

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001396

Date Listed: 9/27/91

|   |               |              |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| Watson Street Commercial Historic District, Fond Du Lac Co., WI |               |              |
| <b>Property Name</b>  | <b>County</b> | <b>State</b> |

#### Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Beth Poland  
Signature of the Keeper

3/17/92  
Date of Action

#### Amended Items in Nomination:

- 1) The resources count in Section 3 does not agree with that in the description (Section 7, p. 1 continuation sheet). The correct count is 69 contributing buildings, 14 noncontributing buildings, and 1 noncontributing structure.
- 2) The State neglected to remove "transportation" as an area of significance when revising the nomination after the demolition of the RR depot. The district is significant in the areas of Architecture, Commerce, and Education.

This information was verified by Jim Drager of the WI SHPO staff, by telephone and mail.

#### DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1276

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 8/86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format (NRF.txt)  
(Approved 3/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

**1. Name of Property**

Watson Street Commercial Historic District

N/A

**2. Location**

street & number Various, see inventory N/A Not for Publication  
city, town Ripon N/A vicinity  
state Wisconsin code WI county FondDuLac code 039 zip code 54971

**3. Classification**

| Ownership of Property                              | Category of Property                         | No. of Resources within Property |                          |
|--|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
|  |  | contributing                     | noncontributing          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private        | <input type="checkbox"/> building(s)         |                                  |                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <u>69</u>                        | <u>7</u> buildings       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State              | <input type="checkbox"/> site                |                                  | <u>      </u> sites      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure           |                                  | <u>      </u> structures |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> object              |                                  | <u>1</u> objects         |
|  |  | <u>69</u>                        | <u>8</u> Total           |

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Jefferson  
Signature of certifying official

7/26/91  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet

Beth Poland

9/27/91

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

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution  
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE/department store  
INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE/business  
COMMERCE/TRADE/professional  
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification**

(enter categories from instructions)

---

Italianate

---

Classical Revival

---

Art Deco

---

**Materials**

(enter categories from instructions)

foundation 

---

Stonewalls 

---

Brick

---

Limestone

---

roof 

---

Asphaltother 

---

Wood

---

Metal

---

---

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

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The Watson Street Commercial Historic District is made up of most of Ripon's historic downtown commercial business district. The bulk of the district runs along Watson Street, known very early in the community's history as Main Street, and consists of streetscapes of nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. These streetscapes are rarely interrupted by vacant lots, parking lots, or non-contributing elements, giving the district much of its cohesiveness as an intact historic downtown business district.

The district's southern boundary is where Watson St. meets Seward St., which is the historic end of Ripon's downtown; but this boundary has been extended slightly to include the historic Carnegie Public Library. At the north end of the district is the town square, a widening of Watson St., flanked by streetscapes of historic buildings. The district ends where Watson St. meets Jackson Street because most of the historic commercial buildings on the north side of the square are not extant. The northeast portion of the district, along East Jackson St. and Scott St. includes buildings that were originally used for light industries such as blacksmithing, carriage or wagon making, and harnessmaking. These industries were an integral part of most community's commercial business districts during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. During the twentieth century, though, this area has been converted to commercial uses. And, while there are some small intact historic streetscapes in this part of the district, there are more vacant or parking lots and non-contributing elements than along Watson St.

Originally surrounded on the south, east, and west sides by residential neighborhoods, the Watson Street Commercial Historic District is now surrounded by areas of mixed uses. To the north of the district are vacant lots, a railroad corridor, large industrial or commercial buildings, and the modern city hall and public library. This area was historically a combination of commercial blocks (most of which have lost integrity or been demolished), the historic Woods Hotel (not extant), houses, and mills using the the water power of the Silver Creek. West of the district are residential dwellings and Ripon College. South of the district is an historic residential neighborhood. To the east of the district is a combination of dwellings, modern or remodeled commercial buildings (some in converted dwellings), and large vacant or parking lots. Because of the compactness of historic commercial buildings in Ripon's downtown and the physical differences surrounding the district, the boundaries of the Watson Street Commercial Historic District can be easily seen and defined.

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Within the boundaries of the Watson Street Commercial Historic District, there are both gentle and rapid inclines along Watson Street and the intersecting streets. From the southern boundary of the district at Seward Street, Watson Street gently falls until it reaches the northern boundary at Jackson Street. Outside of the district, the land falls off significantly to Jefferson Street. A more pronounced incline occurs west to east in the district. In the northeastern portion of the district, the land begins at a low point where East Jackson Street and Scott Street intersect with Blackburn Street. Then the land rises rapidly toward Ransom Street to Ripon College, which is located on a hill. In fact, the 200 and 300 blocks of Watson Street back up into this hill and some first floors on the street facade are basements on the rear facade.

The overall appearance of the district is typical of urban commercial streets. The buildings of Watson Street share party walls and fill the entire block. In the northeastern portion of the district, some buildings share party walls and form small streetscapes, but there is a higher incidence of individual buildings sitting separately from their neighbors. Almost all of the buildings in the district are uniformly set back from the street, and in most cases there are wide sidewalks in front of them. There are few trees within the district boundaries with the exception of some landscaping in the Rotary Court (Map #92) in the middle of the old town square. Streetlights occur at regular intervals and consist of tall aluminum poles with mercury vapor lamps. Street paving is asphalt and may cover turn of the century brick paving, especially in the town square area. The incidence of parking or vacant lots has already been addressed, being mainly in the northeastern area of the district. As much as possible, parking and vacant lots have been drawn out of the district.

Watson Street runs north and south and allows for two-way traffic. Parallel parking is allowed on both sides of the street in the 200 and 300 blocks of the district. In the 100 block of the district, or the town square area, angle parking has been provided for on both sides of the street. Jackson Street is also a typical commercial street with two-way traffic and parallel parking on both sides of the street. Fond Du Lac Street is a one-way street running east, while Scott Street is a one-way street running west. Both Fond Du Lac and Scott Streets allow parallel parking on both sides of the street.

The district contains 69 contributing buildings and 14 non-contributing buildings. Most of the non-contributing buildings are sheds behind the west side of Watson Street. The remaining non-contributing buildings are classified as such because they have lost too much of their historic appearance or are of too recent

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construction to contribute to the district. In some cases, remodeled historic buildings are not irreversibly altered, meaning that restoration is possible.

As is common in most commercial districts, original or historic storefronts are generally not extant, but, so much detail remains on the upper floors in the district, and in most cases, the modern storefronts are not so radical or do not so overwhelm the building that they make it non-contributing. Only those buildings that have received alterations to the entire front facade of the building were categorized as non-contributing. That is, if at least 50% of the original or historic appearance of the building is extant, it was determined to be contributing in the district. One of the goals of the Main Street project in Ripon is historic storefront restoration, so it is expected that within the next few years, many storefronts will be rehabilitated to reflect more of the historic character of the entire building than they do now.

Most of the district's contributing buildings are Italianate-influenced commercial blocks. Other buildings express either the commercial vernacular or twentieth century commercial style or form. A few buildings express more style and they include a Classical Revival post office, bank, and library; and an Art Deco bank block. The Italianate-influenced commercial blocks and the commercial vernacular buildings have similar form and construction materials and because of this fact, the district has a very pronounced architectural cohesiveness.

The dates of construction of the buildings in the district reflect the reconstruction of the downtown after disastrous fires in 1868 and 1869 and smaller fires that destroyed a number of important commercial blocks during the 1870s and 1880s. Of the 71 contributing buildings in the district, only four or 6% date to the 1860s, while 28 or 39% and eight or 11% of the contributing buildings in the district were built during the 1870s or 1880s.

Little construction took place in this district after 1890 except in the 300 block of the district where the commercial business district was stretching to its limits. Nine or 13% of the contributing buildings in the district were built in the 1890s. After 1900, most construction replaced older buildings that were either destroyed by fire or demolished for new construction. Only 21 or 30% of the contributing buildings in the district were built in the first four decades of the twentieth century.

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DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED STREETSCAPES AND INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS

This district is composed, in part, of two streets of commercial blocks that reflect a similar Italianate-influenced commercial architectural style. Almost all of the buildings are of cream brick construction with elaborate brick corbelling acting as a cornice and decorating window openings. There are few applied wood or metal cornices on these buildings or others in the district. There are also several outstanding or interesting individual buildings or smaller building groups in the district. In this section, the streetscapes will be discussed first, followed by the individual elements in the district in map number order.

| <u>Map No.</u> | <u>Address</u>     | <u>Historic Name</u>  | <u>Date of Construction*</u> |
|----------------|--------------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1              | 101-03 Watson St.  | Pettibone Block   | 1872                         |
| 2              | 105 Watson St.     | Davy Jewelry Store  | c.1870                       |
| 3              | 107-11 Watson St.  | O. J. Clark Block<br>(Dillon & Vosburg Grocery)<br>(O. J. Clark Hardware)<br>(Pynch-DuVall Grocery) | c.1870                       |
| 4              | 113 Watson St.     | Jenkinson-Fey Hardware  | c.1870                       |
| 5              | 115-117 Watson St. | Reichmuth-Thompson Building   | c.1870                       |
| 6              | 119 Watson St.     | Kleifoth-Mueller Block  | c.1870                       |
| 7              | 121 Watson St.     | Zobel Brothers Block  | remodeled: 1884<br>1878      |
| 8              | 123 Watson St.     | Drug Store/First National Bank  | 1875<br>remodeled: c. 1909   |

This streetscape of commercial blocks was built as the result of a fire in 1869 that destroyed all but 121 and 123 Watson St. These two blocks, though, burned in an 1875 conflagration and were rebuilt in 1878 and 1875, respectively. They all are built of cream brick and probably have limestone party walls. Stone side and back walls can be seen on the corner blocks and at the rear of this streetscape. All, except two buildings, have elaborate brick corbelling in place of cornices and all have segmentally arched or label molded second floor openings creating an arcaded

\* Footnotes for the dates of construction for the buildings described here are included with those for the rest of the buildings in the Building Inventory, immediately following this section.

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streetscape have the arcaded effect mentioned earlier in Section 7. The building's storefronts have all been remodeled during the twentieth century, and some buildings have had more than one remodeling effort. However, the building's second stories, with the exception of some occasional alterations to window openings, are largely intact.

The creambrick Pettibone Block (1872, 101-03 Watson St., No.1) features a corbelled brick cornice that suggests brackets, a row of arcaded reveals sitting over indented forms, and a row of dentils. The segmentally-arched arcaded window hoods feature dentils and shield keystones. The segmental arches sit on pilasters that separate the window openings. Small, modern double hung sashes fill part of the window openings. The other part of the openings are enclosed. However, these window alteration are not irreversible. The first floor storefronts feature modern brickwork, metal siding, and a glass theatre marquee. Both storefronts appear to date to the 1960s or 1970s.

Built by A. W. Pettibone in 1872 for his dry goods business, later in the nineteenth century the block was split into two stores; a dry goods house and a drug store. During the turn of the century years the dry goods store was operated by the Mattice family and the drug store by Ottmar Schallern. By 1909 the building was again combined to house the Mattice-Foster Company Department Store, one of Ripon's larger department stores. This business was in operation until the mid-1920s. In 1925, Ben Marcus established the Campus Theatre in the location it exists today. This was the first of the chain of Marcus Theatres that he would establish throughout Wisconsin in the twentieth century. In the other half of the block, numerous businesses have been located during the later twentieth century. (1)

The Davy Jewelry Store (c.1870, 105 Watson St., No.2) has a brick corbelled cornice featuring an unusual line of bricks laid in a sawtooth pattern. There is also a line of stepped brickwork suggesting brackets. The semi-elliptically arched window hoods feature shield keystones and sit on pilasters. Window openings are partially boarded up to fit smaller double-hung sashes. The storefront has a modern brick apron, large single-pane show windows, and a modern aluminum and glass door.

William Davy was a pioneer jeweler in the city, coming to Ripon in 1870. He remained at this location until 1908 when he moved elsewhere along Watson Street. He continued to ply his trade until his death in 1923. After Davy left the building a variety of businesses were located there including a grocery and drug store. Since the 1950s the building has housed the Berg Electric business. (2)

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The O. J. Clark Block (c. 1870, 107-111 Watson St., Nos. 3) is a three storefront cream brick commercial block that features similar brickwork on all three portions of the building. The central storefront was originally three stories in height and carried an elaborate brick corbelled cornice. This third story has been removed and making the central portion of this block is slightly lower than its neighbors. The north and south flanking storefronts are identically decorated with a brick corbelled cornice of dentils, arcaded reveals, and belt courses. Window openings on all three storefronts have identical segmental arches sitting on pilasters and are decorated with shield keystones. The north and south storefronts have slightly enclosed window openings to fit smaller double hung sashes. The central storefront's window openings have been enclosed with brick, although not irreversibly. The storefronts also have modern single pane show windows, aluminum and glass doors, concrete paneling, and single-paned, narrow windows.

O. J. Clark was an early hardware merchant in Ripon and operated in 109 Watson St. until 1886 when he sold out his interest in the business to Charles Cowan. Cowan operated the hardware store until 1910. After that time it was still a hardware store known as the Ripon Hardware Store and remained in operation until the early 1960s. The Dillon and Vosburg grocery store was located in 107 Watson St. Later it became the John J. Dillon grocery store and later the Dillon and Son grocery store. During the middle years of the twentieth century, the storefront housed a restaurant, and it is currently an office building. In 111 Watson St. was the grocery store of the Pynch Brothers that later became the DuVall Grocery store. In the later years of the twentieth century, this storefront became part of the hardware company next door, but today it is part of a medical office. (3)

The Jenkinson-Fey Hardware Store (c.1870, 113 Watson St., No. 4) is a cream brick building featuring a simple brick corbelled cornice (some of original cornice brickwork has been replaced with plain brickwork) with the unusual sawtooth course seen on No. 3 and the line of stepped brickwork that suggests brackets. The partially boarded up windows are decorated with segmental brick arches with shield keystones and elaborate brick corbels. Modern double-hung sashes have been installed in the enclosed window openings. The first floor storefront is identical to 111 Watson St., but includes two modern aluminum and glass doors.

The building is best known as the location of the Jenkinson and Fey hardware store in the late nineteenth century. This business was taken over by George Sargent and operated as Central Hardware and later as the Ace Hardware Store until the 1960s. It is now part of a medical office. (4)

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The Reichmuth-Thompson Building (c.1870, 115-117 Watson St., No. 5) has details similar to the buildings described above. The brick corbelled cornice features stepped brickwork that suggests brackets over arcaded reveals, short pilasters, and brick belt courses. Window openings are decorated with segmental arches with shield keystones and stepped brick corbels. Half of the windows are modern double hung sashes with enclosed arched openings, while the other windows have original openings with historic four-over-one light double hung wooden sashes. The first floor storefronts both feature large wooden signs, large single-pane show windows and wooden and glass entrances.

Herman Reichmuth's (earlier Reichmuth Brothers) restaurant and confectionary was a long-time tenant of 115 Watson St. Several businesses have occupied this space since World War II. C. G. Thompson's grocery store was the first tenant of 117 Watson St., but by the 1880s it became the Strauss Brothers clothing store. Strauss Brothers was to become, in a different location, one of Ripon's largest twentieth century department stores. By 1909, this was the location of Herman Faustman's dry goods store and Faustman's remained here until the depression years. The building then housed a drapery shop and several other businesses after World War II and today is an electronic store. (5)

The Kleifoth-Mueller Block (c. 1870, 1884, 119 Watson St., No. 6) is one of the longest-operated saloon buildings in Ripon's history. Built around 1870 by Charles Kleifoth as a saloon, the building features some brick corbelling from the original building. Window openings are decorated with segmental arches with shield keystones and stepped corbels. The windows are enclosed with vertical wood siding and very small modern double hung sashes. The first floor has a wooden awning, vertical wood siding, modern brickwork, two small windows, and two modern wood and glass entrances.

In 1884, probably the year the Mueller family took over the saloon business, a fine wooden cornice was added to the building. This cornice features classically-appointed brackets, a paneled frieze, dentils, and a pediment parapet that is engraved "G. Mueller 1884." The intact applied cornice is an attractive and unusual element in this district. Except for the prohibition era, the building has been in constant operation as a saloon since c. 1870.

The Zobel Brothers Block (1878, 121 Watson St., No. 7) replaced a smaller store that had survived the 1869 fire, but not the 1875 fire that took its neighbor to the south (123 Watson St.). The building features brick courses, dentils, and a panel of narrow arches accenting the center of the building. The window openings have

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label moldings with keystones and pilasters. There are two double hung sashes flanking a set of narrower double hung sashes filling the openings. The openings are original, although the window units are reproductions of historic commercial windows. The first floor storefront has vertical wood siding, large glass show windows, and a wood and glass entrance.

Built for the Zobel Brothers grocery store, by 1909 this building was the drug store of Ottmar Schallern. It remained a drug store until the mid twentieth century, then housed a number of businesses. Today is it a stock broker's office. (6)

The Drug Store/First National Bank (1875, 123 Watson St., No. 8) was built after the Sumner Block, which stood here, burned. It features a cream brick front facade second story, a stuccoed side wall, and a stone veneer first floor storefront. There is an applied metal cornice that is decorated simply with plain brackets. A belt course of brick dentils accents the area over the windows which are decorated with segmental arches with keystones and pilasters. The window openings throughout the building have been partially boarded up and modern sashes have replaced them. Some segmental arches decorate a few openings on the first floor side wall. The first floor storefront features one large semi-elliptically arched opening and a modern glass entry topped with an enclosed semi-elliptical transom.

This building has often been photographed because it was the home of a noted local photographer. The historic photos show that the building has been altered several times and that it had a major remodeling in 1909. The building is on the site of one of Ripon's early stone blocks known as the Sumner Block. The Sumner Block survived the 1869 fire but burned in 1875 and was rebuilt, possibly using some existing stone walls, but given a new brick front facade. Its first tenant after being rebuilt in 1875 was probably druggist J. M. De Frees. In the 1890s it was the Wright and Brayton drug store and by 1901 it was the T. S. Chittenden and Company drug store. In 1909 the building was taken over by the First National Bank. The bank moved in 1930 to their new and larger quarters across the square. The building then housed a number of businesses and is currently a tavern. (7)

| <u>Map No.</u> | <u>Address</u>     | <u>Historic Name</u> | <u>Date of Construction*</u> |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| 11             | 205-209 Watson St. | Commercial Block     | c.1870                       |
| 12             | 211-213 Watson St. | Commercial Block     | c.1870                       |
| 13             | 217 Watson St.     | Hill Brothers Saloon | c.1870                       |
| 14             | 219 Watson St.     | Commercial Block     | c.1870                       |
| 15             | 221 Watson St.     | Commercial Block     | c.1870                       |

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|    |                    |                      |        |
|----|--------------------|----------------------|--------|
| 16 | 223-225 Watson St. | Commercial Block     | c.1870 |
| 17 | 227-229 Watson St. | Commercial Block     | c.1870 |
| 18 | 231-233 Watson St. | Ripon Knitting Works | c.1870 |

This streetscape of Italianate-influenced cream brick commercial blocks, like the previous streetscape, was the result of a massive fire, this time in 1868, that destroyed the whole block of frame commercial buildings on this site. One of the reasons these buildings are so architecturally compatible is that they were all built around 1870. The buildings are cream brick, two-story commercial buildings, except for the corner block which has three stories. Almost all of the building's architectural details are on the upper floors. A few historic storefronts exist, but they are not elaborately detailed.

The first building of this group is the Commercial Block at 205-09 Watson St. (No. 11). It features a corbelled brick cornice line of brick courses, arcaded arches and corbels. There is a group of fairly intact upper story window openings decorated by heavy brick label moldings with corbels and shield keystones on the second floor and segmental arches with corbels and shield keystones on the third floor. The openings are almost all intact and are filled with historic multi-paned wooden double-hung sashes. The building is rounded at the corner and has two large, multi-paned, french door openings that appear to have been slightly altered. On the first floor side walls there are plain double hung sash windows and several porthole windows. A fine cut limestone foundation can be seen on the side facade as well.

The three storefronts of the building are varied. At the corner the storefront consists of vertical wood siding, modern glass show windows, and a modern aluminum and glass door. The center storefront features a large wooden sign, large glass show windows and a modern entrance. The other storefront has columns separating large show windows sitting on a paneled apron. The entrance is recessed and features a transom.

