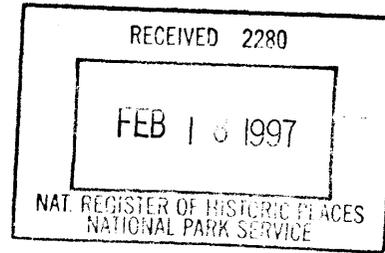


United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service



1271

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property

historic name Princeton Downtown Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number (see continuation sheets) N/A not for duplication

city, town Princeton N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI County Green Lake code U47 zip code 54968

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>24</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<u>1</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<u>24</u>	<u>4</u> Total

Name or related multiple property listing:

N/A

No. of contributing resources
 previously listed in the
 National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.



2/11/97
Date

Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

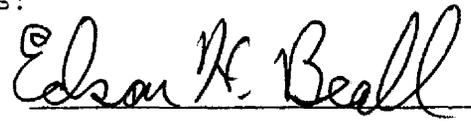
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet



3/21/97

 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet

 determined not eligible for the National Register.

 removed from the National Register.

 other, (explain:)



Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

 COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
 COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution
 DOMESTIC/hotel
 COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

 COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
 DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
 COMMERCE/TRADE/professional
 COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

I. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
Late Victorian	foundation Stone
Commercial Style	walls Brick
Italianate	Stone
	roof Asphalt
	other Wood
	Cast Iron

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Description

The Princeton Downtown Historic District consists of a fine collection of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century one to three-story commercial buildings that form the historic commercial core of the city of Princeton. The district is centered on the east-west running Water Street, the city's principal historic commercial thoroughfare, and all of the district's resources front on this street. The district contains twenty-eight commercial buildings, all but five of which are good representative examples of masonry construction late nineteenth century Italianate, Richardsonian Romanesque Revival, and Commercial Vernacular form designs. Four of the others are fine frame examples. All of the district's twenty-four contributing buildings were constructed between ca. 1859 and 1914 as were three of its four noncontributing resources.

The city of Princeton is located approximately thirty-three miles southwest of the city of Oshkosh and approximately thirty-five miles west of the city of Fond du Lac, which are two of Wisconsin's larger cities.¹ Oshkosh and Princeton are connected by SH 44 and SH 23, the latter of which becomes Main Street within the corporate limits of Princeton, and they are also linked by the Fox River, which flows just south of and parallel to both Water Street and the Princeton Downtown Historic District. The district is located on level ground on the north bank of the river and comprises buildings that line both sides of portions of a three-block-long stretch of West Water Street (the 400, 500, and 600 blocks of West Water Street). This two-lane street is approximately 60-feet-wide at this point, both sides have curbside parking, and the buildings in the district are built flush with the cement sidewalks that line the street.

The buildings within the district comprise both the most intact collection of historic commercial buildings remaining in the downtown section of Princeton and they also represent a considerable percentage of all the commercial buildings that have ever existed in this city.² For the most part, however, they are not the original building on their sites. Until as late as 1885, Princeton's downtown consisted of a mix of mostly frame construction and just a few masonry construction commercial buildings. By 1914, however, nearly all of the frame construction buildings and some of the oldest masonry ones had been replaced with larger masonry construction buildings, most of which are now included within the proposed district boundaries.

¹ The 1990 population of Princeton was 1458. The 1990 population of Oshkosh was 55,006 and Fond du Lac, 31,751.

² A few other buildings that have a similar history are also located on both sides of West Water Street just outside the district, but these buildings have either lost too much integrity for inclusion in the district or they are separated from it by too great a distance to form a continuous streetscape as defined by the National Park Service.

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Some general characteristics typify the district's resources. Most of the nineteenth century buildings in the district either are or were originally faced in cream brick, while most of the contributing twentieth century examples are faced in darker reddish-brown brick. Most of the district's buildings are rectilinear in plan and are one or two stories in height (the three-story Salem T. Wright building is the sole exception). In general, these buildings exhibit a high degree of integrity for buildings of this type although nearly all of them have experienced some degree of exterior or interior change. Almost all of these buildings have, for instance, had their first story storefronts modified since they were first built, some more than once, in order to conform to changing tastes, a circumstance that is true of the buildings in most of Wisconsin's older commercial districts as well.

Only three of the resources in the district have experienced so great a loss of integrity as to make them non-contributing for this reason; 501, 515-519, and 536-538 W. Water Street. In addition, a fourth resource, the Ernest L. Hiestand Building at 502 W. Water Street, is of too recent a date to be a contributing resource in the district. Finally, the district contains a single noncontributing site. This site, which is now a small landscaped park, was the former location of two buildings that were demolished in the early 1990s and it is also of too recent a date to be a contributing resource in the district.

The following inventory lists every resource in the district and includes the original owner's name and the construction date, if known, the address, map number, and contributing or non-contributing status.

INVENTORY

<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Status</u>
1	501 W. Water St.	First National Bank of Princeton	1901	NC
2	505-509 W. Water St.	Tassler/Reetz Double Building	1905-10	C
3	511 W. Water St.	Christ Henning Jr. Building	Pre-1885	C
4	513-519 W. Water St.	Salem T. Wright Double Building	ca.1859	C
	(note: 515-519 is now in separate ownership and this half is now considered to be noncontributing)			
5	521 W. Water St.	Charles E. Demell Building	Pre-1885	C
6	523 W. Water St.	William R. Yahr Building	1901	C
7	525 W. Water St.	Ferdinand T. Yahr Building	1875	C
8	527-529 W. Water St.	Princeton State Bank Building	1894	C
9	531 W. Water St.	John Haas Building	1910-1915	C
10	535 W. Water St.	Ernest Eggleston Building	1904-1910	C
11	ca.541 W. Water St.	Park	1992	NC
12	545 W. Water St.	Anton Rimpler Building	1891	C
13	603 W. Water St.	William F. Schade Building	1901	C
14	609 W. Water St.	August Swanke Building	1891	C

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<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name/Use</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Status</u>
15	608 W. Water St.	J. William Worm Building	1892-1898	C
16	606 W. Water St.	J. William Worm Building	ca.1860/1884	C
17	602 W. Water St.	Gottfried Schnall Building	1882/1891	C
18	544 W. Water St.	Wm. F. Luedtke Building	Pre-1885/1890	C
19	536-538 W. Water St.	Double Building	Pre-1885	NC
20	528 W. Water St.	Mueller Brothers Building	1885	C
21	524 W. Water St.	Gustave A. Krueger Building	1886	C
22	520-522 W. Water St.	Fred Mittlstaedt Building	1886	C
23	516-518 W. Water St.	Teske Bros. Building	ca.1859	C
24	514 W. Water St.	J. P. Schneider Building	Pre-1885	C
25	508-512 W. Water St.	Thiel Double Building	Pre-1885	C
26	506 W. Water St.	Herman Warnke Building	1905-1910	C
27	502 W. Water St.	Ernest L. Hiestand Building	1906/1905	NC
28	440-444 W. Water St.	American House Hotel Building	1885/1894	C

What follows is a more detailed description of the design and history of many of the district's best and/or most characteristic contributing resources.

Tassler/Reetz Double Building (Contributing) 505-09 West Water St. 1905-1910³ Map No. 2

The Tassler/Reetz Double Store Building is a late two-story rectilinear plan Commercial Vernacular form building of very simple design that measures 25-foot-wide x 75-foot-deep. The building was constructed between 1905 and 1910, it rests on concrete block foundation walls, and the rear and side walls that rest on this foundation are also fashioned out of concrete block. The main facade, which faces north onto W. Water Street, is clad in cream brick and it rises up to a simple corbelled brick parapet that is crowned by a fine sheet metal cornice whose end elements are decorated with raised rinceau ornament. An early photo taken around 1910 shows that this facade's first story was originally symmetrical in design.⁴ An entrance door serving the second story was centered on this story and this entrance was surmounted by a tall one-light transom and was flanked on both sides by large one-light display windows and by deeply inset canted main entrances, above each of which was also a one-light transom. The general layout of this story is still intact as is the original cast iron lintel that spans it and the original cast iron

³ Village and City of Princeton Tax Rolls. All surviving Green Lake County tax rolls are kept at the Area Record Center at UW-Oshkosh. Regrettably, the only ones that have been kept are: 1885-1900; 1905; 1910; 1915; 1920; 1925; 1930; 1935; 1940; 1945; 1950. Also see: Village (and City) of Princeton, Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps, 1904, 1914.

⁴ Unless otherwise noted, the historical photographs referred to in the text are in the possession of the Princeton Historical Society.

