## United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

REGISTER This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets

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OMB No. 1024-0018

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1. Name of Property									
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other names/site number	r ST PETH	ER'S	CATHOLIC	CHURC	H; FORMER	ST PETER'	S SCHOO	OL;	
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city, town	Fort Wa						na vi	cinity	
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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions			
ELIGION: Religious Structure	RELIGION: Religious Structure			
RELIGION: Church School	EDUCATION: Preschool			
RELIGION: Church-related Residence	VACANT: Not In Use			
DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling	RELIGION: Church-related Residence			
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)			
	foundation STONE: Limestone			
Gothic Revival_Church	walls BRICK			
Italian Renaissance Revival School	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
Colonial Revival Residence	roof STONE: Slate			
	other ASPHALT			
	STONE: Limestone			

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheet 7.1

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8. Statement of Significance		
Certifying official has considered the significance of this propert	y in relation to other properties: statewide X locally	
Applicable National Register Criteria	D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	D E F G	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) ARCHITECTURE ETHNIC HERITAGE	Period of Significance 1892-19:49	Significant Dates 1892-1894 1904 1908
	Cultural Affiliation	See Continuation Sheet 8.1
Significant Person	Architect/Builder Dederichs, Peter Jr. (an Suelzer, John Sr. (build	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See Continuation Sheet 8.1

X See continuation sheet

See Continuation Sheet 9.1

Previous documentation on file (NPS): preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	Image: See continuation sheet         Primary location of additional data:         Image: State historic preservation office         Other State agency         Federal agency         Image: Local government         University         Other         Specify repository:
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of property Acres (St. Peter's Square	and Rectory)
UTM References A   1, 6]   6  5, 7 0,7,0]  4,15  4,17  5,10,10] Zone Easting Northing C   1, 6]   6  5, 7  2, 6, 0]  4,15  4,17  5,14,10]	B 1 16 6 5 7 0 7 0 Zone Easting Northing D 1 6 5 7 2 6 0 4 5 4 7 5 0 0 See continuation sheet
Verbai Boundary Description	
The nominated district comprises Lots 87-94 of of Lasselleville in the City of Fort Wayne; a in the northeast corner of Dewald Square, as of Lasselleville; and a parcel measuring 8 feet h of Dewald Square, immediately east of, and adjacent to, the 39.5 by 124.75 foot parcel.	parcel measuring 39.5 feet by 124.75 feet contained in the Commissioner's Addition to
Boundary Justification	
All five buildings in the nominated district a during the specified period of significance.	are associated with St. Peter's Parish
	See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title <u>Richard LaRowe/Don Orban w/ assistance</u>	ce from James A. Glass, PhD dete10-4-1990
organization <u>City of Fort Wayne</u> street & number <u>One Main Street</u>	telephone (219) 427-1140
city or town Fort Wayne	

Section 2 Page 1 St. Peter's Square Historic District

## Location:

Roughly bounded by St. Martin, Hanna, East Dewald, and Warsaw Streets and 518 East Dewald Street.

Section 7 Page 1 St. Peter's Square Historic District

#### 7. DESCRIPTION

The St. Peter's Square property consists of five associated The square proper, bounded by Warsaw Street on the buildings. west, St. Martin Street on the north, Hanna Street on the east, DeWald Street on the south, contains three of the and buildings. (see attached sketch map). Standing at the west end of the square and facing Warsaw Street is the landmark St. Peter's Catholic Church. At the center of the square, which measures 560 feet east and west by 133 feet north and south, is the boiler house. At the east end of the square stands the former St. Peter's School, now partially occupied by Fort Wayne Head Start offices and classes and still used occasionally for activities of the St. Peter's parish. Across DeWald Street from the southeast entrance to the church, standing on a slight knoll on the south side of the street, stands the present rectory of the parish (see Photographs 15-17), erected originally as the home of John Suelzer, Sr., contractor for all surviving buildings and structures in the square and a prominent member of the parish. To the rear of the rectory stands a garage.

At the height of the parish in the 1940's, three additional buildings stood between the church and school in St. Peter's Square. All three of these buildings--pre-1949 rectory, original church and school, and convent--have been demolished, changing the character of the square from one of continuous rows of ecclesiastical buildings along St. Martin and DeWald Streets to one in which the church and school form dominating masses at the east and west ends, with the boiler house and trees linking them at the center.

The chief past loss to the historic character of the surviving buildings and structure was the removal of the original wooden and slate spire from the tower of the church, replaced in 1967 with an abstract, open-work spire of steel (Photograph 1). Impending losses to the integrity of the square include the possible demolition of the 1904 section of the school, which was stripped of plumbing, wood trim, and furnishings in the 1970's and has stood vacant for approximately ten years, and the removal of the uppermost section of the 75-foot tall smoke stack of the heating plant, due to disintegrating masonry (Photograph 8).

Section 7 Page 2 St. Peter's Square Historic District

#### I. St. Peter's Catholic Church

The design of St. Peter's Church, by architect Peter Dederichs of Detroit, is reminiscent of both Northern European Gothic sources from the thirteenth to late nineteenth centuries and contemporary late nineteenth century American Gothic churches. The church edifice is 181 feet long and 72 feet wide and runs east and west. The plan is basilican, with a gable roofed nave at center and flanking aisles to the north and south. Shallow, hipped roof transepts extend seven feet north and south of the aisle walls, with the sanctuary and apse continuing on the same axis as the nave, east of the crossing. Two sacristies flank the apse and are linked by an ambulatory passage. A tower rises over the central entrance to the nave at the west end of the church and consists of four brick stages rising 120 feet. This is surmounted by an approximately sixty-seven foot abstract open-work steel spire, constructed in 1967 to replace the storm damaged original spire. (Photograph 1). The church proper consists of an unexcavated basement, a two-story high nave and sanctuary, and an attic. There is also a choir and organ loft at the west end of the nave. The ridge of the gable roof above the nave is ninety feet high, and the aisle roofs at the outer eaves are forty-eight feet high. <sup>1</sup> The crossing spire (see Photocopy 1) was removed above its octagonal base during the 1970's, apparently because of a deteriorated condition.

