

**United States Department of 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 Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	Generally bounded by the 200, 300, and 400 blocks of East Walworth Avenue	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Delavan	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Walworth	code 127
			zip code 53115

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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

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 commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

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.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	building(s)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	26	4 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	structure	0	0 sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	site	0	0 structures
	object	0	0 objects
		26	4 total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/business, financial institution, dept. store
GOVERNMENT/post office
EDUCATION/library
TRANSPORTATION/road related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/business, specialty store, restaurant
GOVERNMENT/ post office
EDUCATION/library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
Italianate
Commercial Style
Classical Revival
Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival
Modern Movement

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
Foundation – Stone
Walls – Brick
Roof – Asphalt
Other - Iron

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 the 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 _____
 Commerce _____

Period of Significance

1871 to 1962 _____

Significant Dates

N/A _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation

N/A _____

Architect/Builder

Claude, Louis & Starck, Edward _____
 Wendroth, Oscar _____
 Wolf, John _____

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Name of Property

County and State

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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:
 Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society
 Wisconsin Historical Society
 The City of Delavan

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.00 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16N</u>	<u>365024</u>	<u>4721445</u>	3	<u>16N</u>	<u>365271</u>	<u>4721314</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>16N</u>	<u>365274</u>	<u>4721440</u>	4	<u>16N</u>	<u>365021</u>	<u>4721319</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

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	Rowan Davidson & Jennifer L. Lehrke, Historic Preservation Consultants	date	February 13, 2015
organization	Legacy Architecture, Inc.	telephone	(920) 783-6303
street & number	605 Erie Avenue, Suite 101	zip code	53081
city or town	Sheboygan	state	WI

Name of Property

County and State

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/title	Various separate listing	date
organization		telephone
street & number		zip code
city or town	state	

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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Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District
Delavan, Walworth County, WI

Narrative Description

The City of Delavan is located in Walworth County in southeastern Wisconsin. Downtown Delavan is situated in the northwest corner of the community, just south of Comus Lake, and its commercial core occupies four blocks of East Walworth Avenue. The downtown is identifiable by the prevalence of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century commercial buildings arranged on deep lots facing East Walworth Avenue from both sides. Towards the older, western end of this business district is a small city block that was developed as a park centered on a water tower in the late nineteenth century. Towards the eastern end of this business district the commercial area ends and residential buildings begin. The Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District is focused on the eastern end of the commercial area and consists of 28 contributing, and 4 non-contributing resources.

The district consists primarily of commercial storefronts along both sides of East Walworth Avenue. The district's development began in the 1870s and continued for over a century. Representative of prevailing commercial architectural styles of the period, Italianate, Commercial Vernacular, Neoclassical, Twentieth Century Commercial, and Contemporary style buildings are common and often demonstrate high levels of integrity and quality. The majority of construction within the district took place during the historic periods of rapid economic development in Delavan, Wisconsin: the 1870s and 1880s saw the development of solid blocks of two or more story masonry storefront buildings with one to a lot; the early twentieth century was a period of civic improvement and the rise of the automobile; and the post-World War II period demonstrated a renewed interest in improvement, alteration, and revitalization, often replacing existing nineteenth century buildings and finalizing the commercial district. In all of these periods the district served as an active commercial, entertainment and civic core for the City of Delavan. The result is one of Delavan's most architecturally intact historic commercial areas.

The Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District's resources consist primarily of two-story and three-story commercial storefront buildings along East Walworth Avenue and a few individual civic buildings. There is also a civic presence in the district with a notable vitrified brick street, a public library, and a post office. The district's 26 contributing, 4 non-contributing, and 2 NRHP listed resources were constructed between 1871 and 1962. The non-contributing resources have been excluded primarily due to a lack of architectural integrity or falling outside of the period of significance. The resources already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the vitrified brick street along East Walworth Avenue and the United States Post Office, are not extensively addressed in this nomination. The contributing buildings are well constructed and reflect aspects of public commercial and civic life during the period of significance and the variety of styles, closely aligned with periods of construction, reflect the architectural trends of the era in which they were built. The commercial architecture displays variety within a clear set of constraints as the imposing array of

