

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

For NPS use only

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

received FEB 12 1986
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District

and or common Fletcher Place II

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Virginia Avenue to the northeast, Interstate 65/70 to the east and south, and South East Street to the west N/A not for publication

city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Marion code 097

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple ownership

street & number

city, town N/A vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Records of Deeds

street & number 721 City-County Building

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title (1) Survey Report for Indianapolis/Marion County
(2) Intensive Survey and Study of the Fletcher Place II Neighborhood, Indianapolis has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date (1) 1977; (2) 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records (1) Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission
(2) Department of Natural Resources

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District is located one mile southeast of Monument Circle, the center of Indianapolis and the core of the central business district. The Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District's triangular shape is formed by one of the original diagonals of the 1821 Ralston Plan--Virginia Avenue--which serves as the northeast boundary of the district. As it exists today, the district is permanently isolated from adjacent neighborhoods to the south by the Interstate 65/70 system constructed during the late 1960s. Construction of the inner belt eliminated all Buchanan Street buildings but retained Horace Mann School #13, which provides a strong visual and historic anchor at the southern reaches of the district. The growth of the Eli Lilly and Company complex to the west of East Street has further isolated the district from a once larger residential area that extended as far west as the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks near South Senate Street.

Today, the heaviest traffic flows at the perimeter of the district along East Street and Virginia Avenue. By contrast, the streets at the interior of the district see a lower volume of traffic which is, in part, a result of the establishment of one-way streets (Stevens Street and Greer Street south of McCarty Street). Since the Eli Lilly and Company complex has recently closed East McCarty Street to all vehicular traffic west of East Street, the traffic flow within the district is expected to be reduced further.

The diagonal configuration of Virginia Avenue creates an interesting streetscape. While their north and south facades are oriented toward the typical grid pattern, buildings on Virginia Avenue have their main facades oriented toward the diagonal. This orientation along two different street systems creates a variety of unusual building shapes, including trapezoidal structures and buildings which appear to be "bent." Two hundred thirty-three (233) structures lie within the boundaries delineated by the nomination. Abutting the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District along the northeast side of Virginia Avenue lies the Fletcher Place Historic District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Fountain Square Commercial Areas are located just across the Interstate to the southeast, and both the Lockerbie Square Historic District (National Register district) and the Holy Cross/Westminster neighborhood (nominated to the National Register) are within two miles to the north and northeast, respectively.

At its zenith (approximately 1890-1950), the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District established itself as a residential area whose everyday needs were provided for by the service-oriented commercial enterprises located on South East Street and Virginia Avenue. The establishment of the street railways on Virginia Avenue and East Street in the mid-1860s, the construction of the Virginia Avenue viaduct in the 1890s, and the construction of a second bridge in 1910, not only provided easy access for area residents to downtown businesses, but also assured the continued development of commercial enterprises along Virginia Avenue, itself. Although it catered primarily to the neighborhood immediately surrounding it, the Virginia Avenue corridor attracted residents from other nearby neighborhoods. By the late 19th century, the original mixed-use character of the corridor had given way to a strongly commercial one.

This typically platted 19th century neighborhood still retains much of its original streetscape with a continuity in lot development and block size (photo #1, 2, 44-66). Small, narrow lots with uniform building setbacks and alleys are characteristic of the era, as are the narrow streets. The neighborhood is comprised of intact rows of detached residences which date, for the most part, from the 1870s through the 1890s. Architectural styles represented in the district range from the Italianate structures such as the John Kring House (photo #11), to the simplified Gothic Revival church formerly known as the Trinity Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church (photo #19), to the Jacobethan Revival residence

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) ethnic/immigrant history
Specific dates	1857–1930	Builder/Architect	Various	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District is named after the two outstanding structures located in the district. These two landmarks, Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church and Trinity Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, reflect the history of the district that is unique in Indianapolis. The district is significant for its role in ethnic immigration history and religious history of the city. Most important is its association with the Italian community in Indianapolis.

The Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District is located in the southeast quadrant of the regional center of Indianapolis. Originally, both East Street and Virginia Avenue were platted only to the south boundary of the city's original Mile Square (South Street). With the expansion of the central business district, however, both of these streets were extended and the newly platted area included within the corporation limits. The construction of the Interstate system during the late 1960s, as well as the expansion of the nearby industrial complexes within the past 50 years, isolated the district from its sister neighborhoods to the south and west. The northeastern boundary of the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District--Virginia Avenue--separates the neighborhood from the Fletcher Place Historic District, which is the oldest neighborhood on the near southside.

The Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District is significant because of its unique ethnic development during the period 1854 to 1909. Platted by businessmen who were prominent in the first period of Indianapolis's settlement, the area was first inhabited by German, Irish, Scottish and Welsh immigrants who were responsible for the construction of the earliest residences. Then, as the demand for rental housing increased during the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, the platters either sold or developed their land for the use of still more immigrants. It was during this period that Indianapolis witnessed the immigration of hundreds of Danes who sought refuge and promise of wealth in the United States. German property owners in the district opened their doors to the Danes and allowed them to rent--often for only six months--until they were able to purchase their own land. Although they largely moved away from the district, the Danes still had strong ties to the neighborhood and continued worshiping in the Danish church located in the core of the district.⁴

