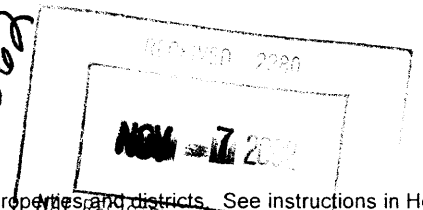
NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1562



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **T H I & E Interurban Depot/Substation**

other names/site number Plainfield Interurban Depot

2. Location

street & number 401 South Vine Street ☐ N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Plainfield ☐ N/A ☐ vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Hendricks code 063 zip code 46168

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

J.C. Sl 10·25·02

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

✓ 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 of the Keeper — Date of Action

Patrick Andrus — 12/19/2002

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [ ] private
- [x] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [x] building
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-Related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: BRICK
STONE: Limestone
roof: SYNTHETICS: Rubber
other: ASPHALT

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

T H I & E Interurban Depot/Substation
Name of Property

Hendricks IN
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contriibution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] **B** removed from its original location.
- [ ] **C** a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] **D** a cemetery.
- [ ] **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] **F** a commemorative property.
- [ ] **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1907-1952

Significant Dates

1907
1940

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- [ ] State Historic Preservation Office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [x] Other

Name of repository:

Plainfield Public Library; Ratio Architects

T H I & E Interurban Depot/Substation
Name of Property

Hendricks IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	551420	4394440
2			
3			
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Julie Zent, Graduate Architect/Historic Preservation Specialist

organization Ration Architects Inc. date 04-01-2002

street & number Suite 100, 107 South Pennsylvania Street telephone 317/ 633-4040

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46204-3684

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Plainfield--Richard Carlucci, Town Manager

street & number Municipal Building, 206 West Main Street telephone 317/ 839-2561

city or town Plainfield state IN zip code 46168

Narrative Description

The T.H.I.&E. Interurban Depot/Substation is located on the southeast corner of East Buchanan and South Vine Streets in Plainfield, Indiana (Site Plan). The approximately 0.2 acre site encompasses one-eighth of a city block. The former depot building is situated on the northwest corner of said block, fronting East Buchanan Street. A concrete sidewalk follows the perimeter of the site on the west with a grass median forming a buffer between the street. An alley is located to the east of the site with a strip of grass along the perimeter. The remainder of the site is comprised of an asphalt parking lot accessed from the north.

The small brick building exhibits features of the Italianate style including round arch openings, an articulated stringcourse and a corbelled brick cornice which conceals a flat roof. The building even possesses the illusion of a small square tower. The full-width entry porch supported by square posts with beveled corners, a prevalent feature on Italianate style buildings, has since been removed.

The former depot is square in plan; each side measures approximately 45 feet in length. The massing of the building is divided into two distinct portions. The southern two-thirds is a rectangular box with a flat roof. This area once housed the power substation. The northern third contained the passenger depot. This area is lower in height and has a hip roof broken by a central square tower that also features a hip roof.

A concrete foundation is visible a few inches above grade on most elevations. Brick walls, with a common bond pattern rises above. Toward the top of the substation portion of the building, a stringcourse, comprised of a band of rowlock bricks between rows of projecting stretcher bricks, wraps the perimeter. A corbelled brick cornice with terra cotta copingstones caps the building. The depot portion of the building once possessed a clay tile roof. The roof is currently sheathed in asphalt shingles. All of the original round-arch openings are topped with rows of radiating brick voussoirs and have limestone sills. The original wood doors and multi-light windows have been replaced with new smaller doors and glass block windows. Some of the openings have been infilled in their entirety, the locations are readily apparent due to the use of a different color brick.

The front façade or north elevation (Photo 1 & 4), currently exhibits a symmetrical appearance. The southern or substation portion rises above the depot area and features two groupings of three small round arch openings containing electric wire insulators (Photo 5). The stringcourse acts as their sill. A metal armature once extended from this area.

The shorter, depot portion of the north elevation is divided into three sections. The central portion rises slightly higher than the ends and once featured a projecting three-sided brick bay, since removed (Photo 6). Two non-original glass block windows with limestone sills are now located in this area. A segmental brick arch is found above. Flanking the center, a bricked-in door opening and glass block window capped by a bricked-in arch is found on each side (Photo 7). Differing brick denotes the original openings. The location of the full-width entry porch is also evident via brick color differentiation and filled rafter pockets.

