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NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8/86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 2/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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 Form (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 (Form 10-900a). Type all entries on a letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property

historic name Buemming, Herman W., House
other name/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1012 East Pleasant Street N/A not for publication
city, town Milwaukee N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin Code WI county Milwaukee code 079 zip code 53202

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

12/6/89
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.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Entered in the
National Register

 entered in the National Register.

 See continuation sheet

 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet

 determined not eligible for the National Register.

 removed from the National Register.

 other, (explain:)

[Signature]

1/18/90

Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)	
Classical Revival	foundation	Brick
	walls	Wood
	roof	Asphalt
	other	Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

General Character

The Herman Buemming House is located on Milwaukee's lower east side approximately one mile northeast of the city's central business district. The residence is situated on a small, 55 wide by 60 feet deep lot fronting south onto Pleasant Street. The house is set back about five feet from the sidewalk. Since the house sits several feet above grade, a concrete retaining wall about three feet high was constructed in 1972 about one foot back from the sidewalk. Historically, Pleasant Street developed between 1850 and 1890 as a middle-class residential street with houses ranging from simple, one- and two-story, front-gabled, clapboard houses to rowhouses, double-houses, and more elaborate and costly single family brick residences. The densely-built area retains a good portion of its historic fabric although twentieth century apartment buildings have replaced some of the earlier structures. The Buemming house today is bordered on the east by a four-story, late 1920s pair of apartment buildings while on the west is a smaller two-story apartment house built in the early 1960s. Those apartment buildings replaced frame, single family dwellings that were built before 1888.¹

The Buemming House, built in 1901, is an imposing example of the Classical Revival style and was designed to resemble a Greek temple. The main feature of the rectangular frame building is the two-story pro-style, Ionic portico. The portico rests on a raised platform with paneled plinths. Wooden classical grilles in a crossbuck design fill the spaces between the plinths. The portico was designed without a balustrade.² A central flight of five wooden steps provides access to the porch platform.

Not a pure example of any one classical order, the portico nevertheless skillfully combines Ionic capitals, a Corinthian multiple-fascia architrave, and a simple frieze ornamented with four blank medallions. A boldly enframed lunette window with Adamesque fan tracery is located in the clapboarded tympanum of the pediment. Egg and dart mouldings enrich the pediment raking and the entablature while anthemion-form acroteria decorate the three corners of the pediment. The entablature is carried around both the east and west elevations of the house.

Behind the colonnade, the facade of the Buemming house is symmetrically divided into three bays. The large pedimented central entrance is flanked by broad windows on both stories. Above the entrance on the second story is

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a small, rectangular Roman grille window set in a crossetted frame. The large two-over-two sash windows flanking the door on both stories have fixed ornamental Roman grille upper sash whose design reflects the pattern of the porch skirting grilles. These windows, like the entrance, each have pediments and wide crossetted architraves. The architrave around the front door is more ornate than the ones at the windows in that it is battered, enriched with rosettes, and encloses a small, fixed leaded glass transom above the door.

The east elevation is much simpler in design than the facade and features an abstract arrangement of plain, rectangular windows of various sizes, asymmetrically placed to respond to floor plan requirements. The one notable window on this elevation is the long, rectangular parlor window which is glazed with a leaded panel of clear beveled glass.

The west elevation is symmetrically arranged at the first story level with two large sash windows flanking a narrow rectangular one. These three windows are trimmed with pediments and wide architraves like those on the facade. On the second story above this grouping is one simple, unadorned, central, one-over-one sash window. Since there was once a large side yard on the west side of the house between the Buemming residence and the house on the corner, the west elevation was evidently designed more formally than the less visible east elevation.

The rear of the house is unornamented and has several variously placed one-over-one sash windows as well as a small, one-story, flat roof addition projecting from the east end of this elevation. Neither building permits nor fire insurance atlases indicate that any significant changes to the exterior of the building have occurred since it was built. Slight changes in the shape between the 1894 Sanborn and 1910 Sanborn fire insurance atlases may indicate some minor alterations to the rear wing.³ A frame garage, built in 1910, once stood at the east end of the property near the sidewalk, but it has been replaced by a concrete parking pad.⁴

The interior of the Buemming house has four main rooms on each of the two stories with a finished playroom in the attic. No changes have been made to the interior with the exception of updating the kitchen and the bathrooms. Flanking the center hall on the first floor are a sitting room/library on the west and a parlor on the east. The dining room and kitchen extend across the rear of the house at the north end of the hall. The enclosed staircase is in a small separate cross hall that opens off the entrance hall between the parlor and the kitchen. A small powder room or half-bath is tucked under the staircase.

