

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational 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 Blackstone Building
other names/site number 003 215 26030

2. Location

street & number 112 West Washington N/A not for publication
city, town Fort Wayne N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Allen code 003 zip code 46802

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber 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.

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: business

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Terra Cotta

Brick

roof Asphalt

other Glass

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Blackstone Building is located on the north side of Washington Street, just west of Calhoun Street, in downtown Fort Wayne. Calhoun Street was the principal shopping area in downtown Fort Wayne from the late nineteenth century until well into this century; today Calhoun Street is a transit mall open only to buses and pedestrians. Most retail activity in the area is dependent upon the office workers who have largely replaced shoppers as downtown's principal users. Washington Street, a residential area until about 1910, is today one of the city's main thoroughfares.

The Blackstone Building is a three story Neo-classical style commercial structure which was built in 1927. The building's upper facade is clad entirely in white terra cotta. The three bays of the facade are enframed by panelled Ionic pilasters and topped by a modillion cornice and a shaped parapet (photo 1). The parapet is enriched at its center and either end by stylized shields. The three bays of fenestration on the upper floors are further enframed by the treatment of the mullions between the window bays as smaller panelled pilasters that support a slightly projecting lintel above the third story windows. The recessed spandrels between the second and third story windows also have panelled faces. The sash consist of a single large pivot-mounted light in the center bay on each floor, flanked by narrower one-over-one double-hung sash in the outer bays. Though the first floor facade has a modern angling display window beside a single entry door, the original architect's rendering of the building (photo 2) shows that the facade once had a recessed entry and display windows enframed by a terra cotta molding; a molded cornice topped the first floor, and a projecting marquee with acroterion trim was suspended from chains mounted below the first floor cornice.

The building's only other exposed elevation is its rear (north) wall, which has groups of windows faced with steel bars on each of its registers (photo 3).

The interior of the first floor is a single room with a stairway located at the rear (northeast) corner (photo 4). The ceiling is divided laterally by a series of panelled beams; each panel is finished with a plaster cove cornice. The stairway is finished with marble treads, square steel newels, and a steel rail trimmed with a wooden handrail. Though the rail is missing on the first floor, the intact sections above have a lozenge design worked in bent steel, rather than balusters. Adjacent to the stairway is a modern mezzanine level enclosed in plywood, and a modern opening has been cut into the east wall of the first floor to connect it with the adjacent Schmitz Block.

☒ See continuation sheet

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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The second floor has the same type of molded plaster detail seen on the first floor, with the difference that a partition is placed under the front beam to create a separate room inside the facade (photo 5); the area in the rear (northwest) corner beside the stairway, originally defined by the configuration of the ceiling and stair rail alone, has been enclosed by modern plywood partitions (photo 6). The original woodwork consists of edge-molded mahogany casings and ogee-topped baseboards on both upper floors (photo 7, 8). The third floor repeats the plan of the second, but without its plaster ceiling detail. A modern partition (visible on the left in Photo 8) has been added to subdivide the front room on the third floor, and plywood partitions have also been added around the rear (northwest) corner (photo 9). The baseboards have been stripped from the center part of the third floor, and the marble treads of part of the steps between the second and third floors have also been removed.

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

1927

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Weatherhogg, Charles B.

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

The Blackstone Building is primarily of local architectural significance as an example of terra cotta construction in the Neo-Classical style, and as one of the few extant commercial designs of Charles R. Weatherhogg, who was a prominent Fort Wayne architect. With the exception of one other structure, the 1924 Utility Building, the Blackstone Building is the only commercial structure in downtown Fort Wayne to have an upper facade clad entirely in terra cotta. The ground floor exterior of the Utility Building has been completely altered and the first floor interior has recently been substantially changed. The upper facade, however, remains essentially intact. Virtually all other such local examples of the use of terra cotta were theaters, including the Lyric (c.1910), Kieth (1907), and Orpheum (c.1924), all of which have been demolished. The best example of terra cotta as trim is the Embassy Theater/Indiana Hotel (1928), which has tapestry brick as its principal facing material.

Charles R. Weatherhogg was born April 15, 1872 in Donington, Lincolnshire, England. After apprenticing for three years, Weatherhogg came to America to view the 1893 Chicago's World Fair. He was so impressed that he decided to establish himself in the United States. Making business connections with a firm in Fort Wayne, he spent his early years of practice, 1893-1897, in partnership with Arthur Grindle. He left the firm to open an office under his own name, which was most successful between the years 1910-1928. Through his work he promoted the formal Beaux-Arts style, which he often combined with details of other architectural styles. He was adept at working with numerous stylistic modes and choosing appropriate styles to meet the particular needs of clients, buildings, and sites. His large scale commission work was most often done in the Neo-Classical Beaux-Arts Style. He not only designed structures in Indiana, but in Ohio and Michigan as well. He was also selected to the committee appointed to draft Fort Wayne's new building codes.

Though he designed many major downtown structures during his career, only four of Weatherhogg's other downtown designs survive: Central High School (1902), Elks Temple (1907), Masonic Temple (1922), and the Journal-Gazette Building (1927). His vanished works included not only such other downtown landmarks as the Anthony Hotel (1907, Louis H. Sullivan, associate designer) and the Keenan Hotel (1922), but also a suburban commission related to the origins of the Blackstone Building, his 1915 design for the same client, William H. Noll, of a palatial mansion that was arguably the most elaborate residence built in Fort Wayne during this century.

☒ See continuation sheet

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2 Blackstone Building

William H. Noll was a prominent businessman who made his fortune mass-producing a cough syrup originally developed by his pharmacist father. Noll later opened the nation's first factory to mass produce liquid nail polish. He bought the site of the Blackstone Building along with the adjacent Schmitz Block in 1912; in 1927, Noll erected this building to house Blackstone Shop, an exclusive women's clothing store owned by his wife, Laura Green Noll. Mrs. Noll's business continued to occupy the building until 1937; it was succeeded by a men's clothing store, Harold Hughes, in 1941, and by Nobbson, another women's clothier, in 1951. Nobbson used this building, along with the first floor of the adjacent Schmitz Block, until it abandoned downtown for a suburban mall in 1979.

9. Major Bibliographical References

"New Home of the Blackstone Shop," Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, January 9, 1927, p. 8.

"William H. Noll Funeral May be on Monday," Fort Wayne News-Sentinel, April 10, 1941, p. 1.

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 # _____

☐ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

Indiana Historic Sites & Structures
Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	6
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6	5	6	8	1	0
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4	5	4	8	3	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

South 70 feet, Lot 8, in the Schmitz Subdivision of Lots 454, 455, and 456 of Hanna's Addition to the City of Fort Wayne

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This constitutes the historic boundary of the property.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Craig Leonard, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization _____ date December 1987

street & number 521 West Market Street telephone (219) 824-4010

city or town Bluffton state Indiana zip code 46714