The exterior walls of the church are constructed of load-bearing, running bond brick, resting on an exterior foundation composed of rock-faced limestone blocks laid in regular courses and rising approximately three feet to a smoothly-cut stone water table (Photographs 1 and 2). At the foot of the stepped buttresses, which occur between each bay of the north and south elevations, the foundation blocks are ashlar.

All ornamental details on the facade of the church are of carved limestone with smooth ashlar limestone used for the voussoirs of windows on the main facade and buttress steps on the north and south elevations. In the aisle windows, the voussoirs are brick, outlined with a single course of upraised brick headers terminating at the springing point of the arch in stone corbels. The three Gothic arched western entries with their engaged stone columns and steep gables are elaborated with crockets and finials. The original tongue-and-groove wooden doors survive with ornamental wrought iron hinges in the three western entries and in the entry to the north transept (Photograph 1). The nave

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and aisle roofs are covered with the original gray slate laid in 1894, replaced and patched in spots since then. The dormers in the nave and apse roofs are surmounted by pyramidal slate roofs crowned by copper finials. Pressed sheet metal stamped with ornamental square panels appears below all cornices of the church, and below the panels there are sheet metal moldings with concave profiles (Photograph 2).

For the tracery in the stained glass windows of the church, Dederichs employed a motif that figured in several of his ecclesiastical and school designs--circular lights. Above each of the three western entries and the north entrance, for example, there is a transom composed of three circular windows, symbolizing the Trinity. In all of the principal windows of the church, except those of the apse, two circular lights intervene between the cinquefoil head and lancet below (Photograph 1). The circle motif also appears in the eastern auditorium windows of the 1914-15 St. Peter's School, also designed by Dederichs.<sup>2</sup>

The interior design of the church features ribbed plaster vaulting in the nave, aisles, crossing, transepts, sanctuary, and apse. The slender wooden piers and pilasters from which the vaults spring are encased in clustered colonettes utilizing bunches of carved fruit as capitals. Affixed to the aisle piers and the outer walls of the transepts are large painted panels (Photographs 6 and 7) set in richly carved Gothic style enframements, which depict the twelve Stations of the Cross.<sup>3</sup> These were commissioned in 1908 by Reverend Charles H. Thiele who also commissioned a decorating scheme of stencilled frescoes involving foliated motifs, flowers, and grape vines. These frescoes were replaced in 1948 with the present stencilled pattern involving stylized geometric figures and fleur-de-lis superimposed on a pastel background. (Photographs 3-7).<sup>4</sup>

In 1908, Thiele commissioned Emil Hackner of the E. Hackner Company church decorating firm in LaCrosse, Wisconsin to design and construct the three principal altars of the church.<sup>5</sup> The high altar which stands at the east end of the apse, consists of the altar proper, a white marble table surmounted by a richly carved tabernacle, and a reredos behind the altar that rises approximately twenty-five feet high and dominates the sanctuary and nave of the church (Photographs 4 and 5). The three vertical stages of the reredos are composed of a profusion of elaborately carved motifs drawn from medieval and nineteenth century English Gothic architecture--blind arched panels, open-work arcades with

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filigree work, clustered colonettes, and multiple, crocketted finials providing terminations to the ornamentation of each In a large niche above the tabernacle at center are the level. statues of a standing Christ and a kneeling St. Peter. To the south and north of the sanctuary, in three-faceted niches designed for such a purpose by Dederichs (Photographs 6 and 7), Hackner created the altars of St. Joseph and St. Mary. Of nearly identical design, the two ensembles consist of an altar and tabernacle in the foreground and reredos in the background. Above the tabernacle of each ensemble, in a central niche, stand the statues of St. Mary (north altar) and St. Joseph (south All three of the altars are painted a cream color with altar). gold accenting. A striking feature of Hackner's design is the illumination of all levels of the three reredos with 700 electric incandescent light bulbs (Photograph 5).<sup>6</sup> In 1923, a marble communion rail with twenty wooden panels carved with open-work tracery and painted cream and gold was installed across the front of the chancel by the firm of Jacob Koehl & Sons.

In the interior of the church, most of the furnishings, altars, statuary, and other decorative adornments were added after completion of the church building in 1894. One of the first pieces of religious statuary installed was a large crucifix fastened to the south wall of the central vestibule. The cross is hardwood, stained a natural color, and on it hangs a life-size wooden statue of Christ, painted vivid, human colors. On the pedestal of the cross are carved a legend in German: "Million vom. 15 vis 24 Oct. 1899." Also of note are the two confessionals which were built into the west walls of the two transepts. The richly-carved wooden setting for the three stalls of the confessional include open-work gables with crockets over each stall entrance, a crowning ogee arch with panel of elaborate foliated details, and flanking crocketted finials.

In 1927-28, Thiele hired the Tellers-Kent Organ Co. of Erie, Pennsylvania to design and build a new pipe organ for the church. The console and pipes were constructed at the center of the balcony at the west end of the nave (Photograph 3). The organ contains three manuals, fifty-four stops, and 3311 pipes and continues in use today.

