National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

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depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town

Madison

OMB No. 1024-0018 Expires 10-31-87

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7. Description

Condition		Check one
x_ excellent x_ good	deteriorated ruins	x unaltered x_ altered
<u>x_</u> fair	unexposed	

Check one _X_ original site

x moved date see intensive survey forms

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

GENERAL PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The city of New Richmond is located in the northwest quadrant of St. Croix County about 14 miles northeast of Hudson, Wisconsin and approximately eight miles east of the St. Croix River. St. Croix County is located in the west central part of the state. New Richmond is the largest city in that part of the county and is located on the Willow River which flows west emptying into the St. Croix River at North Hudson. The city is approxiantely 50 miles east of Minneapolis and St. Paul and ten miles north of I-94.

New Richmond is surrounded by rich argicultural lands with relatively heavy clay soils on rolling prairie. The topography was formed during the Woodfordian substage of the Wisconsin Ice Age and is glacial drift. At settlement in 1850, the site of New Richmond was on the edge of a large patch of prairie with mixed deciduous-coniferous forest directly to the north and northeast which stretched to Lake Superior (Finley, 12, 13, 156). Today, entering the city of New Richmond from the south along County Highway 65, the topography is rolling prairie, mostly undercultivation, and immediately before entering the city limits, the land rises up a slight incline into the central business district.

According to historical photographs, the early years of settlement in New Richmond showed a town of small one and a half story frame houses and dirt roads which meandered through the area immediately adjacent to the Willow River on what is now the east and west sides of Knowles Avenue (then Main Street). By 1872 when the first rails arrived, New Richmond had several larger houses in what is now the West Side Historic District which were two stories and designed in Italianate style. In the early 1880s, New Richmond was a town of around 250 souls who were spread over a square mile close to the Willow River (Stager, 1983, p. 5). The layout of the town was a grid pattern with streets running east-west and avenues running north-south. Within the one square mile of settlement, there were many gaps consisting of nascent roads and vacant lots. Residences on all sides of town had associated outbuildings and chicken coops in rear yards. Common setbacks from the street appear to have ranged from 15 feet on the east side of Knowles Avenue to over 20 feet in what is now the West Side Historic District on the west side of Knowles. The commercial area along Knowles (then Main) did not present an unbroken front. Gaps of vacant lots and narrow frame buildings of one story, for the most part, dominated the commercial area which divided the east and west sides of town.

The city had a unique opportunity to rebuild and re-image itself after the June 12, 1899, tornado which destroyed all structures in a 700 to 1,000 foot path running from southwest to northeast through the city. Today the commercial area has a concentration of one and two story commercial structures of 25 and 50 feet in width concentrated for three blocks south of the Willow River along Knowles.

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GENERAL PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION, continued

The residential area west of Knowles continued to attract the wealthier families who built large houses set back from W. First and Second streets in a range from approximately 30 feet to as much as 100 feet. The neighborhood grew generally from east to west. The West Side's large houses stood out starkly among small spindly trees in the early years, but these trees and accompanying yard landscaping began to mature. Writing just ten years after the tornado struck, Easton, in his <u>History of the Saint Croix Valley</u> (1909, p. 857), described New Richmond:

It is said that the city contains more wealth in proportion to the population than any other city in the Northwest, and this claim has never been successfully disputed.... The streets are broad and well kept, and the main street is macadamized for a short distance. The residences are large and well built, and the broad velvety lawns are tastefully adorned with shrubbery and trees, while the streets are shaded with maple, elm, and boxwood trees.

In the West Side Historic District, in fact, the streets are 80 to 100 feet wide and generous lots are 157×66 . Even in the east side neighborhood and the north side, lots are much larger than in many towns where a 50 foot side lot is standard.

Historic photographs from the turn of the century until around 1940 indicate that the city was reaching maturity. This process was completed by around 1930. By then streets were paved, sidewalks had been poured, and the infrastructure of water and electrical service had been installed to all buildings (the latter began to occur around 1910 and continued until completed). The area of the West Side Historic District, for example, is remembered by old time residents as having a beautiful canopy of elms over the streets during the 1940s. These trees have now given way to recent plantings as the elms have succumbed to Dutch Elm disease. The district today has trees which look more like they did in size in 1910.

Neighborhoods to the east of Knowles Avenue have always been more modest as have the residential areas north of the Willow River where the First English Lutheran Church is located. According to the 1897 plat map of New Richmond, standard lots were only 54 feet wide on the East Side and North Side of the city, with some exceptions. The East Side is where most of the individually eligible residential properties are located. In the city proper, most of the land is flat and has very little geographical relief. Except for the Willow River, there are no natural boundaries in town and the grid pattern, which runs in the cardinal directions, dominates the landscape.

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ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

New Richmond's architecture can be dated fairly easily as either pre- or post-tornado. Since the 1899 tornado destroyed most of the city in a swath of 700 to 1,000 feet running from southwest to northeast, the only pre-tornado areas are residential and are located in the northwest and southeast portions of the city.

Building material has been overwhelmingly wood since the earliest settlement. The presence of several lumber mills, the largest of which was the Willow River Lumber Company, operating from 1882 to 1913, is a causal factor. In addition, there were no nearby brick yards to draw from and thus only a handful of brick residences in town. The first known house of brick veneer was the William Virgin house in the West Side Historic District at 222 West First Street. It was built in 1883, but was to be veneered in cream-colored Milwaukee brick in 1887 (St. Croix Republican, April 27, 1887). The brick actually used was red and it is not known where it originated. However, it would have been brought in by rail, since the city had two railroads by 1884. There are two or three other red brick houses which appear to date from the late 1870s or early 1880s, but that is all. As rail and truck service improved, the use of brick did not increase. Bricks brought in by rail from other parts of the country were used to rebuild the post-tornado commercial area. constructed between 1900-1917, and industrial structures. The New Richmond News Building, 145 West Second Street, built in 1913, is the only commercial building being nominated. It is red brick and very plain, and like all the commercial buildings, altered. It is being nominated for historical significance. Early stone foundations might be limestone or sandstone, but most of them have a concrete wash and the stone is difficult to identify.