The former Danish Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Church, located at 701 East McCarty Street (photo #19), is a landmark of the period, and provides both a visual and historical anchor at the core of the district. This Gothic Revival church, built in 1872, is believed to have been the first all-Danish church in the United States.⁵ The first Danes to arrive in Indianapolis were Hans Peder Weis and Rasmus Svendsen, who arrived from Cleveland in 1860 to assist in the construction of the new St. Paul's German Lutheran Church, which was located north of the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District at the northeast corner of East and Georgia Streets (since demolished). Weis returned to his homeland on the Danish island of Moen five years later and brought several of his friends and relatives back to Indianapolis, along with about 40 young men from Moen and the nearby island of Falster to work. It was two years later, while the immigrants were assembled at a park, "that the singing of the national hymns of their fatherland engendered a desire to form an organization where their children might be taught their native language and

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approx. 49 acres

Quadrangle name Indianapolis West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1 6	5 7 2 8 8 0	4 4 0 1 3 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	1 6	5 7 3 1 1 0	4 4 0 1 1 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	1 6	5 7 3 2 9 0	4 4 0 0 8 9 0
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D	1 6	5 7 3 2 0 0	4 4 0 0 5 5 0
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E	1 6	5 7 2 8 7 0	4 4 0 0 5 5 0
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F			
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G			
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H			
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Verbal boundary description and justification

Please see continuation sheet

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Douglas A. Dunn, Director
Cecilia A. Boggs, Preservation Historian; Diana Elrod, Consultant

organization Indianapolis Regional Office, Historic Landmarks Foundation
of Indiana date _____

street & number 1028 N. Delaware telephone 317/638-5264

city or town Indianapolis state Indiana 46202

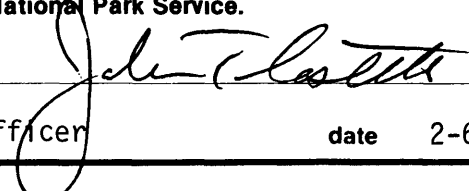
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 2-6-86

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

June M. McPherson
 Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
 National Register

date 3/13/86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Buchanan Street, 714
South East Street, 435-939 (east side of street, only)
Greer Street, 701-930
East McCarty Street, 501-747
East Merrill Street, 508-607
South Noble Street, 654-930
East Norwood Street, 611-621
Stevens Street, 517-701/705
Virginia Avenue, 601-719 (south side of street, only)
East Warsaw Street, 514-523
Wright Street, 812-928

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at 747 South Noble Street (photo #9, #10), to the Italian Renaissance Holy Rosary Catholic Church (photo #20). In general, however, the typical structure in the district is a one-and-one-half or two-story Carpenter-Builder cottage, constructed of either brick or wood. The oldest remaining building is, in fact, one of these typical Carpenter-Builder residences. The John Wands House, located at 741 Greer Street (photo #3) was built in 1857. Possibly the oldest house in the district, it sits on a comparatively large lot which rises a few feet above street level. The high-pitched gable is decorated by a series of repeating fabricated shingles which include flat-cut, scalloped and truncated sawtooth bands. The gable window is a double-hung sash in a one-over-two light configuration. The heavy scrollwork brackets, which extend as far down as the meeting rail, support a shallow shed hood. The large, wrap-around porch extends along the western and southern elevations. The porch roof is hipped except at the points directly above the doorways, where the roof breaks into a low gable. A pair of purlins and carved braces support the porch gable at the eaves. The frieze consists of a panel out of which has been cut a repeating pattern of four-leaf clover designs. At the main elevation, the porch is divided into four bays while at the side there are five bays. The posts are square-cut and have a pair of carved braces supporting the frieze panel. The main structure is sheathed in clapboards and has one double-hung sash window to either side of the main entry. A one-story shed roof structure has been added at the rear of the building.

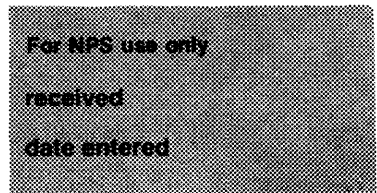
Carpenter-Builder cottages in the district range from the exuberant to the subdued, but all share the same basic characteristics of a gabled roof, proportionately long, double-hung sash windows, a porch, and scrollwork ornamentation. The one-and-one-half story house at 848 Wright Street (photo #4) was built c. 1875 and has a low-pitched gable roof with carved rafter ends, purlins, and scrollwork bracketing. The windows at the main elevation have flat vertical trim which flanges toward the heads and sills. Two small, carved brackets support the entablature window hoods. The building is sheathed in clapboards with flat corner trim. A low-pitched hipped-roof porch extends beyond the main elevation and was added after the house was built, as were the hipped dormer and the shed roof section at the rear of the building.

The house at 519 East McCarty Street (photo #5) is an extremely reserved version of the Carpenter-Builder cottage. Built c. 1898, this clapboard house has a cross gable roof that is supported by purlins and scrollwork brackets at the ridge and eaves. Rafter ends are sawn and exposed. Above the plainly-trimmed double-hung sash windows is a circular jigsawn gable vent in a stylized star pattern. The small side porch consists of two turned posts and one square post (a replacement) which support a shed roof. The jigsawn side frieze displays a foliage motif.

