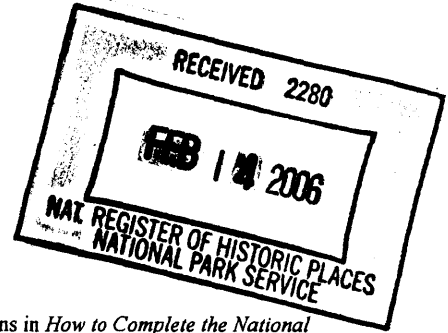


207



United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Greenfield School

Other names/site number Garfield School, Fifth District School.

2. Location

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| street & number | 8405 West National Avenue | N/A | not for publication |
| city or town | West Allis | N/A | vicinity |
| state Wisconsin | code WI | county Milwaukee | code 079 |
| | | | zip code 53227 |

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _ nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William A. Stevens _____ *Feb 9, 2006* _____
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _ meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Greenfield School

County Milwaukee

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain):

Edson H. Beall

3/29/06

[Signature]

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)
 district
 structure
 site
 object

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

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> noncontributing |
| 1 | buildings |
| | sites |
| | structures |
| | objects |
| 1 | 0 total |

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

N/A

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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Limestone

walls Brick

roof Shingle

other Stone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Greenfield School
Name of Property

County Milwaukée
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Education

Period of Significance

1887 - 1923

Significant Dates

1887 - 1923

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Schnetzky, Herman P.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Greenfield School
Name of Property

County Milwaukee
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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 #WI-322
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State Agency
 - Federal Agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other Internet
- Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 417069E 4762368N
 Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| name/title | Daniel O'Keefe | date | July 30, 2005 |
| organization | | telephone | 414/259-0646 |
| street & number | 1618 S. 115 th Ct., #309 | zip code | 53214 |
| city or town | West Allis | state | WI |

Greenfield School
Name of Property

County Milwaukee
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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 Internet
- Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 417069E 4762368N
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| name/title | Daniel O'Keefe | date | July 30, 2005 |
| organization | | telephone | 414/259-0646 |
| street & number | 1618 S. 115 th Ct., #309 | zip code | 53214 |
| city or town | West Allis | state | WI |

Greenfield School
Name of Property

County Milwaukee
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|------------------|---------------|
| name/title | Mayor Jeannette Bell | date | July 30, 2005 |
| organization | City of West Allis | telephone | 414/302-8290 |
| street&number | City Hall, 7525 West Greenfield Avenue | zip code | 53214 |
| city or town | West Allis | state | WI |

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

Greenfield School

West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Located on the southwest corner of the busy arterial streets of 84th Street and National Avenue, the Greenfield School stands next to a cemetery. The building, which stands as a local landmark at the top of a south facing slope, is now part of a city park with a large water tower, gazebo, landscaped green space, and tennis courts. The park also is the home of places of historical interest with the Greenfield School housing the displays and research library of the West Allis Historical Society. Near Greenfield School is a one room log school house available to the public. A winding concrete path takes interested walkers to short written plaques with descriptions of an aspect of West Allis history. The nonGreenfield School structures are outside of the nominated boundary.

The above grade limestone foundation, laid out in a square footprint, supports the one and one half story building. Load bearing cream city brick make up the walls decorated with a low level rough limestone beltcourse. The brick was chemically cleaned in 1971. Tall four over four windows are featured on all four sides. White aluminum combination storm windows were installed on all windows in 1985. The roofline features two east-west gables intersected by one north-south gable. The roof was insulated and replaced in 1980. A bell tower with its square belfry topped with a steep, pyramidal roof and flared eaves sits along the ridge of the northernmost east to west roof line towards the main façade. Originally burned in a fire, the bell tower was replaced, and an 800 pound antique bell of the same era was donated to the school house in 1973. A few feet south of the bell tower is a brick chimney.

Classic Romanesque features distinguish the north, main façade of the building. The deeply recessed, arched main entrance, a group of three arched windows in the north facing gable, the presence of foliate carvings at each recessed level of the entry way, as well as a heavy emphasis on the overall mass rather than decorative detail are examples of the style. A pair of four over four windows and two basement windows on each side of the entrance gives a sense to symmetry to the main façade. The two pane basement windows feature plain metal grills. There is a single window on each side of the extended part of the main façade. The east facing window is a full sized with four over four panes. The bottom one half of the west facing window has been replaced with a diaper, or woven brick pattern.

The east and west facades are essentially identical repeating the Romanesque details of groups of three arched windows and finials along the gables. Along the top of each of window in the groups of three are voussoirs formed in a curve by vertical bricks wedged together in contrast to the horizontal brick of the rest of the building. Near the apex of each gable is a narrow vertical indentation connected at right angles with a horizontal line. A beltcourse connects the bottom of the angles of the gables and a beltcourse acts as a continuous sill along the bottom of the windows around the exterior walls of the building. The finial at the top of each corner of each gable is an orb on top of a vertical receptacle. The bottom half of one east façade window was replaced with a diaper, or woven brick pattern. The most southern window on the west facade was expanded into a full door when the facility was used as maintenance facility for the City of West Allis.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Greenfield School

West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 2

The only façade without gables, the rear or south façade is the least complex in terms of architectural detail. Five windows highlight the façade. One more window would have completed a symmetric design feature, but one window has been bricked over. A handicap ramp and entrance was added on the western corner in 1980.

The interior of the building features two floors. The basement is used for historical displays with a room set aside for historical research. Bathrooms and utility rooms line the west wall. The floor is poured concrete and the walls are limestone. The bathrooms, utility room and the research room floors are tiled.

The first floor consists of two small rooms on each side of the entrance. Two large classrooms, separated by folding doors at the rear of the room, complete the rest of the floor. When the building was first constructed, it contained two classrooms. Two additional rooms were soon set apart to accommodate more grade levels within the same building. Currently, three of the rooms are used for historical displays. One is used as a volunteer room. Original tongue in groove wainscoting covers the interior walls. Paneled doors grace the main entrance and the different rooms. Oak floors in the hallway and maple floors in the main classrooms are original to the building. Tile was put in the small class rooms at the northern part of the building.