The 1983 Intensive Survey of New Richmond noted that clapboard was the overwhelming sheathing on residential architecture, probably because it was popular, inexpensive, and readily available. The survey only discovered six stucco houses and seven brick ones in town, and one brick church. Precast rusticated concrete block was a popular foundation material in post-tornado construction, but exterior walls of buildings were rarely made of this material. Only one commercial building at 103 Knowles Avenue South and the First English Lutheran Church on the north side (1906) have walls of this material. The church is actually concrete brick. Both these buildings were supplied by the B and W Concrete Stone Company of New Richmond which locally manufactured concrete stone and brick blocks. Two nearby stone quarries operated at the turn of the century, but the only stone house was the John W. McCoy mansion, built in 1895 and razed in 1970, which stood on the north side of West First Street (Stager, 1983, 74, 75). When the Soo Line built its new passenger and freight station in 1915, it faced the building with Colfax stone, largely because the citizens wanted a depot similar to the stone one in Colfax, Wisconsin.

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ARCHITECTRAL RESOURCES, continued

Stylistically, the majority of houses in New Richmond are early twentieth century Four Squares or "Homestead style" built after 1900. The earliest "high style" popular in the 1870s and 1880s was Italianate, according to various historical photographs. Most of these houses were destroyed in the 1899 tornado. The majority of the housing stock has been metal sided and otherwise altered with additions, and in some cases, roof changes in pitch. Much of the original millwork, including brackets, has been removed. As a result, there are only two good examples of the Italianate style remaining: the Marcus Bell Farmhouse at 1100 Heritage Drive and the William Kell House at 215 S. Green Avenue.

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Another popular early style is Queen Anne. The best examples of this style are three houses at 350 West Second Street, known as the Erick J. Thompson House (1894); the O. W. Mosher House at 111 S. Dakota Avenue, built in 1887: and the second Marcus S. Bell House at 350 West First Street, built in 1897. These are large houses and the Thompson and Bell houses may have been fancy patternbook examples of the style. The Mosher House was designed by Gilbert and Taylor of St. Paul. It is Queen Anne in massing, but has Colonial Revival and Shingle style detailing and is unique in the city. After the tornado, late Queen Anne styles, sometimes called Princess Anne by The Old House Journal, arouse in abundance. Most of these late manifestations of the style were constructed between 1900-1915. The best example is the William J. Bernd House at 143 North Arch Avenue, built in 1907. A local contractor, Traiser and Barrett, built many Four Squares after the tornado, but they have all been altered with siding, additions, alterations to porches, and missing millwork. It is a great loss that Traiser's business records have not been found and that the Willow River Lumber Company burned in 1913. These two firms probably bought ready-made house plans and constructed houses after the tornado by the dozens.

Because the burning of the lumber company was an economic blow to the town in 1913, followed by WW I, and a post-war slump in the economy, there are few houses which reflect the styles popular in the early twentieth century. The early pre- WW I Colonial Revival style is best represented in the Glover House at 415 East Second Street, built in 1907. It is the only high style example of this architecture in town. Another early twentieth century style found commonly in the upper midwest is the Dutch Colonial style with a true gambrel roof. The 1983 survey found only eight examples of this style in New Richmond, all fairly small houses. The best of this style is the house at 326 West Second Street. The roof is cross-gambrelled with returned eaves and decorative shingled gables. It is in original condition, and is a fine local example of the style. The bungalow style which shared a philosophy with the Craftsman movement was not extremely popular in New Richmond. Only a handfull

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ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES, continued

were located during the 1983 survey, but the best of these in original condition, with open rafters, 3" side wood clapboard, and sweeping front roof is located at 210 East Second Street and was built some time in the teens. The 1929-30 W. T. Doar, Sr. House at 510 West First Street is the only example of another period revival, the Colonial Revival resurgence. It was designed by R. C. Jones, an architect with the University of Minnesota, who suggested the use of cull brick (used brick) and sheathed the second story and steeply gabled roof in wood shingles. It has irregular massing and steel casement small-paned windows. Even the well-to-do Doar family worried about losing this house to the Depression in 1929 and ecomonic factors may explain why this popular style is not represented elsewhere in the city.

One industrial complex is important to New Richmond for historical significance. The New Richmond Roller Mills mill/warehouse, and grain elevator with associated ten tanks were rebuilt after a fire in October, 1916, totally destroyed the earlier structures. The new mill and, elevator, and ten storage tanks were constructed in 1916-17 out of reinforced concrete. Despite alterations and additions, the original structures remain much the way they appeared when built. Concrete seems to have been a strong and versatile building material in the teens. The New Richmond Roller Mills buildings have no architectural significance because the company seems not to have wasted money on architectural detailing and decoration.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEYS

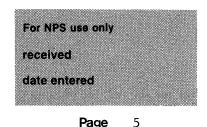
The New Richmond Intensive Survey did not include an investigation of archeological resources. Since no comprehensive study or survey has been completed for these resources, no archeological resources are included within the present nomination.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

In 1983, the City of New Richmond was awarded a survey and planning grant by the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The purpose of this grant was to conduct an intensive architectural and historical survey of New Richmond, complete site forms, recommend districts or properties for nomination to the National Register, and prepare a survey report. The project area consisted of all land within the corporate boundaries of the city.

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SURVEY METHODOLOGY, continued

Claudette Stager was hired as an independent contractor and became principal investigator. The intensive survey was conducted between March and June, 1983. The survey resulted in the identification of over 500 properties of potential historical or architectural interest. An intensive survey report which summarized the research findings was prepared along with an evaluation of properties and potential districts according to National Register of Historic Places criteria.

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The survey was conducted in three phases. The first phase was to complete a reconnaissance survey of the city. Every street was travelled and properties of potential historical or architectural interest were photographed, briefly described, and plotted on a map. Over 500 properties were identified using this procedure. Distinctive neighborhoods were identified as well as an impression of city growth, and ecomonic and cultural sub-areas.

An official invetory card was prepared for the Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places. This card file is a part of the Historic Preservation Division. It consists of cards containing an address, map code, brief bulding description and a black and white photograph. Local volunteers typed the cards and affixed the photographs. Each site inventoried was plotted on a large city map with a site number. This mapping was done by the West Central Regional Planning office in Eau Claire.

