

1 City, Village or Town: Superior	County: Douglas	Surveyor: P. Lusignan	Date: 2/1/85	Street Tower Avenue Number 1501-1511				
Street Address: 1501 - 1511 Tower Avenue (SW corner Tower Ave. & Belknap)		USGS Quad and UTM Reference: Superior, Wisc.-Minn. 15 / 568475 / 5174270	Acreage: less than one					
Current Name & Use: Board of Trade Building / Commercial, offices		Current Owner: Oswega Land Co.						
Film Roll No. DG - 6 DG - 10	Affix Contact Prints		Current Owner's Address: 1501-1511 Tower Avenue Superior, Wisconsin 54880					
Negative No. 34 2			Legal Description: West Superior Sixth Division; Lots 7,8,9,10,11 and 12, Block 164					
Facade Orient. East								
2 Original Name & Use: Minnesota Block / Board of Trade Bldg.		Source A,B,C	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source	Town 49N Range 14W	
Dates of Construction / Alteration 1891 - 1892		Source A,D						
Architect and/or Builder: C.C. Haight		Source A						
3 Architectural Significance <input type="radio"/> Represents work of a master <input type="radio"/> Possesses high artistic values * <input checked="" type="radio"/> Represents a type, period, or method of construction <input type="radio"/> Engineering <input type="radio"/> None		4 Historical Significance <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with lives of significant persons <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with significant historical events * <input checked="" type="radio"/> Assoc. with development of a locality <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <input type="radio"/> None Period of significance: _____		Architectural Description and Significance: Occupying a major corner site at the intersection of two major downtown thoroughfares, (Tower Ave. & Belknap) the Minnesota Block is clearly one of the largest and most substantial of the commercial blocks built in the city. Four stories in height, the building handsomely blends the dominant Romanesque Revival influences of commercial design in the city with the emerging structural forms of the late 19th century (continued) Interior visited? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		Historical Background and Significance: The boldly expressive Minnesota Block was built in 1891-92 by the Land and River Improvement Company. Representing one of the investment firms most extensive speculative ventures, the 4-story, 62,000 square foot structure was designed by Minneapolis architect C.C. Haight. ^A Erected by the F.A. Fisher contracting company of Minneapolis at a cost of \$225,000, the building took a full year to complete. (continued)		Section 22 Map Name Superior Intensive Survey
5 Sources of Information (Reference to Above) A Superior Daily Leader, 9/25/1892		6 Representation in Previous Surveys <input type="radio"/> HABS <input type="radio"/> LDMK <input checked="" type="radio"/> WIHP <input type="radio"/> NRHP <input type="radio"/> other: _____		7 Condition <input type="radio"/> excellent <input checked="" type="radio"/> good <input type="radio"/> fair <input type="radio"/> poor <input type="radio"/> ruins		Map Code E		
B Superior Annual 1899, Superior, WI		8 District: _____ <input type="radio"/> pivotal <input type="radio"/> contributing <input type="radio"/> non-contributing						
C Name Block		9 Opinion of National Register Eligibility date: _____ initials: _____ <input checked="" type="radio"/> eligible <input type="radio"/> not eligible <input type="radio"/> unknown <input type="radio"/> national <input type="radio"/> state <input checked="" type="radio"/> local						
D Assessor's Records		E Evening Telegram, Superior, 2/18/1969		F				

Architectural Description (continued)

Commercial style. The structure's exterior is of salmon, Thomas pressed brick from Illinois with sandstone trim, while the interior contains steel strengthened columns and fire proof brick and tile walls.

The building's major (east) facade is divided into five bays by engaged brick pilasters detailed with heavy sandstone capitals and bases. Each bay contains a series of three windows, all marked with simple sandstone lintels and sills. The central bay features more delicately detailed stone columns and window surrounds with carved capitals. At the roofline a stone cornice and bold frieze is topped with a detailed copper cornice with floral motifs.

The first floor area retains its solid brick corner pilasters, heavy stone cornice and detailed stone entranceway. Directly above the entry is a carved stone panel inscribed with the legend "Board of Trade". The original storefront areas on this level have been altered with the addition of modern glass and metal infill panels. At the Belknap Street (north) facade, original ground floor details are more readily visible, including cast iron storefront columns and surrounds; many marked with a West Superior Iron & Steel Co. stamp. The majority of the building's upper story windows have been infilled with wood panels and small fixed-pane sash.

