

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	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

ELKHART COUNTY COURT HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

COURT HOUSE SQUARE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

GOSHEN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Indiana 3rd

VICINITY OF

STATE

INDIANA

CODE

018

COUNTY

ELKHART

CODE

039

## 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

ELKHART COUNTY, INDIANA

STREET & NUMBER

COUNTY COURT HOUSE

CITY, TOWN

GOSHEN

VICINITY OF

STATE

INDIANA

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

RECORDER'S OFFICE

STREET & NUMBER

COUNTY COURT HOUSE

CITY, TOWN

GOSHEN

STATE

INDIANA

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

INDIANA HISTORIC SITES & STRUCTURES INVENTORY (SURVEY #458)

DATE

1977

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

INDIANA DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

CITY, TOWN

INDIANAPOLIS

STATE

INDIANA

# 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 present building is located in "Court House Square," the site of Elkhart County's first Court House, which, "after 35 years of honest wear," was razed in 1868. Positioned in the center of the square, the present structure, surrounded by mature and beautiful maple and elm trees, is the focal point of downtown Goshen, as well as Elkhart County. Also included within the Court House Square block are various "memorabilia," including a fountain depicting a statue of Neptune, donated in 1912; "Old Bullion," an iron cannon donated by the local VFW and fired during the political rallies held on the lawn at the turn of the century; and a monument commemorating those in Elkhart County who died during W.W. II.

The Court House as originally constructed in 1868-1870 was a three story (2½ story above grade) Italiante style masonry building, asymmetrical in plan, with its lower level partially recessed into the ground and measuring 82' x 72'.

The entire structure was dominated by a lookout/clock tower located at the south end of the building, which also served as the entrance to the lower level. The main entrances to the building were constructed on an E/W axis and were emphasized by exterior "monumental type" stairs and a slightly projecting "classic portico." The portico consisted of four freestanding Corinthian columns set on a rusticated podium, supporting a "well proportioned" entablature and measuring 52' from base to cornice. A continuous band of stone rustication surrounded the building from grade to the main entrance level. The exterior corners of the building were emphasized by stone quoins at the main level and stone pilasters at the upper level. The entire structure was crowned by a bracketed cornice and, excepting the clock tower and portico, a shallow hipped roof hidden by balusters.

In 1905, as a result of increased space needs, an extensive building program was initiated to renovate and expand the existing facilities. The clock tower, a Goshen landmark for more than a generation, became so "oppressively imposing" that this obtrusive feature was eliminated and a new clay tile dome tower, more moderate in proportion, was added. The new tower, with a clock in each of the four faces, is positioned over the central portion of the building located at the intersection of the N/S & E/W axes. The building has been expanded at both ends along the N/S axis symmetrical in plan, with a total increase in ground space of 87' x 70' or approximately 20,000 square feet. A pipe tunnel, originating at the existing jail (located to the west of the square) and extending to the west end of the building beneath the entrance stairs, was constructed to provide heat for the building.

Additions and alterations over the years include:

- .. Revised heating system - 1914
- .. Addition of an elevator - 1960
- .. Addition of A/C system - 1973
- .. Small exterior masonry storage addition located north of west entrance stairs - ?

The Court House as it exists today is in excellent repair and the interior finishes (marble wainscot, the painted plaster, wood trim, etc.) appear to be as was originally constructed in 1906.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES	1868 - 1870	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Barrows & Garnsey Architects
	1905 - 1908		Patton & Miller Architects

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Elkhart County Commissioners, Jacob Bechtel, J.E. Thompson and Nathaniel Thompson were gifted with the wisdom to recognize the necessity for a new court house to reflect the extraordinary progress made by the people of Elkhart County, and the perseverance to overcome the opposition of the taxpayers. Consequently, in 1868, the Commissioners retained the Chicago architectural firm of Barrows & Garnsey and on June 11 adopted their design. Completed in 1870, at a cost of \$125,000, the Elkhart County Court House is a superb example of a successful transition from "past to present" in terms of the architectural styles of the period.

The original building, as constructed in 1868, was Italiante style in character and demonstrated a fusion of the Italian Ville style and the Renaissance revival. It was described as "imposing in appearance, chaste in design, massive and of great strength and delicacy of finish, with the clock tower adding greatly to the appearance of the building."