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plaster strips that flank the still intact centered entrance door. Both of the storefronts, however, have now been partially filled in with later materials.

The original second story of the facade is still largely intact. This story is four-bays-wide and each bay contains a single flat-arched window opening that is still filled with its original one-over-one light double-hung wooden sash window. Two rock-faced cut stone stringcourses span the facade, one at the sill level of these windows and the other just above the window heads. A small panel of dogtooth coursed brick is also placed in the spandrel below each of the windows.

This building replaced an earlier frame double building of the same width. The left-hand store (505) of both buildings contained a harness shop, perhaps one belonging to building co-owner Edward Reetz. The other original owner of the present building, Oscar Tassler, occupied the right-hand store, which housed his tavern.

Christ Henning Jr. Building (Contributing) 511 West Water St. pre-1885⁸ Map No. 3

The small but elegant Christ Henning Jr. Building (so-called because this is the earliest name on the surviving tax rolls) is a two-story rectilinear plan Italianate style building that was built prior to 1885. The building measures 12-feet-wide x 50-feet-deep and has rubble stone foundation walls that enclose a basement story. The main facade faces north onto Water Street and its design is symmetrical and consists of a full-width first story storefront, above which is a two-bay-wide clapboard-clad second story that is surmounted by a bracketed overhanging wood cornice. Although the original storefront has now been replaced with modern materials, the original design of the storefront is still intact and consists of an inset, canted, and centered entrance flanked by single display windows on either side. Early photos show that these windows originally each had two rather than one light but the design is otherwise virtually the same.

In addition, the two original segmental-arched window openings in the second story are also still intact. Each opening still retains its original shouldered surround, which is ornamented with a wooden keystone, and each opening also still retains its original window, which is a two-over-two-light double hung wood sash with a segmental-arched upper sash.

From 1892 to 1904 the first story of this building housed a meat market and in 1914 it housed a shoe store. It has recently been sensitively restored and is now in excellent condition.

⁸ Princeton Tax Rolls. Also: 1892, 1898, 1904, 1914, and 1927 Sandorn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps of Princeton.

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Charles E. Demell Building (Contributing) 521 West Water St. Pre-1885⁶ Map No. 5

The small Charles E. Demell Building (so-called because his is the earliest name on the surviving tax rolls) is a two-story rectilinear plan Commercial Vernacular form building built prior to 1885 and it makes for an interesting comparison with the similar size Christ Henning Jr. Building located two doors to the east (Map No. 3). The Demell Building measures 10.5-foot-wide x 7.5-foot-deep and has rubble stone foundation walls that enclose a basement story. The main facade faces north onto Water Street and its design is asymmetrical and consists of a full-width first story storefront, above which is a sheet metal-clad two-bay-wide second story that is surmounted by a metal-clad cornice.

Historic photos show that the original storefront consisted of a one-light display window that was located to the right of an inset entrance. While the general outline of this design is still intact, all the original storefront elements have now been replaced with modern materials and the display window has been replaced by a much smaller sliding window surrounded by wood tongue-and-groove boards.

The most striking feature of this building, aside from its very narrow width, is its almost totally intact second story. With the sole exception of the wooden surrounds that entrame this story's two flat-arched window openings, all the remaining surface area is clad in metal. The lintel above the storefront is entirely covered in pressed metal stamped with an elaborate design, the wall surface of this story is clad in pressed metal stamped to resemble brick, the window openings are crowned with metal pediments, and the cornice is also completely covered in elaborately stamped sheet metal. It is not known if this highly elaborate example of the tinsmith's art is original to the building or the result of a later remodeling but the net result is one of the district's most distinctive facades.

From 1892 until at least 1914 the first story of this building housed a barber shop that from at least 1897 until 1915 was operated by Ed Henning, a subsequent owner of the building. An 1897 publication about Princeton described this shop as follows:

The village can well boast of the fine barber shop she now has which was recently fitted up by Mr. Henning. It is finished in natural wood and the best barber furniture and fixtures used. Two bath rooms which are fitted out with porcelain tubs provide comfortable means for residents to keep clean.⁷

⁶ Princeton Tax Rolls. Also: 1892, 1898, 1904, 1914, and 1927 Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps of Princeton.

⁷ Industrial Review of Princeton, Wisconsin. Milwaukee: A. I. Lord, publ., 1897, p. 14. Copy in the possession of the Princeton Historical Society.

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William R. Yanr Building (Contributing) 523 West Water St. 1901 Map No. 6

The highly intact William R. Yanr Building is a two-story rectilinear plan Commercial Vernacular form building built in 1901 that is almost identical in design to the slightly later Tassler/Reetz Double Building (Map No. 2), built between 1905-1910. The W. R. Yanr building measures 35-feet-wide x 65-feet-deep and its symmetrical cream brick-clad main facade faces north onto W. Water Street. This facade is framed by two-story pilaster strips and it is crowned by a corbelled brick parapet that is crowned by a fine sheet metal cornice. An early photo taken around 1910 shows that this facade's appearance today is almost identical with its historic appearance. The first story consists of a nearly full-width storefront having deeply inset partially canted entrances at either end that flank two very large display windows. The right-hand entrance door serves the second story while the left-hand one serves the first story and both were originally surmounted by tall one-light transoms that have now been filled with painted plywood. Three slender cast iron columns support the two main display window openings, which have now had their upper portions covered with plywood but which still retain their original cast iron bulkheads. Also intact is the original cast iron lintel that spans the entire width of the storefront and which is decorated with five cast iron rosettes.

The second story of the facade is almost totally intact. This story is four-bays-wide and each bay contains a single flat-arched window opening that is still filled with its original one-over-one-light double-hung wooden sash window. Two rock-faced cut stone stringcourses span the facade, one at the sill level of these windows and the other just above the window heads. A small panel of dogtooth coursed brick is also placed in the spandrel below each of the windows and the facade is crowned by a corbelled brick parapet wall that is surmounted by a sheet metal cornice whose end elements are decorated with raised ornamentation.

The William R. Yanr Building replaced two small earlier frame two-story buildings when it was built. Construction began in July of 1901 and was largely completed by the end of October, when the local paper noted that "W. R. Yanr has the plate glass front in his building and will have the handsomest show window in the city. The interior of the building is about completed and he advertises to open up with a complete line of furniture and caskets November 10th."⁶

Ferdinand T. Yanr Building (Contributing) 525 West Water St. 1875⁹ Map No. 7

The two-story Italianate style F. T. Yanr building was built in 1875 and makes an interesting contrast to the similar-sized building next door (Map No. 6) built for the next generation of the Yanr family. The F. T. Yanr Building measures 25-feet-

⁶ Princeton Republic. July 25, 1901, p. 5; October 31, 1901, p. 5.

⁹ History of Northern Wisconsin. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881, pp. 360-361.

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wide x 65-foot-deep and its once symmetrical cream brick-clad main facade faces north onto W. Water Street. This facade is framed by two-story-tall pilaster strips and it is crowned by a corbelled brick parapet. An early photo taken around 1910 shows that the appearance of the facade's first story storefront today is totally different than the original. The original storefront consisted of an arcade having six equal-width semi-circular-arched openings, which were separated from each other by wrought iron columns. A continuous masonry bulkhead ran beneath these openings, two of which contained entrance doors and four, display windows. Now, all of these elements have been replaced by a modern asymmetrical storefront having smaller modern display windows enframed by panels of brick veneer that are surmounted by a large full-width metal signboard.

The second story of this facade, however, is still largely intact. This story is four-bays-wide and consists of four semi-circular-arched window openings whose corbelled brick heads are all connected, forming a second arcade. Broad brick mullions separate these openings, which originally contained four-over-four-light double hung wood sash windows but now contain modern flat-arched one-over-one-light double hung metal sash. Stone keystones are centered on the window heads and the facade is crowned with one of Princeton's more elaborately corbelled brick parapet walls.

Ferdinand T. Yahr was born in Prussia in 1834 and emigrated to America with his family in 1849. Yahr eventually learned the blacksmith trade, which brought him to Princeton in 1861, where he worked as a foreman in the wagon shop of August Dient. After two years spent running his own shop he became a dealer in agricultural implements. In 1874, Yahr opened a hardware store and the following year built this building to house his store, in the rear of which he also operated the village's first private bank.