Frequently, Carpenter-Builder cottages took on characteristics of the popular styles of the era. An excellent example of this trend can be found at 628, 630, and 632 East McCarty Street (photo #6). 630 and 632 (to right in the photograph) are identical Carpenter-Builder cottages constructed c. 1885, and they carry elements of the Stick Style in their ornamentation. Each house is sheathed in clapboards and has carved rafter ends with supporting purlins and brackets. At the main elevation, there is a pair of narrow, double-hung windows with flat stickwork trim. The side trim to these windows extends from the foundation to the bottom of the gable, accentuating not only the vertical quality of the structure but also the underlying frame construction. The side porches consist of a low shed roof with tongue and groove trim cut in a sawtooth pattern where it meets the frieze at the side panels. Balusters,

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carved braces and lathed porch posts decorate and support the roof. The structure at 628 East McCarty, to the left in the photograph, was built c. 1895 and picks up the richer qualities of the Queen Anne style. The upper gable has imbricated shingles which surround the multi-light, fixed-sash window. The gable of the main facade is treated similarly, though the window here is larger. The main elevation has a six-over-six light, double-hung sash window which is proportionately wider than those found at 630 and 632. Above the main elevation's window there is a simple entablature window hood, and above that is a band of wavy clapboarding. The side porch is more elaborate in its ornamentation: heavy, turned posts support the intricately jigsawed frieze. Fan-shaped braces, which carry the frieze motif, can be found in pairs at the free-standing posts, and singly at the half posts.

The Henry Homburg House, located at 552 East Merrill Street (photo #7), is an unusual form of the Carpenter-Builder style. This one-and-one-half story structure, built c. 1870, may have been moved to its present site during the early 1880s. The style and placement of this house to the edge of the sidewalk reflects an earlier era than any other structure in the district. Instead of the gable end facing the street--as most Carpenter-Builder cottages are oriented--the gable is turned toward the side. The verges are flush with the wall surfaces, as are the eaves at the rear elevation. Two flat-head, double-hung sash windows are situated off center toward the rear of the structure at the side elevation. Three double-hung sash windows in a two-over-two configuration are located to the west of the main entry, while only one two-over-two, double-hung sash window lies to the east of the door. The transom has been blocked in with plywood. The shed roof porch joins the main roof at the eave with a slight change to the pitch. Squared balusters stretch between the four turned posts. The side panels on the porch roof consist of vertical siding with a bottom rail supported by a carved brace located at the juncture of the porch roof and the main elevation.

While most of the Carpenter-Builder cottages in the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District were constructed of wood, a few are built of brick, including the Samuel Keely House at 825 Wright Street (photo #8) which was built in 1872. Subdued in design and ornamentation, the Keely House is a one-and-one-half story brick structure with a cross gable roof. The carved rafter ends are exposed along the eaves and are supported by a pair of purlins and scrollwork brackets at the main elevation. Windows treatments are simple with relieving arches and plain stone sills serving as the only ornamentation. The porch door is similarly treated and has a relieving arch with transom. The porch has a shed roof with a jigsawed side panel. The original posts have been replaced with modern bent steel ones.

Although the district is dominated by these smaller cottages, there are a number of residential, commercial and institutional structures which offer an exciting contrast to the architectural character of the district. The Maria Wuensch House at 747 South Noble Street (photo #9, 10) is a fascinating departure from the typical cottage. Built c. 1900, this one-and-one-half story house is constructed of brick and wood in the Jacobethan Revival style. The jerkin head roof has hipped dormers to either side and flared eaves. Purlins protrude along the soffits and eaves at both gable ends and at the dormers. Imbricated shingles and a dentil course frame the pair of double-hung sash windows in the gable. The dormer windows have fixed sashes with diagonal muntins which break the window into many lights. The double-hung sash windows at the first story have diamond-patterned muntins in the upper sash, square heads, and stepped stone lintels. The stone string course below the windows serves as the sill and accentuates the width and length of the structure. The set-in porch is supported by square posts and has a wood door with half-blind, diagonal pane sidelights.

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The John Kring house at 711 East McCarty Street (photo #11), c. 1872, is a two-story Italianate with a low-pitched, truncated hip roof. The brackets, which support the wide eaves, project from a broad fascia board. This three-bay wide, wood frame structure is sheathed in Insulbrick, concealing the original clapboard siding. Three double-hung sash windows with plain surrounds define the second story, while a slightly recessed entryway in the east bay and two double-hung sash windows define the first story. The entryway is further defined by a transom light and plain surrounds. The glazed wooden door is obscured from view by an aluminum storm door. The one-story porch has a hip roof running the full width of the house and is supported by four simple turned wood posts. The original wood porch floor has been replaced by a concrete slab.

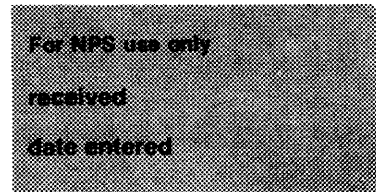
Although they are not as common as single family houses, there are a few duplexes in the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District. The residence at 808-810 South Noble Street (photo #12) was constructed c. 1895 in a Queen Anne-influenced version of the Carpenter-Builder style. This two-story clapboard double has a hipped roof from which two gables peak at the main elevation. The upper gable's corbeled chimney extends from the ridge of the lower gable through the upper ridge. Imbricated shingles surround both the chimney and the lower gable's pair of fixed-sash attic windows. Carved braces and purlins support the lower gable at the eaves. Gables at the side elevations are again supported by braces and purlins. Here, imbricated shingles surround pointed vents out of which have been cut ornamental patterns. At the second story, all windows are narrow, double-hung sashes with flat heads and plain trim. Windows at the first story are more widely spaced than those at the second story but are treated similarly. The brick and stone porch rails and piers have been added within the past 50 years, as was the heavy, low hipped porch roof. To the rear of the structure are attached two additions with shed roofs.

