

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

122

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Middletown Commercial Historic District

other names/site number 065-409-21000

### 2. Location

street & number The intersection of Fifth and Locust streets stretching approximately 125  n/a not for publication  
ft. north and 180 ft. south of Locust and one block west and approximately  
290 ft. east of Fifth St.

city or town Middletown  n/a vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Henry code 065 zip code 47356

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide x local

James Q. Miller  
Signature of certifying official

2/15/2010  
Date

Deputy SHPO  
Title

Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register  removed from the National Register

other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*For Eoban H. Beall* 3-31-10

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
17	3	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
17	3	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/TRADE: business
- COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store
- COMMERCE/TRADE: department store
- COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

- COMMERCE/TRADE: professional
- COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store
- COMMERCE/TRADE: department store
- COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant
- DOMESTIC: single dwelling
- SOCIAL: meeting hall
- FUNERARY: mortuary

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS:

Classical Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE: limestone

walls: BRICK

WOOD: weatherboard

roof: SYNTHETICS: rubber

other: CONCRETE

METAL: iron

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

The Middletown Commercial Historic District is an approximately 3.04 acre area containing mid-to-late nineteenth and early twentieth century one and two story brick commercial and mixed-use buildings. It reflects steady economic growth during Middletown’s development and the optimism and growth caused by the short-lived natural gas boom of the late 1880s and 1890s in east-central Indiana. It also reflects the subsequent economic moderation after natural gas was depleted in the early 1900s. The district includes several modestly ornamented two-story buildings with cast-iron window hoods in the upper floor, as well as sparsely ornamented one-story early twentieth-century frame buildings. The nineteenth century buildings, which replaced small frame buildings and houses, were erected for businesses that expanded or were newly formed to meet the needs of the growing town and rural population, and the influx of factory workers during the gas boom. These buildings survived because the end of the gas boom meant funds for, and the need for additional buildings were limited. While Middletown continued to serve as a local commercial center, the buildings erected after 1904 reflect the moderation of economic prospects through their modest ornamentation.

Middletown is slightly northwest of the center of Fall Creek Township, in northwestern Henry County, Indiana. Henry County is bounded by Delaware County on the north, Madison and Hancock counties on the west, Rush and Fayette counties on the south and Wayne and Randolph counties on the east. Middletown, elevation 965 feet, sits on gently rolling fertile land. The topography and natural resources influenced the development of the town. Fall Creek passes through Middletown just south of the commercial district. As a source of water, it attracted early settlers. Within a few years, water-powered saw and grist mills were built near its banks, and a woolen mill followed. In the nineteenth century, the town became a shipping point for locally produced grain and livestock to markets in Chicago and Cincinnati. The land surrounding Middletown is still used for raising corn, soybeans, and cattle. The 1887 discovery and exploitation of natural gas in the Trenton rock 996 feet below Middletown transformed it into a bustling boom town in the 1890s.

The district has historic integrity in terms of location and setting. The Middletown Commercial Historic District is exclusively within the Original Plat of Middletown surveyed in 1829 by Jacob Koontz. The district is located at the intersection of the primary north-south (Fifth) and east-west (Locust) streets in Middletown. It stretches approximately 290 feet east and one block west of Fifth Street, (see photos 1 and 2), and approximately 125 feet north and approximately 180 feet south of Locust Street. (See photos 3, 4.) It is bounded on the north by the houses at 115 and 200 North Fifth Street; on the east by the houses at 420 and 454 Locust Street; on the south by parking lots south of 101 and 118 South Fifth; on the west by Sixth Street north of Locust Street and by the first alley west 5th Street on the south of Locust Street. The lots were one-quarter acre: 66 feet wide and 165 feet deep. The historic street grid and rectilinear lots can still be seen in the orientation and footprint of the buildings.

As the town grew, Church Street and New Street were added. By 1894, an industrial area had been developed in the west part of town, and the streets were renamed to facilitate and simplify pin-pointing any particular location. The north-south streets were numbered and the east-west streets were named. Main Street became Fifth Street, Church Street became Sixth Street, Mill Street became Seventh Street and New Street was changed to Eighth Street. Locust Street remained the

same. The old highway system that led from New Castle came in by way of Fifth Street to High Street through the commercial district, then west to Seventh Street. It followed Seventh Street for a short distance then angled past the fairground, and northwest to Anderson by way of Chesterfield.

The intersection of Fifth and Locust streets has been the focus of local commercial activity since Joshua Wilets opened a small store in a log cabin in 1830. A year later there were four log cabins, a tannery and two stores. Middletown retains the feeling and association of a rural commercial hub. Its almost fully occupied storefronts house a wide range of services and businesses, including a newspaper, a hardware store, a flower shop, gift shop, restaurants, attorney's office, herb shop, real estate office, photography studio, cabinetmaker's shop, auto repair shop, clothing store, hair salon, civic center, tavern, and funeral home.

The district also retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. There are many examples of decorative patterned brickwork, and pressed-metal window hoods and cornices in the upper floors of the buildings. Painted advertisements, faded with time, remain on side elevations of 472 and 465 Locust Street. However, some of the historic storefronts have been covered with siding or encased in brick, but historic elements, such as cast-iron columns, first-story cornices, or transom windows are still visible. A 1995 restoration of the 1891 Hedrick Block following a roof collapse has given the building much of its original appearance.

The district has a cohesive appearance. While the seventeen contributing buildings were constructed over the span of 109 years, they were fairly evenly distributed over time. The greatest number of buildings was constructed during the gas boom era (eight). The remaining buildings were divided between the period before the discovery of natural gas (seven) and the post boom period (two). Including the buildings no longer extant in the district (two), the gas boom was clearly a construction boom as well. The qualities which visually distinguish the district from the surrounding residential neighborhoods are the form of the buildings (rectangular with shallow pitched roofs), their spacing (adjoining each other and flush with the sidewalks), their materials (brick compared to the earlier mostly frame houses), and their height (most are two-stories with pediments). The town's only stoplight (blinking) is at the intersection of Fifth and Locust streets. Most of the buildings along Locust Street are two-stories tall. Some regularity exists in both the horizontal lines (cornice heights) and the vertical divisions of the buildings. The grade of Locust and Fifth Streets is not level, and effects the regularity of the building heights. Fifth Street slopes downward from north to south. Locust Street slopes downward from east to west. The regular spacing of the tall rectangular upper-floor windows provides some unity; however, the windows are at different heights. (See photo 5.) The one-story buildings are at the edges of the district. Building width throughout the district ranges from one- to four-lots wide. Lot width in the multi-lot buildings can be identified by storefront width, placement of windows and ornamentation. As it did historically, the absence of mature shade trees also visually separates the commercial district from the surrounding neighborhoods with houses and churches of the same era. A few flambeaux lamps lit the district in the late nineteenth-century. The first electric lights were leased from Mrs. Welsh in 1900. The current electric lights are the third generation and were installed in 1953. Overhead power and telephone lines that once were on tall wood poles located at the sidewalk edge have been relocated to the rear of the buildings.

Several late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century commercial building styles are represented in the district. The Italianate style, a popular nineteenth-century commercial building style in the Midwest, is represented by the most notable of the late nineteenth-century buildings in the district: the Hedrick Block (1880), the Hedrick Building (1891), and the Tykle Building (1873). These brick buildings have the characteristic tall narrow windows topped with decorative window hoods. The metal cornices with brackets are also characteristic of Italianate commercial architecture.

The Late Victorian Romanesque Revival style was popular in the late nineteenth century for commercial as well as public buildings. The Masonic building (1899), the three-story brick building at 106 North Fifth Street, displays some elements of this style. A prominent feature is the large Roman-arch windows with limestone trim on the second floor. The combination of different stylistic details, including the acanthus leaf and swag cornice ending with urn-shaped finials, denies an exclusive Romanesque Revival style designation.

The early twentieth-century Neo-Classical style is found in the Farmers State Bank (1914) at 102-104 South Fifth Street. Neo-Classical elements include the pedimented limestone doorways and large entablature with dentil molding and a regular pattern of brick pilasters.

Several buildings in the district lack definitive characteristics of historical styles and are classified as commercial vernacular. They have modest ornamentation created by patterned brickwork, limestone trim, and in some cases structural cast-iron elements and cornices. A fine example of early twentieth-century commercial vernacular is the one-story brick Wisheart Building (1916) at 580 Locust Street. The corner piers and paneled parapet give the building strong vertical and horizontal elements.

These characteristics seen in many of the buildings in the commercial district suggest architectural integrity: corbelled brick cornices, double hung windows, central stairs, two-stories, commercial store fronts with recessed entries, and restrained ornamentation in the second story. In addition to commercial buildings, the district includes a house and one building that was originally a house. The transformed house is a reminder of the earlier intermingling of dwellings and commercial buildings during the first decades of the town's development, and the adaptive commercial use of houses, such as the dry goods store Joshua Willets operated from a room in a log cabin beginning in 1830. The brick two-story house at 118 South Fifth Street (1852) was the home of the David and Julia Strickler family. In the 1930s, Davis St. John adapted the house into a funeral home, and he moved his funeral business from the Tykle Block into the Strickler house. The adapted house, sold to George and Dorthea Ballard in 1951, was also used as a funeral home. The Ballard mortuary, Middletown, partnered with Raymond C. Shirey to become the Ballard and Shirey Funeral Home. Ballards and their growing family lived upstairs and used the first floor for their funeral business. Sons Marty and Jon operate the wholly owned Ballard and Sons Funeral Home today.

The appearance of the district during the time period when it achieved significance (1852 to 1916) was that of a thriving small commercial center. From the time it was laid out in 1829 until the discovery of natural gas in 1887 brought rapid development of manufacturing and population growth, Middletown was a small town surrounded by farmland. Businesses catered to the needs of the several hundred residents of the town and surrounding farms. In the decades following its beginning as a town in 1829, the town flourished. There were three general stores, three groceries, a bakery, two drug stores, a hardware, a furniture store, a bank and a hotel. At the edges of the commercial district there was a livery stable, saddlery and harness maker. In addition, four mills, a saw mill, lumber yard, several medical practitioners and an attorney were in business in 1884. The businesses were located along Locust Street between Sixth Street and one block (blocks 1 and 2 of Original Plat) east of Fifth Street in mostly one-story wood buildings interspersed with houses. Before the discovery of natural gas in 1887, the Summers Building (1868) at 101 South Fifth Street was the first brick commercial building. Four two-story brick multi-lot commercial buildings were built in the next decade, and the character of the commercial district began to emerge. These three remain today: the first Tykle building (1870) at 102 North Fifth Street, Tykle Block (1873) at 103-105 North Fifth Street, and the Hedrick Block (1880) at 517 Locust Street. Until 1897, the streets and sidewalks were mud in wet weather, dust when dry. To make the sidewalks less treacherous, they were graded and paved. Businesses made a significant contribution to the community's survival during the depression. Several dozen eggs bought a subscription to the Middletown News. Merchants extended credit to customers, and merchants bought produce and farm products from local farmers. These practices not only assisted local citizens, but also kept the merchants in business thus preserving the commercial buildings.

Development of the downtown was steady until the discovery of natural gas in 1887. After gas was discovered, Middletown began to grow rapidly as men flocked to work in the newly erected factories and live in housing offered to workers on lots near the factories. To house the many new businesses that sprang up, several substantial two-story brick buildings were constructed over the next decade and a half. These 1890s to 1904 buildings replaced smaller frame ones, and in one case replaced a building that burned during a fire. Photographs from the turn of the century show mostly two-story brick and a few one-story wood commercial buildings along both sides of Fifth Street one block north and south of Locust Street. (See photos A,B,C.)The center of the district was anchored by the Tykle Block (1873). More substantial commercial buildings replaced frame ones on south Fifth Street: Farmers Bank (c.1882) at 108 South Fifth Street, and the Druley Building (1899) at 106 South Fifth Street. A fire destroyed the building John Hedrick owned, and in 1891 he rebuilt with a two-story brick building that follows the same cornice line of the adjacent Hedrick Block. Three frame buildings were moved farther west to make space for the Tykle Building (1896) at 512,514 Locust Street. Business also expanded east along Locust Street. The Davis Building (1900) at 465 Locust Street is a two-story brick building that hosted two businesses, a printing company and a harness maker. A 1902 two story brick building (472 Locust Street) was a farm implements shop for 50 years. The gas boom era construction ended with the Merchant Building (1904) located at 554 Locust Street.

The arrangement of the facades of the two-story brick buildings in Middletown followed the typical late nineteenth-century pattern. The cornices were ornamented with a parapet of brick or cast-iron and most had decorative pediments and/or finials. The upper-story one-over-one and two-over-two wood sash double-hung windows were regularly spaced tall rectangles. The storefronts provided access to the businesses, display space for goods, and natural lighting, and large plate glass display windows were topped by transom windows. Cloth awnings enabled shop keepers to control the amount of solar heat and light the interior received as well as diverting water from the front door. The one-story wood buildings had similarly arranged storefronts. Cast-iron columns supported the weight of the facade and were also decorative elements. Most of the brick appears to have been left unpainted, although some were painted later. Businesses advertised their presence by painting their name on the front elevation, by painting their name on and displaying wares in the display windows, and/or by hanging small signs perpendicular to the storefront.