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In contrast to the exterior, the interior detailing is not executed in the expected Classical Revival style, but rather reflects Arts and Crafts design influences. The dark-stained hardwood floors, the feathered mouldings around the doorways, the doors with their two vertical panels, and the simple hand-crafted looking dark mahogany and oak woodwork all help to create the warmth, intimacy, and informality associated with Arts and Crafts interior design.

The entrance hall is reached through a small vestibule with an encaustic tile floor of white hexagonal tiles banded in rectangular white and yellow tiles. The hall itself is a modest functional circulation space devoted entirely to providing access to the four rooms that open off it. A stained hardwood floor and dark stained door casings, baseboards and picture mouldings constitute the principal design features. A thin wood cornice moulding and another ceiling mounted moulding enframing the ceiling about eight inches in from the wall, both now painted, are the only other architectural features.

The sitting room/library is the most spatially interesting room in the house and features on its north wall a brown, iron-specked, brick-faced fireplace surround with a simple mahogany mantel shelf supported by small consoles. This fireplace is set within a low ceilinged inglenook that is set off from the high-ceilinged part of the room by classical Ionic pilasters resting on engaged paneled wood pedestals. Although it was no doubt originally naturally stained, all of the woodwork in this room has now been painted except for the mantel shelf.

The dining room is fully paneled in natural oak with vertical tongue-and-groove wainscoting. In addition, it has a bracketed plate rail, a beamed ceiling, bottle glass windows, two built-in corner cupboards with leaded glass doors, and an inscription carved in the wood lintel over the doorway from the hall reading, "Give us this day our daily bread." The general aesthetic character of the room, the most elaborate in the house, is strongly Arts and Crafts.

The parlor, in contrast, is a simple rectangular room without any distinguishing architectural features other than a simple picture moulding and the ceiling-mounted moulding that enframes the ceiling. The kitchen, in the east rear corner of the house, retains portions of its original white ceramic tile wainscoting, but otherwise reflects a sympathetic 1980s remodeling. Off the kitchen is the rear one-story service wing which contains a pantry, the back hall, and the stairway to the basement. The pantry retains its original cupboards and sink with marble drainboard. The stairway to the second floor is utilitarian in character and is located in the separate cross hall that buffers the kitchen from the parlor.

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The four second floor rooms are arranged around a square central hall with the two principal bedrooms at the front of the house and a bathroom and third bedroom at the rear. The large master bedroom in the west front corner, features a Georgian style chimney piece with a naturally finished cypress mantel incorporating a crossetted mirrored overmantel. Adjacent to the bedroom is a small sitting room/dressing room/nursery area with numerous original built-in cupboards. All of the bedrooms are simply finished with fairly plain casings, thin mouldings at the ceiling, and vertical-two-panel doors, all now painted.

The attic portion of the house was designed for recreational purposes and is simply finished as a large plastered room illuminated by the original skylight in the center. The walls slope to follow the contour of the roof. The attic also includes a bathroom.

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FOOTNOTES

¹Rascher's Fire Insurance Atlas of the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin
(Chicago: Charles Rascher, 1888), Vol. 3, p. 162.

²Milwaukee City Building Permits, 1012 East Pleasant Street, 1985
correspondence.

³Insurance Maps of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map
Co., 1894 and 1910), Vol. 1, p. 37 and Vol. 1, p. 54.

⁴Permits, July 13, 1910.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions) Period of Significance Significant Dates

Architecture	1901 ¹	N/A
	Cultural Affiliation	
	N/A	
Significant Person	Architect/Builder	
N/A	Buemming and Dick/architects ²	

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

Significance

The Buemming House is being nominated to the National Register for its local significance in the area of architecture, Criterion C. The Buemming House is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of the type of Classical Revival building popularized by the 1893 Columbian Exposition. In its simplicity, restraint and modest size, the Buemming house is an interesting example of a grandiose architectural scheme rendered on a small scale by a locally prominent architect early in his career as both a home for himself and also perhaps as an advertisement of his design skill.

