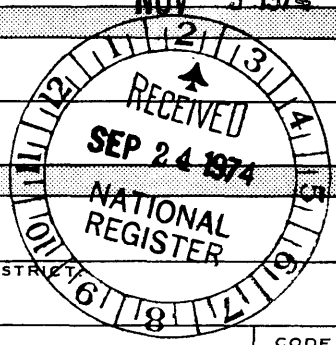


PH0065102

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Indiana
COUNTY: LaPorte
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE NOV 5 1974



**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Michigan City Lighthouse

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Michigan City Lighthouse

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
~~At the head of the Harbor~~, Washington Park

CITY OR TOWN:  
Michigan City

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Third

STATE:  
Indiana

CODE:  
18

COUNTY:  
LaPorte

CODE:  
091

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Civil City of Michigan City-Leased by Michigan City Historical Society, Inc.

STREET AND NUMBER:  
719 Franklin Square

CITY OR TOWN:  
Michigan City

STATE:  
Indiana

CODE:  
18

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
County Clerk's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:  
LaPorte County Court House

CITY OR TOWN:  
LaPorte

STATE:  
Indiana

CODE:  
18

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Indiana Historic Preservation Program and Survey

DATE OF SURVEY:  
 Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

STREET AND NUMBER:  
State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN:  
Indianapolis

STATE:  
Indiana

CODE:  
18

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Indiana

COUNTY: LaPorte

ENTRY NUMBER: NOV 5 1974

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Michigan City Lighthouse was built in 1858 to replace a building and wooden conical tower that had been built in 1837. As constructed in 1858 the lighthouse was twelve inch thick Joliet stone on the first floor, brick on the second, had a medium gable roof with a low octagonal over square light cupola on the north end and a brick chimney on the south. There were no windows on the first floor of the north gable end but the second floor had three voids with two paired four over four double hung sash windows in the center and six over six double hung sash windows on each side. A small square window was centered near the peak. The south gable end was identical except that it had two windows on the first floor and the date "1858" in brickwork in the center.

The main facade had three voids, the first floor has two six over six double hung sash windows with the door in the north void. The second floor had three double arched false openings. All windows had segmental arched radiating brick lintles.

In 1904 the building underwent an extensive remodeling which changed its use from a lighthouse to quarters for the keeper and assistant keeper. The cupola was removed, the fifth order lense was moved to the end of the east pier and the lighthouse was converted into two three-story apartments. The building was extended to the north so the main entry fell in the center of the facade, the grading was changed so that much of the basement on the north was covered and that on the south exposed, the first floor was faced with Milwaukee brick faced in common bond, and the second received sawn shingle siding. The roof retained its pitch but the eaves were boxed, decorated with simple brackets and short returns were added. The main facade became a three part composition with a centered pedimented gable over a very short projection, a single paladian window on the second floor and a large, open semi-circular porch over the main entry. All window frames were altered to conform to the classical mode. A three part paladian construction was used on the facade with only the center section having lights. The gable end windows only had the center section and all had twelve over one sash windows. The interior was also altered considerably in remodeling for the apartments. The net result of these extensive changes was to change a simple mid-nineteenth century building to one with a combination of Neo-Classic and Greek Revival features.

There are two dependent structures, a small (10'x10') oil storage shed of bearing wall brick with a hip roof and a frame gable roofed tool shed about 100 feet from the lighthouse. These are structurally sound but in need of repair.

Recently the Old Michigan City Lighthouse was remodeled for a Museum. At this time the cupola was reconstructed according to the original plans and many of the 1858 interior openings were restored.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1858

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Michigan City Lighthouse is significant as a fine example of lighthouse architecture and as a symbol of the development of transportation on Lake Michigan. When Michigan City was chosen as the northern terminus of the Michigan Road, Indiana's first north-south transportation link, in 1830 the area around the mouth of Trail Creek or Riviere du Chemin, as the French called it, was already being considered as a major transportation center on Lake Michigan. This would be the site of the Michigan City Lighthouse. It was the best location for a harbor in Indiana and had long been a focal point for Indian and French trails in the area. A survey showed the need for some kind of improvements. The water was only a foot deep over the sand bar and Lake Michigan was already known for its sudden and violent storms.