Turn-of-the-century photographs show the interurban tracks in the middle of Locust Street. (See photo D.) Wood poles, taller than the two-story buildings, placed at the outer edge of the sidewalk carried telephone lines along Locust Street.

There were few trees in the downtown, although an early photo of the west Locust shows regularly spaced trees the height of the building along the sidewalk where houses were located before commercial buildings were erected. South Fifth Street also has mature trees as far north as the c. 1882 Farmers Bank.

Photographs from the 1910s show little change in the appearance of the district. (See photos E, F.) Despite the end of the gas boom, merchants remained in business. Middletown served a purpose as an agricultural trading center and shipping point before the boom; that continued. And not all of the gas boom era industries closed. Murphy-Kuntz Lumber, opened in 1895, continued to operate in Middletown until 1969. The woolen mill begun and owned by the Liebhardt family only recently moved out of Middletown. A tomato canning factory opened in Middletown in 1925. Many women worked in the factory, and farmers planted fields of tomatoes. The cannery built workers dormitories, owned a restaurant and provided an annual open house at the end of the season offering entertainment and refreshments to everyone who had an association with the plant. The plant closed in the 1950s due to financial difficulties. The 1910s show the storefronts still had large glass display windows, transom windows and cast-iron columns. Awnings were still widely used and windows on the second-stories were still in use. Signs remained modest in scale, although a few advertised services for automobiles, unheard of during the gas boom era.

The 1926 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows only one gap in the commercial district at the east end where farm implements and engine repair were the primary businesses. The south side of Locust Street is residential just west of the commercial district except for Showalter Furniture (demolished) adjacent to the alley.

Photographs from the 1960s show some of the buildings still closely resembled their turn-of-the-century appearance. (See photos G, H.) Most storefronts retained their large windows and awnings and signs were modest in scale. A few storefronts had been "modernized," such as the Merchant Building storefronts that were covered with stone in 1958. Other buildings underwent alterations in the mid 20th-century.

For example, the storefronts at 105 North Fifth Street, 512-514 and 554 Locust Street were covered with a cantilevered overhang (later boxed) and the wood bulkheads covered with brick or stone. In spite of alterations, the pattern of recessed entry ways that characterized historic storefronts can still be found on many buildings. As in many historic commercial districts, some of the second-story window openings have been filled in. The rear elevation windows of some of the buildings have been sealed or replaced.

The loss of a few historic buildings has introduced a change in the historic streetscape on South Fifth Street. The Franklin Building (southwest corner of Fifth and Locust) was dismantled in 1911 to make room for the Farmers State Bank. Changes on the west side of South Fifth Street include the 1947 demolition of the Welch Hotel (1899) that was replaced by Harry Van Noy's Theater. The theater was demolished 1998. The lot is now an overflow gravel parking lot for Ballard and Sons Funeral Home. The Nathan Murphy house was demolished on the south side of funeral home (118 S. Fifth Street) in 1960 to enlarge the parking lot. The I. O. R. M. (Improved Order of Red Men, 1866) building burned in 2001. Evidence of the stairway to the second floor is still clearly visible on the south elevation of the Simons Building. The 500 block of Locust was originally platted with a north-south alley at its mid-point. While the north alley is still used today, the south alley is part of a parking lot and is outside the historic district boundaries. Farmers State Bank intended to erect a new building on this site; however it never came to fruition.

The surrounding environment has also changed. Locust Street was dirt when the interurban service to Middletown began August 3, 1905. Locust Street was paved with bricks in 1914. Increasing use of the automobile resulted in declining use of the interurban. Service ceased on February 18, 1930. The interurban tracks were left in place when the brick streets were paved. The pedestal streetlights installed in 1914 were replaced with the current lights in 1953, and the wood poles that held telephone lines are gone.

The current conditions of the buildings in the district range from excellent to fair. The 1891 Hedrick Block at 529 Locust Street has been carefully restored. It features many original elements, including the storefronts, window hoods and cornice and brackets. The Wisheart Building has not been altered, although cloth awnings were added above the two large windows. Several of the historic buildings with altered storefronts, notably 472 Locust Street, the Tykle Block and Tykle Building and the Merchant Building, that have not been restored to their historic appearance are nevertheless well-maintained.

The most common physical problems of the historic buildings in the district are deteriorating brickwork and peeling paint. Most buildings have sections with missing or deteriorated mortar that need repointing. Several buildings have spalling and crumbling bricks that need to be replaced. Areas of paint on a few of the painted brick buildings are flaking off and need to be repainted. Cast-iron is well-maintained; however some of the pressed metal cornices are showing signs of corrosion.

The following is a block by block description and brief history of the 17 contributing and 3 non-contributing buildings. The addresses are the current ones. These do not always match historic address numbers shown on Sanborn maps, as changes in address numbering and the street names have occurred in the past 111 years. The legal lot descriptions from the Henry County Auditor's Office are provided, but vary in their specificity.

**Locust Street (north side)** (See photo 6.)

**594 Locust Street** (contributing)

This one-story building was assembled from two frame buildings between 1902 and 1904. Located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Locust and Sixth streets, it occupies 30 x 66 feet of the west end of lot 10 Block 4 of the Original Plat. That the one-story, wood frame long, narrow building is the amalgamation of two buildings is evidenced by the front and rear foundations along the west sidewalk. The oddly shaped roof also indicates two separate buildings. The two buildings are visually unified with the exterior siding. Moving buildings to clear lots for new construction was a practice repeated over and over in Middletown. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1896, 1902 show no building on this lot, but locates Dr. Roland T. Summers's large house slightly off center toward the south west and north of this address. Also, two small frame buildings, identified as Milly and Photo, are located on the west end of Locust Street. Summers came to Middletown in 1832 and built the home sometime after 1840 when he married Sophia Strickler. After Sophia's death the house passed to her niece, and was later known as the Strickler Mansion. The 1914 Sanborn map locates the building (594) in its current configuration at the southwest corner of Sixth and Locust Streets as well as a building known as the Merchant building constructed where the Milly and Photo building had been located. An 1878 reference to the building that subsequently became the Milly states it was originally Dr. Frank Thornburg's office. A historical 1886 (Photo I.) of the "Milly" shows a building of similar size and configuration to the south elevation of 594 Locust Street, however there is no documentation the Milly was moved. Demolition of the Summer-Strickler house in preparation for construction of the 1904 Merchant Building is documented as well as reuse of the house windows in the rear elevation of the Merchant building. The building was used by Dr. Roxford D. Arford who practiced medicine in Middletown from 1913 - 1959. It has also been the location of Mary Hayes Gift Shop, Score Card (baseball card shop) and a sweet shop and bakery. The building has not significantly changed in appearance from a 1963 photograph that depicts the Hess Insurance office. (See photo J.)

A hipped roof extends the length of the building. The roof is straight on the west elevation. The east elevation has multiple juts and extensions to accommodate the differences of the roofs and sizes of the two buildings. The east side of the roof extends down over the building. A short hipped roof extends beyond the shed roof on the north end suggesting when the two buildings were joined they were placed perpendicular. The south elevation extends beyond the front of the building creating a portico that is supported by molded concrete block columns. The corner building abuts the sidewalk, except for the south elevation, which has two wide steps and landing at the center glass door under the portico. In addition to the sidelight on the east side of the door, two fixed-glass windows are asymmetrically placed. The west window is wider than the east window. The west elevation fronts Sixth Street. Centrally located on the six-bay elevation, a slab door and a vinyl covered chimney are between the two old foundations. The west elevation also has two long narrow fixed windows on the south end and two double-hung windows on the north end. There is a narrow grass strip on the east side of the lot.

**580 Locust Street** (contributing)

This 1916 brick building, commonly known as the Wisheart Building, is one-story. Contractor Henry Brown built the offices for Francis (Frank) Arthur Wisheart who established a law office in 1891. It occupies 30 ½' x 21 ½' of lot 10 block 4 of the original plat and extends 66 feet north. Although identified on the 1926 Sanborn map as a doctor's office, it was built for and continuously occupied by the Wisheart Law offices. The law office occupied the west half of the building and the east side was rented for many years. The first east-side occupant was Frost Emswiller who operated a tailor shop. Dr. J.D. Hammer opened a dentist office in the east side room when he came to Middletown in 1920. He practiced there until he retired in 1973, hence the doctor's office identification. Wisheart Law offices occupy the entire building presently.

The three-bay front south façade has a limestone cap and asymmetrical brick piers at corners. The west pier is wider than the east pier. The recessed brick parapet has a centered narrow recessed brick panel. The bays flanking the recessed center entry are slightly recessed, which creates the appearance of piers at the corners and on either side of the entry. Cloth awnings top the single large plate-glass windows and cover the six-light transom above each window. Brick panels from the limestone sills to the limestone foundation have centered wider recessed bands. A long narrow eight-light window is centered just above the limestone foundation on the east and west sides. The recessed entry door is five steps above the sidewalk. The leaded glass panel door has a small wood panel in the bottom of the door. Flanking the door, double hung windows have leaded glass in the smaller upper sash. Three light transoms are above the windows and the door. The brick west elevation has four windows with brick arch header and limestone sills. The north elevation has a shed roof and is sided with vinyl and has one triple hung window. The rear door has a brick arch header.

**554 Locust Street (contributing)**

The two-story brick building, erected in 1904 for Attorney Frank Wisehart, replaced two one-story frame commercial buildings that were relocated west on Locust Street and the Summers-Strickler Victorian mansion that was purchased and dismantled to make space available for the Merchant Building. Bill Eaton and Buddy Moore prepared the foundation. It occupies Lot 10 Block 4 and extends 59.5 feet as well as 21 feet of the north 23 feet of lot 9 block 4 of the Original Plat. J.B. Frasier moved his dry goods store to the western most of four storefronts when the Merchant Building was completed. He operated a dry goods store until 1918 when he sold the stock to F. B. Hupp and Frost Emswiler. Hupp sold his interest to Emswiler in 1919. This occurred within a year of Emswiler's Taylor Shop vacating 580 Locust Street. Emswiler operated a grocery on the northeast corner of Seventh and Locust streets during the depression, and he played a significant role in feeding hungry at that time. Sometime in the early 1920s the west storefront was occupied by Roulette's. The Carters were one of the longest tenants, operating a well-stocked dry goods store for 18 years. L. E. Carter established a store in 1926 and his son, Boyd owned the store until 1944. Mrs. Don (Edith) Maddy, an employee of Carter, bought the store and managed Maddy's Department Store for 25 years. She saw the storefronts remodeled in 1958 before closing the store in 1969. The contents were sold at auction. Virginia's (Kelt) Draperies occupied the space c.1969. Subsequently Tri-County Baptist church held services in the storefront. Subsequently, Oak Tree owned by Mr. and Mrs. Dan Oakes served Middletown not only selling dry goods, but also incorporating the Bureau of Motor Vehicles License branch in 1970. Harry Gavin's Pro Hardware, the current merchant, took over the west and west-central storefronts.

The west-center section was first occupied by the C. K. Moore Hardware. Moore took on Glen Marshall's wall paper business in 1931. In 1933, Webster and Merton McMullen opened for business known as McMullen Brothers serving the community with a hardware, electrical and plumbing business and incorporating Glen Marshall's wallpaper store (1931-1932). McMullens cut an arched communicating door between the west-center and east-center sections in 1950 to expand their store offering gifts and glassware. In 1961, McMullens sold to Harry Gavin who currently occupies three storefronts, and is now the tenant with significant longevity (56 years).

The east-center section has been occupied continuously, since 1904. While the business evolved, it has had only three owners. J.D. Farrell began a family business that would serve the town for more than 70 years. J. D. held a place of influence in town in many aspects: He was on the Town Board, a Township Trustee, postmaster for 18 years, and a school teacher. J.D.'s brother, John W. Farrell, was a partner in the business. John W. began his employment as general freight agent for the Kentucky Central Railroad. John served as Town Clerk for six years, and was deputy postmaster during the time J.D. was postmaster. He was active in civic and service organizations serving as treasurer of the Sixth Street Church, and a member of America's oldest fraternal order, Improved Order of Red Men, and Masonic Order. John expanded the grocery business with the addition of Queensware fine china and added grain merchant to his services. Wade T. Farrell, John's son, and wife Bessie managed Ferrell's for 25 years. Bessie added household finery such as china, crystal, dinnerware and gifts to the stock. Upon Wade and Bessie's retirement in 1950, the business was sold to the McMullen Brothers, who expanded the hardware, electrical and plumbing business they owned in the Merchant Building since 1933. McMullen's cut an archway (mentioned previously) between their present store and Farrell's that joined the two stores' space. In 1961, Harry Gavin purchased the combined businesses, as mentioned previously.

The east store was initially B. E. Goff & Son's meat market, operating until selling to H & H Meat Market in 1945. In late 1940s it was known as (William) Rice's Meat Market. After Rice closed, George Neff Heating, Bob Hipkind Doughnuts and a restaurant sequentially occupied the space. The Middletown Public Library used the east store from 1967 until moving to a new building in 1989. H & R Block is the current tenant.

