

FINAL

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Whiting Memorial Community House

and/or common Whiting Community Center

**2. Location**

street & number 1938 Clark Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Whiting \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 5th

state Indiana code 018 county Lake code 089

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Whiting

street & number 1443 - 119th Street

city, town Whiting \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Indiana

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lake County Courthouse

street & number 2293 North Main Street

city, town Crown Point \_\_\_\_\_ state Indiana

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title None has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Whiting Community Center occupies the major part of a triangular-shaped block in a residential area of Whiting. The materials and eclectic design are typical of buildings of this period -- rough red brick over a steel structure, hipped red tile roof, scattered gables and arches, and concrete bracket and medallion detailing. The surface is alive with patterns in brick, and the complicated massing further contributes to the richness of the whole.

The main facade faces northeast. The primary entrance and a major side entrance are in the main section of the building, which has three usable stories -- two stories over an above-grade basement. (See photo #1). This main section houses a lobby, offices, and classrooms. The rear of the main section has an additional story, part of which is used as an apartment (see photo #7).

Directly behind the main section are gyms, lockers, a bowling alley, and a swimming pool. These flat-roofed, relatively plain sections of the building form a continuous wall along the alleyway behind the building.

To the left of the main section is the auditorium. Not quite as tall and set back from the main section, it has its own entrance. This entrance features three archways, with cast concrete ornamentation in the tympanum, and a hipped tile roof. The three arches are repeated in the ground floor windows flanking the entrance, and again above the entrance (see photo #2). The side of the auditorium is textured in brick patterns.

Although doors on the three entrances have been replaced by modern extruded aluminum doors, most window sash are original. Interior decorative features include wood paneling, ornate molded plaster, and wrought iron balustrades.

## 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1923 **Builder/Architect** Shattuck & Layer, Chicago

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Whiting Community Center is significant for its past role as a community center, and for the role of its builder, Standard Oil Company, in the Whiting Community.

The Standard Oil Company incorporated its Indiana subsidiary in 1889, with the Whiting refinery as its major installation. The Whiting refinery, opened in 1890, was built to process sour crude oil from Lima, Ohio, noted for the high sulphur content and odor which affected its marketability. The odor problem was eventually solved, and the Whiting refinery supplied the Chicago market with kerosene, lubricating oil for railroads, and grease for buggy wheels. Today the Whiting Refinery is the fourth largest in the nation.<sup>1</sup>

As the refinery grew, so did its impact on the community. In 1923, the company built the Community Center for the City of Whiting. A memorial to those who died in World War I, it contained a theater, bowling alley, indoor swimming pool, indoor track, two gymnasiums with shower and locker room facilities, and meeting rooms for citizen groups. Many generations enjoyed the activities at the center, but in recent years deterioration and underuse took their toll.

In 1973 Standard Oil Company spent \$250,000 to refurbish parts of the building, before donating it to the City. Currently, the building is used for classes, meetings, and senior citizen activities.

1. Amoco Torch, January/February, 1979, pages 24-29.

## 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Hermanek, Phil. "The Whiting Chronicles," Amoco Torch, January/February, 1979, pp. 24-29

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approximately two acres

Quadrangle name Whiting, Indiana

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<input type="text" value="16"/>	<input type="text" value="451861715"/>	<input type="text" value="46139410"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Lots 55-77 inclusive, except north 25', plat of Subdivision North Road (pt. southwest  $\frac{1}{4}$ , northeast  $\frac{1}{4}$ , section 7 T37N R9W) that part of Short Street that is vacated except those parts in dedicated street rights-of-way.

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

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Larry L. Hahn, Superintendent	date	11-29-79
organization	Whiting Park & Recreation Department	telephone	219/659-0860
street & number	1938 Clark Street	city or town	Whiting
city or town	Whiting	state	Indiana

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national     state     local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 12-5-79

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Whiting Community Center

Whiting, Indiana

UTM Reference:  
16/458675/4613940

