

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

JUN 29 1987

date entered

AUG 11 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic N/A

and/or common OLD MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

2. Location

street & number See inventory. not for publication

city, town Racine vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Racine code 101

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name N/A

street & number N/A

city, town N/A vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Racine County Courthouse

street & number 730 South Wisconsin Avenue

city, town Racine state Wisconsin 53403

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places
title Racine Intensive Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979-80, 1986 updated federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state WI

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Physical Description

The old Main Street Historic District includes parts of eight blocks of the Original Plat of the Village of Racine, which lie south and east of the Root River and run, almost entirely, along Main Street from State Street on the north to Fifth Street on the south. It is historically the heart of the city, and it was - until the advent of the suburban shopping mall - the commercial center of the city as well. It is now an area of mixed business uses with a small residential population and contains stores, restaurants, taverns, offices, and apartments. The district is comprised, for the most part, of two and three story commercial buildings, compactly built to the sidewalk and forming an almost unbroken line of store fronts along Main Street. The floors above the street level usually contain offices, lofts, or living quarters. Interspersed among these smaller buildings are a few larger, more substantial, and multi-story commercial structures - most of which were built after 1883 and during the period Main Street's greatest prosperity.

The district is separated from its surrounding areas, first of all, by its focus. Almost all of the buildings face Main Street, and their rear walls form a common-brick barrier which seems to close about it when Main Street is viewed from Lake Avenue on the east or Wisconsin Avenue on the west. When the district is viewed from either the north or the south, its character as the last remnant of a cohesive retail strip lining both sides of Main Street is immediately apparent. The district is separated, finally, by the natural boundary of the Root River on the west and by large patches of vacant land on the north, the east, and the south - where former downtown buildings have been razed and parking lots have replaced a number of them - creating, in effect, an "island" of historic buildings north of Racine's Monument Square.

There are 92 buildings in the district; 22 are non-contributing. Seven of the non-contributing buildings were constructed in the nineteenth century or early in this century, but their facades have been covered by modern screens of metal, wood, or simulated stone. Behind those screens are several buildings which are truly significant to the history of Racine. Six of the buildings have been remodeled so completely as to change entirely their original fabric, and nine of them were built after the period of the district's historical significance. The other 70 architecturally or historically significant structures in the district form a cohesive "corridor" of buildings along or attendant to Main Street, which visually displays the district's development as Racine's commercial core from the late 1840s through the late 1920s.

There were three distinct periods of construction in the district. The first was the time of settlement - between 1834 and the late 1840s - when the earliest dwellings, stores, workshops, saloons, and boarding houses in the Village of Racine were built just south of the river at the foot of Main

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Street. The district was the settlement, and the earliest people to arrive lived and worked in the same area. Construction was almost exclusively of lumber, for the banks of the river were thickly forested and timbers could be milled upriver at a sawmill which had been established at the Rapids. No buildings in the district survive from those early years.¹

The second period was one of steady and uniform development. From the late 1840s to the early 1880s, stores and offices, saloons and hotels spread along both sides of Main Street. They were, for the most part, small buildings with twenty foot frontage along the street, each devoted to a particular specialty or service and owned or operated by individual merchants or businessmen, many of whom lived in quarters at the rear of their shops or on upper floors. Those who were successful replaced their frame buildings with new ones in brick - sometimes as a boast of that success. The buildings of this period were usually two or three stories high and three bays wide, with a uniform cornice line. The best examples of such buildings in the district can be seen on the west side of Main Street in the 200 and 300 blocks. A few larger "blocks" were built, which housed stores at the street level and offices, craftsmen's shops, printers, or companies doing light manufacturing on the floors above. The Judd Building (c.1847), at the northeast corner of Fourth and Main, was such a block - as were the Durand and Hill Block (c.1849), at the northwest corner of Third and Main, and the McClurg Building (1857), across the street on the northeast corner of Third and Main.

The earliest brick buildings in the district were built in the Federal or the Greek Revival Style, but only traces of those styles remain - like the now obscured Federal lines of the Judd Block (No. 80) or the "updated" Greek Revival remnants on the Durand and Hill Block (No. 49). Most of the buildings from this period were built in the fashionable style of the time - Italianate. Examples in the style are to be found throughout the district - the finest of them being the McClurg Building (No. 69).

The third period began in 1883, when the Chauncey Hall Building was constructed at the northwest corner of Fourth and Main; and it continued through the 1920s, when several national chain stores built or remodeled buildings along Main Street. During those years the new buildings in the district tended to be larger, and they were individually designed, not just routine and uniform extensions of the retail row. Often, they broke the established line of the cornice - as the Racine Dry Goods Store does at 410-12 Main. It replaced two earlier stores which were almost identical to the one which remains just to the north at 408 Main. The buildings were designed for special uses - as the YMCA Building was at 217 Fourth Street or the Second Journal Printing Company Building, across the street at 212 Fourth. They were sometimes taller and dominated the buildings around them - as the Shoop Building (No. 58) dominates State Street and the 200 block of Main or as the Zahn's Building (No. 13) dominates Fifth Street and the buildings on Monument Square. They were almost always wider,

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expanding their retail frontage along Main Street. This was done, to begin with, by remodeling and combining two or three separate buildings into one store - as S. S. Kresge did at 430 and 432 Main. Some of those stores were eventually replaced by new buildings - like the Neisner Store at 424-26 Main or the J. C. Penney Department Store at 413-17 Main. Several of those buildings were unusual - designed to be readily identifiable - like the Neisner Store, the Paramount Radio Store (No. 39), or the White Tower Restaurant (No. 65).

No particular style dominated the period. In the 1880s a number of smaller buildings were constructed in the Victorian Commercial Style. The best of these are to be seen on the west side of Main in the 200 block. The Chauncey Hall Building (No. 29) is Queen Anne; the Shoop Building (No. 58) is Richardsonian Romanesque, and the Manufacturers' National Bank Building (No. 14) is Classical Revival. The Zahn's Building (No. 13) shows the influence of the Prairie School, and the Neisner Building (No. 19), of Art Deco or Moderne. The smaller commercial buildings in the district which were constructed in the 1890s and after the turn of the century also display characteristics of this variety of architectural styles.

The principal building material used in the district is brick. Most of the buildings are of cream brick, which was produced locally at brickyards along Lake Michigan north of the city. In 1849 only 20% of the buildings in the district were brick; twenty years later nearly half of them were brick, and by 1875 more than 60% of them were built of brick. In 1882 a devastating fire destroyed all but a few of the buildings in the northern third of Racine's downtown area - where more than half of the frame structures in the district could then be found. All of those were replaced in cream brick. At the turn of the century only four frame buildings were among those on either side of Main Street, and by 1933 even they had disappeared. But cream brick also disappeared from the district, replaced by the deeper hues which were preferred in the early part of this century.²

Red brick was used only sparingly in the district during the last century. It usually graced only major buildings. The earliest of these was the McClurg Building (No. 69), begun in 1857. It was chosen for the Chauncey Hall Building (No. 29) in 1883 and was used in 1899 on the three upper stories of the Shoop Building (No. 58), but only for decoration. Early in this century it was employed for M. M. Secor's store and loft building (No. 67) to complement the red brick of its neighbor, the McClurg Building, which Secor owned at the time. But with the turn of the century, a greater variety of face brick began to be used. Red brick was still employed selectively, but its shades were deeper, in keeping with the tastes of the times - as can be seen on the YMCA Building (No. 7), built in 1915, or on the Second Journal Printing Company Building (No. 4), built in 1921. Deep brown shades of "tapestry" brick were used for the Morey Building (No. 9), built in 1912, and for the Hansen Building (No. 72), built in 1913. In the 1920s, buff colored brick was used to face two department stores -

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the Racine Dry Goods Store (No. 23), built in 1922, and Zahn's Department Store (No. 13), built in 1924. The smaller buildings in the district also display this shift to many different colors in brick.

Stone was used principally for decoration. Limestone will often be found at the lintels and sills of windows or as a coping for parapets. A stone cornice will occasionally be seen or a stone foundation, but the most elaborate and extensive use of decorative stone in the district is on the State Street and Wisconsin Avenue facades of the Shoop Building (No. 52). Two buildings in the district have facades covered entirely in stone. They are the Gorton Building (No. 27) on the southwest corner of Fourth and Main and the First Journal Printing Company Building (No. 34) at 328 Main. The exterior of the Manufacturers' National Bank Building (No. 14) on the north side of Monument Square is covered in white marble.

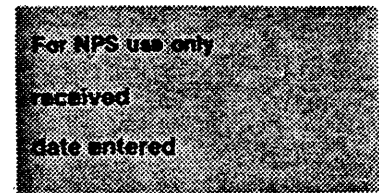
Wood was used on the exterior only for windows, doors, and architectural trim once frame buildings had disappeared from the district - with one exception. Bay windows which overhang the sidewalk were a part of the original design of several buildings constructed in the district after 1890 - like the Mrvicka Saloon (No. 64) or the Morey Building (No. 9). Such bays were occasionally added to older buildings - like the two story bay on the Wustum Building (No. 29) or the single bay window on the First Ibing Building (No. 78). These were all built of wood. And wood in a board and batten pattern was used, unfortunately, in the 1950s to cover the exteriors of three historic buildings in the district (Nos. 83, 84, and 85) at 401 through 407 Main.

Metal was also used decoratively. The cast iron street facade of the McClurg Building (No. 69) is an early example, and the only one of its kind in the district. After 1880 it was often used for the pressed metal cornices on the many Victorian Commercial buildings in the district. Here and there, an exposed steel beam will be seen inset above a shop front. Some of these are probably original - like the one on the Miller Brewing Company Saloon (No. 66); others were installed later, when a store front was remodeled - like the one on the Werner Saloon (No. 75). Metal screens, also unfortunately, were installed in the 1950s and the 1960s to hide the facades of two other historic buildings at 212 Fifth Street (No. 12) and at 427 Main (No. 90).

Altered as they may have been, however, with the inevitable changes that occur in any area which remains vital for a long period of time, the buildings in the Old Main Street Historic District retain enough of their original architectural fabric and enough of their original architectural form to present to the modern viewer a picture of Main Street in Racine as it was during the time of its greatest significance as the commercial center of the City of Racine.

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The following inventory sets out the map number, the street address, the historic name, and the original use of the building (if known), the date of construction (as closely as it can be determined), and the classification of each building in the district as either "contributing" (C) or "non-contributing" (NC). The dates of construction were determined from deeds, newspaper articles, maps, fire insurance records, city directories, tax rolls, and date stones. The buildings are named for the people who built them, for companies that built them, or for the most important tenants that occupied them - in accordance with newspaper articles, local histories, or tradition. Some of the buildings were built separately but are now combined under one owner and are presently listed under one address. In the inventory those buildings are listed separately under the addresses they bore as separate buildings.

INVENTORY

<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Original Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
1	232-44 Wisconsin	Emerson and Company, linseed oil factory	1872 ³	C
2	239 Wisconsin	Hayek and Baumann Stable	1883 ⁴	C
3	214 Third St.	William Lathrop Stable	c.1869 ⁵	C
4	212 Fourth St.	Second Journal Printing Company Building, newspaper publishing	1921, 1939 ⁶ 1949, 1960	C
5	340 Wisconsin	City Garage	c.1923 ⁷	C
6	300 Fourth St.	Racine Fire Department, Engine House No. 5	1907 ⁸	C
7	217 Fourth St.	YMCA Building	1915 ⁹	C
8	435 Wisconsin	Gerhard Thelen Residence Store front	c.1869 ¹⁰ 1924	C
9	222 Fifth St.	Morey Building, offices	1912 ¹¹	C
10	220 Fifth St.	Lakeside Printing Company Building	1926 ¹²	C
11	218 Fifth St.	William Schulz Building, offices	1924 ¹³	C

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<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Original Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
12	212 Fifth St.	Commercial Hotel Exterior metal screen	1878 ¹⁴ 1958	NC
13	500 Monument Sq.	Zahn's Building, department store	1924 ¹⁵	C
14	440 Main St.	Manufacturers' National Bank Building	1919 ¹⁶	C
15	436-38 Main St.	Milton La Pour Building, offices	1964 ¹⁷	NC
16	434 Main St.	Edward McEnery Building, retail store	1869 ¹⁸	C
17	432 Main St.	Nicholas D. Fratt Building, retail store	c.1856 ¹⁹	C
18	430 Main St.	Nicholas D. and Francis W. Fratt Building, meat and vegetable market	c.1850 ²⁰	C
19	424 Main St.	Neisner Brothers Building, dime store	1940 ²¹	NC
20	422 Main Street	Dr. George Mason Building, retail store and offices	1940 ²²	NC
21	420 Main St.	Wiegand Brothers Building, retail store	1913 ²³	C
22	416 Main St.	Lerner Shops Building, women's clothing store	1947 ²⁴	NC
23	410 Main St.	Racine Dry Goods Store	1922 ²⁵	C
24	408 Main St.	George Wustum Building, retail store and offices	c.1852 ²⁶	C
25	406 Main St.	Louis C. Klein Building, tobacco shop and living quarters	1865 ²⁷	C
26	402-04 Main St.	Hugh Gorton and Evan Jones Build- ing, dry goods store	1878 ²⁸	C

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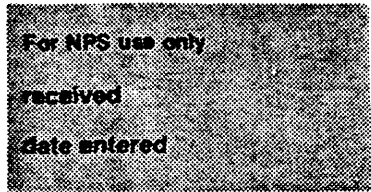
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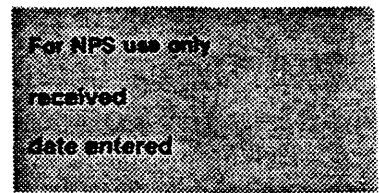
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<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Original Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
27	400 Main St.	Hugh Gorton Building, millinery shop and offices	1899 ²⁹	C
28	211 Fourth St.	Charles Buckingham Building, harness maker's shop	1887 ³⁰	C
29	340 Main St.	Chauncey Hall Building, retail store, offices, and meeting rooms	1883 ³¹	C
30	336 Main St.	Joseph Rowley Building, meat market and living quarters	1880 ³²	C
31	334 Main St.	Ernst J. Hueffner Building, leather shop and living quarters	1880 ³³	C
32	332 Main St.	William Buckingham Building, furniture store and living quarters	1880 ³⁴	C
33	330 Main St.	Alanson H. Lee and John Dickson Building, dry goods store	1858 ³⁵	C
34	328 Main St.	First Journal Printing Company Building, newspaper publishing	1913 ³⁶	C
35	326 Main St.	John Liegler Building, men's clothing store	1901 ³⁷	C
36	324 Main St.	John Neumann Building, retail store and living quarters	1870 ³⁸	C
37	322 Main St.	John Peil, Hieronymus Ritter, and Charles Schmeisser Building, tailor shop	1870 ³⁹	C
38	320 Main St.	Sebastian Besick Building, retail store and living quarters	1869 ⁴⁰	C
39	318 Main St.	Paramount Radio Stores Building	1929 ⁴¹	C

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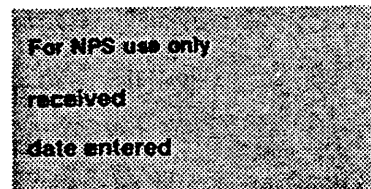
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<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Original Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
40	316 Main St.	Second Amaziah Stebbins Building, retail store and loft	c.1850 ⁴²	C
41	314 Main St.	First Amaziah Stebbins Building, hardware store	c.1850 ⁴³	C
42	312 Main St.	Buckingham Brothers Building, saloon and boarding house	1883 ⁴⁴	C
43	310 Main St.	Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company Building	1946 ⁴⁵	NC
44	306 Main St.	Ernest H. Brill Building, saloon	1883 ⁴⁶	C
45	304 Main St.	Anthony Kraupa Building, hardware store and living quarters	1883 ⁴⁷	C
46	302 Main St.	Jacob Heck Building, saloon and living quarters	1883 ⁴⁸	C
47	300 Main St.	Smieding Brothers Building, drug store, offices, and apartments	1858 ⁴⁹	C
48	210 Third St.	John Dixon Building, hardware store and apartments	1909 ⁵⁰	C
49	246 Main St.	Durand and Hill Block, retail store and offices	c.1849 ⁵¹	C
50	244 Main St.	Henry S. Durand Building, retail store and loft	c.1856 ⁵²	C
51	238-42 Main St.	Buffham's Building, paint and wall- paper store. Present front	1946 ⁵³ 1974	NC
52	236 Main St.	Michael Keidel Building, saloon and living quarters	1885 ⁵⁴	C
53	234 Main St.	J. Hayek Building, tailor shop and living quarters	1883 ⁵⁵	C
54	232 Main St.	Otto B. Schulz Building, bakery	1887 ⁵⁶	C

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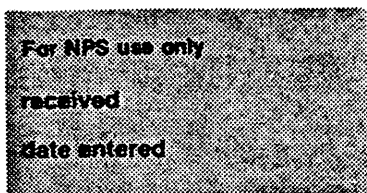
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<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Original Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
55	230 Main St.	Catherine Haas Building, saloon and living quarters	1883 ⁵⁷	C
56	228 Main St.	Rudolph D. Klofanda Building, grocery store and living quarters	1883 ⁵⁸	C
57		City Parking Ramp	1985 ⁵⁹	NC
58	222 Main St. (formerly 215 State)*	The Shoop Building, manufacturing and offices	1893, 1899 ⁶⁰ 1902	C
59	226 State St.	William Rowan Building, retail store	1923 ⁶¹	C
60	224 State St.	Louis Morgensen Building, real estate office	1924 ⁶²	C
61	222 State St.	Harry Gulbank Billiard Parlor Remodeled store front	1925 ⁶³ 1986	NC
62	220 State St.	State Street Furniture Store Remodeled store front	1925 ⁶⁴ 1986	NC
63	214 State St.	Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company Office Building	1888 ⁶⁵	C
64	231 Main St.	F. J. Mrvicka Saloon	1891 ⁶⁶	C
65	235 Main St.	White Tower Restaurant	1929 ⁶⁷	C
66	237 Main St.	Miller Brewing Company Saloon	1902 ⁶⁸	C
67	239-41 Main St.	Martin M. Secor Building, furniture store	1904 ⁶⁹	C
68		Service Corridor for Main Place	1985 ⁷⁰	NC
69	245 Main St.	Alexander McClurg Building, offices	1857 ⁷¹	C
70	301-07 Main St.	Retail Stores	1953 ⁷²	NC

*The address of the Shoop Building was officially changed on June 4, 1985 by the Building Department of the City of Racine.

