

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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

**1. Name**

historic Amberg Town Hall

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number Grant Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Amberg \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district Eighth

state Wisconsin code 55 county Marinette code 075

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Town of Amberg, Eleanor M. Forney, Town Clerk

street & number Grant Street

city, town Amberg \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Wisconsin 54102

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marinette County Courthouse

street & number Hall Avenue

city, town Marinette \_\_\_\_\_ state Wisconsin 54153

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

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

date 1980 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison \_\_\_\_\_ state Wisconsin 53706

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Amberg Town Hall is situated in the village of Amberg in northern Marinette County, Wisconsin. With its back to forest and the Pike River, the building marks a right-angle turn in County Highway V, one block west of the commercial block. Residential areas to the north, south, and east are composed largely of frame cottages.

A two-course, gray granite foundation, locally-quarried, supports the town hall on its grassy site. A wide gable roof, with asbestos shingles in place of the cedar originals, covers the two-story-plus-attic elevation. Only an octagonal tower on the northeast corner and a projecting closed entry on the front (east) facade break the regularity of the rectangular plan. The original tall octagonal roof and supporting braces over the open belfrey were reduced in the 1950s to a lower roof over the simple wood balustrade. A similar balustrade, also original, tops of the front entry. Wood finials top the tower and front peak of the gable roof. A large Palladian window lights the center of the attic-level auditorium. Vertical wood timbers on the seams of the tower and framing the double-hung windows contrast with the shingled surface. Windows, aside from those in the faces of the tower and in the Palladian window, are paired. Secondary entrances include two on the north side and one on the west, all with original wood panel doors. A shed-roof canopy, supported by braces, protects the west door, and a larger canopy with wood posts forms a porch in the center of the north side. A structural brace stabilizes the tall brick stack on the south slope of the roof; a second, shorter brick chimney sits on the west end of the ridge of the gable.

Few alterations have been made on the interior. Walls between the former jail and custodian's residence and between the living room and a former bedroom on the first floor have been removed, to enlarge the present kitchen and club room, respectively. A combination of wall paper and paneling replace the original wainscoting and plaster walls in the former bedroom, now clubroom; the same paneling covers all walls in the clerk's office. Otherwise, the original wainscoting and plaster is intact throughout. Voting booths are still in place in the front room which includes the tower space; the remaining forty-four feet of the sixty-foot first-floor plan is roughly bisected, north-to-south, into smaller rooms. The clerk's office just west of the voting room remains such, while former bedrooms of the custodian's residence are used for storage. The enlarged kitchen fills the western end of the plan, with the enlarged clubroom along the north side. The open meeting hall on the second floor, like those in the former bedrooms downstairs, is constructed of pine boards; other floors are of hardwood. Stairs from the front entry to the first floor, and from the first to second floor are utilitarian in nature. Most of the hardware is original. Oak files, kitchen cupboards, tables, the safe, and several Hitchcock side chairs, are still in service.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Civic Development
<b>Specific dates</b>	1894 <sup>1</sup>	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	C. M. Maass <sup>2</sup>	

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Constructed in 1894, the Amberg Town Hall has served the political, social, and cultural needs of the residents of Amberg and vicinity for nearly ninety years, and continues to do so to this day. Architecturally, the use of frame Queen Anne construction in a civic design is unusual and significant, the more so because of the quality of the building's integrity and condition.

## Civic Development

Originally known as Pike, the settlement that became Amberg made its first appearance in 1867 as a supply depot for the timber drives down the Pike River in northern Marinette County. However, the town's major growth was not to come until the arrival of the Milwaukee and Northern Railroad in 1884.<sup>3</sup> Although the initial years of the town's boom period were fueled with timber, its future would hinge on the quarrying of high-quality building granite. In 1887, William Amberg, a Chicago businessman, arrived at the future site of his namesake. Mindful of the need for paving blocks for rapidly-growing Chicago, Amberg bought several forties on what are now the Martindale, Argyle, and Aberdeen quarries. At the same time, Amberg platted the village that now bears his name. In 1888, he opened the Athelstane quarry, which provided a dark-gray granite used in the construction of the Milwaukee Post Office and several other structures in Wisconsin and elsewhere. By 1891, Amberg was large enough to break away from the Town of Wausaukee and shortly afterward it was decided that the town hall should be erected. Construction commenced in the spring of 1894 and was completed later that year. The town hall housed the jail and custodian's living quarters at the rear of the first floor while the clerk's office was in the front portion. The second floor provided the town with a large hall for community entertainment. The town hall was available for use by the public with locals charged three dollars a night and outsiders five dollars. Church organizations could hold socials rent-free.<sup>4</sup> Outside entertainers gave performances in the town hall and the Christmas plays, box socials, basketball games, dances and public meetings were held in the large hall on the second floor throughout the years. In 1903, following a fire that destroyed most of Amberg's business block, the town purchased a hand-pulled fire engine which was stored in the town hall until a few years ago.

A measure of the pride felt by the community for the town hall was the fact that the Amberg Progressive League's promotional stationery featured the town hall, school, potato warehouse, waterpower, granite quarrying, and cutover land to entice the new settler.<sup>5</sup> Today, the hall is used by the American Legion and other social groups for their get-togethers and by the town board for its governmental functions. Although neglected in recent years, the town hall was given a face-lift in 1976 during the nation's bicentennial. At present, the building's future is in doubt as the town board is considering demolition of this Amberg landmark.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

see Continuation sheet

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Pembin, Wis.-Mich.

Quadrangle scale 1:62,500

UTM References

A	16	422300	5039025
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
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D			
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E			
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F			
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G			
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H			
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 1 and 2 Block 7, S.A. Coleman's First Addition to the Town of Amberg, Marinette County, Wisconsin

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael R. Matucheski, Preservation Assistant (cont.)  
Diane H. Filipowicz, Architectural Historian

organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date November, 1980

street & number 816 State Street telephone (608) 262-2970

city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Richard Murray*

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

date 2/16/81

For HCRS use only

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

*[Signature]*

date 7/20/81

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *[Signature]*

date 3/16/81

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Amberg Town Hall

Continuation sheet

Item number 8, 9, 11

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8. Architecture

Rejuvenated for the nation's bicentennial, the Amberg Town Hall is an unusual survivor of the Queen Anne era of construction. Although the height of the corner tower has been reduced, the design retains its hallmark attic-level Palladian window, finial, and shingle covering with contrasting wood timbers. The multi-purpose facility originally housed town offices, jail, custodian's residence, and an auditorium for social meetings and entertainments.

The architect, Charles W. Maass, advertised his services in Marinette city directories during the time that the Amberg Town Hall was constructed. No other information is known about him.

- 1) Cornerstone and Dorothy Gray Krohn, ed., History of Amberg, 1947, reprinted 1976, pp. 18-19.
- 2) Town Clerk's ledger.
- 3) History of Amberg, p. 7.
- 4) Ibid., pp. 18-19.
- 5) Ibid., p.30.

9. Major Bibliographical References:

Krohn, Dorothy Gray, ed., History of Amberg, 1947, reprinted 1976.

Marinette County Centennial, 1979-1979, Marinette, Wisconsin, 1979.

A Souvenir of Marinette County, Wisconsin, Iron Mountain, Michigan, 1904.

Wausaukee Independent, September 7, 1935

11. Form Prepared By:

Research assistance by Florence Churchill  
P. O. Box 107  
Amberg, Wisconsin 54102

August, 1980