

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received SEP 5 1984
date entered OCT 4 1984

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

1. Name

historic Litchfield Opera House

and/or common Litchfield Community Building

2. Location

street & number 126 N. Marshall Ave. N/A not for publication

city, town Litchfield N/A vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state Minnesota code 22 county Meeker code 093

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name City of Litchfield

street & number 126 N. Marshall Avenue

city, town Litchfield N/A vicinity of state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Meeker County Court House

street & number Sibley Avenue and Fourth Street

city, town Litchfield state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Survey of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society—Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota

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	N/A
<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

The Litchfield Opera House/Community Building is a one-story, rectangular structure measuring 52 feet north-south X 107 feet east-west. This beautifully decorated Renaissance Revival building boasts many designs and patterns unique to its locality and surrounding structures. The soft yellow clay brick, manufactured locally, and layed in a running bond, contrasts with the red brick and red terra cotta patterns which accent two elevations of the structure.

An interesting aspect of the building's design, is that it is only finished on two sides, the south (side) and east (rear) elevations are void of any decoration. The front facade is divided into three bays, with the central or entry bay projecting slightly in front of the bays on either side. The lower half of the front facade is patterned in red brick which portrays a rusticated form and adds a sense of extra depth to the structure. The front windows, still have the original fanlights, but are now covered with energy saving panels. Red terra cotta, egg and dart molding; frames the spandrels above each window. The pattern is also present in the window arches and the pair of circles above each front window. Above the entry, plied ornament wreaths, with terra cotta and quarry cut stone arches, gives evidence of the building's cultural purpose.

The front facade is also highlighted by a trimmed and decorated pediment, which continues into parapets that square-off the building's front and side walls.

Modillion blocks run below the pediment as well as the cornice.

The north elevation is consistent with the front facade design. Major features include a Palladian window, common to Renaissance architecture. Fragments of a parapet that has been removed are evident at the roof line on this elevation. The windows on the north elevation display the original fanlight absent from the front elevation..

Little has changed on this stately building, only minor renovation has altered it since its construction in 1900. Sometime between 1930 and 1939 the interior of the building was remodeled to be used for city offices, which still remain today. Originally, the main auditorium floor was 50 X 60 feet; the orchestra pit and stage 50 X 36 feet. The seating capacity ranged from 600 to 1,000. The building was wired forelectricity, and 200 lightbulbs lit the interior. A large lobby, ticket and coatcheck rooms, plus spacious dressing rooms, provided comfort for performers and patrons. Balcony steps and the balcony itself are near their original state. Hardwood floors cover the terraced seating platforms, which rests above the front entrance. A full basement under the building is divided into storage and meeting rooms.

The building is located in downtown Litchfield and is surrounded by similar commercial and industrial buildings. The Opera House was built on the site of an earlier Opera House and once was the neighbor to a steam driven Merry-Go-Round, enclosed in a one-story frame building.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates Built 1900 **Builder/Architect** Builder: N.P. Franzen, Architect: W.T. Towner

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Opera House has served the City of Litchfield for over eighty-three years. It has survived thousands of visitors, either reaping the benefits of its social functions or treading the halls to meeting places or information offices. The turn-of-the-century brought many changes to Litchfield. A committee of businessmen organized in 1899, recognized the need for expanding meeting places and theatrical performances. They wanted social cohesion and interaction between the citizenry and decided a new town hall was needed to replace the obsolete one constructed in 1871. The building was paid for by the Township of Litchfield, which owned the lot on which it was erected. Completed in November 1900, the structure cost the citizens \$12,000. The evening of November 8th marked the opening of the new building and the opening of "The Marble Heart", starring William Owen, the first of many operas and performances to be presented from the stage. In June 1911 the City of Litchfield purchased the building from the township. Town meetings were held in the spacious auditorium. People cast their ballot here on election days. Men and women enlisted for military service here. Major decisions effecting the community were decided here. About fifty years ago the building was remodeled for use as city offices, new movie theatres had long since emptied the opera house. Today the building houses a variety of civic offices and organizations. Litchfield senior citizens meet here, so do the Girl Scouts, the Draft Board has a home here, and so does Community Education. Public officials and the Police Department occupy some of the rooms.