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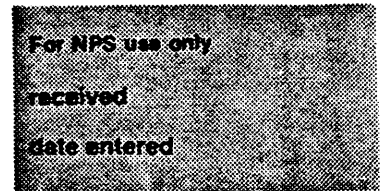
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<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Original Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
71	309 Main St.	First Christ J. Hansen Building, barber shop	1913 ⁷³	C
72	311-13 Main St.	Second Christ J. Hansen Building, saloon and hall	1913 ⁷⁴	C
73	321 Main St.	Leonard Mintener Building, retail store	1877 ⁷⁵	C
74	323-25 Main St.	Meyer Gottleid Building, retail store	1962 ⁷⁶	NC
75	327 Main St.	Henry Werner Building, saloon and tailor shop	1880 ⁷⁷	C
76	329 Main St.	George W. Gates Building, saloon	1907 ⁷⁸	C
77	331 Main St.	Second Frederick Ibing Building, dry goods store	1875 ⁷⁹	C
78	333 Main St.	First Frederick Ibing Building, saloon	1869 ⁸⁰	C
79	335 Main St.	Western Hotel	1875 ⁸¹	C
80	337-41 Main St.	Judd Block, stores and offices	c.1847 ⁸²	C
81	400 Lake Av.	Charles A. Myers Filling Station Remodeled exterior	c.1927 ⁸³ 1975	NC
82	107 Fourth St.	Nicholas F. Reichert Building, contractor's office	c.1897 ⁸⁴	C
83	401 Main St.	Commercial Building, offices Board and batten exterior	c.1852 ⁸⁵ 1953	NC
84	403-05 Main St.	Buffham Block, store and lofts Board and batten exterior	1893 ⁸⁶ 1953	NC
85	407 Main St.	Hopkins' Building, retail store Board and batten exterior	c.1849 ⁸⁷ 1959	NC

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86	409 Main St.	Sinclair's Building, saloon	c.1849 ⁸⁸	C
87	411 Main St.	James Langlois Building, ship's chandlery	c.1849 ⁸⁹	C
88	413-17 Main St.	J. C. Penney Department Store	1947 ⁹⁰	NC
89	419-23 Main St.	Bloch Furniture Company Building	1950 ⁹¹	NC
90	425-31 Main St.	The Arcade Building, stores and offices. Exterior metal screen	1923 ⁹² 1966	NC
91	433 Main St.	Alfred Lewis Building, retail store Remodeled	1893 ⁹³ 1963	NC
92	435-41 Main St.	American Bank and Trust Company	1966 ⁹⁴	NC

DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

<u>Map Number</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
80	337-41 Main St.	Judd Block	c.1847

One of the first brick buildings in Racine, the Judd Block is the only remaining commercial building in the city which was originally built in the Federal Style. An attic story, added after the turn of the century, has blurred the rake of the original roof, but the chimneys are still there to be seen on the south side. The street facade has been remodeled many times, but the fenestration pattern on the second and third stories along Main Street remains as it was built - except that the multi-light sashes of the original double-hung windows have been replaced with the more contemporary single pane style. The building is constructed of common brick and has three store fronts, which run the sixty feet of a full lot as originally platted along Main Street. The brick stringcourse above the third story windows on the Main Street side is original and was the architrave of the original entablature. The present cornice was added after the building was raised to four stories.⁹⁵

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49 246 Main St. Durand and Hill Block c.1849

Although the Durand and Hill Block survived the downtown fire of 1882, it was damaged, and when it was repaired, it seems to have been brought "up to date." The building is three stories high and three bays wide along Main Street. It is constructed of cream brick with limestone window heads and sills. Four brick pilasters frame the windows on the second and third stories of the Main Street facade and rise from the top of the street floor to a brick entablature which runs along the front and the south side of the building. These may well be elements of the original design and they suggest a Greek Revival Style for the building as it was originally constructed. A pressed metal cornice - one of the most elaborate in the district - has been superimposed on the frieze and over the cornice of the brick entablature on the Main Street facade. It was probably added with the repairs of 1883, to make the building look more "modern" and conform more closely to the style of the other buildings nearby, constructed in the district in the 1880s. The shouldered limestone window heads on the front may also date from that time.⁹⁶

24 408 Main St. George Wustum Building c.1852

The Wustum Building is one of the earliest commercial buildings in the district in the Italianate Style. It is a severely rectangular structure of three stories in cream brick, which has been overpainted, with central windows on the second and third stories. It has an elaborately bracketed wooden cornice, which is original, and stacked wooden bay windows, which overhang the sidewalk and are not original. The bay replaced casement windows and transoms, sometime after 1885.⁹⁷

69 245 Main St. Alexander McClurg Building 1857

Begun in 1857 and completed the following year, the McClurg Building now dominates the east side of Main Street in the district as it did when it was first built. Other buildings which were as tall and "grander" - like the old City Hall which sat across the street on the southeast corner of Third and Main - have been razed, leaving open spaces or lower structures around the McClurg Building as there were when it was first constructed. This four story, red brick structure is the most exuberant example of the Italian Renaissance Revival Style in Racine.

A slightly recessed central "pavillion" rises three stories above the entrance doorways on both the front and south facades. Those pavillions are outlined with stone quoins, which become the voussoirs and the keystones of central arches on each facade. The pavillions interrupt the cornices on each of the street facades, and they are crowned by round arched parapets decorated

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with urns. These were fabricated in accord with old pictures of the building during its recent restoration. Quoins also enrich the corners of both street facades.

Round arched windows flank the central pavillions - two on each side on the Main Street facade and four on each side on the Third Street facade - with cast iron keystones set in the arches. The original windows were destroyed when the building was gutted in the fire of 1882. They were replaced with arched glazing in 1883, but in 1941 the window openings were refitted with rectangular sashes, and the tympanums were filled in with panels bearing a garland design. The second and fourth story windows have alternately been bricked up - under the pavillions - or cut back through during the long history of the building. In the process a cast iron panel of elaborate foliate design, which once connected the second and third floor windows in each pavillion, has been lost - as has the cast iron roundel, which once surmounted the fourth floor window of each pavillion.

The most striking feature of the exterior is the single story, cast iron store front on Main Street. Tradition says that the red brick and the cast iron for the building were shipped from Buffalo, New York, and that this facade was cast by the Buffalo Eagle Iron Works Company. It is an embellished arcade with a round central arch over the doorway and two round arches on each side, inset with windows. Pilasters frame the doorway and each pair of windows. The arcade and the pilasters support a bracketed and denticulated cornice. The entire street facade is rich in composite capitals, ornate keystones, and decorative moldings.

A framed doorway of the same design as the one on Main Street originally stood beneath the central pavillion on Third Street, but it was removed - probably in the 1941 remodeling. The doorway has been cut through again and a new surround in sympathy with the original design was installed during the recent renovation. A store front to the east of that doorway had also been removed. A glazed facade, similar to one seen in early photographs of the building, has been restored by the present owners. (NRHP - July 13, 1977)⁹⁸

33

330 Main St.

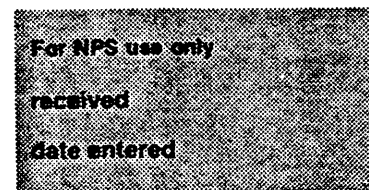
Alanson H. Lee and
John Dickson Building

1858

As the McClurg Building was being completed, this store and loft building was also being constructed with similar but much simpler features. The three story Lee and Dickson Building is of cream brick with molded limestone window heads and limestone sills. The street level has been altered, but the design of the present entryway and the store display windows seems to have been executed in the 1920s or 1930s. Above the store front, the second and third story windows are recessed in a blind arcade which rises to the cornice. The arches are reminiscent of the shallow pavillions on the McClurg Building. The brickwork is plain, with no decorative stringcourses or corbelling. This simple composi-

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tion is capped by a heavily decorated, pressed metal cornice - with four large and elaborate brackets and finials - whose ornate, late Victorian style seems to be of a considerably later date than the rest of the building and very likely was added in the 1880s.

16	434 Main St.	Edward McEnery Building	1869
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Under its pressed metal cornice, this three story, cream brick, Victorian Commercial building is a severely rectangular composition. Four piers rise two stories from the top of the street front to a corbelled brick frieze which joins them. Each of the piers is topped by one of the four large brackets on the pressed metal cornice. The piers divide the second and third stories into three equal bays. Rather deeply recessed in the bays are three rectangular double-hung windows on each floor, with heavy rectangular limestone hoods - supported on each side by limestone brackets. The pattern created by the piers, windows, sashes, hoods, and sills, is further supplemented by inset brick rectangles above the third story windows and just below the corbelled frieze.

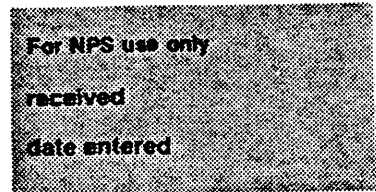
38	320 Main St.	Sebastian Besick Building	1869
37	322 Main St.	John Peil, Hieronymus Ritter, and Charles Schmeisser Building	1870
36	324 Main St.	John Neumann Building	1870
35	326 Main St.	John Liegler Building	1901

The four cream brick commercial buildings which run from 320 to 326 Main Street are of uniform height and share a common cross pattern in the brickwork of their cornices. They are all two stories high, three bays wide, and Italianate in style. The most northerly (No. 38) was built first and established the pattern of the cornice and of the arched windows on the second story, which is carried on by the other three. The three round arched windows on its second story have prominent brick window hoods, but the Besick Building has only simple brick dentils under the cornice and a straight stringcourse to complete its entablature.

The two middle buildings (Nos. 36 and 37) were constructed at the same time and are a single composition. They have a central party wall and a common stairway between them. On the second story, six round arched windows - three on each side - flank a slightly narrower, blind window which is also arched and sits just above the door to the central staircase. The windows are recessed between four shallow brick pilasters - one at each end of the two buildings and one on each side of the blind central window. The pilasters rise from the tops of the store fronts to an arcaded frieze. The upper lights of the double-hung windows are original and consist of two narrow, round arched lancets with a trefoil design in the tracery above them.

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The most southerly of this row (No. 35) was built more than thirty years later, but it adopted some of the elements of the earlier designs. The composition is simpler. The windows are shorter and they are segmentally arched, rather than round, and the window heads are flat brick, but the arcaded entablature is continued, although in a shallower pattern.

78	333 Main St.	First Frederick Ibing Building	1869
77	331 Main St.	Second Frederick Ibing Building	1875

Also built separately but sharing the same design, are the two Ibing Buildings at 331 and 333 Main Street. Each is two stories high and built of cream brick in the Italianate Style. Both have the same elaborate, corbelled brick cornice. The southerly one (No. 78) was built first, but it was altered in the early years of this century. Thus the later building (No. 77) retains more of its original detail - like the round arched windows on the second story, with their prominent brick hoods. A wooden bay window which overhangs the sidewalk has replaced two of the original windows at 333 Main; the arch and the window hood have been removed entirely from the third. While the store fronts of both buildings have been altered, a stained glass window of undetermined age was recently uncovered and restored on the front of 331 Main.

1	232-44 Wisconsin	Emerson and Company Linseed Oil Works	1872
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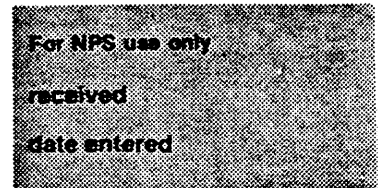
The Emerson Works is a straightforward industrial building of the nineteenth century, with only scant decoration. It is built of common brick with a gabled roof and parapet wall facing Wisconsin Avenue. Stringcourses of straight brick outline the gable and the parapet of a flat roofed addition on the north, which had probably been completed by 1876. A corbelled cornice of brick runs across the principal facade just above the doorways and windows on the Wisconsin Avenue side. Only two segmentally arched windows, set within the gable, are to be found facing Wisconsin Avenue, but a number of such windows punctuate the facade and define the levels of the building on the west, where it rises six stories from the bank of the Root River. Some of the double-hung windows retain their original multi-light sashes. While the Emerson Works is utilitarian, its details exhibit elements of the Italianate Style which dominates the district, and the structure itself is a focal point at the foot of Third Street.

75	327 Main St.	Henry Werner Building	1880
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One of the few buildings in the district to use polychrome decoration, the Werner Building is also singular in its design. The two story Victorian

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Commercial brick saloon and tailor shop abandoned the conventional pressed metal cornice across the parapet. A shallow, corbelled brick cornice at the top of the second story runs for only a few feet from the northerly end pier when it is interrupted by a rectangular bay that runs from there across the remainder of the second story facade to the southerly end pier. This creates an asymmetrical window treatment rather than the expected, symmetrical one. Paired windows are centered in the bay under a segmental arch. The springers and the keystone of the arch are red sandstone, while the remaining archstones are cream brick. An oriel window completes the second story fenestration. Red sandstone was also used for the keystones and springers of the four segmental arches which were a part of the original street facade and are still to be seen above the steel beam which is now inset at the top of the store front.

30 336 Main St. Joseph Rowley Building 1880

A more conventional Victorian Commercial building with polychrome touches, is the Rowley Building at 336 Main. Its windows on the second story are symmetrically arranged, with squares of colored and molded stone set in a brick stringcourse between them. Colored stone is also used for the oversize keystones set in the segmental arches of the window hoods. This two story cream brick structure has lost its pressed metal cornice, but the fancy brick pattern of the frieze which supported it is still to be seen.

32 332 Main St. William Buckingham Building 1880
31 334 Main St. Ernst J. Hueffner Building 1880

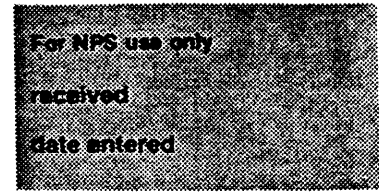
Another pair of two story buildings designed and built together, the Buckingham and Hueffner Buildings established the pattern that would predominate in the district for small commercial buildings constructed throughout the 1880s. They are in the Victorian Commercial Style, built of local cream brick, with molded limestone window hoods, flat limestone sills, and pressed metal cornices. Piers are prominently delineated, and each one is topped by an elaborate bracket and finial which form a part of the pattern of the pressed metal cornice. Between the piers, corbelled brickwork supports the cornice. A second cornice, set just above the shop fronts, is also original.