A final decorative element among the principal elements of enrichment in the interior are the stained glass windows. The employment of stained glass during the 1890's was lavish, with even the transoms of the doors leading from the vestibules into

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the nave and the windows in unfinished rooms of the western tower receiving art glass lights. Today, these early windows are still found in all but two bays of the aisle walls and the clerestory of the apse. One of the most impressive stained glass windows in the church is found in the north wall of the north transept. The window depicts a scene in the life of St. Martin, one of the patrons of the parish, and the life-like figures and vibrant colors are adapted from the style of the Tiffany studios in New York. The south transept window, from the same period, depicts an episode in the life of St. Agnes, a patroness of the parish. The five windows in the apse, containing deep, lustrous colors, (Photographs 4 and 5) were designed in 1931 by L. Woseczek of the Tyrolese Art Glass Company in Cincinnati.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the original interior design of the church remains unaltered. The principal alteration was the previously mentioned new fresco scheme of 1948. Also in the 1940's, the current asphalt floor tiles were laid in the aisle passages and in the chancel area (Photographs 3,4,6, and 7). Sometime after 1947, the original brass chandeliers that had hung from the bosses at the center of the vaults in the nave and crossing were removed and replaced with the present brass lanterns with Gothic panels, suspended from the crowns of the arches between the piers separating the nave and aisle sections.

#### II. St. Peter's School

The former St. Peter's School is a U-shaped brick building consisting of a two and a half story wing, facing onto St. Martin Street, constructed in 1904, and a three and a half story L-shape section, facing onto Hanna and DeWald Streets, constructed in 1914-15. The 1904 wing is a rectangular block with a hipped slate roof pierced by a single, centrally located, Georgian style dormer on the north and west sides (Photographs 10 and 12) and a semi-octagonal, red brick cupola on the south with round arched openings in each of three facets, and a peaked, hexagonal roof culminating in a cast-iron finial (Photograph 11). A copper cornice (removed on the north facade) with modillions covers the The north and west facades are faced with a buff colored, eaves. common bond brick veneer above a high, rusticated limestone base. The south elevation is constructed entirely of red common brick. A distinctive emblem composed of upraised bricks shaped roughly in a cross pattern (Photograph 10) is found in the tympanum panel of the first window above the north entry and in a band above

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each of the windows on the first story. Below the cornice level, there is a shallow brick corbel table on the north and west elevations (Photograph 12). A stone impost course and heavy, stone belt courses further divide the wing into horizontal bands.

With the exception of the easternmost entry bay, the main facade of the 1904 wing is a symmetrical composition with three identical window arches with keystones on either side of a large, two bay arch on the second floor (Photographs 10 and 12), ten regularly spaced rectangular window bays on the first floor, and four rectangular bays grouped at center and flanked by pairs of two bays in the basement story. The arches over each of the second floor windows consist of a single projecting course of brick headers and a course of an alternating brick pattern also found in the cupola. The entry bay features a projecting stone vestibule combining a Gothic gable with a round-arched entryway. A rectangular window with an arched tympanum is located at the first stair landing and a pair of small arched windows at the level of the second stair landing (Photograph 10). In the south elevation of the building, not visible from St. Martin Street, (Photograph 11) there are round-arched windows on the second floor, rectangular fenestration on the first floor and at the basement level, a fire escape doorway with brick tympanum at the east end of the second story, a projecting bulkhead below the escape supported by a corbel table, and an adjacent small arched window. This section of the school has been vacant since 1971 and all exterior openings have been boarded.

The east end of the 1904 wing adjoins the north end of the 1914-15 section of the school, which was designed by Peter Dederichs and runs along Hanna and DeWald Streets (see attached site plan of St. Peter's Square). Both the east and southwest wings of this section have a projecting, sheet metal cornice with modillions, hipped roofs pierced by parapetted brick gables in the east, south, and north slopes of the main block and by Georgian dormers in both sections identical to those used in the At the juncture between the two sections on DeWald 1904 wing. Street, there is a five and a half story, campanile-like tower, which contains the main entrance to the 1914-15 building. This tower has triple arcades on each face of the top story, is crowned by a projecting cornice, pyramidal roof and cross, and is divided into shaft and arcade sections by a projecting stone belt course immediately below the arcade openings (Photograph 11).

A buff-colored brick veneer laid in running bond covers the east

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and south elevations. The north and west elevations, not seen from the streets, are constructed of yellow common brick. An ashlar limestone foundation topped by a rusticated brick base, stone water table between the basement and first story, a heavy belt course between the first and second stories, and the projecting cornice divide the facades into horizontal bands similar to those in the 1904 wing. Colossal brick pilasters with stone caps are found between the bays of the second and third stories vertically connecting the belt course and cornice.

Fenestration is regular, with each bay containing two rectangular casement windows on the basement level, a trio of three doublehung sash with transoms on the first and second floors, and a similar trio arrangement minus the transoms on the third floor. Exceptions to this general arrangement are the projecting gabled bays on the north and south which have paired windows at each level, windows in the tower which have a row of three individual units at each level, the northeast bays corresponding to the stage area which have a single, large arched window with eighteen lights, and the four central bays of the east facade. These second and third story bays, which correspond to the auditorium space, are one of the unusual features of Dederich's design. Each consists of a fixed-sash window containing fifteen lights at the top and a trio of double-hung sash windows below a row of wooden spandrel panels. The upper sashes are dominated by a circular light at center, a motif that Dederichs used in buildings throughout his career. Wedge-shaped lights border the center, and square ones below. (Photo 9) Two bays containing the fenestration pattern originally were visible in the same courtyard elevation of the main block, but are now boarded.