One of the few American Four-Square residences in the district can be found at 917 Greer Street (photo #13). This building appears to be unaltered. Built c. 1910, this straight-forward, two-story residence is constructed of wood and has a hipped roof from which a hipped dormer protrudes. The eaves are comparatively wide, with boxed soffits. There is a plain, narrow fascia below the eaves. The clapboarding flares at the second story line; below this is a contrasting fascia which accentuates the mass of the house. All windows at the second and first stories are double-hung sash windows with flat heads and plain trim, except at the side elevations, where the first story windows have simple crown moldings. Brick piers with stone caps support the low-hipped porch roof. The large window at the first floor on the main elevation consists of one wide sash with a rectangular leaded glass transom above, both of which are flanked by narrow double-hung sash windows.

As Indianapolis blossomed economically toward the turn of the century, the demand for housing again increased. It was during this time that apartment buildings or flats were discovered as an economical, efficient and comfortable means of meeting this demand. In the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District, these apartment buildings tended to be rather small, simple structures with three to ten units. Representative of this type of structure are the apartments at 701-705 Stevens Street (photo #14). This building appears to be unaltered. Built c. 1905, this early 20th century functional brick building has a flat roof with thin stone coping above the corbeled cornice. The main facade is divided into three irregular bays: the west bay (to the far right in the photograph) has a window to the east of the door and an oriel window above; the central bay has a window to the west of a transomed door and an oriel window above; and the east bay has a storefront window with transomed door at the east end of the building, which encloses a stairwell,

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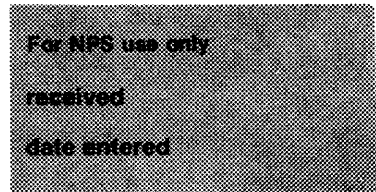
a transomed door to the west and an oriel window above. Windows at the first story are double-hung with relieving arches and stone sills. All oriels consist of flat head, double-hung sash windows on three sides with a low-pitched roof, and all are decorated by plain rectangular panels below each window. All doors are wood, glazed and paneled with transoms. All first floor masonry openings have segmental arches.

Commercial structures are exclusively located along the perimeter of the district on the major thoroughfares of South East Street and Virginia Avenue. Commercial enterprises sprang up in response to both the establishment of the street railway and the demands created by the burgeoning southside neighborhoods. The typical commercial structure was a relatively small, one or two story building with storefronts at street level and flats on the second story. One of the oldest surviving commercial structures is located at 659 Virginia Avenue (photo #15) and at the same time is oriented toward the normal grid pattern along the side elevations. Hence, the building appears to bend toward Virginia Avenue. The main elevation has three bays across the front and one bay at the cutaway corner. It is parallel to Virginia Avenue and has, in the first bay north from the cutaway corner on the street level, a pair of doors with two lights in each and a paired transom above. The last bay, that which is farthest to the northwest, is narrower than the others and has a paneled door with a single transom above. The cutaway corner has a storefront window with a double transom above. Each bay is separated by a brick pier which extends to the second story line, where there is a narrow entablature. The entablature is supported by scrollwork brackets which are located at the far south pier of the cutaway corner, two brackets at the juncture of the corner wall and the front wall, and a single bracket at the farthest north pier of the front wall. The second story contains four casement windows and stone sills which have replaced the original double-hung sash windows. Again, there are three bays at the front and one bay at the corner. The entablature consists of a stone architrave, a brick frieze and a projecting wooden cornice. The frieze is segmented by large scrollwork brackets. Circular vents pierce the panels between the brackets, which support the cornice. Side elevations are simply detailed and have only a few doors and windows at irregular intervals. Twin stone coping caps the wall parapets at the sides. The character of this building remains essentially intact due to the recent sensitive rehabilitation.

Three institutional structures in the district provide a strong visual counterpoint to the residential character of the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District. The first of these is Horace Mann School #13 (photo #17, 18), located at 714 Buchanan Street and serving as the architectural and historical anchor to the southern part of the district. Designed by the prominent Indianapolis architect, Edway May, School #13 is a two-story brick Italianate structure with limestone trim and rough ashlar foundation.¹ The school has a square plan with a truncated hip roof and gabled wall dormers centered on each side. Beneath the peak of the dormers is a star tie rod. The cornice is metal and is decorated with single brackets. The north and south facades have entrances with a gable above. The south facade doorway gable is executed in limestone and bears the inscription, "Horace Mann," with "13" below it, while the north facade doorway gable is executed in limestone and brick and bears the inscription, "1873." The main facade (south) has eight bays with a central pavilion. Over the south entrance the gabled dormer projects from a mansard roof, and both sets of windows in the north and south dormers have surrounds of metal. Windows at the side elevations and to either side of the entrances have a brick label-type surround with a keystone and stone sills. This structure is the most intact Indianapolis Public School building of its era still standing.

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The former Trinity Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at the core of the district at 701 East McCarty Street (photo #19), is a one-and-one-half story brick Gothic Revival church with stone details. The main elevation at the gable end has close verges with a brick corbel table running parallel under the verges. Two central piers and two corner piers divide the main facade into three bays. The center bay has a pointed-arch doorway with paired, paneled wooden doors and a wooden paneled blind transom. Above the entrance is a pointed-arched window glazed by a double-hung sash window and a fixed sash transom in the arch. The transom is outlined by small panes of colored glass, which emphasize the arch. The two bays flanking the entrance each have a small, pointed-arch window opening with double-hung wooden sash windows. Above each window, at the second-story level, is a square stone tablet. The tablet in the east panel bears the inscription, "Dansk Evang. Luth. Trefoldigheds Kirke" ("Danish Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Church"), while the west panel reads, "MGH Organ. 1868 Kirken Bygget 1872" (Congregation [Menighed] Organized 1868 Church Built 1872"). The side elevations carry four symmetrical bays with the same pointed arch windows as found in the gable. The window closest to the main elevation on the west side has been bricked in and a new sliding window has been added. Brick piers separate each bay and extend from the rough-cut ashlar foundation to the eaves. Underneath the close eaves there is a brick corbel table. At the rear of the building is a small brick chancel which houses the altar. The church continues its historical function as a house of worship. Today, the Church of Jesus Christ occupies the building.