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uninterrupted blocks vary largely in their facades, decoration, and double or single block, or single and multiple lot, formations. Most of the buildings are narrow and deep, typically 20 to 30 feet wide and 80 to 120 feet deep, with the first floor invariably commercial in use, with storage below and upper levels originally serving as office space, flats, or communal meeting areas. Many of the buildings are utilitarian in their efficient use of space, materials, and decorative simplicity, though there are exceptions. Exterior alterations to the original buildings have been minimal and have generally been limited to window and door replacements in their original openings, additions, and occasional siding replacement or covering. The buildings and objects within the Delavan Downtown Commercial District are well preserved and have much of the same appearance today as they would have when they were originally constructed.

Building Descriptions

The following are brief descriptions of selected representative examples of the district's resources, in approximate chronological order by style.

Italianate

Hollister Block

231-233-235 E. Walworth Avenue

1871

Constructed as a single, two-story, brick building, the Hollister Block sits on a stone foundation and basement and has three distinct storefronts. Only the main (south facing) façade is clearly visible as the east and west sides of the building are obscured by adjacent commercial buildings. The first floor storefronts on the south façade have been almost entirely changed from their original appearance and are presently a repetition of low concrete walls, painted wood board, aluminum storefront systems and doors, and awnings. The original appearance of first floor was more in keeping with the cream brick and Italianate arches found on the upper floor. The first floor terminates in a brick band that stretches across the entire façade and doubles as the sill for a series of arched window openings. These windows, three equally spaced to each storefront below, are framed in a brick relief with a low arch continuing above. A second band of brick runs between them across the façade. The present vinyl windows are much smaller than the originals that had included a curved pane, and the remaining space in each opening is filled with vertical wood boards. Immediately above the arched openings is another horizontal decorative brick band and above that is a series of steps underneath the cornice line. While the two storefront sections to the west match exactly, the eastern most of the three is painted a cream color with brown paint on the details and cornice instead of green. The cornice is painted wood with large brackets aligned with the ends and breaks between the storefronts. Each bracket has a floret set atop it, and there is a series of equally spaced dentils along the top of the cornice. The building has a sloped flat roof (refer to Photo #10).

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fenestration is regularly spaced and windows are new double-hung aluminum units. There is a wide, single flight of steps on the north (main) façade leading up to a projecting entry pavilion flanked by two large ionic columns and heavy brick pilasters. The main doors are non-original metal and glass with the name “Aram Public Library” carved in the limestone entablature above. Most of the building is constructed of red brick with limestone trim and details around the windows, at the base, and at the cornice. The corners are marked with shallow pilasters and topped with the heavy stone cornice while the large vertical window openings on the first floor sit on limestone sills and share the same limestone cap as the corners and entry of the building. These windows are also replacement aluminum windows. The windows on the eastern, western, and southern facades are set higher in the brick wall and share the same limestone header. This header is topped with a wide frieze and projecting cornice. This cornice line runs around the entire building and over the main entry in a full pediment. The eaves extend under a hipped roof; the original clay tile having been replaced with asphalt shingle. There is an addition to the rear (south) approximately the same size as the original library that doubles its size. The form and materials of this addition are consciously aligned with the original design of the building (refer to Photo #6).

Upon his death in 1897, James Aram, a prominent local businessman, left \$20,000 for the establishment of a library in his name. In anticipation of the building, the Delavan Library and Literary Association was established in 1899, and when Aram’s wife died in 1905, the provisions of his will came into effect. Plans for the new public library for Delavan began in 1906. The Neoclassical Aram Public Library was designed by the architects Claude and Starck in a style popular during the first two decades of the twentieth century and completed in 1908. The library opened with 2,332 volumes. In 1953 the library received a gift of \$10,000 from George O. Von Suessmilch to be used for an addition to house historical documents and records for the city, and further renovations and additions were made in the late 1990s.³

