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OMB No. 10024-0018

NPS Form 10-900
(Expires 5/31/2012)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

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

1. Name of Property

historic name **Whiting, Frank, Boathouse**
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	98 Fifth Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Neenah	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Winnebago	code 139
			zip code 54956

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _ nationally _ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer – Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse

Winnebago

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
☒ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ removed from the National
Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Edouard H. Beall

4-30-11

[Signature]

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ structure
☐ site
☐ object

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

contributing	noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
1	objects
2	0 total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources
previously listed in the National Register**

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/
Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation CONCRETE

walls STUCCO

roof SLATE

other STONE

Narrative Description

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

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Section 7 Page 1

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

The Frank Whiting Boathouse is situated on less than an acre of land on the south side of Doty Island, a little more than a mile from the Neenah central business district, at the southwest corner of Fifth and Clark streets. Immediately adjacent to Doty Park to the east, the boathouse overlooks the headwaters of the Lower Fox River and the Neenah yacht basin. Frank Whiting built the boathouse approximately three blocks from his house as a place to house his boats and as an off-site entertainment locale. Also complementing the site is a landscape feature that is counted as contributing element.

The structure is a Period Revival boathouse and party room displaying elements of the Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean Revival styles. The extant building was constructed in three phases. The boathouse portion, originally constructed in 1932¹ and enlarged to two stories in 1946², abuts the water and has a rectangular plan configuration with poured concrete foundations, stucco walls, and a mansard roof shingled in slate. The attached one-story party room, added to the north in 1939³, is T-formation with similar foundations and wall treatments. The roof form is flat over the projecting pavilion adjacent to the boathouse, with a low pitched side gable and membrane roof over the party room. The roof planes of the boathouse are broken by a series of dormers: three segmental arch dormers on the east or main elevation, one shed dormer on the north elevation, and one flat dormer on the west elevation. The east elevation also includes a second floor entry through an enclosed, flat roof projection similar to the west dormer. The roofline over the party room is broken by two chimneys: a predominant projecting eave wall chimney on the east elevation, and a smaller integral eave wall chimney on the west elevation.

The principal entry is located on the east or main elevation as part of the raised projecting pavilion situated between the boathouse and the party room. The doorway is accessed by three steps and a round-arched integral stoop, and it is fitted with a door lighted by nine panes of glass and constructed of heavy tongue-and-groove vertical members with decorative wrought iron strapwork. A secondary service entry is also located on the east elevation of the boathouse and is fitted with a similar tongue-and-groove door with decorative wrought iron strapwork. Additional first floor service entries are located on the west and north elevations of the party room. The west entry door is flush metal, and the north entry is a contemporary glass and metal door with imitation muntins that was installed to provide handicapped access within the opening of a window. The east elevation second floor entry, fitted with a contemporary paneled door, is accessed by a flight of 20 wooden steps with a wrought iron railing just south of the east first floor service entry.

In addition to these pedestrian entryways, the boathouse has three vehicular entries serving the primary purpose of the boathouse. A single overhead paneled garage door with diamond-paned leaded glass lights is located on the east facade between the main entry and the east service entry. Two additional

¹ 1932 Neenah Tax Roll, p. 105.

² Neenah building permit records, 1946.

³ Neenah building permit records, 1939.

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Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
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overhead doors are located on the south or shoreline elevation. Both contemporary and constructed of metal, the west door is approximately 15 feet high and the east door approximately 10 feet high.

Like the pedestrian and vehicular entryways, the fenestration of the boathouse and the party room is primarily functional, providing light to the work and reception areas as needed. In the boathouse portion of the building, the windows provide light to the boat slips and consist of multipaned metal casement and casement groupings on the first floor. The first of these, on the east elevation immediately south of the east service door and partially blocked by the exterior staircase, is a grouping of two eight-paned casements on either side of an eight-paned central light. Continuing southward are two casement windows of eight panes each, followed by two larger groupings each with two eight-paned casements on either side of a 16-paned central light. On the west elevation are six casements. The first, just south of the northwest corner of the boathouse, is comprised of two eight-paned casements, identical to those located on the east facade. This is followed by two more identical windows, then followed by a grouping of two eight-paned casements on either side of an eight-paned central light. Two more casement windows, following the arrangement of the first three, are located south of the larger grouping.

On the second floor of the boathouse, the fenestration is located in the dormers and comprised of double-hung sash windows. The east and north windows light the second floor apartment over the smaller slip, while the west dormers light the larger boathouse slip. On the east facade the dormer windows are double-hung, single pane replacement units. A single window is located in the dormer just south of the northeast corner of the boathouse, followed by a two window grouping. A second two-window grouping is located just south of the second floor entry. On the north facade the shed dormer incorporates a two-window grouping just west of the northeast corner, followed by two single windows, all of which are fitted with six-over-six double-hung sash. The dormer on the west facade is comprised of three two-window groupings, all with six-over-six double-hung sash.

Originally the windows of the party room portion of the structure were metal casements similar to those on the first floor of the boathouse, but these have been replaced by glass and metal contemporary window units with simulated muntins similar to the historic casement pattern. The window openings are nevertheless unaltered and include two dominant window openings on either side of the east eave wall chimney that provide light to the main party room. On the north elevation one dominant window serves the same purpose near the northwest corner, and one smaller unit near the northwest corner lights a service area off the party room. A second dominant opening serving the party room was converted to a grade level handicapped entry. On the west elevation four window openings similar to the smaller north elevation window light the kitchen, bar and two service areas off the main party room, with the two service area windows enclosed with stucco for security reasons.