Princeton State Bank Building (Contributing) 527 West Water St. 1894 Map No. 8

The largely intact two-story rectilinear plan Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style-influenced Princeton State Bank Building was built in 1894 and was the first building in Princeton built specifically to house a bank. The building measures 22-foot-wide x 65-foot-deep and has a symmetrically designed red brick and granite-faced main facade that faces north onto W. Water St. The building rests on cut stone foundation walls and the rear and the side walls that rest on this foundation are fashioned out of brick. A description of the building printed in the Princeton paper as construction was about to start is still a good description of the building today.

The structure will stand just west of W. T. Yahr's building, so long used as a business block. The new home for the bank will be 22 x 50 feet in size and two stories high. The front will be fine. Duck Creek stone or a beautiful brownish cast and St. Louis pressed brick, will be the material used. The

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finest plate glass, mirror like in its beauty, will be set in front and the entrance to the business rooms will be on the west corner of the front and on the east corner will be the entrance to a fine iron spiral stairway leading to the upper floor. These entrances will be under heavy arches of stone work, the designs of the arches presenting a substantial appearance, but in exquisite taste. Architectural designs will surmount the top of the front over the east entrance, and a tower, complete in architectural finish, will finish off the top over the west entrance. The building will present the finest appearance of any building in this part of the state. The inside fixtures and finish will be of cherry, and very fine. The excavations for the foundations are now in progress and the erection and completion of this structure will be a matter of but a few months, and will be a magnificent and palatial home for one of the most substantial banks in the state.¹⁰

The first story consists of a centrally placed display window that has separate and identical entrance doors located on either side of it. Each entrance consists of a tall and narrow stilted arch opening that is enframed by massive rock-faced cut stone blocks and by a pair of squat engaged stone columns that flank the door. Above each door is a stilted arch one-light transom and the full-width stone-clad lintel that spans this story has the word "Bank" centered on it in raised letters. The only change to this story has been the covering over of the lower portion of the display window with wood panelling and the replacement of the left-hand (east) door with a modern solid door.

The second story is clad in dark brown brick and is three-bays-wide and it is divided into bays by four pilaster strips that have rounded corners. Each bay contains a single flat-arched window opening that originally contained a one-over-one-light double hung wood sash window, all of which have now been replaced with smaller vinyl frame examples. In addition, small stone plaques located in the spandrels above the left-hand and right-hand windows bear the date of construction: "18" and "94." Three rock-faced cut stone stringcourses span this story horizontally at the window sill and window head levels and just below the the panelled brick parapet wall that crowns the facade. A fourth stone stringcourse acts as the coping for the parapet. In addition, early photos of the building show that a very short square plan brick tower having a pyramidal roof was originally located above the right-hand (west) bay, giving the facade an asymmetrical overall design, but this tower was removed at a later date.

The interior of this building was not open to view but the first story's original stamped tin ceiling is still in place and the stairs that lead up to the second story (which are accessed from the right-hand (west) entrance door) consist of a straight run of cast iron steps rather than the spiral stairs mentioned earlier.

¹⁰ Princeton Republic. April 19, 1894, p. 5, and also June 14, 1894, p. 5; and August 23, 1894, p. 5.

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Anton Rimpler Building (Contributing) 545 West Water St. 1891¹¹ Map No. 12

This highly intact two-story rectilinear plan Commercial vernacular form building occupies the southeast corner formed by W. Water and Pearl streets and it was built in 1891 for Anton Rimpler, who used it to house his dry goods store. The building measures 22-foot-wide x 75-foot-deep and it rests on cut stone foundation walls and the rear and the side walls that rest on this foundation are fashioned out of rubble stone. The building has an asymmetrically designed cream brick-clad main facade that is framed by a two-story-tall brick pilaster strip at either side and which races north onto West Water St. Its first story consists of a full-width four-bay-wide storefront, each bay of which is separated from the next by a paneled cast iron pilaster strip, all three of which each bear the legend "A. R. 1891" in raised letters. The left-hand bay contains the second story entrance and it still retains its original tall three-panel wood door, which features chamfering on the edges of the panels. The middle bay of the storefront (the second from the right) contains the deeply inset and canted store entrance, which is flanked by one-light display windows on either side. Both of these display windows and both entrances also have one-light transoms above them and the paneled bulkheads below the display windows are also intact as well. The entire storefront is then crowned by an overhanging wooden cornice that is supported by four small pairs of shaped wooden brackets.

The second story is as original as the first story and is three-bays-wide. Each bay consists of a segmental-arched window opening, each of which has cut stone sill, a corbelled brick hood mold into which is set a stone keystone, and each opening also still retains its original window, which is a one-over-one-light double hung wood sash with a segmental-arched upper sash. Placed in the spandrels above the left-hand and right-hand window openings are small panels tiled with cogtooth-coursed brick while a lunette-shaped panel placed above the center window contains the date "1891" and the name "A. Rimpler." The facade is then crowned by a corbelled brick parapet.

From 1892 to 1914 the first story of this building housed a general store. It has recently been sensitively restored and is now in excellent condition.

William F. Schade Building (Contributing) 603 West Water St. 1901¹² Map No. 13

This two-story rectilinear plan Commercial Vernacular form building occupies the southwest corner formed by W. Water and Pearl streets and it was built in 1901 as a double store building for William F. Schade, who used the east store to house his saloon. The building measures 32-foot-wide x 63-foot-deep and it rests on cut stone foundation walls and the front, rear, and side walls that rest on this foundation

¹¹ See also: Princeton Republic, August 14, 1890, p. 5; July 26, 1891, p. 5; August 27, 1891, p. 5; September 10, 1891, p. 5; October 1, 1891, p. 5.

¹² Princeton Tax Rolls. See also: Princeton Republic, October 31, 1901, p. 5; December 19, 1901, p. 5.

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are fashioned out of orange brick. The building has an almost symmetrical design orange brick-clad main facade that faces north onto West Water St. and whose second story is framed by a two-story-tall brick pilaster strip at either end. Its first story consists of a full-width four-bay-wide storefront, each bay of which is separated from the next by a paneled cast iron pilaster strip. The left-hand (east) bay consists of a canted corner entrance which is inset under the second story and the ceiling of which is upheld by a cast iron post. The right-hand bay contains the now modernized entrance to the second story, and the two larger center bays each contain a mostly enclosed display window opening. A large cast iron lintel decorated with circular cast iron paterae spans the width of the storefront and separates the first story from the second.

The second story is four-bays-wide and it is divided into two halves by a centered pilaster strip and features a concrete stringcourse that acts as the sill of the second story windows. Each bay contains a segmental-arched window opening that is crowned with a corbelled brick hood mold and each opening now contains a one-over-one-light flat-arched double hung metal sash window instead of the wood sash ones with segmental-arched upper sash that were installed originally. The facade is then crowned by a tall corbelled brick parapet wall.

Schade's saloon and a jewelry store run by J. A. Weiskaur were the original occupants of this building, but Sandborn-Verris maps show that the first story of this building housed a saloon and restaurant from 1902 to 1914. The second story was also occupied as the Fox River House Hotel for many years.¹³ The Schade Building makes for an interesting comparison with the quite similar two-story orange brick August Swanke Building next door (609 W. Water St., Map No. 14), built in 1891.¹⁴

J. William Worm Building (Contributing) 606 West Water St. ca.1860/1884¹⁵ Map No. 16

The original portion of the J. William Worm building actually began life as a residence (actual construction date unknown) which Worm moved to the rear of this lot in 1884 in order to build the two-story retail building addition that he attached to its main facade. The original house is still largely intact, however, and is in surprisingly original condition, with a two-story main block to which is attached a one-and-one-half story tall rear wing. Both parts of the house are clad in their original clapboards and they also contain their original six-over-six-light double hung windows as well.

¹³ Princeton Anniversary Historical Committee. Quas Qui Centennial (125th Anniversary), Princeton, Wisconsin: 1848-1973. Princeton: 1973, p. 27.

¹⁴ Princeton Republic. June 25, 1891, p. 5; July 26, 1891, p. 5; August 27, 1891, p. 5.

¹⁵ Ibid, July 24, 1884, p. 5; September 4, 1884, p. 5.

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The two-story frame rectilinear plan addition that worm built in 1884 measures 22-foot wide by approximately 50-foot-deep and has rubble stone foundation walls. The side elevation of this addition is clad in clapboard. The main facade faces south onto Water Street and its design is symmetrical and consists of a full-width first story storefront, above which is a three-bay-wide second story that is surmounted by a fine sheet-metal cornice. The present storefront consists of a centered deeply inset and canted entrance flanked on either side by large single light display windows placed above panelled bulkheads. Surmounting the storefront is a full-width cast iron lintel. The second story above is three-bays-wide and is clad in metal sheets that are stamped to resemble brick. Each bay contains a single flat-arched window opening whose simple wood surround is crowned by a wood drip cap and each opening still contains its original one-over-one-light double hung wood sash window. The facade is then crowned by a tall parapet that hides the gable end of the main roof and which is surmounted by a sheet metal cornice whose end elements are decorated with raised ornamentation and capped with finials.