The west elevation (Photo 1 & 2) possesses two glass block windows with bricked-in arches on the depot portion of the building. A larger glass block window with bricked-in arch is located on the substation portion.

Narrative Description-continued

The larger window shares the same arch size and height as an adjacent metal door to the south. As with the windows, the arch above the door has also been infilled. A non-original wood, shed roof canopy with asphalt shingles covers the entry.

The south elevation (Photo 2 & 3) has not been altered. It features four blind windows with round-arches and limestone sills (Photo 8). There is no parapet wall on this elevation; therefore the corbelled brick cornice is at lower height than on the other elevations.

The east elevation (Photo 3 & 4) has two doors, one entering into the depot and the other into the substation. Similar to the rest of the fenestration, the arches have been infilled with brick and smaller doors have been installed. A non-original wood, shed roof canopy with asphalt shingles extend to cover both entries. A rectangular outline of non-conforming brick on the southern portion of the elevation appears to have once housed an overhead garage door. A set of metal louvers is located in the upper southern part of the elevation. The original fenestration pattern featured two doors flanking a large window.

The interior of the T.H.I.&E. Interurban Depot/Substation underwent many alterations in regard to finish materials since its inception. However, the overall floor plan remains intact (1st Floor Plan). The passenger waiting area, located in the northwest corner, is now office space and the freight storage area currently houses a kitchen in the northeast corner. The central ticket office incurred the most changes as the bay window was removed and two toilet rooms are now situated in this space. The substation portion on the south of building was used as the American Legion Hall (Photo 9). A second story was added to the space at an unknown time (Photo 11).

Originally, the interior surfaces were not concealed. The floors were exposed concrete, the walls brick, the wood roof system formed the ceiling in the depot (Photo 14) and the substation ceiling featured structural steel I-beams spanning the space (Photo 15). The structure was the ornament, with chamfered wood rafters, arched brick door openings (Photo12) and stenciled designs painted on the brick walls (Photo 13).

While all these material remain, they have been concealed in most locations. Composition floor tile is located throughout the building's first floor level as is a suspended acoustic tile ceiling. The walls have been sheathed in wood paneling. The kitchen is the exception, featuring the exposed concrete floor, brick walls and a drywall ceiling.

A wood stair (Photo 10) was added to the east wall of the substation area to access the second floor. Two columns on the first floor level support the floor's wood structural system. The second floor was never completely finished out. The floor is wood and the exterior walls are exposed brick. Wood partition walls divide the space into three rooms (2nd Floor Plan). A makeshift ceiling system consisting of wood 2x4s has fluorescent light fixtures attached to it.

Narrative Description-continued

The alterations to the Plainfield Interurban Depot are easily reversible. The intent is to reveal the original materials with their ornamental detailing. The proposed use of the building is a community center with Interurban museum component. New wood fenestration consistent with historic documentation will be installed and the front entry porch is to be rebuilt (Historic Photo 1 & 2). A clay tile roof is proposed for both the porch and the hip roofs over the depot portion of the building. Also, the signature bay window located in the ticket office will be reconstructed. On the interior, the second floor level is to be removed and the ticket office area restored. The passenger and freight storage areas are to hold rest rooms, storage and a kitchenette (Rehabilitation Plan).

Statement of Significance

The T.H.I. & E. Interurban Depot/Substation is significant under Criterion A as a remaining vestige of the once prevalent interurban rail system. It serves as an important component contributing to the history of transportation, not only in Indiana but also in the United States. The depot is also significant under Criterion C for architecture. The depot/substation is representative of a specific building type that is no longer constructed. It features high-style architectural design with a characteristic floor plan consistent to other buildings of its genre.

The Plainfield Interurban Depot also is unique by virtue that is not unique. This station possessed two, practically identical counterparts along the Terre Haute, Indianapolis and Eastern line, which were constructed soon after the Plainfield original. The appearance of the buildings became an icon identifying interurban stations along the T.H.I.&E. line. In Amo, Indiana, the twin building remains. The depot in Reelsville, Indiana has since been torn down. The Plainfield and Amo depot/substations have undergone many alterations since their inception. However, plans are in the works to return both buildings to their original appearance.