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Along with these principal elements are numerous features that define the character of the Spanish / Mediterranean influenced revival style. Chief among these is the rough stucco wall finish, the massive wood beams over windows and doors, the wrought iron strapwork on doors and stair railings, and the stone quoins and matching stonework around windows and doors. Of particular note is the stepped stucco chimney with its molded brick ogee chimney pot. Equally impressive are the number and quality of decorative nautical features. These include stone rowboat planters flanking the front entry steps, the cast iron screen door with a replica of Whiting's yacht in the kickplate, and the large scale maritime lanterns flanking the entry.

Interior features are equally impressive. Leading from the principal entry is a vestibule and hall paneled in large-scale tongue-and-groove paneling and a tooled copper ceiling light fixture. This area leads down two steps to the principal reception area, paneled in comparable materials and trimmed with nautical themes. Covering the massive stone fireplace is a wrought iron screen with silhouette sailboats. Oversize wrought iron fireplace tools hang nearby. Above these hangs a square-rigger cut out of painted metal. Overhead, two steering wheel and ship lantern chandeliers hang from the beamed ceiling, as do four massive oars, a motif repeated in the curtain rods above each window that were originally hung with fishing nets. The steering wheel motif is repeated in the wooden grill covering the original sound system. Opening off the main room adjacent to the boathouse is the bar and grill area, outfitted with a charcoal grill, red and green ship lanterns, a brass rail at the bar, and the name of Whiting's boat, the Nauti-gal, in neon. Over the bar is the stern of a rowboat also emblazoned with the name, Nauti-gal. A full kitchen, restrooms, and storage areas are located immediately north of the bar and grill along the structure's west elevation.

Contemporary features of historical note are the four lighted wall boxes fitted with the stained glass panels salvaged when the original casement windows were removed. These feature hand-painted images of sailing, power boating, and even one of Frank Whiting in a river fishing. Also noteworthy are the collection of photographs and other memorabilia that document the boathouse at various points in its history, including roguish photographs of Whiting and of his third wife, Broadway ingénue Merle Stevens, who is reputed to be the namesake of Whiting's boat.

The interior of the boathouse on the first floor similarly still retains two slips for Whiting's boats, along with the winches, straps and motors necessary for lifting them out of the water during the winter. The larger of the two is located along the western elevation and is two stories in height. A portion of the area, however, recently was walled off in white metal to provide secure operational space for the U.S. Coast Guard, which has taken over the search and rescue role previously provided by the City of Neenah to Lake Winnebago boaters since the 1950s. In addition to these areas, an apartment is located over the smaller eastern slip. Finished in plaster and simple wood trim, the areas include a bathroom and former kitchen at the northern end, followed by a combination living and dining room, and then a bedroom. The bedroom has access to a narrow catwalk over the two-story slip, and the combination

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living and dining room has two and three window grouping with six-over-one double-hung sash overlooking the two-story slip. The exterior stairway leading up to the apartment to the bedroom and living area at one time also connected up to the roof, which in its heyday was outfitted with a screened pavilion, decorative lighting, and a dance floor.

Complementing these structural features are several important landscape elements, the largest of which is the six-foot wrought iron fencing, stone piers, and portions of the gates that were the last addition Whiting made to the property. These features are complemented by the flagstoned dock and two remaining cast concrete boulevard light poles that flank the boat slip entries that at one time lined the shore and lighted the rooftop dance floor. Because of its scale, the wrought iron fence with posts, constructed in 1946, is counted as a contributing element to the property.

Although subject to several additions and changes over the years, the Whiting Boathouse retains an extraordinary degree of historic and architectural integrity with most of its original fabric still intact. Through this remarkable condition, its association with Neenah's extraordinary industrial wealth and history of recreational boating, and its notable continuous use for its intended purpose, the Frank Whiting Boathouse exemplifies a significant period of growth and development in the city's history.

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
Name of Property

Winnebago
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Social History

Period of Significance

1932-1952

Significant Dates

1932
1939
1946

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Messmer, Robert A.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
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The Frank Whiting Boathouse was constructed in three phases: 1932, 1939 and 1946. It is of local architectural significance under Criterion C as an outstanding example of 1930s Period Revival design and as an example of a two story boathouse used both for the storage of boats and for entertainment purposes. It is also significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of social history as it reflects the lifeway of the Whitings' social/economic circle. The period of significance begins in 1932 with the construction of the boathouse and continues to Frank Whiting's death in 1952 when the boathouse and his boat, the "Nauti-gal," were transferred to the city of Neenah. The 2004 update to the intensive survey of Neenah identified the Whiting Boathouse as one of the properties in the city potentially eligible for listing in the National Register for its architectural merit.⁴

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The settlement that became Neenah began in 1835 as an industrial and agricultural mission for the Menominee Indians. Its early white settlement, attracted by the waterpower of the Fox River, started a few years later. Developing in the 1850s as an important flour-milling center in Wisconsin, Neenah's industrial economy evolved into a nationally prominent center for paper milling in the late nineteenth century, dominated by Kimberly-Clark Corp. After the turn of the century, the local paper industry turned from bulk papers to consumer products, a move that resulted in continued industrial expansion during the twentieth century. Kimberly-Clark led the way in this movement through the development of Cellucotton products, while others like Gilbert and Whiting paper companies continued to provide important industrial commodities such as book and print grade papers.