Historic photos show that the original facade of this addition had a storefront that was very similar to the one that exists today but which had nine-light display windows. The second story, however, was clad in clapboards, the three window openings contained six-over-six-light double hung windows and were flanked by louvered wood shutters, and the facade was terminated by the triangular gable end of the main roof. This original facade was remodeled sometime between 1904 and 1914, at which time it achieved its present appearance.¹⁶

The interior of the first story of the 1884 addition is especially notable for its remarkably intact state. Both the floor and ceiling of this room are covered in narrow boards and the lower portion of the walls is covered in beaded board wainscot, with the remainder of the walls being plastered. In addition, the original panelled oak bar and back bar of the saloon that operated in this building until just recently is still intact as is the wood and glass refrigerator next to it and the early twentieth century lighting. Most remarkable, however, is a superb and largely intact panelled oak ladies screen that allowed women to enter the saloon unseen. This screen spans the width of the room and it is decorated with panels containing art glass of a very high quality.

From 1884 to 1995 the first story of this building housed a saloon, most recently run by Henry Beznarek. The building has recently been sensitively restored and is now in excellent condition. Also notable is the small one-story frame construction shed-roofed Boomtown style store building that Worm built next door at 608 W. Water Street (Map No. 15) between 1892 and 1898. Both of these buildings are now in the same ownership and are being faithfully restored.

¹⁶ Princeton Anniversary Historical Committee. Op. Cit., p. 54. See also: Sandorn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps of Princeton, 1904 and 1914.

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Gottfried Schnall Building (Contributing) 602 West Water St. 1882/1891¹⁷ Map No. 17

The Italianate style two-story Gottfried Schnall building occupies the northwest corner created by the intersection of Pearl and West Water streets and it is one of the more intact buildings in the district. This building was built in two stages. The first and also the largest portion was built in 1882 and it is rectilinear in plan, measures 25-feet-wide x 70-feet-deep, and consists of the four right-hand (east) bays of today's six-bay-wide West Water Street facade. The first story was designed to house Schnall's hardware store and the second story housed storage space for the business. In 1891, Schnall added a two-story two-bay-wide addition along the west side of his existing building that measured 12-feet-wide x 70-feet-deep. Both portions rest on rubble stone foundation walls that enclose a basement story whose original segmental-arched window heads can still be seen along the base of the east-facing side elevation. The south and east-facing exterior walls that rest on this foundation are fashioned out of cream brick, the west wall is clad in rubble stone. These walls rise up to sloping parapets on the building's side elevations and to a tall corbelled brick parapet on the main facade that is topped with an overhanging bracketed cornice.

The principal facade of this building faces south onto W. Water Street and historic photos show that the 1882 portion's storefront originally consisted of three large, tall segmental-arched openings joined together to form an arcade. The center arch contained the deeply inset main entrance, which was flanked by two four-light display windows, and another large segmental-arched display window was placed around the corner at the south end of the east-facing side elevation. When the 1891 addition was built, another arched opening was created for it and all of these openings were then surmounted by an overhanging wood cornice that spanned almost the whole width of the facade just above the storefronts.

At a later date, all of the original storefront elements were replaced by the early twentieth century storefront visible today, which consists of three large flat-arched display windows and a single deeply inset entrance door facing onto Water Street and a single window of identical design facing onto Pearl Street. Each of these windows originally had a transom above it as well, but these have now been filled in with plywood.

The second story of this facade is six-bays-wide and it is highly intact. Each bay contains a single semi-circular-arched window opening having a cut stone sill and a corbelled brick hood mold accented with a stone keystone. Each opening still contains its original four-over-four-light double hung wood sash window, the upper sash of which is arched to fit the opening. A rectilinear date and name plaque

¹⁷ Princeton Anniversary Historical Committee. Op. Cit., p. 54. See also: Princeton Republic; March 9, 1882, p. 5; April 16, 1891, p. 5; June 25, 1891, p. 5; September 10, 1891, p. 5.

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bearing the words "G. Schall" and "1882" is placed in the spandrel above and between the second and third bays from the right (this off-center placement is explained by its being centered on the original portion of the building) and the facade is then crowned by its original wooden overhanging cornice, which is supported by four pairs of sandwich brackets.

William F. Luedtke Building (Contributing) 544 W. Water St. pre-1885/1890 Map No. 18

The Luedtke Building is another of the district's finest resources and it too was built in two parts. The original portion was built prior to 1885, but exactly when, by whom, or in what configuration is not known. In 1890, however, Luedtke, who had owned the building since at least 1885, decided to expand and completely remodel his existing stone building, an act that contemporary reports described as follows.

It is said that Wm. F. Luedtke will soon commence valuable improvements on his premises. He proposes to cut off the front of his stone store and even up the front into line with buildings erected since the erection of his building. He will also widen his building several feet to the east line of his lot.¹⁸

Last week about Thursday, W. F. Luedtke commenced in good earnest the work of demolishing as much of the old stone building as is necessary in order to erect that substantial building that is going to take its place soon.¹⁹

W. F. Luedtke's store building is fast nearing completion. The building is 36 x 90 in size, two stories high, and will have a fine plate glass front. The first floor is divided into two rooms. Mr. Luedtke will occupy the corner, and the other will be rented, as will also the rooms over the east store room. When finished this will be one of the finest business blocks in Princeton.²⁰

The actual amount of older material that was included in the present building is unknown, but the result was essentially a completely new building that is two-stories-tall, rectilinear in plan, and which occupies the northeast corner of the intersection formed by Pearl and West Water streets. This is a Commercial Vernacular form building that measures 36-feet-wide x 90-feet-deep and it rests on rubble stone foundation walls that enclose a full basement story. The exterior walls that rest on this foundation are all constructed out of rubble stone except for the main south-facing facade, which is clad in cream brick. These walls rise to sloping parapets on the building's side elevations and to a taller corbelled brick parapet on the main facade.

¹⁸ Princeton Republic. January 9, 1890, p. 5.

¹⁹ Ibid, May 15, 1890, p. 5.

²⁰ Ibid, August 7, 1890, p. 5.

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The main facade faces south onto West Water Street and early photos of the building show that the second story still retains its historic appearance. The design of the facade is symmetrical and its first story is believed to have originally consisted of two identical storefronts that were framed by brick pilaster strips at each end of the building and separated by a second story entrance. Each of the large one-light display windows was placed in a flat-arched opening and the entire storefront (which turned the corner onto Pearl Street) was surmounted by a cast iron lintel that was sheltered by an overhanging wood cornice. At some point in the early twentieth century, however, this storefront was replaced by the more modern but still architecturally significant one that is in place today. This storefront has two large one-light display windows placed on either side of a deeply inset canted main entrance. Two cast iron posts flank this entrance and support the lintel above and all the windows are set in copper frames. In addition, a continuous transom band spans the width of the storefront above the display windows and the entrance.

The second story, though, is almost completely original. This story is enframed by pilaster strips that serve as the side elements of a corbelled brick frame that creates a slightly inset full-width panel into which the window openings are placed. This story is five-bays-wide and all but the center bay contain single segmental-arched window openings that have a cut stone sill and corbelled hood mold that are each decorated with a panelled stone keystone. The center bay consists of a three-sided oriel window. Each of the four main window openings contains its original one-over-one-light wood sash double hung window, the upper sash of which also has a segmental arch shape, and similar but narrower windows are employed in the oriel window as well. The facade is terminated by a corbelled cornice, in the center of which is placed a lunette-shaped plaque upon which are the words "W. L. Luedtke" and "1890."

The west-facing side elevation of this building is now completely covered by a stucco-like material that has been scribed to suggest ashlar stone joints, but the six original segmental-arched second story windows are still intact. Also intact is the interior of the building's first story. This story was converted by Luedtke into a single large room early in this century and it has a row of iron columns down its center, a wood floor, plaster walls, and a beaded board wood ceiling, all of which are in good condition today, as is the building as a whole.

Gustave A. Krueger Building (Contributing) 524 W. Water St. 1886 Map No. 21

This two-story rectilinear plan Commercial Vernacular form building was built in 1886 for Gustave Krueger, who used it to house his meat market.²⁴ The building measures 22-feet-wide x 80-feet-deep and it rests on cut stone foundation walls that enclose a basement story. The building has a symmetrically designed cream brick-

²⁴ Princeton Republic. March 18, 1886, p. 5; April 15, 1886, p. 5; April 22, 1886, p. 5; September 9, 1886, p. 5.

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clad main facade that is framed by a two-story-tall brick pilaster strip at either side and which faces south onto West Water St. Its first story consists of a full-width four-bay-wide storefront, each bay of which is now separated from the next by a paneled wooden pilaster of modern construction that may conceal an original cast iron support inside. The left-hand bay contains the deeply inset flat-arched main entrance, which is now lined with modern wood panelling and features a modern solid door. The two middle bays originally each contained a two-light display window, but these have now been replaced by smaller one-light windows centered between wood panels above and below them. The right-hand bay contains the slightly inset second story entrance, which also now contains a modern door above which is a filled transom opening. The entire storefront is then crowned by an overhanging wooden cornice that is supported by six small shaped wooden brackets.

The second story is in largely original condition and is three-bays-wide. The two side bays each consists of a segmental-arched window opening, each of which has a cut stone sill and a corbelled brick hood mold into which is set a paneled stone keystone. Both of these openings originally contained one-over-one-light double hung wood sash windows having a segmental-arched upper sash, but these have now been replaced with somewhat smaller flat-arched double hung windows. The center bay, however contains a three-sided oriel window. Placed in the spandrels above the left-hand and right-hand window openings are two small inset panels. The facade is then crowned by a tall corbelled brick parapet.

From 1886 till at least 1927 the first story of this building housed a meat market. An 1886 description described it as follows:

The new brick structure of Gus Krueger is so far completed that he is moving his family into the upper story. The lower floor is arranged to carry on his business in a complete manner. The front room is well adapted as a sales room. Then there is the ice room, the cooling room, and rooms for cutting sausage and meats, rooms for storage, etc., all with a view to handiness in work and adaptability in that line of business. The rooms up stairs are as convenient as a family could wish. A bay window in the front room appears rather peculiar on the outside hanging over the street, but step into the room and look out of that window and its value is at once appreciated. As a matter of fact the building is complete, convenient and perfect for the use designed, is an ornament to the village and exemplifies the good taste of the proprietor.⁴²

The building has recently been renovated and is now in excellent condition. Even the changes to the windows do not seriously detract from the overall quality of the building.

⁴² Princeton Republic. September 9, 1886, p. 5.

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Teske Bros. Building (Contributing) 516-18 W. Water St. ca.1859 Map No. 23

The Teske Brothers Block is the most intact unit of four conjoined two-story buildings (508-522 W. Water St., of which 508-512 is actually a double store building and has the appearance of two units) that are believed to have been constructed between 1859 and 1886 for at least four different owners, who all chose to give their individual units an identical appearance in order to create what appears to be a single unit of commanding size and appearance. These Italianate style units are rectilinear in plan and measure 25-feet-wide but have varying depths, the Teske Bros. Block being 90-feet-deep. These units rest on stone foundation walls that enclose full basement stories and the rear exterior walls that rest on these foundations are rubble stone (some units have brick and some stone party walls) and their main south-facing facades are fashioned out of cream brick. These facades terminate in a continuous corbelled brick parapet wall that crowns each of the units.

The main facade of the Teske Bros. Building faces south onto Water Street and early illustrations of the building show that the present appearance of this facade is very close to that of the original.²³ The first story is framed by brick plaster strips at each end of the facade and the storefront itself originally consisted of two large four-light display windows placed on either side of a deeply inset and canted entrance, while to the right of this storefront was a second deeply inset entrance that served the second story. The original display windows have now been replaced by larger single light windows and the original doors have been replaced with solid modern doors, but the original cast iron posts that frame the display windows are still intact as are the original paneled bulkhead below them, and the original cast iron lintel decorated with three paterae that spans the width of the storefront is also still intact although it is now hidden behind modern paneling.

The second story of this facade is almost totally intact. This story is also enframed by plaster strips and it is three-bays-wide and symmetrical in design, with each bay containing a single semi-circular-arched window opening. These openings each have a cut stone sill and the entire opening is enframed by a shouldered, corbelled brick hood mold. These openings were originally filled with four-over-four-light double hung wood sash whose upper sash had a semi-circular-arched upper portion. Now, however, the arched part of the opening has been filled with solid wood panelling imitating a fanlight, and a modern one-over-one-light double hung window fills the remaining space in the opening. Placed just below each window opening is a small decorative indented rectilinear panel. The wall surface above the windows terminates in a corbelled brick parapet that is decorated with a dog-tooth course of brick and brick paneling.

²³ Reetz, Elaine. Come Back in Time. Princeton: 1982, Vol. 2, p. 104. Shows a woodcut illustration of the building dated 1875.

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The Teske Bros. Block (so-called because theirs is the earliest identified name associated with this unit) occupied both floors of this block from 1866 until 1964 and ran a dry goods store here.

American House Hotel Building (Contributing) 440-444 W. Water St. 1885/1894 Map No. 28

The present American House Hotel was built in two stages. The older part of the building, which occupies the northeast corner formed by the intersection of Washington and W. Water streets and whose six-bay-wide main facade faces south onto Water Street, was built in 1885 to replace an earlier building of the same name that was destroyed by fire early in that year.²⁴ In 1894, this 45-foot-wide x 120-foot-deep U-plan building was expanded by the addition of a rectangular plan 18-foot-wide by 120-foot-deep two-bay-wide wing, which gave the completed building an eight-bay-wide facade facing onto Water Street and a U-shaped plan.²⁵

The American House is two-stories-tall and has rubble stone foundation walls that enclose a basement story. The exterior walls that rest on this foundation are of brick, an orange-brown brick on the side elevations and cream brick on the main facade. As noted above, the main facade consists of the combined facades of the 1885 building and the 1894 addition. The Commercial Vernacular form 1884 facade was originally symmetrical in design and six-bays-wide and it consisted of a full-width first story double storefront which featured two three-bay-wide storefronts placed on either side of a centered segmental-arched entrance. Each of the storefronts had two large plate glass display window openings placed on either side of a deeply inset entrance, and an overhanging wooden cornice supported by brackets spanned the entire width of the facade just above these storefronts. Today, both of these storefront openings have been filled with modern materials but the centered entrance between them, with its original two-light segmental-arch transom, is still intact. The second story of the 1884 facade is six-bays-wide and each bay consists of a segmental-arched window opening having a cut stone sill and a corbelled brick hood mold. Early photos show that these openings originally contained flat-arched four-over-four-light double hung wood sash windows and these windows were carefully replicated using modern materials when the building was renovated in 1994. These windows are grouped in widely spaced pairs and a broad but narrow indented decorative panel is inset into the wall surface above each pair by way of emphasis. The facade is then crowned by an overhanging wooden cornice supported by pierced and carved brackets.

The Water Street facade of the 1894 addition is two-bays-wide and forms a continuation of the 1885 facade, which it adjoins, and its is purposely similar in design with one striking exception. The first story originally consisted of a

²⁴ Princeton Republic. February 5, 1885, p. 5; October 3, 1885, p. 5.

²⁵ Ibid. March 22, 1894, p. 5; June 7, 1894, p. 5; August 2, 1894, p. 5.

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single storefront, this one originally being identical in design to the two on the earlier portion with display windows on either side of an inset entrance. Like the others, this one has also now been fundamentally altered by the insertion of new materials and its inset entrance is now set to the left of two display windows. The second story, however, is almost totally intact and is two-bays-wide. The right-hand bay contains a segmental-arched window opening that is identical to those found on the 1885 facade described above. The left-hand bay, though, consists of a large polygonal wooden oriel window of Queen Anne style design, which extends upward and through the simple bracketed wooden cornice that crowns the remainder of the facade. The oriel has a flat-arched double hung window set into each of its three sides, this portion being surmounted by a flared section clad in fish-scale and diamond pattern wood shingles, the whole then being crowned by a tall pavilion style roof, which has flared eaves.

The west-facing Washington Street side elevation of the building is also two-stories-tall and highly intact and features a six-bay-wide front (south) block and a shorter seven-bay-wide rear (north) block. All of these bays consist of segmental-arched window openings that are identical to the ones described earlier and both blocks are also crowned by overhanging wooden cornices supported by pierced and carved brackets.

The American House was always the largest and most important hotel in Princeton and its construction was closely followed in the local paper.