The electric railway system was born out of the technological revolution in the United States in the late 1800s. People were searching for a faster, more reliable method to accommodate their local travel needs in a manner similar to how the steam railroad changed long distance travel. The steam locomotive had opened a new age of conveyance that was dependable and efficient. Furthermore, unlike the animal, the iron horse could not succumb to disease. This system could negotiate great distances and carry great loads of both people and products at speeds previously unknown to the horse and buggy. The electric interurban became the translation of these benefits at a local level.

The knowledge to create this new electrified mode of transportation was available in the late 1800s. "Thomas Edison had built the first American dynamo-driven electric locomotive in 1880 . . . but he made no effort to adapt it to economic use."[1] The cable car was the first mechanical method to be implemented successfully for local travel. This means of transport worked well to traverse the hilly terrain of San Francisco. However, it was not easily adaptable to other communities and its shortcomings often outweighed its benefits.[2]
In 1888, the first successful electric streetcar was developed in Virginia. It consisted of twelve miles of track, a powerhouse and forty cars. The success was contagious and interurban lines were soon found in communities throughout the nation. Where horses constituted 70% of local miles traveled in 1890, twelve years later, 97% of street mileage was electrically operated.[3] In 1901, over 15,000 miles of electric track were laid in the United States. By the 1920's almost every metropolitan area had an interurban service. In Indiana, interurban railways linked 62 of the 92 counties via approximately 2,400 miles of track.[4]

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[1] George Woodman Hilton. *The Electric Interurban: Railways in America,* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1960) 5.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid, 7.
[4] Francis H. Parker, *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage,* (Muncie, IN: Ball State University, 1989) 28.

Statement of Significance-continued

Charles L. Henry of Anderson, Indiana is credited for coining the term 'interurban' in 1892 when he devised a plan to link the Gas Belt cities of Indiana via electric railcars. By 1895, the word gained almost universal usage.[5] The following four characteristics define an interurban system; 1.) electric power, 2.) emphasis on passenger service, 3.) faster equipment than streetcars and 4.) operation on city streets and on the sides of highways.[6] An alternate definition simply asserts that an interurban is a "railway having less than half its track within municipal limits."[7]

The interurban created its niche by adhering to three basic principals. It 1.) traveled to recreational destinations, 2.) carried cargo as well as passengers and 3.) offered lower fares than any other mode of transportation.[8] Along with these benefits, the interurban accessed small communities with its electric cars running at regular intervals. It was not economically feasible for the steam locomotive to operate at such frequencies or to such numerous locales. Thus, the interurban prospered.

The Midwestern portion of the United States offered an ideal venue for interurban travel. The level terrain and the lack of large bodies of water meant no major obstacles for the interurban track to negotiate. "The areas between cities were not densely populated, but there were few vacant spaces."[9] People living in remote areas could now travel to major metropolitan areas in an economical and expedient manner.

A vast network of interurban lines formed in the states of Indiana and Ohio (Interurban Lines). These two states boasted the greatest number of track mileage. Indiana and Ohio also benefited from the fact that their interurban systems intermingled and could provide transportation to a greater variety of places with less transfers. "Indiana's Terre Haute, Indianapolis & Eastern Traction Company and The Union Traction Company were among the largest and strongest interurban companies in the nation".[10] Indianapolis was considered the Interurban Capital of the nation, boasting the largest interurban station.[11] Traction Terminal accommodated up

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[5] Jerry Marlette. *Electric Railroads of Indiana*, (Indianapolis, Indiana: Council for Local History, 1959) 5.
[6] George Woodman Hilton. *The Electric Interurban: Railways in America*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1960) 9.
[7] Jerry Marlette. *Electric Railroads of Indiana*, (Indianapolis, Indiana: Council for Local History, 1959) 5.
[8] University of Virginia. *Interurban Rail: Incorporating the Hinterlands at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*, (http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/INCORP/interurbanrail/index.html. February 2002) Subsection: *Competition*, 2-3.
[9] University of Virginia. *Interurban Rail: Incorporating the Hinterlands at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*, (http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/INCORP/interurbanrail/index.html. February 2002) Subsection: *Midwest*, 1.
[10] University of Virginia. *Interurban Rail: Incorporating the Hinterlands at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*, (http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/INCORP/interurbanrail/index.html. February 2002) Subsection: *Midwest*, 2.
[11] Gus Pearcy. "Interurban Building Gets $10,000 Grant." *Hendricks County Flyer*,

Statement of Significance-continued

to 400 trains a day[12] on its seventeen interurban lines.

