

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Christian G. Strunz House

AND/OR COMMON

Sponbauer House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

333 E. Berry St.

CITY, TOWN

Fort Wayne,

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4th

VICINITY OF

Allen

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Indiana

18

Allen

003

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

General Telephone & Electric

STREET & NUMBER

8001 U.S. 24 West

CITY, TOWN

Fort Wayne

STATE

Indiana

VICINITY OF

46804

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Allen County Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER

City County Building One Main St.

CITY, TOWN

Fort Wayne, Indiana

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Resources Survey

DATE

in progress

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Indianapolis, Indiana

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- DETERIORATED
- RUINS
- UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

- UNALTERED
- ALTERED

CHECK ONE

- ORIGINAL SITE
- MOVED
- DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sponhauer House stands on East Berry St, in what was once an upper middle class neighborhood adjacent to the commercial district. Although the structure is flanked on either side by Italianate residences of similar scale and style, its companions have been drastically altered for commercial use, and the three are now lost among the parking lots and business blocks of downtown Fort Wayne.

The Sponhauer House is distinguished, however, by much more than its pristine survival.

The overall form of the building is that of an irregular rectangle with its long axis extending north and south. The central portion is a mass four bays square whose three east bays extend an additional two bays to the south; the ell thus formed is capped by a steep hipped roof which terminates in a small flat deck. The three east bays also extend one bay to the north, but are roofed by a direct extension of the north rake. A two story, three-sided bay extends from the west side of the south wing; directly above, the south rake of the roof is almost entirely covered by a smaller extension which is supported by the bay on the west. The remainder of the elaborate Flemish gable of this roof is supported by broad shaped modillions, and at the southeast corner by the building's most unique feature: a bracket in the form of a life-sized mermaid. Directly below, the angle between the bay and the south wing is filled by a one story porch which shelters the main entrance and extends beyond the face of the bay; to the west, a porch of similar design fills the angle in the southwest corner of the main block over a side entrance. A simpler wooden porch in the rear (northwest) corner serves the back door.

The principal (south) elevation is not only the most formally complex, it is also the most heavily ornamented. The red brick walls stand on a high basement finished with rock-faced coursed ashlar which contrasts with the smooth limestone ashlar of the porch balustrades, whose panels are richly carved with floral patterns in high relief. The balustrades of the two front porches advance toward the street flanking the stone risers, and are terminated by dies with ball finials. On the porches, pairs of fluted Tuscan columns stand atop the balustrade and support an architrave decorated with a frieze of garlands and beribboned swags beneath a dentilled cornice.

The windows above the porches and on the projecting bay are also heavily ornamented. All are crowned by pedimented entablatures supported by consoles enriched with anthemias; the broad windows on the face of the bay are further elaborated by panelled surrounds, and a segmented cap is used on the second floor window of the bay. All windows have original one over one double hung sash.

The walls are capped by a frieze of close spaced wide thin dentil blocks beneath a broad eave supported by modillions slightly rounded on their outer faces. The entablature of the gabled projection extends above the main cornice and consists of a plain architrave with regula beneath a finely dentilled eave. The Flemish gable above springs from panelled dies at each corner; the smooth moulding

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on the edge of the gable rises as volutes over the dies and terminates beneath a sunburst at the apex. The tympanum is punctuated by a central elliptical oculus with exaggerated keystones at the cardinal points of its smooth surround; the rest of the gable is covered with scrolls of running foliated ornament.

In contrast with the complexity of the facade, the rear and side elevations consist of smooth masonry surfaces punctuated by regularly placed windows set within shallow segmental-arched openings. The small back porch, now enclosed, is supported by a single turned post and has an open rectangular tracery beneath its architrave and plain boxed eave. A later frame addition extends three bays behind the northeast corner and one bay wide, and is entered via a door on its west side. At the rear of the lot is a plain one and a half story brick carriage house, which straddles the west property line and was apparently used in common with the adjacent residence.

Although both of the front porches have colorful encaustic tile floors, the entrances themselves are markedly simpler than the rest of the facade. Both the side entrance on the southwest and the main entry on the southeast are set within plain masonry openings decorated only by the eccentrically chamfered lower edges of their smooth stone lintels. The southwest door is a single leaf fully glazed with a large beveled light. Although the main entrance is apparently a pair of leaves, the left panel is in fact stationary; both doors have central lights of clear bevelled plate and are panelled above and below the glazing.