This large building housed a variety of businesses; its most long-term business was a cigar manufacturing shop. F. W. Gruetzmacher operated his cigar factory there between around 1900 and the depression years. It remained a tobacco store until the 1970s. A barber shop has also been located here for most of the building's history. Stoller and Milliman operated a barber shop in the 1890s, then Yerke and Ladwig operated it until the mid twentieth century. It remained a barber shop until around 1970. Other businesses here were a harness maker's shop, a millinery shop, a dressmaker's shop, and between 1940 and 1968, the central storefront was the office of the Central Federal Savings Bank, now located next door (Map No. 9). (8)

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The next building (211-215 Watson St., No. 12) is constructed of cream brick and features a brick corbelled cornice that has lost some of the detail work. Where the cornice is intact there is a row of indented crosses and several stepped brick courses accented on the bottom row by corbels. There is a continuous row of small arcaded arches sitting on short pilasters. This row of arches sits on another group of stepped brick courses and they are also decorated with corbels.

Decoration on the round arched window openings consists of segmental brick arches with brick keystones and corbel stops. Most of the window openings are intact and are filled with single-pane double-hung wooden sashes. Other openings have been slightly filled in and replaced with aluminum sashes. One storefront features columns separating tall, narrow show windows sitting on a plain apron. The modern aluminum and glass entry door is topped with a large enclosed transom. The entry door to the upper floor also appears to have been enclosed, but the historic opening can still be seen. The second storefront features a large wooden sign over modern show windows. It has a recessed entrance of a wood and glass door with a transom. Its entrance to the upper floor is a plain wood paneled door with a transom. The third storefront has been combined with its neighbor to the south (217 Watson St.) and features a large metal sign, metal overhang, modern show windows and modern aluminum and glass entry doors.

The Graf and Jussen-Jussen Brothers Market, located at 211 Watson St. was one of the longest continuous businesses in Ripon's commercial district. Graf and Jussen began in 1865, perhaps in the frame building on this site that burned in the 1868 fire. In any event, Graf and Jussen's meat market dates back on this site to at least 1876. Around 1920 the firm became the Jussen Brothers Meat Market, operated by the sons of Edward Jussen. This firm operated until the brothers died in 1937 and 1938. The building remained a meat market, though, until the mid-1960s. (9)

The Reichmuth Bakery occupied 213 Watson St. Operated first by F. Reichmuth, then by Edward Reichmuth until the turn of the century, it became the F. William Diedrich Drug Store. After World War II the building was used as a clothing store and just recently has become a card shop. (10).

The building now housing half of the Country Accents furnishings store had a number of historic businesses housed there. Its original function is unknown but in the 1880s it was a saloon, then in the 1890s a grocery store and later a harness maker's shop. Between around 1904 and the 1920s, the building housed the Ferdinand Everez boot and shoe store. In recent years the building has housed a Walgreen's drug store, a variety store, and a furniture store. (11)

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Number 13 (217 Watson St.) has a slightly different form of brick corbelling on its upper story. Built of cream brick, this two story block is decorated with second story windows by a row of semi-elliptical arcaded arches, short pilasters, two lines of brick courses, and corbels. The window openings are decorated with segmental arches, brick keystones, and corbels. The windows themselves are partially enclosed and have been replaced by modern double hung sashes.

This building was probably built for the Hill Brothers Saloon, located in this spot between at least 1876 and the turn of the century. While the 1901 city directory indicates an A. Ogden operated the saloon during that year, by 1909 and 1913, Andrew and Harry Hill were listed as proprietors. During prohibition the building became a soda fountain, then after prohibition a number of stores occupied the site. Most recently, it has been a variety store and a furniture store. (12)

Number 14 (219 Watson St.) is elaborately decorated with a brick cornice. Three arches support an interrupted line of corbels that suggest brackets between pilasters that are interrupted with more corbeling. Underneath the arches is a line of brick dentils, then panels, and finally a stepped belt course. The window openings are decorated with segmental arches, stone keystones, and corbels. The windows have been partially enclosed and replaced with modern double hung sashes. The storefront has vertical and diagonal wood siding, a canvas awning, and modern show windows. A plain entry door to the south of the storefront leads to the upper floor.

This original occupant of the building is unknown, but by 1882 it was the tailor shop of Herzke and Fischer, which remained here until the death of Herman Fischer in 1893. William Herzke then operated a saloon here until his death in 1909. The saloon was operated by William P. Hoth until prohibition, when the building became a soda fountain. During the 1920s, the building was a drug store and remained so until after World War II. It was subsequently a tire store, a drug store again, an appliance store, and is currently a small office. (13)

Number 15 (221 Watson St.) features corbels that suggest brackets interrupted by large decorated corbels at the cornice line. Under this is a course of sawtooth brickwork, then another line of corbels suggesting brackets. The windows are decorated with segmental arches accented by another arch that extends down to form a window surround. The arches have shield keystones. The windows both historic and modern single-light double-hung sashes. The storefront consists of vertical wood siding, a modern window with imitation muntins. The recessed consists of a wood and glass door. The entry transom is filled with an air conditioner.

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While this building's original use is unknown, by 1884, Sanborn-Perris maps indicate a grocery was located here. In 1901, the city directory indicates that it was the Fred Wolitz grocery, but by 1909, it was the grocery of Andrew Amend. Amend's grocery was to remain at this location until his retirement in 1936. The building then became a tavern and remains so today. (14)

Number 16 (223-225 Watson St.) is decorated at the upper level by indented panels and a line of dentils. The windows are decorated with segmental arches, shield keystones, and corbels. The arch is filled in by a single light sitting over wooden single-light double-hung sashes. One of the storefronts has metal panels, modern show windows, and a modern aluminum and glass entry door with a transom. The other storefront is more historic and has old show windows separated by very narrow cast iron columns. There is a wooden apron and a recessed central entrance of double wood and glass doors and a large transom. The entrance to the upper floor is a plain wooden door with a double transom. A small sign sits above the storefront.

In the 1880s the building was known as the Central Hotel. During the 1890s the hotel became the Carley House, but by 1900, the hotel was no longer in operation. In one storefront, a furniture store took over, followed by a movie house, then a pool hall, and in the twentieth century, a number of stores. It is now a photo store. Around 1900, the other storefront became the Val Habel saloon. He operated it until prohibition and died in 1933. After prohibition the building was a paint store, a fabric store, and now is a sewing machine dealership. (15)

Numbers 17 and 18 (227-233 Watson St.) housed, during their early period, the Ripon Knitting Works. Most of the factory was located on their second floor, with other businesses located in the storefronts. The Ripon Knitting Works, an important small industry in the community, moved from this location to the end of the 300 block of Watson Street around 1900 (not extant).

Number 17 has a brick cornice that has been partially removed resulting in only one line of stepped corbels suggesting brackets over the upper windows. Windows are decorated with segmental arches, shield keystones and a raised segmental arch that extends downward to form window surrounds. The openings have been partially enclosed with modern double hung sashes. The first floor storefronts have permastone aprons, large modern show windows, modern aluminum and glass doors, a large awning, and a large wooden sign.

Number 17 has a cornice line of stepped corbels, short pilasters, a row of dentils, and a stepped brick course. Windows are decorated with segmental arches, shield

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keystones, and corbels. The arches have been enclosed over single light double hung sashes. One storefront is topped with an applied wooden cornice. The simple cornice is decorated with Neo-classical scroll brackets and a paneled frieze. The storefront has a permastone apron under modern show windows and a wood and glass entrance with a transom. The other storefront consists of a very large panel of plain painted wood. Stone siding material has covered up much of the window space and only small glass windows still exist in the storefront. The entrance has modern aluminum and glass doors. An entry to the upper floor on the north end of this block has an older multi-light wood and glass door.

As indicated above, these buildings were the early location of the Ripon Knitting Works, most of which was housed on the second story of the four blocks. In the storefronts, other businesses were housed. In Number 16, the Gruetzmacher and Company cigar factory shared the quarters with the knitting works in the 1890s. Between around 1900 and the early 1920s, Emil Rutz operated the cigar factory. After World War II, the block housed a men's ware store and since the mid-1960s the block has housed a jewelry store. (16)

The other storefront of Number 16 housed a grocery store, dry goods store, a notions store, a variety store, and for many years a bakery. During the 1960s and 1970s, there was a paint store here, and today there is a hair salon. (17) One of the storefronts of Number 17 was the office of the knitting works. After this, the storefront was the Nohr Milling Company, a flour and feed store, later operated by Oehler and Wiese. Between the mid-1920s and the mid-1950s, it was a restaurant. Several stores have occupied this space since that time. (18)

The other storefront of Number 27 was the long-time location of the August, then Fredrick Buchholz grocery store. While August Buchholz is not listed in the 1876 city directory as the proprietor of a grocery store, the 1884 and 1892 Sanborn-Perris Maps indicate a grocery store was in this building during these years. August Buchholz came to Ripon as a young man in 1873 and later entered into the grocery business. He probably came to this location sometime in the 1880s. He is known to have operated a grocery store here between at least 1893 and his death in 1918. After his death, his son, Frederick, operated the grocery store here until his death in 1937. After 1937, this building housed several stores and a financial office. (19)

19            301 Watson St.            Ripon State Bank            1913

The Ripon State Bank (No. 27) is typical of Neoclassical Revival bank design of the

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the early years of the twentieth century. Built of ashlar-faced grey limestone with a rough-faced cut limestone foundation, the building features a flat parapet roof under which is a plain cornice line running across the front and side facades of the building. Under the cornice line is an undecorated frieze on which is engraved "Ripon State Bank." Under the plain frieze is a panel decorated with medallions. The front facade of the building is recessed slightly behind large pilasters at the corners and two colossal Ionic columns flanking the main entrance of the building. The Ionic columns have capitals with scrolls and volutes; fluted shafts; and a base consisting of torus, scotia and fillet moldings and a tall plinth.

The main entrance consists of a metal and glass door accented with sidelights and a large transom. Over the transom is a frontispiece that consists of a cornice topped with a carved stone panel and supported by scroll brackets. Under the cornice is a paneled frieze. Above the main entrance is a set of three single-light double hung sash windows separated by narrow pilasters. On the other side of the colossal columns are individual single-light double hung sash windows. On the first floor these windows are decorated with narrow pilasters and topped with cornice lintels. The side facade of this building has both large windows and groups of single-light double hung sashes. The windows are separated by full length pilasters. In 1954, drive-through windows were added to the rear of the bank.

The Ripon State Bank was founded in 1913, the same year this building was completed. It is one of four banking institutions in Ripon, of which three still exist. Several important events in the bank's history at this location include a major robbery in 1936, a fire in 1945, and its sale to the M & I banking chain in the 1970s. Around 1981 the bank relocated and donated this building to the city. It is occupied by the Ripon Senior Center and other civic offices today. (20)

21      305 Watson St.      Cooley Block      c.1869

Probably built by Charles M. Cooley right after the 1868 fire that destroyed the east side 200 block of Watson Street and probably a frame building on this site, the Cooley Block is the only building that has a locally-produced limestone front facade. It is reminiscent of the old Summer Block (mentioned earlier at 123 Watson St.) and another historic block on Ripon's square, both of which were built with locally produced limestone blocks and elaborately decorated in the Italianate commercial style. Many side and rear walls of buildings throughout this district are constructed of limestone, but any buildings that may have looked like the Cooley Block, are not extant, having either been demolished or covered up with brick.

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The Cooley Block has a cornice that is decorated with classical brackets and a paneled frieze with rows of sawtooth and cloverleaf designs. It was probably a later addition to the building. The round arched windows have hoodmolds decorated with foliated keystones and corbel stops. The windows are four-over-four light double-hung sashes. The old storefront has a wooden cornice supported by plain brackets and a paneled frieze. The brackets sit atop pilasters that separate the large show windows. These windows sit on a paneled apron and have large transoms. The main entrance is recessed from the street.

Charles M. Cooley began his furniture and undertaking business in Ripon with J. S. Delano. The business was known as Delano and Cooley and may date back to Cooley's arrival in Ripon in 1856. Cooley died in 1890 and the 1901 city directory indicates Gustav Propst operated a furniture store here. Fred C. Butzin worked for Propst beginning in 1896, then with Jake Falkenstein, who bought out Propst. In 1908 this business was The Kussman and Butzin furniture and undertaking firm and was operated as such until Kussman retired in 1922. Butzin continued to operate the business until 1945 when he sold off the furniture stock and relocated the undertaking business to 520 Blackburn St. where his sons took over. Butzin died in 1957. (21)

| <u>Map No.</u> | <u>Address</u>    | <u>Historic Name</u>   | <u>Date of Construction*</u> |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 22             | 307-09 Watson St. | Hazen Block            | 1896                         |
| 23             | 311 Watson St.    | Kussman Brothers Block | 1891                         |
| 24             | 313 Watson St.    | Cold Storage Block     | 1891                         |
| 25             | 315 Watson St.    | J. C. Seelig Block     | 1891                         |

These four blocks all were built on vacant lots or on the site of demolished frame buildings during the 1890s. Number 22 (307-09 Watson St.) may have incorporated a stone building in its construction, but all the other blocks were new construction. At some time in their history they all were part of the large J. J. Powers and Company (later the Ripon Produce Company) produce and cold storage business.

All of the buildings are faced with cream brick and have simple brick corbelled cornices. Plain brick pilasters separate each building and they all have datestones. The windows are all decorated with brick label hoodmolds. Window arches are slightly enclosed, more so on the Hazen Block than the others, and filled with single-light double-hung sashes. All buildings, except the Hazen Block, have grillwork "balconies" off of the windows, probably a modern alteration.

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The storefronts of the blocks vary. The Hazen Block has a double storefront with a large sign attached to a metal overhang. The rest of the storefront is made up of permastone panels, modern show windows, and aluminum and glass doors. The Kussman Brothers Block has large show windows, columns, a wooden apron, and a wood and glass door. The Cold Storage Block has a double storefront featuring vertical wooden siding, small "picture" type windows, and a modern entry door. The J. C. Seelig Block has a shingled overhang, modern show windows, an apron with vertical wood siding, and a modern entrance.

While J. J. Powers and his produce company may have influenced the architectural cohesiveness of this group of buildings, only one storefront was continuously related to this business. In the Hazen Block, the first businesses were the Lueck and Shave (later Robert Shave) grocery store, and the Hollis Akin furniture store and undertaking parlor. The Shave grocery store later became the R. F. Lehman grocery and meat market that lasted until the 1930s. Hollis Akin continued his furniture and undertaking business until then. After World War II, the building housed a number of businesses. (22)

The Kussman Brothers Block housed a grocery, a dry goods store, and was at various times, part of the Ripon Produce Company. From the mid-1920s to the early 1970s, this block was the telephone office and the office of the Western Union Company. It is currently a shoe repair shop. (23) The Cold Storage Block was the main office of the J. J. Powers and Company cold storage and produce company which later became the Ripon Produce Company. The Ripon Produce Company was located here until at least the mid 1920s. During the mid twentieth century the storefront housed a barber shop, then the offices of an insurance firm and a tax preparation office. Today it is a travel agency and a pet store. (24)

The J. C. Seelig Block probably was built for the Seelig and Kellogg marble works, located there in 1893. But soon after, the storefront became a doctor's office, then a boot and shoe shop, then part of the Ripon Produce Company, and in the twentieth century, a number of offices were located here. Today it houses a chiropractor's office. (25)

28      327 Watson St.      Armory-Ripon Motor Company      c.1898  
remodeled c.1920

This large building was originally constructed for Company D, Second Regiment of the Wisconsin National Guard around the time of the Spanish-American War. Historic photos from that era show a large building with a frame "boomtown" front. Sanborn-

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Perris maps from 1898 through 1913 indicate the building was brick veneered. The building current facade was probably constructed for the Ripon Motor Company around 1920.

The building has a red brick front facade and cream brick side walls with a curved parapet roofline. There are no openings on the second story, only an attached, probably metal, sign that has been obscured. One storefront of the building has small show windows, a modern entry door and an awning. Vertical wooden siding separates the storefronts. The other storefront features wooden panels with an attached sign, modern show windows, and modern metal and glass entry doors. The building was a car dealership until the mid-twentieth century, then housed several stores including Gambles' Hardware Store and the current Sears store. Today Sears and a hardware store share the building.

31 401 Watson St. Old Ripon Public Library 1905  
Architect: C. C. Anderson of Waukesha, Wisconsin

A Carnegie Foundation grant assisted the community in constructing this elegant and distinguished Neoclassical Revival style library building. It was completed in 1905 and served the community until a new library building just north of this district was completed around 1980. Built on a tall rough-faced limestone foundation, the building is constructed primarily of reddish colored brick and liberally appointed with polished limestone details. The building has a square plan with very large semi-circular bays at each end. A hipped roof covers the building and is topped with a two-stage hipped cupola. This classically-appointed cupola has a standing seam metal roof, while the main roof is shingled in asphalt. A brick balustrade tops the front facade of the building. Running under the balustrade and around the entire building is a stone entablature consisting of a cornice with modillions, a frieze band, and a plain architrave.

A pedimented central pavilion frames the main entrance to the old library. It is topped with a full brick pediment outlined by a cornice with modillions. Under the pediment is a plain stone frieze with stone letters spelling out "Public Library." The pavilion is supported at the corners with ashlar-faced limestone pilasters and flanking the entrance next to the corners are two colossal Ionic columns. The entrance consists of double wood and glass doors. The glazing in the doors consists of one large pane of glass topped by a transom with geometric muntins. A massive transom sits over the double doors and the entire entrance is framed by a stone architrave surround. Concrete steps lead to this pavilion and the balusters on each side have cast iron lightposts with globe lights.

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The two main windows of the front facade have three parts, an upper multi-light window with geometric muntins, a single-paned lower light, and an apron. These windows are framed by a stone architrave surround. Windows in the large side wall bays consists of two parts, a single pane lower window topped by a multi-paned transom with geometric muntins. The window and transoms are separated by a stone belt course. Windows in the raised stone basement level are single-light double-hung sashes.

33      316-388 Watson St.      Gehrke Paint Store      c.1895

This double storefront building illustrates how the basic Italianate-influenced commercial block architecture seen in the buildings of the 1870s in this district continued into the turn of the century years. This two-story block is built of cream brick and, like others in the district, has its main features in the upper stories of the building, and these features are entirely done in fancy brickwork. At the top of the building is a group of brick courses under which is a line of indented crosses. Under the crosses is a line of brick panels, brick courses, and a line of sawtooth patterned brickwork. The window openings are decorated with brick segmental arches and have corbel stops. Windows have had their arches slightly enclosed to allow for the placement of double-hung sashes. An interesting line of sawtooth brickwork sits under the windows. The storefronts are joined by a shingled overhang, but the south storefront features vertical wood siding, small "picture" type windows and a modern entrance. The north storefront has modern brick walls, small "picture" type windows and a modern entrance.

Prior to the turn of the century, several businesses were located in this double storefront block. They included a grocery store, a laundry, and a water and gas office. After the turn of the century, 316 Watson St. became the Chadbourne and Gehrke paint store which eventually became the Gehrke and Sons paint store and finally just the Gehrke paint store, a business that occupied the building until the 1980s. A restaurant occupied 318 Watson St. in the 1910s and 1920s, and since prohibition, a tavern has been in this storefront. (26)

37      308 Watson St.      J. W. Bailey Block      1904

This commercial block with limestone walls and a red brick front facade is similar to other buildings in the district constructed in the early twentieth century. The two story building has a Neoclassical Revival pressed metal cornice with heavy scroll brackets at the corners, a row of dentils, and a row of swags. There is a row of large brick dentils under the cornice and above the plain datestone. The

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window openings are decorated with brick label moldings and stone keystones. The arches have been slightly filled in to accommodate the double-hung sash windows. Under the windows are stone sills. Under the windows is an awning that covers the storefront. It has modern show windows, a plain wood and glass entry door, and a wood and glass door that leads to the upper floor.