The building was constructed in 1887 and was used a school until 1923 when the school district stored and maintained equipment there, and used the facility for technical teaching. Other organizations around West Allis used the building as a greenhouse, Civil Defense Office, and as a temporary home for the offices of a local hospital. Since 1968, the West Allis Historical Society has restored, cleaned and brought the structure back to full service.¹

Continuation of National Register of Historic Places

¹ Community Survey Form, Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; and Penny Murn, "Garfield School Building,: Request for Determination of Eligibility, West Allis Historical Society, 3-4.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 1

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Statement of Significance

The Greenfield School is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under *Criterion C: Architecture* as a fine example of a schoolhouse type containing elements of Richardsonian Romanesque style. Built in 1887, the school features such Romanesque traits as a deeply recessed arched door, grouped arched windows, foliate carving of capitols, brackets and finials, and an emphasis on mass instead of decorative detail. The school is also eligible under *Criterion A: Education* as an example of the transition in education techniques from simple one-room schoolhouses to the complex institutional facilities that developed in the early twentieth century. The original two and later four-room schoolhouse allowed students to be taught in separate grades where teachers could more carefully adapt class work to each age group and more successfully meet the skill levels of the students. The State of Wisconsin offered funding for schools that adopted the grade level approach of education. The period of historical significance of the school is from 1887 to 1923. It begins with the construction of the building and ends in the year it ceased to function as a regular school. The building retains its original masonry, decorative exterior features, tongue and groove wainscoting, paneled doors, and maple and oak floors. The building, situated at the top of south approaching rise, stands as a century old landmark.²

Historical Context

History of West Allis

The first settlers, mostly Yankees and a few French Canadians, arrived in the 1830s, attracted by fertile soil and proximity to Milwaukee. German settlers arrived soon after and went into farming. The settlement of Honey Creek, so named for the presence of thirteen beehives along its shoreline, became the first village in the area. Inhabitants included a small number of houses, a blacksmith shop, sawmill, post office, two churches, and a log schoolhouse.³

In 1880, the area changed dramatically when the Chicago-NorthWestern Railroad built a train line to Madison, Wisconsin. The North Greenfield depot was built along this train route and became a hub of commercial activity for the area. The name, North Greenfield, eclipsed the name of Honey Creek as the identity for the area. A plat was recorded in 1887 and the village prospered.⁴ The *Milwaukee Journal* in

² *Ibid.*

³ Reverend J. H. Burbach, "Historical Review of West Allis' (West Allis, WI, 1927) 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2

Greenfield School

West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

March of 1893 described North Greenfield as "concededly one of the very prettiest and most convenient of Milwaukee's many residence suburbs."⁵

A watershed event on December 9, 1891 was the purchase of land from E.C. McFetridge by the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society. The land became the permanent home to the annual Wisconsin State Fair. Three years later, T.J. Fleming, president of the state fair, convinced the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad to carry people from Milwaukee to the state fair. He also convinced the president of the Milwaukee Streetcar Company to build a line to the fairgrounds. Plentiful transportation, along with fertile soil and the absence of wetlands, or standing water, provided a healthier and plentiful work force, and set the framework for a prosperous future for this area.⁶

On Sunday, November 25, 1900, Charles Allis decided, over several other inducements, one as far away as Waukegan, Illinois, that the 100 acres of the Whitemore farm would be the new home of the fast growing and enormous manufacturer, The Edward P. Allis Company. Charles Allis needed to expand and centralize his manufacturing facilities. He wanted to employ 10,000 workers and produce over \$30 million of machinery a year at this new facility. A building boom ensued. The city would grow by 1,000 residents a year from 1902 to 1927, from 1,018 to over 26,000 residents. The value of property in the area grew from \$997,846 to \$40,769,259 during the same period.⁷

While many businesses and shops moved into this area, many manufacturers moved to or started their businesses in West Allis. Many eastern European workers followed. A successful ballot was taken on June 28, 1902 where West Allis decided to become a city. With a successful vote, the City of West Allis began to develop an urban infrastructure. A system for distributing water was funded after several ballots. The city purchased fire equipment. On April 4, 1906, the State of Wisconsin awarded West Allis the status of a fourth-class city, which had many obligations. Four policemen were hired soon after. Sewage lines were laid down and connected throughout the city. A Common Council was elected along with a Board of Education.⁸

West Allis prospered and developed a distinctly industrial character. In the 1980s the industrial character was challenged with the closing of Allis-Chalmers and several other large manufacturing concerns. However, a small number of manufacturers have moved into West Allis. Other businesses have moved in, printing and post-secondary education enterprises, for example, and a large retail district has developed. Despite the changes made the last 25 years, West Allis has retained its industrial character.

⁵ Milwaukee Journal, March 27, 1893, p. 9.

⁶ Reverend J. H. Burbach, "Historical Review of West Allis" (West Allis, WI, 1927) 8.

⁷ Ibid., pp.10-19.

⁸ Ibid.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 3

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Historical Context: Education in Wisconsin

Schools in the early days of Wisconsin were sometimes formed for reasons other than education. The first known schools taught by Europeans were part of missions sponsored by the government of France to strengthen its hold in the New World. And the schools were taught by intrepid Jesuit priests who wanted to extend the reach of the Catholic Church. The first French Jesuit, Father Claude Allouez, set up a mission in 1665 at what is now called Ashland, Wisconsin to convert Native Americans to the Christian perspective. Allouez was replaced at Ashland and started a new mission school of St. Francis Xavier in 1670 at present day DePere, Wisconsin. French fur traders, who were well trained and better suited to establish France's dominion, replaced the missions. Children, who lived at various trading posts at Lake Pepin, Green Bay, Prairie du Chien, and La Pointe, were intermittently taught rudimentary skills, but little evidence of a regular school exists.⁹

The first white settlement at Green Bay, formed in 1745 by fur traders Augustine de Langlade and his son Charles, started a regular school taught by fur-trade clerks who had sufficient knowledge and skills to pass on to the settlers' children. The first known professional teacher, Jacques Porlier, arrived in Green Bay in 1791. Military post schools at Fort Crawford in Prairie du Chien and Fort Winnebago in Portage, were formed in 1817 and 1835, respectively. The post schools were initially set up to teach the children of the military commander. However, the children of the other soldiers were allowed to attend. The first teacher at Fort Crawford was an educated sergeant called Reeseden, and Miss Eliza Haight opened the school at Fort Winnebago.¹⁰