The new hotel is about ready to receive the finishing touch of both carpenter and painter. The cellar walls and foundation of the building, the stone work, was about completed the first of August. About that date George H. Chase, of Berlin, commenced laying out the carpenter work and the rebuilding of the American House began to move rapidly forward under his supervision. About August 4 the brick-work was commenced by A. H. Oakey, of Portage, and in just a fortnight Oakey and his six masons had the brick-work completed of a building 44 feet front on Water Street and 110 feet on Washington Street, two stories high. As noted above Mr. Chase is drawing the work to a close, John Snow and helpers having completed the plastering some days since. The planning of the inside arrangements of the hotel are excellent and the whole thing, both in design and workmanship, reflects credit on those having the matter in charge. The furniture and upholstery of the new hotel is being furnished by H. H. Harmon, our popular furniture dealer. It is only a matter of a few days when the hotel will be completed and the wants of the travelling public anticipated.²⁶

In the last two years the exterior of the hotel has been carefully restored and the interior converted into apartments for the elderly.

²⁶ Princeton Republic. October 3, 1885, p. 5.

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This district is comprised of twenty-four contributing resources and four non-contributing ones. Of the contributing buildings, seven are largely intact examples of the Italianate style, one is an example of the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style, and sixteen are largely intact examples of the Commercial vernacular form. Individually, these buildings are fine representative examples of architectural styles that are typical of this period in Wisconsin's history and they also typify the stylistic evolution of the downtown of Princeton from its early years through its maturity in the early 1900s. Collectively, these buildings represent the still largely intact core of Princeton's only collection of historic commercial buildings and their highly visible location makes them potential models for restoration activity in the rest of the community.

Commerce/Trade

The Princeton Downtown Historic District is being nominated to the NHRP under Criterion A because of its status as the historic commercial core of the city. West Water Street has historically been the retail center of the city and the buildings within the district comprise the still intact portion of that historic and still active core. In addition, the buildings in the district comprise a substantial percentage of all the buildings in Princeton that have ever been associated with retail and commercial activities in this city.

The city of Princeton is located in the civil town of the same name and both are located in Green Lake County. Like so many of Wisconsin's earlier communities, Princeton owes its existence to its proximity to an early transportation route and to a source of water power, in this case the Fox River. Prior to and even after Wisconsin attained statehood in 1848, the Fox and Wisconsin rivers were the subject of great interest as the principal links in a potential water route that was envisioned as connecting the Great Lakes with the Mississippi River. Consequently, the land bordering on these two rivers was also the object of considerable interest and speculation on the part of those who hoped to benefit from a location on the future waterway.

The first permanent settler in what was to become the village and later the city of Princeton was Royal C. Treat, who arrived at the site on April 15, 1848. Treat promptly put up the area's first building - a shanty built with boards hauled from Stevens Point - but this was almost immediately replaced by a small log building (nonextant) that Treat located close to where the Main Street bridge now crosses the Fox River. In September of 1848, Treat was joined at this place, which at first was called Treat's Landing, by Nelson M. Parsons, who boarded with him. The following February, Treat and Parsons were joined by John Knapp and his family, who had previously lived several miles away in Pleasant Valley. Shortly thereafter, Treat's brother, Henry B. Treat, also arrived at the new settlement and in June of 1849, the two brothers journeyed to Green Bay and purchased 132 acres as the site for a new

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village, which they then had surveyed and platted and named Princeton after the county seat of Bureau County, Illinois.³⁰

The Treat brothers' new settlement was located on the north side of the Fox River at a point where the river makes a large oxbow bend and the original portion of the village was referred to as the east side of Princeton, to distinguish it from the land on the other (west) side of the bend. A riverside location was of critical importance to the owners of the new village because the Fox River was then navigable from Princeton all the way to the rapidly growing city of Oshkosh, located on the west shore of Lake Winnebago, and steamboats based in this city were the only reliable means of transporting goods and people into and out of the territory bordering the river. Such a location had a special appeal for many of the earliest settlers of the region.

At this time (1850) emigration had set in with a strong current from the east, principally from New England and New York, to this section of the State. Green Lake Prairie (however) was a wild uncultured tract of uninviting greensward to the hardy New Englander. They could not then, as well as now (1859) understand nor appreciate the inexhaustible mine of wealth which lies imbedded in the rich rolling surface, but passing over, and leaving the prairie behind, they gathered along on the beautiful gliding river, making claims in the openings. Then, there was not as much as one foot of railroad in the whole State of Wisconsin, nor indeed west of Ohio, and visions of large cities loomed up in the fancy of those fortunate enough to get an interest in the village plat along the Fox River, for would not the commerce of a large share of the State float upon its placid waters to and from the Great Lakes?³¹

Such dreams brought increasing numbers of new settlers to the land bordering the Fox River and by late 1849 the first commercial buildings in the village were under construction. The first store (nonextant) was a one-and-one-half story frame building built by Byron Harmon and Charles Stacey and sold to Ferdinand Durand, who opened a dry goods and general merchandise store. The second store (nonextant) was put up on the southwest corner of Water and Pearl streets where the Wm. F. Schade Building, built in 1901 at 603 W. Water St., is now located. This frame building was built by Barton Chute for Dr. Sargent, who rented it to A. Randall & Bros. for a general merchandise store.³²

³⁰ Princeton Times-Republic. 92nd Birthday Edition, Thursday, February 19, 1959, p. 2. Part of this special edition is an updated reprint of a history of Princeton taken from a series that ran in the Princeton Republic in 1922, which was itself taken from a copy of an as yet unidentified history of the village written in 1859.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., pg. 2-3.

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By 1850, the new settlement of Princeton had twenty-three inhabitants, its first post office and its first postmaster, John Knapp. This same year saw a miniature building boom along Water Street, whose close proximity to the river made it the logical location for the business district of the village. In this year three more commercial buildings (all nonextant) were constructed on Water Street: Seely & Hall's Building, on the south side of the street; Richard Tucker's Building; and W. S. and A. L. Flint's Building, also on Water Street.

More buildings continued to be built along Water Street within the boundaries of today's Princeton Downtown Historic District throughout the 1850s. By 1860 at least thirteen commercial buildings were located on both sides of Water Street between Short and Mechanics Streets, including the village's first brick and stone buildings, one of which is believed to be the building at 513-519 W. Water Street, which may have been built between 1858 and 1859 by Salem T. Wright Building. By 1860, the village had eleven stores, three taverns, two drugstores, two doctors, two lawyers, two shoemakers, four blacksmiths, two wagon shops, one tin shop, one tailor shop, four saloons, one chair and cabinet shop, and a population of 900.³³

Accompanying the creation of the village's economic infrastructure was growth of other types. The first house of worship in the village was built for the Congregational Church in 1852. In 1855, Henry Treat and Nelson Parsons laid out the first addition (Treat & Parsons' Addition) to the original plat, which was followed by Parsons' Second Addition in 1856, and Flint and Treats' Addition in 1857.³⁴ Another major event of 1857 was the construction of a three-story stone grist and flouring mill (nonextant) - the village's first - on the banks of the Fox River by W. S. and A. L. Flint. This mill, which was actually powered by water from the Mecan River that flowed to the mill via a six-mile-long hand-dug canal, and it was the beginning of a small industrial area that gradually evolved on Princeton's west side.

Thus, by 1857, the village of Princeton had established itself as the commercial hub for the surrounding area. A ferry connected the east and west sides of the community, new commercial enterprises were being constructed on both sides of the river, and produce grown on the surrounding farms was processed in the mill in the village and could be sent on to larger markets via the steamboats that ran daily between the village and the city of Oshkosh in all but the coldest winter months.

Growth continued throughout the 1860s, although at a much reduced rate, but it was still sufficient to justify the chartering of the community as a Village in 1867, with Royal C. Treat being elected the first Village president. In the same year Rosebrook's Addition to the village was platted, a bridge was finally placed across the Fox River (the Main Street Bridge), a new two-story stone school was constructed

³³ Princeton Anniversary Historical Committee. Op. Cit., p. 6.

³⁴ Helpe, Robert W. & Emma B. A Heritage History of Beautiful Green Lake Wisconsin. Green Lake, WI: Heritage Edition, 1976-77, p. 104.