J. W. Bailey may have remodeled an older building on this site. George Deming's grocery store occupied the building between 1904 and the 1920s. The building then housed a dry cleaning shop, a Kroger grocery store, an appliance store, and a men's ware store. It is now a photography studio. (27)

41            214 Watson St.                    Kohl Hardware Company                    1922

This is the largest example of the twentieth century commercial style in this district. It is also one of the only three story buildings in the district. Faced with red brick, the building has cream brick side or party walls and a stone-capped parapet roofline. Decoration is minimal and includes flat brick bands, shallow brick pilasters, and square stone accents. Third story windows are grouped in fours and are single-light double-hung sashes. Second story windows are grouped in threes and consist of a large single-pane window flanked by two single-light double-hung sashes. The circa-1922 storefront of the building has been modernized only slightly. It consists of a large metal sign above large modern show windows and a simple entrance.

This address is the site of three important commercial buildings. Originally it was the site of the old City Hall Block, a prestigious commercial address in the nineteenth century. This block burned in 1894 and was replaced with the McMahon Block, which burned in 1922. At the time the McMahon Block burned, it housed the Barlow and Seelig Company hardware store. Barlow and Seelig established the Barlow and Seelig Manufacturing Company in 1908. This company produced Speed Queen washing machines and the company is still in operation today as part of Ratheon Industries, producing Amana appliances.

After the 1922 fire, the Kohl Hardware Store rebuilt the structure. Fred W. Kohl had worked for Barlow and Seelig prior to his taking over the business. The building was known as the Kohl Hardware Store until the 1970s. It was part of the national True Value hardware store chain in the mid-1970s, but ceased operations prior to 1980. Today the building is the location of the Haase Shoe Store, a long-time Ripon business that relocated to this site in the 1980s. (28)

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43      210 Watson St.      Wolcott & Kinsbury Jewelry Store      c. 1870

This diminutive building is noted not only for its fine brick detail, but also for its fine historic storefront. The building's upper level is decorated with brick courses, an indented line of stepped corbels suggesting brackets, a line of sawtooth brickwork, raised pilasters and corbels, and finally, another line of stepped corbels suggesting brackets. A plain wooden cornice with simple brackets at the corners separates the storefront from the rest of the building. Tall show windows separated by very narrow cast iron columns make up much of the storefront and sit on a paneled apron. The recessed entrance is made up of double wood and glass doors with paneled aprons similar to those of the show windows.

Not only distinctive for its architectural qualities, this building is one of the few buildings in the district that has housed one type of business for most of its history. After its c.1870 construction, the Wolcott and Kinsbury Jewelry store occupied the building. During the turn of the century years, it housed the Edward Ensign jewelry store, then during most of the first three decades of the twentieth century, it was the new location of the William Davy Jewelry store. During the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, it was the Fargo Jewelry store, and in 1960 it was listed as Alan's Jewelry Store, the last jeweler to locate here. After this time it was an upholstery shop and a women's boutique, which it remains today. (29)

44      200-208 Watson St.      Pratt's Block      c.1885

Pratt's Block is a nine-storefront corner block that is one of the most impressive commercial blocks in the district. Built on the site of at least three burned out commercial blocks, Pratt's Block may have used some of the wall structure of its immediate predecessor, Reed's Block, in its construction. The two-story cream brick structure is anchored at the corner of Watson St. and West Fond du Lac Street by a central bay that rises to a gable parapet. This bay is separated from the other parts of the building by shallow pilasters. The parapet is decorated with brick segmental arches over a panel of sawtooth brickwork. Under this is a stone panel with "Pratt's Block" engraved in it and three small windows. The rest of this bay has details like the rest of the building.

The upper floor consists of a cornice line of indented stepped brick corbels that resemble brackets and brick pilasters that extend slightly above the roofline delineating storefront bays or entrances to the upper floor. Upper floor window openings are grouped in twos and decorated with segmental arches over panels of sawtooth brickwork. A second level of segmental arches also sits above the windows.

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The windows are separated and framed by brick pilasters. Brick courses also decorate the second level of Pratt's Block.

Windows are varied. They include modern double-hung sashes, single-light double-hung sashes, and modern sliding windows. There are bays with enclosed openings or small double-hung sashes, as well. Although the window openings have been altered somewhat, the size and decoration trim of the windows can still clearly be seen on this entire block.

The storefronts of Pratt's Block along Watson Street have also been variously remodeled. One storefront features vertical wood siding, modern show windows, a metal overhang, and a simple wood and glass entry door. Another has vertical wood siding, larger, but modern show windows, and a modern metal and glass entry door. Another has a sign constructed of vertical wood siding that sits over modern show windows and a permastone-clad apron. Still another consists of a plain wood panel that was probably a large wooden sign, modern show windows, a modern brick apron, and a modern metal and glass entry door.

The corner storefront has an enclosed transom and a large overhang that sits over the entrance at the corner of the building. It also has modern show windows and a modern brick apron. The storefronts on West Fond du Lac include one that is totally enclosed with vertical wood siding and small windows, and a storefront that features metal panels that partially enclose the show windows, modern glazing, a modern brick apron, and an enclosed transom over the plain wood and glass door.

Pratt's Block is the fourth commercial block to sit on this expansive space in downtown Ripon. The first was the old Kellogg House (or earlier, Shepard House), which in a historic photograph was a large frame hotel taking up the entire space that Pratt's Block takes up today. It burned in 1871 and was replaced by the Centennial Block. No known photos exist of the Centennial, probably because it, too, burned in 1878, and the land stood vacant for a few years until the Reed Block was built. The 1884 Sanborn-Perris map indicates that it was constructed of brick and took up as much space as Pratt's Block. The Reed Block burned in 1885, and it was quickly replaced by Pratt's Block. It is possible that the fire gutted the Reed Block and some of its existing walls were used to rebuild Pratt's Block. (30)

Pratt's Block, because of its sheer size, has been the home to many businesses in Ripon, and the block is an important one in the history of the city's retail economy. Its prominent location and handsome style, no doubt, attracted some of the city's prominent merchants. At 208 Watson St., Herman Radke operated a meat

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market between the 1890s and 1912, when he retired. Alvin Martin continued the meat market for a short time, then this store was home to a number of commercial businesses including a bakery, grocery, furniture store, flower shop, appliance store, and restaurant. (31) Beginning in the 1890s, William Deming's boot and shoe shop occupied 206 Watson St. Deming operated it until the 1920s; then the business was taken over by O. A. Haase. Haase's shoe store was located here until the 1970s when it moved to the old Kohl Hardware Store down the block. It has been the home of Ripon Appliance since the mid-1970s. (32)

By the 1890s, Charles and Samuel Sharp were operating a jewelry store at 204 Watson St. By 1909 the Kinsbury and Lambert jewelry store was located here, and in 1913 Harry Fargo took over the business. In 1921 the store was known as the Fargo-Diedrich Jewelry Store and in the 1930s, the Harry Diedrich Jewelry store. The store remained Diedrich Jewelry until at least 1980, but is now the home of Wachholz Furniture. (33) The address of 202 Watson St. was occupied by one of Ripon's most long-lived and prominent citizens, Edgar J. Burnside. Burnside began his career as a druggist in 1882 working for Frank Wilson. He soon began his own drug store and between the 1890s and his death in 1947, it was located in this storefront. After his death, the store continued on as part of the Rexall chain. By the late 1970s, though, the store changed to a barber shop and is a hair salon today. (34)

The very large store at 200 Watson St. began as an office, a millinery store, and bank. During the turn of the century years, a tailor shop, U. S. Express office, and a boot and shoe store were located here. By 1909 Arthur Steinbring was operating his boot and shoe store here and took up much of the store space. In the early twentieth century, Steinbring's was the most prominent store in Pratt's Block and his store was known as Steinbring's "Busy Corner." After Steinbring's death in 1950, the business became the Ripon Bootery and remained as such until the 1960s. A sport shop and a decorating shop have occupied this space since that time and today Scharpf's Office Supply store is located here. (35)

45 105-107 W. Fond du Lac Schultz Block

c.1875

This two story painted brick block dates back to the 1870s, at least. Have of the cornice consists of a row of brick dentils, then continues with several courses, a row of indented corbels, a row of sawtooth brickwork, and finally another row of stepped corbels. The other half of the cornice begins with a line of long brick corbels suggesting brackets, a row of brick dentils interrupted by long corbels, an arch and a row of stepped corbels. The windows feature segmental arches, brick keystones, and corbels. The openings have four-over-four double-hung sashes.

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The storefronts have been combined by a large panel of vertical wood siding. At the peak of this panel there runs a line of dentils. Below this panel, though, the storefronts have large (mostly enclosed) show windows separated by thin cast iron columns. The show windows sit on brick aprons. The entrances are identical and consist of double wood and glass doors.

Historical information suggests that this building housed the Schultz Brothers grocery business. Beginning in the 1890s, Hugo Schultz and Company operated a grocery and saloon at this location. During the turn of the century years, the building housed two separate businesses, a grocery-flour and feed store, and the American Express office. By the 1920s the grocery store was known as Drager and Schultz grocers and this business lasted until the mid twentieth century. Since World War II, there have been a number of businesses here including a thrift shop, barber shop, sport shop, appliance store, and a realtor. Currently the building houses an antique business. (36)

47 113-115 W. Fond du Lac Lyle Block

c.1880

The Lyle Block was built on the site of the Runals Block, which burned in 1879. Like other buildings in the district, this block features a brickwork cornice of stepped corbels. On the central portion of the block, the corbels appear as arcaded arches, while on the two flanking portions of the block, they appear as a row of dentils. The second story windows are decorated with brick label moldings and the openings are single-light double-hung sashes. The openings in the central portion of the block are attached in a palladian-like effect.

A cornice line of stepped brick belt courses separates the first and second floors. The storefronts are especially interesting because of their arches which have an arcaded effect. The arches are connected by pilasters that separate the show windows and entrances. The eastern storefront has a plain glass and wood door, while in the central portion of the block the main entrance consists of a set of wood and glass doors.

The one-story addition on the west end of the block features a painted brick facade, and heavy, segmental arches over the openings. The arches have keystones and corbel stops. The window openings have four-over-four light double-hung sashes. The entrance has a modern door and its arch is filled in with an air conditioner.

The Lyle Block had a number of businesses during its early years after it replaced the Runals Block. They included a grocery store, the U. S. Express Office, a

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millinery store, an insurance office, a bakery, and a dry goods store. From the 1920s to the 1960s, most of the building was occupied by the offices of the Ripon Commonwealth, Ripon's most long-lived newspaper, and the Commonwealth Printing Company. After the 1960s, most of the building has been occupied by its current tenants, the Fox River Glove outlet store, a factory outlet store selling locally-produced leather goods. (37)

49 114 Watson St. First National Bank 1930  
Architects: Auler, Jensen, & Brown of Oshkosh, Wisconsin

This massive, unusual Art Deco commercial building is a monument to the modern image the First National Bank wanted to present to its customers in 1930 just after merging with another large bank in town. Their advertisements in the local paper promoting the new bank and the new building stress modernism in both the facility and the banking services the new, large bank would render to the community.

The two-story bank block was built with Texas limestone on a granite foundation. It has a shallow stepped or set-back facade with a variation of a stepped frontispiece surrounding the first floor entrance. The massive, almost overwhelming facade of the building is broken only by very narrow full-length recessed window bands in both the main facade, the stepped frontispiece, and the shallow projecting ends of the building. The recessed window bands have very small, narrow openings. The recessed window bands and raised central facade, along with the stepped frontispiece stress verticality, as is common in the style. The massive shallow stepped frontispiece dominates the recessed entrance to the building which is composed of double glass doors. The only other details on the building are the small coin faces set between the recessed window bands.

The history of the First National Bank will be discussed in detail in Section 8 under the Commerce theme. Suffice it to say here that the First National Bank was one of four important historic banks, and is one of the leading financial institutions in the city. The bank remained at this location until 1975. Since that time, the National Forensic League has occupied the building, but it is currently vacant.

53 106 Watson St. Faustman Building c.1882

This two-story painted brick building features the brick corbelling common on the nineteenth century buildings in this district, but its application is slightly different. Beginning with a brick cornice at the very top of the building decorated

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with corbels suggesting dentils, the building then has an unusual line of gable-peaked reveals with sawtooth edges. Under this is a line of arches with corbel stops. The window openings are decorated with label hoodmolds, a brick keystone, corbel stops, and footed stone sills. The windows have been partially enclosed for modern double-hung sashes. The first floor storefront has a large concrete panel, enclosed show windows, and some vertical siding in the entrance area.

This building was constructed after a major fire destroyed the west side of the this block. Faustman's-on-the-Square dry goods business occupied this building in 1885. Also known as Mueller and Faustman's dry goods, the business remained here until around the time partner Herman C. Mueller died in 1905. Then Herman J. Faustman relocated his business to the other side of Watson Street. After Faustman's, this building was occupied by the Jobber's Supply Company general or department store, a business that lasted until the 1920s. In recent years the building has been vacant frequently, but today houses a dental office. (38)

|    |                |                  |        |
|----|----------------|------------------|--------|
| 54 | 104 Watson St. | Commercial Block | c.1882 |
| 55 | 102 Watson St. | Saloon           | c.1882 |

These two-story cream brick commercial blocks feature the same type of brick corbelling as on the 100 and 200 blocks of the east side of Watson St. Number 54 (104 Watson St.) has a line of brick courses, a line of stepped corbels suggesting brackets, a line of sawtooth brickwork, and a line of applied crosses. The window openings are decorated with brick label moldings, stone keystones and feature footed sills. The windows have been replaced with modern single-light double-hung sashes.

Number 55 (102 Watson St.) has a line of stepped brick corbels suggesting brackets over a line of sawtooth brickwork and belt courses. Two large corbels separate this detail. The windows are decorated with brick label moldings and stone keystones. In between the windows is a line of sawtooth brickwork and brick courses. The windows have footed sills. Two of the openings feature historic two-over-two light double-hung sashes. The central opening has a multi-light opening with transom, possibly acting as an entry to the modern grillwork balcony that completes the upper level of this block. The storefronts have large show windows and modern entry doors.

Originally a clothing and dry goods store, 104 Watson St. was briefly a millinery shop at the turn of the century. During the 1910s and the 1920s, the building housed the Kingsbury Music Store. In the mid-twentieth century, the building was the Conney department store. Around 1950, it became the Campbell's Clothing store.

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During the 1970s the building was primarily vacant and has most recently been Red's Sign Shop. A saloon or restaurant has occupied 102 Watson St. throughout most of its history. At the end of the nineteenth century and up to prohibition, it was the Charles Kopplin Saloon, the Emil Hass Saloon, and the E. Kaiser Saloon. During prohibition it was an automobile parts store. After World War II it became a restaurant, and since the 1970s, it has been a pizza parlor. (39)

56      102 W. Jackson St.      Byron Kingsbury Store      c.1870

This impressive two-story cream brick commercial block is the only extant building that created the north end of Ripon's historic square. Like other brick blocks it is elaborately decorated on both the side and front facades with brick corbelling, including a line of arched reveals, short pilasters, a brick course, and oculus windows that are enclosed. The windows have heavy segmental arches, keystones, and raised brick corbel stops. Under the second story windows of the front facade is a line of stepped brick corbels suggesting a bracketed cornice.

One of the outstanding details of this building are the intact openings. At the upper level they consist of single lights over single-light double-hung sash windows. The first floor side facade windows are decorated only with plain stone lintels and have four-over-four double-hung sashes with a two light transom. The front facade storefront features large show windows with transoms sitting on the original brick aprons, and two recessed entrances of wood and glass doors.

This block was built around 1870 for Byron Kingsbury, an early grocer in the community. In the 1880s until around 1910, the building was Bishop grocery. Between the 1920s until just recently, the building was the local headquarters of the International Order of Odd Fellows, a fraternal group. It is now a private studio and is one of a few buildings in the district that has retained much of its historic character throughout. (40)

57      114-16 E. Jackson St.      Blacksmith-Carpenter Shop      c.1870

This one-story nineteenth century light industrial building has retained its stone facade and is typical of the light industrial buildings of this district that occupied this street during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The building is a simple one, constructed of uncoursed locally-produced rough-finished limestone. The openings consist of some six-over-six light double-hung sashes and some two-over-two light double hung sashes. Lintels and sills are made of wood. Two large openings frame the west entrance of the front facade. One window has six

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large lights while the other has eight large lights. They both have rough wooden lintels, frames, and sills. The entrances are topped by rough wooden lintels and have sidelights.

The building was constructed for C. S. Latimer's harness making shop. Early Sanborn-Perris maps indicate the building was used both as a harness making shop and as a carpenter shop, then as a marble works. At the turn of the century, the building was a bicycle repair shop, along with the harness making shops of Joseph Trier and Vincent Treanore. By 1904, Vincent Treanore had taken over the entire building. After the automobile began replacing horses, the building was used as both a harness making shop and an automobile trimming shop. It remained a repair shop until the 1960s, when it was converted into office space. (41)

|       |                        |                                   |        |
|-------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| 64-67 | 125-135 E. Jackson St. | Dodge and Manville Carriage Works | c.1860 |
|       |                        | Heath and Butzke Carriage Company | c.1900 |

These four buildings make up the historic factory of the Dodge and Manville Carriage Works, later, the Dodge and Mitchell Carriage Works. Around 1900 Frank Heath and Edward Butzke rebuilt Number 64 (135 E. Jackson St.) and refaced the three other buildings of the complex to match it for their Heath and Butzke Carriage Company. While Dodge and Manville had been a prosperous firm, Heath and Butzke could not compete with the larger, more efficient factories in other parts of the state, and the Heath and Butzke firm expired around 1910. (42)

Three of the four buildings are two stories in height, and the corner block (Number 65) has three stories. They are all built or faced with tan or cream brick and are simply decorated. Pilasters separate each building and they are topped brick corbelling. There is a simple cornice and brick courses running across all of the buildings. Upper story windows are all simple two-over-two double-hung sashes where they have not been enclosed. They are decorated with flat jack arches and very shallow stepped lintels.

The storefronts of the buildings are varied. Number 64 has a shingled overhang, enclosed show windows, and a modern entrance. Number 65 is a double storefront with a large metal sign, large, modern show windows, and modern entrances. Number 66 also has a metal panel running across the storefront, large modern show windows, and an unusual entrance of a metal and glass door surrounded by large, modern sidelights and transom. Number 67 has a storefront with classical details. This block also has side wall windows with four-over-four double-hung sashes.

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After the Heath and Butzke Carriage Company failed, Below and Brewer operated a farm implement factory in all of the buildings except for Number 64, which became a factory that produced novelties. As this street converted from light industrial to commercial, this building (Number 64) became an office building which it remains today. Number 65 was a warehouse in the 1920s, possibly for the farm implement factory. For a brief time it was part of the novelty factory, and in recent years it was a laundromat. Number 66 remained part of the farm implement business, then was, for a brief time, part of the novelty factory. Since 1960 it has been a hair salon and today half of the building remains a hair salon while the other half houses an office. Number 67 was the main building of the farm implement business, then briefly in the 1950s, it was part of the novelty factory. It then housed a bakery, a newspaper office, an attorney's office, a realty office, and most recently, the Ripon Chamber of Commerce. (43)

76      220 Blackburn St.      U. S. Post Office      1924  
Addition: 1968

This Neoclassical Revival one-story post office was originally built in 1924 of red brick. The original building was almost doubled in size in 1968 and while the detail was matched almost exactly, a few differences between the original building and the addition can be seen.

The original building has a hipped roof recessed from the ends to accommodate a balustraded parapet. Under the parapet is a stone cornice. A stone belt course separates the basement from the first floor. The windows are 12-over-12 light double-hung sashes slightly recessed in brick arch reveals with stone tabs. The main entrance features a stone frontispiece with a full pediment, a frieze of triglyphs and metopes, and a plain architrave. Flat pilasters complete the frontispiece and are topped with short, flat scroll brackets. The recessed entrance features double wood and glass doors with a large transom. There are steps leading to the raised entrance that feature brick balustrades topped at the ends with tall posts and globe lights. The 1968 addition can be distinguished from the original post office by the slightly different color of the brick and the lack of a hipped roof.

Like many communities, Ripon's post office during its early years was housed at the home or business location of the postmaster. Later, it had a permanent home in Ripon's old city hall. When the U. S. Government planned a new facility for Ripon during the First World War, the citizens of Ripon received kudos for turning down this construction project in favor of spending the money on the war effort and so did not get this building until 1924.