On July 4, 1836 after requests in 1832 and 1834 from the Indiana General Assembly the United States Congress finally appropriated \$20,000 to improve the harbor at Trail Creek. On this same day the first ship entered the creek--pulled over the sand bar with its keep dragging by the townspeople anxious to begin activity as a port.

In 1837 the first lighthouse was built at Michigan City to guide the growing number of ships on the lake. At this time and for many years later ships were unloaded by lighters or at piers built far out into the water. It was not a safe or good port. Congressional appropriations for the continued development of the harbor were irregular and insufficient to make Michigan City a major port on the order of Chicago.

The 1837 lighthouse was replaced by the present building in 1858. This structure served as a lighthouse until 1904 when, during a major harbor improvement, the light was moved to the end of the east pier and the lake front was filled so as to move the lighthouse away from the shoreline. The lighthouse remained as the keepers quarters until 1940.

Miss Harriet E. Colfax, a cousin of Vice President Schuyler Colfax served as the keeper from 1861 to 1904. She was a brave keeper and sailors could be certain that the beacon at Michigan City would be burning. Many remarked that this was the best kept lighthouse in the district.

This lighthouse has a long and close association with the development of navigation and transportation on Lake Michigan. Solidly built, practically designed and attractively remodeled it is Indiana's only example of a lighthouse and is one of the best on the Great Lakes.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Newspaper Michigan City News, Sept. 25, 1935  
 Series of newspaper articles Michigan City News Dispatch Oct. 24-27, 1966

Original Drawings for the Old Lighthouse at Michigan City and those for the remodeling of it  
 Various papers on file with the Michigan City Historical Society from Records Group 26 of the National Archives  
 Rollo B. Olglesbee and Albert Hale, History of Michigan City, 1908

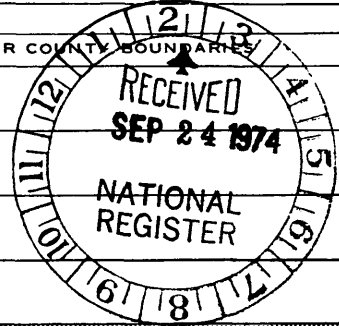
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41° 43' 22"	86° 54' 21"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **one**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. Wm. H. Harris, Curator, Old Lighthouse Museum  
 ORGANIZATION: Sec. Michigan City Historical Society, Inc.  
 Michigan City Historical Society, Inc. Sept. 10, 1974  
 STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 512  
 CITY OR TOWN: Michigan City STATE: Indiana CODE: 18

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**      **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: *Joseph D. Poland*  
 Title: Indiana State Liaison Officer  
Director, Indiana Department  
of Natural Resources  
 Date: September 18, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*Al R. Mortensen*  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/5/74

ATTEST:  
*Charles A. Herring*  
 Acting Keeper of The National Register  
 Date: 11.1.74

HM 16 / 4618780 5078220

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

10/23/90

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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

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Michigan City Lighthouse

LaPorte County, INDIANA

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVAL

*for* Keeper Patrick Ardus 12/7/90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

OCT 23 1990

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Michigan City Lighthouse, Additional Documentation

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The purpose of providing additional documentation for the Michigan City Lighthouse is to account for a number of resources not documented on the original form and to verify the precise boundaries of the nominated property. The lighthouse was listed 11-5-74.

The lighthouse itself has not changed visibly since 1974. It continues to serve as a historical museum. The Michigan City Historical Society, Inc., long term lease holders of the property, are planning to rehabilitate the exterior. The society has received a Bicentennial Lighthouse Fund grant through the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology to provide sewer service to the building. A grant will likely be awarded for the rehabilitation of the building next year. A five year letter of agreement (protective covenant) with the DHPA currently protects the property from adverse effects.

The Oil Shed and Tool Shed were in poor to fair condition in 1974. Both buildings have since been restored and are now in excellent condition.