Another wave of mission schools started, in 1823, in Green Bay, by Episcopalian clergyman Rev. Eleazer Williams. His mission served up to fifty pupils. Four years later, Rev. Richard F. Cadle, on behalf of the Protestant Episcopal Church, started another mission school in Green Bay. Enrollment at his boarding school numbered as large as one hundred and twenty-nine pupils. Protestant clergymen started mission schools at Prairie du Chien in 1832 and at Ashland in 1831. Catholic missions were attempted again between 1830 and 1834, but with no success.¹¹

During the period 1835 to 1850, the Caucasian population of the State of Wisconsin increased from ten thousand to three hundred thousand, mostly in the southern part of the state. During this time, a state identity was developing and an educational policy was a large part of the process. Most of the arrivals to

⁹ Reuben Gold Thwaites, "Early Schools in Wisconsin," in the Columbine History of Education in Wisconsin, ed. by John W. Stearns (Milwaukee: The Evening Wisconsin Company. 1893.) 78-79.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp.79-81.

¹¹ Ibid., pp.82-83.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 4

Greenfield School

West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Wisconsin were Yankees from New York, New England and Pennsylvania where the concept of a "free school" was heatedly discussed. These new arrivals were well educated on the issues. Many of them sought the establishment of a free school system in Wisconsin.¹²

The territorial laws of the Michigan Territory extended to Wisconsin thereby allowing settlers to form tax supported school districts and choose supervisory officials to look after the schools. Colonel Michael Frank, as a member of the 1844 territorial legislative council from Southport (now Kenosha), introduced a bill to establish free schools in the territory of Wisconsin. The bill failed. Frank changed his tactic at the following council. He took advantage of the law of the territory requiring any district requesting to tax itself for educational purposes to obtain permission from the particular territories' legislative body. Frank requested permission for District Number One in Southport to levy taxes. The territorial council consented and required a referendum authorizing the district to approve a tax levy. A majority of the primarily Yankee village of Southport agreed to authorize the levy of taxes for District Number One. The first school district authorized to support itself entirely by a tax levy was thus established.¹³

A campaign took place to convince Wisconsin's early settlers of the merits of¹⁴ tax supported free schools. In October of 1845 the first "educational convention" in the Territory of Wisconsin took place in Madison where lectures were given on the subject of free schools. Most importantly, the conventions kept the subject of free schools in the public eye. This first convention was reported by newspapers in detail. Another convention took place three months later in Milwaukee. Other counties held meetings. The nationally prominent free school advocate, Henry Barnard, spoke at an education convention in Chicago in October of 1846. There he was invited to speak in Milwaukee and Madison. Barnard gave two lectures at each place. Barnard's address in Madison was to the Constitutional Convention where he clearly outlined the importance of free schools to delegates. In 1848, the citizens of Wisconsin passed a constitution with language requiring the establishment of free primary schools along with local taxation guidelines and regulations regarding the apportionment of state revenues to local districts.¹⁵

While a free school system was in place, attendance by eligible children was poor. During the period from 1850 to 1865, approximately one-third to one-fourth of all eligible children were registered. An even smaller number attended. The school experience of poorly ventilated and furnished schools, untrained teachers, and distance discouraged attendance. Many parents could not properly clothe their children for the long walk and cold classroom. The most prevalent reason among rural families was to

¹² Joseph Schafer, "Origins of Wisconsin's Free School System," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 9 (1), 27-35.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 39-46.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 5

Greenfield School

West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

keep their children at work on the farm. Many city dwellers were indifferent to the need to educate their children, or their children worked to bring income into the family. In 1879, a compulsory education bill became law. Ten years later, another compulsory education bill brought in a wider age group into the classroom and eliminated several loopholes. In 1903 and 1907 legislation to further encourage attendance became law.¹⁶

The quality of education in Wisconsin schools increased dramatically with the development of graded schools and the initiation of teacher education. A movement began in 1855 to replace the system of teaching all students of all ages together with a graded system. Children would be separated by age. Several of the state's largest school districts had successfully adopted this approach with the added bonus of a reduction in the number of teachers needed for a similar roster of ungraded students.¹⁷

From 1849 to 1859 anyone with no more than a passing knowledge of reading, geography, writing and math could and did teach. In 1857, the first attempt to develop a teacher education program was made with the "Teacher's Institute." For up to five days, a short course on teaching techniques was offered. In 1899, permanent county training schools were started. Marathon and Dunn counties had the first two. Further legislation in 1909 allowed normal schools to teach a similar curriculum.¹⁸

Developing an educational infrastructure took up the agenda for the educators and legislatures of Wisconsin for the first fifty years of statehood. A realignment of the infrastructure to more efficiently and cost effectively teach the students of Wisconsin began with the movement to consolidate school districts. While the first discussion of this process was voiced as early as 1854 by the state superintendent of schools, the movement did not take hold until the 1900s. The intent of consolidation was to give small school districts, many of whom were poor, the opportunity to pool their resources and better educate their children. The consolidation movement would pave the way for better education for all the children in Wisconsin.¹⁹

Historical Context: Education in Early West Allis

The early settlers of North Greenfield built a one-room log schoolhouse in 1835 at the present site of the Greenfield School. The land for the school, known for many years as the Honey Creek School, was donated by Reuben Strong, an early settler to the area. The first class started with seven students. By

¹⁶ Conrad E. Patzer, "The Country School System," in Educational History of Wisconsin, ed. by Charles McKenny (Chicago: The Delmont Company, 1912) 51-55.

¹⁷ Ibid., 47-49.

