

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Buschmann, William, Block
other names/site number Buschmann Block 097-296-D2803

2. Location

street & number 968-972 Fort Wayne Avenue not for publication
city, town Indianapolis vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Marion code 097 zip code 46202

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Ruth Harty for J. Don Fidenon 6/23/68
Signature of certifying official Date
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
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.

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 of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestone

walls BRICK

STONE: Limestone

roof WOOD

other METAL: Tin

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Built in 1870-1871, the original Buschmann Block is a three-story, seven-bay, red brick, commercial/residential, L-shaped structure on a rubble foundation with limestone facing at the southwest corner of 10th Street and Fort Wayne Avenue (Photo 1). Sited tight to the sidewalk on Fort Wayne and 10th Street (Photo 2), the acute-angled building was enlarged in c.1879 by the addition of a four-bay wing on the south forming the present c-shaped structure (Photo 3, Map 2).

The Italianate style of this post-Civil War structure is clearly delineated on the primary or east elevation (Photo 4). The three-story bays are clearly marked at each level. The prominent projecting cornice is finished with finely detailed laminated brackets which continue the verticality established in the lower levels by the recessed brick course framing the window openings. Each bracket flanks the open ventilator oculus located in the upper level of the wall elevation. This level is marked by a brick string course which is detailed with a row of brick dentils composed of a slightly projecting stretcher finished below with a centered header. The north section of cornice and accompanying brackets are missing due to roof deterioration. The tall, narrow window openings in this elevation are topped by stilted brick arches with eared limestone springers and keystones set with the brick voussoirs. Limestone lintels finish the framing of the brick filled arches. Projecting limestone sills are fitted with slightly projecting limestone support blocks which are set to the outside of the recessed brick frame. Existing windows are double hung units with four over four light sashes. Some window sash have been sealed on the exterior with the installation of painted panels. The sills become part of the limestone string courses which serve as divisions between the first and second floors and second and third floors. Support blocks of the second floor window sills have been removed. The string course and sills have received parging during the first floor remodeling, c.1950. At this time, the original large, arched commercial windows and entrances were removed (Photo 5). Replacement elements include a projecting metal cornice topping the angled installation of commercial window units now covered with painted panels. Recessed entrances are framed with incised poles. The original arched entranceway to the stairs remains exposed on the interior (See Photo 16). The exterior has been fitted with sidelights and toplight. The other entrances although retaining no original openings have been similarly treated on the exterior. The entire remodeling is set on the original foundation line. Thus the original limestone facing blocks and thresholds are still in place.

The north wing is two bays wide by approximately ten bays long. This north elevation is finished as a secondary facade (Photo 6). The two entrances are detailed as the windows on the east elevation. The arch is infilled with a toplight. Original five-panel, double leaf doors remain in the opening. All window openings are treated in a less decorative manner. Each opening is topped by a low relieving arch finished with limestone

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ears to simulate the configuration of a hood. Existing exposed sash repeats the same configuration as on the east elevation. Two first floor windows are sealed with original two-panel shutters. Other windows are sealed with plywood panels. All sills repeat the treatment found on the primary elevation. The horizontal accent of the string course is not repeated here. The upper wall is finished with the brick string course and one oculus per bay. The cornice line continues from the east elevation. A single bracket remains at the west end, the terminus of the decorative metal cornice. Due to the deterioration at the northeast corner, the bracket in that location does not survive. The two-bay west elevation of this wing is finished with narrow window openings with undecorated segmentally arched tops and simple limestone sills. Existing sash indicates that all units consisted of six over six light double hung windows. The south elevation of this wing contains an entrance with infilled toplight set above an original four-panel door. There are no window openings in the upper level.

The remainder of the five-bay rear west elevation of the original building is detailed as the west elevation of the north wing. The first floor center bay is marked by a two-panel door with plywood infilled toplight. At unknown dates original first floor window openings were infilled with brick, plywood panels and ventilator grills. Two double door openings were cut to provide access to a concrete deck. Second and third floor window openings remain intact. Original six light sash remain in some openings. A fire escape has been installed.

As originally constructed, the south wing addition was finished on the west elevation with opening details to correspond to those of the north wing, north elevation. The upper level openings remain intact. Some original six-light sash remain in place. All original first floor openings have been filled with brick. The center bay has received a narrow single leaf door. Non-original window units now boarded have been installed. Similar units have been installed on the first floor, north elevation of this wing. As originally constructed, this elevation contained no openings. Today a glass block stairway window is located in the first east bay, second floor. A small double hung unit has been installed on the third floor, abutting the intersection of the addition and original building. The south elevation of this wing, the full south elevation of the building, was originally constructed to abut a two-story building to the south (Photo 7). Four evenly spaced, rectangular window openings exist on the third floor. At unknown dates, small window openings were cut into this elevation.