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Notes to Section 7 narrative:

(1) Sanborn-Perris Maps for Ripon, 1884, 1892, 1898, 1904, 1915, 1924, 1951, on file in the Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin (1884-1924) and the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin (1951); City Directories for Ripon, 1876, 1893, 1901, 1909, 1913, 1921, 1933, 1948-80, on file at the Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin and the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin; Samuel M. Pedrick, ed., Biographical and Statistical Information Relating to Many Families that have Lived in Ripon and Vicinity, Volumes 1-39, compiled alphabetically by last name, on file at the Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin. Since the pages in the individual volumes are not numbered and to simplify footnoting, future references to these volumes will be cited as "Pedrick Biographies," followed by the name of the person under which the reference can be found. In this case, the reference is Pedrick Biographies: Mattice, Henry P. and Pettibone, A. W.

(2) Sanborn-Perris Maps; City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Davy, William Woodhouse.

(3) Sanborn-Perris Maps; City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Cowan, Ira and Dillon, John J.

(4) Sanborn-Perris Maps; City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Fey, Henry J., Jenkinson, J. M., and Sargent, George W.

(5) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Reichmuth, Ferdinand G. C.

(6) City Directories.

(7) Historic photographs and newspaper clippings housed in the iconographic files of the Ripon Historical Society; Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.

(8) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.

(9) City Directories, Pedrick Biographies: Graf, Louis and Jussen, Edward.

(10) City Directories.

(11) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.

(12) Ibid.

(13) City Directories, Pedrick Biographies: Herzke, William and Fischer, Herman.

(14) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories, Pedrick Biographies: Amend, Andrew J.

(15) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories, Pedrick Biographies: Habel, Valentine.

(16) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.

(17) Ibid.

(18) Ibid.

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- (19) Ibid., Pedrick Biographies: Buchholz, August
- (20) "Gift . . . Bank was Scene of Fire, Robbery," newspaper clipping in the Ripon History file of the clipping files in the Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin.
- (21) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories, Pedrick Biographies: Butzin, Karl, Cooley, Charles M., Delano, Justin S., Kussman, Ludwig.
- (22) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (23) Ibid.
- (24) Ibid., Pedrick Biographies: Powers, Joseph Jacques.
- (25) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (26) Ibid.
- (27) Ibid.
- (28) Memo from Samuel M. Pedrick to the Ripon Historical Society summarizing major fires that occurred in Ripon between 1868 and 1922, on file at the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin; City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: McMahon, Martin H., Kohl, Henry, Seelig, John G.; clipping files in the iconographic collection of the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin.
- (29) Historic photographs at the Ripon Historical Society; City Directories.
- (30) Memo from Samuel M. Pedrick to the Ripon Historical Society.
- (31) City Directories.
- (32) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (33) Ibid.
- (34) Ibid., Pedrick Biographies: Burnside, Daniel; clipping files in the iconographic collection of the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin.
- (35) City Directories.
- (36) Historic photographs at the Ripon Historical Society; City Directories.
- (37) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (38) Memo from Samuel M. Pedrick to the Ripon Historical Society; City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Faustman, Charles F. A. and Mueller, Herman C.
- (39) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (40) Historic photographs at the Ripon Historical Society; City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Bishop, Alfred E. and Kingsbury (Kinsbury), Byron.
- (41) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Latimer, C.S. and Treanore, William M.
- (42) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Dodge, Cyrenus F. and Heath, Frank.
- (43) City Directories; Pedrick Biographies: Heath, Frank.

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BUILDING INVENTORY

| Map # | Address            | Historic Name                  | Date               | Status |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------|
| 1     | 101-103 Watson St. | Pettibone Block                | 1872 (1)           | C*     |
| 2     | 105 Watson St.     | William Davy Jewelry Store     | c.1870 (2)         | C      |
| 3     | 107-111 Watson St. | O. J. Clark Block              | c.1870 (3)         | C      |
| 4     | 113 Watson St.     | Jenkinson-Fey Hardware Store   | c.1870 (4)         | C      |
| 5     | 115-117 Watson St. | Reichmuth-Thompson Building    | c.1870 (5)         | C      |
| 6     | 119 Watson St.     | Kleifoth-Mueller Block         | c.1870,1884 (6)    | C      |
| 7     | 121 Watson St.     | Zobel Brothers Block           | 1878 (7)           | C      |
| 8     | 123 Watson St.     | Drug Store-First National Bank | 1875,c.1909 (8)    | C      |
| 9     | 125 Watson St.     | Central Federal Savings        | 1968 (9)           | NC*    |
| 10    | 125 Watson St.     | Fountain                       | 1975 (9)           | NC     |
| 11    | 205-209 Watson St. | Commercial Block               | c.1870 (10)        | C      |
| 12    | 211-215 Watson St. | Commercial Block               | c.1870 (11)        | C      |
| 13    | 217 Watson St.     | Hill Brothers Saloon           | c.1870 (12)        | C      |
| 14    | 219 Watson St.     | Commercial Block               | c.1870 (13)        | C      |
| 15    | 221 Watson St.     | Commercial Block               | c.1870 (14)        | C      |
| 16    | 223-225 Watson St. | Commercial Block               | c.1870 (15)        | C      |
| 17    | 227-229 Watson St. | Commercial Block               | c.1870 (16)        | C      |
| 18    | 231-233 Watson St. | Ripon Knitting Works           | c.1870 (17)        | C      |
| 19    | 301 Watson St.     | Ripon State Bank               | 1913 (18)          | C      |
| 20    | 303 Watson St.     | Restaurant                     | c.1925 (19)        | C      |
| 21    | 305 Watson St.     | Cooley Block                   | c.1869 (20)        | C      |
| 22    | 307-309 Watson St. | Hazen Block                    | 1896 (21)          | C      |
| 23    | 311 Watson St.     | Kussman Brothers Block         | 1891 (22)          | C      |
| 24    | 313 Watson St.     | Cold Storage Block             | 1891 (23)          | C      |
| 25    | 315 Watson St.     | J. C. Seelig Block             | 1891 (24)          | C      |
| 26    | 319 Watson St.     | Theodore Krueger Monuments     | c.1905 (25)        | C      |
| 27    | 323 Watson St.     | Commercial Block               | c.1900 (26)        | C      |
| 28    | 327 Watson St.     | Armory-Ripon Motor Company     | c.1898,c.1920 (27) | C      |
| 29    | 329 Watson St.     | Commercial Block               | c.1900 (28)        | C      |
| 30    | 333 Watson St.     | Biegick Brothers Garage        | c.1925 (29)        | C      |
| 31    | 401 Watson St.     | Old Ripon Public Library       | 1905 (30)          | C      |
| 32    | 320-22 Watson St.  | Saloon-Grocery                 | c.1900 (31)        | C      |
| 33    | 316-318 Watson St. | Gehrke Paint Store             | c.1895 (32)        | C      |

\* = Contributing in the district  
 \*\*= Non-contributing in the district

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BUILDING INVENTORY

| Map # | Address                | Historic Name                           | Date               | Status |
|-------|------------------------|---|--------------------|--------|
| 34    | 314 Watson St.         | Saloon                                  | c.1890 (33)        | C      |
| 35    | 312 Watson St.         | Commercial Block                        | c.1870,c.1935 (34) | C      |
| 36    | 310 Watson St.         | Webster Block                           | c.1870,c.1935 (35) | C      |
| 37    | 308 Watson St.         | J. W. Bailey Block                      | 1904 (36)          | C      |
| 38    | 300 Watson St.         | Hotel LeRoy                             | c.1905 (37)        | NC     |
| 39    | 230 Watson St.         | Strauss Brothers Dept. Store            | 1904 (38)          | C      |
| 40    | 220 Watson St.         | Commercial Block                        | c.1895 (39)        | C      |
| 41    | 214 Watson St.         | Kohl Hardware Company                   | 1922 (40)          | C      |
| 42    | 212 Watson St.         | J. E. Brown Block                       | c.1870 (41)        | C      |
| 43    | 210 Watson St.         | Wolcott & Kingsbury Jewelry             | c.1870 (42)        | C      |
| 44    | 200-208 Watson St.     | Pratt's Block                           | c.1885 (43)        | C      |
| 45    | 105-107 W. Fond du Lac | Schultz Block                           | c.1875 (44)        | C      |
| 46    | 109 W. Fond du Lac St. | Commercial Block                        | c.1875 (45)        | NC     |
| 47    | 113-117 W. Fond du Lac | Lyle Block                              | c.1880,c.1885 (46) | C      |
| 48    | 120 Watson St.         | Millinery Shop                          | c.1882 (47)        | C      |
| 49    | 114 Watson St.         | First National Bank                     | 1930 (48)          | C      |
| 50    | 112 Watson St.         | WP&L Office                             | c.1930,c.1975 (49) | NC     |
| 51    | 110 Watson St.         | Barber Shop                             | c.1920 (50)        | C      |
| 52    | 108 Watson St.         | Commercial Block                        | c.1907 (51)        | C      |
| 53    | 106 Watson St.         | Faustman Building                       | c.1882 (52)        | C      |
| 54    | 104 Watson St.         | Commercial Block                        | c.1882 (53)        | C      |
| 55    | 102 Watson St.         | Saloon                                  | c.1882 (54)        | C      |
| 56    | 102 W. Jackson St.     | Byron Kingsbury Store                   | c.1870 (55)        | C      |
| 57    | 114-116 E. Jackson St. | Blacksmith-Carpenter Shop               | c.1870 (56)        | C      |
| 58    | 118 E. Jackson St.     | Blacksmith Shop                         | c.1910,c.1960(57)  | C      |
| 59    | 126 E. Jackson St.     | Fire Engine House                       | c.1870,c.1960(58)  | NC     |
| 60    | 126 E. Jackson St.     | Livery Stable                           | c.1890,c.1960(59)  | C      |
| 61    | 126 E. Jackson St.     | Blacksmith Shop                         | c.1870,c.1960(60)  | C      |
| 62    | 138 E. Jackson St.     | Carpenter Shop                          | c.1870 (61)        | C      |
| 63    | 10 Blackburn St.       | Horner & Middleton Lumber Co.<br>Office | c.1880 (62)        | C      |
| 64    | 135 E. Jackson St.     | Dodge & Manville Carriage Works         | c.1900 (63)        | C      |
| 65    | 131 E. Jackson St.     | " " " " " "                             | c.1860,c.1900(64)  | C      |
| 66    | 129 E. Jackson St.     | " " " " " "                             | " " " "            | C      |
| 67    | 125 E. Jackson St.     | " " " " " "                             | " " " "            | C      |
| 68    | 111 E. Jackson St.     | Zinth Saloon                            | c.1870 (65)        | C      |

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BUILDING INVENTORY

| Map # | Address                | Historic Name      | Date                                   | Status |
|-------|------------------------|--------------------|--|--------|
| 69    | 109 E. Jackson St.     | Blakely Auto Parks | 1874, remodeled<br>c.1955, c.1970 (66) | NC     |
| 70    | 101 Blackburn St.      | Luhm's Hotel       | c.1880 (67)                            | C      |
| 71    | 107 Blackburn St.      | Pin Bowl           | c.1950 (68)                            | NC     |
| 72    | 111 Blackburn St.      | Blacksmith Shop    | c.1900 (69)                            | C      |
| 73    | 126 Scott St.          | City Garage        | c.1930 (70)                            | C      |
| 74    | 120 Scott St.          | " "                | " "                                    | C      |
| 75    | 114 Scott St.          | Auto Parts Store   | c.1920 (71)                            | C      |
| 76    | 220 Blackburn St.      | U.S. Post Office   | 1924, 1968 (72)                        | C      |
| 77    | Ca. 120 W. Fond du Lac |                    | Ca. 1884-1892 (73)                     | C      |

Notes to Building Inventory

(1) Dates of construction for the buildings in this district were determined by the following method. If an exact date for a building was found on a datestone or in a historic source, and if it was confirmed by the use of historic maps and photographs, it was determined accurate and contains no c. indication. Because of the lack of or unavailability of tax roll data and because of the multitude of fires in the community that are well documented and that had a direct impact on when many buildings were constructed, most buildings were dated by an analysis of fire damage information, Sanborn-Perris Maps, the 1867 Bird's Eye View of Ripon, City Directories, and, especially, historic photographs. The dates for these buildings, while probably accurate within only a few years span, have been given c. dates.

The reference for the Pettibone Block is from Samuel M. Pedrick, ed., Biographical and Statistical Information Relating to Many Families that have Lived in Ripon and Vicinity, Volumes 1-39, compiled alphabetically by last name, on file at the Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin. Since the pages in the individual volumes are not numbered and to simplify footnoting, future references to these volumes will be cited as Pedrick Biographies, followed by the name of the person under which the reference can be found. In this case, the reference is Pedrick Biographies: Pettibone, A. W.

(2) This block, as well as the next five blocks were all dated c. 1870 based on an analysis of the 1867 Bird's Eye View of Ripon (on file at the Archives of the State Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin and available for purchase from the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin), historic photographs in the

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iconographic collection of the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin, and on a memo from Samuel M. Pedrick to the Ripon Historical Society detailing major fires that occurred in downtown Ripon between 1868 and 1922, on file at the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin.

The date of c. 1870 is specifically based on several factors. The 1867 Bird's Eye View of Ripon shows that all buildings on the east side 100 block of Watson St., except for 123 Watson, were frame commercial buildings. Pedrick's memo to the Ripon Historical Society, which is his compilation of the major fires in downtown Ripon based on his extensive study of the history of Ripon during the early twentieth century, and verified by a number of individual sources, indicates that except for 121 and 123 Watson St., this entire block of frame buildings burned in 1869. With this information in mind, a number of historic photographs on this block were studied. Since a few buildings in these photographs either in the block itself or outside of it have known dates of construction, the photographs could be dated, and buildings on the east side of the 100 block of Watson St. that existed either before or after these known dates of construction could be given c. dates.

For example, dates of construction for buildings on the east side of the 100 block of Watson St. were relatively easy to determine. The fire destroyed most of the block in 1869. North of this block was the old Wood's Hotel (which itself burned in the 1940s). It is known that the old Wood's Hotel was built in 1872. A photograph of the east side of the 100 block of Watson Street showing a vacant lot where the Wood's Hotel existed after 1872, yet showed all the buildings of the 100 block of Watson Street as they appear today, except for 121 and 123 Watson St., indicates that this block was quickly rebuilt between the 1869 fire, but before the construction of the Wood's Hotel in 1872. The fact that the Pettibone Block has a documented construction date of 1872 supports the assertion that other buildings in the block, except for 121 and 123 Watson St. were probably rebuilt around 1870, but no later than 1872. It was determined from this analysis that a c. 1870 date for these buildings was probably very close or may have been the actual construction date for 105-119 Watson St.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid.

(6) Ibid., remodeling date from date inscribed in cornice of building.

(7) Samuel M. Pedrick, A History of Ripon, Wisconsin, George H. Miller, ed., Ripon: Ripon Historical Society, 1964, p. 288.

(8) The Pedrick fire memo indicates the original building on this lot, the Summer Block, burned in 1875 and was immediately rebuilt. The 1876 Ripon City

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Directory indicates an occupant existed in a new building here as early as 1876, supporting Pedrick's claim. Dating the remodeling of this building to 1909 is based on field observation and the fact that the First National Bank took over this block in that year ("First National Bank of Ripon," pamphlet on file in the Ripon historical files, Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin, probably published in 1956 on the event of its 100th anniversary). It would be logical for the bank to remodel to suit its new quarters in that year or shortly thereafter.

(9) "Central Federal Savings 1984 Annual Report," Ripon: Central Federal Savings, pamphlet on file at the Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin. The fountain was built by local sculptor Lester Schwartz of Ripon College.

(10) The dates of construction for the east side of the 200 block of Watson Street were more difficult to ascertain than those of the 100 block. Few pictures older than the turn of the century years were found to compare buildings in the block and what pictures were available showed the block to have basically the same appearance it has today, except for first floor storefronts. It is known that on the 1867 Bird's Eye View of Ripon, this block, too, was filled with frame commercial buildings. Pedrick's fire memo indicates that this entire block was burned in 1868. Because of the architectural continuity of the buildings along this block and the history of the rapid rebuilding of the 100 block, it was determined that all of the blocks on the east side of the 200 block of Watson Street were built around 1870 and they have been given c. 1870 dates of construction.

(11) Ibid.

(12) Ibid.

(13) Ibid.

(14) Ibid.

(15) Ibid.

(16) Ibid.

(17) Ibid.

(18) "Gift. . . Bank was Scene of Fire, Robbery," article on file in the Ripon History file of the Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin.

(19) The article cited above shows a picture from 1913, the date of construction of the bank. That picture shows this building as a nineteenth century building. Its architectural style suggests a remodeling or reconstruction in the 1920s, hence a c. 1925 date.

(20) Pedrick Biographies: Cooley, Charles M.

(21) Datestone.

(22) Ibid.

(23) Ibid.

(24) Ibid.

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- (25) Sanborn-Perris Maps, on file in the Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin; City Directories for Ripon, Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin.
- (26) Ibid.
- (27) Ibid., historic photographs.
- (28) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (29) Ibid., advertisement in Ripon Commonwealth, 19 December 1930.
- (30) Datestone.
- (31) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (32) Ibid.
- (33) Ibid.
- (34) 1867 Bird's Eye View of Ripon, Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories, field observation.
- (35) Pedrick Biographies: Webster, Buel G.
- (36) Datestone.
- (37) Pedrick fire memo, historic photographs.
- (38) "The Big 'Daylight' Store," newspaper article on file at the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin.
- (39) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (40) Pedrick fire memo, clipping files in the iconographic collection of the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin dated 13 April 1923.
- (41) Historic photographs, field observation.
- (42) Historic photographs, City Directories, field observation.
- (43) Pedrick fire memo.
- (44) Historic photographs, City Directories.
- (45) Sanborn-Perris Maps, field observation.
- (46) Pedrick fire memo, Sanborn-Perris Maps, field observation.
- (47) Pedrick fire memo, Sanborn-Perris Maps.
- (48) "First National Bank Opens New Home," Ripon Commonwealth, 19 December 1930.
- (49) Sanborn-Perris Maps, field observation.
- (50) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (51) Pedrick fire memo.
- (52) Pedrick fire memo, Pedrick Biographies: Mueller, Herman C. and Faustman, Charles.
- (53) Pedrick fire memo, historic photographs.
- (54) Ibid.
- (55) Historic photographs, City Directories, 1867 Bird's Eye View of Ripon, Sanborn-Perris Maps.
- (56) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories, 1867 Bird's Eye View of Ripon.
- (57) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.

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- (58) Sanborn-Perris Maps.
- (59) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (60) Ibid.
- (61) Ibid.
- (62) Field observation.
- (63) City Directories.
- (64) "Our New Depot," Ripon Commonwealth, 18 November, 1892.
- (65) Sanborn-Perris Maps, historic photographs.
- (66) The remodeled building fronting the street was part of Goodall's Carriage Factory, built in 1874 as a three-block size factory, of which this is the only remaining part. The c. 1955 remodeling and the demolition of the rest of the factory has made this part of the complex non-contributing. The modern building of Blakely Auto Parts is an addition to and remodeling of the old Ripon Ice Cream Company building (behind the east side of the 100 block of Watson St.), built between 1913 and 1924. The remodeling and/or addition to this structure makes it non-contributing.
- (67) City Directories, historic photographs, Pedrick Biographies: Luhm, Charles.
- (68) City Directories, 1951 Sanborn-Perris Map.
- (69) Field observation.
- (70) Sanborn-Perris Maps, City Directories.
- (71) Ibid.
- (72) "Refusal of \$75,000 Post Office in 1916 War Time Got National Praise," Ripon Commonwealth Centennial Issue, 26 August 1965, Part 4, p. 7; addition date is from a newspaper clipping regarding the dedication of the new post office addition, in the iconographic files of the Ripon Historical Society dated 1968.
- (73) Outbuildings were not included in the inventory property count because they were considered to be of insignificant size and scale and because they are all non-contributing buildings.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

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

**Areas of Significance**

| (enter categories from instructions) | Period of Significance | Significant Dates |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Architecture                         | 1850-1939 (1)          | N/A               |
| Commerce                             |                        |                   |
| Education                            |                        |                   |
| Transportation                       |                        |                   |
|                                      | Cultural Affiliation   |                   |
|                                      | N/A                    |                   |
|                                      |                        |                   |
|                                      |                        |                   |

|                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Significant Person | Architect/Builder            |
| N/A                | Anderson, C. C. (2)          |
|                    | Auler, Jensen, and Brown (3) |

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

The Watson Street Commercial Historic District is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C. It is being nominated under criterion A because the district includes almost all of the historic commercial buildings of downtown Ripon and because most of Ripon's historic commercial activity took place within these buildings. And, even though Ripon has had some of its commercial activity move to the outskirts of the community as has been the post-World War II trend in commercial activity, Ripon's downtown is still looked upon as the center of the business district of the community.