Wisconsin State Bank

301-303 E. Walworth Avenue

1909

The building sits on a long corner lot on a limestone foundation. Unlike many of the commercial buildings around it, the bank building has two primary facades: to the south and west with similar detailing, materials, and architectural forms on both sides. The base of the south facing façade, where the main bank entry is located, is cut limestone with brick walls above. The main entry door, a single contemporary metal and glass door, is flanked on both sides by large limestone Doric columns and has a pedimented and bracketed hood over the doorway with the name “Bank” etched in limestone. The

³ Cartwright, Carol Lohry. *Aram Public Library*. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1990; “Founding of Aram Public Library,” Aram Public Library website. <www.aramlibrary.org/library-history/founding-of-aram-public-library> accessed December 23, 2014.

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south façade is symmetrical with three bays. The entry occupies the middle bay with a large vertical window on each side. Each bay is topped with an arched window and a limestone surround and cap. The corners of the building consist of heavy brick pilasters. These pilasters, along with the columns and window hoods, are capped with a limestone frieze and narrow cornice. Nearly all the details on the one-story building are limestone. The west façade is similar in its symmetry and employment of the arched hoods over large vertical window openings. There are eight such openings along this façade, terminating at the north end in a lower brick section of the building with a simple door entry and no other fenestration. The south facade is capped with a ballustrated parapet wall while the west façade has a simpler brick parapet. The bank reportedly had a large iron vault and an interior finished with green marble and mahogany (refer to Photo #8).

The State Bank of Delavan purchased the Stowell residence at 301 East Walworth Avenue in 1908 and demolished it to make room for a new Neoclassical Bank built by the Wagner and Bauman Construction Company of Monroe, Wisconsin. The new building was completed in 1909 and adopted the name Wisconsin State Bank in 1911. The bank remained at the corner of East Walworth Avenue and Third Street until 1985, when it moved to another branch and closed at this location.⁴

Mediterranean Revival

Knights of Pythias Building

328 E. Walworth Avenue

1916

The two-story brick building sits on a concrete foundation and has a basement. Like many of the other commercial buildings in the district the main façade faces north while the east and west facades have no fenestration or decoration as they are intended to be adjacent to other commercial buildings. The west side is obscured by the adjacent commercial building. The first floor of the north façade has been significantly altered from its original and is presently finished in a dark red brick with two large aluminum storefront windows and a plain metal door at the east end. At one time the building had two large storefronts with plate glass, low brick walls, and recessed entries divided only by a single brick column. The second floor however is largely intact and features a concrete beltcourse above which are five large, double hung wood windows with operable, divided-light transoms. The windows are surrounded by a single row of header bricks and arranged symmetrically along the light brick colored façade. In between the first and second, and fourth and fifth windows are concrete crests set in the brick. Above the windows are a set of nine brick rectangular designs interspersed with wood brackets,

⁴ "Mystery Place: 1909 building couldn't bank on original." Walworth County Today, December 18, 2014; General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society; Hall, Ginny. *Walk around Delavan's Business District*. The Friends of the Lake Geneva Public Library, 2010, page 6.

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painted green that support a shallow pent roof protruding from the brick façade below the parapet wall. The brick corners of the building are flush with the rest of the wall but extend slightly above the parapet. These corners have a decorative concrete cap with dentil molding. The capped parapet spans between the brick corners and the building has a gently sloped roof (refer to Photo #5).

In 1916, the Knights of Pythias constructed a large two story-building at 328 East Walworth Avenue for use as a meeting hall. The first floor was occupied by several businesses including Rustad's Drug Store, which was the first tenant. A number of businesses occupied the space during the twentieth century including several taverns, a bowling alley, and the Delavana Club. The building also had a large meeting hall, originally used by the Knights of Pythias, and also used for civic meetings and by the Christian Science Society. The building underwent extensive remodeling in 2009.⁵