The interior of the Buschmann Block is very functional and simple. The load-bearing brick building has a heavy timber structural system. The first floor has cast iron columns with foliate capitals to carry the heavy timber beams and floor joists (Photos 8, 9). A stamped tin ceiling occurs in some spaces (Photo 10). Other spaces are more utilitarian in finish (Photos 11, 12, 13). Few distinctive features are present in the commercial spaces. Some party walls are finished with wide flat baseboards and trim (Photo 14). A four-panel cross-framed door remains as an example of the original interior residential doors (Photo 15).

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As originally constructed in 1871, the Buschmann Block was to service the growing family, wholesale and retail grocery and grain dealership. The four north commercial bays were occupied by the Buschman enterprises. The two commercial bays south of the stairway entrance were occupied upon completion of the building by the Lewis Meier Dry Goods Company. The upper floors were used as residences by the William and August Buschmann families. An undecorated staircase extends from the east entrance to the upper residential portion of the building (Photo 16). Original pedimental trim remains visible on the second floor window in this stairwell. Both second and third floors to the north of the stairwell now contain open spaces with all structural supports visible. All evidence of the original residential layout was removed when these floors were converted to light manufacturing and warehouse use sometime after 1895. Outside walls retain some remnants of deteriorated plaster. In this area the third floor has octagonal wood posts with block capitals (Photos 17, 18). To the south of the stairwell, the space is defined by the load-bearing wall of the stairwell and the original south elevation wall. Simple chamfered heavy wood posts are used in the open warehouse areas of the second and third floors of the four-bay, south wing addition (Photo 19). The original residential area of the upper two floors seems to have been centered around the entrance stairwell. A straight-run, open staircase to the third floor extends north from the entrance stairwell to the third floor. This staircase features heavily molded handrail with turned newel post and balusters in the Italianate style (Photo 20). All other details of the residential use have been removed.

The Buschmann Block is sited immediately adjacent to the west sidewalk of Fort Wayne Avenue. This short, diagonal street is the remaining remnant of the "Old Fort Wayne Road" which was established as early as 1828 as a special route extending northeast from the original mile square area of Indianapolis to Fort Wayne, Indiana. Open space surrounds the building to the south and east. Some areas are paved parking lots; others are gravel/rubble surfaced areas. These spaces are the result of city urban renewal efforts of the late 1950's and early 1960's. To the west, at the southwest corner of East 10th and North New Jersey Streets, are located a row of worker cottages dating from the 1860's and 1870's. To the north, immediately across East 10th Street, is located the large brick industrial building built c.1905 as the replacement factory for the Louis Meier and Company, manufacturers of shirts and pants. This building as sited on Central Avenue, a one-way southbound street, screens the Buschmann Block from view.

The owners plan to undertake a major renovation of the building. The second and third floors will feature loft apartments. The ground floor will be used as commercial space.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1870-1871

Significant Dates
c.1879

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
Buschmann, William

Architect/Builder
UNKNOWN

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Buschmann Block constructed in 1870-71 and c.1879, survives today as an outstanding example of the large Italianate-styled commercial buildings which were prominent in Indianapolis in the last quarter of the 19th century. The perception of the scale and massing of the building is highlighted by its location and site configuration. The imposing three-story angled facade set immediately adjacent to the street and accompanying sidewalk provides the visual terminus for the diagonal street, Fort Wayne Avenue, as it intersects the standard grid pattern of the north/south street, Central Avenue. The Buschmann Block stands today as a reminder of the establishment of a highly successful business family who contributed substantially to the early development of a mixed-use neighborhood which developed during the years following the Civil War.

The Buschmann Block is one of few remaining large Italianate commercial buildings in Indianapolis. Typical of the wholesale buildings built in the original mile square area until about 1880, the Buschmann Block is composed of multiple units. Usually a portion of the commercial space was retained by the owner/builder. The remainder was rented to another business. Two such buildings which survive include the House of Crane Building, 124 South Meridian Street, 1866-67, and Morrison's Block, 43-49 South Meridian Street, 1871. Each features the prominent bracketed cornice comparable to that of the Buschmann Block. Tall, narrow, arched windows are finished with prominent, projecting, molded window hoods. First floor commercial openings at the House of Crane were originally framed with cast-iron columns. Morrison's Block was originally completed with fully arcaded cast-iron storefronts. This material in similar application was used elsewhere in the city. The most complete use of cast-iron can be found in the full facade of the Byram, Cornelius, and Company Building, 201-205 South Meridian Street, 1871-72. As originally finished, the cornice line was supported by heavy brackets. The north masonry elevation is finished with molded window hoods framing the tall, narrow openings. Throughout the city, the architectural texture of the earliest phase of building is marked by the use of window hoods and prominent bracketed cornice lines of the Italianate style.

