

First National Bank
509 Wabash
d. 1892, 1928

Owner: Terre Haute First National Bank
509 Wabash Avenue
Terre Haute, Indiana

Description:

Photo #8, Bldg. #89

The First National Bank Building is a two-story structure of neo-Classical design located near the center of Terre Haute's central business district. Constructed in 1892, it was remodeled to its present appearance in 1928 and remains a part of the bank's branch system.

The building has a rectangular plan and a flat roof with a parapet. The main facade of the structure faces Wabash Avenue and features limestone construction with metal window detailing. It is dominated by a central pavilion consisting of a high pediment supported at either side by paired, engaged columns. These columns feature fluting and Corinthian capitals and stand on one-story tall, smooth stone ashlar pedestals. The pediment features an architrave with cyma recta, egg-and-dart, and talon molding, as well as dentils, foliated modillions, and a projecting cornice. The pediment's raking cornice also features modillions, dentils, and cyma recta molding. The parapet above the pediment is unadorned except for the end pairs, which feature rosette paterae. The large glazed area below the pediment is divided vertically into three units by heavily molded metal mullions; on the ground floor these units contain the centrally-located main door and the flanking windows, while the upper floor levels contain fixed windows. The main entry is enframed with metal panels and surmounted by a hood mold with dentils. On either side of the central pavilion is a fluted pilaster, similar in appearance to the neighboring engaged columns, with Corinthian capitals and smooth stone ashlar pedestals.

Significance:

The First National Bank is architecturally significant as a good local example of the Neo-Classical style as commonly applied to banking institutions. Its distinctive facade, featuring a prominent two-story Greek temple portico of the Corinthian order, gives the building the solidity and stateliness commonly associated with such facilities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The building was designed by architect H. Jenny, of Chicago, in 1892 for the First National Bank and was constructed the next year. Professor Malverd Howe, of Rose Polytechnic Institute, supervised construction, with T. S. Snapp as general contractor. The building was remodeled in 1928, when First National merged with the McKeen National Bank, but the alterations were sympathetic in nature and did not detract from the building's Neo-Classical lines. A 1932 merger resulted in the creation of the Terre Haute First National Bank, which currently has its main offices in another Neo-Classical bank building (#99) and maintains this structure as a branch office.

Geographical Data

Acreage: Less than one acre

UTM Reference: 16/464660/4368400

Boundary: Map #1806-21, Block #476, Parcel #001