The other church in the district, the Holy Rosary Catholic Church, is located at 520 Stevens Street and serves as the district's northern monument (photo #20). First begun in 1911, the church was not completed until 1925.² The building was designed in the Italian Renaissance style by the local architectural firm of Jacob Edwin Kopf and Kenneth K. Woolling.³ Described by contemporary sources as an example of the Renaissance Style, it does bear a resemblance to the church of San Giorgio in Velabro in Rome, an early Renaissance church. San Giorgio was the titular church of Cardinal Luigi Sincero, a friend of Father Priori, who knew the church. The Indianapolis church is constructed of stone, brick and concrete with steel trusses supporting the roof. At the main elevation, a pair of two-story, composite order columns support a large stone lintel which bears the inscription, "Holy Rosary." The truncated pediment above the lintel has decorative brickwork which surrounds the three round-arch windows in the tympanum. The pediment's evenly spaced, heavy purlins support a carved vergeboard. To either side of this classical portico is situated a hip roof belltower which rises another story above the roofline of the church. Each facade on the towers has a brick pier at each corner and a pair of narrower piers toward the center. In the three panels created by the piers, there are stepped, fixed-sash windows. The piers, with their stone caps and detailing, extend from the stone foundation line to the stone course just below the belfries. Here, the wide corner piers extend to the roof. The interior bays consist of a three-section, round arch colonnade. The columns and capitals are made of limestone, and modillion blocks support the red clay tile roof under the eaves. The church's side elevations have a series of regular bays in which are located large, round-arch windows with stone keystones and imposts.

Intrusions in the district are generally one-story commercial structures such as the laundromat at 931 South East Street (photo #21), or the commercial building at 531 Virginia Avenue (photo #22). Holy Rosary's Latin School dormitories, located at 717 South East Street (photo #23), are another type of intrusion. Intrusions are generally brick, concrete block and glass structures. They date from the 1950s and 1960s, and are continued to the perimeters of the district.

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Several structures in the district are undergoing or have completed renovations. The landscaping of a small courtyard completed the renovation efforts of the 600 block of Virginia Avenue (photo #24). And, with the continued support of organizations such as the Fletcher Place/Fountain Square Revolving Fund, Fountain Square Fletcher Place Investment Corporation, and Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana several more structures in the neighborhood will be restored during the next five years. These three organizations have either renovated directly or seen to the renovation of several small cottages on East McCarty Street this year (photo #25), and plan to expand their programs to encompass the entire district in the future.

Although there have been eras of incompatible alterations in the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District, most of the historic fabric remains. Awareness of historic preservation and the involvement of the above mentioned groups has resulted in reinvestment in the housing stock. Considerable progress has been made since the late 1970s, with much artificial siding being removed and many porches and details being restored. National Register status will further spur the preservation of the intact building stock.

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and they might conduct their religious worship in their native tongue."⁶ Relations with the Germans at St. Paul's may not have been comfortable after Denmark's defeat in the 1866 German-Danish War, resulting in German annexation of Danish territory. Weis formed a committee to meet with St. Paul's pastor. Since no Danish church organization existed in the United States, they would have to affiliate with the Norwegian Synod, a move some Danes found unacceptable. In April, 1868, the congregation was formally organized when the Rev. Markus Frederick Weise, a theological student from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, was sent to Indianapolis to serve as the first pastor of the church. Weise had come to America in 1863.⁷ Services were held in the home of Hans Peder Weis, who lived just outside the district on South East Street. Rev. Weise preached the first service in Danish on Easter Sunday, 1868. In 1872, the lot was purchased at the corner of McCarty Street and Noble Street, and by September, 1872, the congregation had built the church with their own hands. The church building was dedicated on September 22, 1872, by Rev. H. A. Preus, president of the Norwegian Synod.

Trinity Danish reputedly was a hard line conservative congregation. Twice in the 1870s and 1880s part of the congregation seceded, the first time because of rigid enforcement of doctrine, and the second time because of theological disagreement. Despite doctrinal controversy and congregational problems, four men of the congregation became ministers.

Family and national ties brought more Danes to Indianapolis after the turn of the century. In 1914 the congregation affiliated with the newly organized United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. The first services in English were conducted in 1919, while services in the Danish language continued until November, 1956.⁸ In 1961 the Danish Lutheran Church merged with two other Lutheran bodies to form the American Lutheran Church. The first non-Danish pastor was installed in 1967. The congregation's records have been moved to First Trinity Lutheran Church at 5321 East 42nd Street.

The Danish Church remains the only structure in the city that distinctly represents the Danish immigrants. Its historical name is Danish Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Church, as it is inscribed in Danish on the structure itself. The successor church on East 42nd Street has not continued using the word "Danish" in its title, and no longer has Danish language services.