29 338-40 Main St. Chauncey Hall Building 1883

The Chauncey Hall Building is a three story, Queen Anne commercial structure which dominates the intersection of Fourth and Main Streets. It was designed by Edward Townsend Mix of Milwaukee. The building has a limestone foundation, a gabled roof, and it is faced on its two street sides with pressed red brick and tinted mortar. The eastern elevation is topped by a Flemish gable and is bisected by a corbelled projection which rises from just above the

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street story to the apex of the gable. This was originally a chimney, which once rose above the gable but has been lopped off. On each side of this stunted chimney, on the second and third floors, are a pair of rectangular, double-hung windows. Those on the third floor are each surmounted by an arch. Within the tympanum of each arch is set an ornamental sunburst of terra cotta. Between the second and third story windows are set panels of terra cotta decorated with festoons.

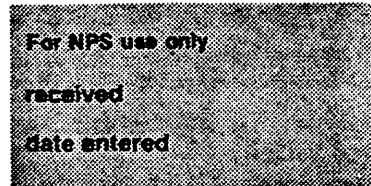
The southern elevation consists of thirteen windowed bays. The three central ones project slightly and are arcaded and decorated like the windows on the eastern elevation. A large dormer with a Flemish gable and a corbelled chimney once sat over this central section, but it has been removed. Two other corbelled projections, similar to the one on the eastern facade, flank the central section. Their chimneys have also been removed. The original store front was remodeled in 1929, at which time the glazed terra cotta decoration on the street facade was added. (NRHP - October 10, 1980)⁹⁹

56	228 Main St.	Rudolph D. Klofanda Building	1883
55	230 Main St.	Catherine Haas Building	1883
46	302 Main St.	Jacob Heck Building	1883
45	304 Main St.	Anthony Kraupa Building	1883
53	234 Main St.	J. Hayek Building	1883
52	236 Main St.	Michael Keidel Building	1885
54	232 Main St.	Otto B. Schulz Building	1887

Racine merchants whose shops were destroyed by the fire of 1882 began to rebuild them almost immediately thereafter. These buildings were, for the most part, carbon copies of one another. They were Victorian Commercial in style, two stories high, three bays wide, and built of cream brick with limestone lintels and sills on the second story windows. The piers at either end of the twenty foot street facades were plainly delineated in brick and topped with an elaborate bracket and finial which formed a part of the pattern of a pressed metal cornice. The decorative brickwork on the frieze just below the cornice was often identical - as it is on the Klofanda (No. 56), Haas (No. 55), Heck (No. 46), and Kraupa (No. 42) Buildings. Some of the structures were built in pairs with a central party wall, a central pier, and a central pressed metal bracket above it - as can be seen between the Haas and Klofanda Buildings (Nos. 55 and 56) or the Kraupa and Heck Buildings (Nos. 45 and 46). Those buildings which were constructed separately have clearly defined end piers, and their cornices are pressed in a variety of patterns - as can be seen on the Keidel or Hayek Buildings (Nos. 52 and 53). Sometimes a building was suspended between two party walls - as the Schulz Building (No. 54) was - and the end piers were reduced to short brick corbels to support the brackets of the cornice.

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63	214 State St.	Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company Office Building	1888
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The Driver Building is constructed of common brick with a simple, corbelled brick cornice under which run two header courses of alternately recessed bricks. The building is two stories high on its State Street side, but it has an additional lower story at the rear on Second Street. The windows on the second story along State Street and at the rear are segmentally arched, and each of those on the State Street facade has a decorative, rectangular panel of angled brick below it. The State Street facade was originally arcaded, but it has been altered. Segments of the filled-in arches can still be seen above the doors and the windows of the present State Street front.

64	231 Main St.	F. J. Mrvicka Saloon	1891
66	237 Main St.	Miller Brewing Company Saloon	1902

Two saloons were built in the district a little more than ten years apart by competing Milwaukee breweries - Pabst and Miller - to promote the sales of their beer. The styles of the two taverns are strikingly different.

The first was built in 1891 by the Pabst Brewing Company in the Queen Anne Style for M. J. Mrvicka. In 1898 Pabst assumed ownership of the saloon. Its exterior is dominated by two wooden bay windows on the second story, which overhang the sidewalk. A polygonal tent roof rises from the bracketed eaves of each bay and is interrupted by a rectangular dormer. From the bracketed eaves of each dormer, a pagoda-like roof sweeps up to a spire, capped with a weather vane. Between the twin roof towers of the two bays, an open gabled parapet rises - topped with a wooden spire at its apex and decorated with an elaborate ornament on the underside of the gable. The street front of this three story brick building was remodeled in the 1920s to create a half-timbered facade for a German restaurant which was operated there for many years.¹⁰⁰

The second tavern was built in 1902 by the Miller Brewing Company and is a much simpler, two story cream brick building in the Romanesque Revival Style. Above its corbelled brick cornice is a parapet with widely spaced crenels and a coping of rock faced stone. The three windows on the second story are arcaded, with pronounced archivolt trim and a straight brick stringcourse at the impost. The sills of the windows are joined in one thin line of molded and denticulated limestone with volutes at each end. The street facade may well be original. At least it appears to have been altered very little. It is surmounted by an exposed steel beam with rosettes capping structural bolts. The beam is set into the end piers of the building and above a central bay window, which is flanked by two recessed entry doors. The large display windows of the bay are framed by slender wooden posts and have chamfered wooden panels below them. It is a typical turn-of-the-century retail store front.

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222 Main St.

The Shoop Building

1893/1899/1902

The Shoop Building is, in fact, three structures built in a tight rectangle between 1893 and 1902 at what is now designated as 222 Main Street. All three buildings are the work of James Gilbert Chandler, a Racine architect.

The earliest of the group to be built was the main section along State Street at the foot of the bridge and overlooking the Root River. The basement and first two floors were built in 1893. The three remaining stories were added in 1899. It is constructed of cream brick - with red brick and red sandstone used for trim - in the Richardsonian Romanesque Style. Rock faced red sandstone is used for the Syrian arch over what used to be the main entrance on State Street. It is used to frame the large arched windows on the first floor and the rectangular windows on the second. It is also used for the capitals on the cream brick pilasters which divide the third and fourth stories and for the arcing of the fourth floor windows, as well as for cornices above the second and fourth stories and for other decorative elements. On the northwest corner of the building is a bartizan which rises from just below the second level to the top of the building. It was originally capped by a copper sheathed cylinder with a conical roof, that is now gone. On the northeast corner, the end bays are set off by engaged columns of red sandstone which run from the second level to the cornice. This corner was originally capped by a pyramidal roof which is also gone.

The second section is a six story addition built in 1902 on the south side of the main building and extending three bays beyond it on the east end. The addition is a much simpler design in the Romanesque Style. Constructed of cream colored brick, it is also trimmed with red sandstone - but much more sparingly. Two sandstone stringcourses continue the lines of the second and fourth story cornices on the main building. A two story Roman arch, rimmed in red sandstone, on the west elevation and three smaller arches on the east elevation surmount semi-circular windows similar to those on the State Street facade of the original building and faintly repeat their arched pattern. The addition has a simple cornice of corbelled brick.

Tucked within the ell formed by the original building and its addition, an office building and power plant was also constructed in 1902. This two story building is faced in ashlar masonry of smooth, buff colored sandstone. It is in the Classical Revival Style. The street level contains a colonade of four Corinthian columns, in antis. Between them are an arched doorway (now a window) and two arched windows. Above the colonade is an entablature comprised of a cushioned frieze, above which is a dentil molding and a modillioned cornice. Four pedestals topped with orbs, with a balustrade running between them, rest on a ledge above the cornice. The side elevation on the first floor has four arched windows (two of which are now used as doors) like those along State Street. The windows on the second story of both elevations are rectangular and are framed with a molded stone architrave. Those on the State Street side have carved masks above them. A bracketed cornice runs along the top of both facades, surmounted by a parapet decorated as a blind balustrade. (NRHP - April 26, 1978)¹⁰¹

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west from a bluff along the Root River. It has a flat roof with a low parapet, below which a modillioned cornice and an indented triglyph frieze run around the street and the river sides of the building. On the second story of the Fourth Street facade, double-hung windows - arranged in two sets of three - are set within brick surrounds, which project slightly from the plane of the wall. The windows have limestone sills, which establish a "white" line of horizontal "dashes" along the flat plane of the wall. On the Wisconsin Avenue elevation and along the river, the same type of window is set similarly - either singly or in pairs - on all stories. Originally, there were two segmentally arched openings on Fourth Street - below each set of windows - instead of the three rectangular garage doors which are there now.

A square watchtower at the southwest corner of the building rises five stories along the river and four stories above Fourth Street. It is topped by a low pitched hipped roof with wide, bracketed eaves. A doorway on the Fourth Street side at the base of the tower is segmentally arched with a Gibbs Surround and limestone used as the keystone and "quoins." A wide, casement window on each of the four sides of the top floor is deeply recessed just above a corbelled stone "balcony" at the level of the window sill.

The City Garage at 340 Wisconsin Avenue was also designed by Guilbert, in all probability, for many of the design elements of the engine house are repeated here. It is a single story structure along Wisconsin Avenue, with an additional story below it on the bluff along the river at the rear. It has a flat roof and is constructed of the same red brick as the firehouse. The double-hung windows on each side of the central garage doorway are treated as they are on the fire station, and the doorway itself is almost exactly like the two which were replaced on the Fourth Street facade of the firehouse. It is segmentally arched with a Gibbs Surround treated as it is on the entry door of the firehouse tower. The garage has no cornice - only a brick parapet inset with decorative limestone squares.¹⁰³

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217 Fourth St.

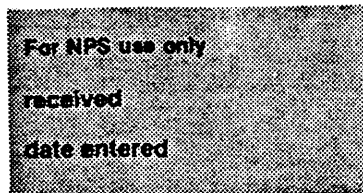
YMCA Building

1915

The four story YMCA Building is constructed of red brick and also displays the rectangular lines of the Prairie Style, as well as a classical cornice. It has a flat roof and a stone cornice with modillions. Below the cornice is an ornamental frieze of raised brick rectangles and crosses set alternately against panels of brick and panels of plain mortar. The foundation is also of brick, but in the early 1960s it was covered on the street sides with small square ceramic tiles set in a very thick bed of mortar. The windows are double-hung, and those on the first floor are elongated by the addition of transoms. The most interesting characteristic of the building is its brickwork. Above and below the windows on the street story, the bricks are set soldier fashion and stacked, rather than staggered. The stiles of the windows are framed by stacked stretchers, and the sills consist of a single course of headers. The piers between the first floor windows are constructed of stacked headers only. A raised belt course - comprised

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of one soldier with a header above and below - divides the first and second stories. All the bricks are set with severely raked joints. On the upper three stories, they are set in a common bond - except around the windows, where the stiles, sills, and lintels are treated as they are below. Between the windows of the second and third floors, are square panels of plain mortar, each one inset at its center with four square ceramic tiles, arranged in a diamond pattern.¹⁰⁴

14	440 Main St.	Manufacturers' National Bank Building	1919
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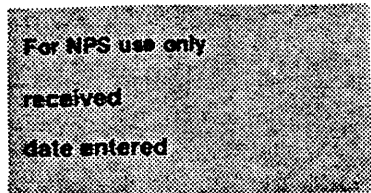
Behind the Classical Revival Style of the Manufacturers' National Bank Building may stand the skeleton of the Vaughan and Williams Block, which was built in 1869 in the Italianate Style. But the exterior has been remodeled so extensively at least twice - first in 1907 and again in 1919 - that the structure has become an entirely different building. The present exterior displays, for the most part, the white marble face of 1919. The three story building has a hipped, pantile roof over its central section, with flat roofs over the east and west wings. The third floor is an attic story which rises above a deep cornice with block modillions. The five central bays on the Fifth Street facade are defined by marble pilasters with gray granite bases, which rise two stories from the street. The bays are spanned by tall, fixed windows and two doorways. The doorways are between the most easterly and westerly bays at the street level. The westerly one has been made into a window, but both of them have their original, carved marble pediments. The three central windows have cast iron lintels over the street level. In the early 1930s, the eastern corner of the building was fitted with a store front for a women's clothing shop. In 1964 that section was remodeled again to restore it to greater harmony with the original design.¹⁰⁵

4	212 Fourth St.	Second Journal Printing Company Building	1921
23	410 Main St.	Racine Dry Goods Store	1922
13	500 Monument Sq.	Zahn's Building	1924

Three buildings constructed in the 1920s show the influence of the Chicago School and elements of the Prairie Style. All three structures are of brick, with well defined piers and with the bays between them spanned by tri-part windows for light. The buildings have flat roofs with low parapets, and they are essentially rectilinear. The Second Journal Printing Company Building at 212 Fourth Street was designed by Lambert Bassindale, and it is a two story structure built of red brick. The Racine Dry Goods Store at 410 Main Street is three stories tall, and the Zahn's Building at 500 Monument Square, is four. Both are built of buff colored brick in differing shades. The Zahn's Building was designed by Edmund B. Funston.¹⁰⁶

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All three buildings have the "Chicago windows" - in three sections, usually with a wide, fixed sash in the center and narrower, double-hung sashes on each side. When decoration is found on any of these buildings, it is most often geometric. Simple rectangles of limestone are set in the parapet of the Journal Building, and small limestone squares are set in the upper corners of its window recesses. Rectangular lines of raised brick outline the piers and the windows of the Racine Dry Goods Store. Geometric designs in glazed terra cotta adorn the tops of the piers, decorate the parapet, and are used as its coping on the Zahn's Building. What decoration is not geometric is faintly classical - like the simply molded cornice and the second story window sills of the Journal Building or the slightly corbelled, stone cornice on the Racine Dry Goods Store. Above that cornice is a pedimented parapet with a date stone on a medallion centered in the tympanum and embellished with festoons.

The additions made in 1939, 1949, and 1960 to the Second Journal Printing Company Building continued the same pier and spandrel design and the brickwork of the original several bays to the rear (north). These additions and the minor window alterations do not detract significantly from the principal elevations of the building and are not detrimental to its overall integrity.

39	318 Main St.	Paramount Radio Stores Building	1929
65	235 Main St.	White Tower Restaurant	1929

Five buildings in the district were constructed especially for national or regional chains. They were built between the late 1920s and the late 1940s, and they display the slick and glossy exteriors which became the rule for retail establishments in the 1930s and 1940s. Two of them were built during the period of significance.

The two story building at 318 Main Street was built for the Paramount Radio Stores in what might be called the "Hollywood Spanish Style." A false "mansard" roof of green Spanish tile decorates the parapet. Below it, molded and glazed terra cotta tiles, in pink, face the entire second story.

The White Tower Restaurant at 235 Main Street is the familiar, single story structure covered in white glazed brick with details picked-out in black glazed brick. Its one and a half story tower has a round arched window set above the entry door. The tower is capped by brick corbelling and a crenel at each corner. The exterior appears to be intact as it was built, except that metal door and window frames have replaced the original wooden ones.

Three other buildings in the district were constructed especially for chain stores. Neisner Brothers Incorporated had a new store built at 424 Main Street after its original store burned on the same site in 1940. After World War II, the Lerner Shops Building (No. 22) and the J. C. Penney Department Store (No. 88) were constructed, both in 1947.¹⁰⁷

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FOOTNOTES: PART 7

- ¹ Alice Sankey, Racine: The Belle City (Racine: Racine Board of Education, n.d.), pp. 37 & 40.
- ² "Table of Fire Insurance Rates in Force on the Buildings in the Business District of Racine in 1849"; Minimum Tariff of Rates Adopted by the Racine Board of Fire Underwriters, April 1868 (Racine: Printed at the Racine Journal Job Office, 1868); Tariff of Rates of Insurance at Racine, Wisconsin (Racine: Advocate Steam Printing House and Bindery, 1875); John Van Thiel, "100 Years Ago: The Big Fire of '82," Racine Journal Times, April 4, 1982.
- ³ City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Racine Journal Times, February 24, 1939; September 9, 1949; July 10, 1960.
- ⁷ Racine City Directory for 1923.
- ⁸ Robert D. Long, Racine's Historic Firehouses (Racine: Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1982), p. 7.
- ⁹ Racine Times-Call, November 1, 1916.
- ¹⁰ Dorothy Osborne, "Originals," Preservation-Racine Newsletter, Winter 1984, p. 6; City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- ¹¹ City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Building Permit.
- ¹⁴ City of Racine Tax Rolls; Building Permit.
- ¹⁵ Building Permit.
- ¹⁶ H. Russell Zimmermann, The Heritage Guidebook (Milwaukee: Heritage Banks, 1976), p. 371.
- ¹⁷ Building Permit.