The next phase was an intensive survey. Research on the history of the city and careful architectural analysis was conducted to place each property into a historical perspective. Each property was evaluated using National Register criteria. Intensive survey forms with a detailed architectural description, historical backgound on the buildings and biogrphical information on persons associated with the properties, and an assessment as to type and level of significance was attached to each form.

At the same time, general research, using primary and secondary sources, was conducted on the history of the city and region. Nineteen themes were identified of importance to the city, seventeen of which were suggested by the State Historical Society. Two additional themes were added: newspapers, and the June, 1899 tornado.

Sources of general and specific research were wide-ranging. Primary sources included plat maps and Sanborn Insurance Maps, transcripts of oral interviews, federal census data, property abstracts, letters, contemborary accounts of the tornado, monographs of local, regional, and statewide topics, historical photographs, and newspapers. Collections at the St. Croix Historical Society, the Area Research Center at River Falls, the New Richmond Preservation

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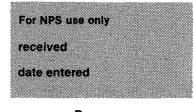
SURVEY METHODOLOGY, continued

Society, and the Carleton Friday Memorial Library had both primary and secondary sources. The New Richmond newspapers were especially helpful beginning with the <u>St. Croix Republican</u> (1869-1899), the <u>Republican Voice</u> (1900-1907), <u>The New Richmond News and Republican Voice</u> (1907-1942), and the <u>New Richmond News</u> (1942-present). Historical photographs were available at the Friday Library, St. Croix County and New Richmond historical societies, and individual residents. Several county histories dating from 1881, 1888, and 1909 were valuable secondary sources.

The final stage was to assess the sites for National Register eligibility and make recommendations. More intensive site specific research was undertaken for properties which appeared to have architectural and historical significance as the research progressed. The backgound research was written up in the 1983 <u>Intensive Survey Report</u>. After consultation with the Historic Preservation Division in Madison, it was decided that a historic district survey should be done. A public meeting presented the findings and recommendations to interested local citizens. A draft of the West Side Historic District was prepared including some 19 properties and another short list of some two dozen properties were deemed potentially eligible to the National Register.

As a follow-up to Stager's original efforts, a new grant was awarded to the St. Croix County Planning Department by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in the April, 1986. The purpose of this grant was to review and reassess the properties identified in 1983 as potentially eligible, rephotograph eligible properties, locate any additional information necessary, and prepare a Multiple Resource Nomination for New Richmond consisting of the West Side Historic District and individually eligible properties. The grant was administered locally by Lynn Wood, New Richmond Preservation Society and past president of that group. A private contractor, Historical Research, Inc. of Minneapolis, was hired to do the work. The principal investigator was Dr. Norene A. Roberts, president of the firm.

Working with Lynn Wood, Roberts reviewed all potentially eligible sites identified in 1983. Two properties were deleted in the West Side Historic District because of alterations and one was added when it was discovered to be over 50 years old. In consultation with the Historic Preservation Division staff, potentially eligible properties were reassessed. Prior research was rechecked and additional map, photographic, newspaper, and abstract research was conducted. Abstracts of Title were located on most of the eligible properties and proved to be invaluable in establishing historical significance. Soo Line railroad archives and information on architects at the Northwest Architectural Archives and University Archives, University of Minnesota, were checked. Local citizens were interviewed or re-interviewed and the original research supplemented and verified. The result is this nomination, which consists of a residential district of 18 properties along with 12 geographically non-contiguous individually-eligible properties or complexes.



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8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture architecture art commerce x communications	community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlement	 literature military music philosophy politics/government 	
Period o	of significance:	invention	x Development	x other (specify) Medicine
Specific dates	1870- 1938	Builder/Architect see	intensive survey for	
			• -	associat

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Nomination includes use of criteria A,B, & C

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The thirty properties comprising the Historic Resources of New Richmond are included variously for historical and architectural significance. Architecturally significant properties are examples of types, periods, and methods of construction in nineteenth and twentieth century New Richmond. Some are architect-designed and some are textbook examples of patternbook styles in excellent condition with good architectural integrity. All architecturally significant properties are residential. Historically significant properties are included for their associations with significant individuals or an ethnic group, the historical development of New Richmond, or as excellent or only examples of the following themes: communications, industry, transportation, and medicine. The resources comprise one residential district of 18 properties, one church, one industrial complex, one newspaper office, one passenger and freight depot, one doctor's office, one farmstead, and six individually eligible residences. All are located within the corporate limits of the city of New Richmond.

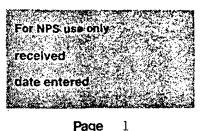
Historical Backgound

European settlement began in the early 1850s. Although the identity of the first settler is in dispute, B.C.B. Foster of Maine is commonly credited with being the original settler, because part of his land became the original plat of New Richmond. His home was at the northeast corner of North Knowles Avenue and East First Street about two blocks east of the West Side Historic District. It was leveled in the 1899 tornado. Foster built a saw mill on the south side of the Willow River at Knowles and a dam across the river not far from the present dam. The settlement became known as Foster's Landing (Folsom, 1888, pp. 184, 185).

The Willow River had a pivotal role in the settlement at New Richmond. After the first dam spanned the Willow, a small settlement grew up at the junction of the river and what is now Knowles Avenue (formerly Main Street). The river provided transportation for men and timber before the first railroad arrived in 1872. As soon as the river was dammed, it became a source of power to run flour and timber mills.

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SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, continued

The land to the south and west of Foster's became the heart of New Richmond. Henry Russell, who settled in New Richmond from Vermont in 1857, platted the area west of Knowles and south of the river, naming it the village of Fremont. This "west side" area is now the first ward and is the location of the West Side Historic District. Another early settler, Robert Philbrook, filed on land south of Foster's and platted it as the village of Gridley. This area eventually became the second ward. The town was organized in 1857, but not incorporated as a village until 1878 or 1879, depending on the source (Stager, 1983, 6, 8). The early names of Gridley and Fremont disappeared forever, to be preserved only on land titles.