However, as the Georgian revival, with its pleasing symmetrical facades, gained momentum, the asymmetrical location of the "elegantly proportioned clock tower" became increasingly obtrusive and grew into disfavor with the public. Thus, in 1905, when the Chicago architectural firm of Patton & Miller was retained for the renovation and expansion of the existing building, the clock tower was removed from the south facade and a new tower positioned on the central axes of the building. Wings, symmetrical in plan, were added to the north and south facades. The renovated building assumed the character of a Georgian Revival style coeval with Second Renaissance style. The fact that these two styles reached their zenith between 1890-1915 (concurrent with the court house renovation) played a major role in effecting a satisfactory solution to the problem of combining two dissimilar styles. The Second Renaissance style gave continuity from original to new design and the Neo-Colonial style, with its symmetry, domed tower, etc., provided a structure with a more aesthetically pleasing architectural massing of elements. The present building is considered to be one of the most attractive county buildings in the State of Indiana.

The County Commissioners also possessed the foresight to recognize the need for preserving a "Green Acre" in the midst of present and future urban monotony and Court House Square serves as an excellent example of sensible urban planning. During the summer the maple and elm trees surrounding the Court House provide much needed shade and also veil the structure while still permitting its prominent tower to serve as a reference point in Elkhart County - it can be seen for miles.

As the seat of Elkhart County government, the Court House (located approximately central to the county) has been the site of numerous and sundry political rallies held on the Court House lawn and has hosted such political luminaries as Ezra Taft Benson, former Secretary of Agriculture (1960); former Senator William Jenner, and the great orator, William Jennings Bryan (1904).

Because of its historical, social and political relevance to the citizens of Elkhart County and the surrounding communities we strongly recommend the nomination of the Elkhart County Court House to the National Register of Historic Places.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bartholomew, H.S.K.: Pioneer History of Elkhart County, Indiana (Goshen, Indiana: The Goshen Printing, 1930) PP 21-23

Bartholomew, H.S.K.; Sketches and Stories of Elkhart County, Indiana (Napanee, Indiana, E.V. Publishing House, 1936) PP 186-188

(See continuation sheet)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.28

UTM REFERENCES

A | 16 | 597062 | 4604373 |  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 C | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | |  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 D | | | | | | | | | |

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Elkhart County Court House square is located in the central commercial business district of Goshen, Indiana and is bounded by the curb lines of: Clinton Street on the north; Lincoln Avenue on the south; main street on the east; and 3rd Street on the west.

## 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

JOHN ROBERT PLENNERT, REGISTERED ARCHITECT

June 18, 1979

ORGANIZATION

R. M. McINTURF, STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

810 CHRISTIAN AVENUE

TELEPHONE

219/293/1919

CITY OR TOWN

ELKHART

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

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

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Deahl, Anthony; A Twentieth Century History and Biographical Record of Elkhart County, Indiana (Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Company, 1905) PP 49-58

Weaver, Abraham E.; A Standard History of Elkhart County, Indiana (Chicago, The American Historical Society, 1916) PP 67-81

Whiffen, Marcus; American Architecture Since 1780 A Guide to the Styles (Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Mit Press, 1969)

History of Elkhart County, Indiana (Chicago, Charles C. Chapman & Co. 1881) PP 506-511

Historical Atlas of Elkhart County, Indiana (Higgins, Belden & Co., 1874) Page 9

NAME OF THE PROPERTY

TEMPORARY LOCATION

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE OF INDIANA

COUNTY

STATE

DATE OF RECORDING IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

DATE

DATE

DATE

# GOSHEN QUADRANGLE

INDIANA-ELKHART CO.