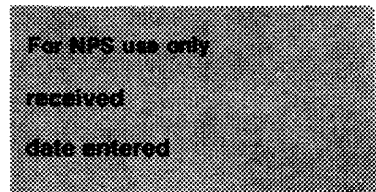
According to oral history interviews, the Danes were an independent people who preferred to build their own homes rather than rent. Although some of the immigrants continued to live in the area, especially on East Street, Greer Street, and the original Buchanan Street, most left after renting homes from Germans for a few months and built their own homes in the far southside and the northwest area of Indianapolis. The 1870 U.S. Census, taken at a time before the heaviest period of Danish immigration, shows a population of 25 Danes concentrated in the western section of the district. In 1880 U.S. Census statistics show a Danish population of 63, again concentrated in the western portion of the district.

Although not a great number of Danes lived near Trinity, the church was such a strong magnet that Danes, no matter where their neighborhood, viewed it as the center of Danish life in Indianapolis. As late as 1938 the adjoining parsonage became a parish hall so that Danish societies could meet there.

It was not until the turn of the century that the next wave of immigrants adopted the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District as their home. Italian families came to Indianapolis and many ultimately made their living in the produce business. Faced with

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language barriers, discrimination and culture shock, "the Italians tended to cluster together in this small neighborhood where they could work and reside closely with relatives and friends."⁹ Because of this large concentration of Italians in a single area of Indianapolis, the decision was made in 1909 to build, here, the first Italian National Parish in Indiana. It was begun on Stevens Street.

It was during this period of commercialization and industrialization that one particular market--the produce industry--found a home in Indianapolis. The "Commission Merchants" were wholesale produce businessmen. Distributors sent their wares to Indianapolis primarily from New Orleans via the Illinois Central and Pennsylvania rail lines. The produce was sold out of the train cars to retail peddlers and merchants, a practice which continued into the 1930s. Produce that was not sold to Indianapolis dealers was shipped to other locations throughout the Midwest.

The expansion of the commercial produce market attracted hundreds of Italians to the Indianapolis area, most of whom came from Sicily.¹⁰ The 1880s and 1890s had only seen the occasional immigration of Italians; the Montani family men were among the first to arrive in Indianapolis in the early 1880s.¹¹ The Montani family is listed in the 1881 City Director. The Montanis knew nothing of the city when they arrived. They had seen, however, a map showing the relationship of the crossing rail lines indicating a commercial future and economic opportunities. They worked in Indianapolis first as confectioners and later became grocers. Arriving at about the same time as the Montanis were the men of the Mascari and Meo families. These men, without their families, located south of the County Courthouse and north of the railroad tracks after 1880. The decision to remain in Indianapolis resulted in bringing wives and children to live above or behind commercial establishments in that area. The growing number of Italian arrivals and the economic advancement of the merchants resulted in the move of many of the families in the 1890s to the future Holy Rosary Church neighborhood.

The removal of Old St. Mary's Church from East Maryland Street in 1912, elevation of the rail line tracks during World War I, and the city's barring of curbside sales around the courthouse in the early 1920s led to the Italian families' evacuation of the earlier settlement.

Italians settled in Indianapolis according to their region of origin. The Italians who moved into the Holy Rosary area were primarily Sicilians. It is their neighborhood around Holy Rosary which became the most densely Italian neighborhood in the City of Indianapolis. Other Italians, primarily non-Sicilians, were scattered in smaller groups throughout the city. In his 1909 register, Father Priori listed 165 addresses, 70 of which were on Stevens, Merrill, Warsaw, South East, and Norwood Streets. An additional 25 were west of East Street in what is now land incorporated into the Eli Lilly Corporation expansion. His list is thought to be incomplete, however, based on reports from descendants of area residents.

The U.S. Census of 1910 shows that 90% of the residents within the boundaries of the district had Italian surnames, with two and three families often living at the same address. In some cases there were as many as three generations of one family residing together.

In 1909, central Italian Father Marino Priori accepted the invitation of Bishop Francis Silas Chatard to minister to the needs of the Italian population of Indianapolis.¹² Upon his arrival, Fr. Priori found many Sicilian families living close together in the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District, and it was on the basis of this settlement pattern

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that Fr. Priori decided to establish the Italian church on Stevens Street. He purchased three lots, numbered 7, 8, and 9, on the north side of the street with money donated by the Italians themselves. The house on lot #8 was moved back to the alley line and the extra yard space was used to hold festivals to raise money. The first floor of the house was used as the church during the early years.

Fr. Priori wanted to erect a stately Renaissance church for his parishioners; thus, he commissioned George V. Bedell to draw up plans for the new church. In May, 1911, ground was broken for the church and by April the following year the basement was completed. The parish ran short of funds, however, and Fr. Priori had the basement roofed over so it could be used as a temporary church. In 1923 work resumed and the architectural firm of Jacob Edwin Kopf and Kenneth K. Woolling submitted a new set of plans. Although the Italian congregation donated a large part of the funds for the new construction, donations also came from the Germans of St. Mary's and Sacred Heart parishes, the Irish of St. Patrick's parish, and Jewish families who lived near the old Manual High School. In 1924, the six bells were installed in the towers. The largest of these weighed 7,000 pounds and was named "San Salvador," and was dedicated to Christopher Columbus. This bell was believed to be the largest bell in Indianapolis at the time, and probably is today. An \$8,000 organ was financed by the Italian produce merchants, who gave ten cents for each bunch of bananas they sold.¹³

The interior of the church was decorated by Professor Marco A. Rigucci, a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome.¹⁴ The finished church was dedicated on May 3, 1925 (photo #20). During the ensuing years, Holy Rosary became the center of many social activities that were held to pay debts incurred from the construction.

Although the church was once designated the Italian National Parish, Canon Law revisions in 1983 brought about a re-designation for the church as a "personal parish" without boundaries. There is one other "personal parish" in Indianapolis, Sacred Heart, but it has boundaries for the areas which it serves.