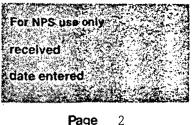
The early economy was based on lumbering and New Richmond was on the edge of the vast timberlands to the north. Dirt roads connected New Richmond with Hudson, until the railroad was built through the town in 1872. By 1888, the population had grown to around 1,400 and the city was incorporated in 1884. Flour milling and lumbering were the primary industries during the last century. Logs were driven to Hudson down the Willow River until 1882, when John E. Glover began operations at the Willow River Lumber Company on the north side of the river. This lumber operation was the largest employer in town until 1913 when the entire complex burned in a huge fire, never to reopen. The river split the town in two and most of the lumber hands and their families (largely Scandinavian) lived on the north side of the river in more modest worker's houses.

New Richmond had its share of disasters and population grew slowly during the nineteenth century. The Civil War in the early 1860s delayed settlement. Tn 1863, there were only eleven buildings within a square mile of settlement. After the railroad was built in 1872, the village began to grow. It became a trading point for Stanton, Erin Prairie, and Star Prairie. In the early 1880s, New Richmond was a town of around 250 spread over a square mile with predominantly wooden structures (Stager, 1983, p. 5).

The two largest disasters happened in the 1890s. In 1891, a fire destroyed half of the Main Street Business district where all the buildings had been of frame construction. But the greatest natural disaster was the tornado which struck on June 12, 1899, destroying residential areas in the southwest and northeast portions of the city and wiping out virtually the entire four block commercial district which stretched from the Willow River south along Main Street. Also hit were the New Richmond Roller Mills where Doboy sits today. Eye witness accounts varied, but some 119 people were killed and 150 wounded. Only the extreme northwest and southeast portions of neighborhoods were left standing and over 200 homes and 50 businesses destroyed. All city services and offices were also lost (See Boehm, The History of the New Richmond Cyclone...; and Epley, A Modern Herculaneum).

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SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, continued

In spite of these setbacks, New Richmond prospered and grew between 1880 and 1910. It survived the financial panic of 1893, thanks in part to John E. Glover, the largest employer and a local banker. The post-tornado rebuilding was accomplished in record time. The downtown was rebuilt with brick and fireproof structures. By 1912, the population reached 2,500 and both the lumber and flour mill industries were growing (Stager, 1983, p. 9). New Richmond was able to survive economically because its citizens kept an eye on diversification. Not only was it a trade center for the surrounding agricultural community, but a distribution point as well. Both the Soo Line and the Omaha Line ran through town. A booster pamphlet written in 1910 noted that the Roller Mills and elevators, lumber mills, a ski and oar factory, a creamery, two ice cream factories, a candy factory, two agricultural machine dealers, and assorted retail stores were located there (Souvenir of New Richmond, Wisconsin, n.p.).

After the Willow River Lumber Company burned in 1913, growth slowed. But the Friday Canning Company located in town in 1925, and the Roller Mills were reorganized as Doughboy in the mid-1930s. Doughboy (Doboy and Domain, today) and the canning company have become the city's largest employers. Unfortunately, the canning company complex predominantly dates from the 1950s. and is not part of this nomination. Today, New Richmond is partially a bedroom community to the Twin Cities. New neighborhoods have sprung up on the southeast and southwest part of town and the downtown is a thriving small community. The city annexed a portion of former farmlands to the south in the early 1980s so that the Marcus S. Bell farmstead, once located a mile south of town, is now within the city limits.

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE

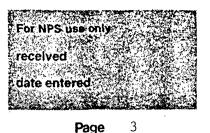
Within the West Side Historic District, two residences are significant for architecture: the O. W. Mosher House at 111 S. Dakota Avenue and the W. T. Doar, Sr. House at 510 West First Street. Both are architect designed. The Mosher House was designed in 1887 by (Cass) Gilbert and (James Knox) Taylor.¹ The Doar House was designed and built in 1929-30 by Roy Childs Jones.² The Mosher House is significant as a signal example of the early design work and collaboration of Gilbert and Taylor and as a restrained but elegant example of the Shingle Style with touches of Queen Anne detailing. The interior of the

¹ Abstract of Title; Architectural plans in posession of current owner.

² Interview with W. T. Doar, Jr., June 27, 1986.

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AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE, continued

Mosher House is an interesting combination of Queen Anne and Classical Revival detailing. Queen Anne details are to be expected in an 1887 designed house and Gilbert even worked spoolwork into the staircase balustrade. The Classical Revival details are a very early Gilbert-inspired use of this popular style later used extensively in the upper midwest. For example, tucked under the front foyer staircase is a sprung-arched niche with a wooded keystone at the top of the arch, classically-inspired beadwork and egg and dart trim in wood molding in the built-in dining room buffet and on millwork. pilastered trim boards, and dentilled crown molding around first floor ceilings. Cass Gilbert is credited with having "single-handedly brought the eighteenth-century Colonial Revival style to St. Paul from the east coast" in the late 1880s. His enthusiasm for the Shingle Style in the early 1880s was a result of having worked for McKim, Mead, and White on the east coast and his drive to keep well-informed about the latest architectural trends 3 . The Mosher House illustrates Gilbert's interests in the 1880s beautifully. The Gilbert and Taylor partnership only lasted from 1884-1892, at which point Taylor moved to Philadelphia and eventually went on to become the Supervising Architect of the U. S. Treasury. Gilbert has been assessed as "one of the most innovative and proficient architects practicing in Minnesota between 1880 and 1910."4

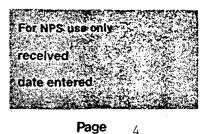
The Doar House at 510 West First Street represents a much different style and era. It was the last house built in the West Side Historic District in 1929-30. Doar was an attorney with business connections to St. Paul. Prior to 1929, he and his family lived in a Four Square one lot south of his new house. He contacted the head of the School of Architecture at the University of Minnesota, Roy Childs Jones, and Jones took the commission. The Doar House is Colonial Revival resurgence with irregular massing and roof line. Conscious of wasting money, Jones proposed the use of cull (used) brick and the first story is irregular cream-colored cull brick with a shingled second story and steeply-pitched roof. The house is not symmetrical, but, rather, reflects the irregular romantic feeling of an English country cottage. It has small-paned steel casement windows and half-fan lights flanking the end chimneys on the west and east gable ends. The genius of the house is the five bedrooms and long east-west hallways loaded with storage space. Storage

³ Murphy, Patricia A., "Cass Gilbert: Minnesota Master Architect." (University of Minnesota exhibit pamphlet, n.d., n.p.

