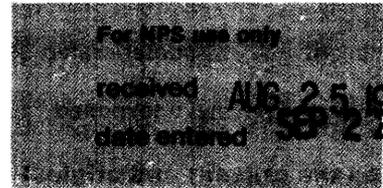


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



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

1. Name

historic New Jersey Building

and/or common (Globe News Building, Opera House Drug Store)

2. Location

NE corner of Tower Avenue and Belknap Avenue

street & number 1422 - 32 Tower Avenue ^{AND} 1705 - 23 Belknap Avenue not for publication

city, town Superior vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state WI code 55 county Douglas code 031

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Richard Unterberger & Thomas Unterberger

street & number 1222 E. 7th St. & 1110 Harrison Avenue

city, town Superior vicinity of state WI 54880

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Douglas County Courthouse

street & number 1313 Belknap Avenue

city, town Superior state WI 54880

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state WI

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located at the corner of two of Superior's most important commercial avenues, the New Jersey block is a two-story commercial building in the Victorian Romanesque style, consisting of retail storefronts on the first floor and two groups of apartments on the second floor. Built in 1889¹, the massive rectangular-plan building with load bearing walls exhibits a polychromatic exterior surface of smooth red brick and rough cut brownstone. Round arches, standard features of the Victorian Romanesque style, are used for the first floor doorways and, on the second floor, above each rectangular window opening. Long ago altered from a facade of brownstone piers and wide storefront windows in 1914-15, the first story is entirely of rough-cut brownstone and the second story walls are constructed of smooth red brick courses, with rough-cut brownstone string courses, piers, window sill courses and lintel archivolt moldings, and coping stones. Decorative elements on the first floor include carved foliated details on the doorway arch and reticulated projections, set off by brick piers and corbel tables, that add variety to the massing. An alley runs behind the building parallel to Belknap Avenue. The east wall abuts a modern one-story retail store where the Opera House once stood. The New Jersey block has a basement with a dirt floor, a foundation of concrete and stone, and a small rectangular court in the rear. The flat roof is pierced by skylights, at present in poor condition.

Although the tall rectangular second-story windows vary in width, all the windows grouped ribbon-like in pairs or triplets, are of the same height and all are capped by brownstone lintels with impostes below, and supported on a continuous brownstone sill. In addition, counterthrusting red brick arches, consisting of a brownstone archivolt molding and red brick voussoirs, also in pairs or triplets, cap each second story window above the lintel courses. The Belknap Avenue facade consists of fourteen sash windows with three doorways and the Tower Avenue facade consists of eighteen sash windows with two doorways. The opening of each arch is filled with reticulated red brickwork disposed alternately in a decorative herringbone pattern. The second story wall is completed by a brick corbel table and topped by brownstone coping.

The building's foremost corner is accentuated by a square two-story projection set off by pilasters and a corbel table, from which the (secondary) Belknap and (primary) Tower Avenue facade extend. Each of these dissimilarly arranged facades is in turn accentuated by differently scaled projections above doorways. On the Belknap Avenue side, the central original arched doorway is intact, consisting of rough-cut brownstone, stepped above to the left to join the single exterior chimney that arises above. The foliated impostes survive in excellent condition. A second brownstone arched entry, smaller in scale, remains intact on the far east end. The rest of the Belknap Avenue first floor facade, as expected, has been altered according to changing commercial storefront fashions. The area occupied by the Globe News, formerly the Opera House Drugstore, exhibits early panelled wood storefront elements while the rest of the facade, occupied by a vision center and a Goodwill Store, has been altered from the original first-story lintel down, consisting primarily of pink brick and false half-timbering. Shown in historic photographs, the awnings and the sign for the Globe News add to the historic character of the building.