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on Main Street (extant), and the Princeton Republic newspaper was begun. In 1868, another new industry came to the village when the foundry of J. & J. Junker was established near the mill. The stage was thus set for the arrival of the village's first railroad, the Shedoygan & Fox River Railroad, whose track finally reached Princeton in 1871, and whose passenger and freight service began on May 22, 1872.³⁵

Being the last stop on this line (which was soon taken over by the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad) gave Princeton an advantage over other communities in the area for a number of years. Partly as a result, Princeton continued to grow slowly throughout the 1870s. New, mostly frame store buildings gradually filled in most of the lots lining both sides of Water Street and still more residential plats were added to the original one: R. C. Treat's in 1872; W. S. Flint's in 1875. Even a disastrous fire on April 11, 1880 that wiped out all the original commercial buildings on the south side of Water Street east of Washington Street (the 401 block) did not dampen the generally positive economic state of the village, which an 1881 account described as follows:

Princeton is the second town in size in the county, and has a population of 1000, three-fourths of which number are Germans; the remaining fourth being Irish and Americans. The town was first settled by Yankees. In addition to the grist mill the village contains one large foundry for heavy castings; one planing mill; three wagon shops; one tannery; one brewery; two hotels, the largest of which is the American House, kept by John F. Schneeder, formerly of Berlin City. The City Hotel is a comfortable inn kept after the German fashion. There are six churches, one Methodist, one Congregational, one German Lutheran, and three Catholic, all of which have neat and cozy church edifices. There are two public school buildings, one on each side of the river. The schools are graded and are supplied with a good corps of teachers. The societies represented at present in the village are the Masons, Odd Fellows, and the Good Templars.

Princeton, with her excellent facilities for transportation, both by rail and the Fox River, her fine pastures and rich farming lands, and a water power unequalled by any town in the county, has certainly a bright and promising future.³⁶

Princeton's population continued to grow throughout the 1880s and 1890s, reaching 1100 in 1892 and an all time high of 1600 in 1898. During this time, many new commercial buildings were built along Water Street and most of these were located within the district boundaries. Nearly all of these buildings were constructed of brick and stone and replaced older and smaller frame buildings on the same lots,

³⁵ Princeton Anniversary Historical Committee. Op. Cit., p. 34.

³⁶ History of Northern Wisconsin. Op. Cit., p. 359.

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some of which were moved to new locations elsewhere in the village including the west end of W. Water Street just to the west of the Princeton Downtown Historic District. By 1892, fourteen of the thirty-one buildings within the district boundaries were of masonry construction and eight of these had been constructed since 1885. By 1898, four more masonry buildings had been constructed, and after July 11, 1901, when the village board established a fire district in the downtown, all buildings built within this district (which included all of the Princeton Downtown Historic District) had to be of masonry construction.

After 1898, though, growth in Princeton came to a halt and the population began a gradual decline that by 1904 had bottomed out at 1300, a number that would continue well into the Post World War II period. Mostly, this reversal of fortune reflected the limitations inherent in Princeton's location. Even as early as 1880, the nearby cities of Oshkosh and Fond du Lac were becoming important regional transportation centers with multiple railroad, water, and road connections. Consequently, industrial growth in this region came to be concentrated in these cities and the much greater scale of these enterprises eventually rendered the much smaller industries in communities such as Princeton obsolete. In addition, better transportation via rail gave Princeton area shoppers better access to the much larger stores in Oshkosh, the area metropolis, but brought little business to Princeton merchants in return, a situation that was only exacerbated by the subsequent development of the automobile. Consequently, Princeton settled more or less peacefully into its natural role as the trading and shipping point for the agricultural area immediately surrounding it.

The subsequent history of the village (Princeton was not incorporated as a city until 1920) is uneventful and is typical of the histories of hundreds of similar communities in Wisconsin. Indeed, population did not begin to grow again until relatively recently, when the proximity of Princeton to the fast growing tourist area surrounding nearby Green Lake made it attractive to persons relocating in search of a more pleasant way of life. Today, the city's population is just over 1500 and growing and the city now finds itself in the position of having to plan for the next stage in its history.

Nearly all traces of Princeton's earlier aspirations as a manufacturing center are now gone, but its historic retail and commercial center still survives because it continues to offer the inhabitants of the city many of the same goods and services that it provided more than a century ago. The best and most intact of the buildings that make up the core of this commercial center have now been included within the boundaries of the Princeton Downtown Historic District and it is hoped that this act will help them retain both their historic appearance and their current usefulness.

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Architecture

The Princeton Downtown Historic District is significant architecturally as an excellent collection of mostly nineteenth and a few early twentieth century commercial buildings that for the most part are fine representative examples of the Italianate style and the Commercial Vernacular form. The district contains twenty-four contributing buildings, three noncontributing buildings, and one noncontributing site. The contributing buildings include seven Italianate style buildings (Map Nos. 3, 7, 11, 22, 23, 24, 25), sixteen Commercial Vernacular form buildings (Map Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28), and one Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style building (Map No. 8). These buildings comprise an architecturally significant concentration and they have additional significance because they represent general trends in the development of commercial building styles and vernacular forms during the period of significance, both in Princeton and elsewhere.

Commercial buildings such as those found in the district currently represent the leading edge of work involved in the development of more sophisticated and accurate architectural typology. This is attested to in the introduction to the vernacular forms section of the Architecture Theme in the CRMP which states that "Descriptions of vernacular forms are offered (here) with full knowledge that this is a little understood aspect of the built environment and that much more study is needed."⁷ Before the CRMP was written, buildings such as those found in the Princeton Downtown Historic District were evaluated largely on the basis of their integrity and whether or not they were close enough in design to recognized architectural styles to warrant being nominated to the NR on that basis. Gradually, however, more sophisticated views of these buildings have developed and "Common buildings whose distinguishing characteristic was their simplicity began to be viewed as keystones in the architectural history of Wisconsin."⁸ Today, enough work has been done in identifying and categorizing such resources on both the state and national levels to make it possible to evaluate vernacular forms of commercial buildings using criteria other than integrity alone. This is apparent in the creation of the Commercial Vernacular form and Twentieth Century Commercial style categories developed by the staff of the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and it can also be seen in such new works as the recently published book The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture, written by Richard Longstreth.

Italianate

The other significant concentration of buildings within the district is the group of seven buildings exhibiting the design characteristics of the Italianate Commercial

⁷ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Op. Cit., Vol. 2, 3-1 (Architecture).

⁸ Ibid.

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style. Salient characteristics of the commercial manifestations of the Italianate style are given in the CRMP:

Frequently windows have hoodmolds or even pediments, and sometimes they are round-headed. Italianate references are typically found in the bracketed cornice, which often rises above a flat or shed roof, and at the windows. Nearly every Wisconsin city has its examples, often surviving in near original form in upper story wood, stone, or iron hoodmolds, brackets and cornices.³⁹

Commercial examples of this style are also similar to Commercial vernacular form buildings in many ways, most especially in terms of size, shape, and storefront design. Those examples found in the Princeton Downtown Historic District include Map Nos. 3, 7, 11, 22, 23, 24, 25. Of these, the four nearly identical buildings that comprise 512-520 W. Water Street (Nos. 22 - 25) are especially notable because they were built by at least four separate owners between 1859 and 1886. Apparently, these owners wished to create an architectural entity having the appearance of a single large commercial block of the type that would have been found in larger cities of the day, a type of civic boosterism that left its mark on many early Wisconsin downtowns.

Commercial Vernacular

Simply designed store buildings built between 1850 and 1920 in Wisconsin that lack clear stylistic antecedents are now considered to be examples of the Commercial Vernacular form. This label was developed by the Historic Preservation Division to answer the need for a category into which could be placed the vast number of such buildings within the state that do not fall under the standard architectural styles. The description of this form included in the CRMP states that:

The label "Commercial Vernacular" is less specific to a visual type than other significant Wisconsin building forms, and can be generally applied to simply-designed commercial buildings of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries. All varieties, if not radically altered, include large retail show windows on the ground story. Upper stories, whether meant to serve business or residential uses, are characterized by simple window openings. Doors to serve ground-story shops and upper stories are simple and, when original, are generally of paneled wood with a single window above. An emphatic cornice with some decorative treatment (compound brick corbelling, wood moldings, or metal friezes, with finials or thick corbels at the ends) and a cornice or I-beam above the storefront are usually the only decorative touches. Simplified period motifs are implied, but without any overt stylistic character. Frequently, vernacular commercial buildings, as other commercial buildings, were partially illuminated on the ground floor by a transom across the facade. The transoms

³⁹ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Op. Cit., Vol. 2, 3-1 (Architecture).