The upper floor of the two-story, brick building's south façade is intact. Its limestone capped brick parapet is above a cornice of decorative brickwork: thirty-three recessed panels created with brackets of stacked end brick are resting on a corbelled brick band. Ten windows are centered above four recessed storefronts. There are four windows above the west storefront, and two windows roughly centered above the entry doors of the other three storefronts. Nine of the second floor window openings are boarded. The sixth window from the west has a double-hung wood window. All the windows have limestone sills and headers. There is a two-brick band above the lintels. A fixed, boxed asphalt shingle awning spans the façade covering the transoms. Coursed stone covers the bulkheads and encloses the columns. Each storefront has a recessed glass and aluminum double door entry and single fixed windows on either side of the entry except for the west storefront, which has two fixed windows on either side of the entry. The entrance is one step up from the sidewalk just as it was originally built when sidewalks were installed on Locust Street in 1897 to keep dirt and mud out of the stores. The flat roof slopes toward the rear of building, which is one-story high. The east and west parapets have terracotta caps. The east elevation fronts the alley. There are four double hung windows with limestone headers and sills high on the first story and one on the second story on the south end. There are three double hung windows with limestone sills on the west elevation. Original rear openings have metal doors or brick infill. The limestone headers are extant. Circa 1850 windows from the Summers-Strickler house were reused on the north elevation. On east half of the north elevation, a shed roof has a flat roof has been added, and creates portico over the steeply graded rear drive.



**512, 514 Locust Street (contributing)**

The first documentation of the 1896 Tykle Building, owned by George Tykle and built by O. L. Miller, is the location of a "foundation for brick building" identified on the 1896 Sanborn map. The Tykle family had a successful history of building and leasing commercial buildings in Middletown's downtown. The Tykle Building expanded their real estate holdings.

At the time sidewalks were wood, the streets were dirt and many frame buildings were wood frame construction. Three frame businesses were moved to free the space for the Tykle Building: Dr. Barry Painter's office, Granville Sheets Grocery and Teeter's Jewelry Shop. O. P. Greenlee and J.B. Frazier Dry Goods Store bought Granville Sheet's Grocery, and moved the frame building west on Locust Street to make space available for the Tykle Building. In 1896, Greenlee and Frazier moved into the west storefront of the new Tykle Building. Tykle House (hotel) moved into the second floor.

The movies came to town in the Tykle Building in 1914. The west room was enlarged and remodeled by Charles Klopenstein to accommodate the, "NICKELO" 5-cent theater. Sometime after 1919, Charlie Miller had a picture show and additionally a variety store and cleaning establishment in the east storefront. Subsequently, the theater was known as the "Rialto" until 1932. Use of the west section changed in 1935 to the Middletown Café. It was owned by Mr. & Mrs. Harry Schuman until 1940. In 1940 the west side of the building was Stuckey's IGA, and in the early 1940s the partition was removed between Middletown Café enlarging Dan's Stuckey's Supermarket. Dan Stuckey moved to Kiser Building in 1946. At that time Bickham & Morecini's 5¢ to \$1.00 Store moved from the east side of the Tykle Building to the west side. Other businesses occupied the Tykle Building. Davis St. John had a funeral home in 1931. He later moved into the Strickler House and converted it to a funeral home. In 1932, the Bean sisters moved their restaurant from the Hedrick Building to the Tykle Building. The restaurant occupied various rooms during their 19 years in business. The current building owners live in a large portion of the second floor.

The two-story brick building is located on 82 feet of the west end of the Original Plat on lot 1 block 4. It reads like the 1896 building despite alterations to the storefront and upper floor on the south façade. Corbelled brick supports a brick parapet, which has a pressed metal cap. Below, decorative brickwork divides the facade vertically, with pilasters at each corner and two in the center. The second floor has eleven bays with flat brick lintels. Eight unaltered openings have one over one double hung windows. On the west side, two windows have been converted to doors and small wrought iron balconies added. On the east side above the first floor storefront, the center window has been converted to a door and a wrought iron balcony spans the three middle bays. There are four storefronts, two on each side of a central stair. Large asphalt shingled bay windows have been added in the original window openings. A recessed entry is centered between each pair of bay windows and flanked by cast-iron pilasters and a metal frieze embellished with rosettes. The west has a single entry with a glazed and paneled door and an arched cloth awning. The east entry has paired a single cloth awning above the pair of paneled and glazed doors. Wood covers the window and door transoms. A glazed door and cloth awning encloses the center stair that is between the middle two brick pilasters. Access to the alley between this building and the east elevation of the Tykle Block at 105 North Fifth Street is restricted by a vinyl-covered wall with a center door.

The west elevation of the Tykle Building fronts an alley. Three brick chimneys rise above the brick parapet. The second story location of four original windows is clear from the brick segmental arches and limestone sills. Two windows on the south end have been changed. A smaller window is centered in the original opening and the bottom of the next opening has been lowered to install a door; the limestone sill has been removed and a wood balcony erected. The next opening has been bricked, but because the brick is unpainted, it clearly reads as a former window. The window at the south end is slightly lower than the original; the upper gap is filled. The first floor has a doorway closed with brick and two small openings with limestone sills filled with brick. An opening cut for a drive-thru window is topped with an awning. All the windows are one-over-one double-hung, and the door is steel with an upper divided light window. The north elevation is also painted brick. The alterations are similar to those on the east elevation and accommodate residential units. From the west end there are six second story openings: west to east (1) one smaller window, (2) a steel slab door, (3) a steel door with an upper divided light window, (4) a smaller window and (5 and 6) two large windows. All the windows are one-over-one double-hung. A wood balcony with stairs to the ground spans openings two, three and four. The first floor has three doors. The west and east doors are a steel six-panel door, the middle door has an upper window and two lower panels. The west elevation has a large wood deck with a stairway to the ground abutting the east elevation of the Tykle Block on North Fifth Street. One brick chimney rises above the brick parapet. The second floor has three openings: a door and two windows (one on each end). The first floor openings are bricked.

**First building on Locust Street (east of 5<sup>th</sup> Street) no street number (non-contributing) (see photo 7)**

In the mid-to-late nineteenth century, fire was a constant threat to the frame commercial buildings. Middletown had no organized fire department. Several devastating fires in Middletown history changed the character of the downtown. A slaughterhouse burned in 1866 and an 1890 fire destroyed Cox & Mowery's meat market, a small frame building. There was no efficient way to firth the fires or protect adjacent buildings until two artesian wells were dug and pump serving the

commercial district were installed in 1896. Subsequently, the installation of Middletown's first fire hydrant at the northwest corner of Fifth and Locust streets led to the first organized volunteer fire department. The equipment located on Sixth Street consisted of one two-wheel wagon, hose, nozzles and other tools. In June 1900, apparatus was arranged for hitching a horse to carts and were used until the first fire truck, a Seagraves, was purchased in 1926. A GMC pumper truck was added in 1941. When the town offices moved to the first Tykle Building (1870) on the northeast corner of Fifth and Locust streets, the north section of the building was altered to house fire fighting equipment. In 1963, the fire station garage was behind the Tykle Building at 102 North Fifth Street. It was remodeled in 1971. Sanborn maps identify a small detached building on the site. In 1896 and 1902 it was vacant. The 1914 map shows an office. By 1926 the lot was empty.

The one-story concrete block building has a brick veneer two-bay south façade. The building's only embellishments are the soldier course lintels above the single-light entry door and above the overhead metal garage door, and the cement cap of the parapet. The flat roof and cement block are visible on the east elevation, which also has two glass-block windows. The building's west elevation abuts the east wall of 102 North Fifth Street. North wall abuts the south wall of 106 North Fifth Street. A concrete alley is on the east side of the building.

#### **458 Locust Street** (non-contributing) (See photo 7.)

A. S. Fisher's frame blacksmith shop had been on this lot since 1880. In 1939, Dr. Farrell Dragoo purchased the lot. He built a new 40 x 20 foot office building and practiced medicine there. Dr. Ralph Reynolds began his Middletown practice in July 1959 locating in Dr. Dragoo's office building after Dragoo died. Reynolds left to continue his medical education at Indiana University Medical Center in 1963. Before being transformed into a residence, it was as a real estate office. A pre-remodel photograph, c. 1970, shows aluminum siding, double-hung windows, and a small concrete front porch. (See photo K.)

On the one-story asphalt shingle roof building, the chimney, hipped roof and south elevation window locations are unchanged. The wood frame is covered with brick veneer laid in common bond pattern. The symmetrical five-bay south façade has a brick soldier course at the eave. Two six-over-six double hung vinyl windows flank the six-panel, steel door. A white carriage light is on each side. The foundation abuts the concrete sidewalk. A modest landing at the front entry is accessible from two brick steps on the east and west side of the landing. The west elevation's most remarkable feature is a decorative brick chimney randomly studded with rough-cut stone; this feature was also on the c.1970 photograph. There are also two six-over-six double hung vinyl windows. On the rear of the house on the north elevation, access to the concrete patio is via a glass sliding door. The east elevation has one double hung window and an air conditioner compressor. The house is surrounded by a grassy lot.

#### **472 Locust Street** (contributing) (See photos 1 and 7.)

An agricultural implement shop was on this site in 1896 when Sanborn mapped Middletown. F. A. Wisheart and A. S. Fisher built the brick business block in 1903 from which to sell implements. Fisher partnered with his son, Vessie, and became the headquarters for John Deere, Oliver and Gale plows. Robert Pence subsequently was Vessie Fisher's associate and they handled McCormack Deering machinery. Other implement dealers in this location were Pence and Heath, then Veo Abshire. The building was converted into Mack's garage, and sold in 1945 to William J. Duchek who opened a hardware store. The Complete Electrical Shop, owned by Phil Snodgrass, opened in 1965. One pre-1939 photograph depicts a typical center entry storefront. (See photo L.) A stair to the second floor was added before 1970, and it has not changed significantly. Currently, it is occupied by Split Decision Hand Dipped Ice Cream, a restaurant serving "hot dogs & nachos, desserts & treats". The second floor is a residence.

The two-story, flat roof brick building has a three-bay south façade. It located in the Original Platt, Lot 1 Block 1 east 55 feet and Lot 2 Block 1 55 x 17.4 feet, SE corner 2 feet west end of lots 9 and 10. Each bay is set-back behind rows of brick corbelling giving the appearance of pilasters between the windows and at corners. The brick is laid in common bond except in the window bays where soldier and end brick alternate courses. One wood double-hung window with limestone sill under two rows of arched rowlock brick is centered in each of the three second story bays. A pressed metal cap crowns the façade. A band of rowlock brick is above the first floor cornice, which is embellished with rosettes. The painted store front has original pressed metal pilasters. The west bay has two doors: a steel door opens to a second floor staircase, and an aluminum and glass door opens into the store occupying the center and east bays, which have plate-glass windows. All the storefront transoms are covered with wood clapboard siding. The concrete foundation abuts the sidewalk. The grade slopes down toward the east. On the west elevation, the second floor, three wood double-hung windows, with brick arch lintels and limestone sills, are symmetrically placed on the wall. One small window adjacent to the south window is double-hung with a flat brick lintel and a limestone sill. Faded painted advertising is on the south end. Advertising on south end of the east elevation was long ago painted over. A narrow grass strip lies between the building and the house to the west. The east elevation abuts a driveway and has three tall and one small double-hung windows with limestone sills and

headers on the second floor, and small windows on first floor. The north elevation is the primary entrance for the second floor, and it is accessible via a wood deck and short run of stairs. There is a grade elevation at the rear of the lot. A single door with wood infill is set inside a large segmental arched opening. On the first floor wood doors are centered under large segmental arch and wood in fills a large segmental arched opening.

**Locust Street (South Side)** (See photo 5 and 8.)  
**529 Locust Street** (contributing)

A significant fire just east of the center alley on the south side of Locust Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets occurred in 1890. The fire started in the Cox-Mowery City Meat Market and destroyed the meat market as well as the adjoining G. W. Jennings & Sons Shoe Shop. Both were frame buildings. It spread west to the Showalter building and east to Hedrick Hall (513). The stairway to Hedrick Hall and the Hall's cornice were destroyed. John Hedrick owned the adjacent 1880 Hedrick (Hall) Building, and in 1891 he built the Hedrick Block on this site. Hedrick's actions played a central role in the discovery and exploitation of natural gas in 1887. The resulting need for commercial space ensured Hedrick would profit by building additional space. Hedrick was a member of the Montezuma Tribe of Red Men, the local chapter of Improved Order of Redmen. The organization leased the order's first Wigwam on the upper floors of the Hedrick Block. The remainder of the building was occupied by various businesses over the years.

