

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FIVE

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 Bergan, W. N./J. C. Lauber Co. Building
other names/site number 141-597-36319-36320

2. Location

street & number 502-504 E. La Salle St. N/A not for publication
city or town South Bend N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county St. Joseph code 141 zip code 46617

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 36CFR 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ 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 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:

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

Name of Property

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
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

East Bank Multiple Property Listing

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

INDUST/PROC/EXTR: Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

Metal

roof ASPHALT

other Tin

Narrative Description

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

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE
INDUSTRY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1882-1947

Significant Dates

- 1882
1900
1924

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic 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:

South Bend/St. Joseph County Historic Preservation

Bergan, W. N./J. C. Lauber Co. Building
Name of Property

St. Joseph IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property < 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	562900	4614190	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				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 Camille B. Fife, President
organization The Westerly Group, Inc. date 06/30/97
street & number 556 W. 1175 N. Rd. telephone (812) 696-2415
city or town Farmersburg state IN zip code 47850

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 Carl and Eva Taff / J. C. Lauber Co.
street & number 502 E. LaSalle / 504 E. LaSalle telephone _____
city or town South Bend state IN zip code 46545

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 W.N. Berger/J.C. Lauber Co. Building
St. Joseph County, Indiana

7. Description

The W.N. Bergan/J.C. Lauber Company is comprised of several adjoining buildings, most of which were unified under the auspices of the J.C. Lauber Company in the 1970s. The complex had achieved much of its present parameters between 1917 and 1945.

The westernmost of the structures, the original Bergan Building, constructed in 1882, is a two story, rectangular plan structure of Italianate design. The foundation and walls are of brick which has been painted. A new store front has been installed over the former ground floor facade, and permastone infill and concrete steps replace the bulkhead and entry floor. Doors and windows on the ground floor are aluminum replacements. Two signs identify the building on the west facade, which also has several brick-infilled windows. The three bay facade has a central, recessed entry on the first floor and three windows on the second. These latter are graced with brick corbelled, segmental arched label window heads.

The most imposing feature of the building is the ornate cornice and frieze. This projects on the west and north sides, with a decorative boxed cornice, on the north side of which is a gable with wide eave returns at the roof line. Within the gable end, scroll cut wood letters and filigrees identify the original owner of the building and decorate the facade. Below the cornice is a tightly spaced row of dentils surmounting a panelled and decorated frieze, the chief element of which is a band of regularly spaced losenge modling motifs. Separating these are scroll cut brackets. At the extreme east end of the north facade is a larger, more decorative bracket with incised detail which gives closure to the frieze and cornice.

The interior of the shop floor has a dropped ceiling and dark mahogoney wood panelled counter, back wall and interior office. Behind the store are various storage areas and an enclosed stair leading to the second floor. At this time, this stair is the only second floor access. Adjoining the building and with access through a stair in the rear of the store area, are two, one-story brick additions, the southernmost of these, formerly a cobbler shop, has been owned and used by the Lauber Company since 1900. The one adjacent to the back of the Bergen building is presently a garage.

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St. Joseph County, Indiana

The second floor space is comprised of living quarters, originally reached through an outside, rear stair at the back of the building. The access door is still present, although a new, interior stair is now used. The space has not been occupied for a long period of time, although part of it is used for storage. The living spaces include a front parlor at the north end (building front) with a small dining area off of it through a wide opening. A second parlor is off the first, connected by another enlarged, framed opening. Three doors lead from this room. The first, on the east side leads to a small alcove bedroom with a small closet, the second, in the southwest corner of the room leads to a hall, the stairs and original exit, the third, immediately to the west of the second leads to another room, presently used for storage, which contains a chimney and which may have been a kitchen. Off of the stair hall, another bedroom and bath is located. The wood trim in the apartment is interesting, as the surround between the front parlor and the alcove/dining area contains fluted moldings with a rosette at the center. Those in the second parlor have similar treatments except that the rosette is replaced by a simple roundel. A transom is present in the hall door, which allowed for cross-ventilation through the rear door and the front windows. The windows in the front two rooms have been infilled with glass block, and the side windows blocked, but most of the latter still have their frames, sash, surrounds and some glass intact.

There is a small basement in this building with concrete floor and rough ashlar walls, accessed by a stair under the present rear stairway. In the past it was probably reached through an outside stair.

To the east of the Bergen building are two one story buildings, rectangular in plan and unified on the front facade by a single, ornate cornice. This is similar to the one on the adjacent Bergen building and comprises a plain upper frieze, with a decorative molding at the top. This frieze carries the Lauber Company identification, in raised letters. Below this is another decorative molding supported by a row of slightly scrolled brackets, under which is a plain frieze and a row of recessed square panels. The ends of the ornament contain a highly decorative bracket, which is scrolled and fluted, with the upper portion in the form of a small pilaster with a modified capital. The facade contains modern display windows and aluminum doors, as well as a secondary sign over the windows adjacent to the main entry. The main entry is recessed, with double leaf, full light doors and a full transom. A 1924 remodeling changed the ground

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St. Joseph County, Indiana

floor. Although, some of the present windows appear to date from a later era.

The interior of this building consists of a main, rectangular room used for machine work and fabrication. There are rows of wood fabrication tables on casters lining both sides of this room, with various types of equipment interspersed or connected to them. The ceiling has been insulated with loose battens, secured by furring strips. There are two, interior office/drafting rooms built within the space of simple construction. The machine room has a concrete floor and there are two skylights on the east side of the room. These have metal frame multi-lights and extend above the roof line, tent-fashion. The back of the building contains a large equipment door to the south and leads to the rear building behind no. 502, which is an extension of the equipment room. A modern (c. 1960 concrete block extension on the east part of the building extends to the south and east to the alley. It is used for storage and equipment.

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Section number 8 Page 4 **W.N. Bergen/J.C. Lauber Co. Building**
St. Joseph County, Indiana

8. Statement of Significance

The building is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of commerce and light industry in the East Bank area of South Bend. (See Section E., East Bank Multiple Property Listing.) The East Bank area, thanks to the presence of water power through the river and the East Race, was associated, during the late nineteenth century with industry. Commerce and additional residences grew up around this impetus. The Bergen/Lauber buildings were a part of this development. They can also be associated with the development of the town of Lowell, as they were located in the central part of the original plat.

There is evidence that, even before W. N. Bergen constructed his building on the corner, the site was associated with commercial use. An 1866 birdseye map shows a two-story building at the site which could serve such a capacity. When Mr. Bergen constructed this building, he worked for the M. E. Listenberger Company and lived a block east, on LaSalle Street (Then known as Water Street.) The ground floor store front housed a number of businesses in its history, including a grocery, and a saloon, according to early Sanborn Insurance Maps. By 1903, it was serving as a dry goods store, with the owners, Mr. & Mrs. Louis Gross, living in the apartment above. In 1920 it was devoted to men's clothing and furnishings, which in became the home of the Brehmer Electric Company, when Bernard Brehmer purchased the building. It remained in the Brehmer's hands until 1966. The J.C. Lauber Company purchased the building in 1975 and converted at least part of it to offices, although the Michiana Tile and Marble Company was a tenant until 1984.

Joseph Charles Lauber, emigrated to South Bend from Ohio in 1868. He began work as a tin smith at the age of 12, apprenticing in Mishawaka. Later, he took a position with a firm in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and attended the South Bend Business College. In 1890 he began his own sheet metal and slate roofing business. For the first years, he had several business partners, including a Mr. Weiss, with whom he was associated until 1908, when the Lauber & Weiss Galvanized Works (as it was listed in T. Howard's *History of St. Joseph County*) became the J.C. Lauber Company. The Lauber Company has always been associated with the 500 block of E. LaSalle. The first location was probably a small shop at the rear of one of the buildings facing the street, with access from the alley. By 1893, a tin shop is shown at 506 E. LaSalle, with frontage on the street. The Lauber Company manufactured copper and galvanized cornices, window caps, brackets, metal skylights, tile slate and tin roofing as well as heating and

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St. Joseph County, Indiana

ventilation systems. At one point it employed 26 men, many of whom were immigrant craftsmen. Mr. Lauber also organized the LaSalle State Bank in 1921. The institution did not survive the depression.

