

FINAL

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 Sommerer House
other names/site number 141-597-36403

2. Location

street & number 415 Parry St. N/A not for publication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]
Signature of certifying official/Title

10/21/00
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:

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:)

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	
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.)

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)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN:

OTHER: Upright and Wing

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other

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.

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)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c.1875

Significant Dates

c.1875

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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:

Sommerer House
Name of Property

St. Joseph IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property < 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	563580	4613430	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 Greg Miller
street & number 415 Parry telephone
city or town South Bend state IN zip code 46617

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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Sommerer House
St. Joseph County, Indiana

7. Description

The main part of the house is a two-story rectangular block, wood frame with clapboard siding. Attached on the south side is a one story wing, also wood frame with clapboard siding. This addition has been present since at least 1917 (probably earlier), according to Sanborn Maps. The foundation of the structure is brick, with some concrete parging.

To the east, a large, ell plan, shed roof addition is accessed by a small square porch with scrolled brackets. Another addition is at the juncture of the east side of the main wing and the addition. The building has a medium-high gable roof, with a plan frieze and decorative, boxed cornice. Narrow plain cornice boards are present. On the main wing, the corner boards join the eave frieze with a slightly protruding board at the juncture. This detail is not present on the one-story wing. There are other, slight differences, the boxed cornice on the lower wing for example is slightly more simple than that on the larger portion of the house. There are two chimneys, one on the south wing is of tan brick, with slight corbelling and considerable modern parging. The other, at the center of the peak of the two-story wing, is plain, and fully parged.

The building contains two, ornate decorative porches, with decorative scroll work as brackets, pendants suspended from the porch roof, a plain fascia and frieze. Turned posts support the wood structures, one a replacement. The floor of the front porch is wood. The windows are two/over/two light, double hung, with medium wood surrounds. Those on the lower wing have a simple, projecting board cornice at the top, those on the larger wing possess a slightly larger, molded projecting cornice. All are fitted with narrow modern storm windows. The main door of the house, in the south wing, has an upper light. A second door, on the south facade of the upper wing, is panelled.

The house is located on a street, now comprised of mixed residential and industrial uses. The lot to the south is vacant. The side and rear addition is enclosed by a grape stake fence, which also surrounds a rear and north yard. Some modest planting is present around the foundation and to the south of the building.

The interior of the house consists of a front parlor, in the one story wing, with a dining room immediately behind (east) and a kitchen, pantry area built within the addition. The two-story wing of the house contains a

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Sommerer House
St. Joseph County, Indiana

living room/parlor at the front with access from the porch as well as a large doorway into the parlor in the one-story wing to the south. In addition, a bedroom with small closet is situated off of this parlor. Upstairs, in this wing are two small bedrooms and a hall. The stair which leads to the upstairs opens out into the one-story wing, dining room. An adjacent opening leads into a hall off of which one finds a small room and bath, all in the rear addition. The interior woodwork is intact, with bullseye corners on the door moldings and wide, decorative window surrounds. The stairs are very narrow with simple moldings and a turned balustrade protects the stair hall from the upstairs hall. Woodwork in the front rooms is generally painted, while that in the dining room is dark-stained. Wood floors are present in the ground floor areas, although the second floor rooms are carpeted.

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Sommerer House
St. Joseph County, Indiana

8. Statement of Significance

This property gains significance from its association with the Industrial Era Development of the East Bank, 1867 - 1947. (See Section E., East Bank Multiple Property Listing.) The property qualifies under criterion C, as it embodies a distinctive type of early house construction in the East Bank, modest, but rarely seen with this degree of integrity. In addition, it is significant for its association with the broad pattern of Industrial development in the East Bank, including the early association of the first developer during the time when Lowell became annexed to South Bend, and for the association of early owners with the industrial life of the East Bank.

The Sommerer House is a good example of early construction in the East Bank area. It is one of the few remaining structures (with a high degree of integrity) of the vernacular house type, Upright and Wing, which was once prevalent in the neighborhood. As such it provides an opportunity to understand something of the carpenter-built structures of the late-nineteenth century. An 1875 map shows a small, square structure at the site. These maps are not necessarily accurate with regard to specific structures, however, coupled with the deed records of sale of the property in 1873 by Samuel Parry (to a Charles Snyder, who returned it to Parry three years later) for \$300, we may posit that the construction date was 1873, at least for part of the house. It is possible that at least the south portion of the house was present in 1875 or earlier. Parry's Addition was recorded only a few years earlier than this date. This sequential pattern of construction was certainly not unusual for early buildings in such areas.