Several items are on temporary display on the grounds. Beside the main entrance to the lighthouse is a flagpole composed of portions of the rudder of the J.D. MARSHALL shipwreck (the site of which is in Lake Michigan near Michigan City). To the north is a display of old wagons and carts. To the northwest, a historic life saving type boat is on display.

In the 1930s, a commemorative fountain of granite surmounted by a bronze lamp was placed north of the lighthouse.

The parcel of land on which the lighthouse, sheds, and other items stand is the largest intact portion of the original land grant made expressly for the purpose of establishing a U.S. government lighthouse on June 23, 1835. The location of the first lighthouse on the property is indicated on the attached map. A simple stone tablet with the initials

US  
LHE

(United States Light House Establishment) marks the east boundary adjacent to the lighthouse. The tablet marker appears to be quite

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2 Michigan City Lighthouse, Additional Documentation

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old, and it is referenced to in maps dating to 1906.

A resource count for the property can be summarized as follows: There are 3 contributing buildings (lighthouse, oil shed, tool shed); no non-contributing buildings; 1 contributing site (the parcel of land itself, including the original lighthouse site); no non-contributing sites; no structures; 1 contributing object (the USLHE tablet); and 1 non-contributing object (the commemorative fountain). This makes a total of 5 contributing resources and 1 non-contributing resource. The cart display, boat, and flagpole are considered temporary items and are therefore not counted.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1 Michigan City Lighthouse, Additional Documentation

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There is no change in the significance of the Michigan City Lighthouse. The property remains significant under Criteria A and C. Criterion A applies because of the important role the lighthouse played in navigation on Lake Michigan. As remodeled in 1904, the lighthouse is a locally outstanding example of Shingle Style architecture, making it significant under Criterion C. Appropriate areas of significance as now required on National Register forms would be MARITIME HISTORY and ARCHITECTURE.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

OCT 23 1990

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1 Michigan City Lighthouse, Additional Documentation

### Boundary Description

September 25, 1989

Lease Description - Composite Description of Leased Land  
Between the Port Authority of Michigan City  
and the Park Department of Michigan City, IN  
to the Michigan City Historical Society, Inc.

Beginning at a point on the present North line of Lot 6, Land  
Company Water Lots in the City of Michigan City, Indiana that is  
One foot (1.0') West of the North East corner of said Water Lot,  
thence South along the East line of the Old Lighthouse Reservation  
Strip a distance of 244.56 feet to a point that lies 42.50 feet  
North of the South boundary of said Lighthouse Strip, thence North  
(N) 87° 43' West (W) a distance of 100.00 feet, thence North (N)  
33° 43' 25" West (W) a distance of 105.47 feet, thence North (N)  
10° 27' 25" West (W) a distance of 91.02 feet to a point on the  
West line of the Old Lighthouse Strip, -said point lies a distance  
of 223.72 feet North of the South line of said Lighthouse Strip,  
thence North along the West line of said Lighthouse Strip a  
distance of 2.40 feet, thence North (N) 62° 30' 57" East (E) a  
distance of 197.26 feet to a point on the East line of said  
Lighthouse Strip, thence South along said East line a distance of  
30.00 feet to the place of beginning.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

OCT 23 1990

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2 Michigan City Lighthouse, Additional Documentation