Directly within the entry is a narrow main stairhall. The flying stair attached to the exterior (east) wall is splayed at its rounded foot, and turns with winders to reach a landing above a passage to the room behind the hall. The wide, shallow rail of the stair is supported by turned spindles which stand on a plain stringer; the rail merges with the turned cap of the large polygonal newel whose sides are battered and reeded. The stairhall has a cramped character by virtue of its narrowness, and the lack of any sunlight other than that provided by the lights in the entrance doors. This impression is not relieved by the fact that one proceeds into the adjacent front parlor through a single rather than a double doorway. This constricted passage is perhaps explained by the double pocket doors which lead into the rear parlor; a single door from the hall allowed a more desirable broad opening between the formal living areas without the loss of room for furnishings in the shallow front parlor. Upon entering the front parlor however, one's attention is diverted from this aspect by facing the fireplace on the west wall. The oak mantelpiece consists of two superimposed tiers of unfluted Ionic columns. Those at the base stand on plain dies flanking a broad opening filled by courses of the mottled buff glazed ceramic tile which also form the hearth. A cast iron surround and door with burnished designs in low relief covers the hearth opening. The dentilled entablature of the first stage of columns

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forms the mantle shelf, on which the second pair of columns stand flanking a bevelled rectangular mirror. The entablature above has a cyma recta profile and is richly carved with a central scallop and a running band of foliation beneath a plain fillet.

The pocket doors to the rear parlor are leaves of four panels each- as are all the interior doors. The hardware of the pocket doors has elaborate Eastlake-style geometric patterns with prominent diagonals elsewhere throughout the house, the separate escutcheons for doorknobs and keyholes are ornamented in the same manner; knobs are cylindrical sections with serrated edges and slightly convex faces. The enframements of the first floor doorways are faced with plain wide boards; with the exception of those in the kitchen, these are further enriched by bolectio moldings on both edges and plain corner blocks with round bullseyes. The enframement on the second floor are identical, but have mouldings only on their outer edges. The woodwork throughout the house is yellow pine grained to imitate quarter-sawn golden oak.

The rear parlor extends to the west behind the front parlor, and can be entered via the door on the southwest front porch. Two tall windows provide light on the west wall of the room; on the opposite wall a broad portal joins the parlor to a small sitting room, whose most unique feature is the arched recess within which a door to the stairhall is set. This recess is formed by the passage of the stairway above, as is the small corner closet located under the turn of the stair. A single door in the north wall of the rear parlor leads to the dining room directly behind. The dining room also has two west windows, as well as the back door on the northwest corner of the house. A small square serving window in the east wall opens into a pantry situated between the sitting room and the kitchen. Directly adjacent to the serving window is the door to the kitchen.

The kitchen's walls are finished with a service wainseote of verticle reeded car-siding with a shallow cap; the feiling is finished in stamped metal panels, including a fluted cove cornice. The edges of the ceiling are decorated with a garland and swag motif; within this a semicircular moulding of bundled reeds enframes the center of the ceiling, which is divided into a grid of squares, each filled with a stylized rosette. The kitchen flue is located on the north end of the east wall directly opposite a door which now leads into the one room rear addition mentioned above. On the north end of the west wall of the kitchen, adjacent doors lead to the basement and upstairs.

The second floor of the house consists of bedchambers arranged on either side of a narrow central hall which terminates in the stair landing at each end of the house. The master bedchamber extends completely across the front (south) of the house, is pleasantly lighted by the windows and is provided with a closet which seperates it from the rooms behind on the west.

The landing of the main stairway displays a curious handling of the rail. Since the landing extends past the last two risers of the

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stair, this required that it be enclosed by an ell-shaped rail. The stair rail thus forms a gooseneck over the spindle-sized newel at the corner of the ell, then continues over two more spindles before terminating in a large turned newel. The intersection with the landing rail is expressed, however, by giving the smaller newel a squared top whose side facing the risers is adorned with a bullseye.

Directly behind the stairwell on the east side of the corridor is a small bedchamber with both a closet and built-in cabinets on its north end. Directly behind is the bathroom (modern fixtures) and beneath the low roof in the north wing is a small servant's room or storeroom.

On the west side of the hall directly behind the master bedchamber is a bedchamber separated from a morning room beyond by a closet and connecting doorway. At the end of the hallway in the northwest corner of the floor is the landing of the rear stairway, which is finished with a simple blind rail of reeded car siding.

Several rooms of the second floor display what may prove to be their original finishes. The small east chamber has a boldly figured green paper beneath a gilt picture moulding. Both this room and the morning room also possess brass ceiling fixtures which provided both gas and electric lighting. The white figured blue paper and naturally finished picture mould in the morning room may also be original, as could be the plain brown base, figured cap border, and rose wall and ceiling papers in the hallway and rear stairwell. Slightly newer are the four bulb electric fixtures hung by chains in the master bedchamber, dining room, and rear parlor, though even the hand-blown bulbs still present are at least from the early twentieth century.

The presence of these interior features, and the excellent condition of the grained woodwork throughout the house only serve to confirm the promise made by the building's exterior; namely, that the Sponhauer House is a remarkably intact example of the late nineteenth century domestic architecture.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1886-1887

BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sponhauer House possesses architectural and historical value as an ingenious example of the additive processes of pattern-book architecture.