A historical photograph of Yount's Grocery confirms it was in the west storefront. (See photo M.) Rather than wood bulkheads on either side of the grocery entry, the photograph shows a basement barber shop entrance under the west window and windows under the east side. Over the years, the west storefront was also the home of a dry good store and in the east storefront several people had a restaurant. Offices were on the second floor. By 1902 the dry goods store had moved and the space was vacant for many years. Frost Emswiler started a dry cleaning business in the Hedrick Block in 1913. Emswiler later moved further east to 483 Locust Street and expanded his services to include suits and tailored clothes in his establishment. Emswiler was the first east-side tenant in the Wisehart building (580 Locust) in 1916, and in c.1919-1920 moved to the Merchant building (554 Locust). After the roof collapsed in a storm in the mid 1990s, the building was donated to the town. A 1995 rehabilitation created the Middletown Civic Center which offers space for events, and the gathering place has given life to the community.

The two-story, brick building is located in the Original Plat on 41 feet of the west end lot 1 block 3. The six-bay front façade is in the Italianate style with an ornate cornice and long rectangular windows. The cornice band is a combination of wood, metal, brick and a narrow stone course that is painted a unifying white. Wood brackets of the plain cornice support a deep overhang. Note the cornice of the adjacent east building has the same pattern and dimensions, however only the metal band of the cornice is painted. The second floor has six wood double-hung windows with limestone sills. The brick is pointed with red mortar across the segmental arches and between the limestone sills creating two red bands across the second story facade.

The first story pressed metal cornice is lower than the cornice of the adjacent building at 513 Locust Street. The grade slopes from the center of town down toward the west resulting in a storefront that is lower than the neighboring building. The wood and cast-iron first story appears slightly asymmetrical. The wood panel bay is centered, however the east half storefront is narrower because of a second story stairway while the west half is occupied by only the storefront. The storefronts' double entry doors and fixed transoms, as well as the center panel are recessed. The entry doors are identical. The upper two-thirds of each door has one light with two flat panels below. Both storefronts have fixed plate glass windows with transoms (two on the west and one on the east). The cast-iron columns and steps from the sidewalk to the door abut the sidewalk. The cast-iron columns with acanthus leaf capitals and simple banded bases sit on stone bases. The east entry has a lower stone step and two wood steps to the door. All the steps to the west door are stone. Both entries have a single divided light transom. All the trim of window, door and panel framing is coped. Wood covers the windows and entry to the lower level commercial spaces. The west bay also has a small recessed panel on the end with rough-faced limestone foundation. The center bay is a twelve flat-panel (4 horizontal/3 vertical) grid with fluted and coped cross pieces. A recessed entry that leads to the second floor is at the east end of the facade. The stoop's walls are brick; however the east wall is actually the wall of the next building. The rounded outside edges of the Hedrick building walls mimic the rounded edge of 513 Locust Street built two years earlier. Five steps lead to the slab door with a divided light transom.

**513 Locust Street** (contributing)

Mills powered by Fall Creek and local goods that were produced were transported by rail with Middletown a center of commerce in Fall Creek Township. Goods and services needed by the town and township residents were supplied by local merchants. The 1880 Hedrick Building is one of four extant commercial buildings that was erected before the discovery of natural gas. Referenced previously, the Hedrick Building was the site of planning and organizational meetings that resulted in the Middletown gas boom. The merchants not only met the needs of the local residents, they supported the local

economy. W. L. Van Cleve & Frank Leonard Dry Goods bought the business in 1885 and took two rooms and the basement. The store sold dry goods, clothing, boots, shoes, hats, caps and groceries. Enormous quantities of produce were purchased from local farmers for sale in the grocery store. Leonard retired in 1888, but Van Cleve continued to operate the business until 1890, when he sold out to O. P. Greenlee and J.P. Frazier. They later moved into a frame building on the site of the Tykle Building (1896). After the discovery of natural gas and the influx of workers, the use of the Hedrick Building changed from providing only services to also offering entertainment. By 1896 in addition to a meat market, a saloon and billiard hall occupied much of the space. Once the population began to decline after the gas bust, restaurants and residential rooms came back into use. A restaurant opened in 1919 by Charlie Miller was sold to Otto Sizelove and later to Gertrude and Bertha Bean. When the Bean Sisters moved to the Tykle Block (1873), Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Weaver moved upstairs and opened a first floor restaurant. Rosie Weaver welcomed families after ball games and stayed open for late night dining, offering her specialty, pie. The building ownership transferred to Merrill Mills and later to Max Maddy in 1944. Gold, Heath & Kelly Barbershop opened in the west rooms and the City Cigar Store and then a Beauty shop in the east rooms. The current occupant, Fadley's Tavern, was opened by the new building owner, Harry "Bud" Fadley, in 1955. Fadley fashioned eight modest, economical sleeping rooms upstairs that he rented as needed, and Roy Cass opened a barbershop in the basement. The business is currently closed.

The 1880 two-story, brick, Hedrick Block is on 39 feet of lot 1 block 3 in the Original Plat. It is strikingly similar to the Hedrick Building in design. The cornice of the Hedrick building at the west end continues with the same cornice design and dimensions. The storefront, first story cornice and the second floor windows are not aligned because of the change in grade between the two buildings. Wood brackets, resting on a narrow stone band, support the wide overhanging metal cornice. Four second floor double-hung wood windows with limestone sills and ornate limestone hoods are centered above the storefronts.

The first story pressed metal cornice is supported by four slender cast-iron columns. The alterations of the storefronts are more aesthetic than structural. The original configuration was similar to the layout of the 1891 Hedrick Block: lateral storefront windows and recessed center entrances. Two storefront doors are separated by what originally may have been an entry to the second floor. The center span is covered with wood. Bulkheads are covered by a short brick wall and limestone cap. The large display windows have been replaced with rectangular windows that are wider than they are tall. Wood covers the original transom and upper part of the storefront window. The angled walls have a single rectangular window that is taller than it is wide. One and one-quarter steps rise to the concrete porch that spans the middle section. Brick encloses the columns' stone bases. The west door is slab; the east door has one light in the upper half of the door.

#### **483 Locust Street** (non-contributing) (See photo 9.)

Al Ohnheiser began work in David Swinford's clothes cleaning business in 1948. He purchased Swinford's cleaning business, and in 1950 Ohnheiser had this building erected. He purchased cleaning equipment to do the work onsite rather than sending the dry cleaning out to another cleaner. The dry cleaning establishment has been continuously open for business as it is now.

This flat-roofed, one-story building's brick façade has one large three-part window spanning most of the façade and a door at the east end. The raised threshold of the door glass and metal entry door is one step above the sidewalk. "Middletown Cleaners" is painted on the limestone header above window and door; the sill is also limestone. The fixed plate glass window is flanked by six-over-six double hung windows. The west, south and east walls are concrete block. The east elevation has two windows: a twelve-light window and three twelve-light windows. The south has a slab door. The west elevation is near east wall of 101 South Fifth Street. The view is obstructed by overgrown vines and a shrub. It occupies the area 24 feet by 66 feet of lot 1 block 2 of the Original Plat.

#### **465 Locust Street** (contributing)

This commercial vernacular building, erected in 1900, was first known as the Davis Building. The building's two storefronts were first occupied by a printing business in west side and a harness business was in the east side. Owen Swain operated a bicycle, plumbing and electrical shop which he bought from his former partner Eugene Weaver east storefront. He had employed Webster McMullen for three years when McMullen and his brother Merton bought out Mr. Swain in 1909. McMullen stayed in the Davis Building for four years, moving to the I. O. R. M. building in 1913. (They later moved into the Merchant Building and expanded their business to include hardware products.) A plumber occupied the west storefront in 1914. Frank Dietrich purchased the building from Phi Wisheart in 1922, and it has since been associated with automobiles. Frank Dietrich's ownership of this building is the reference point these 85 years later. The building has seen many changes due to fire, change of use and expansion. Dietrich's work as a machine tool repairman in World War I was a significant benefit to his mechanical business. Oakland Pontiac agency opened in 1926. After an 1928 fire in an unattached garage repair shop run by Walter Fletcher, Frank Dietrich purchased the shop and Fletcher Garage moved to Honey Creek. Harry Barefoot located his poultry and egg dealer shop in the rebuilt garage. Dietrich began a Chevrolet

Agency in 1933 that grew from the one-room mechanic shop into a modern well-equipped sales and service company for automobiles and GM appliances employing 10 - 15 people. An east addition show room was built in 1947. The Dietrich family had an important role in Middletown. Frank's son, Harry "Bud" Dietrich, was the fire chief many years, president of Middletown Chamber of Commerce, President of Henry County Planning Board and president of Farmers State Bank. He bought 20 acres east of town in 1949, improved the ground and sold it for the original price to the town park land. Bud was chosen outstanding citizen of the year in 1961, and in 1966 Dietrich Park was named for Bud. December 1968 saw another tenant, the Middletown News owned by Jack N. White and Ron G. Mettert, occupy the building.

Bob Hanna has operated a body shop since 1971 in the attached garage. After The News relocated in 1999, Hanna expanded into the brick building. The building is now used mainly for storage and the work is done in the attached garage. The legal description of the property follows: Original plat west 42.4 feet and north 3.6 feet of the east 44.6 feet of the west 87 feet of lot 10 block 2. Original plat 44.6 feet of the west 87 feet at the north end to west 88.5 feet at the south end and 36 feet north on lot 10 block 2.

The two-story painted brick building was erected in 1900 in the commercial vernacular style. The decorative brickwork in the cornice is typical of turn of the century embellishments, and is common among the Middletown commercial vernacular buildings. This cornice is created by a solid course between brick banding all resting atop a band of brick dentils and capped with an unadorned metal band. The second story has four windows. Two double-hung two-over-two wood windows with limestone sills, brick arch header are symmetrically located above each storefront window. The first window on the east side is boarded. A metal sign post is centered between the windows. The first story has three bays: a center entry flanked by large display windows. A glazed and paneled central entry has a cloth awning over the door, but the segmental brick arch is visible above the pressed metal cornice. The wood-covered west window is the same size opening as the partially covered east window. The large rectangular windows that fill most of the storefront are framed up to the first floor pressed metal cornice. A faded "Columbia Tires" sign is painted on northwest end of west elevation. There are two small glass-block windows in the second and first stories in arched openings that originally had tall, narrow rectangular windows. An air conditioner is mounted under one of the first floor windows, and a double door is barred. A metal structure is set back on the east side of the building. The south elevation is partially covered by a one story brick garage addition that spans the south elevation. A wood fence encloses the rear lot.

**South Fifth Street (west side)** (See photo 10.)

**118 S. Fifth Street** (contributing)

The story of this building, now the Ballard and Sons Funeral Home, begins with the Strickler family. The building, built in 1852, was originally the residence of David and Julia Strickler. It is the oldest extant building in the Middletown Commercial Historic District. The brick house has hand hewn oak beams. It features five oak fireplaces of marble with beveled glass, and was lit by natural gas using the same style light fixtures in all rooms. The 14 foot staircase in the foyer is made from quarter-sawn oak with carving and ornamental spindles. All these elements are extant. Many years later house became a funeral home.

John Davis St. John was a funeral director 18 years in Middletown. His first funeral home located in the Tykle Building (1873) in August 1931; later, he moved the Davis St. John Mortuary into the Strickler home on South Fifth St. Forrest Fisher joined Davis and he later bought the business. Davis was Middletown's Clerk-Treasurer, and also he was Postmaster 1950 - 1954. George and Dorthea Ballard moved to Middletown in 1949 purchasing the Ralph Niblock Funeral Home on Columbia Avenue in Middletown. George Ballard had many years experience as a mortician in New Castle at the Stanley Mortuary and V. T. Davis Funeral Home. When the Forrest Fisher Funeral Home became available Raymond C. Shirey, a funeral director in Daleville, proposed a partnership with the Ballards. With the purchase of the property in 1951, Ballard and Shirey Funeral Home was established. Ballards and their son, Jon, lived in the house as well as using the first floor for viewing and services. Dorthea Ballard, in a 2007 interview, spoke of rearranging furniture when there was to be a service in the parlor and arranging it for a family space the remainder of the time. Within a year, Ballards remodeled and extended the house making it more suitable and functional for a mortuary. The west room of the house was extended north and south. They also replaced the original porch and with the current two-story porch. Shortly after, another son, Marty, was born. Before George Ballard died, the family purchased the assets of Mr. Shirey in 1985. The name was changed to Ballard and Sons at that time. Mrs. Ballard believes the house was used by Claudette Colbert for eight months sometime between 1928 and 1935. Colbert's husband during this time was Norman (Hoeffler) Foster who was born in Richmond, Indiana, however there is no documentation of Colbert residing in Middletown. The stable at the west edge of the complex was built in 1888. It was converted into offices of the Middletown News. Now, casket samples and other planning materials are located in the stable.

The Ballard and Sons complex consists of the two-story funeral home, a small storage building on the south edge of the parking lot (outside Historic District boundary), and a brick two-story stable on the west side(118a) with its connected one-story attached garage (118b) between the two buildings on the north edge.

The Strickler house is a two-story cross-gabled L-shaped painted brick building with a central brick chimney and a two-story porch. The wide eave overhang is boxed with brackets. The house has multiple additions and alterations that will be described with the particular elevation.