The projects associated with this company include many important buildings in the city of South Bend, including slate roofing for St. Mary's College, the South Bend City Hall, the La Salle Hotel, the Oddfellow's building and others. J. C. Lauber died in 1947 and his son, Joseph Wilton Lauber continued in the business. Under his guidance, the company completed the re-gilding of the famous Golden Dome at Notre Dame, in 1961. J. W. Lauber died in 1964 and the company came under the ownership of J.C. Lauber's grandson, Howard Schmitt in 1970. It is active at the site to the present day. The W.N. Bergen/J.C. Lauber Company buildings are designated as Local Landmarks by the South Bend Common Council.

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Section number 9, 10, 11 Page 6 W.N. Bergen/J.C. Lauber Co. Building
St. Joseph County, Indiana

9. Bibliography

Howard, Timothy Edward. *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana, Vols. I & II*. Chicago/New York: Lewis Publishing Co., 1907.

Other Sources

Sanborn Insurance Maps for the City of South Bend: On microfilm in the collection of the South Bend Public Library.

Survey Forms, South Bend Historic Sites and Structures Survey, 1977, 1985, 1988.

10. Verbal Boundary Description

The property consists of part of lot 79 of the original plat of the town of Lowell.

Boundary Justification

The property includes the building on the corner of Niles and E. LaSalle and the two, unified buildings immediately to the east of it.

Photographs:

The following information is the same for all photographs, unless otherwise noted.

1. W.N. Bergen/J.C. Lauber Buildings
502-504 E. LaSalle Street
2. St. Joseph County, Indiana
3. Camille Fife, The Westerly Group, Inc.
4. May-June, 1997
5. 556 W. 1175 N. Rd., Farmersburg, IN 47850

6. View looking south from the north side of LaSalle street toward the front facade of the W. N. Bergen building, with a portion of the adjacent structure in the left of the image.
7. Photo No. 9

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6. View looking south/southwest, including the length of the buildings comprising the W.N. Bergen/J.C. Lauber Company buildings.
7. Photo No. 10
4. May, 1998
6. Photograph looking southeast toward the north and west facades of the Bergen building, showing the fenestration on the west side.
7. Photo No. 10a
4. May, 1998
6. An image looking due east showing the west facade and extensions of the building. The exterior stair was once located between the garage door and the south end of the two-story building. It was gone sometime between 1917 and 1945.
7. Photo No. 10b
4. May, 1998
6. Looking north, this photograph shows the open garage doors at the rear of the building on La Salle St. and part of the building at the rear of the Bergen building, which fronts on Niles.
7. Photo No. 10c
4. May, 1998
6. An interior photograph of the front, first floor retail space in the Bergen/Lauber building (502 La Salle), looking south toward the rear sales counter, office and storage area beyond.
7. Photo No. 10d
4. May, 1998
6. Interior Photograph taken looking due south on the second floor of the building, toward the hall leading to the stair (left opening) and to the kitchen, through the opening between the two parlor rooms.
7. Photo No. 10e
4. May, 1998
6. Interior Photograph taken on the second floor of the building at 502 La Salle, showing a medium close up of the molding surrounding the hall door. The modern stair has been cut against the back wall. Some plaster loss has occurred.
7. Photo No. 10f
4. May, 1998

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6. Interior photograph taken looking southeast on the second floor of the same building as no. 10f, toward the abandoned former entry door. The new stair is visible at the bottom of the image.
7. Photo No. 10g

4. May, 1998
6. Interior photograph taken in the one-story machine room of the Bergen/Lauber building, looking north to the entrance, through the aisle between the fabrication tables.
7. Photo No. 10h

4. May, 1998
6. Interior photograph looking up toward one of the two skylights in the one-story machine room. In this portion of the room, metal siding has been placed on the ceiling.
7. Photo No. 10i