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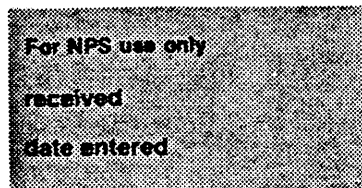
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- 19 Deed, Volume 33 of Deeds, page 411, Racine County Registry.
- 20 Racine City Directory for 1850.
- 21 Building Permit.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- 24 Building Permit.
- 25 Date Stone on the building.
- 26 Racine City Directory for 1852.
- 27 City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Susan E. Karr, Architectural and Historical Survey of the City of Racine (Racine: Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1979), p. 19.
- 32 Party Wall Agreement, Volume 72 of Deeds, page 87, Racine County Registry.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Deed, Volume 66 of Deeds, page 606, Racine County Registry.
- 35 City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Party Wall Agreement, Volume 108 of Deeds, page 474, Racine County Registry.
- 38 City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- 39 Ibid.

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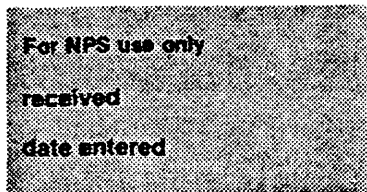
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- 40 Party Wall Agreement, Volume 94 of Deeds, page 429, Racine County Registry.
- 41 Building Permit.
- 42 Deed, Volume X of Deeds, page 391, Racine County Registry.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- 45 Building Permit.
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- 47 Ibid.
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- 51 "Fire Insurance Rates, 1849."
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- 54 City of Racine Tax Rolls.
- 55 Ibid.
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- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Building Permit.
- 60 Karr, Survey, p. 18; John Van Thiel, "Building Has Colorful Past," Racine Journal Times, December 17, 1983.
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63 Racine City Directory for 1925.

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65 City of Racine Tax Rolls.

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70 Building Permit.

71 Karr, Survey, pp. 21-22.

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75 Deed, Volume 69 of Deeds, page 107, Racine County Registry.

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- 95 Fanny S. Stone, ed. Racine: Belle City of the Lakes (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1916), 2: 130; Karr, Survey, p. 19.
- 96 City of Racine Tax Rolls; Helen Patton, "Lucas Bradley: Carpenter, Builder, Architect," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 58 (Winter 1974-1975), 110.
- 97 Photographs in the collection of the Racine County Historical Society and Museum show the building before and after the stacked bay was added.
- 98 Racine Journal, May 10, 1882; Racine Journal Times, July 1, 1956; Karr, Survey, pp. 21-22.
- 99 Racine Journal, March 5, 1883; Karr, Survey, p. 19.
- 100 City of Racine Tax Rolls; Karr, Survey, p. 22. The F. J. Mrvicka Saloon was declared eligible for listing on the National Register on September 11, 1979.
- 101 Racine Journal, March 8, 1893; March 30, 1899; January 1, 1903; Karr, Survey, p. 18
- 102 City of Racine Tax Rolls; Racine Journal Times, February 24, 1939.
- 103 Long, Firehouses, p. 7.
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¹⁰⁵City of Racine Tax Rolls; Zimmermann, Guidebook, p. 371; Building Permit.

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¹⁰⁷Racine Journal Times, April 8, 1940.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1847-1929 Period of Significance Builder/Architect See below.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Old Main Street Historic District contains a group of architecturally and historically significant commercial buildings, which were constructed between the late 1840s and the late 1920s. The district encompasses what remains of the "commercial corridor," lining both sides of Main Street, which began to develop in the 1840s during Racine's earliest days as a Great Lakes port, flourished after the 1880s when Racine was growing as a center of manufacture, and endured through the 1950s when it was drained of its vitality by suburban shopping centers. The district contains some of the best examples in the city of small commercial buildings in the Italianate Style, as well as some of the only remaining large commercial buildings in the Italianate, Queen Anne, Richardsonian Romanesque, Classical Revival, and Prairie Styles. The works of local and regional architects are included in the district - such as James G. Chandler, A. Arthur Guilbert, and Edmund B. Funston of Racine, and Edward Townsend Mix of Milwaukee. Historically, the district includes shops and office buildings constructed by some of Racine's most important early businessmen - such as Nicholas D. Fratt, Henry S. Durand, and George Wustum. It is the area where Racine's first newspapers and banks were established, and it contains buildings which are associated with a number of other "firsts" in the history of the city.

Historical Background

Commerce was the very reason for Racine's establishment. In 1828 Gilbert Knapp - who was then the captain of a Coast Guard cutter operating on the Great Lakes out of Detroit - dropped anchor off the mouth of the Root River while he was cruising the western shores of Lake Michigan, and he explored the area around the river which was to become Racine. Knapp was convinced that the site was the finest potential harbor on Lake Michigan, and even before the area was opened for settlement, he returned there in November of 1834 to establish and hold a claim to 140 acres, which were almost evenly divided on both sides of the Root River where it flows into Lake Michigan.¹

Knapp's claim was platted in 1836, with blocks and streets laid out in a grid on both the north and south sides of the river. But by then it was already apparent that the commercial center of the Village of Racine would be on the south side. That was where Knapp had built his claim shanty, and that was where the settlers who followed him built their homes and shops. There was not even a bridge across the river until 1838. In 1843 Henry Durand, an early businessman in the settlement, described the village in a letter to his uncle in Connecticut: "All of the public buildings are on the south side of the River," he explained, and "all of the business is done on that side. The principle (sic) street is Main St. & nearly all of the mercantile business is done on it. There are now twenty-six stores large & small on this street, ten on the east side & sixteen on the west." The district then consisted of frame buildings mostly, running

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets, item number 9, pages 1 and 2.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 17

Quadrangle name Racine South, WI

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

116	4315760	47311110
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

116	4315880	473110510
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

116	4316000	4730700
Zone	Easting	Northing

D

116	4315880	473106510
Zone	Easting	Northing

E

116	4315770	473108120
Zone	Easting	Northing

F

Zone	Easting	Northing

G

Zone	Easting	Northing

H

Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheets, item 10, pages 1 and 2.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Don Rintz, Historian

organization Prepared for the Racine Landmarks Preservation Commission date

street & number 1730 College Avenue telephone (414) 637-2413

city or town Racine state

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title date 4/23/87

For NPS use only

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

 date 8/11/87

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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along Main Street south to the public square, which came to be known as Haymarket Square, because that is where the farmers brought their crops for sale; but after the Civil War monument was placed there in 1884, it was renamed Monument Square.²

The harbor was to be the source of Racine's growth and prosperity. Gilbert Knapp envisioned Racine as the principal port on the western shore of Lake Michigan, and the early settlers in the village shared his vision. As early as 1836, the citizens of Racine paid for a survey of the harbor. Later, bonds were issued and heavy assessments were made for the building of piers and dredging the river. In those early years, Racine was in competition with Chicago and Milwaukee as a port. In 1842, when the population of the village was only 800, some 3500 immigrants landed in Racine, heading for the rich farmlands to the west, and the following year, wheat exports frequently reached 1500 bushels a day - second only to Chicago.³

The area along the river north of Second Street became the principal service area for the waterfront - with wharves and grain elevators, with storage sheds and yards, and eventually with railroad sidings to serve the merchant ships and the passenger ships that docked in Racine's harbor. It was the area south of Second Street where the shops, saloons, offices, and boarding houses were built and the downtown commercial area developed. During this period Lyman K. Smith built the building on the northeast corner of Fourth and Main which later came to be known as the Judd Block (No. 80), and Henry S. Durand and Israel Munson Hill built an even more elegant building on the northwest corner of Third and Main, the Durand and Hill Block (No. 49).⁴

Racine's harbor remained in competition with Chicago and Milwaukee until the coming of the railroads in the 1850s. A line linking it to the Mississippi River was considered a necessity for the success of any port on the western shore of Lake Michigan. Racine started late in the race; both Chicago and Milwaukee completed their railway lines to the Mississippi before Racine and they dominated the land routes to the west. Racine's venture into railroading - the Racine and Mississippi Railroad - was a failure; it eventually became a part of the Milwaukee Road. The McClurg Building (No. 69) was built as the headquarters for Racine's only railroad, and it remains today as the last vestige of it, since the tracks for the Racine and Mississippi were finally abandoned in the city during the early 1980s. Railroads quickly replaced ships in the transporting of people and goods over long distances, and the activity in Racine's harbor was reduced even further. In its heyday, more than 300 ships called the Port of Racine their home, but by World War I, the last of them had been sold and departed.⁵

While Racine never fulfilled its promise as a port or as a center of trade and transportation, it did establish a firm economic base as a center of manufacturing. J. I. Case had begun to make threshing machines in the Village of Rochester - west of Racine - in 1842, but he moved his shop to Racine two years

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later. That was the beginning of an agricultural implement industry which remains to this day one of the most important industries in the city. That same year Lucius Blake began manufacturing fanning mills. His was the first of nine firms to produce those hand cranked grain winnowers from 1844 to the 1920s. In 1855 Henry Mitchell moved his wagon factory from Kenosha to Racine. In the following twenty years, three other firms were established to manufacture every variety of farm and freight wagon - as well as carriages, buggies, sleighs, and cutters. By 1880, above and beyond the manufacturers of wagons and agricultural tools, nine firms tanned or curried leather, four made shoes, one made trunks and valises. Four others made sashes, doors, and millwork, and three manufactured hardware. Racine's goods began to be shipped to regional, national, and even to international markets.⁶

This growth was reflected in the Old Main Street Historic District. The manufacturing businesses were close to downtown. J. I. Case's works were just across the river south of State Street. The Mitchell Wagon Company was only a few blocks away to the west at Center and Seventh Streets; Lucius Blake's shop was just north of the district on Second Street, and Joseph Miller's shoe company ran along the west side of Chatham Street (now Lake Avenue) at Fourth. Most of the other factories and shops were also within easy distance of Main Street. The district became the commercial and mercantile center of this rapidly growing number of factories, as well as for the rapidly increasing population of Racine. By 1880 the population of the city had grown to 16,031. This period of prosperity produced shops of individual storekeepers in the fashionable Italianate Style - like those to be seen in the 300 Block of Main Street.⁷

From 1880 to 1940 a number of new firms were established to manufacture products for national and international markets. Some of their names became household words. Johnson Wax was founded in 1886, and Horlick's Malted Milk was offered for sale in 1887. Hartmann Trunks, Dr. Shoop's Family Medicines, and Gold Medal Furniture appeared in the 1890s. Hamilton Beach electrical appliances began to be produced in 1910, and the Whitman Publishing Company was moved from Chicago to Racine in 1916. The Oster Manufacturing Company was established in the 1920s, while Dremel Tools and In-Sink-Erators were first made in Racine in the 1930s.⁸

During that period the population of the City of Racine grew by more than 50,000, and downtown Racine grew with it. Most of the larger commercial buildings in the district were built in those years: the Chauncey Hall Building (1883), the Shoop Building (1893/1899/1902), the M. M. Secor Building (1904), the YMCA Building (1915), the Manufacturers' National Bank Building (1919), the Second Journal Printing Company Building (1921), the Arcade Building (1923), and the Zahn's Building (1924). The Great Depression of the 1930s curtailed new building, but by then Main Street had reached its prime. It changed little during the years of World War II, but afterwards, only four new buildings were constructed

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in the district in the late 1940s and the 1950s. Main Street was being displaced by shopping centers out on the edges of the city and its vitality faded into history.⁹

Area of Significance: Architecture

The Old Main Street Historic District encompasses the oldest and some of the finest commercial buildings in the City of Racine. It includes excellent examples of small structures in the Italianate Style, and it contains some of the few remaining examples in the city of larger commercial buildings in the Queen Anne, Richardsonian Romanesque, and Classical Revival Styles. Among the best buildings in the district are some which were designed by Racine's own architects, as well as a few which were designed by architects from other areas. Finally, the district contains a few buildings which are unique in the city - either because they are the last of their kind or because their designs are particularly out of the ordinary.

In the 1830s through the 1850s, when Racine was being settled, the prevailing building styles in the United States were Federal and Greek Revival. A number of buildings in each of those styles once existed in the district, but they disappeared as the commercial area grew and tastes in architecture changed. Only traces of those early styles remain, obscured or covered over by alterations and remodeling. The faint outlines of the Federal Style can still be seen on the Judd Block (No. 80) and the underlying Greek Revival elements of the Durand and Hill Block (No. 49) can be picked out. But the style that dominates in the district is Italianate. Its rise in popularity in this country during the 1850s, and its preeminence among architectural styles for commercial buildings by the 1870s, coincided with the earliest period of vigorous growth in Racine's commercial center.¹⁰

The proud manifestation of that vigorous growth was a vigorous building - the McClurg Building (No. 69). It is the finest example in the district of a commercial building in the Italianate Style. It was the largest building in Racine in 1857. Its combination of red brick with white stone trim was vibrant against the cream brick that was so commonly used in the district at that time, and its cast iron Main Street facade was lavish. It was then and is still unique in the city. In the early 1850s, before the McClurg Building was constructed, a few shop buildings in the Italianate Style had already appeared in the district. The Stebbins Building (No. 41) was built about 1850 and followed almost immediately by its twin (No. 40) and by the Wustum Building (No. 24). These were simpler, more rectangular, and more severe in design. After the McClurg Building was completed, the smaller Italianate buildings in the district display more curved lines and more attention to decorative detail. The blind arcade of the Lee and Dickson Building (No. 33), as already mentioned, echoes the recessed pavillions of the McClurg, but the Lee and Dickson Building is, in itself, a

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a restrained and handsome example of the Italianate Style. The windows and the frieze of the Neumann Building (No. 36) and its companion, the Peil, Ritter, and Schmeisser Building (No. 37), establish arcaded patterns that are light and lacy, and Venetian in their effect. Those two buildings are central to a row of four, at 320 through 326 Main, which are as fine a strip of small Commercial Italianate buildings as is to be found in the City of Racine.

The change in Victorian architectural taste that was to become prevalent in the district during the 1880s was foreshadowed more than ten years earlier by the McEnery Building (No. 16). It is a strongly rectangular design, carefully detailed and controlled - a very regular, rhythmic, placid facade - with all its Victorian embellishment. The corbelled frieze, the prominently delineated piers, rectangular windows, heavy limestone hoods and sills became the models for the two story Commercial Victorian buildings which were constructed in the district during the 1880s - like the Hueffner and Buckingham Buildings (Nos. 31 and 32). They, in turn, were the models for the shops constructed after the fire of 1882 - like the row of five shops on the west side of Main in the 200 block (Nos. 52 through 56). They present the most cohesive and complementary row of Victorian Commercial buildings that have survived in the city.