Holy Rosary is the only parish in Indianapolis and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis (39 southeastern counties) that is officially designated Italian. It is also the only Archdiocesan parish listed with an ethnic designation. Holy Rosary was the first of three Italian national parishes organized in the state. The other two were St. Joseph, Fort Wayne (1913), reorganized as a regular parish in the 1920s; and Immaculate Conception, East Chicago (1933).

Holy Rosary Parish also was the hub of commercial activity--primarily grocery and produce--for those Italians who went into businesses in other cities in the state. Sicilian names could be found in Anderson, Terre Haute, Frankfort, Lebanon, Lafayette, Columbus, Seymour, Bloomington, Crawfordsville, and Greensburg. Indianapolis was their source of produce and the residence of family and friends.

The Holy Rosary district area was one of the largest permanent Italian immigrant neighborhoods located in the state's urban centers.¹⁵ It serves Italian Catholics throughout the city of Indianapolis today, as well as parishioners of other national origins.

Because most of the housing stock had already been established by the time the Italians adopted the Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District as their home, few houses were actually constructed by the Italians. Rather, they bought or rented small cottages that

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had been built in the 1870s and 1880s. For example, the house located at 447 South East Street (photo #40) was built in 1884 by John W. Marshall, a steamfitter. He sold the property to Charles and Dorothea Fuerchtenicht (both German immigrants who anglicized their name to Fearnought at the turn of the century) in 1890. They rented it to several tenants over the years. In 1914, John Comella, an Italian tailor rented the building as his residence. Another house, located at 552 East Merrill Street (see aforementioned photo #7) was owned by the Ferraro family in the 1920s. Also of note is the bake oven building behind the Hillman House at 742 South Noble Street (see aforementioned photo #40) that was used by the Italian residents as their community bake oven during the early 1900s. Since so many Sicilians were in the produce business, another interesting feature of the Holy Rosary district is the existence of banana cellars and fruit sheds. One shed stands across the alley from Holy Rosary Church; one cellar exists under 541 East Merrill.

Two notable houses in the district were constructed by Italians: 523 East Merrill Street (photo #41) built in 1926, was constructed by the Miceli family. Philip Miceli, a prominent commission merchant, came from Termini Imerese, Sicily, at the turn of the century, and his small home reflects the architectural character of the homeland. Michael Miceli built the small bungalow which now stands at 623 South East Street (photo #42) on the southeast corner of East and Stevens Streets. After East Street was widened, c. 1940, the house was moved to the northeast corner where it presently is situated.

Economic advancement led to some families moving from the area in the 1920s, but Italian families largely remained in the area until the 1950s. Although more Italians began moving out of the neighborhood in the 1950s and 1960s, many chose to stay. Today, parishioners and friends operate an annual, highly successful spaghetti dinner. They successfully revived the Italian Street Festival in the summer of 1984. Periodically, the United States and Italian flags fly together at the church. The parish's monthly bulletin identifies itself as "The Italian Church of Indianapolis."

The list of property owners in the proposed historic district still shows many Italian surnames. Several of the non-Italian names represent the marriage of a woman of Italian ancestry to a non-Italian. Thus, the area is still known as the Italian center of Indianapolis.

The 1980 Census indicates that some 13,000 residents of Marion County are of Italian ancestry. Because Holy Rosary's area was the largest Italian neighborhood, many of that number are able to trace their lineage to the historic district.

The district, as it stands today, is made up primarily of small frame houses, the earliest dating from 1857. Construction during the district's greatest period of growth (roughly 1870 to 1900) took place on a largely speculative basis, with renters coming and going at a brisk pace. Houses sprang up in uniform rows on nearly every street. This period of rapid growth is what gives the district its distinctive character today: rows of small Carpenter-Builder cottages of one or one-and-one-half stories with a continuity of design, scale and setback, nestled among a few Italianate or two-story Carpenter-Builder houses.

Along the west and northeast edges are what have historically been the commercial corridors, East Street and Virginia Avenue. Along with adjacent neighborhoods, the Holy Rosary/Danish Church district was served by the Virginia Avenue Street Railway line, which promoted both

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commercial and residential growth in the area beginning in 1864. Until the completion of the Virginia Avenue viaduct over the Big Four tracks in 1892, commercial activity all along Virginia Avenue increased to support these rapidly growing neighborhoods. Drug-stores, groceries, saloons, and harness shops were interspersed among residential structures along both East Street and Virginia Avenue. Stores were frequently operated by German families who lived in the neighborhood and who helped develop the area.

The commercial growth on Virginia Avenue has taken up most of the homes that once stood there, but has retained several of its historic commercial structures. South East Street, meanwhile, has retained its residential development to a larger extent, only recently allowing strong commercial growth to form; and this was probably influenced by the isolation of this neighborhood caused by the development of the Lilly complex to the west and the Interstate to the south and east. The commercial corridors are the places in the district where the most changes have occurred, in terms of demolitions and intrusions. The interior of the district, however, has experienced few demolitions; thus, the neighborhood's original scale has, for the most part, been maintained.

In summary, the district has witnessed a richness of ethnic diversity which continues even today. Except for the Germans and Irish, no immigrant group in Indianapolis stands out numerically. The presence of Italians and Danes, however, shows that the Hoosier capital was able to attract other groups during the time of its greatest economic development, 1880 to 1920. The proposed historic district calls attention to these immigrants and their descendants who have quietly contributed to Indianapolis for many decades. It also reminds us that they brought distinction to Indianapolis: here they built the first Italian Catholic National Church in the state and perhaps formed the first all Danish congregation in the country.

