

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED	NOV 14 1979
DATE ENTERED	17

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Bank of Washburn

AND/OR COMMON

Old Washburn State Bank Building

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Bayfield Street and Central Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Washburn

VICINITY OF

7th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Wisconsin

55

Bayfield

007

**CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_\_DISTRICT

\_\_\_PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

\_\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_\_MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

\_\_\_UNOCCUPIED

\_\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_\_PARK

\_\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_\_BOTH

\_\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_\_EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_\_SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_\_OBJECT

\_\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_\_YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

\_\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_NO

\_\_\_MILITARY

\_\_\_OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

William D. Maki

STREET & NUMBER

R.R. 1, Box 137

CITY, TOWN

Washburn

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 54891

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Bayfield County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

117 East 5th

CITY, TOWN

Washburn

STATE

Wisconsin 54891

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

June 1975

\_\_\_FEDERAL STATE \_\_\_COUNTY \_\_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bank of Washburn, built in 1890, is a two plus attic story brownstone ashlar building. Its steeply pitched hipped roof gives a tall, narrow profile, particularly dominant since the two story courthouse is the next tallest building in Washburn.

<sup>engaged</sup>  
Sixteen stone columns encircle three sides of the first floor, defining fenestration, doors, and corners. The top third of the column shafts are scored, and the capitals have foliated ornamentation. First floor windows are either large glazed panels or sash. Five of them were replaced by smaller openings in the 1950s and 1960s, as was the main entrance. These are the only major alterations on the exterior.

The second floor is virtually intact, retaining many of the original window panes. Eight full-height, round-arched windows suggest Romanesque styling. The glass panes in the tympanum are original, but have been painted over. In addition to the arched windows, there are paired, sash windows, and above the entry, small glazed openings.

The roof consists of a steeply pitched hipped portion closest to the street corner and an adjacent hipped roof. Large, hipped wall dormers interrupt the steep roof, while smaller dormers accentuate the lower roof. A decorative stringcourse embellishes the wall of the steeply pitched portion, below the wall dormers. The original copper roof was tarred over in 1946, but the present owners plan to restore it. A curved copper antefix adorns each roof.

Much of the original interior has been lost through the three changes in banking operations, adaptations for a restaurant, hotel and offices, and its recent conversion into apartment units. However, several marble sinks and fixtures still remain, as well as some of the original woodwork and the bank vault. The building is presently divided into five private apartments, with additional sleeping rooms in the half story. The elevator was removed in the 1960s. A small frame storage shed on the north elevation was added circa 1950.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1890<sup>1</sup>

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bank of Washburn is significant for the fine craftsmanship of the brownstone construction and as the largest and most distinctively designed commercial building in the City of Washburn. The building represents a period of economic growth and development in northern Wisconsin and is probably an early example of an architect-designed building of local brownstone in that region.

In 1887, A. C. Probert founded the first bank in Bayfield County at Washburn, four years after the town's founding. Three years later he built a sturdy building for the bank. Mindful of a fire that destroyed part of Washburn in 1888, he chose local brownstone as the construction material.

The Romanesque Revival Bank of Washburn was built of Potsdam sandstone, most commonly known as brownstone. The quarry south of Washburn yielded the stone used in the building. Because of several disastrous fires in the late nineteenth century in northern Wisconsin, brownstone became a very popular construction material. Many of the region's commercial, religious, and public structures utilized the stone that was so prevalent in the northern coastal fields.

The bank building cost about \$25,000 to build. Only the first floor was designed for use by the bank; upper floors were rented as offices.<sup>2</sup>

1. Inscribed in stone over the entrance; also, The Washburn News, vol. 4, December 27, 1890, p. 1
2. The Washburn News, vol. 4, January 17, 1891, p. 1

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sheridan, Charles, interview with Jim Peters, August 11, 1978

The Washburn News, vol. 4, Dec. 27, 1890 and Jan. 17, 1891

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.16

QUADRANGLE NAME Washburn, Wis.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 661295 5170820

B                 
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C               

D               

E               

F               

G               

H               

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 31 and 32 of Block 58 of the original plat of Washburn, Wisconsin

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Jim Peters, Project Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Northwest Regional Planning Commission

DATE

August, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

302 Walnut Street

TELEPHONE

715/635-2197

CITY OR TOWN

Spooner

STATE

Wisconsin 54801

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL X

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

*Richard Murray*

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

11/5/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

1/17/80

ATTEST: *W. Ray Luce*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

1/16/80

*Christina Jane Saxe*  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION  
*Regional Coordinator*

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Bank of Washburn, Washburn, Bayfield County, Wisconsin

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER <sup>See</sup> below PAGE 1

8. In 1895 A.C. Probert, the bank's founder and president, was convicted of illegal banking practices. He was sent to prison and the bank closed. After years of litigation, ownership was turned over to the village and the building was leased to the Bayfield County Bank. In 1923 this bank, too, was closed for illegal practices.

From 1924-1954 the First National Bank of Washburn occupied the building. Since 1954 ownership and functions have changed several times. The District Attorney and Forest Service leased the old bank quarters; later a restaurant was housed there. By the 1960s the entire building was leased as private apartments.

The Bank of Washburn is probably the finest building in Washburn. At one time it was considered the finest building in Bayfield County. The warm reddish-brown walls, the strikingly narrow profile of the building, and the interesting texture and design of the details lends the building a quality that is rare in this sparsely populated part of the state. The building is an eye-catching element of the main street of Washburn, readily apparent as the most substantial and distinctive of the village's buildings.

3. The Washburn News, vol. 4, 12-27-90, p.1

11. Barbara Wyatt

State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Historic Preservation Division April 1979

816 State Street 608/262-8904

Madison Wisconsin 53706