

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Snider, S.C. and McFeeley, George, Polygonal Barn  
other names/site number Shearer Barn, 069-016-35005

### 2. Location

street & number 1/2 mile south of Division Rd. on IN 9/37  N/A  not for publication  
city or town Huntington  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Huntington code 069 zip code 46780

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Arthur R. Roberts*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

2/3/93  
Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- 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): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Snider-McFeeley Polygonal Barn  
Name of Property

Huntington Co., Ind.  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register**

0

Round and Polygonal Barns of  
Indiana

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE: Animal Facility

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE: Animal Facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Twelve-sided barn

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD: weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Snider-McFeeley Polygonal Barn  
Name of Property

Huntington Co., Ind.  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1906-1936

**Significant Dates**

1906

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

**Cultural Affiliation**

NA

**Architect/Builder**

Snider, S.C. and McFeeley, George

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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

Name of repository:

Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana

Snider-McFeeley Polygonal Barn  
Name of Property

Huntington Co., Inc.  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 |  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jerry McMahan  
organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of IN date November 11, 1991  
street & number 340 W. Michigan St. telephone 317/639-4534  
city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Jim Shearer  
street & number 251 S. Marion telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Huntington state IN zip code 46780

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section number 7 Page 1 Shearer Barn, Huntington, IN

The Snider-McFeeley Polygonal Barn, located in rural Huntington County, just south of Huntington, Indiana, is an excellent and unique example of a twelve-sided barn. Built in 1906 by S. C. Snider and George McFeeley, this barn is reached by a drive off of SR 9/37 and is completed by the frame farmhouse to the northeast. The site is composed of mature trees and cultivated fields on all sides. Additionally, the barn maintains its sense of integrity in relation to location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, meeting all of the standards set forth in the requirements for multiple property nominations.

The twelve-sided, two-storied barn is topped by a sectional three-pitch gambrel roof which is in turn crowned by a round cupola with a conical roof. The cupola contains louvered vents to aid in the distribution of light and air to the upper reaches of the barn. Adding a unique touch, the twelve-sided barn is built into a rectangular barn that dates to the nineteenth century. Apparently, the rectangular barn was not large enough so a multi-sided structure was built to expand the space in a creative manner. It would appear that the 1800s barn was extensively remodeled in conjunction with the addition, possibly including the addition of a gambrel roof (such roofs are uncommon on Indiana barns before 1900). The balloon frame wall construction rests firmly on the poured concrete foundation.

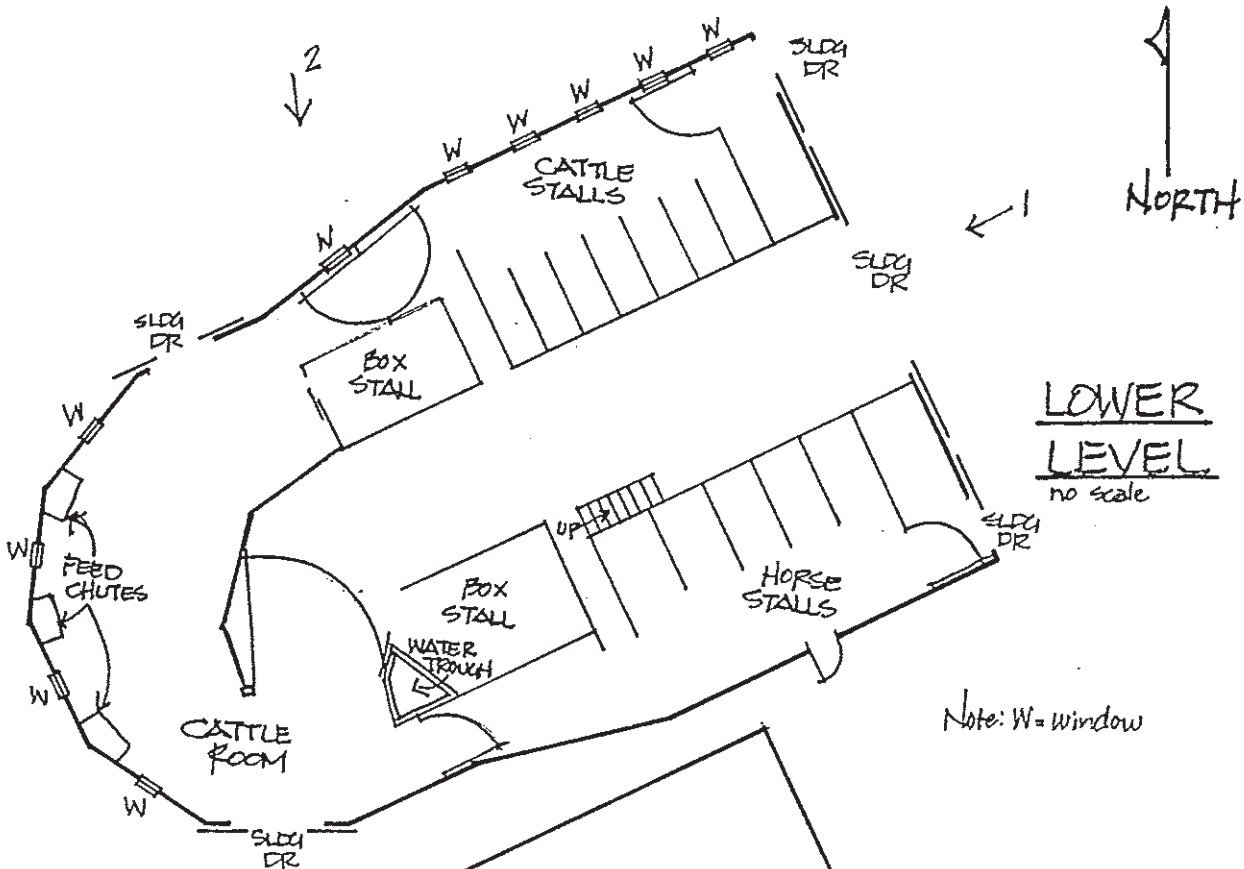
The roof surfaces are now covered in asphalt replacement shingles, an alteration that minimally affects the historic integrity of the barn. There is a slight overhang to the roof with exposed rafters and roof decking visible in the soffit region. The walls of the twelve-sided structure are sheathed in the original horizontal wood siding while the rectangular barn is covered in vertical wood siding.