The Litchfield Opera House is historically significant in the fact that the building has been a focal point in the community continuously for more than 83 years. First as a theatre, providing a place for social intercourse for Litchfield citizens, and now supportively as administrative and community service headquarters. The building is also a well preserved example of Renaissance Revival style architecture, rare in Litchfield and Meeker County.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Souvenir Program of the Litchfield Opera House, November 8, 1900.
Litchfield News Ledger (newspaper) Nov. 8, 1900.
Litchfield Saturday Review, November 10, 1900

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Litchfield North

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UMT References

A

1	5	3	8	0	0	0	4	9	9	8	0	0	0
Zone				Easting				Northing					

B

Zone				Easting				Northing					

C

Zone				Easting				Northing					

D

Zone				Easting				Northing					

E

Zone				Easting				Northing					

F

Zone				Easting				Northing					

G

Zone				Easting				Northing					

H

Zone				Easting				Northing					

Verbal boundary description and justification

Legal Description: Lot 1, Block 66 - Town of Litchfield

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

state None code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James A. Sazevich (and Brian C. Pease, 415 E. Third St., Litchfield, Mn. (612) 693-6169)

organization The House Detective date November 15, 1983

street & number 454 N. Smith Avenue telephone (612) 222-8160

city or town St. Paul state Minnesota

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

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 8/24/84

For NPS use only

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

Melores Byer
Keeper of the National Register

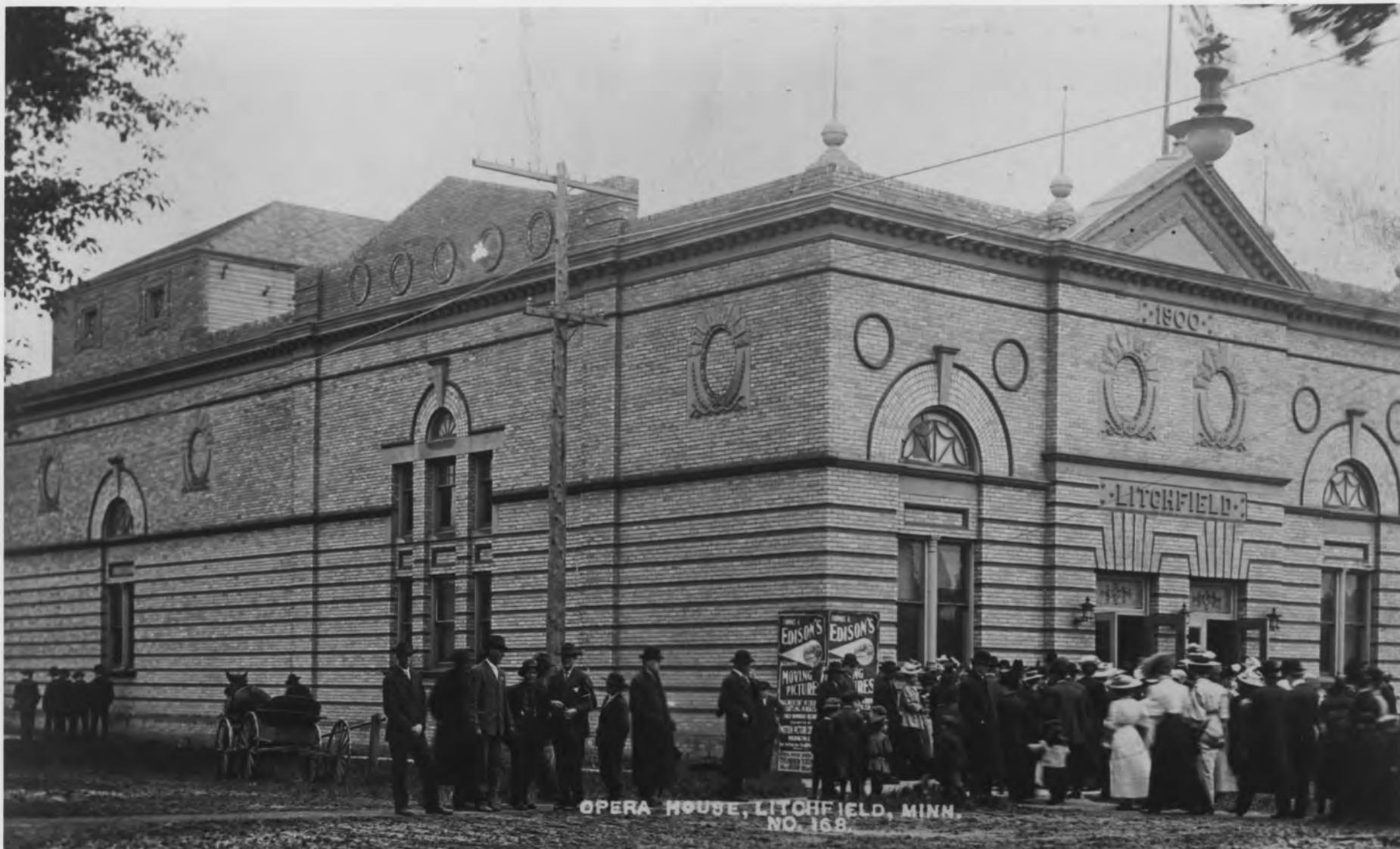
Entered in the
National Register

date 10-4-84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



OPERA HOUSE, LITCHFIELD, MINN.
NO. 168

MM5.9
LT 3.1
r5

Litchfield Opera House
Litchfield, MN; Meeker County
Photographer: W.O. Olson
1908
Minnesota Historical Society, 690
Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101
Looking northwest
41409

Photo: W.O. Olson, Alexandria

FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS FOR REFERENCE USE
ONLY. IT MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR
SOLD WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION.

NOTICE: This material may be
protected by copyright law
(Title 17 U. S. Code)



04701 #16

Litchfield Opera House
Litchfield, MN; Meeker County
Susan Roth
1981

Minnesota Historical Society, 690
Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101
Looking northeast
04701/16

NOTICE: This material may be
protected by copyright law
(Title 17 U. S. Code)

FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS FOR REFERENCE USE
ONLY. IT MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR
SOLD WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION.



04455 #18A

Litchfield Opera House
Litchfield, MN; Meeker County
Susan Roth
1981

Minnesota Historical Society, 690
Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101
Looking northwest
04455/18A

FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS FOR REFERENCE USE
ONLY. IT MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR
SOLD WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION.

NOTICE: This material may be
protected by copyright law
(Title 17 U. S. Code)



1900

LITCHFIELD

COMMUNITY BUILDING
• CITY COUNCIL
• CITY ADMINISTRATOR
• CITY CLERK
• ASSESSOR
• BUILDING DEPT.
• CHARITABLE SECTION
• ENGINEER

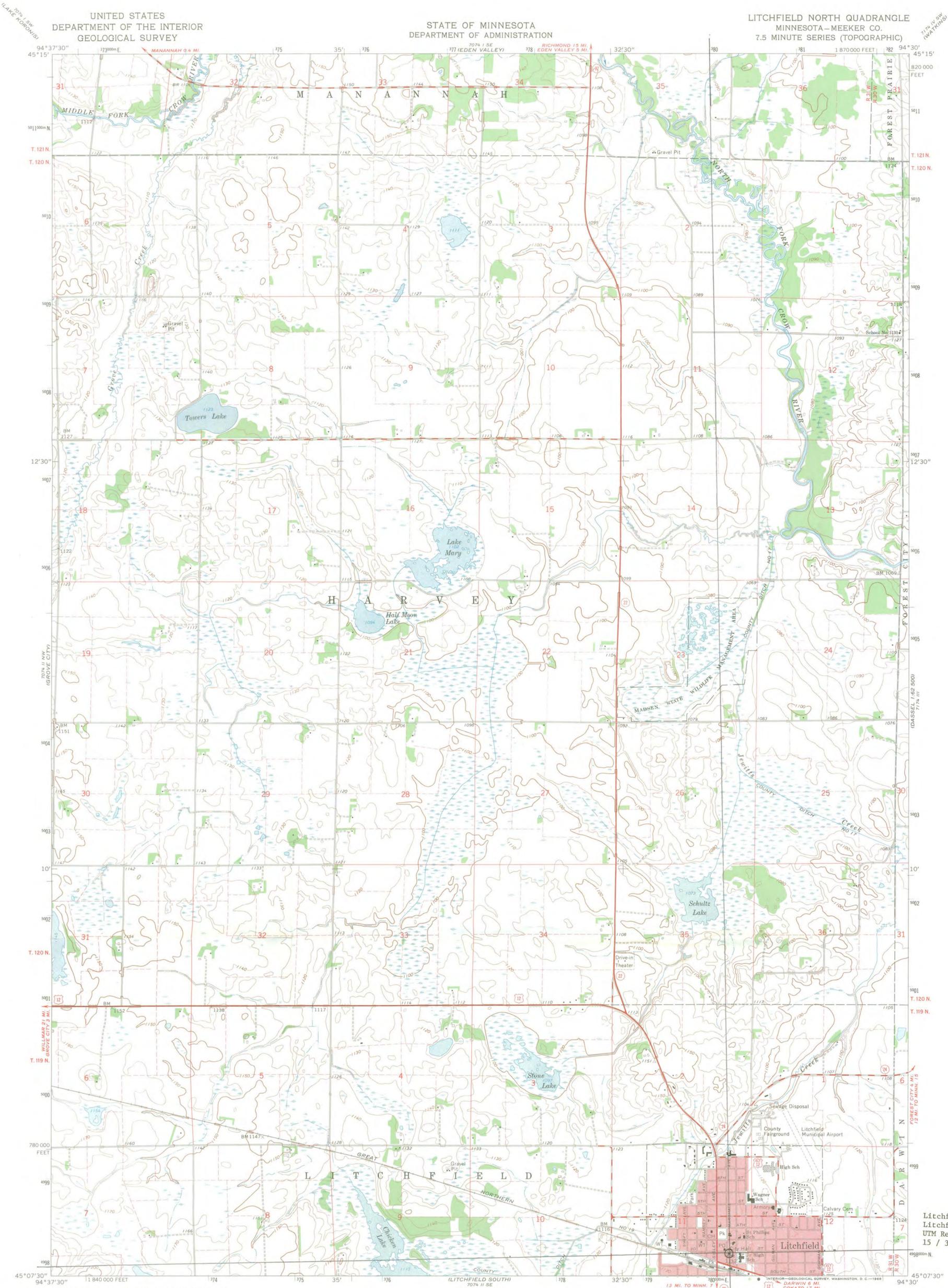
04701#20A

Litchfield Opera House
Litchfield, MN; Meeker County
Susan Roth
1981

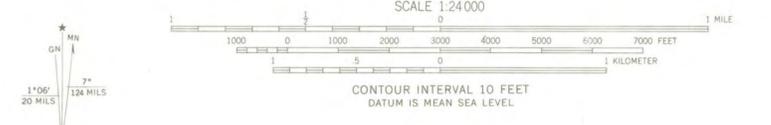
Minnesota Historical Society, 690
Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101
Looking west
04701/20A

NOTICE: This material may be
protected by copyright law
(Title 17 U. S. Code)

FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS FOR REFERENCE USE
ONLY. IT MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR
SOLD WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION.



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1967
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Minnesota coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs
This information is unchecked



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

LITCHFIELD NORTH, MINN.
N4507.5—W9430/7.5

Litchfield Opera House
Litchfield, MN; Meeker County
UTM References
15 / 380000 / 4998000

National Register of Historic Places

Note to the record

Additional Documentation: 2017

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 2/17/2017 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 4/3/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

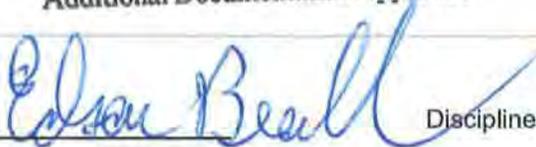
Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 4/3/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer: Edson Beall  Discipline: Historian

Telephone: _____ Date: 4-3-17

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

AD84000019

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Litchfield Opera House
Name of Property
Meeker County, Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 2 Page 1

Reference Number: 84000019

State: Minnesota

County: Meeker

Resource Name (Historic): Litchfield Opera House

Location: 136 N. Marshall Avenue, Litchfield

Comments: The city changed the address of the opera house from 126 N. Marshall Avenue to the above address in November 2007, after the nomination was written. This was due to the City building a new city hall just south of the Litchfield Opera House; the city retained the 126 address and assigned the opera house 136.



Amy Spong, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

2.9.17

Date

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Litchfield Opera House
Meeker County
MINNESOTA

SEP 5 1984

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Working No. _____
 Fed. Reg. Date: 2.4.86
 Date Due: 10-4-84 / 10-20-84
 Action: ACCEPT 10-4-84
 RETURN
 REJECT
 Federal Agency: _____

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
 Reviewer _____
 Discipline _____
 Date _____
 _____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
 _____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____
Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

Michigan State University
Michigan State University
Michigan State University

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Minnesota Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office
345 Kellogg Blvd West, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
651-259-3451



TO: Stephanie Toothman, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Denis Gardner

DATE: 2/9/2017

NAME OF PROPERTY: Litchfield Opera House

COUNTY AND STATE: Meeker, Minnesota

SUBJECT: National Register:
 Nomination
 Multiple Property Documentation Form
 Request for determination of eligibility
 Request for removal (Reference No.)
 Nomination resubmission
 Boundary increase/decrease (Reference No.)
 Additional documentation (Reference No. 84000019)

DOCUMENTATION:

- Original National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
- Multiple Property Documentation Form
- Continuation Sheets
- Removal Documentation
- Photographs
- CD w/ image files
- USGS Map
- Sketch (site) map(s)
- Correspondence
 - Owner Objection
 - The enclosed owner objections
 - Do Do not constitute a majority of property owners

STAFF COMMENTS:

Please see comments on first page of additional information.