The flat roof of the 130' x 150' building houses a small gabled mechanical shed and a solid brick chimney stack. The non-public south and west walls of the structure are stripped of details except for heavy sandstone sills and lintels. A fire escape and a series of minor (non-contributing) additions are also found to the rear of this extended U-shaped building. (see site plan).

The majority of the interior spaces have been remodelled, particularly at the ground floor level. Although replaced by a modern system, the original open iron elevator and elevator shaft is still visible at the center of the building, surrounded by an intricate cast iron staircase. Upper floor offices and halls maintain some original oak wood details and marble trim, as well as the original twelve foot ceilings. There are a total of 40 upstairs rooms in the building at present. Structurally, the building contains sandstone and brick foundation walls 12" thick and a concrete and arched-tile flooring system reinforced with steel.

Historical Background (continued)

The site chosen for the block was to become the heart of the new commercial core being developed by the Land & River Improvement Co. at the intersection of Tower and Belknap. Within a few years the site was to be strategically located at the central transfer point for all major street car lines entering and exiting the downtown area, and a focal point for commercial activity.

The building was designed as a combined commercial and office building and at one time housed the offices of both the Land & River Improvement Co. and the powerful West Superior Iron & Steel Company. The major ground floor tenant was originally the dry goods and general merchandise store of James C. Dawkins. At the time of the building and store's grand opening the firm was employing over 75 people, which according to local papers made it the largest such establishment north of Chicago.^A Utilizing 35,000 square feet of basement, ground floor and first floor space, the Dawkins store was originally lit by a skylight set into the U-shape courtyard of the building. For many years the firm would rival any establishment in the upper northwestern reaches of the state. In 1894 William Fanning -former treasurer of the Land & River Co.- bought out Dawkins and along with head clerk George Spicer maintained the dry goods house as the Spicer-Fanning Company. The Spicer-Fanning firm was eventually replaced by the Pederson Brothers

(continued)

Historical Background (continued)

Fair.

1894 also marked the change of names for the building, and the Minnesota Block became known as the Board of Trade Building. With that change the Land & River Company moved to the nearby New York Block and their offices were taken over by the Anchor Milling Company. The Grand Republic Mills took over the second floor offices and the Freeman and Daisey Roller Mills occupied the upper floors. With this changeover the building became a major business center for much of the shipping and rail commerce that was being carried on within the port. Throughout the 19th and twentieth century the building also continued to provide private office space for a number of prominent lawyers, doctors and professional businessmen within the community.^B

During the mid to late 20th century the Board of Trade building has seen a succession of owners and tenants. The block remains however a key commercial and business center within the downtown area.

Significance

The Minnesota Block is a significant representation of the work of the Land and River Improvement Co. in attempting to create a major commercial center along lower Tower Avenue. The Land and River Co. was the major factor in the building and development of the community of Superior and the Minnesota Block is a fine visual example of their work, investment and commitment to creating a great new center of commerce and trade on the western shores of Lake Superior, in the mold of the great eastern cities and Chicago.

This structure distinguished itself from other Land & River Improvement Co. buildings by housing the offices of the firm and the West Superior Iron and Steel Co., and later the administrative offices of the ports major grain and flour milling concerns.