Interurban service from Indianapolis to Plainfield began November 29, 1902 on the Indianapolis & Plainfield Electric Railroad Company.[13] Hourly service was offered via six passenger cars. In 1903, this company merged with the Danville & Cartersburg Railroad Company to form the Indianapolis Coal Traction Company. There is no documented evidence of a depot in Plainfield at this time. However, a 1902 article denotes the corner of Buchanan and Vine Streets as a right-of-way for the interurban travel.[14]

The introduction of the interurban in Plainfield was well regarded. The rail line provided a quick and easy commute to the capital city of Indianapolis. Residents came to enjoy living in a small town while reaping the benefits of a big city. They also hoped that the interurban would aid in increasing their population base. Life was considered improved, due to the dependable link the interurban had forged.[15]

In 1907, the Terre Haute, Indianapolis & Eastern Traction Company formed. It became the second largest interurban company in the state of Indiana featuring 402[16] miles of track. The T.H.I.&E. system established an immense range of interurban travel in Central Indiana by merging numerous smaller organizations, including the Indianapolis Coal Traction Company.[17] The first documented evidence of Plainfield's T.H.I.&E. Interurban Depot/Substation also is found 1907 (Historic Photo 1). *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* from this year illustrate the building situated on the corner of Buchanan and Vine Streets.[18]

The T.H.I.&E. enjoyed a period of expansion until 1912[19], followed by an age of prosperity lasting into the 1920s. It moved freight, cattle and passengers along its tracks throughout Central Indiana. The Plainfield Station lay along the line that connected Indianapolis to Terre Haute. "During most of the twenties, the interurban showed operating deficits, but auxiliary income from the sale of power and from earnings of the

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(3.January.2002): A-4.
[12] Bruce C. Smith. " American Legion Post Donates a Former Interurban Station to Town." The Indianapolis Star: Metro West, (1.March.2001), 1-2.
[13] Jerry Marlette. *Electric Railroads of Indiana*, (Indianapolis, Indiana: Council for Local History, 1959) 37.
[14] "County News: Commissioner' Court." *Plainfield Progress* (23.October.1902): 6, column 1.
[15] "Plainfield Wants to Grow: Committee of Citizen will Ask the Interurban Company to Help It." *Plainfield Progress* (30.October.1902): 1, column 1.
[16] Research led to a discrepancy in the actual number of miles included in the T.H.I.&E. system. Author Francis Parker lists the number as 442 on page 30 of his book *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage*.
[17] George Woodman Hilton. *The Electric Interurban: Railways in America*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1960) 278.
[18] *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Plainfield, Indiana*. (New York, New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Company: 1907).
[19] William D. Middleton. *The Interurban Era*, (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Kalmbach Publication, 1961) 157.

Statement of Significance-continued

Indianapolis Street Railway kept the company from showing net losses."[20] However, poor management and the Great Depression left the company 2.5 million dollars in debt in 1930. By 1931, 188 miles of the T.H.I.&E. interurban lines were abandoned and the company was sold at auction to the Midland United Corporation.[21] The Plainfield line and depot survived these changes and continued to function much as it did from the beginning.

The growing popularity of the automobile forced the ruin of many an electric rail company. The interurban survived as long as it was more technologically advanced than the automobile. The car eventually caught up with technology while the interurban remained status quo. The automobile offered greater ease, affordability and range than the narrow tracks of the interurban ever could. It also catered to the American peoples' love for individualism. Conspiracy theories of diesel conglomerates forcing the interurban demise also exist.[22]

During this time, few new companies opened. Many turned their focus to hauling freight or selling electric power rather than passenger service. The rare exception is the Indiana Railroad Company. Formed on August 1, 1930, it was owned by the Midland United Company. It accumulated approximately 600 miles of track at its peak, including the 214 from the former T.H.I.&E. Traction Company. [23] Indiana Railroad was financially secure until the mid 1930s. "In 1935, the Securities and Exchange Commission forced the passing of the Public Utility Holding Company Act. This act required holding companies to restrict their operations to a single integrated system by separating their power and railway operations."[24] The law altered the interurban company's focus to the more profitable endeavor of electric power operations, which meant many railways were abandoned.[25]