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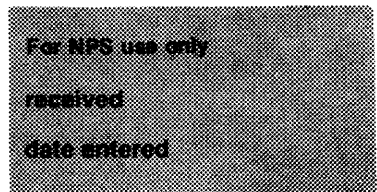
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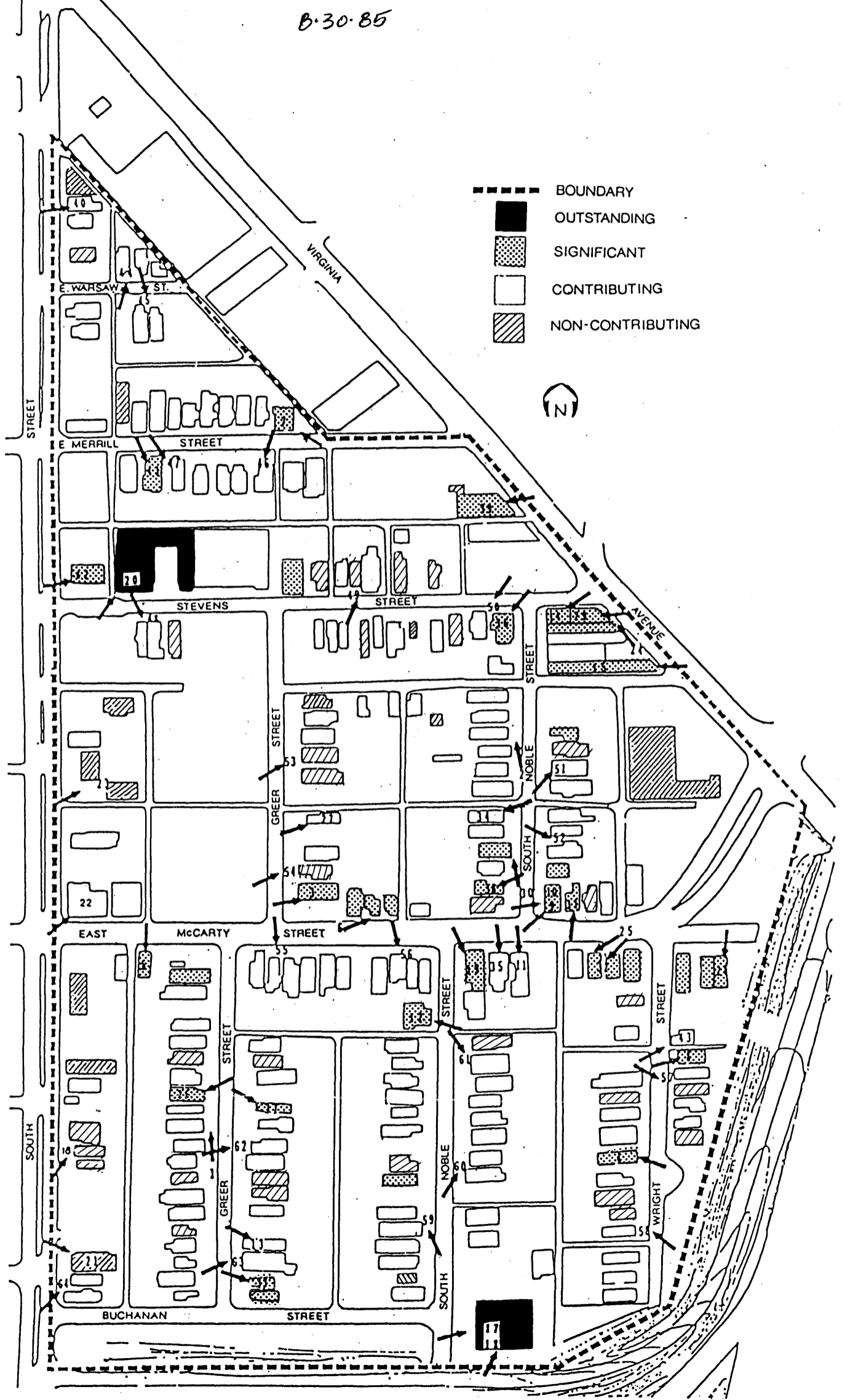
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Beginning at the point where the alley, which runs south of and parallel to the 400 block of Virginia Avenue, meets South East Street and continuing southeasterly along the alleyway to the juncture of East Merrill Street and said alley. Turn east onto East Merrill Street. Continue eastward along the south curblineline of East Merrill Street to the juncture of East Merrill Street and Virginia Avenue. Proceed south along the southwest curblineline of Virginia Avenue to the northwestern boundary of the Interstate Highway 65/70 right-of-way. Follow the right-of-way southward and turning westward to the point at which the Interstate is bisected by South East Street. Turn north onto South East Street and continue along the eastern curblineline northward to the point of origin.

HOLY ROSARY/DANISH CHURCH
 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 B.30.85



- BOUNDARY
- OUTSTANDING
- ▨ SIGNIFICANT
- CONTRIBUTING
- ▩ NON-CONTRIBUTING



STREET

E. WARSAW ST.

E. MERRILL STREET

STEVENS STREET

STEVENS STREET

AVENUE

GREER STREET

STREET

NOBLE STREET

EAST STREET

MCCARTY STREET

GREER STREET

STREET

STREET

SOUTH STREET

GREER STREET

NOBLE STREET

WRIGHT STREET

BUCHANAN STREET

SOUTH STREET