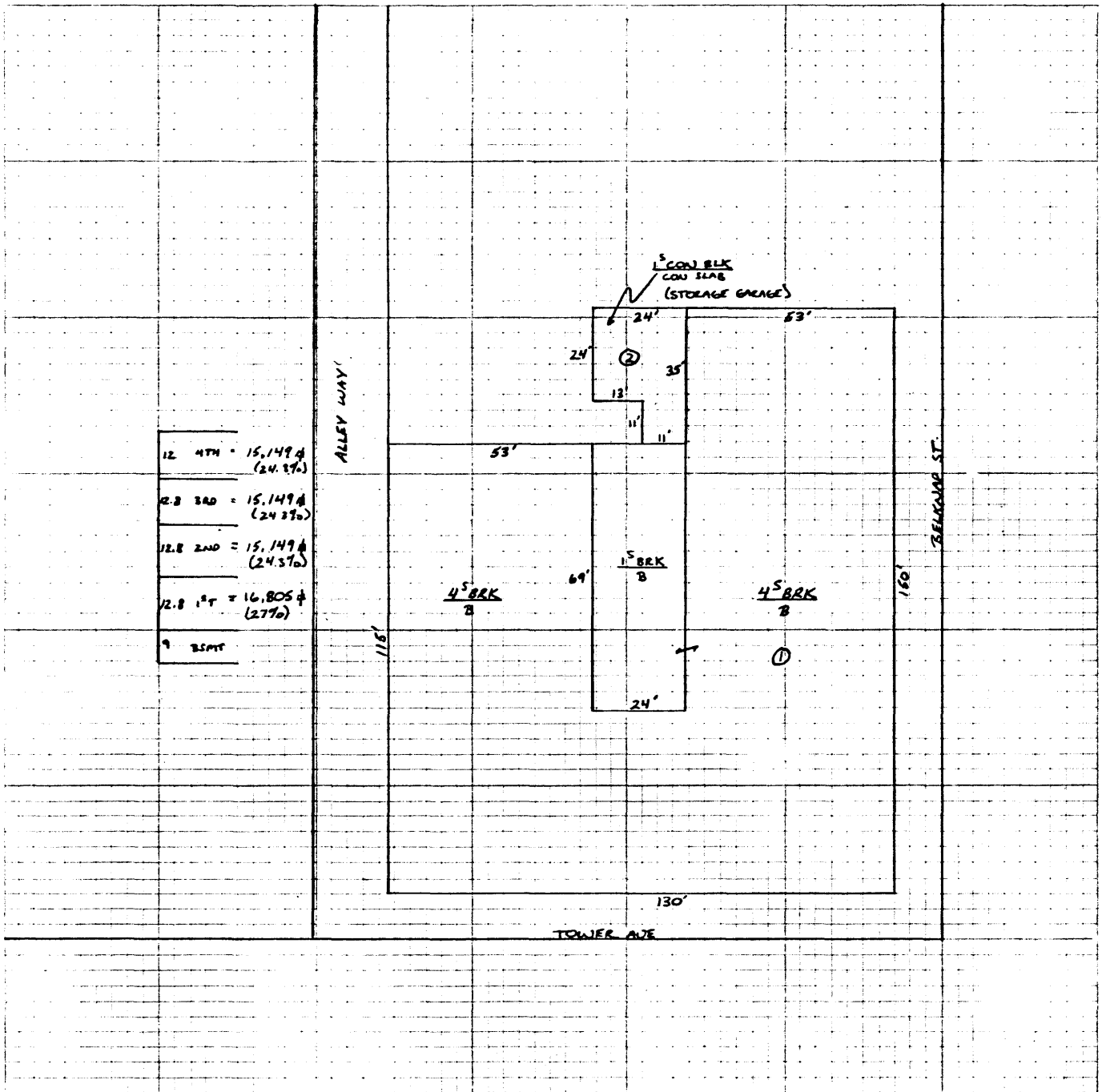
The largest and most imposing of the major commercial blocks erected along Tower Avenue during the Boom Period, the Minnesota Block is a significant local representation of the emerging blending of picturesque Romanesque forms with the newly arriving structural technologies and aesthetic sensibilities of the Commercial/Chicago School style of the late 19th century.

Address 1501-11 TOWER AVE District _____

Owner OSWEGA LAND CO Key No. _____

Date of Appraisal 11/80 Made By RG Year of Const. 1891

Indicate on Building Sketch: No. Stories - Story Height - Wall Mat'l & Thickness - Type & Size Windows Scale: 1" = 40 Ft.



12.4TH	= 15,149 sq ft (24.3%)
12.3 3RD	= 15,149 sq ft (24.3%)
12.2 2ND	= 15,149 sq ft (24.3%)
12.1 1ST	= 16,805 sq ft (27.7%)
9	BSMT

Computations & Other Pertinent Data 1ST FLOOR - 1) YAN VLECK CLEMENS AGENCY 2) SEARS 3) THE BIBLE HOUSE
2ND - 4TH FLOOR - 40 OFFICES (DENTISTS, DOCTORS, CPA'S, LAWYER'S ETC...)