The Indiana Railroad Company abandoned most of its lines in the following years. The Indianapolis to Terre Haute track was the last remaining vestige of the interurban portion of the company. The business turned to diesel motorbuses[26] with the final electric railcar passing through Plainfield on January 10, 1940.[27]

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[20] George Woodman Hilton. *The Electric Interurban: Railways in America,* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1960) 279.
[21] George Woodman Hilton. *The Electric Interurban: Railways in America,* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1960) 279.
[22] University of Virginia. *Interurban Rail: Incorporating the Hinterlands at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century,* (http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/INCORP/interurbanrail/index.html. February 2002) Subsection: *Why Interurban Lost,* 1.
[23] George Woodman Hilton. *The Electric Interurban: Railways in America,* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1960) 284.
[24] Jerry Marlette, "Trails and Tribulations: The Interurban in Indiana", *Traces,* (Summer 2001) 23.
[25] Jerry Marlette, "Trails and Tribulations: The Interurban in Indiana", *Traces,* (Summer 2001) 23.
[26] George Woodman Hilton. *The Electric Interurban: Railways in America,* (Stanford California: Stanford University Press, 1960) 284.
[27] Jerry Marlette. *Electric Railroads of Indiana,* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Council for Local History, 1959) 47.

Statement of Significance-continued

The American Legion Post 329 of Plainfield acquired the property soon after the interurban ceased running in 1940. They used the building as a meeting hall until 2001, when they donated the building to the Town of Plainfield due to dwindling membership.[28]

In regard to the distinctive architectural styling of the Plainfield Interurban Depot, Author Francis Parker, elaborates on the key features of this building type in a book entitled *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage.* The following are passages taken from his book.

> The interurban lines shared some depot types with the steam railroads, but they also developed a range of special-purpose buildings suited to their unique operating conditions. In small towns the interurbans sometimes used a small version of the steam railroad combination depot, with or without the distinctive operator's bay window. . . these interurban depots usually fronted the street, since interurban cars typically entered town through city streets.[29]
>
> Unique to the interurbans was the depot/substation building, combining the functions of a passenger or combination station with those of a power substation. . . . At distances of six to ten miles, the A.C. current was stepped down and converted to D.C. power for the overhead current, using massive rotary converters. The rotary converters (essentially large motor-generator units) were typically installed in two-story brick "blockhouses" to avoid fire hazards. Early technology required the converters to be manually turned off, not only at night but also when nearby lightning threatened. Since this operation did not require the full time of an employee, it made sense to combine substation duties with those of a station agent. A distinctive building type evolved, essentially a small brick railroad depot with a two-story substation block appended at one end or the rear. . . . The hallmark of these depot/substations, . . . is their high boxy shape, the relative absence of fenestration and the three small ports, high on the walls, through which the A.C. power lines entered.[30]

The Plainfield Interurban Depot contains elements of the typical steam railroad's combination depot with a substation portion. Typical of this building type, it is characteristically divided into four major spaces; the ticket office, passenger waiting area, freight/storage area and substation.

The functions of Plainfield's Interurban Depot/Substation are readily apparent in the elevations (Photos 1 – 4) and floor plan (1st Floor Plan). The front one-story portion of the building is divided into three sections. The middle has a slightly higher roof and is the location of the former bay window, distinguishing it as the ticket

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[28] Smith, Bruce C. " American Legion Post Donates a Former Interurban Station to Town." *The Indianapolis Star: Metro West,* (1.March.2001) 1-2.
[29] Francis H. Parker, *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage,* (Muncie, IN: Ball State University, 1989) 28-29.
[30] Francis H. Parker, *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage,* (Muncie, IN: Ball State University, 1989) 30.

Statement of Significance-continued

office. An important feature of the depot was a bay window fronting the track. This allowed the ticket agent to have a clear view of the track from inside the office.[31] The agent had direct access to all areas of the station without ever leaving his space. The passenger waiting and freight/storage areas flanked the office in nearly identical one-story spaces. The boxy double-height substation was entered via a door at the rear of the office.