In the 1880s, styles other than Italianate began to appear in the district. These buildings were not numerous, but they tended to be larger and more impressive. The first of them was the Chauncey Hall Building (No. 29), designed in 1883 by the distinguished Milwaukee architect, Edward Townsend Mix. This was his second building in Racine. He had designed St. Luke's Episcopal Church at Seventh and Main Streets in 1866. St. Luke's is in the Gothic Revival Style; the Chauncey Hall Building is Queen Anne. It was under construction while Mix was the supervising architect for the Milwaukee Club at 706 Jefferson Street in Milwaukee. Like the Milwaukee Club, its materials are red brick and red sandstone, with red terra cotta ornament. In fact, the ornamental terra cotta panels on the Chauncey Hall Building are identical to those on the Milwaukee Club. Mix is, of course, best known for his Milwaukee buildings - most especially the Mitchell and the Mackie Buildings at 207 and 225 East Michigan in Milwaukee - but his two buildings in Racine have both been listed on the National Register - St. Luke's in 1979 and the Chauncey Hall Building in 1980.¹¹

The Richardsonian Romanesque Style appeared in the district in 1893 with the design of the Shoop Building by James Gilbert Chandler - a Racine architect who specialized in designing schools and built a number of them in Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and Illinois. Chandler had already displayed his mastery of the Queen Anne Style in his design for the first YMCA Building in Racine (NRHP - March 1, 1982) at 314-20 Sixth Street. Here he created a hulking bulwark of a building with a cave-like stone entryway and a towering corner bartizan. Yet the design is not all massive rock faced Richardsonian stone; it is enlivened by the use of cream brick for the flat planes of the exterior walls and by the combination of

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red and cream brick in diaper pattern belt courses across the facade and on the frieze.¹²

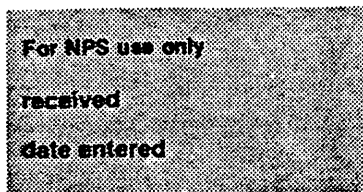
The Shoop Building became an exercise in styles for Chandler. An addition to the building which he designed in 1902 showed his ability to work in a more reserved Romanesque Style. Segmentally arched windows became the motif and the large round arches, lightly rimmed in red sandstone, merely refer back faintly to the massive stone arches of the original building. That same year Chandler designed for Dr. Shoop the final section of the building - the sophisticated Classical Revival structure which H. Russell Zimmermann called "a little jewel of an office building."¹³

After the turn of the century, the influence of the Prairie School was to be seen in the district in buildings like Engine House No. 5 (No. 6), designed in 1907 for the Racine Fire Department by A. Arthur Guilbert - another Racine architect. Guilbert had, in fact, graduated from the Chicago School of Architecture in 1901. He practiced in Racine from 1903 until his death in 1922. Guilbert's buildings usually blend the rectilinear mass and the emphasis on the horizontal, so characteristic of the Prairie Style, with classical decoration - as can be seen in his 1904 design (with Herbert B. Rugh) of the John H. Palmeter Old Ladies Home (NRHD - October 18, 1977) at 1547 College Avenue or his 1912 design for the Racine Elks Club (NRHP - September 7, 1984) at 601 Lake Avenue. Here, as on the other two buildings, even the classical cornice became an important horizontal element of the design.¹⁴

The influence of the Chicago School is to be seen again in the district in the 1920s in Lambert Bassindale's design for the Second Journal Printing Company Building (No. 4) and in the design by an unknown architect of the Racine Dry Goods Store (No. 23). Both are small buildings in the Commercial Style - developed and used in Chicago for skyscrapers but adapted here to a more modest scale. Bassindale was a Racine architect who later moved to St. Paul, but he returned in 1939 to supervise the construction of the first addition to the Journal Building. The building in the district which most clearly shows the influence of the Prairie School is Zahn's Department Store (No. 13), designed in 1924 by Edmund B. Funston. He was a Racine architect who had been trained at the University of Illinois and had worked in Chicago for a time before coming to Racine in 1903. He was in partnership with A. Arthur Guilbert between 1905 and 1915, when they split up and each architect opened an office of his own. In 1915 Funston had designed the Badger Building (NRHP - December 3, 1980) at 610 Main Street, which is clearly a building in the Prairie Style. The Zahn's Building displays the rectilinear mass, the prominent piers, and the geometric ornament which are indicative of the Prairie Style.¹⁵

Finally, the district contains several one-of-a-kind buildings from various periods in its history. The Mrvicka Saloon (No. 64), from the 1890s, for example,

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is the only tavern in Racine built by a brewery in the Queen Anne Style. The Miller Brewing Company Saloon (No. 66) is the only company built tavern in the Romanesque Revival Style. The Manufacturers' National Bank Building (No. 14) is the only example left in Racine of the elaborate Classical Revival facades which once seemed to be mandatory for all financial institutions - particularly between the 1890s and the 1930s. Among these unique buildings are some of the latest to be constructed in the district. They were designed for chain stores or restaurants by corporate architects to be immediately identifiable and to project a particular image for each company. Such are the Paramount Radio Stores Building (No. 39) and the White Tower Restaurant (No. 65), both built in 1929, and the Neisner Brothers Store (No. 19), built in 1940. These and all that remain of earlier architectural styles and designs preserve a visual history of the Old Main Street Historic District's importance as the commercial center of Racine from the 1840s through the 1950s.

Area of Significance: Commerce

The earliest commercial development in the district was, of course, the establishment of stores and workshops to serve the early settlers. The first store, tradition says, was opened in Racine by E. J. Glen and Levi Mason, who settled here in 1835. By 1843 there were 26 stores along Main Street, and by 1850, when the first city directory was published, there were 21 men in the district listed only as merchants. There were 16 others listed as grocers and another 16, as tailors. There were 11 shoemakers or shoe dealers, 7 hardware merchants, 5 hatters, 4 druggists, 3 bakers, 2 butchers, 2 jewelers, 1 tobacconist, 1 leather dealer, 1 marble dealer, and 1 dressmaker. The successful shopkeepers became involved in the economic development and in the government of the Village and of the City of Racine.¹⁶

Among those shopkeepers, for example, was Amaziah Stebbins, who built the stores at 314 and 316 Main (Nos. 40 and 41). He was one of Racine's earliest settlers, arriving here in 1835. By 1837 he was one of the landlords of Racine's first large hotel - the Racine House, which stood on the site of Zahn's Department Store (No. 13). Thereafter, he went into business with Eli R. Cooley, selling hardware. Cooley had arrived here in 1839. The Cooley and Stebbins hardware store was the first occupant of the building at 314 Main. Stebbins was elected as the first assessor of the Village of Racine in 1841. Cooley served as the last president of the board of the Village of Racine in 1848 and as the third mayor of the City of Racine in 1850. He and his wife Anna built a handsome Greek Revival house which still stands at 1135 South Main Street (NRHP - April 11, 1973).¹⁷

Alanson H. Lee and John Dickson built the store at 330 Main (No. 33). Lee had come to Racine in 1840 and Dickson arrived the following year. They opened a dry goods business, which they operated for a time in the Judd Block (No. 80). In 1858 they built the shop at 330 Main, and three years later Lee died. Dickson

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closed the store in 1865 and devoted his time to "building up Racine." He was one of the incorporators of the Racine and Rock River Plank Road and one of the "prime movers" in obtaining a franchise for the Racine and Mississippi Railroad.¹⁸

Nicholas D. Fratt and his brother Francis built the store at 430 Main (No. 18). Nicholas came to Racine from the State of New York in 1843, when he was eighteen years old. The following year he opened a meat and vegetable market in partnership with Charles Herrick, who was bought out by Francis in 1846. The brothers operated the Washington Market, as their store was called, until 1850. Nicholas was one of the founders of the Racine County Bank and became its president in 1858. In 1859 he was the state senator from Racine. He also served as president of the Racine County Agricultural Society and of the State Agricultural Society. In both 1881 and 1884, he was the Democratic candidate for Governor of Wisconsin. The Fratt School at 3501 Kinzie Avenue is named in his honor.¹⁹

George Wustum built the store at 408 Main (No. 24) about 1851. He had been born in Germany and had emigrated to New York in 1838. He came to Racine in 1844, where he established a butchering business, which he operated for sixteen years. Wustum twice served as a city alderman, and he was mayor of Racine in 1855. The home of his son Charles, at 2519 Northwestern Avenue, is now the Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts.²⁰

A number of other buildings in the district bear the names of Racine's commercial pioneers - like Ernst J. Hueffner (No. 31), a leather dealer, and Anthony Kraupa (No. 45), a hardware merchant, both of whom came to Racine in 1849. Michael Keidel (No. 52), a tailor, who arrived about 1850. Hugh Gorton (Nos. 26 and 27), a butcher, settled in Racine in 1851, and Frederick Ibing (Nos. 77 and 78), a furniture dealer, who came here about a year later. Henry Smieding (No. 47), a druggist, and John Liegler (No. 35), a furrier, both arrived in 1854. Most of these men were active in the businessmen's organizations of the time, and a number of them served terms as either aldermen of the city or supervisors of the county.²¹

Racine's first newspaper was established in the district - the Racine Argus. It appeared on February 14, 1838, edited by Marshall M. Strong - Racine's first attorney - and Lorenzo Janes - one of Racine's earliest real estate brokers and financiers. There were only eighteen issues of the Argus published before it was suspended on October 6, 1838, for lack of financial support; but it was the beginning of an active press in the district. The Racine Advocate was established four years later with an office in downtown Racine outside the district, but by 1858 its offices were located in the Judd Block (No. 80), which is the earliest building still standing that can be associated with it. The Advocate's offices were later moved to the Masonic Block (no longer extant) at 413-17 Main, and for a time after the fire of 1882, they were housed in the McClurg Building (No. 69) until the paper ceased publication in 1888. A number of other short lived papers were published in the district. The Old Oaken Bucket appeared in 1849 and only

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in that year - published from the Durand and Hill Block (No. 49). The Commercial Advertiser was published from 1850 to 1852 in the Commercial Building (No. 83) at 401 Main, and the Racine County Argus survived there from 1872 to 1880.²²

The Racine Journal Times has had its offices in the district since its founding in 1856. It is the successor to or the survivor of a long string of Racine newspapers. Established as the Racine Journal, its first editor was Lucius C. Carey, and its first home was also the Commercial Building (No. 83), but three months later it was moved to the Durand and Hill Block (No. 49). The Journal was edited for a time in the 1860s and 1870s by William L. Utley, who was Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin when the Civil War began and later became the Colonel of the Twenty-Second Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers. Utley maintained the offices of the paper at 419 Main (No. 89). In 1873 Frank Washburn Starbuck came from Cincinnati and purchased Colonel Utley's interest in the Journal. Starbuck managed the paper from then until 1912, when his son, Frank Raymond, took over. The elder Starbuck had moved the offices of the newspaper to 436 Main (no longer extant) in 1883 and to 328 Main (No. 34) in 1892. The younger Starbuck built the present home of the Journal Times (No. 4) in 1921, and he remained its president until the 1950s. The Starbuck Middle School at 1516 Ohio Street was named for F. W. Starbuck.²³

Racine has been the home of a number of foreign language newspapers, which were published to serve particular ethnic groups. Some were printed in the district. The Racine Volksblatt had offices in the Judd Block (No. 80) in 1858, and the Racine Banner maintained offices at 406 Main (No. 25) in 1885. The Racine Correspondent was published at 339 Main (No. 80) from 1883 to 1918. All three were German language newspapers. Folkets Avis, a Danish weekly, had offices in the Judd Block (No. 80), at 409 Main (No. 86), and at 432 Main (No. 17) from 1873 to 1905, when it was moved to Minneapolis.²⁴

The first Racine banks were organized in the district, and during the period of the Old Main Street District's commercial importance, they all maintained their offices in the district or very close by. The earliest mention of a Racine bank is in the Argus in April of 1838, where it is noted that Lorenzo Janes was elected president by shareholders of the Bank of Racine. The project is said to have failed because the financial panic of 1837 had made people cautious, and stock in the bank could not be sold. The first bank to succeed seems to have been the Racine County Bank, which was incorporated in January of 1854 and opened its offices on the northeast corner of Fourth and Main in the Judd Block. Its president was Reuben M. Norton and the board of directors included among its members Henry S. Durand and Nicholas D. Fratt. In 1864 the bank was reorganized as the First National Bank of Racine, and therefore, it became the oldest national bank in the county. It remained in the Judd Block until 1880, when it moved to a building on Monument Square just outside the boundaries of the Old Main Street Historic District. The building no longer exists, and the First National Bank of Racine is now known as

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the Marine Bank South.²⁵

In February of 1853, a second Bank of Racine had been incorporated, with Henry J. Ullman as its president. Its offices were in the Commercial Building (No. 83), at the southeast corner of Fourth and Main - directly across the street from the Racine County Bank. In 1859 the private banking house of Byron B. Northrop and Company was opened in the Bouton House Block (no longer extant) at 425 Main. Eighty of the principal manufacturers and merchants of the City and County of Racine organized a new bank in 1871, with J. I. Case as its president. Byron Northrop's company and the Bank of Racine were consolidated with it to form the Manufacturers' National Bank. It opened in the Baker House (formerly the Bouton House) but moved to a building on the northwest corner of Fifth and Main in the following year. The Manufacturers' National Bank constructed the present building at 440 Main (No. 14) and remained there until 1929, when it was merged with the First National Bank of Racine.²⁶

The City Bank of Racine was incorporated in 1854, with Alexander McClurg as its president. It operated for a time in the Bouton House Block but was moved to the McClurg Building (No. 69), when it was completed, but the bank closed soon thereafter. In 1892 the Commercial and Savings Bank of Racine was organized, with Lucius Blake as its president. Early in this century, the bank built a three story building on the northeast corner of Fifth and Main. It closed in 1914, but two years later the American Trades and Savings Bank opened in its place to guarantee the depositors of the earlier institution. The American Trades and Savings Bank eventually became the M & I Bank of Racine, and it still occupies the much remodeled quarters of the Commercial Savings Bank (No. 92).²⁷

A number of insurance agencies were established in the district, the most important of which was undoubtedly the one owned by Henry S. Durand. He came to Racine in 1843 and became an agent of the Aetna Insurance Company in 1844. Durand claimed to have issued the first insurance policy in Wisconsin. If that is so, he must have issued it at his office in the district on Main Street. Durand eventually established an extensive mercantile, produce and commission, lumber and coal business. He owned lumber interests in Michigan and five first-class ships on the Great Lakes. In partnership with three others, he bought the land for and laid out the City of LaCrosse. In 1849 he built the Durand and Hill Block (No. 49), where he maintained his offices. Around 1856 he built the Durand Building (No. 50) next door and another building north of that, which is no longer extant. Durand was an officer in at least two Racine banks and he was the president of the Racine and Mississippi Railroad. Durand was one of the most influential businessmen in the early history of Racine. He lived at 1012 South Main, where he built a huge Italianate mansion (NRHD - October 18, 1977).²⁸

Within the district the first offices were established for those nineteenth century marvels which have become twentieth century necessities.

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The first Western Union office appears to have been opened in the Commercial Building (No. 83). The Racine Gas, Electric Light and Power Company maintained offices in that same building during the 1880s. After the Racine Water Company was established in 1886, it opened an office at 321 Main (No. 73), where it remained even after the city took over the waterworks. The Belle City Street Railway Company was granted the first franchise to furnish electricity to the entire city in 1892. Its plant, which once stood at 219-29 Main, has been razed; however, an office of the electric company was maintained at 336 Main (No. 30) from 1912 to 1921.²⁹

The district was also the site of the first movie theater. William C. Tiede set up the theater in the McClurg Building (No. 69). Indeed, that building housed a number of Racine "firsts." The city's first public library was established there in 1897 and its first municipal court was held there at the turn of the century. In the basement, the first Turkish bathhouse was installed, with the most modern equipment available - purported to be the earliest in this section of the country. It operated until 1941. Like the McClurg Building, downtown was once the place where everything happened first, and it remained that way until the outlying shopping areas drew the crowds away. From the 1840s through the 1950s, however, it was the center of everything; and the Old Main Street Historic District preserves within its boundaries the last visible vestiges of those former times.³⁰

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Archeological Potential

The presence of prehistoric archeological sites within the boundaries of the district was indicated by the reports of at least two early Racine settlers, but the extensive commercial development which took place in the district in subsequent years may well have removed all traces of them. There is now no visible evidence of either prehistoric or historic archeological potential. However, no careful study has been carried out in the district, and therefore its archeological potential is unknown at this time.

Preservation Activity

Preservation activity is now to be seen almost everywhere in the Old Main Street Historic District. It began with an architectural survey of older sections of Racine, done in 1974, for the Urban Aesthetics Commission by Johnston, Johnston and Roy of Ann Arbor, Michigan. A year later a report entitled: "Historic Architecture of Downtown Racine: An Inventory of Buildings Worth Considering for Preservation," was prepared by Nelson Peter Ross for the Racine Landmarks Preservation Commission and presented by the commission to the Common Council of the City of Racine.