4 Ibid.

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AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE, continued in the house consists of built-in drawers, linen and utility closets, clothes closets and a kitchen with two sinks, one area of the kitchen opening on the dining room, the other for food preparation. The house reflects Jones' understanding of the needs of American families and his careful attention to the details not only of family living, even though he was a bachelor, but also of Colonial Revival interior architectural details as they were manifested in the 1920s and 1930s.

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The remainder of the houses nominated for architecture in New Richmond are individually eligible and scattered about town. They represent a variety of national styles popular during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since settlement of the area lifted off in the 1870s just around the time the first rail line came through, there are two houses which are outstanding as examples of the Italianate style. One is in town, the William Kell House (ca. 1875) ⁵, which was spared in the 1899 tornado. The other is an Italianate style farmhouse built by Marcus S. Bell in 1884 ⁶ when his farm was a mile south of town. Historical photographs indicate that the Italianate style was very popular in New Richmond in the 1870s and early 1880s, but most of the homes designed in the style were destroyed in the tornado. Some which survive have been so altered as to be unrecognizable. These two houses are the best intact examples of the style and the only examples with sufficient architectural integrity to merit nomination for architectural significance.

The Kell House exterior is the best example of the Italianate style, untouched in the main, since construction. It is the earliest house in this style remaining in town, pre-dates the 1899 tornado, and is in good condition, although sagging somewhat at the front porches and south dependencies. It is not "high style," but is an excellent example of the Italianate style probably built from ready-made plans. Its massing and shape harks back to the Greek Revival upright and wing. It has the textbook details of slightly-sloped hipped roof, shallow els, angled bay window, narrow porches with sloped and flat roofs, corniced window headers, pilastered cornerboards, fishscaled shingles on the second story and clapboard on the first, wide wooden frieze, scroll-sawn millwork, and paired two-over-two windows.

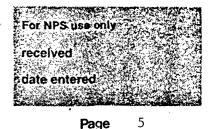
The 1884 Marcus Bell farmhouse is part of one property with associated outbuildings. Unfortunately, or thankfully, the house was saved by being

⁶ St. Croix Republican, December 19, 1883; June 4, 1884; July 2, 1884.

⁵ Abstract of Title

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AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE, continued

moved some 300 feet southeast of its original location. It is an outstanding local example of the Italianate style in farm house design. The paired eave brackets, hood molding on the west windows, angled two story bay, wood panelled window spandrels, pilastered cornerboards, and slightly pitched hipped roof are textbook examples of Italianate detailing. Italianate houses at 222 West First Street and 251 W. Second Street (within the West Side Historic District) have been too altered to stand as examples of the style. The Bell farmhouse is an instructive point of beginning in any explanation of alterations to these other once-fine examples of the style.

The last popular national nineteenth century style extant in New Richmond today is the Queen Anne. This style is evident in a range from fancy to plain, but all houses in this style appear to have been patternbook in origin, rather that one-of-a-kind architect designed. The two houses nominated for architectural significance are: the Erick J. Thompson House (1894) ⁷ at 350 West Second Street and the William J. Bernd House (1907) ⁸ at 143 Arch Avenue North. The former is a somewhat flamboyant expression of the style; at least as flamboyant as one can get in New Richmond. The latter is a late Queen Anne with original integrity in excellent condition (a style which <u>The Old House</u> <u>Journal</u> has dubbed "Princess Anne"). Judging from the surviving Queen Anne detailed houses in the city, New Richmond tastes were very subdued when it came to the common exhuberances of a style like the Queen Anne.

The Thompson House is not as it appeared when originally built because of missing and masked detailling. Spoolwork on the porches and scroll saw and spoolwork detailing on projecting gables on the second floor have been removed, and the house has been re-sided in aluminum. Nonetheless, enough of its original detail remains to make it significant as a fine example of the style. The rectangular massing is broken by projecting gables, and elaborate window heads. Queen Anne details include stained glass window transoms, angled bays, cant cornered second story projections, wide wooden frieze with square wooden blocks, dentilling, tall window heads with double arched windows, turret-like dormer, recessed sleeping porch, and wrap around front porch with squared porch columns. The interior has a spoolwork staircase balustrade, beadwork moldings, and a Corinthian columned fireplace, all done in oak.

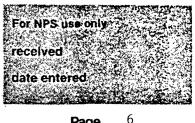
The William J. Bernd House at 143 N. Arch Avenue is done in a late and simpler

⁷ Abstract of Title

⁸ Abstract of Title; New Richmond News and Republican Voice, April 26, 1907.

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AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE, continued

Queen Anne style sometimes referred to as "Princess Anne." It was probably built from stock plans and there are indications that Bernd, a successful farmer and livestock breeder, built houses on speculation after the turn of the century. According to the Abstract of Title, he only lived here or owned it for two years before selling. There are a couple dozen houses of this style in the city, a fact not surprising since the style was popular at the time when most of New Richmond was rebuilding after the almost-total destruction of the 1899 tornado. This one, however, is the best of them all in terms of integrity, condition, and attention to detail.

Although a significant proportion of houses in New Richmond display details associated with the Classical Revival style popular at the turn-of-the-century, only one house in the city can be said to be purely Classical Revival and also an excellent "high style" example with good integrity and in good condition. It is the Ezra Glover, Jr. House (1907) ⁹ at 415 East Second Street. Except for slightly different windows flanking the front door on the first story, the front facade of this house is symmetrical. It has one of the few prominent palladian-motif windows in town. This house is decorated with dentilled frieze, Tuscan porch columns, molded running courses, pilastered corner-boards, pedimented gables, wood water table, bellcast hipped roof, and 3" clapboard siding. Turned balustrades over the front porch and in the top front gable have been removed. Otherwise, the house is in original condition. This house is also a local historical landmark, having been the only hospital in New Richmond from 1928-1950.