Architectural Significance

The Buemming House is architecturally significant as one of the city's most striking examples of the turn-of-the-century Classical Revival style. Although Milwaukee's German-American population, which constituted the principal source of architectural commissions at the time, favored the use of Neo-classical ornament and design features in their buildings, relatively few examples of the gleaming white, temple-fronted building type popularized by the Columbian Exposition and the Ecole des Beaux Arts were built. Instead, most often, very robust and embellished interpretations of Neo-classical features such as porticoes and Classical cornices were incorporated as ornament onto somewhat complexly massed late Victorian or functional early twentieth century building types. These buildings were often rendered in richly colored material combinations such as wine red or brown brick with brownstone or colored terra cotta trim. The Buemming House represents a

X See continuation sheet

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striking departure from this trend in its shining whiteness and pure Classical form. As a result, it has always stood out from the other residences in the city as a unique structure. It inspired few imitators, however, since the other temple-fronted houses in the city tend to reflect the more delicate design influence and ornamentalist tendencies of French Neo-classicism. The one notable exception to the latter trend is the Sterneman-Graham House at 3112 West McKinley Boulevard (McKinley Boulevard N.R. Historic District, 7/30/85) designed by Buemming and Dick in 1903 as a virtual line-for-line copy of Buemming's own house.

The Buemming House differs in design intent from most of the other Neo-classical Revival houses in the city in that its most striking feature, its monumental portico, is an integral part of the geometry and structure of the house and not just an applied decorative feature. In fact, the portico could not be removed without causing some structural damage to the building since it actually supports the roof of the house. This portico is, in effect, the facade of the house and not just one of a number of ornamental features added to aggrandize the entrance front of the building, as is more typical of the city's other Neo-classical residences. In its stark simplicity and straightforward geometric form, the Buemming House remains as one of the city's most individualistic expressions of the turn-of-the-century Classical Revival style. It dramatizes the trend away from the picturesque Victorian styles to a more archeologizing approach to design by the new academically-trained architects entering the profession in the early 1900s.

Historic Background

Herman Buemming (September 5, 1872 - April 17, 1947)³ designed the building at 1012 E. Pleasant Street as a house for himself and his new bride, Gertrude C. Durr, in 1901. Buemming was born in Toledo, Ohio, the son of Julius and Charlotte (Weis) Buemming, who had emigrated to the United States in 1868. When Herman was 12 years of age, the family relocated to Milwaukee and settled on the city's west side. Herman completed his public school education and graduated from the Sixteenth District School in 1888. He then spent a year as an apprentice with local architect Charles A. Gombert and subsequently went to work for the Pabst Brewing Company where he became head draftsman. To further his architectural education, Buemming enrolled at Columbia University in New York City in 1891 and studied there for three years. Following his studies, Buemming worked for various New York architects including Stanford White. Buemming is said to have been influenced by John Russell Pope. While working for George B. Post, Buemming was sent to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to superintend the construction of the Bank of

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Pittsburgh and the Park Building. Buemming returned to Milwaukee in 1896 and went into partnership with Gustav Dick. They opened offices in the Pabst Building downtown. A published biography indicates that Buemming was associated with Chicago architect William LeBaron Jenney in the construction of the Railway Exchange Building in downtown Milwaukee.⁴ During the eleven-year partnership of Buemming and Dick, the firm produced a number of Classical Revival and Colonial Revival buildings including Century Hall (1899) at 2346 North Farwell Avenue (razed after a fire in 1988), the Dr. L. Stephan Residence (1899) at 2803 East Bradford Avenue, the George Grede Residence (1900) at 1804 West Mineral Street, and the Sterneman-Graham House (1903) at 3112 West McKinley Boulevard (McKinley Boulevard Historic District, NRHP, 7/30/1985). Buemming and Dick also designed such Classical Revival style churches as St. Matthew Roman Catholic Church (1905) at 1126 South Twenty-fifth Street and the Church of the Immaculate Conception (1907) at 1023 East Russell Avenue and various commercial style buildings such as the terra-cotta-clad Simon Jung Building (1906) at 236 North Water Street.