The architectural significance of the Buschmann Block can thus be placed in context with similar commercial Italianate buildings in the city. As originally constructed, this building exhibited the full first floor arcade. In contrast to previously referenced buildings, all arched openings are finished with masonry details which

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Abstract of Title, Pentacle, Inc.
Building file, The Acquisition and Restoration Corporation
Building file, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, Kemper House
Indianapolis Illustrated, The Capital City of Indiana. Indianapolis: The Consolidated Publishing Company, 1893.
Indianapolis Men of Affairs. Indianapolis: The American Biographical Society, 1923.
Indianapolis City Directories. Indianapolis: (various publishers), 1855 to 1877.
Pictorial and Biographical Memoirs of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana. Chicago: Goodspeed Brothers Publishers, 1893.
Polk, R.L. Indianapolis City Directories. Indianapolis: R.L. Polk and Company, 1878 to 1960, inclusive.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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:

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property approx. .31 acres

UTM References

A 16 572800 4403560
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 1 and 45 feet off of the North side of Lot 2 of Sorin's Subdivision of Cut Lots 175 and 176 of the Donation Lands of the City of Indianapolis

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This constitutes the historic boundary of the property

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan R. Slade, Architectural Historian
 organization Slade Associates date May, 1987
 street & number 4560 North Broadway telephone (317) 283-6114
 city or town Indianapolis state Indiana zip code 46205

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maintain the plane of the elevation.

The stylistic references therefore are not simply applied to the exterior but become an integral part of the facade. In this instance the masonry craftsmanship is singular. Molded or stamped window hoods and cast-iron arcades are multiple units which in the 1870's represented a cost-effective building technology designed to replace labor-intensive craftsmanship such as found on the Buschman Block.

Although the Buschmann Block in scale and size as completed in c.1879, was comparable to the blocks located in the wholesale area of the city around Union Station, it was one of the earliest large, commercial structures in the highly concentrated mixed-use St. Joseph neighborhood (see Map 1). According to the 1887 Sanborn Insurance Map, buildings along Fort Wayne Avenue were of mixed size and orientation to the street. Two-story residential units were set back from the street with the facade line perpendicular to the lot line. Two-story, party-walled commercial/residential buildings were set parallel to the acute angle of the street. According to the 1898 Sanborn Insurance Map, only three other commercial buildings along this street were three stories in height. The Munger Bicycle Works, located one block south on the west side of the street, was comparable in size and orientation. Between 1887 and 1898, typical residential units were sited along the east side of Fort Wayne Avenue at the north end. This residential character continued north of the angled intersection on the east side of Central Avenue, the north/south street. Thus the three-story, masonry Buschmann Block presented an imposing, dominant architectural accent along a rapidly developing commercial node aligned along a unique diagonal street which terminates into the standard city grid system at northeast corner of the property line. Today the Buschmann Block maintains the same visual accent. With large portions of vacant land, the result of urban renewal efforts during the early 1960's, and construction of low rise intrusions along both sides of the street, the projecting bracketed cornice line and the three-story massing of the acutely angled facade continue to prominently mark the terminus of the short diagonal street at East 10th Street.

William Buschmann identified this site as the location of a growing commercial wholesale and retail center prior to the construction of the Buschmann Block. In 1865, he was listed as a saloon keeper on Fort Wayne Avenue. In 1866, he became associated with the H. Severin, a grocery and grain dealer. He resided at 201 East St. Mary Street, now designated as the 300 block of East 10th Street, within the same block now the site of the Buschmann Block. Like other businessmen in this neighborhood, upon construction of the Block, Buschmann and his family lived above the store. Between 1870 and 1885, city directory research has documented that Fort Wayne Avenue in the 600 to 1000 blocks contained at least thirty-two business listings which included retail, wholesale and manufacturing companies. The upper level residential usage was concentrated on the east side of the avenue, south of the intersection of St. Joseph Street.