The exterior of the 1914-15 section of St. Peter's School is enriched by four concentrations of stone ornamental features. The main entrance at the base of the tower is designated by two enframements, one within the other. The entry proper, with its double doors and transom window, is flanked by fluted pilasters on ashlar pedestals supporting an entablature with swags and dentils and sheltered by a projecting pediment decorated with dentils in the tympanum. The capitals of the pilasters are unorthodox in terms of Classical architecture, consisting simply of cyma recta molding, fascia, egg and dart molding, frieze, and astragal molding. Dederichs used this formula for pilaster capitals throughout the rest of the facades of the building. The larger enframement consists of colossal paneled pilasters at the corners of the tower base, supporting an entablature above the

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windows of the first stair landing. The bases and upper portions of the shafts carry vertical, projecting square sculptures running down into the pedestals and rising from corbels through the capitals into the frieze of the entablature.

The second concentration of decorative detail appears in the central gable of the Hanna Street elevation. The three colossal pilasters in the projecting pavilion below the gable extend up past the cornice line and terminate in capitals pierced by stone crosses resting on corbels imposed on the shafts. Stone coping lines the gable and rises in two stages to a culminating There are three ornamental chimney caps that appear palmette. above the coping at the ends of the gable and at its apex. Two pairs of attic windows appear between the caps of the pilasters. Each window has a stone cornice and the pairs are linked by projecting triangles. At the middle of the gable is a sheet metal niche atop the central pilaster capital. Within the niche stands a plaster statue of an angel pointing upward to Heaven with the right arm and embracing with the left arm a child looking upward. Beneath the sills of the attic windows are two stone tablets bearing the words "St. Peters School" in upraised The third and fourth ornamental concentrations are letters. variations on the Hanna Street gable. At the center of both the north and south elevations of the main block are identical gables, each carrying a single pair of windows with intervening triangle, coping with culminating "chimney" caps, and vertical crosses piercing the capitals of colossal pilasters.

The original plan of the 1914-15 building provided rooms for both St. Peter's School and for activities of the parish. As completed in 1915, the basement of the main block was divided into a seven-lane bowling alley at its north end and a small, sunken gymnasium at its south end. Both of these features have since been removed. The basement rooms of the southwest wing were devoted to storage, offices of parish organizations, and restrooms. The first floor of both sections was devoted exclusively to the school, with six classrooms arranged along the north, east, and south sides of the main block and a kitchen and school offices at the west end of the southwest wing. On the second and third floors of the main block was the stage and auditorium of the school and the parish (Photograph 13 and 14). The second floor of the southwest section contained the school cafeteria at its west end and a classroom, and the third floor contained an assembly room for the school at the west end and another classroom.<sup>9</sup> Vertical circulation is by means of a stair

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hall entered through the tower between the two wings. The tower also contains two floors above the third story:an unfinished storage room and an observation platform at the top.

In the 1904 wing, the plan is similar on each of the three A stair hall runs north-south at the east end of the floors. section and provides the principal means of vertical circulation. In the basement, a corridor runs from the south end of the stair hall west along the south side of the building. A storage area occupies the northern portion of the ground floor. On the first floor, there are two classrooms along the north side, entered from an east-west corridor on the south which continues into the 1914-15 section. The second floor follows the same plan as that on the first, with the exception that there is a narrow room running north and south between the two classrooms on the north A secondary exit is provided for the first floor by a side. story and a half stair hall adjoining the south side of the building.

In the interior of the 1914-15 section of the school, ornamental details are found principally inside the main entry and in the former auditorium. The area between the vestibule and the flight of stairs leading to the first floor is adorned with plaster moldings consisting of egg and dart, geometric, and foliated patterns. The entryway also features a mosaic floor, marble stairs and wainscoting which continues along the stairway to the second floor, and brass stair railing. The balustrade to the upper floors is composed of cast-iron filigree work and wood rails. All doors, trim, and classroom flooring in the building are of varnished hardwood and the blackboards are slate. Speckled terrazzo flooring outlined with a single line of white mosaic and a lavender terrazzo border is found in the corridors, as well as the entry hall of the former Suelzer House, now the church rectory. In the third floor assembly room, the original chandeliers, consisting of glass globes in brass frames, hang by chains from the coved plaster ceiling.

In the former auditorium on the second floor, the walls, proscenium arch, and flanking stage entries are adorned with ornamental plaster moldings (Photographs 13 and 14). The formula used by Dederichs for capitals on the exterior continues in the auditorium, where it appears at the tops of the colossal pilasters lining the east and west walls and on the pilasters of the proscenium and flanking arches (Photograph 14). Within each of the two side arches is an arched stained glass window and an

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entry to the stage beyond framed by wooden pilasters, frieze with dentils, and pediment with crowning palmette. Originally, one of the dominant decorative elements in the auditorium was a fresco design that consisted of stenciled ceiling panels depicting flowers and foliage and abstract border motifs that appeared on the pilaster shafts and ceiling trusses. Recently, all but a few pilaster surfaces and three sections of the ceiling have been painted over.

There are few ornamental details remaining in the interior of the 1904 school building. The chief decorative elements are a plaster groin vault employed as a ceiling over the south end of the main stair hall on the first floor and two large plaster consoles "supporting" a flat arch at the south end of the stair hall on the second floor. The vault "springs" from ornamental corbels, and the consoles are adorned with acanthus leaves.