Buemming's partnership with Dick ended in 1907. Buemming moved his architectural practice to 919 North Jackson Street (razed) where his offices remained for most of his career.⁵ During the second phase of his practice after he split with Dick, Buemming was best known for his distinctive Prairie Style residences such as the A. E. Rietbrock House (1911) at 726 North Thirty-first Street, the George Weinhagen House (1911) at 3306 West Highland Boulevard (Highland Boulevard National Register Historic District, 7/30/1985), the W. Green-owned house (1909) at 2906 East Linnwood Avenue, and the William F. Engelhardt Residence (1912) at 2806 East Locust Street and many others. Throughout his Prairie phase, Buemming continued to design period style houses. He was facile in the Colonial, Tudor, Mediterranean, and Georgian styles. In 1913 Buemming spent four months in Europe traveling in Italy, France, and England studying architecture and sketching.⁶ This sojourn, no doubt, reinforced his interest in period revival design.

In 1919 Buemming formed a new partnership with architect Alexander C. Guth. Guth had previously worked for Buemming from about 1905 through 1915 then went out on his own and in 1918 worked for Milwaukee architect Alfred C. Clas. Guth remained Buemming's partner for eight years during which time the firm designed the French-style August J. Luedke Residence (1923) at 2726 East Newberry Boulevard, the Neo-Classical style Kinley Dodge commercial building (1921) at 3903 West Lisbon Avenue, the Jacobean style E. H. Schwartzburg house at 3223 North Lake Drive, and the east half of the Johnson Controls Building (1924) at 507 East Michigan Street as well as many other houses and commercial buildings. In 1927 Guth went to work for the local firm of Herbst and Kuenzli, and Buemming took his son John into practice with him.

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John Durr Buemming (July 23, 1902 - June 16, 1933) studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania as a member of the Class of 1926.⁸ John's tragic suicide in 1933 at the family home at 2809 North Prospect Avenue (a.k.a. 2328 East Newberry Boulevard) resulted in Clarence W. Jahn entering Buemming's firm as a draftsman. Jahn became a partner with Buemming in 1939. In 1940 the firm moved from 919 to 925 North Jackson Street.¹⁰ The firm of Buemming & Jahn Inc. was active until Buemming retired in 1943. The Buemmings subsequently moved to Waukesha County. Buemming spent several years at the Masonic Home in Dousman and died at Summit Hospital from a heart attack on Thursday, April 17, 1947.¹¹

The site of 1012 East Pleasant Street had been occupied by another residence before the Buemmings acquired the property. Deeds and city directories show that George A. McGarigle lived on the site in 1865, followed by public school principal Charles Spinney in 1868.¹² Fire insurance maps from 1888 show that the previous building on the site was a small, two-story, rectangular frame dwelling that had a one-story porch across the front and a small one-story wing at the rear.¹³ In 1870, Theresa J. White, widow of Henry Kirk White and daughter of city founder Solomon Juneau, purchased the house for \$1,400 for use as a rental property. She herself lived there briefly in the mid-1870s along with her sons Solomon J. White and Ramsey C. White.¹⁴

After Theresa J. White's death, Louis Durr purchased the property for \$2,500 from White's heirs on May 3, 1887.¹⁵ Durr and his family, including his daughter Gertrude, the future Mrs. Buemming, lived in a house next door to 1012 E. Pleasant Street at 1000 E. Pleasant St., on the corner of Astor Street, beginning in 1877.¹⁶ Durr probably used 1012 East Pleasant Street as a rental property since the Durr family continued to live in the corner house. With Gertrude's pending marriage to Buemming, Louis and Harriet Durr deeded 1012 East Pleasant Street to their daughter on December 31, 1900.¹⁷ The Durr and Buemming families were probably acquainted since Julius Buemming and Louis Durr both worked for some years as traveling salesmen or "commercial travelers" for the malting firm of William Gerlach and Company.¹⁸ On January 26, 1901, a permit was taken out for the construction of the present house, implying that the previous building had been razed or perhaps moved to a new location. The building permits show that the new \$4,000 Classical Revival style house was designed by the firm of Buemming and Dick with Edward Steigerwald as mason and H. Schmitt and Son as carpenters.¹⁹