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The residential portions of the Buschmann Block were in use between 1871 and 1895. August Buschmann, nephew of William Buschmann and partner in the firm, removed his growing family to 183 Broadway (1153 Broadway) in 1888. William Buschmann, founder of the business, continued to live in the building until his death in 1893. His son, William F. Buschmann who continued to operate the business, remained in residence at this location until 1895, when he moved to 150 Central Avenue (1244 Central Avenue). After 1895, no residential use is recorded to the building. The residential portions of the building were converted to storage and warehousing.

The William Buschmann Company continued a rapid growth at this location. In 1893, according to Indianapolis Illustrated, "The business is both wholesale and retail in character, embracing a complete line of staple and fancy groceries, including the finest teas, coffees, pure spices, table delicacies, fresh, salt and smoked meats, queensware, glassware, hardware, mechanics' and farmers' tools, sholf and house-keeping goods, dry goods, notions, dress fabrics, boot, shoes, rubbers, etc. The store is equipped with a cash carrier. Fourteen clerks are employed and delivery teams are in active service."

August Buschmann left the employment of his uncle in 1896, to found A. Buschmann and Sons, Inc. This business is represented by another large, multi-purpose commercial/residential structure at 1022 North College Avenue. This building, Second Empire in style, housed the Buschmann plumbing supplies company, hardware shop and heating contract business. August Buschmann also established a neighborhood grocery in the building which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Chatham-Arch Historic District (3-13-80).

Two sons of William Buschmann became associated with the Lewis Meier Dry Goods Company. Louis and Charles joined this company in 1887 and 1891 respectively. By 1883, Meier Dry Goods was beginning to produce custom tailoring in the Buschmann Block. By 1890, Meier had moved with his Buschmann partners to a three story building located immediately north, across 10th Street. At this time, a third story bridge joined the Buschmann Block and the new location. Finished goods were transported across the bridge to the warehouse. The entire third floor of the Buschmann Block was used as storage for the production of 350 hands creating one thousand dozen Meier Shirts, pants and overalls per week. During World War I, Lewis Meier and Company, under the presidency of Charles L. Buschmann, produced over 100,000 "Auto-Brand" olive drab army shirts. Thus, beginning as early as 1890, floor space at the Block was used for warehousing by an enterprise other than the original grocery and associated retail business. By 1923, Charles L. Buschmann, a founding member of the Union Manufacturers Association of America in 1901, had become president of Lewis Meier and Company. Cousins and brothers were associated with him in this business including August W., Harry C., and George H. Buschmann.

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The William Buschmann Company, grocers, continued in the north two commercial bays of the building until 1939. By 1914, other commercial spaces were occupied by the Smith Electric Company, Edwards Instrument Company. Between 1920 and 1945, the commercial spaces and other portions of the building were devoted to service and light manufacturing companies such as Universal Refrigerator Service Company, Sherer Gillet Case Company, National Food Machine Agency and a manufacturer of store fixtures, the Biro Company. In 1951, Vern C. Vanderbilt installed a bakery in the building. Between 1960 and 1986, a cabinetmaker, a wood refinishing business, and archery lanes have occupied major portions of the building. Since 1960, the third floor has been used on a very limited basis due to the deteriorated condition of the roof. Presently the building is unoccupied.

The Buschmann Block, as a prominently located large, early Italianate commercial building is today a reminder not only of the intense activity and booming growth of Indianapolis' commercial/manufacturing concerns along Fort Wayne Avenue, but also of the early business contributions made by a single family outside the original mile square area between 1871 and 1940.