The commitment the community has in its downtown is illustrated by the fact that Ripon is among the first group of cities to initiate a Main Street program in Wisconsin, a program that aims to bolster existing commercial activity in the community's downtown, and/or initiate new commercial activity to replace that which has died out or moved to the outskirts of town. The Main Street program that hopes to revitalize downtown Ripon will continue the emphasis that this district is the commercial focus of the community, as it has been throughout the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century. Historic commercial activity, including the adjunct light industrial activity in the district, will be discussed under the Commerce theme.

There are two individually significant buildings in this district under criterion A; the old Ripon Public Library and the old Chicago Northwestern Depot. The importance of these buildings will be discussed under the themes of Education and Transportation.

  x   See continuation sheet

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The Watson Street Commercial Historic District is also being nominated to the National Register under criterion C because there are individual buildings in the district that are good examples of popular nineteenth or early twentieth century architectural styles. But, more importantly, the district, as a whole, embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Italianate-influenced commercial style of architecture that is seen in many small towns in Wisconsin. The buildings in the district that show this type of construction, taken together, meet the criteria for architectural significance and they form an important and distinctive architectural entity within the community.

The district also embodies some very fine characteristics of brick construction in small commercial buildings. The Italianate-influenced style of the buildings in the district is expressed through elaborate brickwork, most of which is still intact. The continuity of materials, elaborate brickwork, and the Italianate-influenced commercial style seen throughout this district give it an architectural distinctiveness that holds it together and speaks to its prominence as the center of commercial activity in the community. These points will be discussed in more detail under the Architecture theme.

Historical Background

The beginnings of Ripon follow two historical threads. First, as is typical of many early Wisconsin communities, Ripon was founded and settled by Yankees (eastern Americans) who came to reap the economic benefits of frontier Wisconsin. What is unusual about Ripon is that just prior to, and for a brief period of time, concurrently with this typical Yankee settlement pattern, a communal village was established just slightly west of where the early Yankee development would take place. This communal village or Phalanx, as it was called, was a utopian, communal settlement established by Fourierites, followers of French social philosopher Charles Fourier. Newspaper magnate Horace Greeley and other promoters advocated communal settlements of this type as ideal for settling the frontier of the United States. (4)

The first Fourierites came to Ripon in May of 1844 and established their communal village in the western part of what is modern-day Ripon. The Fourierites planted crops, built a dam on the Silver Creek, and set up a sawmill. They erected three small one and one-half story dwellings and by the summer of 1845 they had erected a longhouse of 20 rowhouses as a communal living structure. By this time they had also built a school and a grist mill. (5)

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At the peak of the Fourierites' success at Ripon in the late 1840s, the commune owned 2,000 acres of land, and the community had over 30 families or 150 members in residence. Almost as fast as the group sprang up, it died out by 1850 and its farmland was divided up. At the same time, the Yankee settlement at what is now the center of Ripon's downtown was beginning to emerge and Ripon developed in a similar pattern as other small communities in Wisconsin. Eventually, the old Fourierite buildings were included within the city of Ripon, and today some rowhouses still exist as a reminder of the unusual beginnings of the community. (6)

While the Fourierites were, technically, the first settlers in Ripon, their activity is more historically important for its attempt at creating a communal society than for its success at developing the city of Ripon. That honor goes to David P. Mapes, who assisted land speculator John Scott Horner in promoting Ripon and developing the land upon which the heart of the city sits today.

David Mapes was a Yankee with a diverse and interesting life history. Born in 1798 in New York State, he initially explored the "west" in Michigan in 1829, and returned to New York only to find his money was lost in failed banks. He explored the regions of the Delaware River and Pennsylvania, then operated a successful lumber yard in New York City. The financial panic of 1837 destroyed this success and he then acquired a steamboat which he operated on New York's waterways. The ship was eventually wrecked and in 1844 he went west again. He came to Wisconsin via the port at Racine and extensively traveled around southern Wisconsin and the Green Lake area trying, no doubt, to find a place to exploit that had not already been settled by Yankees who came to Wisconsin in the 1830s. (7)

Eventually he determined the Ripon site had the most economic development potential. He made a deal with John Horner, the head of the land office in Green Bay and owner of the land this district sits on today, to promote Ripon in return for lots in Horner's holdings. By 1849, at the end of the Fourierite period, Mapes and his sons had helped to develop a settlement east of where the Fourierites were located. He built a grist mill and one of the first commercial operations in the settlement, a hotel. Mapes also established a small liberal arts college that later affiliated with the Congregational Church and grew into modern Ripon College, an important private college in Wisconsin. (8)

Along with David Mapes' hotel, a number of other Yankee settlers established commercial businesses in Ripon during its earliest years. In December of 1849, Ezra Northrup opened the first store and by May of 1850 Dana Shepard and Samuel Sumner opened a store known as Sumner and Shepard. John P. Taggart opened the first

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hardware store in 1850. His brother, William came in 1852 and the firm became Taggart Brothers' hardware store. Jehdeiah Bowen came in 1850 and erected a general store on the northwest corner of the public square (100 block of Watson St.) which became the center of much of the nineteenth century retail activity in Ripon. Alvan Bovay had the distinction of being the first professional; he began offering legal services in Ripon in 1850. (9)

During the decades of the 1850s and 1860s, Ripon grew moderately but steadily and received a city charter in 1858. In 1860, the city had a population of 2,000 and was a successful grist milling center serving the fertile farming area surrounding it. The community had developed a commercial center along Watson Street, particularly on each side of the public square (100 block of Watson St.). By the time A. Ruger of the Chicago Lithographing Company prepared a bird's eye view drawing of the city in 1867, Ripon was a substantial community of around 4,000 persons and had a commercial district along the 100 and 200 blocks of Watson St., and extending into the 300 block of Watson Street as well. (10)

In the 1867 bird's eye view of Ripon, the downtown already had a few large buildings like the prominent, flatiron style Greenway Block (125 Watson St., not extant), the large stone building housing the Taggart Brothers hardware business on the west side of the square (not extant), and the Kellogg House (not extant), a large frame hotel on the site of Pratt's Block. The rest of the downtown was mostly small, frame commercial buildings. In looking at the 1867 bird's eye view from a historical perspective, Ripon's downtown has an ominous appearance, since almost all, if not all, of the buildings pictured in this view would burn down between 1868 and 1925. In fact, the history of Ripon's downtown between these years can be written as a history of the fires that destroyed both numerous small frame buildings, and some large, impressive blocks as well.

The first major fire that radically changed Ripon's downtown in the mid-nineteenth century came on August 31, 1868, when the entire block of frame commercial buildings on the east side of the 200 block of Watson Street burned. Local historian Samuel M. Pedrick, who compiled information about the fires in Ripon, concluded that the entire block was rebuilt quickly after the fire. (See section 7 for a discussion of the east side of the 200 block of Watson St.). No major fires occurred in this block after this time, and this one piece of the district has remained intact since it arose from the ashes of the fire around 1870. (11)

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The second major fire that physically changed Ripon's downtown occurred in one of the most important commercial blocks in the district, the 100 block of Watson St. or the east side of the Square. On April 14, 1869, all the frame buildings on the east side of the 100 block of Watson Street burned. Historic photos indicate that the burned buildings were quickly rebuilt with brick blocks (many with stone side and end walls) by 1872. The Sumner Block and Salisbury's store, saved in the 1869 fire, were victims of a major blaze in 1875. The Sumner Block was quickly replaced with a brick and stone block, and the Zobel Brothers built a brick block on the site of Salisbury's store in 1878. So, by 1878, the rebuilding of the east side of the square was finished, and this block of buildings has remained relatively intact since that time. (12)

As if these fires were not enough, fire continued to plague Ripon's downtown. In 1870, the Coe Block on the west side of the Square burned and was not replaced for a number of years. But, more importantly, in 1871, a major fire destroyed the Kellogg House (formerly known as the Shepard House), a large hotel on the site of Pratt's Block on the western side of the 200 block of Watson St. And, this site seemed jinxed for a time. The Centennial Block replaced the Kellogg House in 1876, and, in 1878, it too, burned. A new block was not erected on the site until the mid-1880s. Called the Reed Block, it may have been of brick construction, as a brick building is indicated on this site on the 1884 Sanborn-Perris fire insurance map. But again, fire destroyed or significantly damaged this building in 1885. It was quickly replaced by Pratt's Block, which, given the history of this site, has remained remarkably intact until the present time. (13)

Just west of Pratt's Block is a small streetscape of buildings fronting West Fond du Lac Street. This streetscape was probably initially built around 1875, but a major portion of it, known as the Runals Block, burned in 1879. It was quickly rebuilt as the Lyle Block, and this street has been relatively intact since 1880. (14)

The 1880s were no kinder to Ripon's downtown in regard to major fires. As stated earlier, the Reed Block burned around 1885, and prior to that, in 1882, the entire west side of the Square burned, including the First National Bank building and the three-story Masonic Temple at the southern end of the block. Rebuilt with brick buildings, including the impressive Stone's Opera House, only 120 Watson St. and 102-106 Watson St. remain relatively intact from the rebuilding effort of the 1882 fire. The remainder of the reconstructed streetscape was altered either by additional fires or by remodeling in the twentieth century. (15)

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The prominent Greenway Block (125 Watson St.) was also destroyed by fire in the 1880s. It burned on January 19, 1885. This was a particularly sad loss to the downtown, since the Greenway Block was an impressive building, and possibly the most prominent address in early downtown Ripon. The Greenway Block was replaced with the old Ripon City Hall (not extant). Interestingly enough, the bank building (1968) that sits on this site today is a modern design that suggests the building form of both the old Greenway Block and the old City Hall building. (16)

Other major fires on the west side of Watson Street include the fire of 1894 that destroyed the old City Hall block, a prominent building at 214 Watson St. It was replaced by the three-story McMahon Block, an impressive brick commercial building that also burned in 1922 and was replaced by the current building, the old Kohl Hardware Store. In 1904, another major fire in the 200 block on the west side of Watson Street destroyed the Pedrick Block and the Wicks Block. The Strauss Brothers built a department store on this site (230 Watson St.) that same year. The fire also damaged hotel at 300 Watson Street. Originally known as the Mapes House, then the Tremont House, after the fire, the hotel was rebuilt as the Hotel LeRoy. (17)

The last major historic fire in this district was in 1906 when Stone's Opera House, erected on the west side of the Square (100 block of Watson St.) after the fire of 1882, burned. Eventually new blocks took the place of the three-storefront-sized opera house, but redevelopment was not as quick as in the case of the previous fires in Ripon's downtown. (18)

Other fires, of course, occurred during the twentieth century in the district, but were not as devastating and did not have as much of a physical impact on the make-up of the Watson Street Commercial Historic District. The one exception though, was one of the most tragic fires in Ripon's history. In 1949, the old Woods Hotel (on the site of the current municipal building, just out of the district boundaries) burned. It was built in 1872, and was a large and prominent landmark in Ripon's downtown. This fire took six lives, destroyed a beautiful brick hotel building, and was a tragedy for the entire community. (19)

While the fires in downtown Ripon were important in making up the current appearance of the district, other more typical historical forces developed the district as well. For example, the 300 block of Watson Street grew as a gradual and logical extension of the downtown business district around the turn of the century. In fact, the 1884 Sanborn-Perris map shows that this block was largely undeveloped on both sides of the street. There were only a few brick or stone commercial buildings interspersed between vacant lots and small frame commercial buildings or residences.

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The old Mapes House dominated this part of the district. As the late nineteenth century progressed, large brick and stone blocks replaced the small frame buildings and vacant lots, creating the streetscapes seen today.

An important development on the east side of the 300 block of Watson Street was the construction four cream brick buildings (307 to 315 Watson St.) that take up much of the block. All of these buildings are faced with identical brick fronts and were constructed in 1891 (311-315 Watson St.) or 1896 (307-09 Watson St.). Completing the end of the block was the construction of the large Ripon Armory at 327 Watson St. around 1898. Originally a building with a large boomtown style parapet roof, the Armory was remodeled to its present appearance around 1920 when it became the home of the Ripon Motor Company. During the turn of the century years, there was a large warehouse for the Ripon Knitting Works at 333 Watson St. It was replaced with a gasoline station-automotive garage around 1925.

At the north end of the east side of the 300 block of Watson St. are two buildings that represent the limited redevelopment of the district in the early twentieth century. They are the 1913 Neo-Classical Revival Ripon State Bank and the c.1925 restaurant (301 and 303 Watson St.). They both replaced nineteenth century buildings on their sites. The other two buildings completing this block are the historic c.1869 Cooley Block (305 Watson St.) and 319 Watson St., a typical early twentieth century storefront.

The west side of the 300 block of Watson St. was historically anchored by the Mapes House (Hotel LeRoy, 300 Watson St.). A couple of brick commercial blocks were built in this streetscape around 1870 and then remodeled in the 1930s, but the majority of the buildings were constructed between 1890 and 1905, matching the east side of the street in its period of development. Two large buildings used for the Ripon Knitting Works were built in the late nineteenth century at the southwest end of Watson St. They were demolished in recent years and the modern buildings replacing them have been drawn out of the district.

East Jackson St. originally developed with light industries during the 1860s and 1870s, but most of the buildings have been physically altered and their use changed from light industry to commercial during the twentieth century. Two of these vernacular buildings still have their historic integrity (114-116 and 126 E. Jackson St.), and represent the oldest development period of this street. More typical is the Dodge and Manville Carriage Works (125-135 E. Jackson St.). The complex was originally built around 1860. When 135 E. Jackson St. was rebuilt around 1900, the remainder of the complex was remodeled to architecturally unite the factory.

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And, after the business died out in the early twentieth century, the complex converted to commercial usage.

After 1910, little major redevelopment took place and most of the buildings retain their original appearance except for first floor storefronts. Since many of the first floor storefronts have a post-World War II appearance, it is likely that storefront remodeling took place more than once on some buildings. But, only a few buildings have had their entire front facades remodeled or covered up. Some noted construction that occurred in the twentieth century includes the remodeling of the old armory (327 Watson St.) into the Ripon Motor Company around 1920; the construction of the Kohl Hardware Company and its next door neighbor (212-214 Watson St.) in the early 1920s; the construction of the U. S. Post Office (220 Blackburn St.) in 1924; and on the west side of the Square (100 Block of Watson St.), the block at 112 Watson St., built around 1930 and remodeled around 1975, the barber shop at 110 Watson St., built around 1920, and finally, the massive First National Bank building, constructed in 1930.

Architecture

The Watson Street Commercial Historic District is significant for architecture under criterion C for three reasons. First, there are some individual buildings in the district that are good or fine examples of popular nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural styles or vernacular construction methods. Second, the district has a continuity of nineteenth century architectural style that forms a distinctive architectural entity within the community. Third, the district's buildings feature excellent brick construction and fine detailed brickwork.

The fine individual buildings, though, somewhat overshadowed by the overall streetscapes, are distinctive enough to be singled out for discussion. Three of these buildings from the mid-nineteenth century are outstanding because of their intact limestone construction. They include two vernacular light industrial shops and a more stylized commercial building.

The Blacksmith-Carpenter Shop (114-116 E. Jackson St.) is constructed of rough finished uncoursed limestone and it is a good example of basic stone construction in a simple, utilitarian shop building. It is in excellent condition and its stonework, historic windows, entrances, and trim are all intact. The building has been used as office space since the mid-twentieth century, but the conversion to this use has not detracted significantly from the building's historic appearance. The building is also good example of a type of construction, a light industrial

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shop. It is one of only two examples of this type of building in an area of the district that manufactured goods as an adjunct to the retail area along Watson St.

The Carpenter Shop of 126 E. Jackson St. is also a plain, utilitarian building, but is slightly different because its limestone blocks are laid in a coursed pattern giving the exterior a more finished appearance. Its windows are not historic, but the wooden trim around openings is still intact. This building is a good example of a method of construction using locally-produced stone, and also is a good example of a vernacular shop building of the mid-nineteenth century.

The third building is the Cooley Block (305 Watson St., c. 1869). The Cooley Block is important as the only extant mid-nineteenth century stone-faced commercial building in the district. It also is significant because it has one of the most stylistic facades in the district. Its fine arched windows with the unusually foliated Italianate style hoods, decorative applied cornice, and historic storefront make the Cooley Block a fine and rare example of a commercial building that has retained most of its historic integrity. This building stands out as an architectural gem in the district.

The Cooley Block also features fine nineteenth century stone construction. Locally produced limestone is seen all along Watson St. in side or party walls and end walls of buildings. But, this is the only building that has a locally-produced dressed stone facade. After the major fires of 1868, 1869 and 1882, much of the downtown was rebuilt with commercial blocks that had fancier brick facades. But prior to the fires, at least two of the largest blocks in the downtown (not extant but depicted in historic photographs and drawings) resembled the Cooley Block. So, the Cooley Block also represents the type of architecture of the prominent business blocks of the earliest period of development in the district.

The Neoclassical Revival style of architecture was at its peak of popularity between 1890 and 1920, although according to Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan, the style was seen in Wisconsin primarily between 1895 and 1935. The style was spurred on in the United States by the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago that featured the famous "white city" of white-washed buildings all executed in classical forms. Because the style featured heavy classical detail, it was particularly popular for public, institutional, and commercial buildings in Wisconsin. (20)

The best Neoclassical Revival building in this district is the old Ripon Public Library, built in 1905 and designed by Waukesha architect C. C. Anderson. It is a

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fine and elegant interpretation of the style, creating an image of formality that spoke directly to its purpose. While more decorative than the classically-influenced library buildings of noted library architects Claude and Starck of Madison, Anderson's library is not overpowered by heavy classical details. In fact, the building is well proportioned, symmetrical, and elegantly appointed. Details of note include the hipped roof with double cupola, the brick and stone balustrade, the fine stone frieze, picturesque matching bays, and an entrance pavilion that expresses the importance of the building without overpowering it.

Not much is known about the career of C. C. Anderson except that he began his architectural practice in Waukesha in 1894. He designed the Waukesha Library in 1902-04, around the time the Ripon library was built, but the Waukesha Library has been too remodeled to see Anderson's original design and how it may have resembled the Ripon Library or even how well executed it was. Anderson is also credited with designing a Waukesha commercial building in 1901. It is a Neoclassical Revival style building with details that seem out of proportion to the building and are not particularly attractive. He also designed a very plain Queen Anne style house in Waukesha and an uninspired Queen Anne commercial block in Menomonee Falls that has some Neoclassical details. Therefore, of Anderson's known work, the old Ripon Public Library is probably his best design.

A new library was built north of this district about 10 years ago. And, while the old library is being used for a new, commercial use, it retains its original appearance. While many communities have completed or are contemplating large additions to their historic library buildings that greatly detract from their original integrity, the old Ripon Public Library stands as an intact example of a turn of the century library building, a resource as important for architecture as it is for history.

A more conservative, typical expression of the Neoclassical Revival style is the Ripon State Bank (301 Watson St.). It has a fine ashlar grey limestone exterior, and enough typical classical details to make the building stylistic, but conservative, an image most banks expressed in towns and cities throughout Wisconsin. Of particular note on this building are the fine colossal fluted columns with Ionic Capitals and the bracketed hood mold over the main entrance.

The U. S. Post Office (220 Blackburn St.) is a simple Neoclassical Revival building with strong Georgian Revival influences. The original 1924 section of the post office is symmetrical in its form and the brick and stone balustrade, 12-over-12 light sash windows set in round-arched reveals, and the well-proportioned

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frontispiece help give the building its classical appearance.

The 1968 addition to the post office matches the old building almost identically. While probably done with the best intentions, the result made the building seem out of proportion. And, because 1968 building materials could not exactly match the patina of 1924 building materials, the addition is quite noticeable, and the intended effect of blending the old and new together was not achieved. While the 1968 addition does detract somewhat from the original integrity of the 1924 post office, it does not have such a negative effect as to take away from the original building's contribution to the architectural significance of the district.

The last individually interesting building in this district is the First National Bank (114 Watson St.). This Art Deco building is a large and unusual interpretation of the Art Deco style. According to Wisconsin's Cultural Resources Management Plan, the Art Deco style incorporated futuristic or highly stylized historical details in a hard edged manner emphasizing the machine precision of the new twentieth century technological age. Streamlining and verticality were hallmarks of the style, yet Art Deco designs also included much stylized decoration using stone, metal, or terra cotta materials. (21)

In this design, by the architectural firm of Auler, Jensen, and Brown of Oshkosh, verticality is achieved by the design of the stepped frontispiece and the window bands with their tall, narrow openings. The design is highly abstract and austere compared to typical examples of the style. The only decoration is the small, almost indistinguishable coin face designs that are carved into the stone spandrels. The result is a building that appears massive and almost fortress-like.

Because of the unusual nature of this design, other known designs of Auler, Jensen, and Brown were reviewed. The Auler, Jensen, and Brown firm was formed in the early twentieth century. Henry Auler (1884-1951) was born in Oshkosh, and educated there. He worked for the noted turn of the century Oshkosh architect William Waters before establishing a partnership with James P. Jensen (1853-1935). James P. Jensen was born in Denmark and after coming to Wisconsin he worked as a draftsman for William Waters between 1875 and 1915. It was probably around 1915 that Auler and Jensen began to practice together and with Wallace Brown. (22)

There are a number of known Auler and Jensen and Auler, Jensen and Brown buildings in Oshkosh. Of note are the National Register-listed Wisconsin National Life Insurance Building (1925-27) and the Oshkosh Daily Northwestern Building (1930), both fine large Neoclassical Revival buildings. The architects also designed the

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Neoclassical Masonic Temple and the Paine Thrift Bank in Oshkosh. Their residential work was typical of the early twentieth century; that is, period revival. What is particularly striking in looking at their work in Oshkosh is the fine Neoclassical Revival designs. And, it is of interest that their bank design for the First National Bank in Ripon is not done in this style but in an unusual interpretation of the Art Deco style. (23)

One possibility is that the bank asked for this type of design. A newspaper search revealed that in the months prior to the opening of this new facility in 1930, the bank placed numerous large advertisements in the local paper. Each of these ads stressed how modern and efficient the First National Bank was and emphasized their modern and efficient banking facility. In fact, all of the ads used the words "modern" or "efficient" many times over. It is possible that the First National Bank directors asked for an ultra-modern design to represent their financial marketing strategy at the time rather than a typical Neo-Classical building that represented the past. In any event, the result was an unusual bank building.

While these individual buildings add to the architectural significance of this district, its importance lies in the relatively intact streetscapes of Italianate-influenced commercial blocks. In particular, the east side of the 100, 200, and 300 blocks of Watson Street and the large Pratt's block at the corner of Watson Street and West Fond du Lac Street are outstanding and form a cohesive architectural group.

Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan discusses the Italianate commercial style in Wisconsin. Common details of the style include bracketed wood, stone, or metal cornices that rise above flat or shed roofs. Arched window hoods of wood, stone, brick, or metal are also common on the upper stories of Italianate commercial buildings. Often, the stylistic details are seen only in the upper stories of buildings. In particular, the Plan recognizes the substantial concentrations of Italianate commercial architecture in the communities of Stoughton, Ripon, Brodhead, and Janesville. The style was continued in commercial buildings long after it had died out in residential construction. And often the later Italianate-detailed commercial buildings are more elaborately and classically detailed. The style was very popular for commercial buildings and is commonly seen in commercial districts of Wisconsin communities. (24)

The substantial concentration of Italianate commercial architecture in Ripon exists primarily in the streetscapes of the east side of the 100, 200, and 300 blocks of Watson Street; in groups of buildings located on the west side of the 200 and 300 blocks of Watson Street and the south side of West Fond du Lac Street; in individual

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buildings located on the west side of the 100 block of Watson Street; and in 102 West Jackson Street. Together these buildings have a continuity of form, details, and building materials.

For example, almost all of the Italianate commercial buildings in the district are constructed of cream brick and express their style with brick corbelling and brick hoodmolds over second story windows. In fact, it is particularly of interest that most of the buildings do not have Italianate detailed applied cornices, but have extensive brick corbelling at the cornice line that suggests an applied cornice. The details in the brick corbelling strongly suggest Italianate brackets and classical details such as dentils and modillions; details that are often seen on Italianate influenced applied cornices of wood or metal.

The other element of style in these simple Italianate commercial buildings are the second story windows. They have either round brick arches with corbel stops and keystones or label hoodmoldings with similar details suggesting the Italianate commercial style. The second stories create an outstanding arcaded effect all the way down the east side of the 100 and 200 blocks of Watson St. This arcaded effect is repeated in a smaller way in other parts of the district as well. The continuity of style, construction materials, and details seen in the Italianate commercial buildings suggests that when Ripon's downtown was rebuilt, common builders reconstructed the district in a manner that was either a coincidental or planned attempt to create an architecturally cohesive downtown.

Common details appear over and over again suggesting a common builder or builders. In particular, brick corbelling that suggests brackets is seen on most of these buildings. Arches within cornices are common, as are corbel stops on window decorations. Probably the most interesting brick corbelling can be seen on Pratt's Block, a large, multi-storefront block linked by stepped brick corbelling at the cornice level and unusual window decoration that features a sawtooth brick pattern.

The Kingsbury Store at 102 W. Jackson St. is probably the best example of the Italianate-influenced commercial blocks because it has retained most of its original details including a brick corbelled cornice. It has intact window openings that are decorated with fine brick arches, and a storefront that has a historic appearance. This building best expresses what is seen throughout the district: fine cream brick Italianate influenced commercial buildings that have interesting and unusual brick detailing.

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During the turn of the century years, remodeled or newly constructed commercial buildings retained the Italianate influence, even though the details became plainer. For example, the group of 1890s cream brick blocks at 311-315 Watson St. have simple brick corbelled cornices resembling those of buildings constructed earlier. The label moldings decorating the windows are also similar to earlier buildings, although they are less decorative. This can be seen on the building at 320-322 Watson St. and its companion, the J. W. Bailey Block at 308 Watson St., built around 1900 and 1904 respectively. Stylistic details do not change radically on simple commercial buildings in the district until the 1910s and 1920s.

Like most downtown commercial districts throughout Wisconsin, the historic elements of the buildings exist primarily at the upper story level. Most of the first floor storefronts have been altered, and some have been altered several times. Some of the alterations retain the basic form of historic storefronts by retaining large show windows, transoms, and recessed entrances, but these details are executed with modern materials. A few of the storefronts have, unfortunately, been enclosed with opaque materials that do not at all represent historic storefronts. Some buildings stand out as exceptions to the above. They have retained storefronts that, while not necessarily original, are from the historic period of significance for the district. They include 211, 225, 301, 305, 210, and 114 Watson St., 113-117 West Fond du Lac St., 102 W. Jackson St., and 114-116 E. Jackson St.

The lack of historic storefronts in the district results in a loss of integrity for the district. However, because so much original detail exists at the upper levels of the buildings in the district, they largely overshadow most of the inappropriate remodeling of first floors. And, since the community is currently in the midst of a Main Street revitalization program, storefront rehabilitation is being addressed at this time. It is hoped that through a combination of private investment, historic rehabilitation tax credits, and new business interest in Ripon's downtown, that many buildings will be rehabilitated and historic storefronts will return to the district.

Probably the most striking thing about this district is that it is such a cohesive group of buildings with few intrusions interrupting the streetscapes of primarily nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. The result is that the Watson Street historic district retains much of its historic appearance as the center for commercial activity in the community, just as it was throughout the nineteenth century and as it still is today.

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Commerce

The Watson Street Historic District is historically significant in the area of commerce as the center of commercial activity in the city of Ripon. Beginning at the center of a new community, the district grew up along Watson Street as the commercial center of the city and even the devastating fires of the nineteenth century did not hamper the growth and development of this area as the central business district of Ripon. In fact, the fires allowed for the construction of sturdier, more elegant brick and stone commercial blocks that still exist today. And, while "strip" development on the edge of town has taken some commercial activity away from Watson Street, the center of the community's commercial business district still remains within the boundaries of this district.

While Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan has yet to outline the development of historic resources related to commerce in the state, historians have discussed the importance of commerce in Wisconsin's communities. Trading in goods and services began in Wisconsin communities almost from the beginning of their settlement, some businesses starting out in primitive log cabins. Often pioneer businesses were multi-purpose, incorporating general store, inn, and post office all under one roof. As communities developed in the late nineteenth century, even the smallest towns usually had a variety of stores such as groceries, dry goods, and hardware stores located in a commercial business district at the center of the community. Entrepreneurs in larger communities, such as Milwaukee, developed larger stores that featured more specialty goods. The popularity of retailing increased during the late nineteenth century and while the pioneer general store persisted during this time, it gradually died out as retailing became more specialized. There was a high turnover of businesses in commercial districts and short-term retailers were the rule and not the exception. (25)

The development of commerce in Ripon has been discussed in the historical background of the district earlier in this section. And, the wide variety of stores and other commercial services has been discussed in detail in Section 7 as part of the description of individual buildings and groups of buildings in the district. Here, only a brief review of the development of the important commercial activities in the district will be given to support the assertion that this district was the center for commercial activity in Ripon throughout the city's history.

Banking is one of the most important commercial activities in any community. In Ripon, until recent years, all banking institutions in the city were located in this district. Pioneer merchant Edward P. Brockway operated the first banking and

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exchange business in his store in the 1850s. In 1855, Brockway and Florida banker Richard Catlin opened a banking and exchange business. This business was reorganized in 1856 as the Bank of Ripon, the first formal banking institution in the community. Their first location was in a building erected on the west side of the Square (west side, 100 block of Watson St., not extant). In 1864, the bank took advantage of newly passed federal legislation to reorganize as a national bank and the Bank of Ripon became the First National Bank. (26)

The First National Bank had a virtual monopoly on the banking activities in the community throughout the nineteenth century. Their assets in 1864 were over \$112,000, and by 1895 they had reached over \$500,000 despite the deflation of the 1870s and the recession of the 1890s. In 1882, their first bank building burned with the fire that destroyed the entire west side of the Square, but the bank was quickly rebuilt. It existed on the site of the old First National Bank building (114 Watson St.). In 1909, the bank moved to 123 Watson St. and remodeled that building. (27)

Two other banks were established in Ripon in the late nineteenth century. In 1884 the Ripon National Bank was founded and its offices were located in Reed's Block (200 Watson Street). After Reed's Block burned in 1885, the bank's assets were absorbed by the First National Bank. Only in 1890 did another bank emerge that would challenge the First National Bank's prominence in the community. This was the German National Bank, established by L. D. Moses of Waupaca and located right next door to the old First National Bank location (114 Watson St.). The two banks competed successfully side by side until the First National Bank moved across the street in 1909. In 1914, probably due to the anti-German feelings in the country, the German National Bank changed its name to the American National Bank. In 1930, the American National Bank and the First National Bank merged under the name of the First National Bank. After the merger, the First National's total assets topped \$3,000,000 and the bank built their new building on the site of both banks' old locations (114-116 Watson St.). The First National Bank remained at this location until 1975. (28)

The First National Bank and the American National Bank were joined by the Ripon State Bank in 1913. A small bank when it was started (assets in 1913 were only \$75,000), it grew steadily during the twentieth century at its location at 301 Watson St. In the 1970s the bank became part of the M & I Banks chain and around 1981, it vacated its fine Neo-Classical building on Watson Street for another location in the city. (29)

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The fourth major bank in the community is the Central Federal Savings institution, a savings and loan. It was founded as the Ripon Federal Savings and Loan in 1934 primarily to provide home loans to people in the community. Throughout its history, this financial institution has been located in the district. Its first location, was ironically, in the Ripon State Bank building, but it moved after a few years to 207 Watson Street where it remained until its present building (125 Watson St.) was built in 1968. It is the only banking facility still remaining in the district, although in a non-contributing building. (30)

While most of Ripon's banking institutions have left the district for more spacious quarters in other areas of the city, this phenomenon has occurred only in recent years. And, all four of the major banking houses in the city grew and developed in this district, in downtown Ripon. The historic buildings of the First National Bank and the Ripon State Bank are both located in the district. The Central Federal Savings institution was founded late in the period of significance, but its historic offices are also located in the district, and its new building, while non-contributing, is of modern architectural interest. These buildings all represent the growth and development of an important commercial service in the community: banking. And, while financial services have largely moved away from the district, the historic buildings they once occupied are an important part of the city's historic downtown.

Retailing, of course, made up the bulk of all historic downtowns in Wisconsin. And, like banking, the center of retailing in Ripon until the post-World War II era was the downtown. Only in recent years has some of retailing in Ripon moved to other areas of the community. And, while retailing in the district has changed because of this, the trading of goods and services is still alive in Ripon's downtown. The Main Street program has the goal of preserving historic downtown architecture and rehabilitating buildings, and revitalizing and retaining business activities downtown. It may mean commercial activities in Ripon's downtown will change, but it is hoped that commerce will continue to thrive in the historic center of commerce in Ripon.

That this district was the center of retailing in the community can be easily seen in reviewing the information about individual buildings and groups of buildings in Section 7. Of the hundreds of businesses that existed in this district during the period of significance, a number stand out because of their importance in the business sector or their longevity as representatives of other similar, but more fleeting businesses.

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Dry goods stores, many of which became larger department stores, were important retail businesses in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Some department stores of the turn of the century years were the most prominent businesses in the downtowns across Wisconsin. In Ripon, one of the early dry goods merchants was A. W. Pettibone who began his business in the 1860s. After the fire of 1869, he erected the Pettibone Block (101-103 Watson Street) for his dry goods business and leased half for a drug store. The building remained a dry goods and drug store until the turn of the century when it became the Mattice-Foster Company Department Store, a business that grew out of the Mattice dry goods store of the late nineteenth century. The Mattice-Foster Company eventually took over the entire Pettibone Block and was a prominent department store until at least the 1920s. (31)

Two other important dry goods stores shared the same building (117 Watson Street). In the late nineteenth century the Strauss Brothers opened their dry goods store at this location and stayed there until 1904 when they built a large new building for their Department Store (230 Watson St.). At this new location, the Strauss Brothers operated one of the largest department stores in the community. While the Watson Street building has been altered, the recent removal of false panels at the front and planned rehabilitation work to the contributing building should easily bring the building back to much of its former appearance. As it now stands, the building is still clearly readable as an early twentieth century structure of considerable scale and prominence. Its sheer scale points to its likely dominant role in local commercial activity from the period.

Faustman's department store took over the building at 117 Watson St. after the Strauss Brothers. Faustman's earlier location was on the west side of the Square. Faustman's was not one of the largest of the department stores in Ripon, but historic sources indicate that in the early twentieth century, it was one of the most modern and fashionable places to shop in Ripon's downtown. (32)

Another important type of business in historic downtowns were hardware stores. Both urban and rural patrons relied on hardware stores not only to provide needed goods, but to fabricate specialty items as well. According to Sanborn-Perris Maps, most of the hardware stores in Ripon had tinshops associated with their businesses during the period of significance. The O. J. Clarke Block (107-111 Watson St.) was a long-time location of hardware stores. O. J. Clark operated an early hardware store at that location, selling it to Charles Cowan, who operated his hardware store out of 109 Watson St. until the turn of the century. After 1900, the store became the Ripon Hardware Company and remained a hardware store until the 1960s. At 113 Watson St., Jenkinson and Fey operated a hardware store until the turn of the century.

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After that time, George Sargent operated the store. It became known as the Central Hardware store in the 1920s and after World War II it was known as the Ace Hardware Store, in operation until around 1970. (33)

Probably the most important hardware store in the city, though, was the Barlow and Seelig Company Hardware store. J. B. Barlow and John G. Seelig established a hardware store where they perfected a design for a modern washing machine. They established the Barlow and Seelig Manufacturing Company to build them and this company became the Speed Queen Company, a leading manufacturing of washing machines. The company is still in operation today producing Amana brand consumer goods under the corporate name of Raytheon. Barlow and Seelig's hardware store was erected on the site of the burned "City Hall Block" (214 Watson St.), but it, too, was burned in 1922. After the fire, Barlow and Seelig sold the property to the Kohl Hardware Store, and concentrated on their manufacturing concern. Kohl Hardware was in business at that location until the mid-1970s. Even though the original Barlow and Seelig store is not extant, the location of the Kohl Hardware Store is an important one for the hardware business throughout the twentieth century. (34)

Grocery stores were an important and vital business for any community, but were frequent victims of business turnover and long-time grocery store ownership was rare. One of the oldest and longest operating grocery store in this district was the Kingsbury-Bishop grocery at 102 W. Jackson St. Byron Kingsbury began in the grocery business in the 1850s in Ripon and probably built this building around 1870. In the late nineteenth century it was operated by A. E. Bishop and then by Mrs. Bishop until at least the 1910s. After that time, the building became the location of a prominent service organization in the community, the International Order of Odd Fellows. The IOOF occupied the building until just recently. (35)

Other long-term grocery store locations in the district include the August and Frederick Buchholz grocery at 233 Watson St. Begun by August Buchholz in the nineteenth century, he operated the store until his death in 1918. His son, Frederick, continued the grocery business at this location until he died in 1937. Another location of a long-time grocery store was at 221 Watson St. The nineteenth century owners are not known, but for much of the first half of the twentieth century, this location was Amend's Grocery Store. John J. Dillon and his son operated a long-time grocery store at 107 Watson St. Between around 1870 when the building was constructed and the 1920s, the store was operated by this family. These grocery stores are only a few of the many that existed during the period of significance in this district, but because of their longevity, they were probably among the most important. In any event, it is clear from the city directories that

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until recently, the center of grocery retailing in the community was this district in downtown Ripon. (36)

Besides banks, hardware, and grocery stores, downtown Ripon had bakeries, meat markets, shoe stores, furniture and/or undertaking establishments, jewelers, hotels, and saloons. Some of the long-time businesses associated with this district fall into this category. Most of the others were short-term, but no less important as a group to the significance of commerce in this district.