(continued)

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

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



New Jersey Building, Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin
Continuation sheet New Jersey Building Item number 7

The Tower Avenue facade, the longer of the two, is occupied now by a florist and shows more substantial alteration beyond the Globe News, including the same pink brick and false half-timbered storefront as well as the florist shops aluminum shingled shed roof. The Tower Avenue facade has had most of its brownstone doorways removed. The second story remains in excellent condition on the exterior, with the interior again substantially altered to accommodate modern apartments. Although the original stairways, wainscoting, skylights and some Eastlake style fireplace mantles survive, the condition of the upper floor is fair, due to the number of alterations for the apartments.

8. Significance

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

Date of construction:

Specific dates 1889-1892¹ 1914-15² **Builder/Architect** Land & River Improvement Company¹

(alteration) Period of significance: 1889-1900

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

One of Superior's last significant commercial blocks to remain largely intact, the New Jersey building, completed in 1889, is both architecturally and historically significant. The building possesses integrity of style and materials and is architecturally significant as the best surviving local example of a brownstone commercial block designed in the Victorian Romanesque style. The New Jersey building is historically significant in Superior for its association with the Land and River Improvement Company of New York, which expansively funded Superior's immense commercial growth in the late 1880's and 1890's.³ The company's leading role in Superior's commercial development is marked by the survival of only a few of its many late 19th century buildings in downtown Superior. The New Jersey block survives with greater integrity than any other of its type and represents an unusually fine and rare example of the Victorian Romanesque style in Superior.

Architecture

The New Jersey building is architecturally significant as the best surviving example in Superior of a commercial building in the Victorian Romanesque style. Superior's rapid economic growth and urban expansion can be traced through the history of the Land and River Improvement Company's residential and commercial structures, many of which were designed in prominent architectural styles such as the Romanesque, Renaissance or "Moresque." The New Jersey building, designed by an unknown architect working for the Land and River Improvement Company, was completed in 1889 in the Victorian Romanesque style. This costly and prestigious architectural style, consisting of polychromatic and contrasting wall surfaces of pressed red brick and Lake Superior brownstone, variously sized rectangular windows with decorative arches above filled with reticulated herringbone brickwork, rock-faced brownstone sill and lintel courses, coping stones, archivolt moldings, and foliated details, is appropriate for the prominent location held by the New Jersey building. The Victorian Romanesque style expressed the 19th-century sense of permanence and urban significance in an architectural language used often in established cities such as Chicago or New York.

The Land and River Improvement Company and other development companies had numerous commercial blocks built in a variety of architectural styles. Now demolished, the Grand Opera House and the West Superior Hotel once stood near the New Jersey building. Of the company's other buildings designed in the Renaissance Revival or Romanesque styles, the New York, Massachusetts, Maryland, Minnesota, and Empire blocks also stand on Tower Avenue. The Massachusetts building of the Renaissance Revival style, has had most of its windows and the entire first floor altered. The similar New York building has no architectural

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Anonymous article, "Superior's History Told By Business 'Blocks'." The Superior, Wisconsin Evening Telegram February 5, 1934. p.3, cols. 2-8.
 Flower, Frank A. The Eye of the Northwest (1890)
 Superior Evening Telegram, A Souvenir of Superior (West Superior, 1891).

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less Than 1.0

Quadrangle name Superior, Wis.-Minn. (7.5')

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	1 5	5 6 8 5 5 0	5 1 7 4 3 4 0	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is comprised of lots 19, 20, 21, and 22, Block 142, West Superior Fourth Division, Superior, Wisconsin.

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Steve Sennott

organization Northwest Regional Planning Commission date April 1983

street & number 302 Walnut Street telephone N/A

city or town Spooner state Wisconsin 54801

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

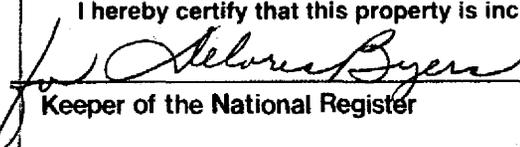
date August 9, 1983

title Director, Historic Preservation Division, Spooner

For NPS use only

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

date 9/22/83


 Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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



New Jersey Building, Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin

Continuation sheet New Jersey Building Item number 8 Page 1

integrity left at all. Possessing greater integrity, the Empire building stands at Tower Avenue and North 12th Street and is the closest in style to the New Jersey building. Nonetheless, many of its windows have been blocked in with modern replacements and the first story storefronts have been severely altered. None of these surviving buildings retain the architectural integrity and fine state of preservation that equals the New Jersey building, thus making it significant for its rarity in Superior as the best surviving example of a Victorian Romanesque style commercial building.