The economic development of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also produced a large number of substantial local fortunes, most of which were used to build notable homes on East Wisconsin Avenue. Along with this development, several of Menasha's leading industrial figures built homes on East Forest Avenue on Doty Island, including homes of various members of the Smith, Gilbert and Whiting families. The phenomenon, prompted in part by the high level of municipal debt in Menasha, led to Neenah's reputation as a city of mill owners with one of the highest per capita incomes in the nation.

Attracted by the water as source of industrial power, influential families living on either side of the Fox River also drew upon the water as a ready source of recreation. Yacht racing on Lake Winnebago began around 1859, with organization of the Neenah Yacht Club following in 1864. A second generation of enthusiasts chartered the Nodaway Yacht Club in 1893, which merged with the older club in 1905.⁵ Revitalized by the consolidation, boat races on the lake became a major local attraction

⁴ Heritage Research, Ltd. Historical/ Architectural Resources Survey: 2004 Addendum. City of Neenah, Winnebago County (Neenah: 2004).

⁵ James C. Kimberly, History of the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club (Neenah: Printed privately, 1957), p. 87.

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during the summer months, drawing excursion steamers from Appleton and Oshkosh. As early as 1903, the Inland Lakes Yachting Association, organizer of competitive races throughout the Upper Midwest, picked Neenah and Lake Winnebago as the home of one of their annual regattas, an event that grew to become one of the major Fox Valley sporting and social events of the early twentieth century.

Along with competitive racing, Neenah's industrial wealth also enabled area families to acquire large steam-powered yachts. One of the largest of these was the 90-foot "Cambria," launched by flour miller John Stevens in 1894. Other early examples included C. B. Clark's "Theresa," and William Gilbert's "Tia Juana," all of which were dry-docked in Oshkosh during the winter. Another generation of power boat enthusiasts came in the years between the Great Depression and World War II, reaching a peak in 1940 when S. F. Shattuck commissioned the 65-foot "Pilgrim," followed by Frank Whiting's 42-foot "Nauti-gal" in 1942, both constructed by the Burger Boat Company of Manitowoc.⁶ These and other power boats became increasingly popular as local sailing enthusiasts lost the physical stamina demanded of racing.

Throughout this period, the popularity of water recreation resulted in the construction of several private boathouses along both sides of the riverfront. The majority were modest frame structures, such as those constructed in the early twentieth century at the S. F. Shattuck House at 324 E. Wisconsin Ave. and the F. J. Sensenbrenner home at 402 E. Wisconsin Ave. Larger frame facilities built around the same time included the Clark-Wing boathouse at 250 N. Park Ave. (demolished), and the Mowry Smith Senior boathouse at 405 Kittiver Court, the only surviving feature of the larger Smith estate.

Eventually, more architecturally distinguished structures were constructed, including the Colonial Revival boathouse built by Carlton R. Smith at 1205 E. Forest Ave., and the Tudor Period Revival boathouse built for Ernst Mahler at 401 Beaulieu Road. These, however, served only as boat storage and related uses. The exceptions were the Shingle Style boathouse and open air dancing pavilion built by the Kimberly family at 416 E. Wisconsin Ave. in the 1890s (demolished), and the Arts and Crafts Shattuck Park pavilion and bandstand (demolished), constructed under the direction of S. F. Shattuck to open up boating to the general community.

The last, largest and most spectacular of all these later structures was the boathouse Frank B. Whiting constructed over a 14-year period beginning in 1932. Built on riverfront land acquired two years earlier, the two-slip boathouse was constructed primarily to serve Whiting's yachting interests. Although it is not known what style boats were housed there at first, Whiting was an early powerboat enthusiast, co-owning one that raced in the Oshkosh Power Boat Club's Labor Day races as early as

⁶ Interview of F. Brock Whiting.

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1927. A Cub class sailboat, named the "Fran Isabella" for two of his daughters, was also moored there and reputed to be the fastest boat on the lake at the time.⁷

Very early on, however, Whiting's boathouse was adapted to party purposes. A small bar was soon installed inside, and the boat slips were fitted with removable planking to make room for dancing and Whiting's taste for whimsical entertainments. Featured at many of these were Johnson Smith & Co. novelties, such as exploding cigars and books.⁸ Also notable were the numerous nautically-themed parties where guests dressed up as pirates or survivors of a shipwreck. These occasions, many of which were reported in the local papers as social events, eventually became frequent enough that an adjoining set of party rooms were constructed in 1939, complete with a full professional grade bar, grill and soda fountain, along with a lighted rooftop piazza over the boathouse for al fresco dancing.

A third major addition to the facilities came in 1946 when a complete second floor was added to the boathouse, along with wrought iron fencing and stone piers around the perimeter of the property. The additional height to the boathouse came when Whiting replaced his Burger yacht, the 42-foot 'Nautigal,' with a 57-foot version that year. In this larger and more glamorous incarnation, the boathouse and party room became the site of even more notable parties hosted by Whiting and his third wife, Broadway ingénue Merle Stevens. It was during these years that the Doty Tennis Club was part of the Western Hard-Court Tournament, the precursor of the U.S. Open, and guest lists at boathouse parties included tennis greats Bobby Riggs, Pancho Gonzalez, Frank Parker, and Dorothy Cheney, as well as Stevens' Broadway associates.⁹

Reputed to have cost more than \$100,000 when completed, Whiting gave a one-fifth interest in the property to the city in 1950, with additional shares to be transferred over a five-year period. The plan, however, was cut short when Whiting died of a heart attack in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1952 at age 67.¹⁰ The remaining interest in the boathouse was then transferred to the city, along with the "Nautigal," which at Whiting's direction was to serve as a police and rescue boat serving all of Lake Winnebago. At the time, the gift was the largest single donation to the city. It continues to be used by the U.S. Coast Guard, fulfilling Whiting's wishes for the property.