A round attic vent is centered under the gable on the east facade. One segmental arched six-over-six double-hung window with arched shutters is centered on the second and first story respectively. The second story window has the as a wrought iron balcony, which is seen in a period photo of the house. A brick watertable surrounding the house is on the same plane as the porch. The east facade is dominated by the two-story porch, which has four concentric steps from the stamped concrete sidewalk. The four square posts and two pilasters supporting the flat-roof replaced the original wrap-around one-story porch in 1952. Two second story segmental arched six-over-six double-hung windows are on the east elevation and one is on the north elevation. The first story porch windows and door have been altered and are now rectangular with transoms. The large window has a rough-faced stone sill. The glass and panel door is on the north elevation of the porch.

On the north elevation a second story window is centered under the gable roof. The house was built with a front porch that wrapped-around the north side of the house over an extended first story set-back. The extension was expanded in the 1950s remodel into a one-story flat roof addition that wraps around the rear of the building; however the location of the original porch roof is visible just under the second story window. The extension has a modest eave and forms an east-facing porch that is supported by two square posts and one pilaster. A ramp on the east side of the small porch is similar to the width of the original extension and obscures the foundation. Stairs on the north side of the porch lead to double wood panel doors.

The south elevation has two second story windows with arched shutters. The first floor has a flat-roof addition that was used for the kitchen initially. Later the kitchen was removed, and the room is now used for services. It has a wide eave and a small covered east-facing porch. The porch posts are similar to those on the two-story porch. The windows are smaller six-over-six double-hung windows on the entry block and the back of the porch. A brick watertable is the only feature of the south elevation.

The west elevation has one segmental arched six-over-six double-hung wood window on the south side and a round iron vent that is centered high under the eave. A gabled one-and-a half story, painted brick extension on the west elevation also has a wide eave overhang boxed with brackets. A three-light door is centered under the gable, and a round iron vent that is centered on west and east elevations.

The vinyl sided west elevation has a windowless small addition that is the embalming room. The entry door is covered by a portico.

**118a - 118b Stable and Garage- Along alley middle of West Locust Street, south side of street. (contributing) (See photo 11.)**

The one-and one-half story, painted brick, gable front building has an east elevation one story gable extension. The asphalt shingle roof with open eave has decorative rafter tails. The south gable end is the primary façade. Second story paired double hung windows are centered under the gable with diamond roof vent above in the peak. The first story has an inset door at west the edge. An air conditioner is mounted in an old window opening and closed with infill brick. A door opening has also been in-filled with brick. An old mill landscape scene has been painted on entire west elevation and wraps around to the north elevation. At the eave, one small double hung window is centered between two wood double-hung windows; all three are centered symmetrically in the middle third of the second story. The first story has no openings; they are all brick in-filled. Under the north elevation gable, "1880" in raised brick dates the house. The two "8"s in the date are on either side of a diamond vent that touches the top of paired double hung windows. The mural continues on the first story; there are no openings.

Sanborn maps from 1896, 1902, and 1914 indicate a small extension on the northeast corner of the building. The garage is attached to the house in the same location. The hipped roof brick garage has a wide open eave overhang and open box except where it is attached to the house. There, a small shed roof is visible under the hipped roof. The west elevation has double swinging wood garage doors. The south elevation has a center door and single wood window with brick sills. The west elevation has an overhead steel garage door. The north elevation is too close to the rear of the buildings fronting the south side of Locust Street to be visible. All the area between the house and the alley are paved with concrete.

No east extension of the stable is indicated on any of the Sanborn maps, however the brick courses are uninterrupted and the windows framing and trim are the same as the ones on the house. The gable roof is perpendicular to the gable roof ridge on the house and connects just under the eave. South elevation has one wood double-hung window on the west side. The east door was in-filled with brick. The east elevation has as one wood double hung window centered under gable with diamond vent above gable in the peak. The north elevation has one window and a door that is now the entry into the building.

#### **108 S. Fifth Street (contributing)**

Farmers Bank, organized in 1873, was the first bank in Middletown. The bank moved to Anderson, Indiana that same year. A second bank also named Farmers Bank was organized in 1882. The bank's first location was 108 South Fifth Street. The officers were well-known in the community: Nimrod Elliot was the founder, and president, Thomas Wisheart, vice-president, E. L. Elliot (son) cashier and Ben H. Davis assistant cashier. Nimrod Elliot moved from North Carolina to Henry County in 1833. He was licensed to teach school at the age of 16, and then he became a builder, contractor and carpenter. He played a significant role in providing the means and planning activities that encouraged people to visit Middletown. Travel was less arduous with the construction of the first road in 1850. Elliot had a hand in building the first road with the creation of Pike Road Company. Travelers paid a fee to use the road owned by a privately held company. The road was regulated by the state, and in 1871, Fall Creek Township bought the turnpikes and made free passage available to everyone.

That same year, 1871, the Middletown Fair, of which Elliot was a co-founder, was organized and financed by the 172 stockholders as an annual four-day event for Henry, Madison and Delaware Counties Agricultural Society. The Fair was held annually until 1931. The Elliot Opera House was also one of Nimrod Elliott's endeavors that he founded with his son, E. L. Elliott. It was built by O. L. Miller on the northwest corner of Sixth and Locust Streets. It became the center of activity hosting graduations as well as entertaining productions such as "La Mascot" put on by the Gilbert Opera Company. Unfortunately, the opera house was demolished in 1913. E. L. Elliott and his father worked together on other endeavors. E. L. was the president of the multi-county agricultural society from its inception in 1870 until 1882. He also served as township trustee in 1886-1887, and went on to represent Henry County in the lower house of the general assembly from 1895-1897.

In 1899 when demand for goods and services in the town was at its peak, the bank building was remodeled. The 1899 remodel extended building west, where it abuts the east wall of the Hedrick Building (513 Locust Street). The bank was relocated in 1913 to a purpose built building on the southwest corner of Locust and Fifth Streets. The post office moved into the vacated building in 1913 and stayed until 1955. The Northwestern School Corporation was a long-time occupant of the building. It is now a florist shop. It is located in the Original Plat lot 6 Block 5.

The brick two-bay building is one story. The brick is laid in a common bond pattern, and it was built with a corbelled brick cornice that was covered in a subsequent remodel. An arched parapet containing the name and date of the building was also removed. The upper façade now ends with an aluminum covered cornice/cap. The south side of the east façade storefront has a large fixed wood window reinforced with L-brackets at the corners and a cloth awning above window. The north side recessed entry has an aluminum and glass door and sidelight fit in the opening of the original wood and arched glass double door. The north wall of the setback is dressed with decorative wood recessed panels. An air conditioner is in half the transom space, and the other half is closed with wood. Wood covers the span above the window and door and below the cornice. Decorative elements include a center cast-iron column, a cast-iron pilaster on the south corner, and a pressed metal cornice. The north end is covered by the end wall of the Druley Building. One deep step and a cement ramp with a wrought iron hand rail rise to the entry door. The flat roof slopes to the west. The west elevation abuts 513 Locust Street. The location of an east addition is visible on south elevation where the brick courses do not align. The south elevation is adjacent to an alley.

#### **106 S. Fifth Street (contributing)**

Charles C. Druley operated a hardware store and handled farm implements for several years after a harness shop vacated. In 1899, he replaced the earlier building. Druley's was the "neighborhood store" where folks gathered. It was known for having the latest modern fixtures. Among the modern amenities customers found the first pressed tin ceiling in Middletown (made locally), modern shelving and counters. An elevator located in the rear of the building facilitated lifting heavy freight.

The building was one in a series of trades in 1920 that newcomer E. L. Kaiser used to obtain the Livery, Feed and Sale Barn on Locust near sixth Street. In February 1920, E. L. Kiser traded a farm to Carry C. Farris for the hardware store. Nov. 1920 Kaiser traded hardware store to Cal Ice for the Livery. Kaiser added a blacksmith shop and a poultry market,

and finally, auctioned livestock. He operated a cream station for Swift and Company in a house subsequently erecting a business block, the "Kaiser Building", to house the creamery and adding a grocery.

The hardware store owners changed many times. Paul C. Faris sold it to Charles Fields who operated the Sporting Goods Store in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Fields sold to (Ross) Bailey Sporting Goods. Bailey in turn sold the building and business to Walter Schott. Schott added hardware merchandise to the stores offerings. The Middletown Community Church used the building for services from 1966 thru 1975. The second floor was used for office space for George Swain's law offices, and Dr. Farrell Dragoo had an office here in 1933 until building his own office at 458 Locust Street in 1939. The first story is an office supply store, and the second story is now residential. The legal description is Original Plat Lot 1, Block 3 18 ½ x 80 feet.

The Druley Building is a two-story, brick building constructed in 1899. An arched nameplate tops a Neo-classical entablature, a style which was also used on the 1899 Masonic Building. The Adam frieze has three vertical bars between swag panels, an architrave of dentils and cornice. Prominent brick at the edges of the facade create the appearance of full height brick pilasters (rounded on south and squared on north) culminating in a metal capital. Between the pilasters a centered second story oriel window with one-over-one sashes is supported by a cantilevered portico. The oriel window's asphalt shingled roof is supported by small brackets under the boxed eave. The first story has a three-bay store front with recessed center entry flanked fixed wood windows and wood bulkheads. The center door of aluminum and glass is fit into the larger original opening. An air conditioner is above the door. The opening enclosed with wood. There is a two-light wood transom above each of the windows. Spanning the front is a cloth awning with a pressed metal cornice and the cantilevered wood portico that has end brackets. The building to south shares wall with the Druley Building. The Druley Building's north wall abuts the 1913 Farmers Bank. The west elevation abuts 513 Locust Street.

#### **102, 104 S. Fifth Street (contributing)**

The Neo-classical brick and stone building was built for The Farmers State Bank in 1912. The Farmers Bank referenced above was reorganized and renamed (1882-1902) to meet the requirements of the Indiana banking laws. A two-story three-bay brick building with decorative brick work, occupied by Franklin's General Store and built in the late 1850s, was dismantled to prepare the site for the Farmers State Bank building. It is located in the Original Platt Lot 1 Block 3 30 x 80 feet. The new 27' by 80' bank building was built on a basement foundation and finished with grey matte bricks and Bedford stone. The second story had a succession of occupants. The American Legion Charles Mundell post 216, first organized in 1919, and used the upper room for meeting space. The public library moved into the upper floor in October 1928 and relocated to a new purpose-built building northeast of the commercial district in 1967. Walter Farrell's insurance office was on the second floor from 1932-1941. The building was updated in 1958 by installing new windows on the north elevation and modernizing the lobby. The building is vacant.

This two-story, brick (common bond) and limestone corner building visually impacts Locust and South Fifth Streets with Neo-Classical details on both elevations. It is the only building in the Middletown commercial district with Neo-Classical details. The primary facade on the east elevation has three-bays and brick full-height pilasters. Two corner pilasters and two narrower pilasters separate the wider center from the narrower lateral bays. The bays are surmounted by the entablature, and end at the limestone-capped brick parapet. The entablature has a plain cornice and dentils above the unadorned frieze and plain architrave, which rests on the pilasters' stone capitals. Second floor windows are double-hung wood with an upper light that is smaller than the lower light. The windows have limestone sills. The wider center bay has paired windows. The lateral bays have single windows, and are entry points with unadorned limestone pediments over the two first floor entrances. The original doors have been replaced. The south has a six-panel steel door. The north has a metal-framed glass door. The center bay has a three-light (vertical) by two-light window. Raised, decorative brick work in each bay is at the level of the second floor. The grade, sloping down to the south, requires a step at the south door; the north entry is at sidewalk. The four course limestone watertable with limestone cap ends where the pediment brackets begin. Limestone pilasters are the height of the water table.

The north elevation is on an incline with the west end at a higher street grade than the east end. Five pilasters create four-equal bays. The brick, limestone, watertable, frieze, cornice and cap are similar to the east elevation. Each bay is wider than those on the east elevation. The second story paired wood windows are double-hung with a smaller upper sash. The 1958 remodel left the two first floor windows at the west end of the building in tact. The windows are individual and also have a smaller upper sash. The watertable serves as the sill. The windows changed in the 1958 remodel are intact in the first and second bays on the east end. They have twelve lights (three horizontal and four vertical). The third opening is temporarily open for the removal of the bank vault. The bank's original external alarm is mounted on the pilaster between the third and fourth bay on the west end. The copper cover has a spider in relief. The iron depository built by Gross Feibel Company of Hillsboro, Ohio, is at the west end of the building. The west elevation abuts 513 Locust Street.



**North Fifth Street (west side)**(See photo 12.)

**105 N. Fifth Street** (contributing)

Middletown was a prosperous community long before the discovery of natural gas boom. The town relied upon local businessmen who were committed to doing what was necessary to see Middletown thrive, to push for progress and promote growth. These entrepreneurs erected buildings and encouraged business to come to Middletown; Frederick Tykle was one of the most active in these endeavors. He was born in 1825 and moved to Middletown in 1855. He was a cabinetmaker by trade, and he operated a furniture business. His influence extended throughout the town as a member of the first town board, and in the county as the 1869 Henry County Appraiser. He owned the Tykle Block, erected in 1873; it was the second of Frederick Tykle's buildings in Middletown directly across his first building on the north east corner of Locust North Fifth Street. When the Tykle Block opened, the Tykle House (Hotel) occupied the second floor with the entrance on the sidewalk level. The American Legion also used the second floor for a time. Currently, the second floor is residential.