Looking to the northeast facade (Photo 1), the front of the rectangular barn is apparent with its central sliding doors mounted on a overhead track and extending to just short of the eave line. On either side are shorter doors, again sliding type and mounted on overhead tracks. All of the doors are composed of vertical wood planks with the central doors having an arch motif painted on them. There are five equally spaced openings that originally contained six-light windows which are now missing on

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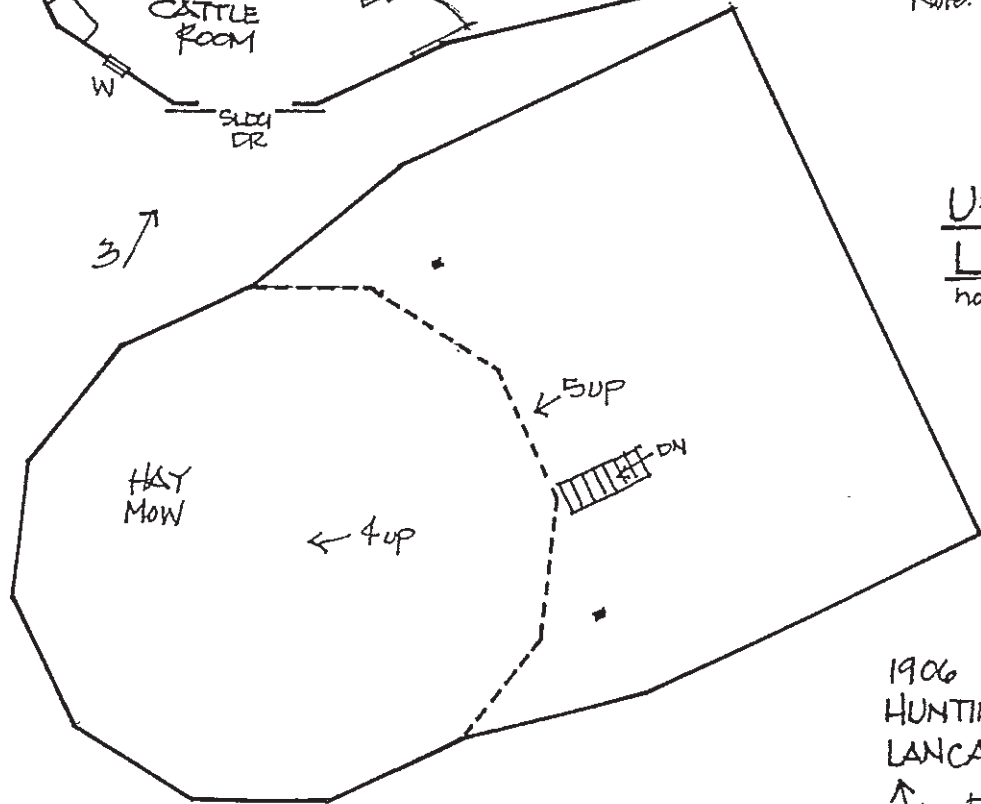
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LOWER LEVEL  
no scale

Note: W=window



UPPER LEVEL  
no scale

SNIDER/  
McFEELEY  
(SHEARER)  
BARN

1906 12-SIDED  
HUNTINGTON COUNTY, IN  
LANCASTER TOWNSHIP

↑ 1 = Photographic key

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Section number 7 Page 3 Shearer Barn, Huntington, IN

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the northwest and southeast sides of the rectangular barn. Following this, the walls of the twelve-sided barn seem to grow out of the rectangular one, with the roof surfaces of the two barns sloping down to a valley at the connector's midpoint.

The twelve-sided barn has a large door on the first face off of the connector on the northwest side (Photo 2), followed by six-light windows centered on each wall section around to the southeast side. On the southeast side (Photo 3), there is another set of double sliding doors that are opposite the doors on the northwest. Both of the doors on the twelve-sided structure are painted in a similar arch motif like those on the rectangular barn. The rest of the wall sections are without openings.

The interior of the building (see floor plan) is an ingenious use of irregular spaces that resulted from the marriage of a twelve-sided and rectangular barn. Inside of the rectangular barn is a central drive that extends from the main doors into the center of the twelve-sided structure. Along the north side are a series of eight cattle stalls, followed by a walkway. Along the south side are seven horse stalls, again followed by a walkway. On both sides, these stalls extend from the main drive to the exterior walls and the first stalls inside the main doors are sectioned off from the rest by swinging gates. Additionally, these stalls run through the connector and into the twelve-sided barn. The connector contains two box stalls, one on either side of the main drive and then gates that fence off the rectangular barn's stalls from the twelve-sided area. Also, there is a built-in concrete water trough in the southeastern corner of the southern box stall. The twelve-sided barn is characterized by the angular termination of the central drive with a gate on the southeast that lines up with the exterior door. Around the perimeter then is a large, undivided cattle room with three feed chutes along the exterior wall.

The upper level is post-free and an open area for the handling and storage of hay and straw. Inside the twelve-sided barn (Photo 4), a laminated beam is present at the base of the cupola and supported by timbers that cross the span and divide it into twelve, equally spaced wedges. Below this and at the intersection of the upper and second roof sections is another laminated beam

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Section number 7 Page 4 Shearer Barn, Huntington, IN

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that is braced across its width in a manner similar to the cupola. This beam is followed by the last laminated beam at the juncture of the second and third roof pitches. The roof trusses in between these laminated beams are then laid up straight with triangular wedges resulting at the joining of each of the twelve sides of the various roof pitches.

The connector space between the twelve-sided and rectangular barns is also worthy of investigation (Photo 5). Here, the roof sections of the twelve-sided barn are braced across the central drive by a massive timber that is in turn supported at both ends by the outside walls and by posts buried in the central drive's walls. Additional support for the gambrel roof of the rectangular barn is garnered by large posts that extend from the floor to the intersection of the lower and middle roof pitches. The result is an ingenious coupling of the two structures that not only increased the usable barn space to the owner but also gave a noticeable and unique landmark to the surrounding area and the state.

Basically, the Snider-McFeeley (Shearer) barn has stood for almost ninety years as an oddity among area and state examples. Although still used today as a barn, there are repairs and maintenance that are long overdue so that this wonderful barn can continue to serve as a reminder of the past and its agricultural achievements.



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The Snider-McFeeley Polygonal Barn, located in Huntington County's Lancaster Township just south of Huntington, Indiana, is significant under Criteria A and C for its association with the development of round and polygonal barns in Indiana. The barn is a rare combination of a rectangular barn with a polygonal addition (see historic context, "Round and Polygonal Barns of Indiana."). The barn is an important and direct link to the agricultural development that occurred in the state from 1850 to 1936 (and beyond) and has changed little since its construction in 1906. The period of greatest significance was from 1906 to 1936 when round and polygonal barns lost their popularity. By 1936, round and polygonal barns were considered obsolete and the last round structure was built in the state to replace a 1915 round barn that had burned (Grant County, Richland Township, extant).

The original owner of the property was George McFeeley who had a rectangular, gambrel roofed barn built in "pioneer days" but the barn soon proved to be too small for the growing farm operation. In 1906, McFeeley's son-in-law, S. C. Snider decided to expand the barn by attaching a twelve-sided structure on the southwest side. Also, the rectangular barn was remodeled at this time. Snider, who had no previous design or construction experience, set out to merge the two decidedly different structures and the result was amazingly ingenious. On the lower level of the rectangular barn there were cows on the west and horses on the east while the twelve-sided barn contained a large cattle room. Box stalls, a built-in water trough and the careful planning of double action gates throughout the lower level contributed to the efficiency of the structure in addition to such features as a centralized manure carrier system that ran through both of the barns' midsections from northeast to southwest. The upper level was devoted to the storage of hay and straw. The farmers had successfully distinguished themselves from their neighbors both near and far. The efforts of Snider and McFeeley were widely heralded in farm journals, including a large write-up in The Farmer's Guide on July 11, 1908.1

The Snider's received ownership of the property after the death of Mr. McFeeley and the barn and farm remained in the family until the sale to the current owners. The current owner, Jim Shearer of Huntington, Indiana, now leases the property to tenants and the structure is still maintained as a barn.2

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In Indiana, there were eighteen twelve-sided barns constructed, making it the third most prominent style of the 219 round and polygonal structures built (behind true circles [151] and octagons [33]). The barns were built in Allen County (Adams Township, razed), Clinton County (Michigan Township, extant), Huntington County (Huntington Township, extant), the Snider-McFeeley (Shearer) Barn, Huntington County (Polk Township, razed), Kosciusko County (Washington Township, extant), LaGrange County (Newbury Township, extant), Marshall County (three in Greene Township, with two being extant and one razed), Miami County (Washington Township, razed), Parke County (Raccoon and Greene Townships, both razed), Ripley County (Jackson Township, extant), Shelby County (Noble Township, extant), Tippecanoe County (Randolph Township, extant), Wabash County (Lagro Township, razed) and White County (Princteon Township, razed). Of these, only two were constructed before the issuance of the 1905 patent (Clinton and Wabash County examples), thus showing that the vast majority of the twelve-sided structures were most probably built to skirt the patent rights of McNamee, Duncan and Littleton. Finally, of the eighteen built and the ten that remain, this is the only twelve-sided barn that is merged into a rectangular barn.

The Snider-McFeeley Polygonal Barn is an unusual and unique example of a polygonal barn, being the only one of its kind in the state that really exhibits a merger of polygonal and rectangular shapes. Other barns that exhibit a sound and well-planned attachment of round and rectangular shapes include barns in Decatur County (Washington Township, Strauther Pleak barn, extant), and Marshall County (Greene and German Townships, both extant). However, none of these examples shows a total outgrowth of one structure into the other. Further, due to the age of this building, it can be assumed that the twelve sides were in response to patent rights that were issued on round barns in 1905, with most of Indiana's twelve sided barns built after 1905.

The Snider-McFeeley Polygonal Barn has the essential physical features and characteristics that it possessed at the time of its period of significance, from 1906 to the mid 1930s. The building has aged and shows some surface deterioration but it has not been significantly altered since its erection. For these reasons and due to the unusual form of the structure, the Snider-McFeeley (Shearer) barn stands as a landmark and icon of Indiana's agricultural history, development and sophistication.

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## Endnotes

1. "A Remodeled Barn", The Farmer's Guide, Vol. XX, No. 28, 11 July 1908, p. 1.
2. Jim Shearer, owner of the Snider-McFeeley (Shearer) Barn, Huntington, IN. Interview by Jerry McMahan, 2 November 1991.

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Shearer Barn, Huntington, IN

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "A Remodeled Barn". The Farmer's Guide. Vol. XX, No. 28, 7 July 1908, p. 1.
- Hanou, John. Research compiled on Indiana's round and polygonal barns from 1986 to present. Archived at Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 340 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202.
- Intensive architectural survey of Indiana's round and polygonal barns. Conducted June to August 1991, conducted by Jerry McMahan, areawide survey of round and polygonal architectural and historical resources.
- Shearer, Jim. Owner of the Snider-McFeeley (Shearer) Barn Huntington, IN. Interviewed by Jerry McMahan, 2 November 1991.
- Soike, Lowell J. Without Right Angles, The Round Barns of Iowa. Des Moines, IA: Iowa State Historical Department, Office of Historic Preservation, 1983.

Verbal Boundary Description

The Snider-McFeeley Polygonal Barn is located in the NWNE of Section 5, T27N-R9E in Lancaster Township, Huntington County, Indiana. Referring to the site plan, begin at a point 1 inch south of the southeast corner of the house (Point A), then proceed south 250 feet to Point B, then proceed west 250 feet to Point C, then proceed north 250 feet to Point D, then proceed east 250 feet to Point A.

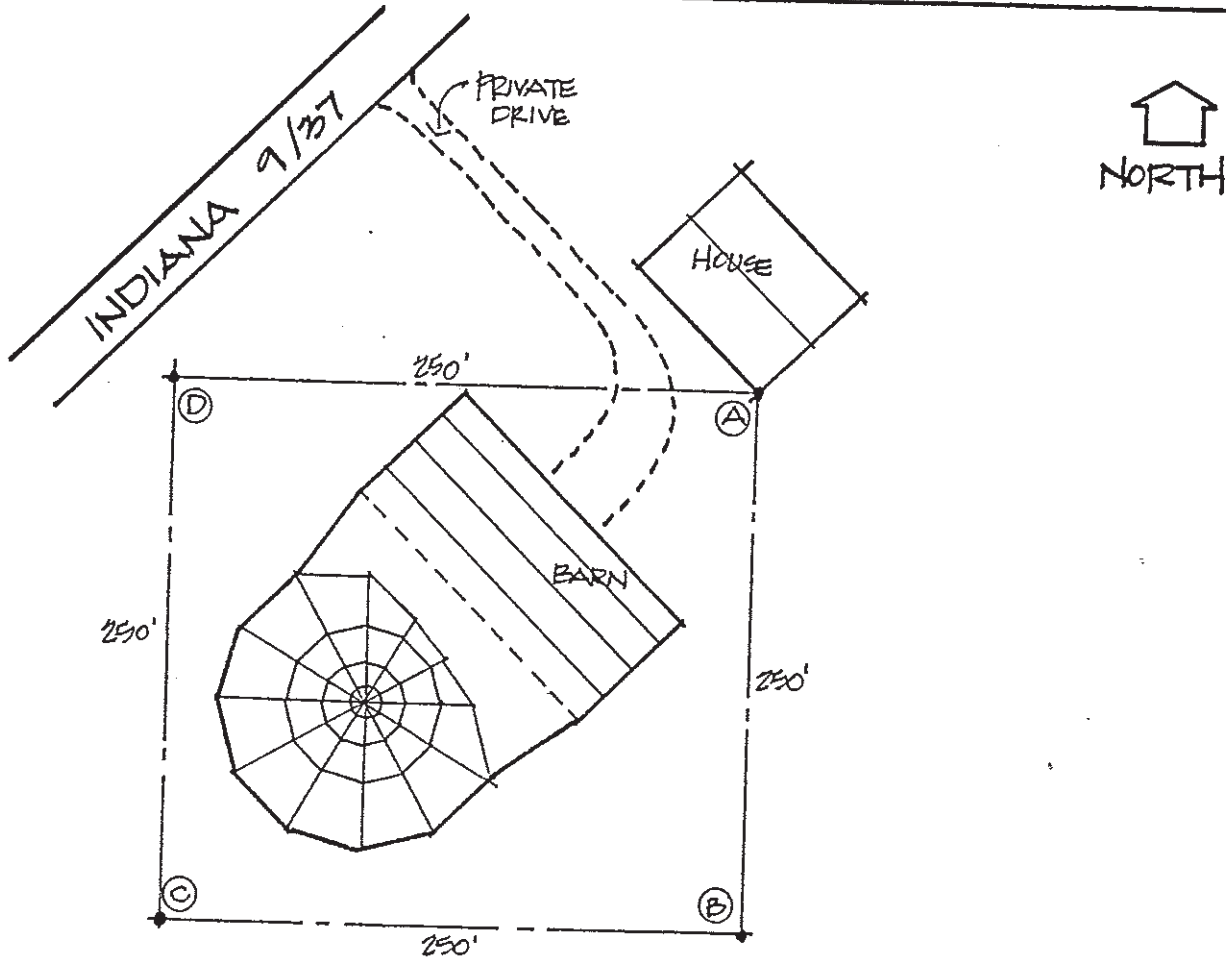
Boundary Justification

The boundary includes only the nominated resource.

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## SNIDER/MCFEELEY (SHEARER) BARN

SITE PLAN  
NO SCALE

1906 12-SIDED  
HUNTINGTON COUNTY, INDIANA  
LANCASTER TOWNSHIP