A 1908 graduate of Princeton University, Frank Brockway Whiting (1885-1952) joined his adoptive father at the George Whiting Paper Co. in Menasha, where for 20 years he functioned as his father's right hand man. Made an officer and shareholder when the company reorganized in 1911, Whiting was put in charge of the rapidly expanding Wisconsin River operations and was responsible for the

⁷ Interview of F. Brock Whiting.

⁸ Interview with Bette Falvey Hill.

⁹ Interview with Bette Falvey Hill.

¹⁰ *Twin Cities News-Record*, March 31, 1952, page 1 column 1.

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Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
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company's groundbreaking initiative of employee profit sharing. Assuming the presidency following his father's death in 1930, Whiting's management kept the mills solvent and at full employment throughout the Great Depression.

In a similar vein, Whiting took an avid interest in the local development of commercial aviation, constructing the Whiting Air Field in Menasha, establishing a flight school, and promoting charter air service with Milwaukee and Chicago. An equally avid yachtsman and tennis player, Whiting participated and contributed generously to the local advancement of both sports. These interests, along with three marriages, a private menagerie of Wisconsin fauna, and the lavish entertainments at his Doty Island boathouse, gave Whiting the reputation of being a millionaire playboy.

ARCHITECTURE (Criterion C)

While usually perceived of as a resource of resorts and summer homes, boathouses were a fairly common feature of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Neenah homes along the shorelines of the Fox River and Lake Winnebago. The more modest examples were likely constructed by local builders and carpenters to house a single boat in a vernacular style building, similar to clapboard or shingle garages. A smaller number were more elaborate, architect-designed structures with multiple slips and incorporating other uses than boat storage. Whatever their architectural merits, the interior spaces were designed to house one or more boats, accessed by wood decking with mechanical or manual hoists nearby to lift the boats out of the water during winter storage. If a second floor existed, particularly in the more elaborate boathouses, these areas frequently were used to house living quarters, entertainment facilities or dance floors, but rarely all three.

Examples of modest single-slip, one story frame structures include the F. J. Sensenbrenner boathouse at 402 E. Wisconsin Avenue, shingled to match the residence. Similar examples of double-slip boathouses combining clapboard and shingles are the S. F. Shattuck boathouse at 324 E. Wisconsin Avenue, the Mowry Smith boathouse at 405 Kittiver Court, and the Clark-Wing boathouse at 250 N. Park Avenue (demolished). Surviving examples of those incorporating other uses are less common, typically more high style, and frequently associated with the work of an architect. The Kimberly boathouse at 416 E. Wisconsin Avenue (demolished) was an 1890s Shingle Style structure with a second floor open air dancing pavilion, attributed to Oshkosh architect William Waters. Another example is the single-slip Ernst Mahler boathouse at 401 Beaulieu Road, constructed with second floor living quarters in the Tudor Period Revival Style, believed to be the work of Childs and Smith of Chicago, architects of the adjacent Mahler residence.

More lavish and high style than any of these is the Frank Whiting Boathouse, distinguished by its lavish appointments and its incorporation of party rooms, living quarters, and originally having a

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rooftop dancing pavilion. Constructed in three distinct phases, the boathouse nevertheless presents a uniform design that incorporates the character defining features of Mediterranean and Spanish Colonial Period Revival styles as described in Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. These include flat, stuccoed wall surfaces, heavy round arches, classical motifs, wrought iron ornamentation, and tile roofs, as well as decorative features and elements borrowed from related period revival styles. The looseness of the historic stylistic references is common in Period Revival style designs of the 1930s.

Consistently faced in stucco, the Whiting Boathouse incorporates a characteristic heavy round arch over the entry door, classically inspired stone quoins, and wrought iron ornamentation on the entryway and stairs to the second floor. Combined with these are the heavy beamed lintels and the stepped chimney with molded brick stacks, features also found in other period revival styles. Equally distinctive is the slate shingled mansard roof, which taken in context with the boulevard lighting that remains and once lighted the rooftop dance pavilion, provides the design with a references to the northern Mediterranean and the French Riviera.

Designed by Milwaukee architect Robert Messmer and constructed by Fluor Brothers of Oshkosh, the boathouse is a wealth of highly decorative features that evoke the lavish quality of the construction.¹¹ These cluster around the main entrance to the party rooms and include the decorative cast concrete rowboats flanking the steps, the cast iron screen door that includes a replica of Whiting's yacht, and the large-scale maritime lanterns that flank the entryway. The quality of these features is repeated inside with paneling, oars employed as curtain rods, and a bar and charcoal grill with neon sign "Nautical" in reference to both Whiting's yacht and his wife. Also extant but no longer in place is the fisherman's netting that was used as window treatments and the stained glass panels that once decorated the now replaced party room windows. Unifying the structure with the surroundings is the 6-foot iron fencing and stone and remaining gates, as well as the pines planted around the entry way and the poured concrete boulevard lights that remain along the waterfront.

The Whiting Boathouse stands out from all other privately constructed boating facilities, being both larger and grander than the more utilitarian frame structures built at other locations on Doty Island or across the river. The closest comparison would be the Tudor Period Revival boathouse built by Ernst Mahler, or the Colonial Revival boathouse built by Carlton Smith, but in both of these cases the boathouses do not come close in size and do not include elaborate party rooms and living quarters. In a broader architectural context, the Whiting Boathouse is of equivalent architectural significance as many of Neenah's more prominent Period Revival mansions, being distinguished as the only structure in the city employing revival design elements in a way that evokes the cosmopolitan and exuberant luxury of the French Riviera.

¹¹ Blueprints, Aug. 8, 1931.

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SOCIAL HISTORY (Criterion A)

Properties, such as the Frank Whiting Boathouse, shed light on the life ways of the socio-economic and social circle of the area's wealthiest residents. As noted in the historic background, the Whitings used the boathouse as a location to host lavish parties and entertain visiting sports figures. The construction of the boathouse during the Depression and the addition of the party room recall the culture of elegance and fantasy embraced by the entertainment industry in the 1930s. Constructed and enlarged during a period when many individuals and families were struggling to meet basic needs, the Whiting Boathouse reflects the continued prosperity of a wealthy segment of society. While movie palaces, in both their architecture and the movies that they featured, provided escapism and visual luxury for the masses, the Whiting Boathouse reflects this trend on a personal scale and for individual use. The decoration of both the exterior and the interior with elements drawn from nautical themes reinforces the feeling of a private stage set that is meant to transport the visitor and to define the experience. The boathouse also continued the role of Fitzgerald's Jazz Age party place – available alcohol at the built in bar and elaborate parties. It further rejected the perceived Puritanism of the American middle class, as can be seen in the name of Whiting's boat, Nauti-gal, used in the decorations of the party room.

The construction of the boathouse also reflects the local interest in yachting and boats. As noted in the historical background, many of the area's wealthy families acquired large and impressive watercraft that resulted in the establishment of yacht clubs and the popularity of boat racing. The need to house the boats led Neenah's wealthiest families to construct ever larger and more elaborate boathouses. As in the case of the Whiting Boathouse, these buildings not only provided a place to store the yachts, they were also intended as places of recreation and entertainment, some with dance floors, party spaces, and bandstands.

CONCLUSION

The Whiting Boathouse is of local architectural significance under Criterion C as an outstanding example of the Spanish/Mediterranean Period Revival design and under Criterion A in the area of social history as a property reflecting the lifeway of its social group. Outfitted with a bar, grill, soda fountain and rooftop dancing pavilion, the Whiting Boathouse was a key venue in establishing Neenah as a site for the Inland Lakes Yachting Association regattas. The boathouse and its party rooms similarly were used to entertain touring tennis greats when they appeared at Western Hard-Court Tournament matches held at the Doty Tennis Club. It retains its original design, setting, materials, and workmanship, which conveys its architectural significance and use as a boathouse. The party rooms, living quarters and dance pavilion, as well as its numerous and lavish appointments, make it one of the largest and most elaborate boathouses in Neenah, comparable to the city's numerous mansions, and illustrative of the city's industrial wealth during the early twentieth century.

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse

Name of Property

Winnebago

County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property Less than one acre

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

1 16 374120 4893489
 Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

☐ See Continuation Sheet

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter Adams
 organization
 street & number 537 East Wisconsin Avenue
 city or town Neenah

state WI

date 11/30/2009
 telephone 920-722-1422
 zip code 54956

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 1

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

TEXTS

Adams, Peter J. Neenah Historical and Architectural Survey and Nomination Project. Neenah, Wisconsin: City of Neenah, 1982.

Dunwiddie, William E. The Parks of Neenah. Amherst, Wisconsin: Palmer Publications Inc., 1993.

Glaab, Charles N. and Larsen, Lawrence H. Factories in the Valley. Madison, Wisconsin: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1969.

Heritage Research, Ltd. Historical/Architectural Resources Survey: 2004 Addendum. City of Neenah, Winnebago County. Neenah: 2004.

Holmes, Fred L. Wisconsin. Chicago, Illinois: Lewis Publishing Co., 1946.

Lawson, P. V. History of Winnebago County. Chicago Illinois: Cooper & Co., 1908.

Kimberly, James C. History of the Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club. Neenah, Wisconsin: Printed privately, 1957.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985.

Moranz, John. Men of Achievement in Wisconsin. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: John Moranz Association, 1946.

Shattuck, S. F. (ed). History of Neenah. Menasha, Wisconsin: Printed privately, 1958.

Smith, Alice E. Millstone and Saw. Madison, Wisconsin: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1966.

Wyatt, Barbara. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. Madison, Wisconsin: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

OTHER RESOURCES

1932 Neenah Tax Roll, p. 105.

Building permit records, Office of Community Development, City of Neenah.

Interview of Bette Falvey Hill, conducted by Chris Wales-Magners, Oct. 21, 2007.

Interview of F. Brock Whiting, conducted by Chris Wales-Magners, Oct. 21, 2007.

Twin Cities News-Record; March 31, 1952, page 1 column 1.

Whiting Boathouse blueprints, dated Aug. 8, 1931 and June 23, 1939, City of Neenah.

Whiting Boathouse records, Park and Recreation Department, City of Neenah.

Winnebago County Tract indexes, Winnebago County Register of Deeds, Winnebago County Courthouse.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is described as follows: Beginning at the northeast corner of the subject property, immediately adjacent to the public right-of-way at the northeast corner of Fifth and Clark Streets, proceed south 213 feet along the Fifth Street right-of-way to the south channel of the Fox River, then turn west and proceed 85 feet along the shoreline, then turn north and proceed 213 feet to the Clark Street right-of-way, then turn east and proceed 85 feet along the Clark Street right-of-way to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the building and related grounds that were historically associated with the Whiting Boathouse, and that are legally described as Lots 247 and 248 in Block G of the Plat of the Town of the Island.

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse

Winnebago

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

Property Owner

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

name/title

organization

street & number

city or town

state

date

telephone

zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section Photos Page 1

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

**Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin
Photographer: Peter Adams, September 2009
Negatives on file at the Wisconsin Historical Society.**

Photo 1 of 17:
View from the southeast of south or waterfront elevation of boathouse.

Photo 2 of 17:
View from southeast of east elevation of boathouse.

Photo 3 of 17:
View from east, detail of doors on east elevation of boathouse.

Photo 4 of 17:
View from northeast of gates and fencing details

Photo 5 of 17:
View from southeast of east elevation of party room.

Photo 6 of 17:
View from northeast of north elevation of party room.

Photo 7 of 17:
View from northwest of west elevation of party room and boathouse

Photo 8 of 17:
Interior of boathouse, view looking northwest.

Photo 9 of 17:
Interior of boathouse, view looking southwest.

Photo 10 of 17:
Interior of boathouse, view looking west

Photo 11 of 17:
Interior of boathouse, looking southeast

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section Photos Page 2

Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Photo 12 of 17:
Interior of apartment central living area, looking southeast

Photo 13 of 17:
Interior of vestibule, looking west.

Photo 14 of 17:
Interior of party room, looking north.

Photo 15 of 17:
Interior of party room, looking south.

Photo 16 of 17:
Interior of party room, detail of fireplace

Photo 17 of 17:
Interior of party room, detail of bar and grill.

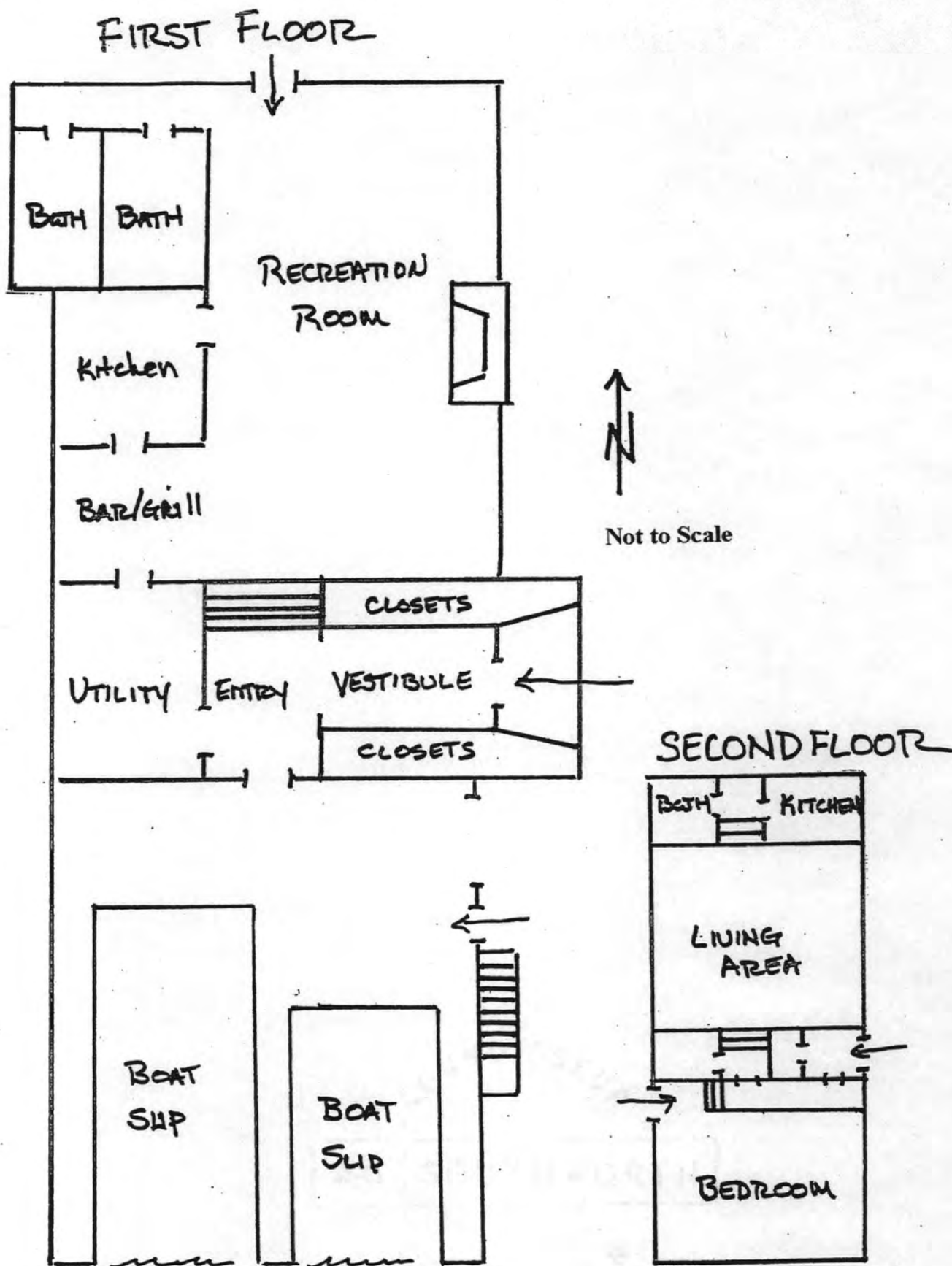


FIGURE #1:
 Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
 Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Whiting, Frank, Boathouse
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Winnebago

DATE RECEIVED: 3/08/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/30/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/14/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/23/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000204

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4.20.11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Whiting, ^{Frank} Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
1 of 17



Whiting, ^{Frank}Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
2 of 17



Whiting, ^{Frank,} Bathhouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
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Whetung, ^{Frank}Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
4 of 17



Frank

Whiting Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
5 of 17



Whiting ^{Frank,} Boat House
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
6 of 17



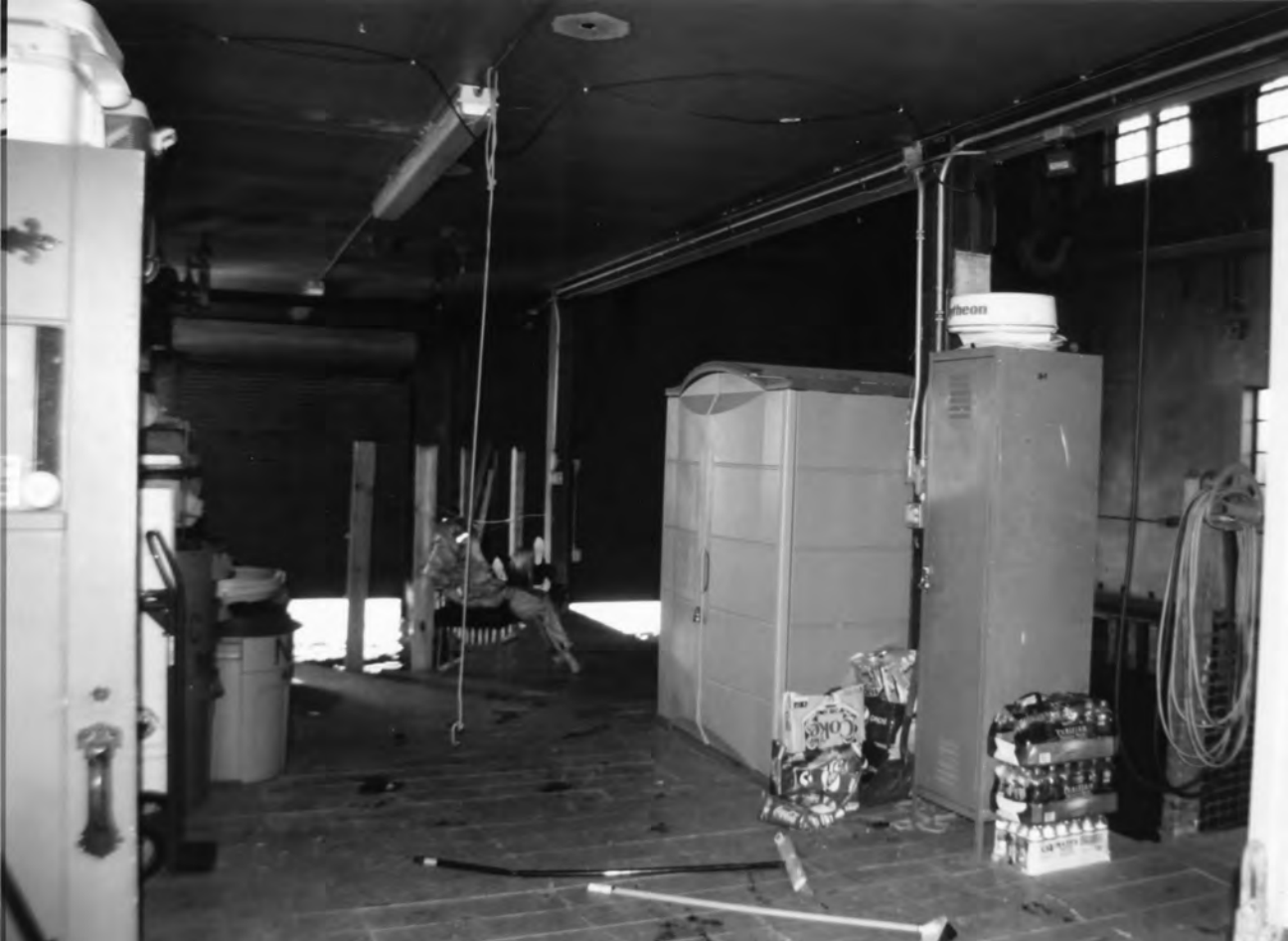
Whiting ^{Frank} Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
7 of 17



Frank,

Whiting, Bathhouse
Nearby, Winnebago Co., WI

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Whiting, ^{Frank} Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
9 of 17