Commerce

The New Jersey building is historically significant for its association with the Land and River Improvement Company whose extensive investment efforts spurred on Superior's late 19th century commercial development. Leading businessmen and early officials of Superior believed in the late 1870's that their location on Lake Superior would help them to secure the most prominent role in Great Lakes shipping. By 1883, the Land and River Improvement Company of New York City had formed to purchase and develop the Harbor property to meet these economic goals.⁴ By 1890, approximately six-hundred-fifty commercial and residential properties had been built by this development company whose financial and property holdings were unsurpassed in northwest Wisconsin.⁵

Their vast commercial building program is survived by approximately five examples, the most significant of which is the New Jersey Building.

The Land and River Improvement Company was a New Jersey corporation organized in 1883 with 4,000 acres by General John H. Hammond of St. Paul, Minnesota who foresaw the commercial potential of Superior's harbor. This company was the result of earlier efforts by Hammond and about ten subscribers who founded the Hammond Syndicate. The company's headquarters were in New York City and a branch office was in Superior, Wisconsin. The company was organized according to New Jersey laws which gives the nominated building its name.⁶ The Land and River Improvement Company sold vast tracts of its Superior property to make possible the commercial development of the Great Northern, the Northern Pacific and other railroads coming to Superior as well as the City's major industries such as the West Superior Iron and Steel Company. In addition, the company donated land for Superior's Streets and Avenues and dredged the harbor for shipping activity.

By the late 1880's, the Improvement Company had turned its attention to the establishment of a new commercial center for the city, located on Tower Avenue between Broadway and Belknap streets, well south of the original commercial district. The company interested a broad spectrum of eastern and regional businessmen in investing in the construction of major commercial blocks, often named after the state associated with the financial backers. The New Jersey Block was the first such commercial block, and its construction turned the isolated intersection of Tower and Belknap Avenues into the energetic focal point of Superior.

(continued)

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

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

New Jersey Building, Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin

Continuation sheet

New Jersey Building

Item number 8

Page 2

The New Jersey building was built at the beginning of Superior's boom period in the late 1880's and early 1890's and was one of the most expensive commercial projects executed by the Land and River Improvement Company in 1889 at a cost of \$50,000. The first business in the corner storefront was Calhoun and Company which operated there until 1892, when the Opera Drug Store opened. The New Jersey building is historically significant for its association in the 1890s with this pioneering land development company's role in the commercial growth of Superior, Wisconsin.

Footnotes

- 1 Anonymous article, "Superior's History Told By Business 'Blocks'." The (Superior, Wisconsin) Evening Telegram, 5 February 1934; p.3, c. 2-8
- 2 Mercantile appraised Card, City of Superior, Wisconsin
- 3 Superior Evening Telegram, A Souvenir of Superior (West Superior, 1891) p. 119 and 127.
- 4 Anonymous article, "Superior's History Told By Business 'Blocks'." The (Superior, Wisconsin) Evening Telegram, 5 February 1934; p. 3, c. 2-8
- 5 Superior Evening Telegram, A Souvenir of Superior (West Superior, 1891) p.118, 127
- 6 Arthur Roberts "Land Speculation in Superior" (Duluth, 1969) Copy of typewritten manuscript in Superior Public Library of paper given to Douglas County Museum Annual Meeting
- 7 Frank A. Flower, The Eye of the Northwest (1890) p.188