#### III. St. Peter's Square Boiler House

The boiler house, measuring twenty-nine by forty-four feet, stands at the center of St. Peter's Square (Photograph 8). When constructed, between 1905 and 1915, the building's boilers furnished steam heat to all of the buildings in the square. Today, it still provides heat for the church and school buildings. Above grade, there is a one-story brick structure containing the upper portion of the boiler room, storage space, and a washroom, while the boilers and a former coal bin are located in a twelve-foot deep basement. The foundation is constructed of reinforced concrete, thirteen inches thick, which supports the common, running bond brick walls of the The flat roof is constructed of a twenty-two superstructure. gauge steel deck supported by fourteen-inch "Bar Joist Rafters"<sup>10</sup> Tar and gravel cover the deck. At the center of the east side of the original boiler house is a brick and hollow tile chimney, constructed in 1924 and rising some seventy-five feet. A brick garage constructed between 1919 and 1951 adjoins the boiler house.

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#### John Suelzer House (St. Peter's Rectory) and Garage (518 East Dewald Street)

St. Peters Rectory is a two and a half story brick house constructed in the Colonial Revival style in 1911 by John With dimensions of thirty-six feet (frontage on Suelzer, Sr. Dewald Street) by forty feet, with a two-story, twenty-two foot rear addition, the north facade is three bays wide (Photograph The foundation of the house is rubble limestone, seventeen 17). inches thick, laid up to grade, upon which rest the exterior brick walls, which are composed of common brick faced with the buff and brown brick veneer. Characteristic of high-style Colonial Revival dwellings erected during the early decades of the twentieth century, the Suelzer House possesses features that are drawn from American Colonial antecedents: the grey slate gable roof parallel to the street, dormers with pediments, brick masonry construction, quoins at the corners of the building, cornice with modillions, lintels styled as flat arches with keystones, and chimneys at either end of the front slope of roof (Photograph 17).

In other aspects of the exterior composition, the design departs from the typical stylistic trends of contemporary Colonial Revival precedents. The fenestration of the facade is not symmetrical or regular, and the eastern bay projects several feet beyond the rest of the elevation. In addition, a veranda occupies the L-shaped space formed by the projection and the remaining facade while its entablature, consisting of cornice, dentil, and frieze, continues across the remainder of the facade. In the eastern projection, the three bays of the first floor curve outward in a slight bow. Another unorthodox aspect of the exterior is the use of polychromy in the brick work of all four elevations of the residence. The quoins are composed of red face brick, contrasting with the intervening walls consisting of a mixture of buff and brown colored brick.

The interior room arrangement typifies the plan used in late nineteenth and early twentieth century urban residences in the United States: a central entry hall flanked by parlors with access to adjoining rooms. On the first floor, one enters from Dewald Street through a vestibule, which leads into an entry hall running north and south. The pastor's office, originally the library of the Suelzer House, is situated in the northeast corner of the first floor, with the rectory's living room, the

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parlor during the Suelzer period, across the entry hall. Adjoining the living room is the dining room of both the original residence and the rectory. The stairway to the second floor is located at a right angle to the entry hall, next to the pastor's office. In the southeast corner of the original house was the kitchen, which in 1949 was divided into two rectory offices. At the rear of the house, the addition provided a breakfast room and kitchen adjacent to the dining room, and another, one story addition to the east elevation furnished a third rectory office.

On the second floor, the principal corridor runs north and south and connects with the pastor's bedroom at the northwest corner, a second bedroom in the northeast corner, a third bedroom south off the pastor's room, and a fourth bedroom in the southeast corner The principal bathroom is at the south of the original house. of the main corridor. The fifth bedroom in end Suelzer household, which has been divided into a bathroom, corridor to the rear addition, and second bath for the rectory housekeeper, is in the southwest corner. In the L formed by the original building and the two-story rear addition, there is an "airing porch" at the second floor level reached by doors from the southeast bedroom and housekeeper's guarters. The third floor attic was expanded in 1949 to include a recreational area at the center, two additional bedrooms (where a dormer was cut in the south slope of the room), and a bath placed next to the stairs.

Of the principal decorative features of the interior, the newel post of the main stairway, consisting of a hardwood pedestal, cornice with dentils, and culminating newel cap in the shape of an urn with a knob, is a chief ornamental element. The cap motif is repeated in the remaining posts of the stairway. Also of interest is the living room fireplace where, above the marble hearth, the simple wood mantel is enframed by a cyma recta molding superimposed on flanking pilasters, together with a frieze with central recessed panel and a shelf. The entry hall is covered with the same terrazzo floor pattern as was used in the 1914-15 section of St. Peter's School. The trim throughout the residence is all hardwood, heavily varnished, and the walls are plastered.

The original doors in the house are of solid hardwood decorated with two inlaid wood strips, one dark and one light. These same doors were used by Suelzer in the 1914 school. There is beveled glass in the transom and side lights of both the front entrance and the inner vestibule doorway.

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In the outside transom stained glass numbers denote the rectory's address.

During the 1920's, the Suelzer family replaced their original stable at the rear of the property with the present two-car garage. The building, identified as contributing to the collective character of the district, is wood frame and stands a single story. Sided with shiplap, the hipped roof is covered with asphalt shingles and features overhanging eaves with a friezeboard and a decorative crown molding. Fixed windows divided into eight lights are found on the east and west facades of the garage.

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l"Corner Stone Laid, "Fort Wayne Weekly Sentinel, May 10, 1893, p. 1, c. 7; Insurance Maps of Fort Wayne, Indiana . ., (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1919), Vol. 2, plan 177; letter form John D. Martindale, architect, to Mgr. John A. Bapst, December 11, 1967 and letter from Edward J. Tourney, Martindale & Associates, Architects, to Mgr. John A. Bapst, July 19, 1967, p. 1, both in St. Peter's Parish Archives.

<sup>2</sup>Dederichs had used circular lights previously in St. Mary's German Catholic Church in Detroit (1885). Later, he employed the motif again in St. Peter's School in Fort Wayne (1914-15) and St. Charles Borromeo Church in Detroit (c. 1919-20). Photographs and postcard views of both Detroit churches are in the photograph collection of the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.