¹⁸ Ibid., 55-59

¹⁹ Ibid., 33-35.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 6

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

1843, registration at the school listed 38 students. The state superintendent in an 1854 report listed a population of 747 school age children in North Greenfield.²⁰

In 1861, the district replaced the one-room log schoolhouse with a new one-room red brick building at the same address. Also, governance of school districts changed the same year with the replacement of a township superintendent by a county superintendent. Counties could divide into two school districts and elect a county superintendent for each one. Better supervision would result. Milwaukee County's First District Superintendent supervised the Honey Creek School.²¹

The school term consisted of two parts. During the 1869-70 school year, the first session began November 8th and ended in February. The second session began April 18 and finished August 9. The total school days for both sessions was 160 days. For most school terms, a different teacher taught each session. Attendance was poor. Registration stayed at around twenty-five to forty students. One-third of the registered students were usually absent. In the rural portion of Milwaukee County, 55 percent of school age children were in school. Parents argued they could not properly clothe their children for the winter, and during the summer, children were needed to help on the farm. Fear of contagious diseases was another reason cited. By the end of the 1880-81 school year, education in rural Milwaukee County was looking up. Attendance increased to 68 percent, which meant greater acceptance of the schools by the local residents.²²

Subjects taught during the 1870s and 80s included geography, reading, writing, grammar, spelling, history, and arithmetic. A few advanced students studied algebra. Spelldown matches and Pompom pull away were among the activities at school. The sounds of the country village, a hammer and anvil from across the street, rang in the ears of the erstwhile students. The country ambience was rounded out by the presence of Reuben Strong's unchained bull in a nearby pasture that terrorized the children.²³

In 1887, the present Greenfield School replaced the red brick building. This large two room schoolhouse was soon divided into two more rooms to accommodate more grade levels of students. Interest in starting a high school program began with the attempt to introduce high school subjects by a principal at the school in 1892. Effort was made again several years later with a three-year program culminating in the first high school graduation with four students in 1897. The first high school graduates finished course

²⁰ Leonard A. Szudy, A Half Century of Public Education in West Allis, (Ann Arbor, University Microfilm, 1983) 14-15.

²¹ Ibid., 15-16, 26.

²² Ibid., 17-19

²³ Ibid., 20

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 7

Greenfield School

West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

work in physics, general history, algebra, geometry, grammar, rhetoric, physiology, English history, the Constitution, and arithmetic. Some of the students took individual classes in bookkeeping and botany.²⁴

The village of North Greenfield was incorporated in 1902 into the village of West Allis. At that time, the Greenfield School housed high school classes and grades four through eight. A nearby frame building on the Lincoln School grounds held classes for grades one to four. Total enrollment in the two schools was 250. A new two-room frame building at the site of the current McKinley School was built to accommodate forty students in 1903. Two years later, the village board elected to build a large grade and high school between 77th and 78th streets along National Avenue. Total cost of the project was \$45,555. The new school opened to 248 students and became known as the Third Ward School. A school resided in each ward of West Allis with a combined city enrollment of 445 students.²⁵

The area was experiencing a building boom due to the relocation of Edward P. Allis Company, and the influx of workers and their families. In 1906, when the village of West Allis achieved city status, governance of the schools changed from rural school plan to a city school plan. The schools were to be managed through a school board appointed by the mayor. In 1924, the citizens of West Allis voted to elect members to the Board of Education by direct vote of the citizens of West Allis. By July 1926 the school census counted 7,431 school age children in West Allis. The city employed a full time "attendance" officer with good results; the attendance rate was 95%. West Allis continued its commitment to education by becoming the first city in Wisconsin to own a vocational school. The Board of Education started a savings program for its students to encourage the habit of thrift. Bank Day was established to encourage participation in this novel program. Four parochial primary schools opened in West Allis between 1902 and 1922, with a total enrollment of 1,279 students in 1926.²⁶

Schools continued to grow larger in size and number of students. The course offerings became far more diverse, including languages, marketing, agriculture, home economics, shop courses, photography, auto mechanics, and computers. There are currently two public high schools in West Allis. Each high school, grounds and building covers more than one entire city block. West Allis is home to one of the branch schools of Milwaukee Area Technical College. And West Allis is home to several adult, nontraditionally oriented college programs.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 21-23, 26-27.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 27-28.

²⁶ Reverend J. H. Burbach, "Historical Review of West Allis"(West Allis, WI. 1927) 29-42

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 8

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Architecture

Schools

The school buildings of West Allis went through a transformation very similar to the rest of the State of Wisconsin: from a primitive log schoolhouse to a very large, multiple room school complex.

The log schoolhouse was often built without any reference to the functions of a good schoolhouse. The challenges of pioneer life took precedence over schools. The early pioneers still valued an education and did the best they could with the materials and knowledge available. Many log schoolhouses were poorly lighted, heated and ventilated. Basic requirements, such as school desks sized for the use of children, were not followed. Reasons given for such inadequacies were: the parents needed larger desks for political meetings, and the building also served as a place for religious services.²⁷

The strong desire of early settlers to school their children evolved into the development of the one room country schoolhouse. Even though many settlers had developed their farms to a level of efficiency to allow the time and resources to build a schoolhouse, the issue of money dominated their discussions. While money was an issue, the settlers sought advice and learned what they could.²⁸

Construction of one-room schools continued throughout Wisconsin. But there was criticism. The one room country schoolhouse often suffered from inadequacies. In addition to poor lighting, heating and ventilation, blackboards were often built so high as to be of use for only the oldest students. Desks were clumsy, encouraging young boys to whittle away on them. The lack of guidelines for the newer school districts was solved by the issuance in 1887 of the two volume "Plans and Specifications of School Houses for Country Districts, Villages and Smaller Cities of Wisconsin," developed by State Superintendent Whitford. School districts became aware of the inadequacies of the one room schoolhouse. In the years from 1885 to 1900, there was much improvement in the school buildings. Further incentives for better school buildings came in the legislation of 1907, which provided extra state aid to school districts, provided certain building requirements were met.²⁹

Schoolhouses with more than one room began to appear in the last decades of the 1800s in response to the concept of graded classes. The educational needs of the students were better understood and were made available to school districts via books and contact with school officials. The separation of children

²⁷ Conrad E. Patzer, The Country School System in Educational History of Wisconsin, ed. by Charles McKenny (Chicago: The Belmont Company, 1912) 44

²⁸ Wayne E. Fuller, The Old Country School (Chicago & London; The University of Chicago Press, 1982) p. 52

²⁹ Conrad E. Patzer, The Country School System in Educational History of Wisconsin, ed. by Charles McKenny (Chicago: The Belmont Company, 1912) 45

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 9

Greenfield School

West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

by age required more rooms within a structure. And high school education began to develop during this time. The wide disparity in ages from elementary to secondary students required segregation of the students.³⁰

The complexity of school buildings increased dramatically as the public began to appreciate the importance of education. The goals of education to impart basic skills for reading, writing and arithmetic changed dramatically to impart work skills, learn domestic skills, inculcate civic responsibilities, develop cultural interests, and discover the character building benefits of athletic competition. Schools became institutions housing shops and workrooms with mechanical equipment, tools and small kitchens. Rooms with office equipment such as typewriters and, later, computers became standard in many school districts. Theaters and auditoriums began to appear in high schools and the lower grade schools. Large athletic facilities began to appear, taking up substantial space around a school. The school complex is now a fixture among school districts in Wisconsin, a reflection in the change of the priorities of education.