Whiting, ^{Franky} Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
10 of 17



Whiting, ^{Frank} Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
11 of 17



Whiting, ^{Frank} Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
12 of 17



Frank

Whetung, Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI

13 of 17



Frank

Whiting, Boothouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI

14 of 17



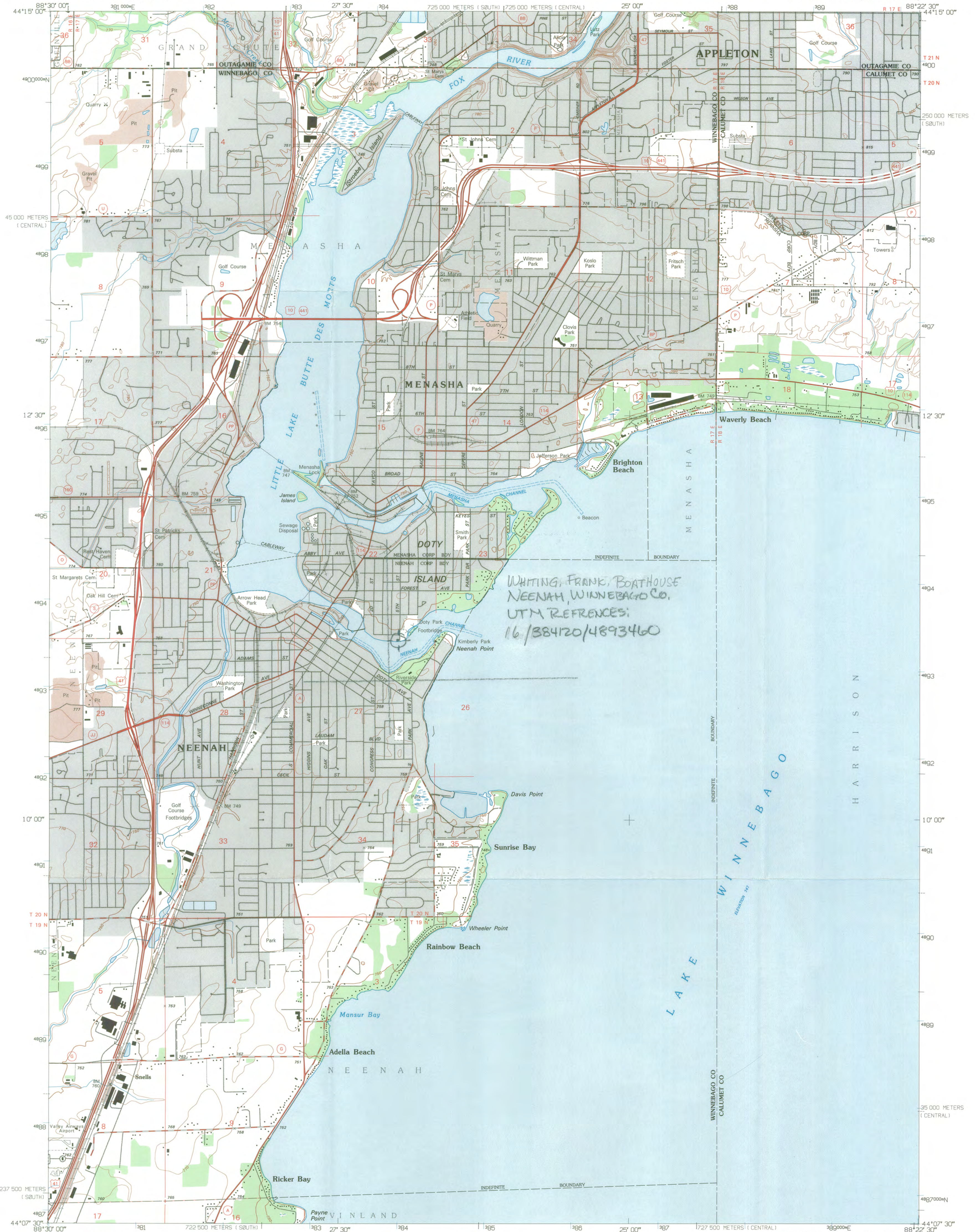
Whiting ^{Frank} Boathouse
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
15 of 17



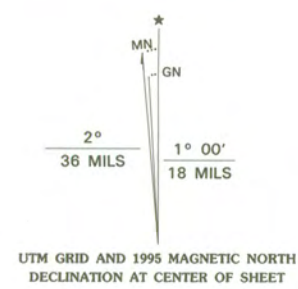
Whiting, ^{FRANK} Boothrose
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI
16 of 17



Whiting, ^{FRANK,} Bathhouse
Neenah, Waunakeeago Co., WI
17 of 17



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Compiled from imagery dated 1953. Revised from imagery dated 1992. PLSS and survey control current as of 1955. Contours and elevations current as of 1953. Map edited 1995.
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and blue 1000-meter ticks: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 16 2500-meter ticks: Wisconsin Coordinate System of 1983 (south and central zones).
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software.
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map.



SCALE 1:24 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

CLARKSON MAP CO.
WISCONSIN
1225 DELAWARE ST.
920-766-3000
KAUKAUNA, WI 54130
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

1 Greenville
2 Appleton
3 Kaukauna
4 Oakshosh NE
5 Sherwood
6 Oakshosh
7 Indian Point
8 Stockbridge

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway Unimproved road
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

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P.O. BOX 218
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920-766-3000
www.clarksonmap.com

NEENAH, WI
44088-B4-TF-024
1992

DMA 3372 III NW-SERIES V861



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



**TO: Keeper
National Register of Historic Places**

FROM: Daina Penkiunas

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

**The following materials are submitted on this 3rd day of March 2011,
for nomination of the Frank Whiting Boathouse to the National Register of Historic
Places:**

1 Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

Multiple Property Nomination form

17 Photograph(s)

1 Original USGS map(s)

1 Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

 Piece(s) of correspondence

Other

COMMENTS:

Please insure that this nomination is reviewed

 This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67

The enclosed owner objection(s) do _____ do not _____ constitute a majority of property owners.

Other: _____