

1 City, Village or Town: BELOIT ✓		County: ROCK ←	Surveyor: Richard P. Hartung	Date: July, 1981	Street Grand, East
Street Address: 822 East Grand Avenue ✓			Legal Description: See Addendum	Acreage: 0.375	
Current Name & Use: Church of St. Thomas the Apostle		Current Owner: St. Thomas Catholic Church			Number 822
Film Roll No. RO-85 *RO-118	Affix Contact Prints		Current Owner's Address: Same		
Negative No. 31, 32 *1			Special Features Not Visible In Photographs: UTM: Zone 16 Easting: 333360 Northing: 4707000 USGS Beloit Quadrangle/Scale: 1:24,000		
Facade Orient. N			Interior visited? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		

2 Original Name & Use: (preferred) ✓ Church of St. Thomas the Apostle (Beloit FMMA)	Source A	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source	Town
Dates of Construction /Alteration 1885	Source A					
Architect and/or Builder: J. J. Egan, Chicago	Source A					Range

3 Architectural Significance <input type="radio"/> Represents work of a master <input type="radio"/> Possesses high artistic values <input checked="" type="radio"/> Represents a type, period, or method of construction <input type="radio"/> Is a visual landmark in the area <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <input type="radio"/> None	4 Historical Significance <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with lives of significant persons <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with significant historical events <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with development of a locality <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <input checked="" type="radio"/> None	Section Map Name City Engineer's
Architectural Statement: SEE CONTINUATION SHEET	Historical Statement: SEE CONTUNATION SHEET	

5 Sources of Information (Reference to Above) A George Fliss, Editor, <u>One Hundred Twenty-Five Years of Faith, 1976, n.p.</u>	6 Representation in Previous Surveys <input type="radio"/> HABS <input type="radio"/> NAER <input checked="" type="radio"/> WIHP <input type="radio"/> NRHP <input type="radio"/> landmark <input type="radio"/> other: _____	Map Code CE 85/31
B	7 Condition <input checked="" type="radio"/> excellent <input type="radio"/> good <input type="radio"/> fair <input type="radio"/> poor <input type="radio"/> ruins	
C	8 District: _____ <input type="radio"/> pivotal <input type="radio"/> contributing <input type="radio"/> non-contributing initials: _____ date: _____	
D	9 Opinion of National Register Eligibility <input checked="" type="radio"/> eligible <input type="radio"/> not eligible <input type="radio"/> unknown <input type="radio"/> national <input type="radio"/> state <input checked="" type="radio"/> local initials: RH	
E		
F		

ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT:

Description: The Church of St. Thomas the Apostle is a rectangular gabled structure with a corner bell tower, built of cream brick walls with smooth stone trim and wooden porches. The pyramidal spire of the square tower reaches one hundred fifty-five feet above ground and a canopied entry, with ornamental gable, leads to the vestibule. The simple massing underscores the heaviness and solidity of the structure rather than the delicacy of the Gothic detail. That detail, however, is seen in the pointed arched openings, the tracery in circular and rose windows, buttresses capped with stone trim, brick corbelling under the eaves, and pyramidal pinnacles. The tower and pinnacles have gablets. But nowhere is the ornament either lacy or light. Even the porches of St. Thomas feature the heavy and bold woodwork associated with the Stick style (itself based on Gothic Revival precedents), complete with brackets, braces, and bargeboards. The interior auditorium (measuring fifty-five feet wide by one hundred eighteen feet long with a ceiling thirty-four feet high) features an arcade of pointed arched windows with stained glass. Tracery divides the windows into paired arches below sexfoils. The sanctuary is dominated by a round chancel arch and an elaborate stained glass altar window with arched and sexfoil tracery. The vaulted ceiling is supported by wooden trusses and divided into panels. The panels are ornamented with paintings commissioned in 1976. The pews are arranged in six rows with an aisle on either side and a large double aisle down the center of the room. In addition, several stained glass windows ornament the auditorium. The rectory and convent buildings (which share the parcel) do not possess architectural significance and are not nominated.