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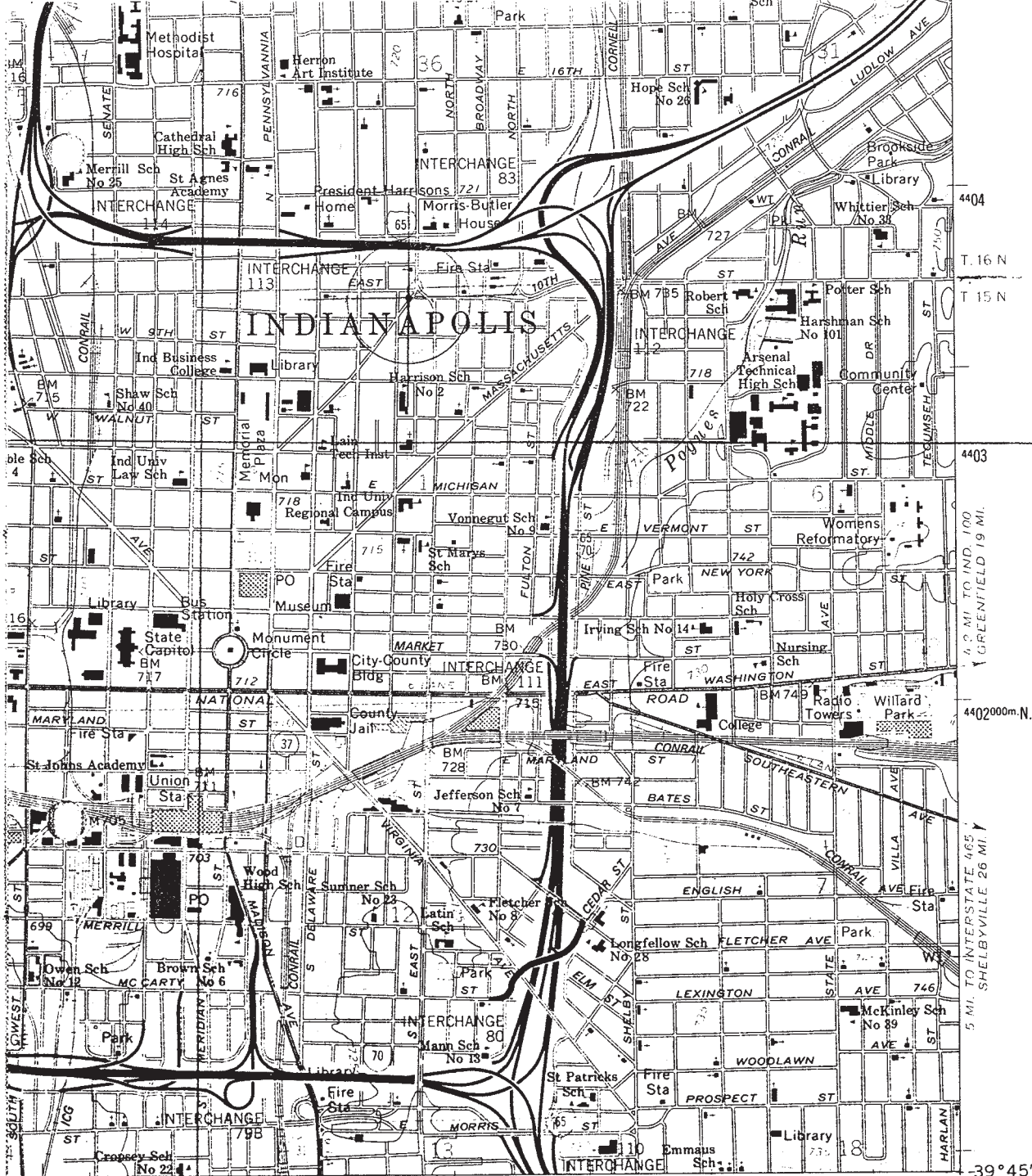
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Sanborn Map Company (compilers). Insurance Maps of Indianapolis, Indiana. New York:
Sanborn Map Company, 1887, 1898 (corrected to 1913).

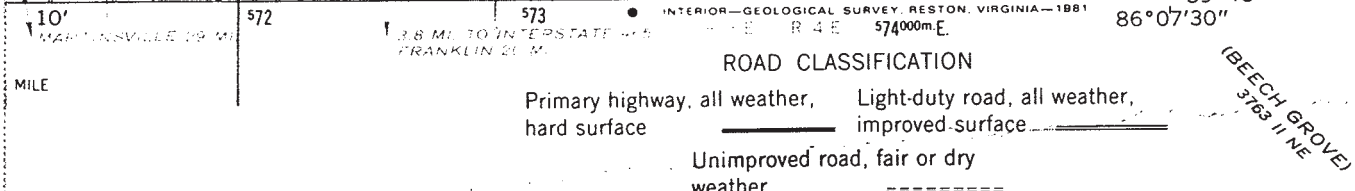
A Part 1, Evaluation of Significance, Historic Preservation Certification Application was approved October 6, 1986. This preliminary determination stated that the above-named property appears to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely be listed in the National Register of Historic Places if nominated by the State Historic Preservation Officer according to the procedures set forth in 36 CRF Part 60.

NPS Project Number: 10113-IN



Buschmann Block 1870; c. 1880
 968-972 Ft. Wayne Avenue
 Indianapolis, IN 46202

16 572 400 440 5560



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

INDIANAPOLIS WEST, IND.
 N3945—W8607.5/7.5

1967
 PHOTOREVISED 1980
 DMA 3763 I SW—SERIES V851

Boundaries shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of Indiana agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1980

(BEECH GROVE)
 3763 I NE