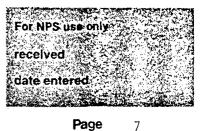
Two other twentieth century styles popular nationally are represented in this nomination: Dutch Colonial Revival and Craftsman-style bungalow. Both have intact integrity and are in excellent condition. The Meilke Residence at 326 West Second Street was built sometime between 1900-1912.¹⁰ It is an excellent example of the Dutch Colonial Revival style with cross-gambrelled roof, decorative shingling, wide wooden frieze, and Eastlake style porch columns, and it is the best example of eight extant Dutch Colonial houses in New Richmond. This house has had no alterations and is in good condition. There is only a handful of bungalows in New Richmond. Of those surveyed, the best example is the William J. Bernd Bungalow at 210 East Second Street, built

¹⁰ Plat map of New Richmond, 1897; Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1912, 1927.

⁹ Abstract of Title; New Richmond News and Republican Voice, April 24, 1907.

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AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE, continued

between 1912-1927, ¹¹ and probably closer to 1927.¹² It was probably built from patternbook plans, but a check of Keith's Book of Bungalows published in Minneapolis during this period, as well as Radford and Sears plans failed to turn up any designs similar to this house. It is the best preserved bungalow in the city, and is an excellent local example of the Craftsman style with exposed decorative eaves and eave boards, narrow clapboard siding, vertical muntin windows, continuous wooden header and sill courses tying groups of windows together, and porch columns which are squared with stylized flat Tuscan capitals.

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: COMMUNICATIONS

The New Richmond News Building, built in 1913 by local contractors Traiser and Barrett after the previous building burned, 13 is significant locally as the only building that is associated with the News and the business life of the Van Meter family which ran the paper from 1869-1968. The building is significant historically as representing the period (1913-1937) when the New Richmond News and Republican Voice was the only source of printed information in the city and consolidated its hold on local news coverage.

Three generations of the Van Meter family ran the newspapers in New Richmond. Abe C. Van Meter began the St. Croix Republican, the first paper in New Richmond, in 1869 and continued it until his death in 1899. In 1899, the two newspapers in town, The Republican and the New Richmond Voice, were merged under the editorship of Franc A. R. Van Meter, Abe's son. The new paper was called the Republican Voice. In 1907, the Van Meter-Welch Printing Company was organized with Franc as president. The printing company bought the New Richmond News and merged the two papers under the title, New Richmond News and Republican Voice, as a semi-weekly. A fire in 1913 destroyed the printing office, but it was replaced with this new facility which opened in November, 1913. Franc ran the News and Rebublican Voice until his death in 1942 at which point the paper was renamed "New Richmond News" under the editorship of John A. Van Meter. The paper was sold in 1968 and passed out of the hands of

13 New Richmond News and Republican Voice, May 21, 1913. OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

¹¹ Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1912, 1927; Interview, Mary Etta Hagan, June 10, 1986

¹² Interview with Marilyn Thomas, June 10, 1986, during which she stated that her great uncle, William J. Bernd, built this house sometime around 1930.

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> AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: COMMUNICATIONS, continued the Van Meter family. ¹⁴ Under Franc Van Meter, the paper was editorially conservative and non-union. It became less conservative under John A. Van Meter in the period 1942-68. John served as mayor repeatedly while running the paper. His terms were: 1948-50, 1952-54, and 1962-68.

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AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: TRANSPORTATION

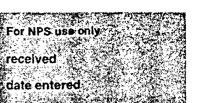
The first railroad, the Wisconsin Central, reached New Richmond in 1872. This line became the Northern Division of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway by 1881. The Soo Line reached New Richmond in 1884 and served northern Wisconsin with supplies, bringing timber down to the mills in New Richmond and the St. Croix region. Passenger and freight depots were the lifeblood of towns before the automobile became affordable for everyone. The rails brought lumber down from northern Minnesota to the Willow River Lumber Company mills, as well as mail, freight, grain, and "drummers." New Richmond sent out hay, flour, finished goods, groceries, and passengers, of course. At one time, there were three depots in New Richmond, two on the Omaha Line and one on the Soo. The first was the old Wisconsin Central depot, which was located a little south of the present Soo Line depot which replaced the earlier one in 1913. The Omaha Line had both a passenger and freight depot. destroyed in the 1899 tornado and rebuilt. The Omaha passenger station which was rebuilt after the tornado was razed when service was discontinued and the tracks torn up several years ago. The Soo Line discontinued service around 1968 and the depot is now vacant. It was built in 1915 after citizen complaints to the railroad and state railroad commission that the old depot was no longer adequately maintained. ¹⁵ The Soo Line passenger and freight depot is the only remaining structure which represents the early age of railroading and rail transportation in New Richmond.

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: ETHNIC ASSOCIATION

The First English Lutheran Church, built in 1906, ¹⁶ is historically significant for its associations with the Scandinavian community which lived on the north side of the Willow River and worked in the lumber mills. The church was built by a congregation of Swedish settlers who conducted their services in English. The Norwegian church, originally a block east, was razed

¹⁵ <u>New Richmond News and Republican Voice</u>. January 1, 1915, October 27, 1915:

¹⁶ Abstract of Title; <u>The Republican Voice</u>, July 7 and 26, 1907; <u>New Richmond</u> News and Republican Voice, January 1, 1907.



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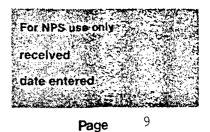
¹⁴ <u>New Richmond News</u>, Centennial + Five Edition, Section A, pp. 5, 6, September 27, 1973.