The first floor storefronts were occupied by the same businesses for many years. The south storefront was a corner drug store opened by A. S. McCall. Burke and Company bought out McCall's drug store in November 1885. Cassell subsequently owned the business and had a succession of partners: Scott, Fisher, Painter and Hart, before selling to A. J. Frazier. Subsequent drug store owners were D. W. Rigish (1899 - 1990) Frank Cain (worked for Rigish 1899-1900; owner 1900-1903), and Walter F. Becker (1903 to 1915, sold half interest to Louis Hubert in 1914). Kimball-Hayes employed Sheldon Moore who purchased store in 1923. The Moore family owned and operated the pharmacy and a soda fountain continuously for more than 50 years. Presently, the south storefront is occupied by a herbologist who also offers reflexology and food supplements. The Homestead Restaurant occupied the middle storefront, and was in business for 50 years. It is currently rented to Nutrition Consultants, a group of pediatric clinicians. North of the Homestead Restaurant, William Greenlee's son operated a harness and shoe repair business. This north storefront is currently a realty office.

Two-story, brick, seven-bay front façade, erected in 1873, occupies the following space in the Original Platt: the undivided half, 83 feet on the east side of Lot 1 Block 4. The building is identified in the arched parapet with "Tykle Block" in raised upper case letters. The step down roof has a pressed metal cornice, plain brick frieze and pressed metal brackets. The six second-story windows are replaced with six-over-six-over three-sash windows. The upper sash is fixed; the lower sashes are double-hung. The windows are capped with arched sheet metal hoods and have limestone sills. The original first-story pressed metal cornice is the top of the sheet metal awning that spans façade, but obscures storefront transom windows. Coursed ashlar stone covers original first floor façade, which has four recessed entrances: three store fronts and the stair to second floor. There is one large display window and an aluminum and glass door for each storefront. The south storefront entry is on the corner. Two plate glass windows are separated by a wall with one window for the south storefront and one window for the middle storefront. The door to the middle space is on the north side. Stairs to the second floor, which are next, are set-back the same distance from the sidewalk as the three storefront entry doors. The north storefront has a recessed entry and an end window.

The south elevation, which fronts Locust Street, has been altered at the west end with the addition of a large window. It has a wood bulkhead and a glazed door under a long header. A sign or awning has been removed above the storefront, and a brick segmental arch enclosed with brick is exposed on the west end. A second smaller fixed window east of the original fenestration has been added. Six second-story six-over-six double-hung windows have a fixed six-light sash and are topped by a segmental brick arch. The north elevation fronts the drive that runs from Fifth Street to the alley. The step-down roof is pierced by one asphalt shed section. The second story windows have been replaced with the same three-sash windows that are on the east elevation, and a brick hood tops the segmental arched opening. The first story has no functional openings. A segmental arch door opening has two vents in the wood infill. The west elevation is covered by a wood deck of 512-14 Locust Street, the 1896 Tykle Building.

**South Fifth Street (east side)**

**101 South Fifth Street** (contributing) (See photo 14 and 15.)

Simon Summers constructed the oldest extant commercial building in Middletown commercial district, in 1868. (The Ballard Funeral Home is located in the 1852 Strickler House. It was adapted for commercial use in the 1930s.) Summers operated a grain business from the entrance on the east side and a general store was run by Shoemaker, Gray and Company in the storefront. A. Levy was the proprietor of a dry goods store until O. P. Greenlee moved his business from the Welsh Hotel in 1909. After Simon Summers died, Greenlee bought the building in 1920 and was in business there until his death in 1946. Dilbert Fisher became the next owner of the "Summers" building in 1947. He moved Fireside Furnishings, Inc. from the Welsh Hotel into the storefront space. His wife, Twila and her sister Mrs. Lee Wood, sold hats

at The Hat Box in the east end space. Within four years, Fisher bought the I. O. R. M. building (105 - 107 S. Fifth Street) and vacated the Summers building to Charlie and Lola Tucker who opened Tucker's Furniture. A custom woodworking business owned by Danny Jacobs presently occupies the building.

The Summers building is located on a 26 foot by 105 foot section of the northwest corner of lot 1 block 2 of the Original Plat. This two-story, painted brick, gable front building has a three-bay front façade. The metal roofed gable building has open eaves and a generous overhang, especially on the facade. Wood brackets, similar to the brackets on David and Julia Strickler's 1852 home (118 South Fifth Street) are in place in a 1975 photo, but have since been removed. The second floor has three bays with brick arch lintels and limestone sills. The center bay is in-filled with brick; the lateral bays openings are covered with two recessed panel wood shutters, also present in a historical photograph. (See photo N.) The storefront has been altered with a fixed, wood shingled awning, wood covered cast-iron columns and clapboard covered bulkheads, sidelights and transom.

The north elevation fronts Locust Street and the building abuts sidewalk. The slope of the gable roof ends with modestly ornamented rafter tails on the open eave. The second story has five evenly spaced shuttered windows. The openings each have a segmental brick arch and limestone sill. The first-story has one brick in-filled opening. Two round windows are high on the first story, and centered on the wall. An air conditioner has been installed and in-filled with brick in a window opening. One double hung wood window with brick segmental arch lintel and limestone sill. The south elevation of the building was recently exposed due to loss of the adjacent I. O. R. M. building. The location of floor and ceiling joists are visible on the brick wall. The second floor has three openings with the same shutters and lintel as on the façade. The west window has a limestone sill; the remaining two have wood sills. There are no openings on the first floor; however two previous door openings at the east end have been filled with brick.

The east elevation has a second-story hipped roof extension. The roof steps down from the main building. The two second-story bays are occupied by wood double-hung windows with segmental arch lintels. The first story has a steel six-panel door fit inside the large original opening and reduced with wood, a limestone lintel and one stone step. The east elevation is obscured by overgrown vines. The south elevation has no openings; however the attachment locations of the floor and ceiling joists of the I. O. R. M. building are extant.

**North Fifth Street (east side)** (See photo 14.)

**102 N. Fifth Street** (contributing)

Frederick Tykle owned a frame building occupied by Hoover's Drug Goods (sic), Isaac and Joseph Groves Tin Shop and Mr. Dorn's tailor shop. In 1870, Tykle replaced it with a two-story unpainted brick business block. The first occupants were Terhune's Dry Goods (Terhune was Tykle's son-in-law and builder of the Masonic Building in 1899) and Scott's Stove & Tin store with tinnery Isaac and Joseph Groves doing the tinwork on the second floor. The south shops were an Opera Saloon on the first floor and on the second floor, a pool & billiard room. In 1884 and 1885, Griffis Brothers offered a full line of hardware, bar and strap steel and iron, English and American Cutlery, horse shoes and nails, mechanical farm and garden tools, pumps, churns, all in the north rooms. Miller and Tarkleson's Dry Goods and Gent's Furnishings specializing in boots and shoes occupied shops in 1890. The 1896 and 1902 Sanborn maps indicate a hardware store in the north space and a first floor saloon in the south space with a pool room upstairs. The 1914 map indicates a restaurant on the south side and a barber on the north side. The storefront was altered at least twice. A new bank, Middletown State Bank, opened in 1920 after the building was remodeled by Henry and Clarence (son) Brown. The middle stair was removed to enlarge the first floor space, and the east end of the basement was finished and a vault installed. George Tykle was one of the stockholders, as well as the seller of the building in which the bank was located. In 1925, the Middletown State Bank consolidated with the Farmers State Bank and vacated the Tykle Building.

With the exodus of the bank, it was remodeled for the Village Hall and Fire Department. An overhead garage door fronting North Fifth Street was installed so the fire truck could be stored in the north side of the building. Some window openings were infilled with brick, and the decorative cornice was removed above the storefronts. The fire department built a cement block garage on the east side of the building in 1963, and removed the garage door on North Fifth Street. The garage was used to store the fire trucks. Now, the entire building (except the garage) is residential with apartments on both the first and second floors.

The corner building's façade fronts Fifth Street, and the secondary south elevation fronts Locust Street. The location is 98 feet x 47 feet of the west end of Lot 1 Block 1 of the Original Plat. The brick building is two-stories with a seven-bay front façade. The corbelled brick cornice has a metal cap. Seven recessed panels in the attic level are largely decorative, but three have rectangular attic vents. A brick string course identified the top of the second floor. The second-story bays are narrower than the first-story bays. Three double-hung one-over-one windows with limestone lintels and sills are on each

side of the center bay. The clearly read center bay with a brick arch and hood has recessed brick infill. A brick string course delineates the change of stories. An overhead metal garage door occupies the two north bays, with a metal and glass door and transom in the third bay. The three bays are lower than the original openings and a single lintel was added in the gap. The brick piers are replaced as well. The next three bays are a single light fixed window with a limestone sill and brick infill below the sills. The original second-story stair location there is now a window. The south bay is a recessed entry one step above the sidewalk. The bricked stoop leads to a metal and glass door. An air conditioner protrudes toward street from the original transom.

The two-story south elevation sits at the sidewalk. The brick band at the lower attic level continues to the rear of the building, and accentuates the downward slope of the roof toward the rear (east) of the building. The second floor has four original openings. Three are tall narrow windows with a segmental arch and limestone sill. The first and second have a double hung window, the third is in-filled with brick. The third opening is the same width as the others, but is shorter. Paired one-over-one double-hung windows are shorter than the opening; the space above is in-filled with wood. The first floor has four openings. From the southwest corner, the west two are alterations and the east two are original. The first is a three-part window with two narrow double hung or casement windows flanking a fixed window. There is a limestone sill and wood or limestone lintel. The recessed door is two steps from the sidewalk. A small, high opening has been filled with brick. No lintel or sill is extant. Two bays very near the east end are original. The first one is a recessed entry with segmental arch and two steps. The fourth bay is a wood double-hung one-over-one window with segmental arch and limestone sill.

### **106 N. Fifth Street (contributing)**

On the heels of the Tykle family's third building success, the Tykle Building first occupied in 1896, Frederick's son George Tykle partnered with his brother-in-law John Terhune to construct a new brick building where Tykle previously owned a large two story frame building. The frame Union Drug Store was demolished in preparation for the brick three-story building. Initially the building was designed for two stories of retail tenants. A third story was added in an agreement with the Masons. The building became known as the Masonic Building complete with "Masonic Temple" signage above the third story rooms.

The first commercial occupant was Farrell's grocery. Over time, other markets were also in the Masonic Building: Eavey's Grocery, Ronald "Stub" Garman's Grocery, and Terry Bailey Grocery. In 1932, Tykle Hardware sold to Young & Frazier Hardware who in turn sold to Herbert Fadley and Wyatt Strickler in 1936. The name was changed to Middletown Hardware. Paul Sheddrick Jewelry was located in the front of the Hardware. The Masonic Lodge bought the building in 1934 and in 1971 Masonic Lodge vacated for a new building. In the 1970s, Jim Stum bought the building for his small engine repairs, garden tractor sales and service business. Other occupants were Thrift E Supermarket, which opened with enlarged floor space because the partition between the two lower rooms was removed. The Middletown News office located in the south storefront in 1999. The partition was replaced between the two first-floor retail spaces, and a photography studio is located in the north storefront. Center stairs lead to the second floor where the current owner's residence is located. The third floor is unoccupied. It is located in the Original Plat 30 x 60 feet off the north side of Lot 1 Block 1 and 17.4 feet off the southwest side of Lot 2 Block 1.