Richardsonian Romanesque

Henry Hobson Richardson(1838-1886) adapted his namesake style of arched windows and doorways, banded windows, large entrances and a heaviness in the mass of the buildings walls and supports from the Romanesque style. The main feature of the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style is an emphasis on heaviness and the horizontal as opposed to smooth, lighter surface treatment on the traditional Romanesque Revival style.³¹

While Richardson did not design any buildings in Wisconsin, his influence is demonstrated in several buildings around the state. Most notably, St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Milwaukee and the Waukesha County Courthouse reflect the principles of Richardson's design innovations.³² The Greenfield School demonstrates the influence of the style by its impressive entrance, banded and arched windows, the use of masonry, the heavy and sturdy appearance of the building, the use of stone in lintels and courses to contrast with the masonry, and the decorative detailing along the roof line.

Cream City Brick

The masonry of the Greenfield School is called cream city brick. The term "cream city brick" refers to the pale yellow brick building material commonly found in buildings in metropolitan Milwaukee. Veins of

³⁰ William T. Anderson, "The Development of the Common Schools," in the Wisconsin Blue Book: 1923 (Madison: State Printing Board, 1923) 113.

³¹ John C. Poppeliers et al, What Style Is It? (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1983) 62-65.

³² Barbara Wyatt, editor, Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986) II: 2-12.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 10

Greenfield School

West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

red clay ran along the western shore of Lake Michigan. When formed into bricks and fired, the red clay turned pale yellow.³³ In 1835, the first kilns were built and began producing cream city brick from the vein deposits. Even though most people were more familiar with red brick, the unusually colored brick found a ready and enthusiastic market in Milwaukee. Milwaukee has been called the "Cream City" ever since.³⁴

Schnetzky and Liebert, AIA

The concerned citizens of North Greenfield selected Herman P. Schnetzky as architect for the Greenfield School. Schnetzky and Liebert, AIA, a prominent architectural firm in Milwaukee, designed a wide variety of buildings. Eugene R. Liebert used his German education and background to obtain commissions to design mansions, commercial and industrial buildings, and churches for the wealthy Germans of Milwaukee. Liebert developed a reputation for expertise in the design of buildings with a distinctive and trademark German flavor. His design of the Henry Harnischfeger and Albert O. Trostel mansions are his most well known buildings.³⁵ Herman P. Schnetzky was involved in a variety of projects designed in many architectural styles from the St. Joseph's convents, the Manufacturer's Home Building on Mason Street, retail stores, the Public Natatorium, and several school buildings.³⁶ Schnetzky worked for a short time with Henry C. Koch, the noteworthy architect of Milwaukee's City Hall and many government buildings around the Midwest.³⁷

Conclusion

Greenfield School is historically and architecturally significant in the educational history and architecture of West Allis, Milwaukee County. The cream city brick schoolhouse is eligible for the National Register under *Criterion A: Education*, for its role as a transition in education philosophy and teaching methods from the one room log schoolhouse to the modern institutional educational complex.

Although there have been minor alterations they don't affect the school's high level of historic integrity.

The school is also significant under *Criterion C: Architecture* as an excellent example of a graded schoolhouse type with Richardsonian Romanesque design features. The structure, built in 1887, envisioned the requirements of a graded school. It was constructed as a two room school, and soon after

³³ Paul J Jakubovich, "As Good As New: A Guide for Rehabilitating the Exterior of Your Milwaukee Home," (City of Milwaukee, 1993) 73.

³⁴ John Gurda, *The Making of Milwaukee*, (Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1999) 42

³⁵ H. Russell Zimmermann, *Germania Building* (Plankinton & Wells Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1982) 32.

³⁶ Wisconsin Historical Society website: Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory.

³⁷ O'Brien, William P. "Milwaukee Architect: Henry C. Koch" (M.A. diss., University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, 1989).

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 11

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

changed to four classrooms. While legislation encouraging graded schools was not enacted until 1901, the conscientious citizens of North Greenfield made a far sighted effort. The proximity of North Greenfield to Milwaukee allowed its concerned citizens to tap the expertise of trained architects located nearby; thereby further enhancing the quality of their children's education.

Area of Statement of Significance

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 1

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Faded text, possibly a reference or note.

Anderson, William T. "The Development of the Common Schools." In *The Wisconsin Blue Book*, Madison, WI State Printer, 1923.

Burbach, Rev. J.H., *Historical Review of West Allis*, West Allis, WI 1927.

Fuller, Wayne E., *The Old Country School, Chicago*: The University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Gurda, John, *The Making of Milwaukee*, Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1999.

Korom, Joseph, *Milwaukee Architecture: A Guide to Notable Buildings*, Madison, WI, Prairie Oak Press, 2000.

McKenny, Charles, "The Elementary School of City Systems," *Educational History of Wisconsin*, Chicago: The Delmont Company, 1912.

Milwaukee Free Press, 22 February, 1916.

Milwaukee Journal, 27 March, 1893.

Muchka, Albert, *Images of America: West Allis*, Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2003.

Murn, Penny, "Garfield School Building," *Request for Determination of Eligibility*, West Allis Historical Society.

Poppeliers, John C., Chambers, Jr, S. Allen, Schwartz, Nancy B., *What STYLE is it?* Washington D.C., U.S. Department of the Interior, The Preservation Press, 1983.