Among the long-term retailers in the district is the furniture store at 305 Watson St. It eventually became the Butzin and Kussman furniture store and funeral home which was in business for several decades in the early twentieth century. For over 100 years, the building at 206 Watson St. housed a shoe store. It began as a boot and shoe shop where footwear was manufactured and sold. Later the boot and shoe business became retail only, selling ready-made shoes. William Deming was in operation at this location between the 1890s and the 1920s. Later, the location was the long-time home of the Haase Shoe Store. Only in the 1980s has the use of this building changed. (37)

There were three long-time jewelry retailers in this district. One of the oldest goes back to the 1870s at 210 Watson St. Originally the Wolcott and Kingsbury Jewelry store, it was the Edward Ensign jewelry store in the late nineteenth century. Then William Davy, who had been a jeweler at 105 Watson St. from the 1870s to the turn of the century moved to 210 Watson St. After William Davy, 210 Watson Street was the Fargo Jewelry Store until the 1960s. The storefront at 204 Watson Street was a long-time jewelry store, probably beginning in the 1870s. The first known occupant, though, was Charles Sharp. It briefly housed The Kingsbury and Lambert Jewelry Store, then the Harry Fargo store which became the Fargo-Diedrich Jewelry Store in the 1920s. Eventually Harry Diedrich became sole occupant and the location was the Diedrich Jewelry Store until very recently. (38)

Drug stores were popular in downtown Ripon, but most were short-lived operations. One exception was the Edgar Burnside Drug Store at 202 Watson St. Burnside began working with another druggist in the 1880s, probably at this location, and by 1893, he was operating his own store. He was a druggist at this location until his death in 1947. Because of his longevity, he was probably the best known druggist in the community. The building continued to be a drug store until the 1980s. (39)

Hotels were an important part of the commercial activity of most downtowns. The 1949 fire that destroyed the Wood Hotel, unfortunately destroyed Ripon's most

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elaborate and historic hotel. Two hotel buildings, although altered, still exist in the district. The Hotel LeRoy sits on the site of the old Mapes House, a historic hotel that dated back to the 1850s. It was overtaken in elegance and prestige in 1872 when the Woods Hotel was built, but remained in operation until it burned in a 1904 fire. Substantially rebuilt as the Hotel LeRoy, it has further seen a loss of integrity because of the alteration of its facade and is currently non-contributing. In recent years, the building has been known as the Davis Hotel, and its alterations are not so irreversible that it could not be returned to its 1904 appearance. (40)

The other extant hotel is Luhm's Hotel, probably built by Charles Luhm around 1880. From the turn of the century until the mid-twentieth century, when it became part of the bowling alley next door, the hotel was known as the Northwestern Hotel. It was located across the street from the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Depot (not extant). It probably catered to travelers on the railroad line. (41)

Of course, no commercial historic district in Wisconsin is complete without saloons. But, often, saloons were the most fleeting businesses in the community and few taverns today can trace their roots back to the nineteenth century. One exception is the Kleifoth-Mueller Saloon at 119 Watson St. Probably built around 1870 by Charles Kleifoth, it was remodeled by the Mueller family (Gustav and Karl) in the late nineteenth century. The Muellers operated the building as a saloon until prohibition. During prohibition the building housed a confectionery store, but after the repeal of prohibition, the building returned to its original use as a saloon. And, it has remained a saloon to this day, over 100 years from the time it was first built and used for this purpose. (42)

So far the discussion of the commercial activity in this district has revolved around activities housed in the first floor of the buildings. While this activity is important and makes up the bulk of the commerce in the district, it should also be mentioned that some commercial activities took place in the second floors when downstairs occupants did not use them for their residences. These activities usually involved professional services, such as doctors, lawyers, or photographers. City directories indicate that in the nineteenth and twentieth century, Ripon's downtown was the center for all types of commercial activities including financial, retail, and professional. Only in recent years has some of this activity been relocated to other areas of the community.

The importance of the East Jackson Street area should not go unmentioned. This area was historically light industrial, focused on industries closely related to

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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retailing. The main activities were blacksmithing, harnessmaking, and carriage or wagon making. Unlike large factories where goods were produced in mass and sold outside of the community, the light industries of East Jackson Street primarily sold to local customers, and therefore, were closely related to the retail trading that took place along Watson Street. In fact, when the goods produced on this street became cheaper and readily available in retail businesses, the buildings on this street were transformed into retail stores and East Jackson Street functioned and still functions as a commercial adjunct to Watson Street.

The area encompassed within the Watson Street Historic District was the center of nineteenth and much of twentieth century commerce in Ripon. All the major activities that involve commercial transactions in the community took place here. And, since the district retains much of its architectural cohesiveness as a commercial area, it represents the historic downtown business district of Ripon.

Education

There is one building in this district that is individually significant for local history in the area of education. The old Ripon Public Library (401 Watson St.), completed in 1905, is significant as the most important historic resource associated with the free public library movement in Ripon, a movement that is of significance throughout the state and nation.

Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan discusses the history of the free public library movement in Wisconsin and indicates that the establishment of free public libraries in communities was a significant event in any city's history of education. According to the Plan, the earliest libraries in the state were generally private collections that were occasionally offered for public lending or donated to communities or community organizations. The State of Wisconsin authorized municipalities to establish libraries with tax levies as early as 1868, but few communities did. Most likely, an early public library was established when wealthy citizens donated money for that purpose. Between 1882 and 1900, 20 communities received donations for public libraries from wealthy citizens. In the 1890s the Wisconsin Library Association and the Wisconsin Free Library Commission promoted free public libraries as a means to promote intellectual and moral development in young people, and as an aid in assimilating immigrants. but the movement was, overall, stymied for lack of funds until steel magnate Andrew Carnegie began issuing grants for libraries. A total of 64 Carnegie libraries were built in Wisconsin, slightly surpassing the number of libraries founded with local philanthropy. (43)

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Ripon, Fond du Lac County, WI

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The development of Ripon's free public library was typical. The Ripon Library Association was founded in 1880. It was an idea spawned by a women's social club that was established in the 1870s. The club had a small treasury that funded the purchase of books for the library association when the club disbanded in 1880. These books were available at a downtown location while the library association tried to raise enough money for a library building. The library association was incorporated in 1884. (44)

The goal of the group was to acquire 100 books a year, and they were successful in reaching this goal during their early years of operation. In 1885 the library had 500 books and by 1893, the collection had grown to over 1400. The fledgling library, like others across the state, was housed in various downtown locations prior to the construction of an actual library building. By 1898, the City of Ripon became involved when it took over the operation of the library under the direction of a city-appointed library board. Like the Wisconsin communities that had no willing philanthropist who could afford or would agree to fund a modern library building, Ripon applied for a Carnegie grant. It received one in 1903 and the erection of the building in this district was completed in 1905. (45)

Libraries of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are almost always associated with downtowns. Downtown was seen as the center of the community, easily accessible to all and many early public library collections were housed in temporary quarters in downtown buildings until, usually, a new library building was constructed immediately adjacent to downtown. The old Ripon Public Library is an elegant and beautiful building that embodies architecturally the importance of this building to the community.

The public library was housed in this building for over 70 years. Around 1979 a new library building, just north of downtown was erected. The old building, probably due to its land-locked site, odd configuration, and, perhaps, its pristine beauty, was not compromised by an addition, as has been so often the case in many communities with historic libraries. In fact, although the building has been put to a new use for commercial purposes, it sits unaltered today.

Ripon, as the home Ripon College, a highly-regarded liberal arts college, has a strong tradition of education. But not everyone could or would attend Ripon College or any other institution of higher learning. So, the library was the most important source of knowledge after one left formal schooling. Between its completion in 1905 and the late 1970s, the old Ripon Public Library was an important educational institution for the community, as well as being an important resource for elementary

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and secondary school students. It provided free public access to information and literature, a goal of the free public library movement in the state. And, given the size of the current library's collections, and the fact that after just a brief period of time in their new building they are already "bursting at the seams," Ripon's public library has met and continues to meet its mission to provide as much free information and literature as the public desires.

Besides representing the growth and development of the free public library movement in Ripon, this building is significant historically because it is a Carnegie-funded facility, one of the fortunate 64 Wisconsin libraries to benefit from the industrialist's philanthropy. The library in Ripon grew from the initial activities of a few public-spirited women in the community and from the seed money donated by Carnegie into a fine small-city library facility. The old Ripon Public Library is the result of these two efforts and it is in this building that was the site of the library as it grew and developed. It is, therefore, significant as an individual element in this historic district.

Notes to Section 8:

(1) These dates encompass the most significant historic and architectural development within the district.

(2) Personal communication from Professor George Miller, Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin. Professor Miller obtained the architect's name from information he received from a Ripon College librarian who had researched the history of the Ripon Public Library.

(3) "First National Bank Opens New Home," Ripon Commonwealth, 19 December 1930.

(4) Samuel M. Pedrick, A History of Ripon Wisconsin, George H. Miller, Ed., Ripon: Ripon Historical Society, 1964., pp 3-5.

(5) Ibid., pp. 30-44.

(6) Ibid., pp. 44-45.

(7) Ibid., pp. 57-60.

(8) Ibid., pp. 60-62.

(9) Maurice McKenna, Ed., Fond du Lac County Wisconsin Past and Present, Volume I, Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912, p. 388.

(10) Pedrick, pp. 96-101.

(11) Samuel M. Pedrick Memo to the Ripon Historical Society detailing major fires that occurred in downtown Ripon between 1868 and 1922, on file at the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin; Pedrick, pp. 281-284.

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- (12) Pedrick Memo.
- (13) Ibid.
- (14) Ibid.
- (15) Ibid.
- (16) Ibid.
- (17) Ibid.
- (18) Ibid.
- (19) Clipping files in the iconographic collection of the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin, dated 1949.
- (20) Barbara Wyatt, Ed., Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Vol. 2, Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Architecture, p. 2-18.
- (21) Ibid., p. 2-34.
- (22) Architect's file in the State Historic Preservation Office, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, filed under Auler, Auler and Jensen, and Auler, Jensen and Brown.
- (23) Ibid.; Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places files, State Historic Preservation Office, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.
- (24) Wyatt, p. 2-6.
- (25) Richard N. Current, The History of Wisconsin, Vol. II: The Civil War Era, 1848-1873, Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976, pp. 107-108; Robert C. Nesbit, The History of Wisconsin, Vol. III: Urbanization and Industrialization, 1873-1893, Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1985, pp. 211-213.
- (26) "First National Bank of Ripon," pamphlet on file in the Ripon historical files, Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin, probably published by the First National Bank in 1956 on the event of the bank's 100th anniversary.
- (27) Ibid.
- (28) Ibid.; "Ripon State Bank Grows Thru War, Depression, Fire, Holdup," The Ripon Commonwealth-Press, 26 December 1963.
- (29) Ibid., Ripon City Directories, on file at the Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin.
- (30) "Central Federal Savings 1984 Annual Report," Ripon: Central Federal Savings, 1984, pamphlet on file in the Ripon historical files, Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin, published on the 50th anniversary of the founding of the bank.
- (31) Samuel M. Pedrick, Ed. Biographical and Statistical Information Relating to Many Families that Have Lived in Ripon and Vicinity, Volumes 1-39, compiled alphabetically by last name, on file at the Ripon Public Library, Ripon, Wisconsin. To simplify footnoting, future references to these volumes will be cited as Pedrick Biographies, followed by the name of the person under which the reference can be found. In this case, it is Pedrick Biographies: Pettibone, A. W., Mattice, Henry P.

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- (32) "The Big 'Daylight' Store," newspaper article on file at the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin; Pedrick Biographies: Faustman, Charles F. A.
- (33) Ripon City Directories.
- (34) Pedrick Biographies: McMahon, Martin H., Kohl, Henry, Seelig, John G.; clipping files in the iconographic collection at the Ripon Historical Society.
- (35) Pedrick Biographies: Bishop, Alfred E. and Kingsbury, Byron.
- (36) Pedrick Biographies: Buchholz, August.
- (37) Ripon City Directories.
- (38) Ibid.
- (39) Pedrick Biographies: Burnside, Edgar.
- (40) Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps, on file in the Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.
- (41) Pedrick Biographies: Luhm, Charles.
- (42) Ripon City Directories.
- (43) Wyatt, Vol. III, Education, pp. 5-1--5-9.
- (44) Pedrick, pp. 217-218.
- (45) Ibid., pp. 218-220.

ARCHEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

Archeologists have identified sites of Native American activities in and around Ripon. Since the Watson Street Commercial Historic District has had a considerable amount of building and rebuilding, surface prehistoric or historic archeological resources are probably no longer extant. However, it is likely that hidden resources may remain, particularly those related to the nineteenth century buildings in the district that were destroyed by the many fires in Ripon's downtown. Therefore, although no archeological surveys were undertaken for this nomination, this district may have some potential for the existence of prehistoric and particularly historic archeological resources.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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   See continuation sheet

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  
   Other  
Specify repository:  
\_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of property    1 acres

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UTM References

|   |               |                       |                         |   |               |                       |                         |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| A | <u>  </u> 1/6 | <u>  </u> 3/5/2/1/2/0 | <u>  </u> 4/8/5/6/2/3/0 | B | <u>  </u> 1/6 | <u>  </u> 3/5/2/4/0/0 | <u>  </u> 4/8/5/6/1/6/0 |
|   | Zone          | Easting               | Northing                |   | Zone          | Easting               | Northing                |
| C | <u>  </u> 1/6 | <u>  </u> 3/5/2/3/2/0 | <u>  </u> 4/8/5/6/0/2/0 | D | <u>  </u> 1/6 | <u>  </u> 3/5/2/1/8/0 | <u>  </u> 4/8/5/5/8/0/0 |

   See continuation sheet

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Verbal Boundary Description

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    See continuation sheet

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Boundary Justification

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    See continuation sheet

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/title    Carol Lohry Cartwright, Consultant  
organization    for the Ripon Historical Society  
street & number    Rt. 2, 5581A Hackett Rd.  
city or town    Whitewater  
date    8-10-89  
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state    WI zip code    53190

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

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- Historic Photographs in the iconographic collection at the Ripon Historical Society, Ripon, Wisconsin.
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Secondary Sources

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"Refusal of \$75,000 Post Office in 1916 War Time Got National Praise." Ripon Commonwealth Centennial Issue. 26 August 1965.

"Ripon State Bank Grows Thru War, Depression, Fire, Holdup." The Ripon Commonwealth-Press. 26 December 1963.

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Verbal Boundary Description

(Refer to Map for Map Numbers) Beginning at the intersection of the west curbline of Mill St. and the north curbline of W. Jackson St., then east along the north curbline to the east curbline of Pacific St., then north along this line to the south curbline of Jefferson St., then southeast along this line to the west curbline of Blackburn St., then south along this line to the north curbline of E. Jackson St., then east along this line to the east lotlines of Nos. 70, 71, and 72, then south along these lines to the south lotline of No. 72, then west along this line to the west curbline of Blackburn St., then south along this line to the north curbline of Fond du Lac St., then northwest along this line to an extension of the rear lotlines of Nos. 11-30, then south along this line across Seward St. to the east lot line of No. 31, then southwest along the rear lot line of No. 31 to the east curbline of Watson St., then north along this line to the south lotline of No. 24, then west to the south lotline of No. 32, then west along this line to the west lot lines of Nos. 32-44, then north along this line to the south and west lotlines of Nos. 45-47, then north along the west lotline of No. 47 across Fond du Lac St. to the west lotlines of Nos. 48-55, then north along this line across W. Jackson St. to the north curbline of W. Jackson St., then east along this line to the west lotline of No. 56, then north along this line to the north lotline of No. 56, then east along this line to the west curbline of Mill St., then south along this line to the point of beginning.

Verbal Boundary Justification

This boundary encompasses the streetscapes and buildings that make up Ripon's historic downtown commercial district. In particular, the northern boundary is defined by including only those buildings, primarily along E. Jackson St. that have retained their historic character. Beyond the northern boundary is an area of mixed usage with vacant or parking lots, non-commercial buildings, and new construction. The northeast portion of the district is made up of the light industrial area that was converted to commercial use during the twentieth century. The east and west boundaries are defined by the rear lot lines of the buildings of the 100, 200 and 300 block of Watson Street, the main commercial thoroughfare in Ripon. A large non-contributing element of the west side of the 300 block of Watson Street was drawn out because of its modern construction date and the boundary was extended to the southeast to include the historic old Ripon Public Library, an important resource in downtown Ripon. The boundaries, in general, make up a very "tight" district with as many non-contributing and modern elements and vacant lots drawn out, while keeping in the district the historic streetscapes of Ripon's commercial downtown.

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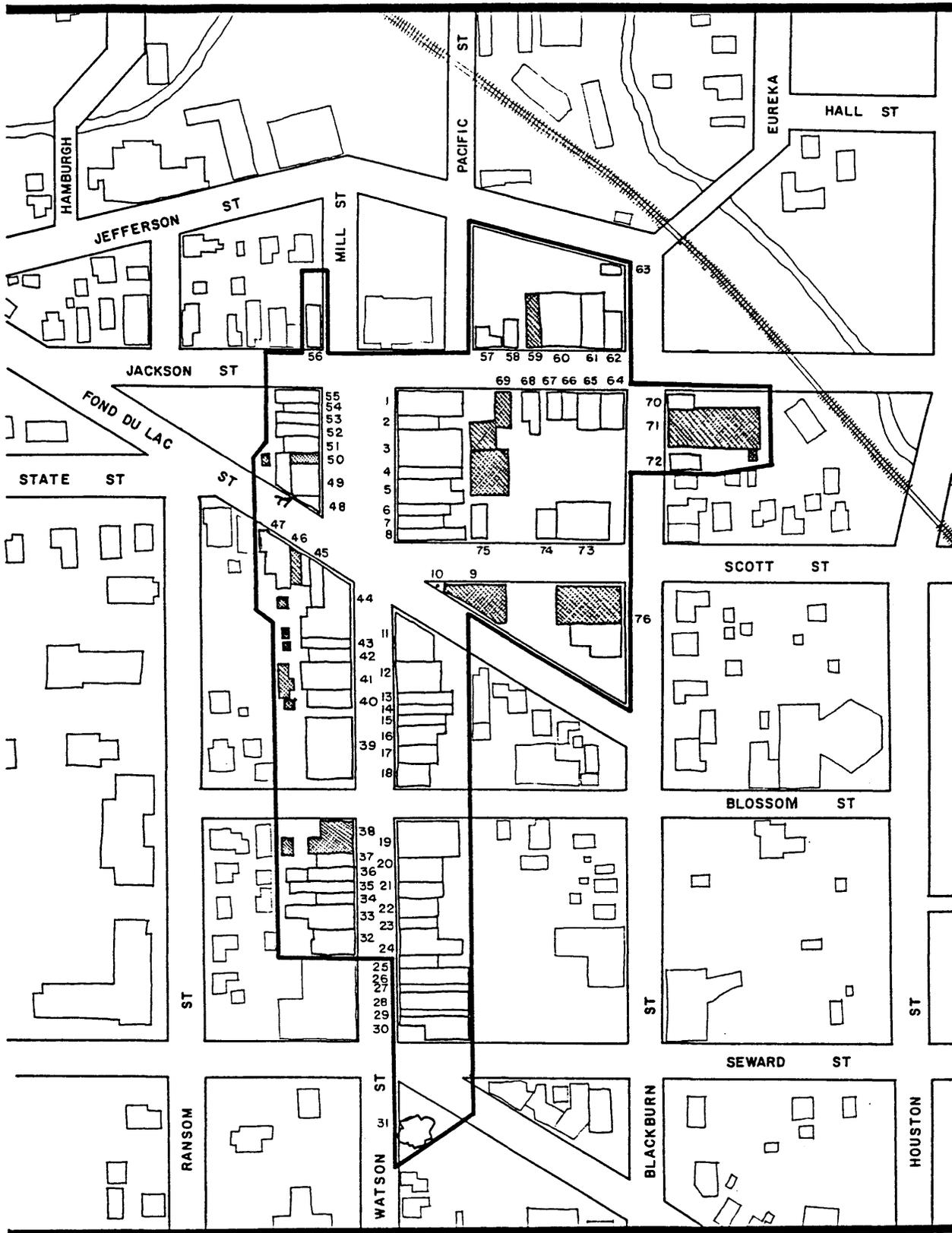
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WATSON STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT, Ripon, Fond du Lac County, WI. Photos by C. Cartwright, April, 1989. Negatives at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Views:

- 1 of 17: Map Numbers 1-12 (left to right), view from the southwest.
- 2 of 17: Looking down Scott Street and at Map Number 13, view from the northwest.
- 3 of 17: Looking down W. Fond du Lac St., view from the northwest.
- 4 of 17: Map Numbers 14-26 (left to right), view from the northwest.
- 5 of 17: Map Numbers 27-33 (left to right), view from the southwest.
- 6 of 17: Map Numbers 34-38 (left to right), view from the southwest.
- 7 of 17: Map Number 39 and out of the district, view from the northwest.
- 8 of 17: Map Numbers 40-48 (left to right), Ripon Drugs and Ben Franklin are out of the district, view from the southeast.
- 9 of 17: Map Numbers 49-57 (left to right), view from the northeast.
- 10 of 17: Map Numbers 64-71 (left to right), view from the southeast.
- 11 of 17: Map Number 72 and out of the district, view from the southeast.
- 12 of 17: Map Numbers 73-75 (left to right), view from the southwest.
- 13 of 17: Map Number 78, view from the southwest.
- 14 of 17: Map Numbers 79-84 (left to right), view from the northwest.
- 15 of 17: Map Numbers 85-87 (left to right), view from the northwest.
- 16 of 17: Map Numbers 88-90 (right to left), view from the southwest.
- 17 of 17: Map Number 91, view from the northeast.