The height of this three-story brick building makes this the most imposing building in the commercial district, and the rising grade of the street exaggerates the building height. The three-bay front façade is capped with an ornate pressed metal cornice embellished with an acanthus leaf and swag frieze. The urn finial is extant on north corner pilaster; the finial is missing on south corner pilaster. The date is split between the two corners 18-99. The corbelled brick detailing the under cornice, an architectural detail repeated many times in the commercial district buildings, is slightly recessed from the full-height corner brick pilasters. The verticality is emphasized with the three recessed three bays creating the look of pilasters between the three bays. Each bay's paired wood double-hung third-story windows are topped with a transom, reinforcing the verticality. Limestone bands above and below the windows are intersected by the pilasters. A metal plate with the name "Masonic Temple" and the Masonic Emblem between the words is mounted above the center bay windows. Under the three, second floor large brick round arches windows are triple double-hung one-over-one windows with three-part fixed windows above. A stone band is the sill under the windows. The first story has large fixed windows, stone/brick bulkheads and panel-covered transoms. Two cast-iron columns that divide the building in thirds support the storefronts below a cast-iron lintel embellished with rosettes. The original windows curved toward the recessed middle third with three entry doors. Each steel door has divided (nine) light upper glazing and two raised panels below and double transoms above each door. Center door is to the upper floor stairway. The flanking doors are to the storefronts.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The date 1852 is derived from the construction date of the Strickler House, the oldest resource in the district while the date 1916 marks the end of the period of prosperity that came from the discovery of natural gas near Middletown and throughout east-central Indiana.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

**Period of Significance**

1852-1916

**Significant Dates**

1887

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Brown, Henry

Miller, O. L. (builder)

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The Middletown Commercial Historic District reflects the impact of the gas boom, the burst of economic activity following the discovery of natural gas in 1886, on east-central Indiana towns. The gas boom transformed this region from an agrarian area to a more industrialized one. As in other towns in the gas belt, Middletown's businessmen exploited the cheap energy to develop factories. The resulting influx of workers created a demand for more goods and services. Local businessmen built commercial buildings for the growing numbers of merchants and professionals, replacing smaller wood frame and brick buildings. As such, the area of significance is "Commerce" because it reflects Middletown's development as a center for local trade. The gas boom was a significant era in Indiana history, and Middletown is largely a product of that era. Therefore, the Middletown Commercial District is locally significant under National Register Criterion A. The building styles of the mid-to-late nineteenth century expressed economic optimism during the gas boom era, and confidence that it would continue. Middletown's Commercial Historic District retains a remarkable degree of original character with majority of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century downtown buildings intact. Two-thirds of the extant buildings were built during and shortly after this prosperous time in Middletown's history, and the majority of the commercial space is occupied. The district meets National Register Criterion C as a locally excellent example of mid-to-late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial architecture in an east-central Indiana gas boom town.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

Middletown arose from the Fall Creek Township, the seventh township organized in Henry County. The surrounding land was cultivated for wheat, corn, and fruit. Farms also had such livestock as cattle, sheep and hogs. The rolling hills were heavily timbered with oak, poplar, walnut and ash trees. Jacob Koontz built a home in what is now Middletown in 1828. Koontz platted the four-acre Original Plat in 1829. It consisted of a total of forty lots with ten lots on four blocks on the north and south sides of Locust Street and on Fifth Street one block north and south of Locust. The first lots were sold on Christmas Day 1829 for three to twenty dollars each. The location of Middletown, midway on a wagon path between Anderson and New Castle, inspired the village's name in 1832. Within the first three years, Middletown became an important agricultural center for the township. Commerce and trade commenced when in 1831 Joshua Willets, from Milton in Wayne County, Indiana, opened the first store on Block 2 Lot 3 in the Original Plat.

Located on a plain north of Fall Creek, water powered the mills. These early industries processed and profited from the natural resources and agricultural products in the region. Joining the sawmills (1836), gristmills (1839), flour mills and Liebhart-owned woolen mill (c.1848) were services such as a post office, blacksmith, tavern, inn, livery, and merchants offering food items and living necessities to support local residents as well as travelers and commerce. The town grew steadily. In 1831, the village of Middletown consisted of four log cabins, a tannery and two stores. Men who influenced and supported Middletown's growth settled there very early in its development. Chauncey H. Burr, a tanner, came to Middletown in 1830. In 1835 he was elected a Justice of the Peace, a position which he held until 1882. The first physician was Dr. Joseph Henry, a native of Philadelphia, who came in 1832. The first school teacher, McPherson, began lessons in 1833 in a log cabin west of the village.

Middletown was incorporated in 1840 through the efforts of Chauncey Burr. The population was 188 in the 1850 census. Businessmen who played an important role in pre-gas boom community development as well as development during the gas boom located to Middletown in the 1850s or before. An 1857 atlas map shows homes and businesses intermingled in the Original Plat. Among the names are Nimrod Elliot who moved from North Carolina in 1833 offering his skills as a builder, carpenter, contractor and school teacher; James D. Farrell who opened a grocery store in 1854; Captain Frederick Tykle, a carpenter and community leader, who moved to Middletown in 1855; and merchants Yount, Summers, and Showalter. Additions to the Original Plat bears many of these names: Burr, Yount, Summers, and Tykle.

The arrival of the Penn line railroad in 1856 brought more people, more conveniences and improved living conditions. Ownership of the line went through a succession of companies including the Logansport and Chicago Railway Company (1857), Cincinnati and Chicago Railroad Co. (1857), Cincinnati and Chicago Air Land Railway Company (1860) and the Pan Handle Railway Company (1868). Ultimately, the line connected Middletown to Richmond, Indiana and Chicago. Early roads, called turnpikes, which could be traveled for a fee, were constructed in the 1850s and 1860s and further expanded travel options. Articles of association for a turnpike or gravel road were filed on June 7, 1867.

Middletown Shareholders of the seven-and-a-quarter mile road listed in descending order of share value were Jasper Yount, Jacob and Levi Shoemaker, Horace and R. T. Summers, Simon and Lewis Summers, and Frederick Tykle. Fall Creek Township purchased the roads and made all road travel free by 1891. Rail and overland transportation encouraged progress of small industries and brought more people into Middletown. One of Middletown's earliest steam powered flour

mills was erected in 1858-59 by John Swope. The Cooper Shop was started to make barrels for the mills. Social development flourished once travel was less arduous. The Odd fellows were organized in 1851, and Masons in 1861. In 1871, the Middletown Fair was organized as an annual four-day event for the Henry, Madison and Delaware Counties Agricultural Society, and continued until 1931. By 1880, the population had increased to 606. "Memories, Dreams and Reflections of Middletown" listed 1884 businesses as general stores (3), groceries (3), bakery, drug stores (2), hardware, furniture, undertaking, hotel, livery stable, saddlery and harness maker, flour mill, saw mill, lumber yard, bank, attorney, physicians and printer. Just before the gas boom era began, four brick buildings currently occupied were erected by Summers (1868), Tykle (1870, 1873), David Stickler (1852 house), and John Hedrick (c.1880).

A particularly successful inventor was James Gronendyke, who patented "The Favorite" washer on August 15, 1882. The Favorite, sold all over the United States by Sears and Roebuck Company and Montgomery Ward, was ordered by rail car loads.

The pace of development escalated rapidly after the discovery of natural gas in Indiana. In April 1887, "The (Middletown) News" reported on a series of community meetings that were held in the Hedrick Block to discuss how Middletown could capitalize on this potential resource. The meetings resulted in the organization of the Middletown Gas Company. The officers were Frederick Tykle, president; Andy Miller, vice-president; G. L. Swain, secretary; W. L. Van Cleve, treasurer; additional members were E. L. Elliott, J.P. Shoemaker and Willis Wisehart. Stock of more than \$2,000 was raised at the meeting and an additional \$700 was raised from local investors in a matter of days. Mr. Cole, driller for Hess Brothers, found gas at 996 feet in May 1887. Andy Miller's drug store was the first business illuminated by gas. A board of trade was organized and successfully enticed businesses to come to Middletown. The board's first success was the Indiana Glass Factory that opened in 1890. Glass manufacturing took an enormous amount of fuel, and was the most frequently attracted industry to the gas belt. A handle factory opened in 1891 and was converted into a box factory in 1895. Other industries to take advantage of inexpensive operating costs were locally owned: Middletown Manufacturing, and Middletown Iron Works, Tin Plate and Rolling Mill, Murphy, Kuntz lumber mill (1893), and Ralya Saw Company (1899).

Middletown spread north and east of the Original Plat in the early to mid 1880s. "The Middletown News" in the January 29, 1886 edition said, there was "not an empty business room nor an empty dwelling in town". A builder-contractor advertisement soon appeared in the newspaper, suggesting construction was escalating. In the next decade, Indiana Glass Company platted lots near the factory on the west side of town to prepare for the anticipated influx of the factory workers' need of housing.

The prosperity of the gas boom lead to significant improvement of Middletown's infrastructure in the early 1890s. Dirt streets were improved with macadamized roads and plank sidewalks were installed in 1892. An 1890 fire destroyed two frame buildings (Cox and Mowery Meat Market and G. W. Jennings & Sons Shoe Shop) where the 1891 Hedrick Building now stands because there was no water readily available to fight the fire. Not coincidentally, two artesian wells and a pump were the first to be installed the commercial district in 1896, and Middletown's first volunteer fire department was formed after the installation of a fire hydrant at Locust and Fifth Street. The streets and sidewalks were graded, drastically lowering the elevation and leveling them in 1897. Middletown's first electric street lights were leased from Mrs. Welsh, who opened the Welsh Hotel in 1900. The first powered vehicle arrived in 1901, but hard-surface streets did not appear until 1914.

Telephone service was initially offered by Benjamin Davis in 1897. Davis' phone service, operated from his home at 127 North Fifth Street, had forty-four subscribers. The company moved to a new exchange building on Sixth Street in 1911 and took on the responsibility of operating the fire siren that was moved to that location. Turn of the century photographs show telephone poles along the north side of Locust Street. (See photo F.) Davis's sons Karl and Howe operated the company after their father's death. It was bought by Harry Kerlin and Harry Dibell in 1919, and to sold George Myers in 1922. The business passed to Max Hosea then to United Telephone Company, who sold it to Indiana Bell Telephone Company in 1956.

Commercial buildings were erected in Middletown during the gas boom to house businesses both long established and new. They were two-story brick buildings, ornamented with pressed metal cornices and columns and brick window hoods. The new buildings often replaced smaller one-story frame buildings. The buildings in Middletown were typical late nineteenth-century commercial buildings, much deeper than they were wide. To maximize the narrow front elevation, for both natural light and attracting customers, the storefronts were primarily glass. Large plate glass display windows were topped by transom windows. Retractable awnings allowed some control over the amount of natural light and heat. Cast-iron columns supported the storefront and the wall above. Offices, apartments, lodge rooms, and billiard rooms were above the storefronts. Stairways to the upper floor were often located in the front facades.

The 1891 (John) Hedrick Building (529 Locust) was the first building erected during the gas boom. The building has a reserved Italianate style. Tykle already owned two two-story brick buildings which included a hotel, grocery, drug store and hardware. He had a third building erected in 1896 at 512-514 Locust Street. The greatest burst of building construction came in 1899-1900.

The Druley building at 106 South Fifth Street replaced an earlier building on the site. The 1899 construction project occurred at the same time as the extension and remodeling of the Farmers Bank building (108 South Fifth Street) on the Druley's south side. At 106 North Fifth Street, Frederick Tykle's son-in-law Fred Terhune partnered with Tykle's son George Tykle to erect the only three-story building extant in the district, the Masonic Building (1899). The building replaced the frame one-story building of the Union Drug Store. The plans were for only a two-story building, however, the Masons accepted the offer to locate in the upper story of the building and specified a third story for their use. The style +pressed metal swag-embellished upper cornice. The Welsh Hotel opened on July 4, 1900. The "Welsh" as it was called, was designed by Mr. Kaufman of Richmond; he incorporated ideas of owner Anna D. Welsh into the design. The three-story brick building incorporated Romanesque Revival elements including a round tower on the northwest corner. The hotel had forty guest rooms and offered only the most modern amenities such as closets, bath, hot and cold water, electric lights and electric call bells. The entire third floor was occupied by Fall Creek Lodge #97 I. O. O. F. Mrs. Welsh was a savvy business woman planning not only for her hotel, but contributing to Middletown's appeal to visitors while improving the quality of life. She constructed Middletown's first light plant in 1899 because she wanted her hotel to have electric lights. She then leased functioning street lights to the Town of Middletown. After Mrs. Welsh's death, the hotel had several owners, and was converted to apartments in 1939. It was unfortunately demolished in 1940, and the Van Noy Theater was built on the site. The I. O. R. M. (Improved Order of Red Men) Building was between the Welsh and the Summers Building.

Two buildings with modest brick ornamentation were built in the early 1900's at the east edge of the commercial district. The (John) Davis Building was erected in 1900 on the south side of Locust Street at 465 and occupied by a printing business and a harness maker. A new implement building (472 Locust) was erected in 1902 for F. A. Wisheart and business partner A. S. Fisher, who had an adjacent black smith shop on the west side. The Rolling Mill and Tin Plate relocated to Elwood in 1903 because there was insufficient gas to run the furnaces. However, the final building of the gas boom era was constructed despite the first indications of decreasing gas reserves. The 1904 Merchant building (554 Locust) was a 105 foot wide two story brick building with four storefronts. The large Victorian brick home of the Summers family was dismantled and two small frame buildings were relocated to clear land for the new commercial building. Thus the construction of the Merchant Building completed the transition from a mixed commercial and residential district to an exclusively commercial district.

After much speculation and assiduous last minute planning, Middletown welcomed the Interurban on August 3, 1903. The tracks ran down the center of Locust Street, which was still a gravel surface bed. The Interurban line ran parallel on the north side of the Pan Handle Rail Road and operated between Anderson and Middletown. Increasing preference for automobile travel forced the closure of the Interurban service to Middletown on February 18, 1930.

Although the depletion of Middletown's natural gas caused Indiana Glass Company and other mills to close, the Murphy-Kuntz Lumber Mill continued doing business until 1969. The most successful business begun in the Middletown area was Liebhardt Mills, Inc. Johann Sebastian Liebhardt emigrated from Strasberg, Germany in the 1840s. He converted a water-powered gristmill on Pipe Creek into a woolen mill. The family retained some control over the company until 1998. Then named LMI, it was sold to the WestPoint Stevens Company of Dalton Georgia and had sales in excess of \$53 million. Products were licensed under Serta® and Jessica McClintock brand names.