Pray, Carl E., "Early Education." In *Educational History of Wisconsin*. Ed. Charles McKenny. Chicago: The Delmont Company, 1912.

Schafer, Joseph, "Origins of Wisconsin's Free School System" *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 9, 1925.

Szudy, Leonard A., *A Half Century of Public Education in West Allis*, Ann Arbor, University Microfilm, 1983.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 2

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Thwaites, Reuben Gold, "Early Schools in Wisconsin." In *The Columbian History of Education in Wisconsin*. Ed. John W. Stearns, Milwaukee: The Evening Wisconsin Company.

West Allis Star, 8 March, 1962

Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. 3 Vols. Madison, Wis. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, June 1976

Zimmerman, H. Russell, *The Heritage Guidebook*, Milwaukee, WI, Harry W. Schwartz, 1989.

Zimmerman, H. Russell, *Germania Building*, Milwaukee: Plankinton & Wells Company, 1982.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description:

All that part of a parcel of land situated and lying on and near the North-East corner of said ¼ section. Beginning at a point where 84th Street on the ¼ line of said section crosses the center of National Avenue, running thence South along the center of said 84th Street on the ¼ line of said section to the North East corner of the Honey Creek Cemetery Grounds, thence running West to the North West corner of said cemetery, thence North to the center of National Avenue; thence, Easterly along the center of said National Avenue to the place of beginning.

All that part of a parcel of land situated and lying on and near the intersection of South 84th Street and West National Avenue. Beginning at a point where the inner edge of the sidewalk along 84th Street meets the inner edge of the sidewalk along National Avenue, running thence South along the edge of sidewalk along 84th Street to the North East corner of the Honey Creek Cemetery Grounds, thence running West to the North West corner of said cemetery, thence North to the inner edge of the sidewalk along National Avenue; thence, Easterly along the inner edge of the sidewalk along National Avenue to the place of beginning. The boundary is indicated on the attached site plan.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the building and related grounds that were historically associated with the Greenfield School and excludes resources not related to the school.

End of Boundary Description

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 1

Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Photo 1 of 6 external views.
Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, WI
Photo by D. J. O'Keefe, November, 2004
Neg. at the Historical Society of Wisconsin
View looking south.

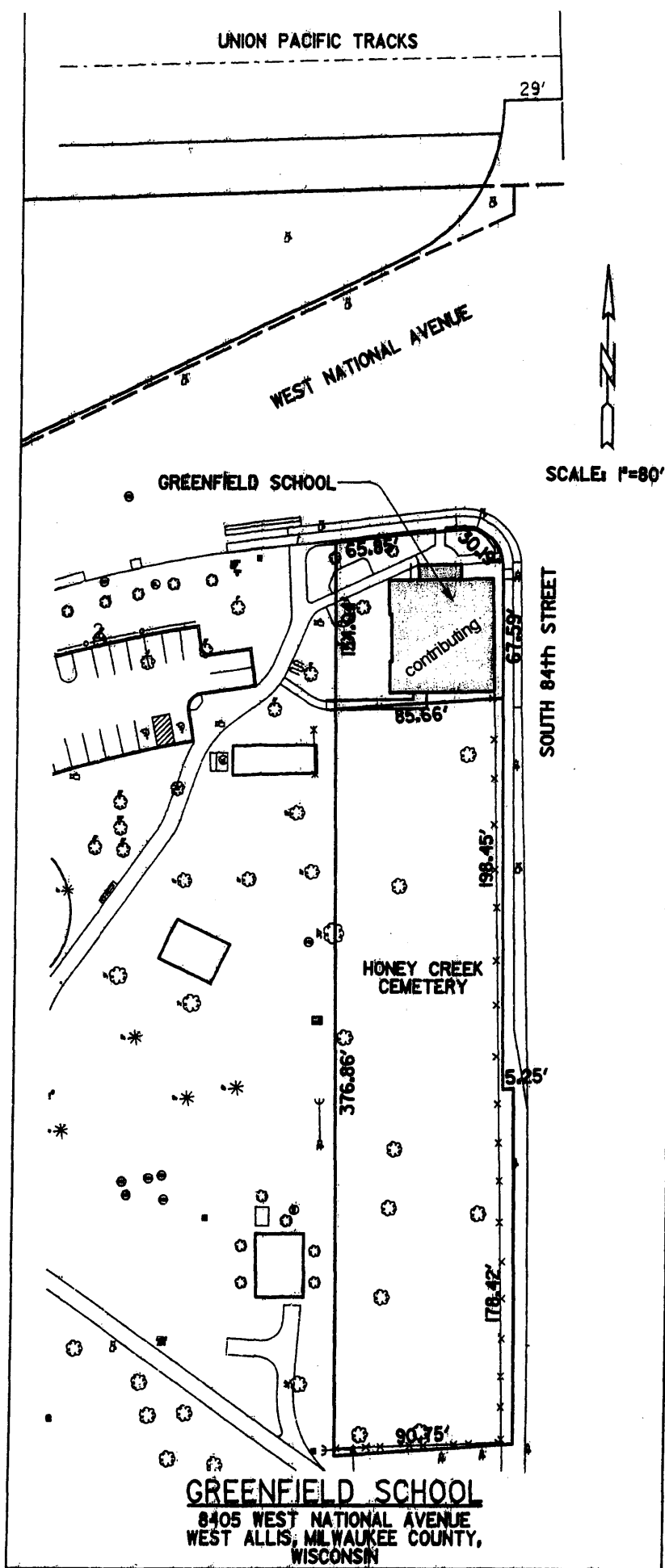
Photo 2 of 6 external views
Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, WI
Photo by D.J. O'Keefe, November, 2004
Neg. at the Historical Society of Wisconsin
View looking west.