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are often covered with modern signage. Although there are free-standing vernacular commercial buildings, many are joined by party walls into continuous commercial streetscapes.⁴⁰

As knowledge of this form increases it is probable that it will be subdivided into smaller, more descriptive categories. Until then, such buildings will, or necessity, be thrown together in a somewhat undifferentiated way. Currently, the form includes many buildings which appear to share slight stylistic identities but that do not yet merit a stylistic category of their own. For now, examples of the form can be roughly differentiated from one another on the basis of their date of construction. Generally speaking, nineteenth century examples of the form grow taller as the century progresses and they are generally narrower than their early twentieth century counterparts and are somewhat more elaborately decorated. Early examples are also very much orientated toward a single street front, even when they are placed on corner lots, and decoration tends to be limited to the principal facade. Early twentieth century examples, on the other hand, are often somewhat broader and less tall than nineteenth century equivalents and frequently display some period revival style elements. Examples built on corner lots also are more likely to be designed in such a way that both the main facades are accorded a similar status and decoration is often employed on both of the principal facades.

Of the twenty-four contributing buildings within the district, sixteen of them (Map Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28), are examples of Commercial Vernacular design and exhibit the hallmark features of the Commercial Vernacular form listed above. Three of these buildings: the Charles E. Demell building at 521 W. Water Street (Map No. 5), built prior to 1885; the Ferdinand T. Yahr building at 525 W. Water Street (Map No. 6), built in 1875; and the Anton Rimpler building at 545 W. Water Street (Map No. 12), built in 1891, also exhibit Italianate style influence as well in their tall, rather narrow stilted, segmentally arched, or round-arched second story windows.

The architectural significance of the Princeton Downtown Historic District lies both in the fine, representative designs of its contributing buildings and also in the fact that these buildings are representative of important nineteenth and early twentieth century trends in the architectural history of Wisconsin's historic commercial buildings. Taken together, these buildings form a prominent, visually distinct entity that has historically been the center of Princeton's commercial activity.

Local Preservation Activity

It is the intent of this nomination to help foster an understanding and appreciation of the historic commercial buildings of Princeton by listing the best surviving

⁴⁰ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Op. Cit., Vol. 2, 3-10 (Architecture).

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local examples of these types of buildings. It is also hoped that the creation of this district will increase local awareness of the value of this city's entire historic building stock. Princeton is currently trying to emphasize its attractiveness as a tourist destination and is experiencing a period of population growth. Both factors will ultimately have a considerable and possibly negative impact on the historic buildings in this city if an awareness of their value to the city is not developed now.

Princeton has recently taken a number of steps to help ensure that its historic building stock will be preserved. The community already has an active local historical society whose fine museum is housed in the former City Hall located just to the west of the Princeton Downtown Historic District. It is also possible that an historic preservation ordinance that will be enacted in the near future will ensure some level of protection for the city's historic resources.

ARCHEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

The extent of any archeological remains in the district is conjectural at this time. Earlier buildings are known to have occupied almost all of the sites in the district, but it is likely that site excavation work for newer buildings would have obliterated most historic remains of such buildings. Possible exception might be remains associated with now vanished buildings that once lined the north shore of the Fox River within the district boundaries. A number of these buildings are known to have once existed, but most were gone by the turn of the century, so any remains that survive would now be found along the banks of the river behind the district's north-facing buildings.

No information about possible prehistoric remains in this area was found in the course of this research although the area in the vicinity of the city of Princeton is known for its associations with the Fox and other Indian tribes. It is likely, however, that any remains of these pre-European cultures located within the district would also have been greatly disturbed by the building activity associated with the subsequent development of this area.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Helpe, Robert W. & Emma B. A Heritage History of Beautiful Green Lake Wisconsin.
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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

See continuation sheet

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Nomination Preparer

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 4.5 acres

UTM References

A	<u>176</u>	<u>322811075</u>	<u>4785112220</u>	B	<u>176</u>	<u>322811075</u>	<u>4785112220</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1</u>	<u>11111</u>	<u>111111</u>	D	<u>1</u>	<u>11111</u>	<u>111111</u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Princeton Downtown Historic District is located on the north bank of the Fox River within the corporate limits of the City of Princeton. The district includes portions of Section 24, T16N, R11E and is described as follows: Beginning at a point on the north bank of the Fox River corresponding to the SW corner of Lot 24 of Blk 33 of the Original Plat of the Village of Princeton, then proceeding due N along

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

These boundaries contain all the land historically associated with the buildings in the district. In addition, the boundaries reflect an attempt to include the largest number of potentially contributing buildings in the district that is consistent with

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy F. Heggland/Consultant for the Princeton Chamber of Commerce

Organization _____ date November 28, 1996

street & number 1311 Morrison Street telephone (608) 251-9450

city or town Madison state Wisconsin zip code 53703

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Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Historic Preservation Division, 1986. Vol. 2 (Architecture).

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Boundary Description, Cont.

the west line of said lot to the south curbline of west water street, then proceeds north across said street to the a point on the north curbline of said street, then turns 90° and continues due west along said curbline approx. 12 feet to the SW corner of the lot associated with 608 W. Water St. (SW corner of E2 of Lot 7, Block C, Original Plat). The line then turns 90° and runs due north to the north line of Lot 7, then turns right 90° and proceeds due east along the north line of Lot 7 to a point of intersection with the west curbline of Pearl Street. The line then proceeds east across Pearl Street and continues along the north lot lines of Lots 1, 4, 5 and 8 of Block D of the Original Plat to a point on the west curbline of Washington Street, then continues due east across said Street to a point on the east curbline, which also corresponds to the NW corner of Lot 1, Block E, of the Original Plat. The line then continues west along the north lot line of Lot 1 to a point that corresponds to the point of intersection with an imaginary line that is extended due north from the east side of the building known as 440-444 W. Water Street (the American House Hotel). The line then turns 90° and runs south along said imaginary line to the north curbline of W. Water Street, then turns 90° and continues west along said curbline to a point formed by the intersections of the west curbline of Washington Street and the north curbline of W. Water Street. The line then proceeds south across W. Water Street and along the west curbline of Washington Street and along the east lot line of Lot 29 of Block 32 of the Original Plat to the north bank of the Fox River. The line then continues west along the meandering shoreline of this river to the PUB. The boundaries enclose an area of approx. 4.5 acres.

Boundary Justification, Cont.

NPS standards. The eastern boundaries of the district were drawn so as to exclude greatly altered historic buildings, modern buildings, and a parking lot located adjacent to the building 440-444 W. Water Street on the north side of Water Street and a parking lot and more modern and altered buildings located across from this building on the south side of the Street. The north boundary of the district was set so as to exclude both historic and modern buildings having a different history and much lower integrity levels than buildings in the district and the south boundary is the Fox River's north bank; a natural boundary. Other buildings located to the west of the district on both sides of W. Water Street were also judged to have lost too much integrity or to be of too recent a date of construction when compared with buildings in the district.

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Items a-d are the same for each photo

Photo 1

- a) Princeton Downtown Historic District
- b) Princeton, Green Lake County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Hegglund, October 6, 1996
- d) State Historical Society of Wisconsin
- e) 505-09 W. Water St., view looking S
- f) Photo 1 of 13

Photo 11

- e) 544 W. Water St., view looking N
- f) Photo 11 of 13

Photo 12

- e) 524 W. Water St., view looking N
- f) Photo 12 of 13

Photo 2

- e) 511 W. Water St., view looking S
- f) Photo 2 of 13

Photo 13

- e) 440-444 W. Water St., view looking N
- f) Photo 13 of 13

Photo 3

- e) 521 W. Water St., view looking S
- f) Photo 3 of 13

Photo 4

- e) 523 W. Water St., view looking S
- f) Photo 4 of 13

Photo 5

- e) 525 W. Water St., view looking S
- f) Photo 5 of 13

Photo 6

- e) 527 W. Water St., view looking S
- f) Photo 6 of 13

Photo 7

- e) 545 W. Water St., view looking S
- f) Photo 7 of 13

Photo 8

- e) 603 W. Water St., view looking S
- f) Photo 8 of 13

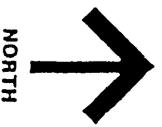
Photo 9

- e) 606 W. Water St., view looking N
- f) Photo 9 of 13

Photo 10

- e) 602 W. Water St., view looking N
- f) Photo 10 of 13

PRINCETON DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT PRINCETON, GREEN LAKE COUNTY, WI.



--- DISTRICT BOUNDARY 1 MAP NUMBER

■ NON-CONTRIBUTING 1 ADDRESS NUMBER

NOT TO SCALE