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### Boundary Justification

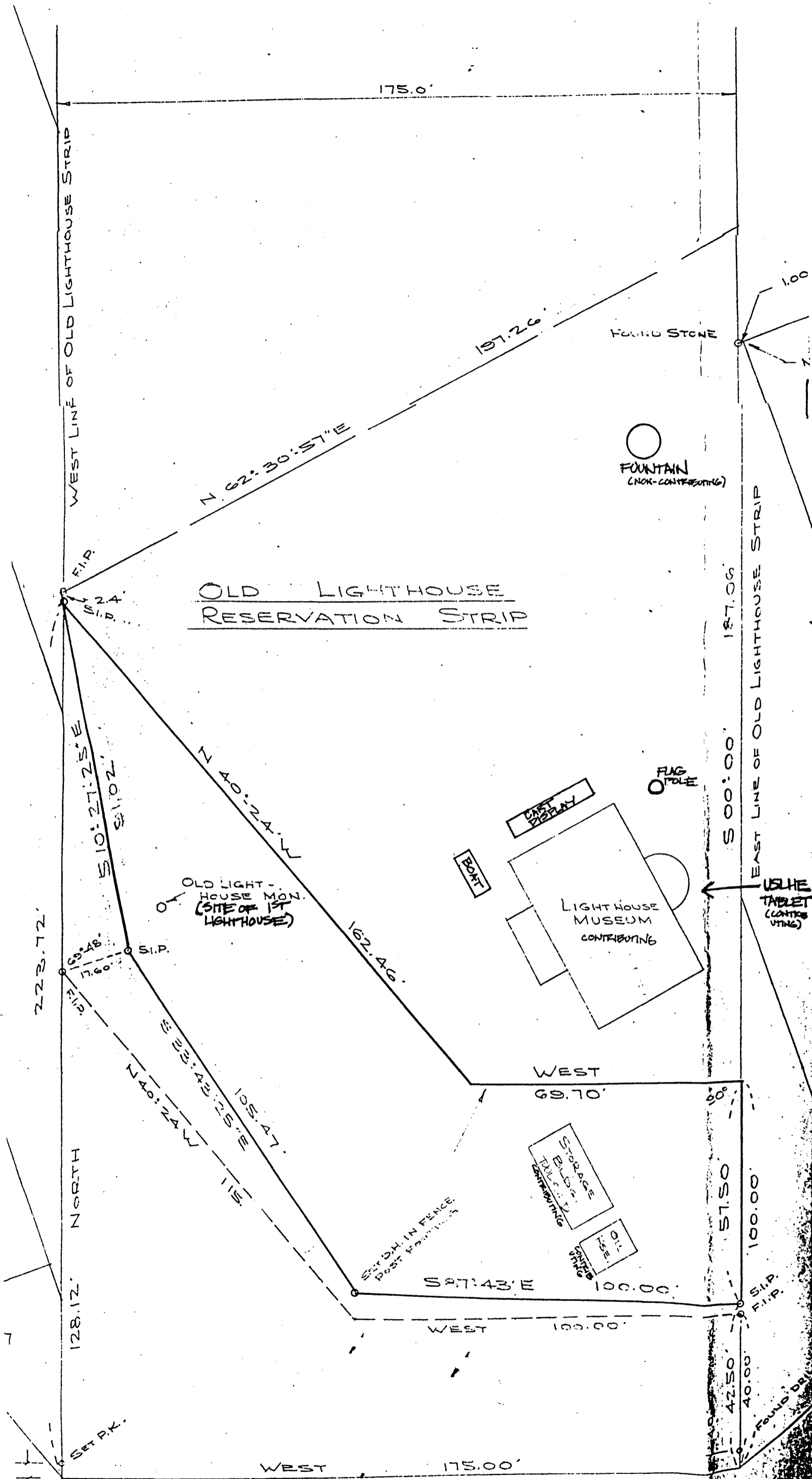
When the Michigan City Lighthouse was placed on the National Register in 1974, the forms in use at that time had no blank for "Boundary Description" or "Boundary Justification." The intention was to nominate the lighthouse, tool shed, and oil shed, since all are described in the 1974 nomination. Also, the form indicates one acre of land in Section 10. This figure would correspond to the area leased by the Michigan City Historical Society, Inc. The described boundary, therefore, is not an increase of the 1974 boundary, but a confirmation of the intended boundary of 1974. The parcel described is the largest remaining segment of the original lot set aside for the establishment of the lighthouse in 1835. Land to the north (created by silting and infill) is now owned and used for other purposes.

### Geographical Data:

The nomination form used to list the property in 1974 had no blank for UTM references. A single point centered on the site would be:

16 507840 4618780

A USGS map labeled in pencil is attached.



JOHN A. DOYLE & ASSOCIATES INCORPORATED  
 MICHIGAN CITY, IN AUG 31, 1968