<sup>3</sup>See "Golden Jubilee of St. Peter's Catholic Church to Be Celebrated on Thanksgiving Day," <u>Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette</u>, November 26, 1922, p. 17, c. 1; and Charles H. Thiele, "St. Peter's Parish History Tells Story of 53 Years of Achievement, "<u>Fort Wayne News-Sentinel</u>, June 19, 1926, p. 14, c. 1.

<sup>4</sup>See "Proposition and Specifications for Redecoration," submitted by the Gaffer Studios to St. Peter's Parish, dated 1948, in St. Peter's Parish Archives.

<sup>5</sup>See "History of St. Peter's Parish" in <u>Diamond Jubilee of</u> <u>St. Peter's Catholic Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana</u> (Fort Wayne: St. Peter's Parish, 1947), and Albert H. Sanford and H.J. Hirshheimer, <u>A History of La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1841-1900</u> (La Crosse: La Crosse County Historical Society, 1951), p. 251.

<sup>6</sup>See "Did you Know?" section in <u>Diamond Jubilee</u>, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup>See "Specification of an Organ," prepared by St. Peter's R.C. Church of Fort Wayne, Ind. by the Tellers-Kent Organ Company, September 20, 1927, in St. Peter's Parish Archives and "History of St. Peter's Parish," in <u>Diamond Jubilee</u>, op. cit.

<sup>8</sup>See list of windows to be created by L. Woseczek in envelope marked "Church Windows--1931," St. Peter's Parish Archives.

<sup>9</sup>The original functions of the rooms in the school building are indicated in the 1919 Sanborn <u>Insurance Maps of Fort Wayne</u>, op. cit., plan 177 and in MacConnell & Co., cit., p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>The dimensions given for the boiler house are taken from the MacConnell & Co. insurance summary, op. cit., Building No. 7, p. (1).

Section 8 Page 1 St. Peter's Square Historic District

#### Significant Dates (Continued)

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1911 (construction of Suelzer House)
1914-15 (construction of second section of St. Peter's School)
1949 (remodeling of Suelzer House to serve as St. Peter's
Rectory)

## 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Comprised of five contributing buildings, St. Peter's Catholic Church, the former St. Peter's School, the boiler house, and the John Suelzer House and garage (St. Peter's Rectory), St. Peter's Square Historic District is collectively significant for its associations with local architectural and historical development. In applying the criteria for evaluating the significance of the district, St. Peter's Square meets National Register Criteria A and C and Consideration A.

Under Criterion C, the church and school buildings are major examples of the work of Peter Dederichs, a leading church architect in the Midwest. Under Criterion A, the district is directly connected with Fort Wayne's ethnic history for its associations as one of the principal German Catholic parishes of the City.

#### I. <u>Architectural Significance</u>

Peter's Catholic Church and School are architecturally st. significant as two of three surviving buildings in Fort Wayne designed by Peter Dederichs, a leading Midwestern architect of German Catholic churches and parish buildings during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Dederichs was born in Detroit in 1856, the son of a German immigrant carpenter. A selftaught architect who acquired his first commission at the age of seventeen, Dederichs advertised himself as an architect and superintendent of construction for churches, school houses, dwellings and stores.<sup>1</sup> In Detroit, Sacred Heart Catholic Church (c. 1873-74) and St. Mary's Catholic Church, the later an edifice for a German Catholic parish, are two of his earlier known works. His regional respect as a church architect strengthened in 1886 when Dederichs was commissioned to plan the new edifice of the west side German parish in Fort Wayne, St. Paul's Catholic Church.<sup>2</sup> (NRHP-West End Historic District, 1984) When St. Peter's, the German parish in the southeastern section of Fort

Section 8 Page 2 St. Peter's Square Historic District

Wayne, decided to erect a new building in 1892, Pastor Anthony Messmann and the building committee turned to Dederichs, whose reputation as an architect of German Catholic churches had become well-established.

From the 1890's until his death in 1924, Dederichs expanded the breadth of his practice; supervising the construction of the United States Post Office Building and the county building in Detroit, planning hotels and several parochial schools, designing St. Joseph's Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska, and designing churches in Chattanooga, Tennessee; Sharpsburg, Pennsylvania; and Richmond, Virginia. It was during this period of Dederichs' professional expansion that St. Peter's parish again selected him to erect a new addition to St. Peter's School (1904). Dederichs supervised construction of the new edifice between 1914 and 1916.<sup>3</sup>

Dederichs established a rapport with Catholic clients, who had the same Germanic heritage as himself. The architect derived his income by supplying plans for church and school buildings needed by the many Midwestern parishes that swelled with first and second-generation German families in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In addition to its association with Dederichs, St. Peter's Church is architecturally significant as one of the finest examples of late nineteenth century Gothic Revival churches surviving in Fort Wayne. Ranking as one of the principal monumental Gothic edifices of the post-Civil War period in the city, St. Peter's rivals the significance of some of more prominent local examples. Despite replacement of the spire in 1968, St. Peter's possesses architectural integrity equivalent to several Gothic Revival churches currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places: Trinity Episcopal (1978), Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception (1980), St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran (1982), St. Mary's Catholic (1984), and St. John's Lutheran and Emmanuel Lutheran Churches (West End Historic District, 1984).

The boiler house, erected circa 1910, stands as a contributing building within the district. Despite a series of modifications, all executed during the district's period of significance, the overall character of the building, and its association with the square, has not been diminished.