Photo 3 of 6 external views
Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, WI
Photo by D.J. O'Keefe, November, 2004
Neg. at the Historical Society of Wisconsin
View looking east

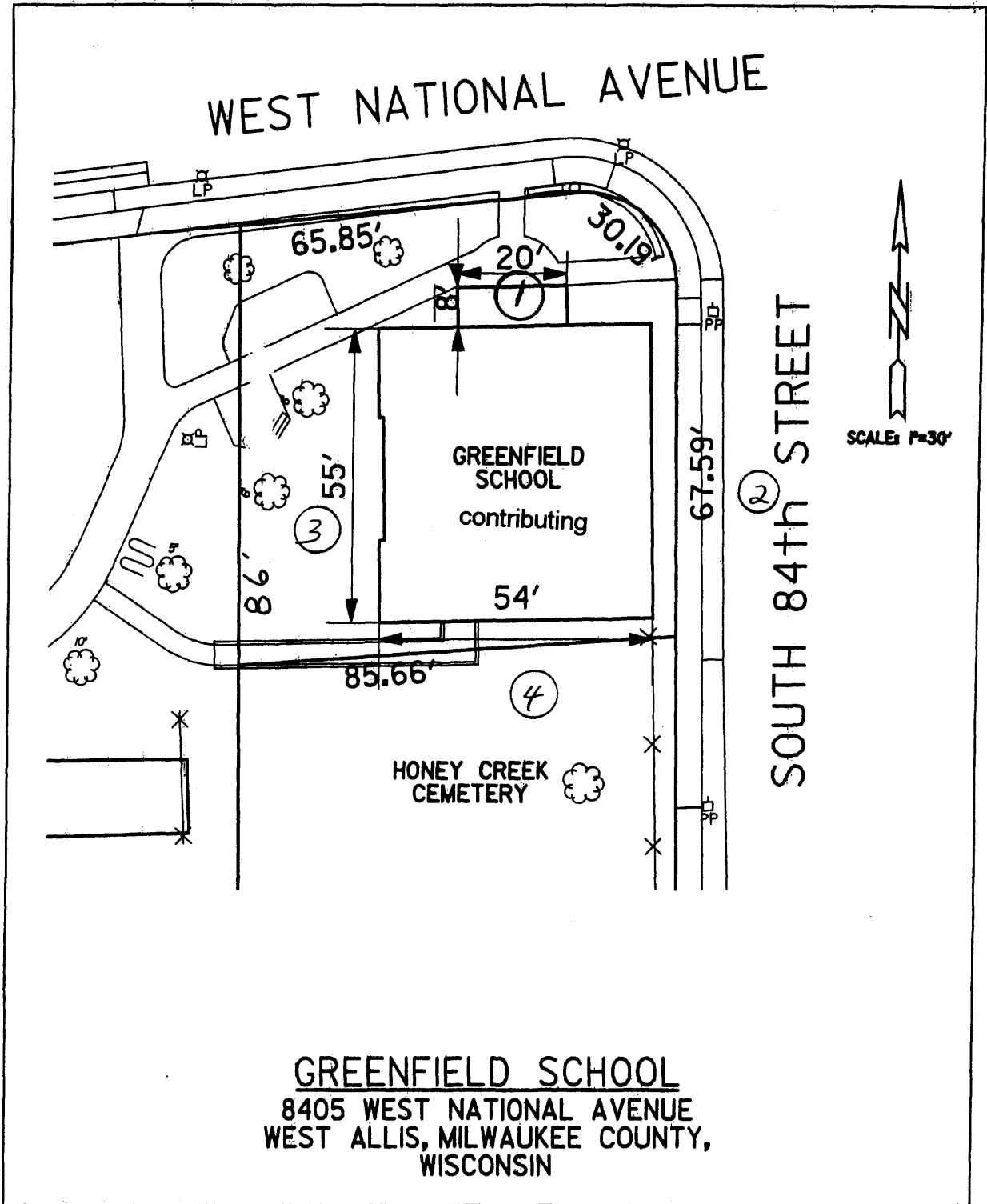
Photo 4 of 6 external views
Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, WI
Photo by D.J. O'Keefe, November, 2004
Neg. at the Historical Society of Wisconsin
View looking north.

Photo 5 of 6 internal views
Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, WI
Photo by D.J. O'Keefe, November, 2004
Neg. at the Historical Society of Wisconsin
View looking southeast into display room

Photo 6 of 6 internal views
Greenfield School
West Allis, Milwaukee County, WI
Photo by D.J. O'Keefe, November, 2004
Neg. at the Historical Society of Wisconsin
View looking southwest