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AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: ETHNIC ASSOCIATIONS, continued

years ago. The Swedish and Norwegian Lutheran congregations merged in 1945 and built a new modern church which still has a very active membership today. The St. Thomas Episcopal congregation bought the old First English Lutheran Church building in 1946 and has called it home to services since. The Scandia House, the Willow River Lumber Company, the Norwegian church, and other buildings associated with this northern European ethnic community which contributed to the up-building of New Richmond are all gone. This building, although a church, is the last tangible link to an important ethnic minority in New Richmond and a group who contributed as laborers to the lumber business in New Richmond. Unfortunately, the New Richmond newspapers have never given adequate coverage to the Scandinavian neighborhood on the north side of the Willow River. According to Lynn Wood, past president of the New Richmond Preservation Society, the north side neighborhood was sometimes referred to as "Brooklyn," Statistics have not been found to document how large the Swedish and Norwegian populations were in New Richmond at the time of the building of the church and the local newspapers almost never included news of this group of immigrants. The North Side today, however, has a significant concentration of people of Scandinavian extraction and these groups are still viable in town.

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: INDUSTRY; DEVELOPMENT OF A LOCALITY

The remaining industrial complex which is significant for its associations with the development of a locality is the New Richmond Roller Mills buildings. The New Richmond Roller Mills complex consists of a concrete five story mill/warehouse, feed mill, elevator, and ten storage bins, all but the feed mill dating from 1916-17. These buildings were constructed on the site of previous New Richmond Roller Mills Company's wooden buildings which were destroyed in a 1916 fire. ¹⁷ At that time new steel rollers were installed, but there is no original machinery left in the mill. The Roller Mills Company supplemented the production of flour with scratch feeds and supplements for livestock and poultry during the 1920s and early 1930s and managed to survive the Great Depression. Since 1935, this company has continued to diversify and grow into the largest employer in New Richmond. It survived the decline of wheat and milling which occurred at the turn-of-the-century in Wisconsin, but

¹⁷ James H. Buell interview, July 14, 1986; <u>New Richmond News</u>, Centennial + Five Edition, Section F, pp. 7, 13, 14 and Section D, pp. 4, 5, September 27, 1973.

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AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: INDUSTRY

continued to produce flour until 1970. Today it still produces formula feeds, operates the milk replacer plant, and operates a plastics division. The significance of the New Richmond Roller Mills lies in the company's successful contribution to a diversified economy in New Richmond and in the fact that it represents the only remaining important historic industrial site within this small St. Croix county community.

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: MEDECINE

It was not until 1950 that New Richmond had a full-service hospital. Holy Family Hospital was opened that year on the former fairgrounds site. Prior to this time residents of this small community either went to the Twin Cities, had private care, or went to "Margaret's Place". In 1922 the McNamara family moved into E.A.Glover's 1907 house. The McNamara's had lived on a farm five miles northeast of New Richmond. The parents and two of their daughters moved here. Between 1928 and 1949 Margaret McNamara's house was the only place in New Richmond offering hospital care. The formal name of the hospital was the New Richmond Hospital, but it was never popularly known as such. Margaret McNamara was a registered nurse, having graduated in 1916 from St. Paul's St. Joseph Hospital program. Upon coming back to New Richmond to work she was approached by local physician Dr. Armstrong to take in a patient for home care and the service continued to grow. Obstetrical care or simply surgery were the most common types of cases that utilized the house. Upon the opening of Holy Family in 1950, the house returned to use by the McNamaras as a residence.

The operation of the hospital at 415 East Second Street by Margaret McNamara and her sister reflected an early trend often found in small communities unable to support full-service medical facilities. As the only hospital in New Richmond from 1928 until the opening of the new Holy Family facility in 1949-50, the Classical Revival McNamara House represents a significant element in New Richmonds medical history.

One individual property is specifically associated with the life of a significant person important in the medical field in New Richmond. It is the office of Dr. Frank W. Epley - c.1879 - at 137 East Third Street. This building was the office of Dr. Epley, a leading early physician in the community, citizen, businessman, and the Mayor in the troubling and rebuilding years of 1902-04. He died in 1908. The building is historically significant as the only remaining structure associated with this man's varied career, which reached a highpoint with his contributions to the medical aid of the local citizenry during and after the horrible tornado of 1899. The office played a key role in post-tornado assistance because it was the only local cache of medical supplies which was not damaged by the tornado. Epley's medical and civic efforts in the wake of the devastation to the community have been repeatedly noted in the history of the city.

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT / COMMERCIAL ASSOCIATIONS Within the West Side Historic District lived the greatest concentration of local

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HISTORIC RESOURCES OF NEW RICHMOND St. Croix County, WI

citizens of wealth, power and commercial importance to the growing community of New Richmond. Starting in the 1870, the area to the west of Knowles Avenue and the heart of the commercial center of New Richmond became the sought-after address for residential settlement for those with influence in the community. Near to downtown commercial activity and the natural areas of the lower Willow River, the area quickly built itself up with handsome, sizable homes. Within the city of New Richmond the development of the First Street corridor as an affluent residential section was matched by the settlement of the northside of the community as the workers neighborhood for laborers and mostly newly arriving Scandanavian immigrants. Together these areas represented the broadest patterns of local development.

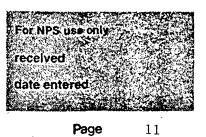
The tornado of 1899 reinforced the importance of this area as a unique visual representation of the early settlement and development patterns within the city by destroying almost completly the city's stock of pre-1899 housing. Except for scattered sites, many of which are being included seperatly as part of this nomination no other area of the city contains such a concentration of buildings representing the typical development and building patterns of the city from the period 1870 to around the 1910s.

Within the specific boundaries of the district, several houses are associated with significant political and business figures in the history of New Richmond from the 1870s to the present. Taken as a whole these names portray a picture of community activity essential to the growth and development of the New Richmond community. These indiviuals include the following houses on West First Street: Marcus S. Bell House (350), William Doar (510), William J. Virgin (222), Orin J. Williams House (413), Katherine Bell House (425), Louis G. Earle House (367), and the Ward Spooner Williams Residence (339). On other streets in the district, houses associated with significant individuals include: the O.W. Mosher House (111 S. Dakota Avenue), the William and Stella McNally House (112 S. Dakota Avenue), the Frank Bartlett House (251 West Second Street), and the Mark L. Simonton House (313 W, Second Street).

For additional information, please see West Side District site forms and district survey form.