# WATSON STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT RIPON, WISCONSIN

## LEGEND

-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  25 MAP NUMBER
-  CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES
-  NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES
-  PHOTO NUMBER AND VIEW


  
 SCALE NORTH
   
 MAY, 1989
   
 REVISED FEBRUARY, 1991

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001396

Date Listed: 9/27/1991

|   |                    |           |
|---|--------------------|-----------|
| <u>Watson Street Commercial Historic District</u> | <u>Fond Du Lac</u> | <u>WI</u> |
| Property Name                                     | County             | State     |

N/A

Multiple Name

-----

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of the Keeper

9/31/01  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Action

-----  
 Amended Items in Nomination:

**Significance:**

The building at *300 Watson Street (Davis Hotel/Hotel LeRoy)* is considered a contributing building within the historic district. [The covered historic exterior, while not original, dates from the period of significance. Thus the building retains integrity sufficient to convey the character of the property during the district's period of significance.]

**Resource Count:**

The resource count is revised to add *one contributing building* and remove *one noncontributing building*.

These revisions made under 36CFR67.5 were confirmed with the WI SHPO.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

## CONTINUATION/AMENDMENT SHEET

Historic Preservation  
Certification ApplicationDavis Hotel, Ripon, Wisconsin

## 6. Statement of significance:

The Watson Street Commercial Historic District in downtown Ripon is one of the best examples of continuous Italianate architecture in Wisconsin. Located on the southwest corner of the Watson and Blossom Street intersection, the Davis Hotel (Mapes House) is possibly the oldest remaining building in the downtown and has tremendous potential to be a quality restoration project. It is believed that the gunite material was placed over the stone facade in the 1930's to hide structural defects. The original window openings are intact and could be easily restored. The window openings are currently covered by aluminum storm windows. In addition, several restoration experts have stated the gunite covering could be removed, but at a substantial expense. Reclassifying the building as a contributing source to the existing historic district would make the project eligible for tax credits and may help justify removing the gunite material.

Historically, the building has a very interesting past. Timothy J. Mapes, son of David Mapes, one of the founders of the City of Ripon, was the original owner and manager of the hotel, called the Mapes House. Perhaps because he was a staunch and somewhat pro Southern Democrat, the hotel was used in 1860 as headquarters for the federal marshals sent to locate and arrest Sherman Booth, a leading Milwaukee abolitionist who was rescued from a Milwaukee jail by fellow abolitionist from the Ripon area. Ownership of the building changed several times in the late 19th Century. In 1918-19, the building was renamed the Hotel Leroy. During this time, the hotel was taken over by Ripon College and used as a women's dormitory and dining hall while the Army occupied several campus residence halls to house a unit of the Student Army Training Corps during World War I. William Davis purchased the building in 1943 from Doctor Bluemshine and renamed it the Davis Hotel. The building was then purchased by Louie Lyons in 1948.

Four sources of information were used, in addition to the first hand account provided by Ray H. Davis, son of William Davis. Sources were: History of Fond du Lac County, 1888 (also known as Butterfield possible author,) information collected from the Pedrich Papers, Pedrich History of Ripon Wisconsin, Samuel M. Pedrich, and History of Ripon College, George H. Miller, Robert P. Ashley.

## CONTINUATION/AMENDMENT SHEET

Historic Preservation  
Certification ApplicationDavis Hotel, Ripon, Wisconsin

## 5. Description of physical appearance:

Located in the three hundred block of the Watson Street Commercial Historic District (number 48 on the map), the Davis Hotel (Mapes House) was originally constructed in 1853 as a three story, field stone, square shaped building with a large cupola positioned on the roof. A sketch is the only documentation of its original appearance. In the late 19th Century, a fourth floor was added along with a decorative copula. The new addition was a mansard roof construction with dormers for windows. Large decorative wood balconies overlooking Watson Street were added to the second and third floors around this same time. The fourth floor was destroyed by fire in the early 1900's, as flames and ashes from the Pedrich Opera House, located at 230 Watson Street, were blown onto the roof of the hotel. The buildings exterior remained relatively unchanged until the 1930's when its facade was covered with gunite. A two story addition on the west side of the building was constructed in the mid 1940's. The second and third floor balconies were removed in the 1960's.

The appearance of the buildings interior is somewhat of a mystery as no photographs or original floor plans have been found. Ray Davis, the son of previous owner William Davis, stated that there was an open space in the middle of the hotel which extended to the roof. Balconies with decorative wooden railings surrounded this "court yard." Entrances to the hotel rooms were adjacent to the balconies. Ray Davis also stated that at the time his father purchased the building in 1943, the bar was on the north side of the building, a lobby in the middle, and a dining room on the north side. During the 1960's, the bar was moved to the south side of the building, with the north side being converted into living quarters for the owners of the business. Since that time, the north side space has been used for a barber shop, travel business, environmental consultant, and is currently vacant. The second and third floors appear to be in their original state, with the exception of the center of the building. As stated previously, there was a "court yard" in the middle of the building. Currently, the opening is framed in on both the second and third floors, providing storage space and rest rooms. Although the cupula has long since been removed, the large skylight still remains and is relatively well intact.

RECEIVED

HISTORIC PRESERVATION CERTIFICATION APPLICATION  
PART 1 — EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

OCT 16 1995

Div Hist Pres  
NPS Office Use Only

Project No:  
WI-96-00002(13)

NPS Office Use Only

NRIS No: 91001396

Instructions: Read the instructions carefully before completing application. No certification will be made unless a completed application form has been received. Type or print clearly in black ink. If additional space is needed, use continuation sheets or attach blank sheets.

1. Name of property: Davis Hotel

Address of property: Street 300 Watson Street

City Ripon County Fond du Lac State WI Zip 54971

Name of historic district: WATSON STREET COMMERCIAL HD

National Register district  certified state or local district  potential historic district

2. Check nature of request:

- certification that the building contributes to the significance of the above-named historic district (or National Register property) for the purpose of rehabilitation.
- certification that the structure or building and, where appropriate, the land area on which such a structure or building is located contributes to the significance of the above-named historic district for a charitable contribution for conservation purposes.
- certification that the building does not contribute to the significance of the above-named district.
- preliminary determination for individual listing in the National Register.
- preliminary determination that a building located within a potential historic district contributes to the significance of the district.
- preliminary determination that a building outside the period or area of significance contributes to the significance of the district.

3. Project contact:

Name Craig Tebon

Street P.O. Box 305, 301 1/2 Watson Street City Ripon

State Wisconsin Zip 54971 Daytime Telephone Number (414) 748-7466

4. Owner:

I hereby attest that the information I have provided is, to the best of my knowledge, correct, and that I own the property described above. I understand that falsification of factual representations in this application is subject to criminal sanctions of up to \$10,000 in fines or imprisonment for up to five years pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Name Jim Lahr Signature [Signature] Date 10-13-95

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security or Taxpayer Identification Number 391-46-0422

Street 6135 O'Connell Street City Hartford

State Wisconsin Zip 53027 Daytime Telephone Number (414) 966-4936

NPS Office Use Only

The National Park Service has reviewed the "Historic Preservation Certification Application — Part 1" for the above-named property and hereby determines that the property:

- contributes to the significance of the above-named district (or National Register property) and is a "certified historic structure" for the purpose of rehabilitation.
- contributes to the significance of the above-named district and is a "certified historic structure" for a charitable contribution for conservation purposes in accordance with the Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980.
- does not contribute to the significance of the above-named district.

Preliminary Determinations:

- appears to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely be listed in the National Register of Historic Places if nominated by the State Historic Preservation Officer according to the procedures set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
- does not appear to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely not be listed in the National Register.
- appears to contribute to the significance of a potential historic district, which will likely be listed in the National Register of Historic Places if nominated by the State Historic Preservation Officer.
- appears to contribute to the significance of a registered historic district but is outside the period or area of significance as documented in the National Register nomination or district documentation on file with the NPS.
- does not appear to qualify as a certified historic structure.

Date 11/6/95 National Park Service Authorized Signature [Signature]

National Park Service Office/Telephone No: H.P.S. 202-343-9578

See Attachments

NUMBER

3

Describe and evaluate the physical characteristics of the property, its integrity, and its significance within the context of the historic district (or individually for preliminary determinations of individual listings).

THIS THREE-STORY HOTEL BLOCK IS LOCATED ON THE CORNER OF WATSON AND BLOSSOM STREETS IN DOWNTOWN RIPON. THE FACADE IS GUNITE-COVERED BRICK, RUSTICATED TO LOOK LIKE STONE. PIERS ARE LOCATED AT THE BUILDING CORNERS, AS WELL AS NEAR THE CENTER OF THE FACADE; THE LATTER FLANK A THREE-STORY ENTRANCE BAY. THIS BAY HAS BEEN ENCLOSED IN GLASS, BUT THE ORIGINAL COLUMNS ARE INTACT WITHIN. BASED ON HISTORIC SKETCHES, A SQUARE CUPOLA USED TO BE LOCATED ON A HIPPED ROOF; THE BUILDING IN ITS PRESENT FORM IS FLAT, WITH A CORNICE AND PARAPET. ON THE GROUND FLOOR, A LARGE DISPLAY WINDOW REPLACED TWO SINGLE WINDOWS. ALTHOUGH CHANGED, THE ALTERATIONS TO THIS BUILDING ARE OLD ENOUGH TO BE CONSIDERED HISTORIC THEMSELVES.

ON THE INTERIOR, FEW HISTORIC ELEMENTS SURVIVE. A STAIRWAY WITH TURNED POSTS IS LOCATED IN THE LOBBY--THIS IS PROBABLY ORIGINAL. ALSO IN THIS ROOM ARE HISTORIC PRESSED TIN CEILINGS, CORNICE MOLDINGS, AND TRANSOMED DOOR SURROUNDS. ACCORDING TO THE CERTIFICATION APPLICATION, MUCH OF THE SECOND AND THIRD FLOORS IS INTACT.

THIS BUILDING IS SIGNIFICANT UNDER CRITERION A, FOR HISTORY.

NUMBER

4

State Official Recommendation:

- This application for the above-named property has been reviewed by JOE DEROSE, a professionally qualified architect, architectural historian, or historian on my staff.
- The property is included within the boundaries of a registered historic district, contributes to the significance of the district, and is a "certified historic structure" for the purpose of rehabilitation.
- The property is included within the boundaries of a registered historic district, contributes to the significance of the district, and is a "certified historic structure" for a charitable contribution for conservation purposes in accordance with the Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980.
- The property does not contribute to the significance of the above-named district.
- The property appears to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely be nominated.
- The property does not appear to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will not be nominated.
- The property appears to contribute to the significance of a:
  - potential historic district which appears to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely be nominated.
  - registered historic district but is outside the period(s) or areas of significance as documented in the National Register nomination or district documentation on file with the NPS. Revised nomination or district documentation is enclosed.
- The property should be denied a preliminary determination that it could qualify as a certified historic structure.
- Insufficient documentation has been provided to evaluate the structure.

Detailed NPS review recommended  Precedent-setting case  Forwarded without recommendation

10/30/95

Date

  
State Official Signature

See attachments:

NPS Comments:

Date

NPS Reviewer

REVIEW SHEET

Historic Preservation Certification Application—Significance

Property: DAVIS HOTEL Project No.: WI-960002 (13)

Historic District: Watson Street Commercial Historic District

10/16/95 date initial application received by State \_\_\_\_\_ date(s) additional information requested by State

10/16/95 date complete information received by State \_\_\_\_\_

11/2/95 date of this transmittal to NPS \_\_\_\_\_

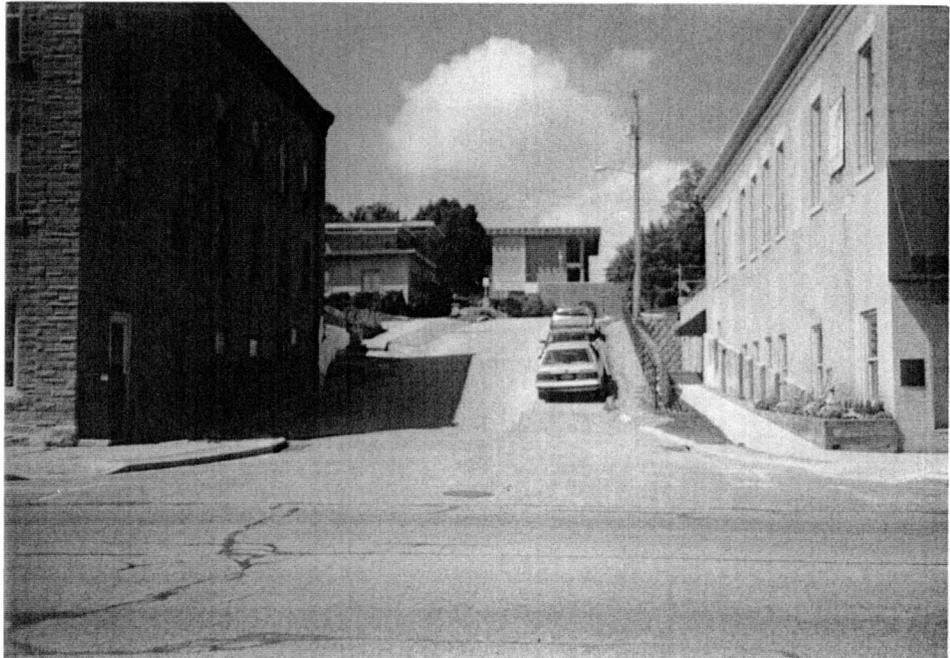
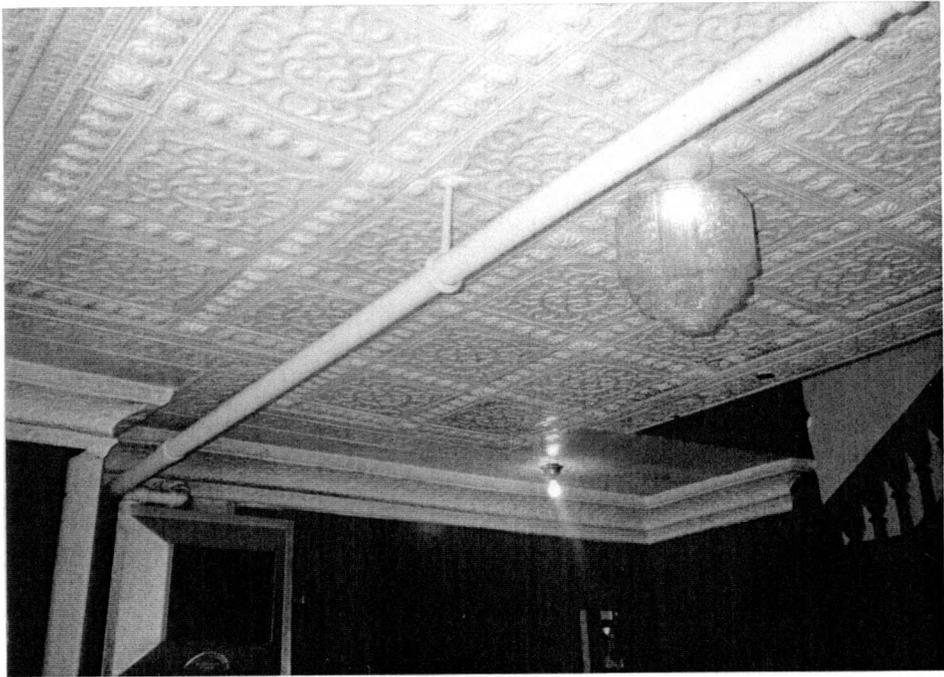
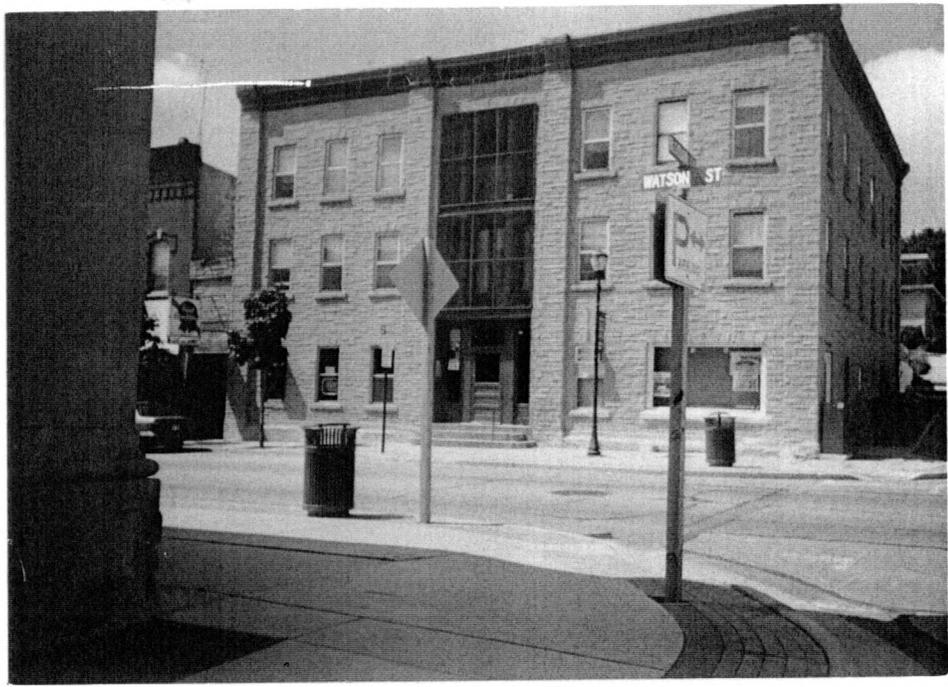
Inspection of property by State staff?  no  yes date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

There is adequate documentation enclosed to evaluate the historic character and integrity of this property.  
 There is insufficient documentation to evaluate the property adequately. The application is missing the following items:

Reasonable efforts have been made to obtain this information. Copies of the information requests are enclosed.

|        |   |   |
|--------|---|---|
| NUMBER | This property involves:                                       |   |
| 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> Extensive loss of historic fabric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Obscured or covered elevation(s)                     |
|        | <input type="checkbox"/> Substantial alterations over time    | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved property                                       |
|        | <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary determination of listing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State recommendation inconsistent with NR |
|        | <input type="checkbox"/> for district                         | documentation   |
|        | <input type="checkbox"/> for individual property              | <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation different from the applicant's        |
|        | <input type="checkbox"/> Significance less than 50 years old  | request   |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| NUMBER | Complete item(s) below as appropriate.  |
| 2      | <p>(1) The documentation on file with the National Register cites the period(s) of significance of this historic district as <u>1850-1939</u></p> <p>(2) The property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> contributes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> does not contribute to the historic significance of this registered historic district in:<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> location <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> design <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> setting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> materials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> workmanship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> feeling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> association<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Property is mentioned in the NR or State or local district documentation in Section <u>7</u>, page <u>31</u>.</p> <p>(3) For properties less than 50 years old:<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> the historical merits of the district (the periods and areas of significance) are documented in the National Register form or district documentation on file as less than 50 years old, justifying the certification of this property's contribution.<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> the exceptional historical or architectural significance of this property as described in the National Register form or district documentation on file justifies its certification as contributing.<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> there is insufficient justification to consider this property as contributing to the district for its individual exceptional architectural or historical significance or the significance of the district does not extend to the last 50 years.</p> <p>(4) For preliminary determinations:<br/> A. The status of the nomination for the property/historic district:<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination has already been submitted to State review board, and nomination will be forwarded to the NPS within _____ months. (Draft nomination is enclosed.)<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination was submitted to the NPS on _____.<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination will be submitted to the State review board within twelve months.<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination process likely will be completed within thirty months.<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Other, explain: _____</p> <p>B. Evaluation of the property:<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Property is individually eligible and meets National Register Criteria for Evaluation<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Property is located within a potential registered district that meets National Register<br/> Criteria for Evaluation: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D<br/> Criteria Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G</p> <p>(5) The property is located in a registered district, is outside the period(s) or area(s) of significance as documented in the NR form and:<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> appears to contribute to the expanded significance of the district. Enclosed is the revised nomination documentation.<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> does not appear to contribute to the period(s) or area(s) of significance of the district.</p> |



Davis Hotel, front facade looking west  
300 Watson Street  
Ripon, Wisconsin

6/95

Davis Hotel, ceiling in front lobby area  
300 Watson Street  
Ripon, Wisconsin

6/95

Davis Hotel, Blossom Street looking west  
300 Watson Street  
Ripon, Wisconsin

6/95