Significance: The Church of St. Thomas the Apostle, built in 1885-1886 on the site of the first permanent Catholic Church in Beloit, is architecturally significant as the finest example of late Victorian ecclesiastical architecture in the city, reflecting a free handling of Gothic detail and sensitivity to materials. The interior auditorium features stained glass windows and a vaulted ceiling supported by wooden trusses, creating a significant interior space. J. J. Egan of Chicago was consulted for the architectural plans. The structure was erected by Marshall and Sweet, masons; Cummingham Brothers, carpenters; and A. S. Jackson, stonecutter, all of Beloit. The rectory and convent buildings share neither the architectural character nor the historical associations of the church and thus are excluded from the nomination.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT:

The Church of St. Thomas the Apostle has been the historic spiritual home of Beloit's oldest Catholic parish and mother church for all subsequent Catholic churches in the city. Built on the ruins of the historic Stone Church--the first permanent Catholic church in Beloit, which burned in December, 1884--the present edifice was completed after an intensive fund raising campaign led by the indefatigable Reverend M. J. Ward. Father Ward himself relinquished some of his duties to engage in a long series of temperance lectures in an attempt at building the church fund. Eventually some \$15,000 was raised. By June of 1886, the church was formally opened and dedicated.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT (continued):

In the intervening century, St. Thomas has served as a center for Catholic life in the community. Although the original parishioners were largely Irish, the church membership grew to embrace members of all Beloit ethnic groups. From the construction of the church until his death, Father Ward was the controlling influence and the physical symbol of the church's role in the community. A large and engaging man with a flowing beard, Ward not only led the construction of the church, he also campaigned actively against alcohol, became an adviser to civic leaders, established a Catholic hospital in 1903 (located in a house on the corner of Park Avenue and Broad Street) and closely supervised the physical and spiritual evolution of the parish. Although new parishes were established in Beloit shortly after the turn of the century, St. Thomas remained the most influential Catholic church. Father Ward died in 1915 after thirty-two years as pastor, but in 1932, Father Thomas O'Reilly began a pastorate that was to last thirty-five years, and the role of St. Thomas in the community did not diminish. (A)

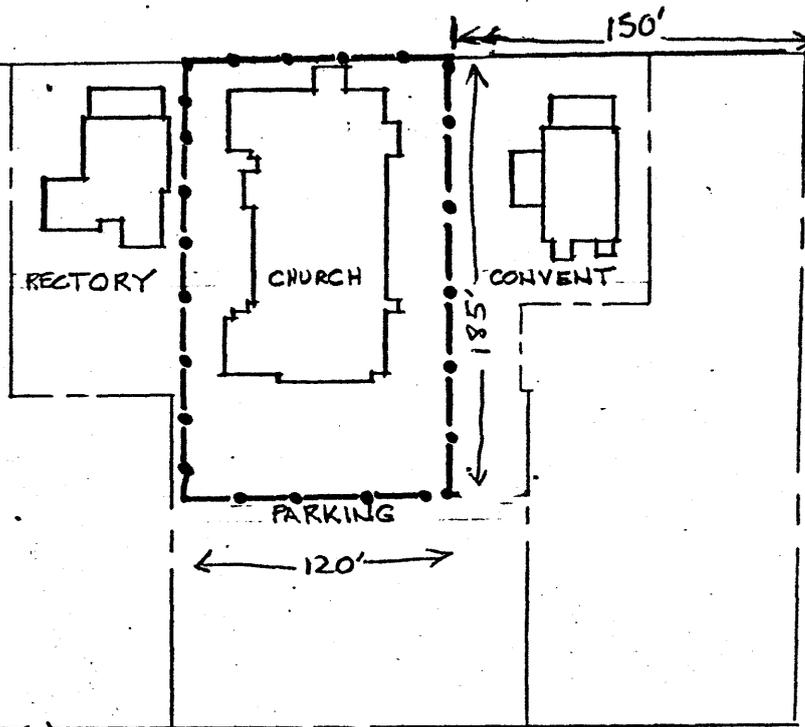
ADDENDUM

Legal Description: Lot 5, excluding the west 1 foot, Lot 6 and the west quarter of Lot 7, Lots 11, 12, 13 and part of Lot 10, Block 71, Original Plat.

Verbal boundary description of nominated property: The nominated property is a rectangular shaped plot beginning at a point approximately 150' directly west of the southwest corner of the intersection of East Grand Avenue and Park Avenue, then proceeding westerly approximately 120', then turn 90° south and proceed southerly for approximately 185', then turn east 90° and proceed easterly approximately 120 feet, then turn northerly 90° and proceed northerly approximately 185' until point of beginning. Said nominated property is located within the above legal description, City of Beloit, but excludes other buildings on the same parcel.

HORACE WHITE PARK

EAST GRAND AVENUE



PARK AVENUE

BROAD STREET

CHURCH of ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

822 EAST GRAND AVENUE

BELOIT, WI.

SCALE 1" = 80'

N



•—•—• = boundary of nominated property