The house demonstrates the simple craftsmanship typical of its era, with narrow clapboards, corner boards, plain friezes and boxed cornices. The two story wing, is indicative of attempts, as later prosperity allowed, to provide more decorative touches, in the moldings used on windows and cornices. Finally, the easy availability of pre-cut elements such as the scroll and pendant work on the porch, provided owners with an opportunity to more attractively decorate their properties, particularly toward the end of the nineteenth century.

The property also gains significance for its association with the local developer, Samuel Parry, for whom the street and subdivision were named. Mr. Parry lived a long and fruitful life in the East Bank. He was born, about 1804, in England, he came to South Bend from Chicago in 1852. He was

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Sommerer House
St. Joseph County, Indiana

a cabinet maker by trade, but was always known for farming and land accumulation. During the time the Parry Addition was being developed, he lived first, south of St. Louis and South Bend Streets, later moving to the corner of Cedar and St. Louis Streets. Mr. Parry was a city councilman for one year, representing the Fourth Ward, during 1867, the first year that it was formed, following the annexation of the Town of Lowell into South Bend. Thus, the building can be associated with the planning and development of the East Bank area as a thriving division of South Bend.

The property is also associated with the Sommerer family, who purchased it in 1879, members of which lived in the house nearly continuously from 1879 to 1966. The original owners, John G. and Anna E. Sommerer both emigrated from Germany. Like hundreds of other early residents of the East Bank area, John worked at Singer Manufacturing Company. Thus the house can be seen to typify similar residences of the many workers who built the industrial base of the community. The Sommerer's had three children, George, John and Minnie. The latter owned the property until 1937, when it transferred to George J. until the 1940s, when it became the property of Wilhelmine Sommerer until 1966, when it went out of the Sommerer family. The property was briefly sold to other parties in 1928-29, but reverted to Anna Sommerer in 1930 (possibly the result of financial difficulties experienced by the potential new owners during the depression.

Although it has passed through several hands, the property is well maintained today and still serves as a residence. It has been designated by the South Bend Common Council as a Local Historic Landmark.

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Summerer House
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 Form, South Bend Historic Sites and Structures Survey; City Directories, Recorder's Office records.

10. Verbal Boundary Description

The property consists of lot 6 of Parry's First Addition.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the property is consistent with its original boundary.

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St. Joseph County, Indiana

11. Contemporary and historic photographs:

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

1. Sommerer House
415 S. Parry 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 west from across S. Parry Street, of the east facade of the building.
7. Photo No. 23

6. View looking northwest, from S. Parry Street, showing details of the front porch, the south wing and part of the south porch.
7. Photo No. 24

4. June 1998
6. View looking east, northeast from the rear yard of 415 S. Parry Street showing the west elevation of the house, including the original one and two-story wings, with the low, one-story addition containing the kitchen and other service rooms.
7. Photo No. 24a

4. June 1998
6. View from parlor in two-story wing of the house, looking south toward the entry door off of the porch (one of two, the other opens into the one-story wing), with a portion of the opening (oversize with a double door), leading to the front room of the south wing at right. This photo shows the moldings, wood door and transom, typical of the home's woodwork.
7. Photo No. 24b

4. June 1998
6. View looking south within the first floor front parlor, toward the windows on the south wall, showing the windows, their surrounds and a chimney, projecting within the wall, once used for a stove. The wood floors are also visible (a contemporary design has been painted on the

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- floor).
7. Photo No. 24c

 4. June 1998
 6. Photo taken from the dining room in the one-story wing of the house, looking north, northwest toward the stair to the second floor and the hall to the first floor addition, north side. Floors, woodwork and the narrow stair are clearly visible.
 7. Photo No. 24d

 4. June, 1998
 6. Photograph taken in the hall of the second floor addition, looking south toward the balustrade above the stair, showing the turned rails and post.
 7. Photo No. 24e