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PLANNING, PRESERVATION, AND RESTORATION ACTIVITIES

The initial intensive survey work in 1983 and the present work to complete a National Register nomination have been used by the city of New Richmond, the St. Croix Planning Department, and the New Richmond Preservation Society. The New Richmond group has been especially active in saving the Marcus Bell Farmhouse from demolition and have raised thousands of dollars to build a new foundation for the house and restore the interior and exterior. They realize, at the same time, that moving a building is a measure of last resort. The group is equally interested in maintaining the integrity of older significant buildings throughout the town.

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Leading citizens in New Richmond, in both the West Side Historic District neighborhood and owners of scattered sites throughout town, have taken a great interest in the grants from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin which have made this survey and nomination possible. The two grants, in 1983 and 1986, drew the participation of a dedicated group of local volunteers. Many businesses in the city contributed in-kind and financial assistance to make the work possible. In each case, the National Register contracts have included public meetings and slide shows to explain the program, cover the historical development of the city, and disseminate information about the National Register of Historic Places.

Most of the older citizens of New Richmond are well-informed about the history of their town. The tornado which destroyed most of the city in 1899 seems to have drawn the people of New Richmond together behind a mutual interest in the city. Also, the population has been fairly stable since the 1890-1910 era and many families in town trace their roots to this period and share personal family histories in common. The present contractor has found interest in preservation and in the National Register nomination process very keen on the part of a wide spectrum of residents and business people.

The 1983 survey produced a spin-off publication of 32 pages called <u>Reflections: New Richmond, Wisconsin</u>. The principal investigator, Claudette Stager, and Lynn Wood produced the research and a grant-in-aid from the National Park Service funded the publication. Since no sites are yet on the National Register, commercial property owners have have not taken advantage of the tax credits for rehabilitation yet.

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See Continuation Sheet

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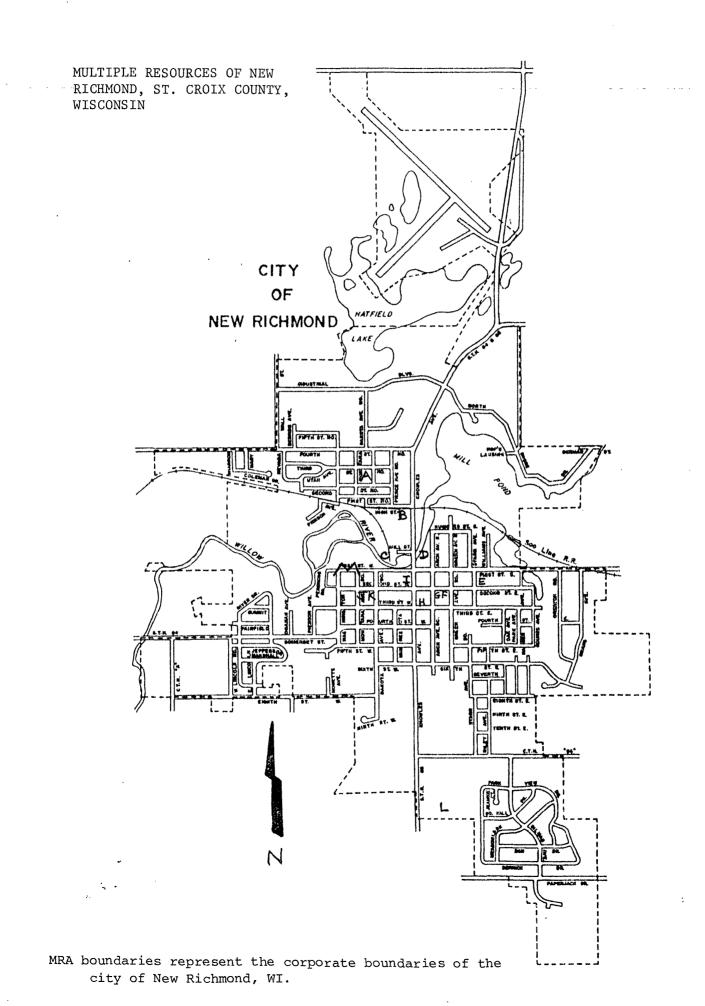
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9



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

		Multiple Resource Area Thematic Group
Name <u>New Richmond MRA</u> State <u>St. Croix County, V</u>	VISCONSIN	
Nomination/Type of Review		Date/Signature
Cover		Keeper Beth Boland 5/31/88
1. Bell, Marcus Sears, Farm	Eubstantiva Hevlew	Keeper Beth Boland 5/31/88
		Attest
 Bernd, William J., House (143 Arch Ave. ,N.) 	Entered in the National Register	fikeeper Alburggun 5/3
^{3.} Bernd, William J., House	Entered in the National Register	Attest Keeper AlmapByn 5/
(210 Second St., E.)		Attest
^{4.} Epley, Dr. Frank W., Offic	e Entered in the National Registe	Keeper Allougger 3
5. First English Lutheran Chu	rch	Attest Keeper Beth Boland 5/31/88
	And the south	Attest
6. Glover, Ezra Jr., House	Enteral In MM National Register	freeper Helow Syen ste
	Till of the province of the	Attest
7. Kell, William H., House	Entered in the National Register	freeper HeloneByen st
	Entered in the	Attest
8. Mielke, Joseph, House	National Register	Heeper Autompyon 5/3
		Attest
9. New Richmond News Building	Entered in the National Register	FReeper Automapage 5/3
		Attest

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Page					
		9-19-19-19-19-19-19-19-19-19-19-19-19-19		Multiple Resource Area Thematic Group	
Name	New Richmond MRA				
State	St. Croix County,	WISCONSIN			
Nomina	ation/Type of Review			Date/Signature	
11.	New Richmond West Side Historic District	Entered in the 9 National Register (Keeper	Helourgyen 5/3.188	
			Attest		
12.	Soo Line Depot	Entered in the National Register	Keeper	Alan Byen 5/3/188	
			Attest		
13.	Thompson, Erick J., Hou	use Substantive Review	Keeper	Bett Boland 5/31/88	
		DUDSCALLETVO MOVION	Attest		
14.			Keeper		
			Attest	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
15.					
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18.			Keeper	:	
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