The current appearance of downtown Middletown reflects both its gas boom heritage and subsequent economic slow down after the natural gas was depleted. Business continued to be somewhat profitable in Middletown. In 1911, a two-story three-bay building was demolished on the southwest corner of the Locust and Fifth streets for the expansion of the Farmers State Bank. In 1916 with Middletown's population at 1800, Frank Wisheart built a one-story brick office building on the north side of Locust Street (580 Locust). It was the last building in the commercial district until 1936 when Dr. Dragoo built a one-story office building on the site of Fisher's blacksmith shop. The 1950s saw the last flurry of building activity in the downtown. Ballard-Shirley remodeled the 1852 Strickler home (118 South Fifth Street) in 1952, expanding the building as well as their undertaking business. Middletown Cleaners (1950), and the Fire Department Garage (1963) were characteristic of the utilitarian concrete block and glass block design of the time period.

There are just two noticeable gaps in the streetscape. An overflow gravel parking lot for Ballard-Shirley Funeral Home was the site of the 1900 Welsh Hotel and the two-story brick I. O. R. M. building between the Welsh Hotel and the Summers Building that was demolished after a fire in 2001. A gap on the south side of east Locust Street between Middletown

Cleaners and the Davis Building in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century replaced four small one-story buildings on the 1914 and 1926 Sanborn maps.

Compared to other small towns that prospered during the gas boom, Middletown's commercial district is remarkably intact. The upper floors of most of the buildings retain their historic design and materials, with many examples of decorative brickwork, and pressed-metal window hoods and cornices. Some storefronts have been covered with wood or enclosed in brick or stone veneer; however many still have exposed cast-iron columns, pilasters, cornices and transoms.

Preservation efforts of the Town of Middletown brought back the historic nineteenth-century character of the 1891 Hedrick Block. Middletown retains the character and feel of a rural commercial hub. The majority of the storefronts are occupied with a wide range of business and services including a newspaper, hardware store, photography studio, tax preparation service, thrift shop, beauty shop, gift shop, attorney office, custom furniture maker, funeral home, auto repair shop, flower shop, business services center, reality office, apartments and two restaurants.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 065-409-21000 \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 3.04  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>625000</u>	<u>4434620</u>	3	<u>16</u>	<u>625210</u>	<u>4434580</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>16</u>	<u>625210</u>	<u>4434620</u>	4	<u>16</u>	<u>625000</u>	<u>4434580</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

Beginning at the northwest corner of the intersection of Locust and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets thence north along the east side of 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the northwest boundary of 594 Locust Street; thence east along the north boundaries of 594, 580, 554, 514-512 Locust Street, the north boundary of 105 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, crossing 5<sup>th</sup> Street, along the north boundary of 106 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 458 and 472 Locust Street to the northeast boundary of 472 Locust Street; thence south along the east boundary of 472 Locust Street to the south side of Locust Street; thence east along Locust Street to the northeast boundary of 465 Locust Street; thence south along 465 Locust Street to the southeast corner of the said property; thence west to the southwest boundary of 465 Locust street; thence north to the south property boundary of 101 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street; thence west along said property line crossing South 5<sup>th</sup> Street to the east side of South 5<sup>th</sup> Street; thence south along the west side of 5<sup>th</sup> Street 115 ft.; thence west to the west boundary of 118 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street; thence north to the north side of Locust Street; thence west along the north side of Locust Street to the point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property boundary includes that part of the Original Plat that is historically associated with the Middletown commercial development.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Judy Cowling

organization Cowling Preservations date 6/10/2008

street & number 504 S. Main Street telephone 765-661-6189

city or town Fairmount state IN zip code 46928

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

---

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Middletown  
**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana  
**Photographer:** Judy Cowling  
**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008  
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Looking west from the east end of the Middletown Historic District

1 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Middletown  
**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana  
**Photographer:** Judy Cowling  
**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008  
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Looking east from Sixth and Locust.

2 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Middletown  
**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana  
**Photographer:** Judy Cowling  
**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008  
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Looking south from the north end of the Middletown Historic District

3 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Middletown

**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Looking north from the south end of the Middletown Commercial Historic District

4 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Middletown

**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Looking southwest from the northeast corner of Fifth and Locust.

5 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Middletown

**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Looking east at west end of Locust Street

6 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Middletown

**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Locust Street at Fifth Street looking east from southeast corner  
7 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Middletown

**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** North façades on Locust Street looking southeast  
8 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Middletown

**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** North façades and north side elevation, looking southwest  
9 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Middletown

**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** East façades, looking west-northwest from parking lot east side of  
South Fifth Street  
10 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Middletown  
**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana  
**Photographer:** Judy Cowling  
**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008  
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** South façade, looking North  
11 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Middletown  
**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana  
**Photographer:** Judy Cowling  
**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008  
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** East façades, and south façades looking northwest from south side of west Locust Street  
12 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Middletown  
**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana  
**Photographer:** Judy Cowling  
**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008  
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** West and south elevations looking northeast from the west side of South Fifth Street  
13 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Middletown  
**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Henry County, Indiana  
County and State

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** West façade looking southeast from the southwest corner of South Fifth Street at Locust Street.

14 of \_15\_.

**Name of Property:** Middletown Commercial Historic District

**City or Vicinity:** Middletown

**County:** Henry **State:** Indiana

**Photographer:** Judy Cowling

**Date Photographed:** 6/13/2008

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** East façades and North elevation from west side of North Fifth Street

15 of \_15\_.

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**Property Owner:**

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

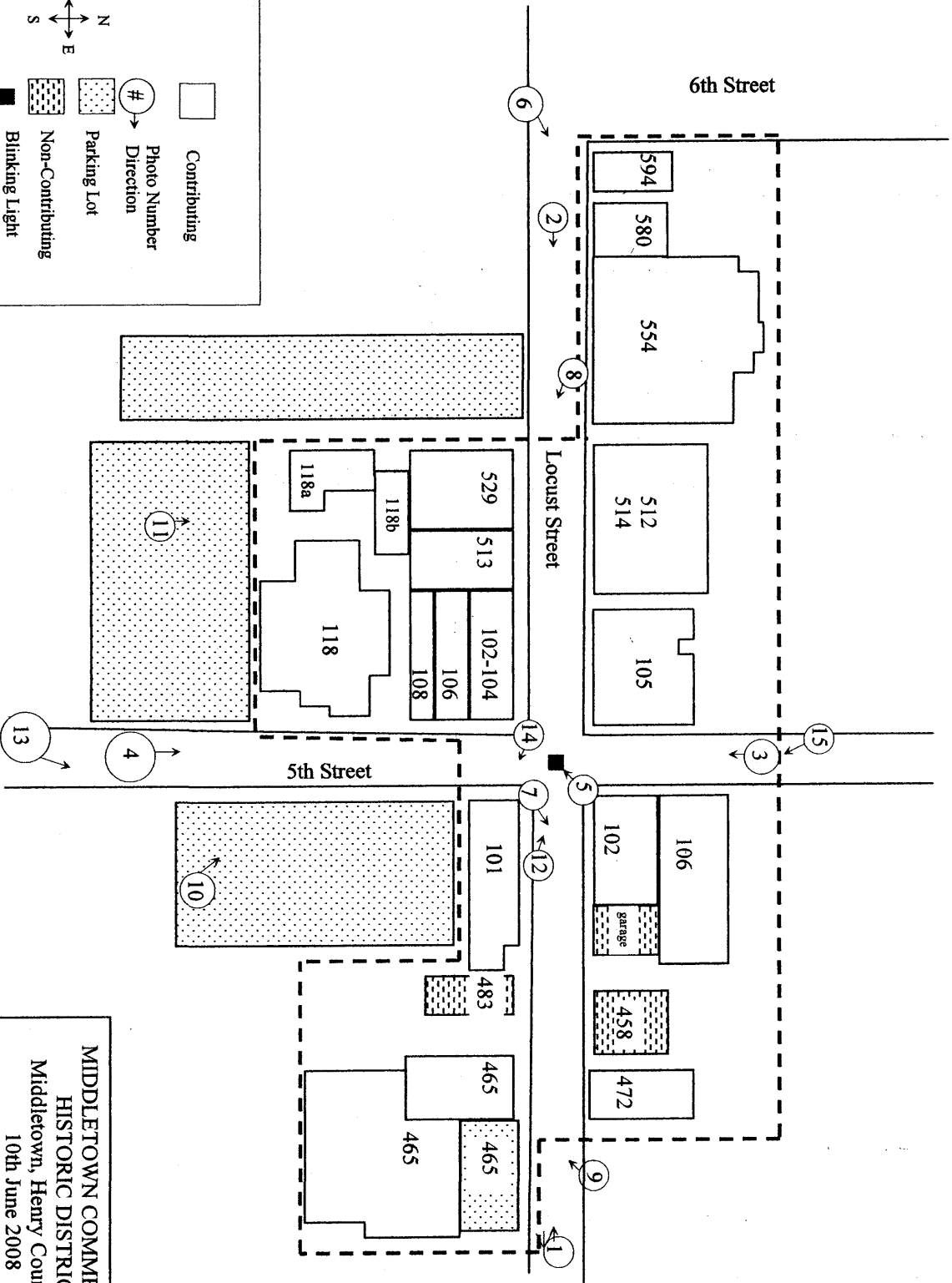
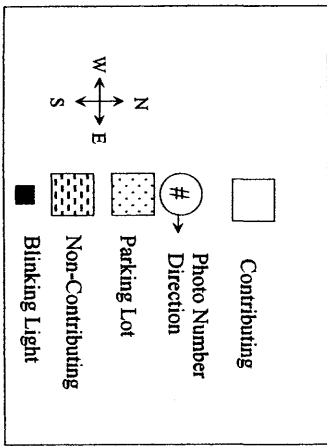
name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



MIDDLETOWN COMMERCIAL  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 Middletown, Henry County, IN  
 10th June 2008



Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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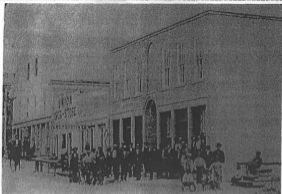


Photo A: 1. North Fifth Street at Locust Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1875  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. West facades on North Fifth Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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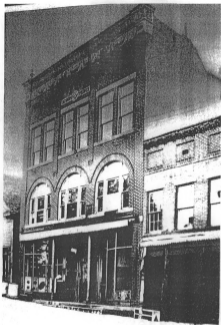


Photo B: 1. North Fifth Street at Locust Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1896  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. West facades on East side of North Fifth Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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- Photo C:
1. South and North Fifth Street.
  2. Henry County, Indiana.
  3. Unknown
  4. c. 1898
  5. Middletown Historical Society
  6. West facades on East side South and North Fifth Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

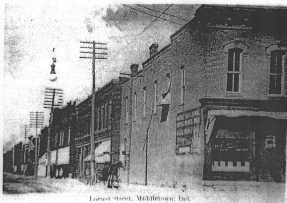
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Photo D: 1. Locust Street west of Fifth Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1905  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. North and south facades on Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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Locust Street, Middletown, Ind.

- Photo E: 1. Locust Street west of Fifth Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1910  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. Looking northwest on Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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Photo F: 1. Locust Street at Sixth Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1913  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. Looking east on Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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Photo G: 1. Photo Collage of 1965 Sesquicentennial.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. 1965  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. Various view of Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
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- Photo H: 1. Locust Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1960  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. South facade on north side of Locust Street.



Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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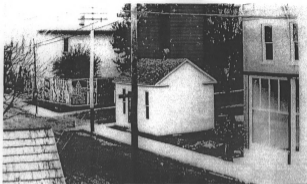


Photo I: 1. Locust Street at Sixth Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1904  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. Southeast facade on north side of Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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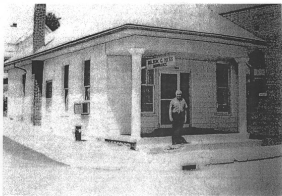


Photo J: 1. Locust Street at Sixth Street  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1963  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. Southwest facade on north side of Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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Photo K: 1. Locust Street east of Fifth Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. pre-1939  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. South facades on north side of Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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Photo L: 1. Locust Street east of Fifth Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1970  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. Southwest facades on north side of Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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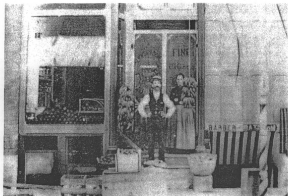


Photo M: 1. Locust Street east of Fifth Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1895  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. North facade on south side of Locust Street.

Middletown Commercial Historic District  
Henry County, Indiana

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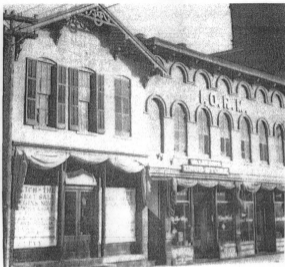


Photo N: 1. South Fifth Street.  
2. Henry County, Indiana.  
3. Unknown  
4. c. 1905  
5. Middletown Historical Society  
6. West facades on east side of South Fifth Street.