The former John Suelzer House, now known as St. Peter's Rectory, is also architecturally significant. A well-executed local example of Colonial Revival domestic architecture, the Suelzer House was erected in 1911. John Suelzer was a Fort Wayne

Section 8 Page 3 St. Peter's Square Historic District

contractor whose local works include(d) St. Paul's (German) Catholic Church (1886), St. Patrick's Catholic Church (1890), St. Peter's (1892-94), St. Peter's School Addition (1914-16), St. Mary's School for Girls (demolished), the James H. Smart and Bloomingdale Public Schools (both demolished), and the Sophia Dewald House (1903). The Sophia Dewald House, located in the block immediately west of the subject district, is noted in Fort Wayne's Cultural Resources Survey as the city's most formidable example of Colonial Revival architecture and is reputed to be the prototype of the Suelzer residence.

In comparison, the Suelzer House rivals the significance and integrity of the Dewald House. The 1949 remodeling to the Suelzer House altered the interior plan at the back of the building, however the exterior appearance and the arrangement of rooms at the front remain unchanged from the period in which the Suelzer family resided there. The garage on the south side of the property, which replaced the original stable around 1925, contributes to the collective character of Suelzer property and the St. Peter's Square district through its architectural association.

## II. <u>Significance in Local Ethnic History</u>

St. Peter's Church and School buildings are significant in the ethnic history of Fort Wayne for their associations with German settlement in the southeast section of the city in the late nineteenth century. Although two other German Catholic parishes had been founded in the central city before St. Peter's, St. Mary's Church on the east and St. Paul's on the west, first and second generation Germans comprised a majority of residents in an area bounded by the east-west Pennsylvania Railroad tracks on the north, Calhoun Street on the west, and the city's corporation limits to the east and south. These same delineations became the boundaries of St. Peter's Parish.

Following the Civil War, German immigrants began to settle south of the railroad tracks which ran along the southern edge of the town limits. In 1871, a group of German Catholics living southeast of the center of Fort Wayne petitioned Bishop Joseph Dwenger of the Diocese of Fort Wayne to form a new parish for the German-speaking people of their area. The bishop agreed and appointed the Reverend Jacob Wemhoff as pastor. The trustees of the new parish promptly purchased lots in what is now St. Peter's Square where some of the male members constructed a combined church and school building facing St. Martin Street. A wave of

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Section 8 Page 4 St. Peter's Square Historic District

new German families immigrated into Fort Wayne over the next twenty years and settled the neighborhood surrounding the church. Like many other ethnic parishes of the time, St. Peter's provided a religious and social center for the newcomers, in which their native language was spoken and home culture kept alive.<sup>4</sup>

Under the Reverend Anthony Messmann, the successor of Father Wemhoff, a building committee was formed, and the present, monumental church erected to accommodate the burgeoning size of the parish. With the addition to the parish school buildings, completed in 1916, the original parishioners, their children, and grandchildren were able to practice most of their social and recreational activities in St. Peter's Square.

St. Peter's Square was central to the everyday lives of many congregants. The children of the parish attended the parochial school, participated in extracurricular activities sponsored by the School Sisters and assistant pastors, and engaged in recreational activities on the premises. Adults from St. Peter's Parish joined many affiliated societies; St. Martin's Society, Holy Name Society, the School Society, St. Agnes Sodality, Married Ladies Sodality, and a drama troupe known as the Charlonians.

Although the Germanic traditions gradually faded after World War I, second and third generation German families in southeast Fort Wayne continued to join St. Peter's parish. Membership increased from 2,843 people in 1922 to a high of 5,423 in 1947.<sup>1</sup>3 Beginning in the 1950's, a slow decline in the number of parishioners began, as the descendants of immigrant families moved to suburban housing tracts and new Catholic parishes were organized in outlying areas. Today, St. Peter's Church and the former school are among the principal monuments left in Fort Wayne by the nineteenth century German immigrants, the largest ethnic group to settle in the city.

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#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>See advertisement for "PETER DEDERICHS, JR. Architect and Superintendent...," in <u>The Detroit City Directory for 1877</u> (Detroit: J.W. Weeks & Co., 1877), p. 149.

<sup>2</sup>See "City Items," <u>The Fort Wayne Journal</u>, February 3, 1886, p. (4), c. 4.

<sup>3</sup>See the building contract for the 1914-15 St. Peter's School building, dated May 1st, 1914, in St. Peter's Parish Archives, and "St. Peter's Votes the Erection of a New School Hall," <u>Fort-Wayne</u> <u>Journal-Gazette</u>, January 26, 1914, p. 1, c. 2. The parish account book for 1912-25, in the parish archives, shows disbursements to Dederichs for supervising construction between 1914 and 1916.

<sup>4S</sup>ee "Golden Jubilee of St. Peter's Catholic Church to Be Celebrated on Thanksgiving Day;" <u>Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette</u>, November 26, 1922, p. 17.