7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Elkhart County Court House Square

Goshen, Indiana

UTM Reference:

16/597062/4604373

386 JLNW  
27  
(ELKHART)

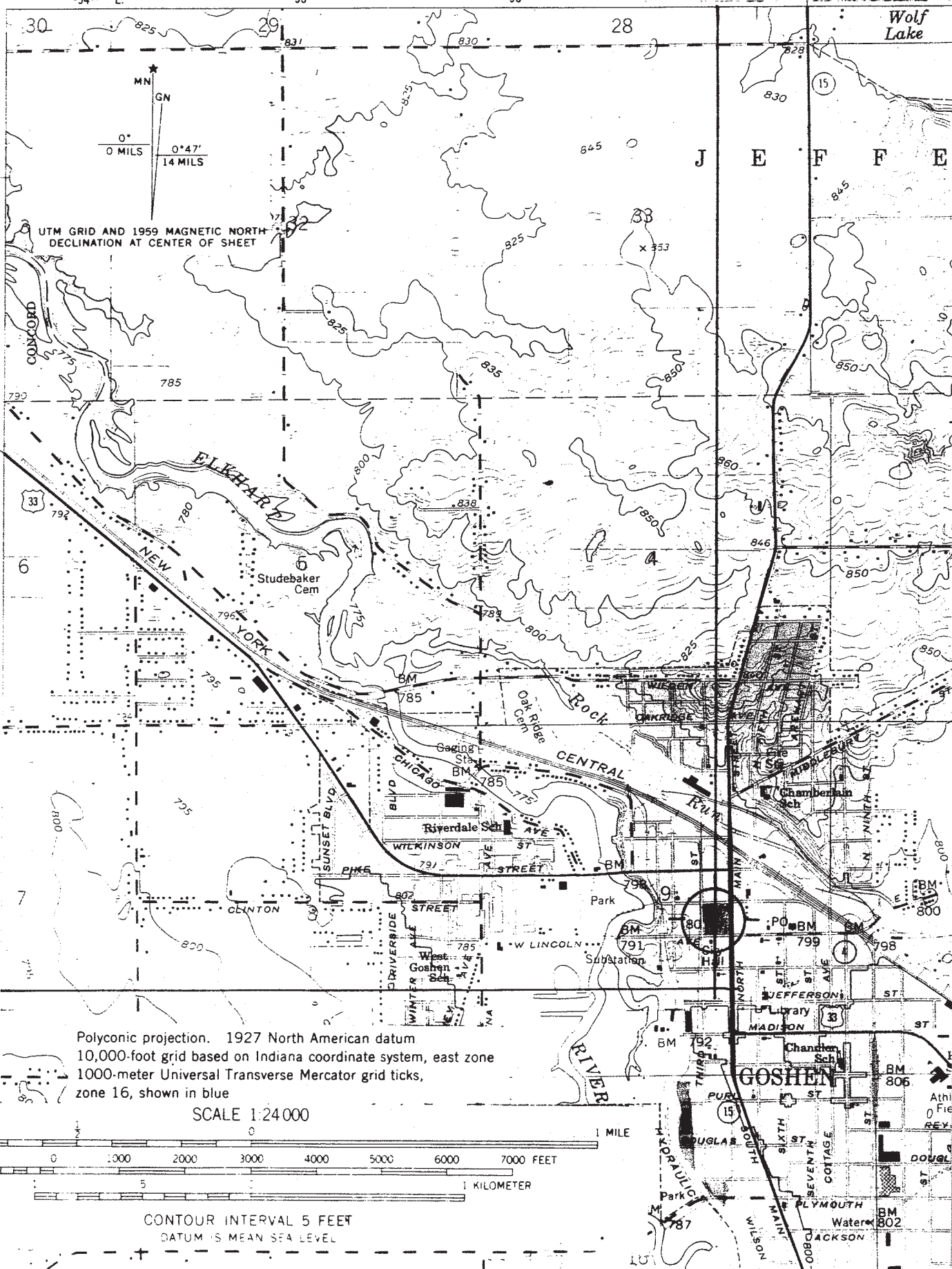
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594000m E

595

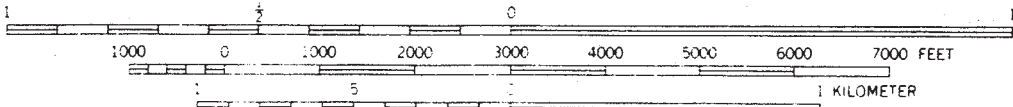
596

597



Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Indiana coordinate system, east zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 16, shown in blue

SCALE 1:24000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL