

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Manhattan Building
other names/site number Empire Building

2. Location

street & number 360 N. Robert Street N/A not for publication
city, town St. Paul N/A vicinity
state Minnesota code MN county Ramsey code 123 zip code 55401

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> objects
			<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register none

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Nina M. Archabal 6/15/88
Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal, State Historic Preservation Officer 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. Beth Boland 7/13/88
 See continuation sheet. _____

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 of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce/Trade: business, professional,
financial institution

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce/ Trade: business, professional

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Second Renaissance Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls brick and sandstone

roof Other: vinyl
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

This nomination consists of a single standing structure. The Manhattan Building is located at the southeast corner of 5th Street and Robert in downtown St. Paul and faces west. It has a 102' frontage on Robert Street and 104' frontage on Fifth Street, the two principal facades.

A red brick and stone structure, this building is seven stories tall with a raised basement. Structurally, it consists of angle irons and T-irons with a masonry facing. The metal framework is in excellent condition and all building lines are plumb. Floors are constructed of steel beams filled with cinder concrete. The exterior wall is 5'4" thick at the bottom and rests on expanded footings each of which have a base of 9'4". The flat original roof was refurbished with a new single membrane roof in 1983. There is a large brick chimney on the east (rear) wall.

Built in 1890, the Manhattan Building was designed by Clarence H. Johnston, Sr. in the Second Renaissance Revival Style. Architectural details are classically-inspired. Horizontally, the building is divided into four zones: the rusticated stone block first story with arched windows and entrance; floors 2-5 terminating in a molded horizontal band; floors 6 and 7 (with seventh floor arched windows); and the frieze and cornice. Vertically, the building is divided into three bays flanked by two smaller bays along both the Fifth Street and Robert Street sides, which are identical above the first story.

From bottom to top, the building has only been altered with applied material on the first story. Upper floors and cornice are intact. Today, the first floor sports panels of pink and grey polished marble laid horizontally which have been applied to the original rusticated block facade which is intact beneath. This was applied sometime in the 1950s by Toltz, King, and Day architects according to historical photos. The arched entrance, which faces west, and the four flanking first story windows were originally round-arched as were four windows on the north side. These have been covered over with the marble panels, but remain intact. The current owner intends to remove the applied panels and uncover the original first story.

Floors 2 through 5 are defined by quoins and panelled stone pilasters between the bays with windows in a 1-3-3-3-1 five-bay configuration. Windows at the second story are tied together with continuous molded stone sills. Above the fifth floor center bays with three windows each are modillions in the lintel

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areas. Above is a plain stone frieze with a molded sandstone course of classical dentilling and egg and dart banding separating the lower floors from the sixth and seventh floors. Windows on the upper two floors are grouped in a 2-3-3-3-2 configuration. The seventh floor windows are round-arched with flanking pilasters. They are decorated with round terra cotta detailing between the arches in the windows. A dentilled molded course runs above the seventh floor windows under a frieze with rectangular decorative details. The building is topped off by an elaborate projecting cornice which consists of a dentilled course below the molded projecting cornice punctuated by metal scuppers fashioned in the shape of lions' heads.

All windows are one-over-one and have noticeable reveals. The secondary walls on the east and south side are of common cream-colored brick. The east side has a light shaft above the first story. The first story is a party wall with the one-story Endicott Arcade building. The south wall also has a light well and abutts the Endicott Building.

The main entrance has been obscured by the 1950s applied facade, but the entrance has retained the original seven steps up to the first floor. The main floor hall has walnut panelled walls. The main hall corridor opens in to the Endicott and Pioneer buildings to the south. A cast iron open staircase in the middle of the building has decorative rail supports and a hardwood rail. The sides of the steps are embossed with a decorative design. The original open grill elevators have been replaced with enclosed elevators. The third and fourth floors have heavy oak doors adorned with cast iron latches and letter openings. Ceiling height ranges from 10 feet in the basement to between 10'6" to 18" on the upper floors.

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)

Architecture
Commerce

Period of Significance
1890-1936

Significant Dates
1890

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person

Johnston Sr., Clarence H.

Architect/Builder

Architect: Johnston Sr., Clarence H.
Contractor: Lauer Brothers, St. Paul, MN.

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

The overall design of the Manhattan Building is well-proportioned and well-executed. It closely matches the adjacent and contemporary Pioneer-Endicott Buildings to the south, which are on the National Register. Historically, the Manhattan Building, originally constructed as a bank and office building, is one of the few important commercial survivors in downtown St. Paul of the building boom of the late 1880s and early 1890s during a time when St. Paul became the leading banking center in the upper midwest. It was listed as one of 29 "sites of major significance" in the 1983 survey of the City of St. Paul. It undoubtedly would have been among the 41 sites recommended as eligible for designation had the first story not been altered with applied material, a reversible 1950s alteration. In addition, the Manhattan Building is eligible architecturally as a sophisticated local example of the Second Renaissance Revival Style executed by Clarence H. Johnston, Sr.. The Manhattan Building is also the structure most closely associated with the architectural career of Johnston, a leading turn-of-the-century architect in Minnesota, who maintained offices in this building from the time of its completion in 1891 until his death in 1936. From his offices in the Manhattan Building, Clarence H. Johnston, Sr. designed all the state buildings from the time of his 1901 designation as State Architect of the State Board of Control of Minnesota until his death in 1936.

St. Paul entered a period of intense building in the late 1880s and early 1890s, but few of these commercial/ office buildings survive in downtown St. Paul today. All were built by first-class architects. One of these is the Manhattan Building. The 1983 National Register survey of St. Paul identified the following four from this period: the Richardsonian Romanesque style Germania Bank Building (St. Paul Building) on N. Wabasha by J. Walter Stevens (entered on the National Register on Nov. 11, 1977); the Endicott-Pioneer Buildings, the Endicott by Cass Gilbert and James Knox Taylor and the Pioneer Building by Chicago architect Solon Beman (entered on the National Register as one nomination on July 7, 1974); the Manhattan Building;

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and the New York Life Insurance Company Building (razed since 1983). All but the Germania Building were designed in modified Renaissance Revival style.

The Manhattan Building was constructed in the period when St. Paul came into its own as the leading railroad and financial center west of Chicago. Like the Pioneer and Endicott buildings, the Manhattan Building was built during the 1888-1890 period when eastern capital financed the larger commercial structures in downtown St. Paul to service the growing demand for banks, realtors, loan offices, and other professional services. This was also a period of great demand for housing, new businesses, large wholesale houses, and manufacturing, all of which created a demand for office space in the center of the city.

The expansion of the Northwest was an important element of the business boom in St. Paul, which, in turn, created demands for commercial and financial space. The Manhattan Building at the turn of the century was a premier office building in downtown St. Paul. The St. Paul National Bank was the first bank tenant in the Manhattan Building and, at the time, one of the three largest banks in St. Paul. Other first tenants in the years after 1891 included financial operations, lawyers, realtors, insurance agencies, utilities, mining concerns, architects, a business school, jewelers, agents, wholesalers of produce, coal, lumber, grain, and brick concerns. Senator Moses Clapp from Fergus Falls, one of the prominent state senators and a former Attorney General, headquartered his senate office from the Manhattan Building during his 1901-1917 term in office. During the early decades of the 20th century, three utilities maintained their headquarters here as well: the Northwestern Telephone Exchange Company, the Twin City Telephone Company, and the Manhattan Light, Heat, and Power Company.

The Waseca-born architect, Clarence H. Johnston, Sr. (1850-1936), moved his offices to the Manhattan Building upon its completion in 1891. He practiced here until his death in 1936 and worked out of the Manhattan Building during his entire career as State Architect. At that time, all state institutions had to fund construction of state buildings through a Board of Control. While officing in the Manhattan Building, Johnston designed buildings at all the major state institutions. He designed virtually all buildings constructed by the state during his tenure as State Architect, including entire campuses. A few examples are buildings at the University of Minnesota (Medical and Engineering buildings and Folwell Hall); state universities (originally normal schools); the Minnesota Colony for Epileptics (now Cambridge State Hospital); the Minnesota Home at Sauk Center; Faribault School for the Deaf; the second Stillwater State Prison; Douglas Lodge at Itasca State Park; and St. Peter State Hospital. Many examples of his state buildings survive, but he also designed the Second Renaissance Revival Manhattan Building in 1890 which is one of the earliest surviving examples of his commercial buildings.

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William E. Howard, developer of the building, moved from New York to St. Paul in 1887. His enterprise was merged into a stock company with investors located in St. Paul and New York. Howard named the building "Manhattan," and hired Clarence Johnston as architect. The 1890 permit lists construction costs at \$250,000. Howard hired the local firm of Lauer Brothers as constructors, consistent with his motto "Patronize St. Paul industries and St. Paul men."

The Manhattan Building continued its prominence as a banking locus when, it was renamed the Capital Bank Building from 1910-1927. In 1928, it became the home of the Empire National Bank and was, again, renamed the Empire Building in 1931, a name it retains to this day. The Manhattan Building has had a long record of successful operation and high occupancy. The Great Depression effected its operations, but after a 1933 foreclosure new owners inaugurated a comprehensive interior rehabilitation which increased the occupancy from 40% to 72%. It remains one of the few survivors in downtown St. Paul from the boom period of the late 1880s and early 1890s.

Architecturally, it is one of the few commercial office-space survivors of the period of florescence of the Renaissance Revival styles in the central business district of downtown St. Paul. Its proportions and massing are suited to this important intersection in St. Paul and its details are restrained. The Renaissance Revival style was particularly popular for banks and banking operations during the closing decades of the 19th century and signalled an important "palace of commerce" at the time it was built. The Manhattan Building is as worthy an example of the times and architectural period as its adjacent sister buildings to the south on Robert Street (already on the National Register): the Pioneer and Endicott Buildings. Visually, the Manhattan Building contributes to the Robert Street streetscape and completes a solid block of late 1880s and early 1890s structures, in itself, a decided rarity in downtown St. Paul. Finally, the Manhattan Building is the structure most closely associated with the working career of one of Minnesota's major turn-of-the-century architects: Clarence H. Johnson, Sr., who maintained his architectural offices here from 1891 until his death in 1936. This period encompassed his entire career as State Architect from 1901-1936. During his 35 year tenure in that position, Johnson was conveniently located only ten blocks from the State Capitol and the inevitable political constituency of the State Architect's office and in one of the major business addresses in downtown St. Paul.

The Manhattan Building is slated for a historic rehabilitation by the current owners.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet 9:1

See continuation sheet 9:1

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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 1 5 4 9 2 9 0 0 4 9 7 6 9 0 0
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

City of St. Paul, Blocks 3-12, 17-26, and 31-39. Northwesternly 102.5 feet of the following Lots 6 and 7, and the Southwesterly 4.54 feet of Lot 5, Block 17.

N/A See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the city lots that have been historically associated with the property.

N/A See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Norene A. Roberts date December 30, 1987
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