Studies and design sketches for the restoration of downtown buildings were commissioned by Racine Urban Aesthetics in the late 1970s, but it was the investment of money and effort by individual building owners which began to reverse several decades of deterioration, and it is the continuation of that effort which will eventually overcome it. Preservation activity quickened when the Johnson Redevelopment Corporation bought three major buildings in the district and began to adapt them for the rental of office space. The McClurg Building and the M. M. Secor Building were renovated and joined by a steel and glass service core to form an office complex now called "Main Place," which was opened last year. This year, work on the Shoop Building has been completed, and it is ready to receive tenants. There is a new vitality in downtown Racine, spurred by the construction of a harbor for pleasure boats, a festival area, and lakeside condominiums - all of which are being built just to the east of the district. The restoration of older buildings nearby is now being looked upon as the creation of "historical ambiance" for those residential and recreational areas. The period of razing old buildings appears to be over and the period of renovating them seems to have come at last.

The following buildings have been determined eligible or listed in the NRHP previously:

Mrvicka, F.J. Saloon (231 Main St.) DOE 9-11-79
Hall, Chauncey Building (340 Main St. NRHP 10-10-80
McClurg Building (245 Main Street) NRHP 7-13-77
Shoop Building (215 State Street) NRHP 4-26-78.

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FOOTNOTES: PART 8

- ¹ The History of Racine and Kenosha Counties (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879), pp. 355 & 365 (hereafter referred to as 1879 History); Stone, Racine, 1:67-68.
- ² 1879 History, p. 360; Stone, Racine, 2: 138-39; "A Letter from Racine in 1843," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 5 (March 1922), 320.
- ³ Stone, Racine, 1: 273-78; 1879 History, pp. 368, 454-55.
- ⁴ Richard H. Keehn, "Industry and Business," Racine: Growth and Change in a Wisconsin County, edited by Nicholas C. Burckel (Racine: County Board of Supervisors, 1977), p. 283; Don Rintz, "Racine's Own Railroad," Preservation-Racine Newsletter, Summer 1984, p. 9; Stone, Racine, 1: 275.
- ⁵ 1879 History, pp. 459-60, 466-67; Stone, Racine, 1: 241-50; Keehn, "Industry," pp. 282-86.
- ⁶ Keehn, "Industry," p. 286.
- ⁷ Racine City Directories; Official U. S. Census for 1880.
- ⁸ Stone, Racine, 1: 249-66; Keehn, "Industry," pp. 287-99.
- ⁹ The U. S. census figures for 1940 show the population of Racine as 67,195. The four new buildings were the Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company Building (No. 43) at 310 Main Street, the Lerner Shops Building (No. 22) at 416 Main, the J. C. Penney Department Store (No. 88) at 413-17 Main, and the Retail Stores (No. 70) at 301-07 Main.
- ¹⁰ The original Durand and Hill Block was designed by Lucas Bradley, Racine's most accomplished architect. See Helen Patton, "Lucas Bradley: Carpenter, Builder, Architect," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 58 (Winter 1974-1975), 110.
- ¹¹ H. Russell Zimmerman, The Milwaukee Club (Milwaukee: n.p., 1982), pp. 12-14; Zimmermann, Guidebook, p. 371; Karr, Survey, pp. 19 & 81.
- ¹² Karr, Survey, pp. 18 & 79.
- ¹³ Zimmermann, Guidebook, p. 389.
- ¹⁴ Karr, Survey, pp. 28, 49, & 80; Long, Firehouses, p. 7.

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- 15 Racine Journal Times, February 24, 1939; Racine Times-Call, October 5, 1925; Karr, Survey, p.80.
- 16 Sankey, Racine, p. 145; Durand, "Letter," 320.
- 17 Stone, Racine, 1: 69, 144; Sankey, Racine, p. 145; 1879 History, p. 575.
- 18 1879 History, pp. 576, 597-98; Louise E. Bolton, "Racine-Rock River Plank Road," manuscript in the library of the Racine County Historical Society and Museum.
- 19 Portrait and Biographical Album of Racine and Kenosha Counties, Wisconsin (Chicago: Lake City Publishing Co., 1892), pp. 1028-29 (hereafter referred to as 1892 Album); Sankey, Racine, pp. 133-34.
- 20 1879 History, pp. 629-30; 1892 Album, p. 479; Karr, Survey, p. 56.
- 21 Racine City Directories for the 1850s; 1879 History, pp. 585, 591, 592, 596; 1892 Album, pp. 352-53; Stone, Racine, 2: 95.
- 22 Racine City Directories; 1879 History, pp. 446-48; Stone, Racine, 1: 215-19.
- 23 Stone, Racine, 1: 220-21; Racine Journal Times, February 24, 1939; Sankey, Racine, pp. 124-25.
- 24 Stone, Racine, 1: 224; Racine Journal Times, February 24, 1939; Racine City Directories.
- 25 1879 History, pp. 433-34 & 447; Stone, Racine, 1: 233-34.
- 26 Stone, Racine, 1:233-34; 1879 History, p. 434.
- 27 Stone, Racine, 1:235-36.
- 28 1879 History, p. 577.
- 29 Racine City Directories; Stone, Racine, 1: 154-55.
- 30 Racine Journal Times, July 12, 1960; Karr, Survey, pp. 21-22.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Begin where the south line of Second Street extended meets the east bank of the Root River; run south along the east bank of the river to the north line of Fourth Street extended; thence east along the north line of Fourth Street extended and of Fourth Street to the east line of Wisconsin Avenue; thence south along the east line of Wisconsin Avenue to the south line of the Zahn's Building (500 Monument Square); thence east along the south line of the Zahn's Building to the west line of Monument Square; thence north along the west line of Monument Square to the north line of Fifth Street; thence east along the north line of Fifth Street to the west line of Lake Avenue; thence north along the west line of Lake Avenue to the south line of Fourth Street; thence west along the south line of Fourth Street to the east line of the alley behind the east side of the 300 block of Main Street extended; thence north along the east alley line to the north line of the building at 231 Main Street; thence west along the north line of the building and that line extended to the west line of Main Street; thence north along the west line of Main Street to the south line of State Street; thence west along the south line of State Street to the east line of the building at 214 State Street extended south; thence north along that extended line and the east line of the building to the south line of Second Street; thence west along the south line of Second Street and that line extended to the east bank of the Root River.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Old Main Street Historic District have been drawn to include the last remaining group of buildings which line both sides of Main Street, starting a half block south of State Street and running to Fifth. The district also includes those buildings attendant to Main Street - on State, Third, Fourth, and Fifth - which share its commercial character and were built during the district's period of significance. The Root River forms a natural boundary on the west from Second south to Fourth Street. There, the boundary cuts east and south to exclude the buildings south of Fourth Street and along the west side of Wisconsin Avenue, which are clearly from a later period. The boundary takes in the Zahn's Building at 500 Monument Square because it relates in style and period to the buildings north of it along Fifth Street, and it is clearly set apart from the low, contemporary buildings which run along Monument Square south of it. The southern boundary also includes several non-contributing buildings on the east side of Main Street between Fourth and Fifth because they complete the compact "streetscape" lining both sides of Main Street which was probably the single characteristic most indicative of commercial development in a downtown district during the period of this district's significance. The eastern boundary runs along the rear of the buildings which face Main Street. In the 400 block of Lake Avenue one sees mostly the backs of those buildings, and the buildings are clearly different in orientation, style and function from the contemporary drive-in

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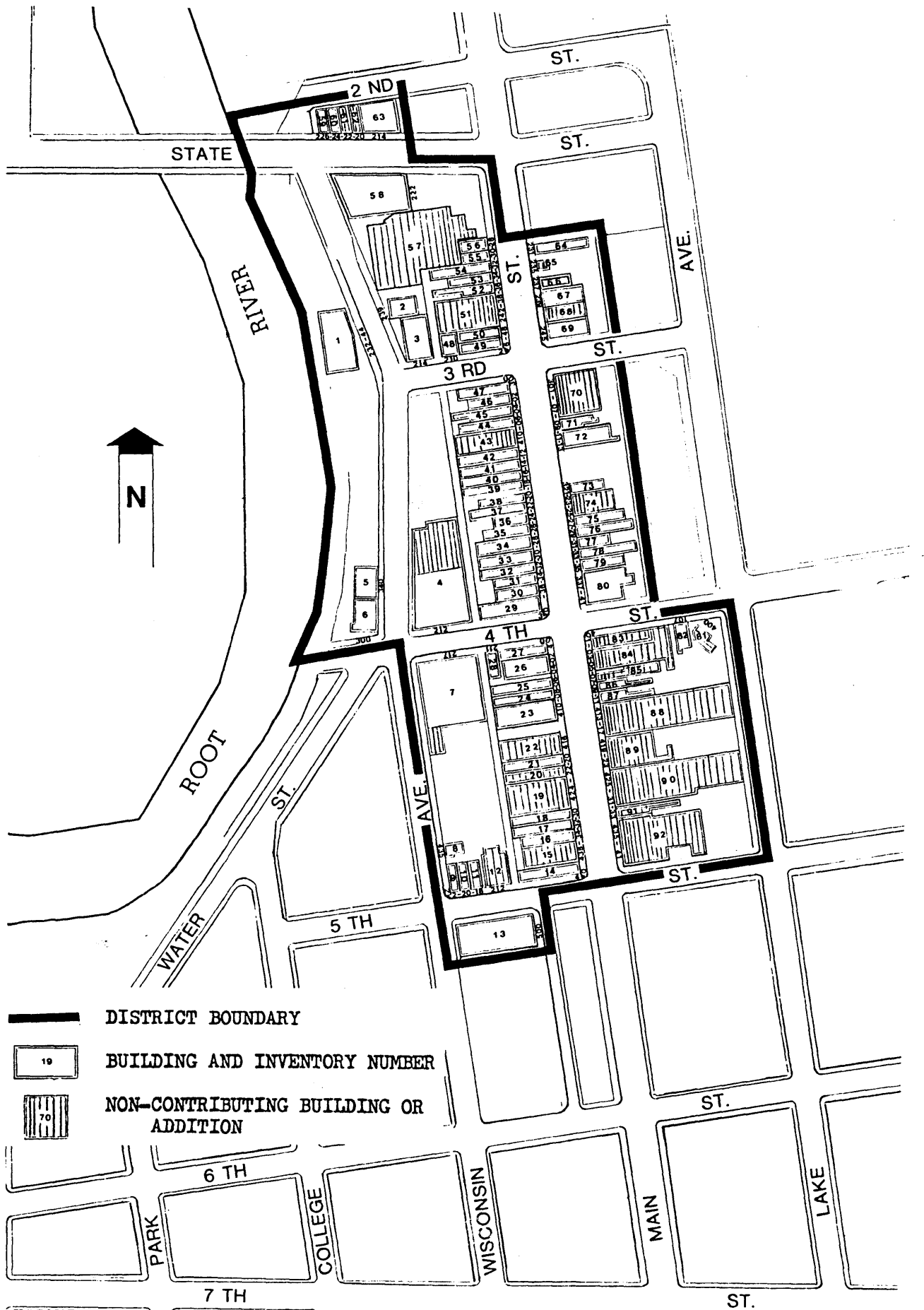
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

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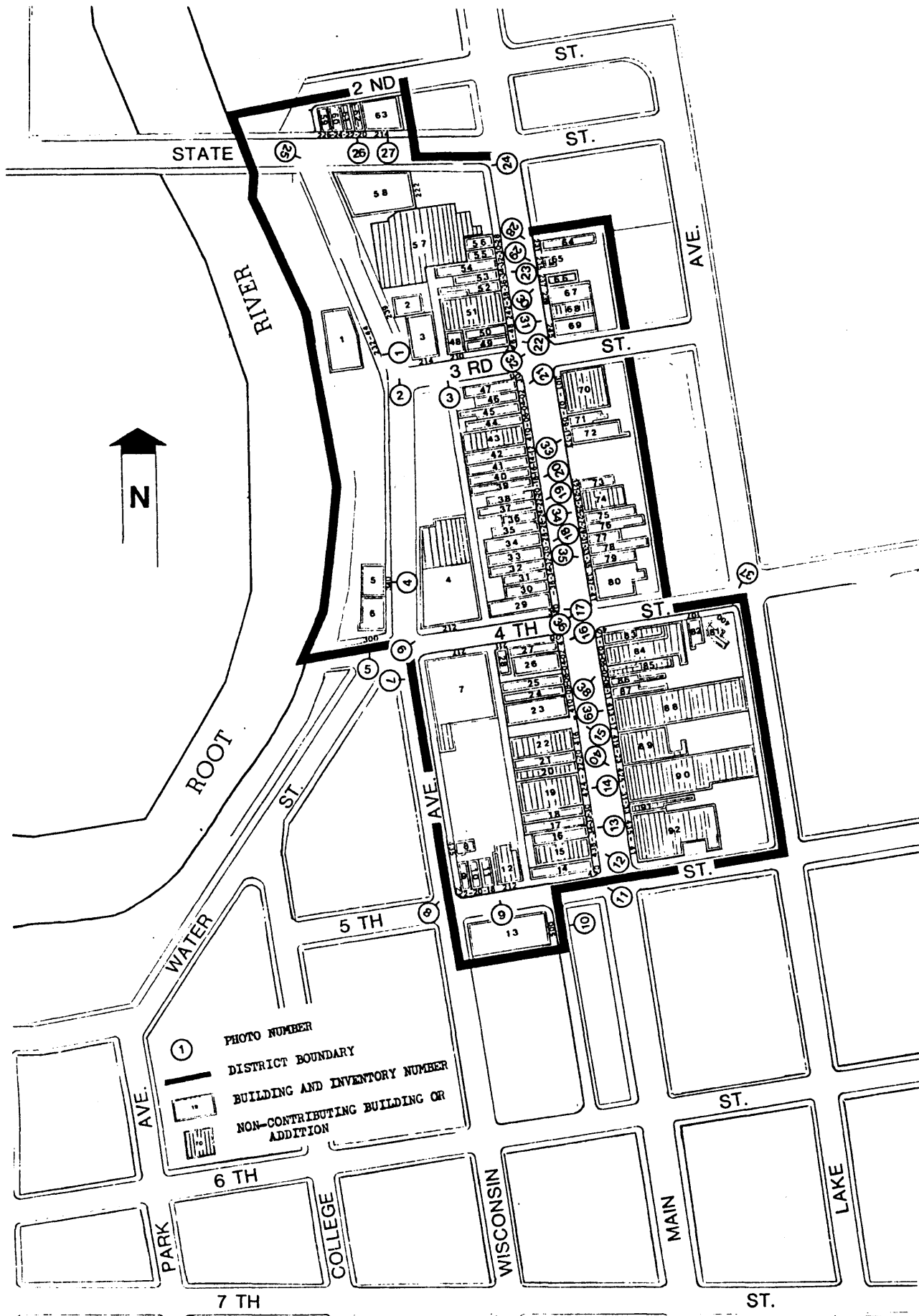
structures and nineteenth century industrial buildings on the east side of Lake Avenue. North of Fourth Street, the buildings are set apart by parking lots or vacant land. Vacant land is also a visual boundary of the district on the north. The row of commercial buildings along the north side of State Street was included because they share the architectural period and the commercial function of the buildings in the district south of State, and they do not share the industrial character of the buildings north of Second. They are also "built up" to State Street; so they sit high above Second Street and "belong" to a commercial group around the Shoop Building, rather than to the industrial group which runs north and west to the river from Second Street.

OLD MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT



-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  BUILDING AND INVENTORY NUMBER
-  NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDING OR ADDITION

OLD MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY Old Main Street Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Racine

DATE RECEIVED: 12/12/96 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/26/97
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 87000491

NOMINATOR: STATE

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 1.9.97 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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

87000491

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National Park Service

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1996 Amendment to the Old Main Street Historic District
Racine, Wisconsin

2. Location

Street & number: (see inventory)

city: Racine

state: Wisconsin code: WI

county: Racine code: 101

zip code: 53403

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1996 Amendment to the Old Main Street Historic District
Racine, Wisconsin

7. Description

The 1996 Amendment to the Old Main Street Historic District, first of all, subtracts 6 buildings from the original inventory of the district. Those buildings have been demolished since the district was listed on the National Register in 1987. The total of the present inventory is thus reduced from the original number of 92 to 86. Secondly, this amendment splits one building, the former Bloch Furniture Company Building at 419-23 Main Street (No. 89), into the two separately built, historic resources that were uncovered when both exterior and interior non-historic alterations were stripped away in 1995, revealing significant segments of their original architectural fabric on both buildings. Thus, the total of the amended inventory is 87. Finally, the classification of 7 buildings is changed from noncontributing to contributing, either because non-historic remodelings were removed or because the Period of Significance has been expanded to include the years from 1846 through 1947. The boundaries of the district remain the same, and of the 87 buildings still contained within them, 73 (or 84%) are contributing and only 14 (or 16%) are noncontributing. Those 73 architecturally or historically significant resources visually display the district's development as Racine's commercial core from the late 1840s through the late 1940s.