The Buemmings lived at 1012 East Pleasant Street through 1910 after which they moved to a large new house at 2809 North Prospect Street (a.k.a. 2328 East Newberry Boulevard) designed by Buemming.²⁰ Herman and Gertrude Buemming

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resided in the latter home through 1941. For the two years before his retirement, the Buemings lived at 2320 East Belleview Place before relocating to Waukesha County.²¹ It is not clear who occupied 1012 East Pleasant Street between 1911 and 1914, but most likely the house was rented. Gertrude C. Durr Buemming sold the property to Nellie E. Mott on October 14, 1914.²² City directories indicate that Charles H. Mott lived there from 1915 through 1945 with Gerald McWilliams and his wife, Mildred, probably relatives. Mott served as president of the Brush-McWilliams Company where Gerald McWilliams' father had been a corporate officer.

The Buemming House has had some notable owners since the late 1940s. Milwaukee Journal art critic and writer Frances Stover acquired the house in 1946 and lived there with her two sisters, Isabel and Julia, until her death in 1967. During her years at the Journal from 1921 through 1962, Stover wrote numerous articles about Milwaukee's architectural heritage and laid the groundwork for much of the current interest in the city's historic architecture. Isabel²³ Stover survived both of her sisters and occupied the house through 1972.

Flamboyant theatrical manager Clair Richardson was the next owner of the house and occupied it through 1979. He is known for establishing the Skylight Theater as an important cultural institution in Milwaukee.²⁴ After Richardson's death, the Buemming house had a succession of short-term owners until the current owner, Ronald S. San Felippo, acquired it in 1986.²⁵

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FOOTNOTES

¹City of Milwaukee Permits, 1012 East Pleasant Street, January 26, 1901.

²Ibid.

³John G. Gregory, History of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Chicago and Milwaukee: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1931), Vol. 4, pp. 461-462; "Stroke Fatal To Buemming," Obituary, Milwaukee Journal, April 17, 1947, Section 1, p. 24.

⁴Gregory, pp. 461-462.

⁵Milwaukee City Directory, 1907-1945.

⁶Gregory, p. 462.

⁷Milwaukee City Directory, 1907-1945.

⁸Gregory, pp. 461-462.

⁹Coroner's Office of the City and County of Milwaukee. Inquest, John D. Buemming, June 16, 1933, Box 952, Case No. 314.

¹⁰Milwaukee City Directory, 1933-1940

¹¹"Stroke Fatal."

¹²Milwaukee County Register of Deeds, Vol. 83, p. 152, Vol. 107, p. 76; Milwaukee City Directory, 1862-1871.

¹³Rascher's Fire Insurance Atlas of the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Chicago: Charles Rascher, 1888), Vol. 3, p. 162.

¹⁴Deeds, Vol. 117, p. 331; Milwaukee City Directory, 1870-1880.

¹⁵Deeds, Vol. 229, p. 461.

¹⁶Deeds, Vol. 151, p. 620.

¹⁷Deeds, Vol. 438, p. 45.

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¹⁸ Milwaukee City Directory, 1884-1900.

¹⁹ Milwaukee City Building Permits, 1012 East Pleasant Street,
January 26, 1901.

²⁰ Milwaukee City Building Permits, 2328 East Newberry Boulevard, May 9,
1911.

²¹ Milwaukee City Directory, 1941-1942.

²² Deeds, Vol. 710, p. 322.

²³ Milwaukee City Directory, 1947-1972.

²⁴ Ibid., 1973-1979.

²⁵ Ibid., 1980-1987.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS): _____ See continuation sheet

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

Specific repository:

Historic Preservation Commission
809 North Broadway
Milwaukee, WI 53202

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/2/6/7/8/0</u>	<u>4/7/6/6/6/2/0</u>	B	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	D	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>

_____ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Partition of the east half of SW 1/4 Sec. 21-7-22
Block 7, east 55 feet of south 60 feet of quarter block 7.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the land upon which the Buemming House now stands.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Les Vollmert/Carlen Hatala

organization Dept. of City Development Date May 2, 1989

street & number 809 North Broadway telephone (414) 223-5705

city or town Milwaukee state WI zip code 53202

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REFERENCES

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Rascher's Fire Insurance Atlas of the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Chicago: Charles Rascher, 1888.