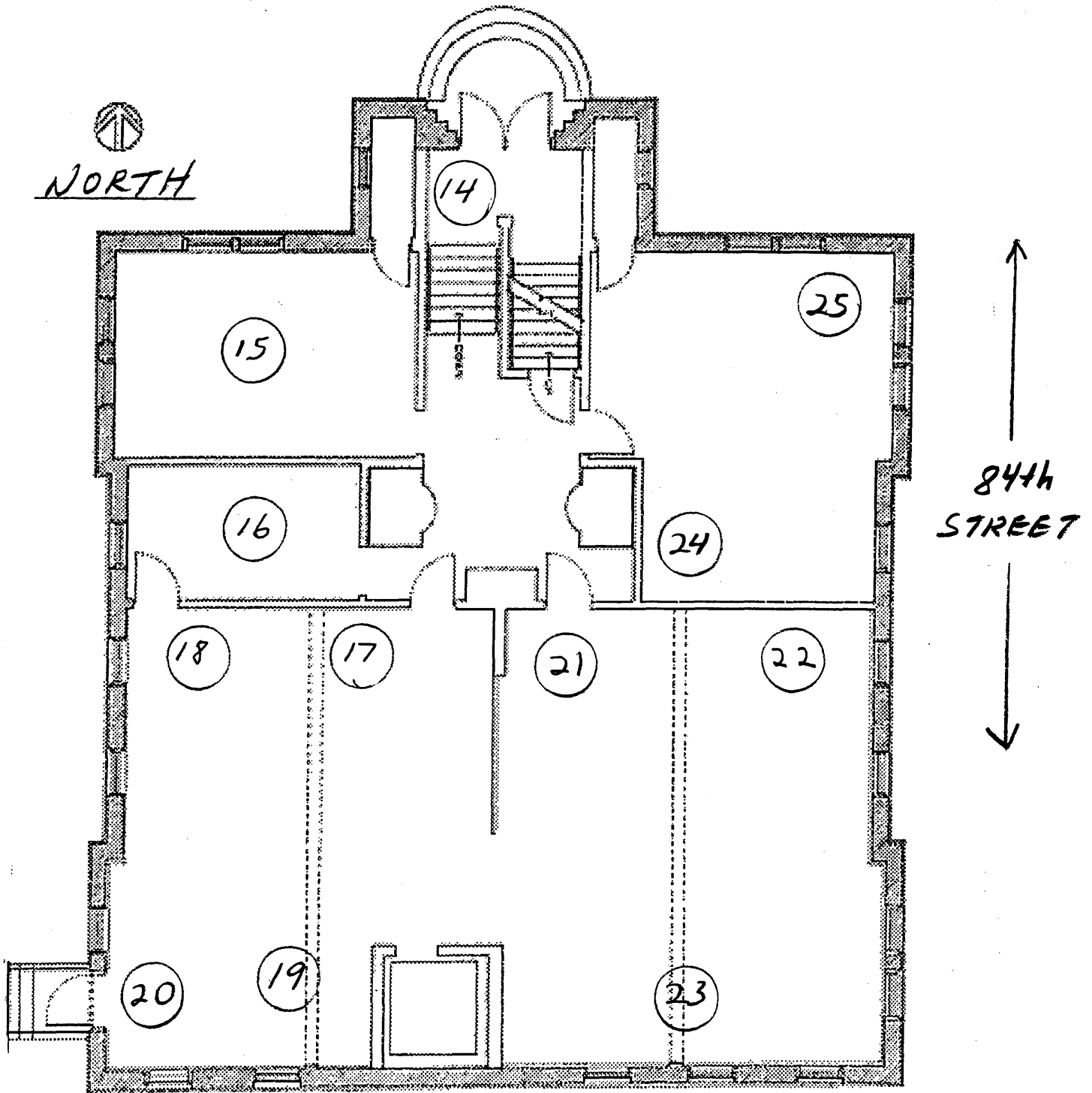


SKETCH PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF WEST ALLIS



SKETCH PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF WEST ALLIS

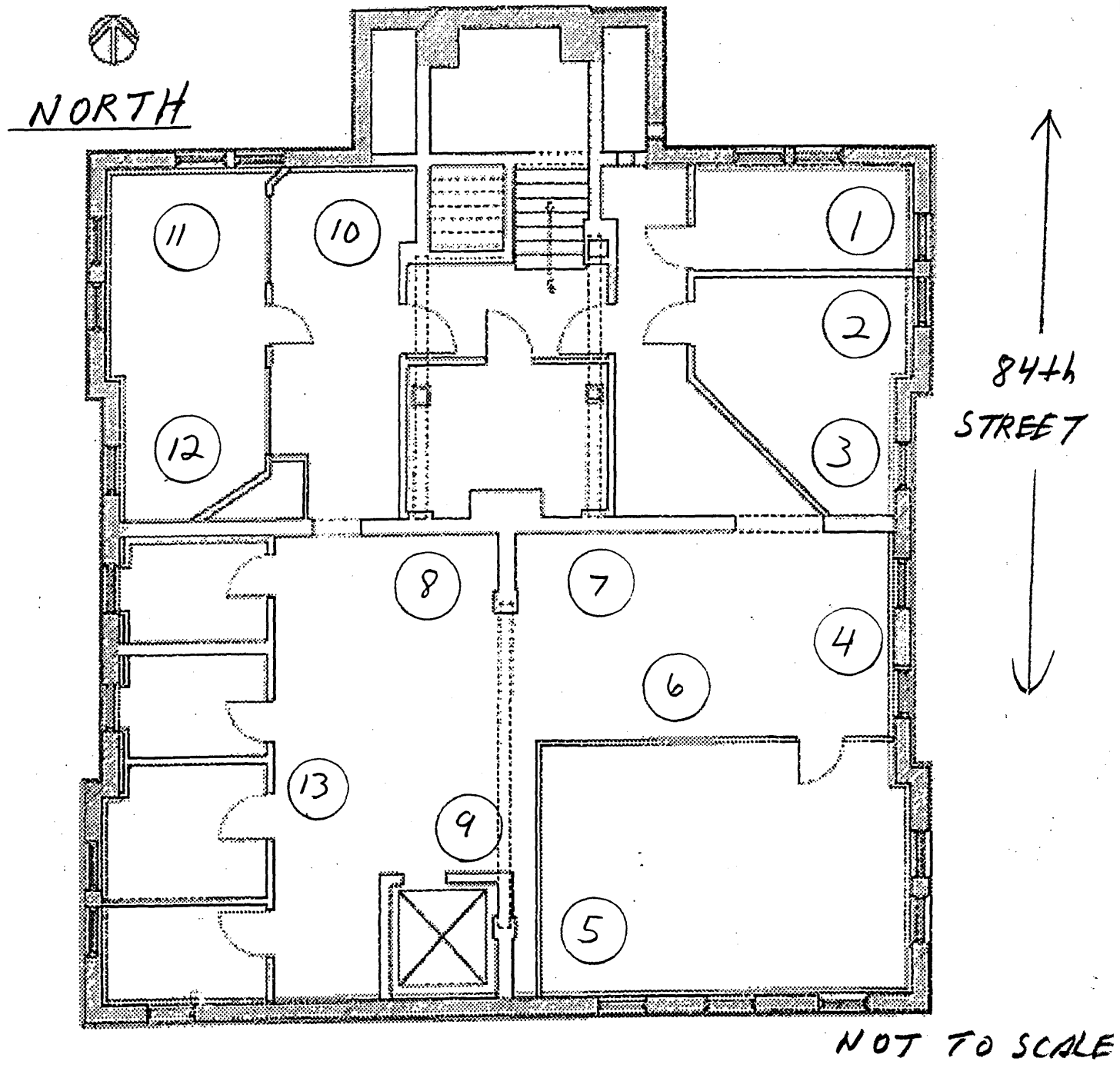
GREENFIELD SCHOOL
WEST ALLIS, MILWAUKEE COUNTY, WISCONSIN
FIRST FLOOR



NOT TO SCALE

DRAWING FROM HABS W1-322

GREENFIELD SCHOOL
WEST ALLIS, MILWAUKEE COUNTY, WISCONSIN
BASEMENT



DRAWING FROM HAB5 W 1-322