The third period of construction in the district, which began in 1883 when the Chauncey Hall Building (No.29) was constructed, must be modified to recognize that the period actually extended at least through 1947, when two national retail chains, the Lerner Shops and the J.C. Penney Company built new stores on Main Street during a revival of commercial development that had been halted by World War II. The fifty-year rule precluded the recognition of this final phase of downtown development when the original nomination of the Old Main Street Historic District was prepared.

Expanding the Period of Significance necessitates the inclusion of additional style classifications, such as the Art Moderne Style of the J.C. Penney Department Store at 413-17 Main Street (No. 88) and the Mid-Twentieth-Century Commercial Style of the Lerner Shops Building at 416 Main (No. 22). Unfortunately, a fire at the Neisner Brothers Building in 1991 and the razing two years later of what remained of the structure at 424-26 Main (No. 19) removed from the district its most delightful Art Deco facade. With it went the last vestige of a half dozen dime stores that were a significant part of mercantile development along Main Street.

Expanding the Period of Significance also requires the addition of glass block to the list of building materials used in the district during its historic period. It can be seen on the upper stories of the J.C. Penney

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Department Store as well as on the Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company Building at 310 Main Street (No. 43). It was also employed in the remodeling of Buffham's Building at 238-42 Main (No. 51). The removal of the modern metal screen from the Arcade Building of 425-431 Main (No. 90) uncovered a good portion of its principal facade of glazed terra cotta, which is being restored to its original, gleaming white. The other metal screen which hid an historic facade at 212 Fifth Street (No. 12) had been eliminated from the district earlier, but unfortunately the building was removed with it in 1988. The stripping of the fake stone front off the former Bloch Furniture Company Building uncovered two distinct historic facades at 419 and 421 Main (Nos. 89A and 89B). However, a board-and-batten wooden screen still shields the historic exteriors of the buildings at 401 through 407 Main (Nos. 83, 84, and 85).

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<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Original Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
8	435 Wisconsin	Gerhard Thelen Residence Store front	c.1869 1924	Demolished 1994*
12	212 Fifth St.	Commercial Hotel Exterior metal screen	1878 1958	Demolished 1988*
19	424 Main St.	Neisner Brothers Building, dime store	1940	Demolished 1993*
22	416 Main St.	Lerner Shops Building, women's clothing store	1947	C
28	211 Fourth St.	Charles Buckingham Building, harness maker's shop	1887	Demolished 1993*
43	310 Main St.	Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company Building	1946	C
51	238-42 Main St.	Buffham's Building paint and household appliance store Remodeled	c.1846, c.1856 c.1910 1945, 1947 ¹	C

* City of Racine Permit for Razing

¹ Mortgage, Volume F, page 476; Deed, Volume 35, page 36, Racine County Registry; Sanborn Maps of Racine: 1908 and 1933; Building Permits.

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<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Original Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
59	226 State St.	William Rowan Building, retail store	1923	Demolished 1994*
60	224 State St.	Louis Morgensen Building, real estate office	1924	Demolished 1994*
88	413-17 Main St.	J.C. Penney Department Store	1947	C
89A	419 Main St.	Langlois and Robilliard Building, paint store and ship's chandlery (1950 false stone front removed in 1995)	1862 ²	C
89B	421 Main St.	Langlois Block, shop with offices above (1950 false stone front removed in 1995)	1884 ³	C
90	425-31 Main St.	The Arcade Building, stores and offices. (1966 metal screen removed in 1995)	1923	C

* City of Racine Permit for Razing.

2 Party Wall Agreement in Volume 43 of Deeds, page 54, Racine County Registry.

3 City of Racine tax rolls; Eads' Illustrated History of Racine, Wis. (Racine, WI: The Times Publishing Company, 1884), 12.

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DESCRIPTIONS OF BUILDINGS LISTED IN THE AMENDMENTS TO THE INVENTORY

<u>Map Number</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
51	238-42 Main St.	Buffham's Building	c.1846/c.1856/1947

Buffham's Building is actually the combined segments of two structures that were built about ten years apart by separate owners. Both are constructed of local cream brick (which is now painted), with flat roofs and brick foundations. Both were originally built in the Italianate Style, although their facades did not match. The north section, which is now essentially a two-story structure, was constructed about 1846 as a three-story building with two shops at the street level and lofts above. The south section was constructed about 1856 along with the segment to the south of it, which has, for many years, been separately owned. Those combined sections were also three stories high with two separate shops along the street and lofts above them. Both of the original buildings have been ravaged by fire, repaired, and repeatedly remodeled during the nearly 150 years of their commercial use. The essential configuration of the present structure has existed since 1947, when it was remodeled for Buffham's, Inc., a paint and household appliance store, after a serious fire the year before.

Sometime after 1908, during the early years of this century, a fourth floor was added to the north section of the present building by a former owner. The show windows along the street and the recessed entryway were probably added then. In 1942 Buffham's moved into the north section from another downtown location. Three years later it expanded into the south section. At that time the window apertures on the third floor of the south section were squared-off and filled-in with glass block (which has since been replaced by double-hung windows with transoms). Show windows were installed in wide bands cut into the second stories of both sections. They were framed, top and bottom, by decorative runs of painted metal that was bolted to the brick. The show windows along the street were extended into the south section. The intent, it appears, was to impose an Art Moderne look on the century-old structures, at least at the first and second stories. The fire in 1946 damaged the north section particularly. In the repairing and remodeling that followed, the two upper stories of the north section were removed (leaving only a segment of the original third floor as a penthouse recessed from both the street side and the north side of this section). The show windows at the second story of the north section were filled in: the bottom half with brick and the top half with glass block. The result was the asymmetrical building that exists today, with a wider

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and lower section on the north, two stories high, running to the narrower and taller section on the south, three stories high and topped by a tall parapet, across which runs the original brick cornice that it shares with its companion building to the south. A contemporary facade in frame was added above the street level in 1974. It was removed in 1995, revealing, essentially, the Buffham Building's 1947 configuration.

89A	419 Main St.	Langlois and Robilliard Building	1862
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The Langlois and Robilliard Building is a three-story, rectangular structure built of local cream brick and in the Italianate Style. It has a flat roof and a rubblestone foundation. The storefront has been altered any number of times over the years; the last remodeling, in the early 1970s, produced a street front of plate glass with a recessed entryway. The original architectural treatment of each of the upper stories features a central pair of double-hung windows set within round arches and separated by a single, engaged Doric column made of wood. The coupled windows are flanked by individual windows of the same size, under matching arches of molded stone set flush with the cream brick wall. A bracketed cornice along the parapet was removed in 1950, when the upper stories were covered with a synthetic stone veneer. That facade was stripped away in 1995, and the building's historic front is now being refurbished and sympathetically restored.

89B	421 Main St.	Langlois Block	1884
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The Langlois Block is a rectangular, three-story structure, with a flat roof and a rubblestone foundation, that is built of locally manufactured cream brick and ornamented in the Italianate Style. The north twenty feet at the street level once comprised a separate shop, but in the 1950s it was combined with the Langlois and Robilliard Building to create a single showroom with plate glass windows along the street. The south ten feet at street level were originally a passageway under the upper stories. It led to a livery stable behind the Langlois Block. About 1906 the livery stable was replaced by a moving picture theater, and the passageway was enclosed as an entryway from Main Street as well as a long lobby for the theater. When the theater itself was torn down in the 1950s, the narrow lobby was remodeled into a store with small show windows on either side of a recessed entryway. The two upper floors of the Langlois Block extend a full thirty feet or so between the buildings on its north and south sides. There are four rectangular, double-hung windows evenly aligned along both stories. Each window is topped by a hood of molded stone incised with geometric ornament and supported by stone corbels on either side. The brackets and

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crown molding of a sheet-metal cornice were removed in 1950, when the upper stories were covered with a synthetic stone veneer. That facade was stripped away in 1995, and the building's historic front is also being refurbished and restored.

90 425-31 Main St. The Arcade Building 1923

The Arcade Building is a rectangular brick structure, with a flat roof and a reinforced concrete frame and foundation. It runs, west to east, across a portion of the 400 block between Main Street and Lake Avenue, giving it frontage on both streets. The Main Street side is its principal facade, where the building runs seventy feet along the sidewalk and rises five stories, forming the crossbar of a "T" whose stem runs east more than half-way toward Lake Avenue. On each side of this five-story stem are two-story wings that expand the T-plan into a rectangle which extends to the east beyond the stem. About seventy feet from Lake Avenue, the rectangle becomes narrower by ten feet on its south side, so that the building runs only sixty feet along Lake Avenue. The narrower street front on the east side was not the result of an aesthetic decision; the builders didn't own the other ten feet of land. The Lake Avenue facade is three stories high because the site slopes downward from Main Street, and the building steps downhill a full story. Thus, the first floor off Lake Avenue becomes the basement below Main Street, and the entry level off Main Street becomes the second floor at Lake Avenue.

The first two stories on the Main Street side of the building stand behind three segmentally arched bays that originally contained a lower level along the street and a mezzanine above. Under the central arch is the main entrance, which once led to the two-story arcade for which the building was named. Each of the flanking arches contained a separate shop with its own entrance and mezzanine. At that upper level, three large plate-glass windows were framed under each arch and set essentially flush with the facade. Those windows were filled in with concrete block when the mezzanine itself was closed in and converted to a separate second story in the 1960s. The shop windows were also radically altered both in the 1960s and 1970s.

At each of the three upper stories, nine individual double-hung windows were set within and separated by a pier-and-spandrel grid, above which were a wide frieze, a cornice, and a decorated parapet. The entire Main Street front was ornamented in the Classical Revival Style and faced with glazed terra cotta, most of which was white. (The spandrels beneath the windows at the fourth and fifth stories were pale green.) The piers between the upper-story windows were treated as fluted pilasters supporting a blind

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arcade across the frieze, its arches filled in with a fan motif. Above the frieze was a molded cornice and a parapet incised with the name of the building, which was flanked by ornamental corbels supporting scrolled pediments that broke the horizontal line of the coping. The cornice and the parapet ornaments were removed in 1966, when all but the storefronts were covered by a modern metal grille hung between angled strips of precast concrete that were bolted to the building. That grillwork was removed in 1995, revealing a substantial portion of the original terra cotta facade and reduced window apertures, which had been fitted with sliding sash. Those windows are being replaced and the terra cotta ornament is being cleaned, repaired and reproduced.

The secondary facade, along Lake Avenue, was executed in a face brick that is red and wire-cut. There are five bays at each of the three stories. They were originally aligned precisely with one another. The outer bays on the street level contained doorways; all the others were fitted with three-part, Chicago-style windows. The bays along the street had transoms. The windows at the upper levels were separated by brick pilasters with white terra cotta bases and capitals; they supported a narrow terra cotta frieze and cornice. A lower terra cotta cornice ran along the second-story windowsills just above the street story. In 1966 a new entryway was cut into the building at the middle bay of the five that run along the street; window openings were reduced and fitted with either fixed or sliding sash; and the entire front was covered with a corrugated metal that was painted white. To accommodate that covering, almost all of the terra cotta trim was chiseled away. Much of the original architectural detail of the Lake Avenue facade is being restored.

43	310 Main St.	Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company Building	1946
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The Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company Building is a rectangular, three-story structure with a flat roof. It is built of brick on a brick foundation. There is a single store at the street level with plate-glass show windows flanking a recessed entryway at the center. The entryway was fairly recently fitted with a storm door and a glass surround set only slightly back from the sidewalk line to create a vestibule. Over the storefront is a fixed awning that is new. Above it is a run of corrugated metal framed on the top and left (south) side by a narrow band of opaque glass. Neither of them is original. The facade of the two upper stories is constructed of a smooth-faced yellow brick set in a common bond with the header courses recessed to create wide bands of brick across each story. The windows are

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narrow ribbons of glass block interrupted and defined by brick piers that have every other course recessed, producing slender stripes of brick between unadorned lintels and uninterrupted cement sills that run from one end pier to the other. The combination of the brickwork and the glass block creates the streamlined horizontals of the Art Moderne Style. The building merges well with the line of older structures among which it stands. Its low profile fits three stories under a parapet that is barely higher than those of the buildings on either side of it.

22 416 Main St. Lerner Shops Building 1947

The Lerner Shops Building is a rectangular, two-story structure with a flat roof. It is built of brick on a concrete foundation. There is a single store at the street level, with a front that was apparently altered sometime in the 1970s. A simple wooden cornice above the storefront is original, and from there up to its slightly more elaborate and denticulated companion cornice at the base of the parapet, the front of the building is a blank wall of red brick set in a common bond. It was so fashioned to accommodate the large letters spelling out "Lerner Shops" that were originally scrolled across its bare expanse. The slanted slate roof above the cornice is non-functional. It is merely a parapet ornament that adds height to the building in a "boomtown" effect which hints at a Colonial Revival Style. The building is, in fact, a mid-twentieth-century commercial structure that is steel-framed and windowless (except at the street level), because it was designed for "daylight" fluorescent fixtures and "climate control."

88 413-17 Main St. J.C. Penney Department Store 1947

The J.C. Penney Department Store is a rectangular brick building, with a flat roof and a concrete foundation, that was built in the Art Moderne Style. From a two-story front along Main Street, the store runs straight back (east) to Lake Avenue. Because the site slopes downward from Main Street, the building adds a full story below the Main Street levels as it steps downhill. An extra story is also added above them, which is a penthouse for machinery, running only along the easterly section of the building. Thus, the Lake Avenue facade rises four stories above the street, with a basement beneath it.

The Main Street facade accents the horizontal. Along the sidewalk, two show windows are separated by a deeply recessed entryway. The plate-glass windows are framed with serpentine stone and are sheltered under a shallow canopy that is cantilevered above them. It runs the length of the facade between end piers that are faced with the same serpentine stone, which is

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carried above the canopy in a wide horizontal band that defines the upper limit of the street story. The second story is comprised of three segments of face brick, the central section of brown-colored brick rising slightly above the other two at the parapet. Each of the side sections of cream-colored brick is incised at its center with five horizontal slits of six glass blocks set side by side and ranked one above the other. They are the only openings for light on the second-story facade.

The Lake Avenue front accents the vertical, presenting to the street what is essentially a flat plane of the cream-colored, face brick in a block that is four stories high. That block is broken at the street level by smaller show windows than on Main Street at each side of a shallower entryway, which is approached by a concrete stairway. The shop front is set off by "quoins" of the brown-colored brick separated by single courses of the cream-colored brick. Between them runs a cantilevered canopy. The storefront takes up only about half of the street facade, and it is flanked on the left (south) by a garage doorway, leading to a loading dock, and on the right (north) by a doorway at the sidewalk level, leading to the basement. Both are set within the flush plane of the cream-colored block. Ranked above the basement doorway are four windows, with divided lights, and metal sash and grillwork, that light the landings of a stairway serving all the levels on the Lake Avenue side. Centered in the cream-colored brick plane of the east facade are three sets of glass-block windows, serving the second, third, and penthouse levels. They are arranged vertically in strips of two glass blocks separated by "mullions" of the brown-colored brick.

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Racine, Wisconsin, Racine county8. Significance

Specific dates: The Period of Significance is extended to encompass the years between 1846 and 1947 in order to include the historic time between the construction of the earliest section of Buffham's Building (No. 51) and the construction of the J.C. Penney Department Store (No. 88).