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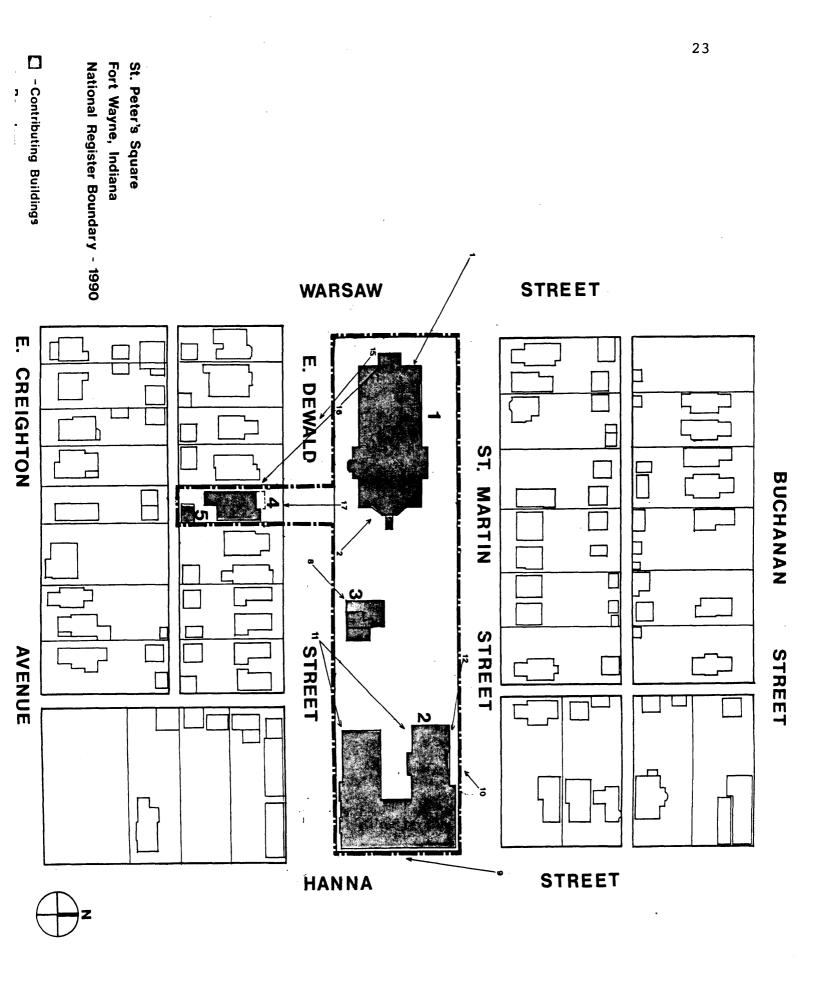
- 1. Suite 800, City-County Building, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802
- 2. St. Peter's Parish Archives, 518 East DeWald Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46803



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ST. PETER'S CHURCH, FORT WAYNE, IND.





Sketch Map Page 1 St. Peter's Square Historic District

Five buildings, all contributing to the significance of St. Peter's Square property, are shown on the attached sketch map.

- 1. St. Peter's Catholic Church
- 2. 1904 section of the former St. Peter's School
- 3. 1914-15 section of the former St. Peter's School
- 4. John Suelzer House St. Peter's Rectory
- 5. St. Peter's Square Boiler House
- 6. Rectory garage

The orientation of all exterior photographs accompanying the nomination is also shown on the sketch map. See the Photograph Description Continuation Sheets for orientation of interior photos.

The sketch map is adapted from <u>Insurance Maps of Fort Wayne,</u> <u>Indiana</u> (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1919, corrected to March, 1951), Vol. 2, Plans 177 and 190. The portion shown in the sketch map has been enlarged from the original, and the is not to scale.

Section 9 Page 1 St. Peter's Square Historic District

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Photographs Page 1 St. Peter's Square Historic District

## Description of Photographs

All photographs accompanying the St. Peter's Square nomination were taken by James A. Glass on June 16 and 17, 1988. All buildings photographed are located in St. Peter's Square, 518 East DeWald Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana. The thirty-five millimeter negatives are located at the Division of Community Development and Planning, City of Fort Wayne, Suite 800, City-County Building, One Main Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802. Each of the following photograph numbers is keyed to the attached sketch map of the property.

#### St. Peter's Square Historic District

- 1. West (Warsaw Street) elevation (facade) and North (St. Martin Street) elevation of St. Peter's Catholic Church, seen from northwest, on St. Martin Street.
- 2. East elevation of St. Peter's Catholic Church, showing transepts, apse, and ambulatory, seen from the southeast along Dewald Street.
- 3. Looking west along the central axis of St. Peter's nave, from the sanctuary.
- 4. Looking east along the central axis of St. Peter's nave, from the doorway of the central vestibule.
- 5. Detail of High Altar and reredos, illuminated by incandescent light bulbs, from the west, in the chancel.
- 6. Looking east along the north aisle section toward the illuminated Altar of St. Mary, from the western balcony.
- 7. Looking east along the south aisle section toward the Altar of St. Joseph, from the western balcony.
- 8. West and south elevations of the boiler house and St. Peter's School, seen from the west, on DeWald Street.
- 9. East elevation of St. Peter's School, from northeast at intersection of Hanna and St. Martin Streets.
- 10. North (St. Martin Street) elevation of 1914-15 section of the school, seen from the northeast, on St. Martin Street.

Photographs Page 2 St. Peter's Square Historic District

- 11. South elevation of the 1904 building and west and south elevations of the 1914-15 section of the school, seen from the southwest, on DeWald Street.
- 12. North (St. Martin Street) and west elevations of 1904 building (St. Peter's School), seen from the northwest, on St. Martin Street.
- 13. Proscenium and stage of the former auditorium on the second and third floors of St. Peter's School, seen from the south.
- 14. Four bays with circular motif and east wall of the former auditorium in St. Peter's School, seen from the southwest, on the west balcony.
- 15. View of St. Peter's Rectory and the surrounding neighborhood, taken from the northwest, atop the belfry in St. Peter's Church.
- 16. Bird's eye view of rectory from the northwest, atop the belfry of St. Peter's Church.
- 17. North (DeWald Street) elevation of St. Peter's Rectory, seen from the north, in St. Peter's Square.

## Photocopies of Historical Photographs

- 1. West and south elevations of St. Peter's Catholic Church in c. 1898, as seen from the southwest. Source: St. Peter's Parish Archives.
- 2. North and west elevations of St. Peter's Church in c. 1920's, as seen from the northwest, on St. Martin Street. Source: St. Peter's Parish Archives.