Standard depot designs were developed during the interurban's years of prosperity. The functional requirements of the Plainfield Interurban Depot dictated the overall size and shape of the building. Its design, including Italianate features were most likely developed in the T.H.I.&E Traction Company's engineering offices rather than being the work of an architect. It is known that individual interurban companies often developed their own distinctive depot designs utilizing the popular architectural style of the time.[32]

As a function of economy and a means of identity for the T.H.I.&E. rail line, the construction documents for the Plainfield Station were used at least two more times, in Amo and Reelsville, Indiana. The Italiante style, not only being popular during the early 1900s, possessed features conducive to the depot's needs. The deep entry porch served to protect the passengers and freight from inclement weather while waiting for the electric railcar to arrive. Arched windows allowed more natural light to penetrate the space while using fewer costly window units. The use of brick was considered fireproof, a necessity for any building housing a substation.

Many distinguishing features of the T.H.I.&E. Interurban Depot/Substation have been altered or removed during the occupancy of the American Legion. However, the town of Plainfield has vowed to return the building back to its original appearance. Plans are currently underway to rehabilitate the building into a community center with an interurban museum component (Rehabilitation Plan).

In itself, the building has retained much of its architectural integrity. The majority of modifications are reversible and have not changed the overall character of the building. For example, the window and door masonry opening were not altered when new units were installed, nor where the rooflines. The overall massing and basic floor plan remains unaffected. The building is structurally sound. The rehabilitation plan for the depot includes the reconstruction of the bay window and full-width entry porch as well as replica windows and doors. All design work is based on documented evidence.

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[31] Walter G. Berg. *Buildings & Structures of American Railroads,* (New York: John Whiley & Sons, 1893) 246.
[32] Francis H. Parker, *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage,* (Muncie, IN: Ball State University, 1989) 5.

Bibliography

"Amo." *Friday Caller* (3.May.1907): 3, column 5.

"Another Traction Hearing Held in Capital This Week." *Friday Caller* (1.June.1939): 1, column 5.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The T.H.I.&E. Interurban Depot/Substation is located on lot number twenty-seven (27) in Carter's South Addition, an addition to the Town of Plainfield, Guilford Township, Hendricks County, Indiana as per recorder on March 3, 1862 in Plat Book 1, page 135 in the Office of the Recorder of Hendricks County, Indiana.

The rectangular site is bounded by East Buchanan Street to the north and South Vine Street to the west. An alley forms the property line to the east with the southern boundary created by the property lines of the adjacent owners. Refer to Site Plan.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundary is based on the legally recorder property lines and encompasses the whole of the property associated with the T.H.I.&E Interurban Depot/Substation.

Photographs

1. 3.) David Kroll
   4.) April 2002
   5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
   6.) North and West Elevations
   Camera looking southeast.

2. 3.) David Kroll
   4.) April 2002
   5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
   6.) West and South Elevations
   Camera looking northeast.

3. 3.) David Kroll
   4.) April 2002
   5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
   6.) South and East Elevations
   Camera looking northwest.

4. 3.) David Kroll
   4.) April 2002
   5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
   6.) East and North Elevations

Photographs-continued

Camera looking southwest.

5. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Detail of Electric Wire Insulators
Camera looking south.

6. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Location of Former Ticket Office Bay Window on North Elevation
Camera looking south.

7. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Location of Former Door and Replacement Window on North Elevation
Camera looking south.

8. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Original Blind Window on South Elevation
Camera looking north.

9. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) First Floor Lodge Hall
Camera looking northwest.

10. 3.) Peter Moore
4.) January 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Stair
Camera looking south.

11. 3.) Peter Moore
4.) January 2002

Photographs-continued

5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Second Floor
Camera looking northwest.

12. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) First Floor Arched Door Opening
Camera looking south.

13. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Detail of Stenciling on Brick Walls
Camera looking west (seen above acoustic panel ceiling).

14. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Depot Hip Roof Structure
Camera looking north (seen above acoustic panel ceiling).

15. 3.) David Kroll
4.) April 2002
5.) Ratio Architects, Inc.
6.) Substation Steel I-beam Roof Structure and Insulators
Camera looking northwest (seen above 2x4 ceiling).