Amended Statement of Significance

The Old Main Street Historic District contains a group of architecturally and historically significant commercial buildings, which were constructed between the late 1840s and the late 1940s. The district encompasses what remains of the "commercial corridor," lining both sides of Main Street, which began to develop in the 1840s during Racine's earliest days as a Great Lakes port. It flourished after the 1880s, when Racine was growing as a center of manufacture. It endured through the Depression and war years of the 1930s and early 1940s, when new building was substantially curtailed. It experienced a spurt of renewed development in the late 1940s after World War II. And finally, it survived through the 1950s, when it began to be drained of its vitality by suburban shopping centers. The district contains some of the best examples in the city of small commercial buildings in the Italianate Style, as well as some of the only remaining large commercial buildings in the Italianate, Queen Anne, Richardsonian Romanesque, Classical Revival, Prairie, and Art Moderne styles. The works of local and regional architects are included in the district - such as James G. Chandler, A. Arthur Guilbert, and Edmund B. Funston of Racine, and Edward Townsend Mix of Milwaukee. Historically, the district includes shops and office buildings associated with some of Racine's most important early businessmen - such as James Langlois, Nicholas D. Fratt, Henry S. Durand, William S. Buffham, and George Wustum. It is the area where Racine's first newspapers and banks were established, and it contains buildings which are associated with a number of other "firsts" in the history of the city.

Historical Background

The historical background must be amplified to record that from 1880 to 1950 the population of the City of Racine grew by 55,000, and Downtown Racine grew with it. While the Great Depression curtailed new construction in the district during the 1930s, indications of renewed development began as early as 1940, when Neisner Brothers replaced a dime store that had burned with a brand new building in the Art Deco Style (No. 19) at 424 Main Street. (Unfortunately, that store itself burned in 1991, and its remnants were razed in 1993.) Further construction was halted by World War II, but a new phase

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of development began in the waning days of the war when the J.C. Penney Company announced, in August of 1945, that it would build "an ultra-modern department store" just as soon as "war building priorities permit." That announcement appears to have spurred a small building boom in the district. Buffham's enlarged and remodeled its store (No. 51) at 238-42 Main Street to expand its household appliance department. Buffham's remodeled again after a serious fire in 1946. The Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company built a new store that year (No. 43) at 310 Main Street, and the Lerner Shops built a new store the following year (No. 22) at 416 Main. When the new Penney's store opened (No. 88) at 413-17 Main, it was heralded, as the other three buildings had been, as a significant contribution to Main Street and to Downtown Racine.¹

Area of Significance: Architecture

This amendment recognizes the architectural significance of the seven buildings it adds to the district as contributing:

Buffham's Building (No. 51) at 238-42 Main Street is a hybrid that displays architectural characteristics from both the earliest and the latest years of Old Main Street's historic period. It is constructed of locally manufactured cream brick, which is an historic architectural material in itself. The south (three-story) section also displays traces of its original Italianate Style, especially when it is viewed together with its companion structure just to the south, the Henry S. Durand Building (No. 50) at 244 Main. Both were built at the same time, about 1856, and the brick cornice they share still ties them together and to their time. But that juxtaposition immediately separates the two segments when the window treatments at the second and third stories are compared, because the south section of Buffham's Building has so obviously been altered. Its window apertures have been squared off, and those at the second story have been slashed open to accommodate large plate glass windows in the modern mode. The south section's past and its present are simultaneously discernable.²

1 The population of Racine in 1880 was 16,031 and in 1950 was 71,193, according to John L. Andriot, ed., Population Abstract of the United States. 2 vols. (McLean, VA: Andriot Associates, 1983), 1:874; other information was drawn from building permits, razing permits, and the Racine Journal Times: August 2, 1945; February 2, 1946; November 10, 1948; May 4, 1958; and September 17, 1958.

2 For the significance of locally manufactured cream brick as an historic architectural material, see Don Rintz, "Workingman's Marble," Preservation Racine Newsletter (Summer 1989), 1-3.

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The lower and longer line of the north (two story) section of Buffham's Building and the retrofitting of a strip of glass block windows at its second story belie the fact that the original structure was built in the 1840s. It was changed, almost completely, into an Art Moderne building of the 1940s. While this kind of remodeling is officially frowned upon today, it was considered an admirable architectural aim during the latter years of Old Main Street's historic period. Early in 1946, the Racine Journal Times predicted that "Downtown Main St. will have its face lifted." When the postwar shortage of building materials was over, the newspaper explained, "new and beautiful buildings will replace old landmarks with modern, streamlined structures." Buffham's Building got one of those face-lifts. In 1974 even that was covered by a contemporary front for the upper stories, and the building was listed as non-contributing when the district was nominated to the National Register in 1987. That facade was removed in 1995, revealing the rudiments of the Buffham Building's 1846, 1856, and 1946 exteriors. It is now an historic resource in architectural "archaeology."³

The Langlois and Robilliard Building (No. 89A) at 419 Main Street is one of the handsomest examples of a small commercial building in the Italianate Style that was constructed in the district during the 1860s. Its round-arched window hoods are characteristic of the period; and its paired central windows separated by an engaged Doric column made of wood is the only architectural feature of its kind in the district. The Langlois Block (No. 89B) at 421 Main was a particularly fine addition to the buildings of Downtown Racine during the 1880s. Its late Victorian Italianate Style is distinctly more decorous than the vernacular shops constructed between 1883 and 1887 on the west side of Main in the 200 block. Its window hoods of molded stone incised with geometric ornament and supported by stone corbels on either side are well preserved and worthy of notice. About 1950 all of these historic architectural elements were covered by a veneering of synthetic stone, which kept these buildings from contributing to the district when it was nominated to the National Register. With that covering removed, the buildings are now evocative of specific decades - the 1860s and the 1880s - within the district's period of significance.

The Arcade Building (No. 90) at 425-31 Main Street was one of the architectural gems of Downtown Racine before it was "brightened up" (as the local

3 The "facelifting" quote is from the Racine Journal Times, February 2, 1946.

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newspaper put it) by having its upper stories covered in the 1960s by a modern screen of metal and precast concrete. The building was designed in 1922 by the Chicago architectural firm of Vitzthum and Burns. The "solid terra cotta" on its Main Street front was made especially for it, according to a news story published at the building's grand opening. It is one of only two facades in glazed white terra cotta that now exist in Downtown Racine. The other, on the Ernest Johnson Building at 209 Sixth Street, in the Historic Sixth Street Business District (NRHP 3-24-88), is far smaller and much simpler. The Arcade Building's exterior ornament in the Classical Revival Style is an important addition to the architectural diversity of the Old Main Street Historic District. Had it not been screened from view when the district was nominated to the National Register, it would have been duly noted for its contribution to the architectural richness of the district.⁴

At its second and third stories, the Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company Building (No. 43) at 310 Main Street preserves an Art Moderne facade adapted to a small mercantile structure in the district. The strips and bands of brick along those upper stories are simple but striking, and the building is appropriately scaled to its nineteenth-century neighbors on the north and south. It fits three stories within the parapet height of those adjoining two-story structures, while the Lerner Shops Building (No. 22) at 416 Main stretches its two stories nearly to the height of a four-story building. The tall windowless wall above its storefront was designed as a kind of "billboard" of brick for the large, backlighted or neon letters spelling out a store's name that were commonly seen in downtown commercial districts after World War II. The Lerner Shops Building is the only one in the Old Main Street District that was originally built to accommodate such a sign. Even greater height was added to the structure by the ornamental parapet above its cornice. Both the cornice and parapet faintly evoke the Federal Style, one of the revived colonial styles that was popular for suburban shopping strips in postwar America. Although they are dissimilar and not necessarily distinguished in design, the buildings of the Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company and of the Lerner Shops contribute to Old Main Street typical elements of commercial architecture that were characteristic of the latter years of the district's historic significance.

4 The "brightening up" quote is from the Racine Sunday Bulletin, April 30, 1967; the name of the architectural firm and the details about the terra cotta ornament are from the Racine Journal-News and the Racine Times-Call, September 21, 1923.

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The J.C. Penney Department Store (No. 88) at 413-17 Main Street was the most important building constructed in the district during the 1940s. Like the Arcade Building, it fronts both on Main Street and Lake Avenue. Thus, it contributes to the district not merely one but two unaltered facades in the Art Moderne Style. The two stories on the Main Street side have a long and low silhouette along the sidewalk that merges easily into a line of nineteenth-century mercantile structures in the middle of the 400 block on the east side of the street. The elements of the Penney Building's Moderne design are simple and squared off; they are streamlined within a rectangular rather than a curvilinear composition. Above the long horizontal run of the storefront, the upper story is composed of three panels of brick, the central panel rising slightly above the other two. It is a blank wall of brown-colored brick set in vertical bands created by evenly recessed stacks of headers. The outer panels are flat planes of cream-colored brick inset with horizontal strips of glass block. The facade is both clean lined and streamlined.

The Lake Avenue side is essentially a four-story solid of cream-colored brick with a storefront inset at the street level, that is set off by end piers of the brown-colored brick. The upper stories are delineated by central window stacks of glass block separated by mullions of the brown-colored brick. The building stands fortress-like along Lake Avenue, but it is a carefully designed, face-bricked, and finished facade rising imposingly on a street that was usually treated as the backside of Main Street. The Penney Building's two facades add elegantly to the variety of architectural styles found in the district; they offer contrast to the older historical styles; and they complete the district's chronological continuity of American commercial styles during the one hundred years of Old Main Street's development between 1846 and 1947.

Area of Significance: Commerce.

The mercantile history of Buffham's Building at 238-42 Main Street (No. 51) extends from the very beginning to the very end of Old Main Street's period of historical significance. Both of its sections were built as commercial investments, their stores and lofts meant to be rented out. The north section was constructed about 1846 for William H. Rogers; the south section was constructed about 1856 for Henry S. Durand. Both had been extensively remodeled in the 1940s and then covered with a modern front in 1974. No segments of their original facades were thought to exist when the district was nominated to the National Register in 1987, and the Durand section was specifically described as "no longer extant." But both sections still stand,

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In 1866 William A. Porter, who established Porter's of Racine - which still exists in the Historic Sixth Street Business District (NRHP 3-24-88) - rented one of the stores in the north section. He expanded into the other store around 1879 and into the south section about 1881. Porter was the first Racine merchant to combine both sections into one shop, but he was burned out by the great Downtown fire of 1882 and moved to the 500 block of Main Street. The store was moved to Sixth Street in the late 1930s. About 1890 Charles Bayermann opened a furniture store in one of the rebuilt shops in the north section. He eventually took over both shops, both lofts, and added a fourth story to that section early in this century. Bayermann's Furniture was located in the north section for fifty years. Buffham's moved there in 1942. The south section housed a series of small shops and saloons before and after Mr. Porter was burned out in 1882. From 1866 to 1872 or so, Mathias M. Secor built trunks in the upper-story lofts of the south section, before he moved his factory to Lake Avenue. In 1946 Buffham's expanded into the south section.⁶

Buffham's paint, furniture, and appliance store was then Racine's oldest mercantile business. It had been established as a paint store by William S. Buffham in 1846. It was operated at several Downtown locations for a hundred years before a devastating fire in September of 1946 - just a few months after the expansion into the south section - destroyed 89 per cent of its sales area. Almost all of the damage was in the north section. The business reopened only five days after the fire and carried on while the store was remodeled around it during 1947. The present configuration of the building was established by that remodeling. Two stories of the north section were essentially removed, and both sections were "Moderne-ized." Buffham's held a grand reopening in 1948 and continued in business for another 25 years, finally closing on December 29, 1973. It had been owned and operated for more than 125 years by four generations of the Buffham family.⁷

5 Deeds: Volume H, page 560; Volume I, page 173; Volume K, page 256; Volume P, page 526; Volume 35, page 36, Racine County Registry; "Table of Fire Insurance Rates in Force on the Buildings in the Business District of Racine in 1849" (manuscript in the library of the Racine County Historical Society and Museum), 2.

6 Racine City Directories; Racine Daily Journal, May 6, 1882; Racine Journal Times: February 5, 1946; January 5, 1974; and April 4, 1982.

7 Portrait and Biographical Album of Racine and Kenosha Counties, Wisconsin (Chicago: Lake City Publishing Co., 1892), 361-62; Racine Journal Times: September 23, 1946; August 11, 1948; and January 5, 1974.

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The Langlois and Robilliard Building at 419 Main Street (No. 89A) and the Langlois Block at 421 Main (No. 89B) are associated with one of Racine's earliest mercantile ventures and families. James Langlois, who came to Racine in 1840, established a paint store and ship's chandlery Downtown two years later. About 1849 he built the store at 411 Main Street (No. 87). In 1860 he sold his business to a relative, John Langlois, and his partner, Peter Robilliard. About 1862 they moved the shop to 419 Main. Robilliard died in 1869 and Langlois took into partnership his son, John Jr. For seventy years the business - variously named Langlois and Robilliard, Langlois and Son, Langlois and Company, or the Langlois Company - was operated at 419 Main by the Langlois family and their partners. About 1933 the store was moved to 311-13 Main. It went out of business a year or two later during the Great Depression.⁸

While the Langlois family built the block that bears their name at 421 Main Street, it was not a part of their shop next door at 419 Main Street. It was an investment. The shop on the street floor was rented to a number of mercantile venturers, none of whom stayed there very long. However, the building is associated with the early history of a now defunct Racine newspaper, The Daily Times. It was established late in 1883, but had no permanent location and quickly failed. It was reorganized in early 1884 by Hamilton Utley and "permanently located in Langlois' new block one door north of the Huggins House." The Daily Times, through a series of mergers with other Racine newspapers, still survives in name only on the masthead of The Journal Times, Racine's sole-surviving newspaper.⁹

The J.C. Penney Department Store at 413-417 Main Street (No.88) was the last building in Downtown Racine and in the Old Main Street Historic District to be constructed by a national or regional chain. It is one of the few buildings in the district to be constructed at all specifically by and for one of the retail outlets or chain stores that were commonly to be found Downtown in American cities the size of Racine from the turn of the twentieth century to the 1960s. The Grand Union Tea Company, A&P, National Tea, Singer, Woolworth, Kresge, Sears, Montgomery Ward, Kinney Shoes, Firestone Tires, Walgreen Drugs, and others, all leased existing buildings, which they remodeled to their purposes. Only the Pabst Brewery (1891), the Miller Brewery (1902), the Paramount Radio Stores (1929), White Tower (1929), Neisner Stores (1940), the Lerner Shops (1947), and Penney's constructed new buildings in the district.¹⁰

8 Portrait and Biographical Album (1892), 295-96; Racine City Directories.

9 Racine City Directories; Eads' Illustrated History of Racine (Racine: The Times Publishing Co., 1884), 12.

10 Racine City Directories.

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The Penney's store opened in 1948 with postwar enthusiasm for the future of Downtown and Main Street, but less than ten years later, the first of Racine's outlying shopping centers was built, eventually drawing the chain stores away from Main Street. Elmwood Plaza opened on the southwestern edge of the city in 1956, and Shorecrest Plaza opened on the northeastern edge in 1960. By 1968 Racine was ringed on the north, west, and south by six shopping centers at its city limits. At first, some of the stores merely opened branches in the outlying plazas. Kresge's and Penney's had stores both Downtown and at Elmwood Plaza; Woolworth's had stores Downtown and at Shorecrest Plaza. But eventually the Downtown stores were closed: Kresge's in 1960, Woolworth's in 1966. Those stores without branches merely closed: White Tower in 1964, Lerner's in 1967, Neisner's in 1971, and Montgomery Ward in 1981. Sears moved to the Crossroads Shopping Center on Washington Avenue in 1965. Penney's kept its Downtown store open until 1981. By then Main Street was two decades past its prime.¹¹

¹¹ Racine Journal Times, December 15, 1968; Racine City Directories.

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The following applies to all nine photographs:

Old Main Street Historic District.
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin.
Photos by Don Rintz, October 1995.
Negatives at The State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

Photo #1 of 9: Lerner Shops Building.
416 Main Street.
View looking west.

Photo #2 of 9: Supreme Bedding and Furniture Company Building.
310 Main Street.
View looking west.

Photo #3 of 9: Buffham's Building.
238-242 Main Street.
View looking northwest.

Photo #4 of 9: Penney, J.C., Department Store.
413-417 Main Street (front).
View looking east.

Photo #5 of 9: Penney, J.C., Department Store.
413-417 Main Street (rear).
View looking southwest.

Photo #6 of 9: Langlois and Robilliard Building.
419 Main Street (left).
Langlois Block.
421 Main Street (right).
View looking east.

Photo #7 of 9: Arcade Building.
425-431 Main Street (front).
View looking northeast.

Photo #8 of 9: Arcade Building.
425-431 Main Street (rear).
View looking southwest.

Photo #9 of 9: Main Street.
A portion of the 400 block (east side).
View looking northeast.

OLD MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

1996 AMENDMENT

Racine
Racine County
Wisconsin

not to scale