The basic form of the house is actually a quite common one- the irregular rectangular massing associated with the Italianate style. This can be directly perceived by comparing the house with its neighbor to the west, which is of a type common in the area. It is not at all difficult to imagine that the facade of the Sponhauer house could have been drastically remodelled from such an appearance by the addition of a polygonal bay and the more elaborate and academically informed classical ornaments of the window enframements and porches.

Other stylistic influences can be seen as well. Although hipped roofs are an element of the Italianate mode, and can be seen as such in the adjacent house, the steep pitch and flat deck of the roof of the Sponhauer House recalls more strongly the mansard roofline of the French Second Empire style. The unusual extension of the rear rake of the roof in order to cover the rear wing results in an un-classical truncation of the cornice on the sides and across the back of the house; this feature, and the use of a gabled extension irregularly supported by a polygonal bay and heavy bracketing suggest the elaborate hipped roofiness and eccentric massing associated with the Queen Anne mode. This impression is contradicted, however, by the exact role which the gable fulfills in the design. While the Flemish gable was historically used in the Jacobean architecture from which the Queen Anne style was derived, the elliptical oculus and delicate floral designs which adorn the tympanum recall the Adamesque neo-classicism of the Federal period, and point to the naive historical allusions of the Colonial Revival as the actual style to which the classical embellishments of the facade aspire. The same stylistic intent can be seen in the use of the gable as a central frontispiece which blocks from view the main roofline, whose flat deck would otherwise provide an off-center culmination to the facades' outline.

Thus, through the introduction of classical decorative detailing and the addition of a strong central element, what would otherwise be an Italianate form enriched by Queen Anne irregularity is transformed via yet another stylistic overlay into the later Colonial Revival mode.

Here the unique character of late nineteenth century architecture is revealed. Rather than being discrete and mutually exclusive,

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Fort Wayne City Directories 1880-1976
 Fort Wayne News Sentinel
 Fort Wayne Journal Gazette
 original records in Recorder's Office and County Courthouse

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Fort Wayne West

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 65640 4549120

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Property is defined by the boundary of Lot 53 of the original plat of the City of Fort Wayne

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Karen Anderson Executive Director

ORGANIZATION

ARCH, Inc.

DATE

1979

STREET & NUMBER

130 E. Wayne St.

TELEPHONE

219 743-5117

CITY OR TOWN

Fort Wayne,

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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various architectural styles are freely combined in conventional ways, with the latest Colonial Revival fashion serving as the vocabulary which lends overall direction to the design. This inclusive, eclectic approach can be seen as a natural expression of both the designer's selection and contribution of pattern-book elements and of the client's desire to have a residence which is both fashionable and provides familiar types and configurations of interior spaces and decorative elements. The result in the case of the Sponhauer House is a particularly dynamic building which has survived to this day miraculously intact.

The original owner for whom the Sponhauer House was built was Christian G. Strunz (1831-1916), grandfather of the last owner, Helen Sponhauer, for whom the house is currently known. Mr. Strunz was born in Germany and came to Fort Wayne in 1860, arriving with the flood of German immigrants who came to Fort Wayne in the second half of the nineteenth century. He operated a grocery business in Fort Wayne for about 40 years. His last store was located at Barr and Berry St., one half block west of his home.

In 1883, Strunz purchased the lot on which the house stands. This lot was part of the original tract of land reserved for use by the Indian Agency at Fort Wayne. In 1886-87 Strunz had the house built and in 1887 with his wife Lisette and daughter Henrietta, took residence there. Around 1900, Strunz retired from the grocery business.

When Henry F. Grage married Strunz's daughter, Henrietta, he also took residence at the house. Grage became one of Fort Wayne's best known and most successful traveling salesmen. His last twenty years he worked for the George DeWald Co., a dry goods wholesaler. He died suddenly at the age of 51, leaving his wife Henrietta and his daughter, Helen as survivors, together with Henrietta's parents, Christian and Lisette, all living at the house. The following year, 1916, both of Henrietta's parents pass away, leaving Henrietta and Helen living in the house.

In 1922, Roy Sponhauer married Helen Grage and they made their residence with Helen's mother Henrietta, in the house her grandfather had built. Henrietta died in 1945, and Roy Sponhauer died in 1962. Helen Sponhauer continued to live alone in the house until a few weeks before her death in early 1976. When she died on the 15th of February 1976, she was the last person to live in the house. She left no children, and the property was sold to General Telephone Co. The house has not been used since her death. That it is so remarkably intact an example of late Victorian domestic architecture is no doubt due to the fact that the house was only four years old when Helen Sponhauer was born, and she simply kept the house as she had always known it. Most of the furnishings, since dispersed, had been her grandparents. This is a truly unique house in Fort Wayne.



Christian G. Strunz
 House
 Fort Wayne, Indiana
 U.T.M. Reference
 16/656640/454912

T. 33' N
 T. 33' N
 4550
 5'
 4549
 24
 14
 37
 NEW HAVEN 6 MI.
 ANTWERP OHIO 23 MI.
 4548
 12
 (FORT WAYNE EAST)
 3966 II SE
 4546
 4545
 2'30"