Delavan Theater

405-407 E. Walworth Avenue

1928

The two story brick theater building sits on a concrete foundation with a basement underneath. The main façade faces south while the east and west façades are unadorned and lack fenestration because of the proximity of commercial buildings on either side of it. The west façade is not visible due to the adjacent commercial building. The symmetrical first floor of the south façade is centered on the recessed entry lined with porcelain enamel and with four grouped metal doors of equal size leading to the interior. At one time there was an exterior ticket booth. A large marquee, though not original, extends out over the main entry. On either side of the theater entrance is a series of contemporary storefront windows on a stone tile base and concrete curb. These were spaces for two separate storefront businesses at one time. On each far end is a door with an arched opening near the end of the building to the east and west. Most of the building is a light colored brick with light colored terra cotta details. The first floor ends at a narrow terra cotta band that doubles as the sill for the second story windows. The second story is also arranged symmetrically with a pair of double-hung windows in the center surrounded by a large terra cotta arch inlaid into the brick. On either side of this central window is another single, double-hung window with a smaller terra cotta arch inlaid around it. Over the sides of the theater building are three double hung windows spaced equally apart. Over these wings is a small shaped mission style parapet and a small circular medallion inlaid into the brick and centered over the windows. In the central portion of the second floor is a more elaborate set of stepped and curved terra cotta parapet levels in the Mediterranean style. There are three terra cotta medallions inlaid in this portion, with the largest in the center and two smaller ones symmetrically arranged under the peaks of the parapet. The front portion of the theater building is taller and has a flat roof; the rear is lower and has an arched roof. The interior of the theater once featured Spanish style draped arches,

⁵ General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society; Hall, Ginny. *Walk around Delavan's Business District*, page 3; City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

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lanterns, ornamental curving plaster, and a ceiling with built-in twinkling lights to resemble stars and moving clouds (refer to Photo #7).

In 1928, the owners of the Pastime Theater constructed a new theater at 405 East Walworth Avenue for \$125,000. Opening the following year, the Mediterranean Revival style Delavan Theater was designed by architect John Wolf of Milwaukee, Wisconsin and featured a lobby, foyer, large auditorium and two retail spaces on either side of the main entry and marquee. The largest theater in Walworth County when it was completed, the Delavan Theater was the entertainment center for the City during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s with two nightly features and matinees. The theater also hosted stage shows and drew performers such as the Guy Lombardo Orchestra and Bela Lugosi. A cinemascope screen was installed in 1954 in the face of increased competition. The owners offered to sell the building to the City of Delavan in 1959 for use as municipal offices and a civic auditorium, but were declined. In 1978, major renovations were made when the stage was removed and the theater partitioned. The theater closed a decade later.⁶

Twentieth Century Commercial

The Delavan Republican Building

212 E. Walworth Avenue

1904

The two-story painted brick building sits on a stone foundation and occupies a single lot. The main façade faces north while the east and west facades are obscured by the adjacent commercial buildings. The first floor of the main façade is significantly altered from its original appearance. The façade is split equally between two storefronts, each with a recessed door and large aluminum frame windows set on a low wall of brick. Above these is a band of wood siding laid diagonally. The original appearance was similar with two doors and sets of windows set in a cream brick façade. Above and behind this present façade is a plain painted brick wall. At the transition to the second floor is a recess in the brick coupled with a long painted brick sill extending almost the length of the façade. On this sill are four windows, equally spaced in the wide recess that come to long pointed arches. These double hung windows, now with aluminum frames, are framed with a brick surround and painted a contrasting red against the cream color of the other painted brick on the façade. Above these windows is a row of recessed small crosses in the brick which have been painted a dark color, and above that is the metal cap of the parapet wall. There was once a large sign mounted on a wooden cornice which

⁶ "Delavan Theater boasts decorated history and interior design." The Delavan Enterprise, March 5, 1997; Ruth-Marsicano, Patricia. *Forgotten Delavan, Images of America series*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014; General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society; City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

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has since been removed. The building has a sloped roof(refer to Photo #2).

The *Delavan Republican* newspaper, established in 1861, constructed this building at 212 East Walworth Avenue in 1904 as a space for their headquarters and printing offices. The company also printed books, posters, and stationary at the office in the early twentieth century. The upper floor was rented out as office space. The *Delavan Republican* moved from the space in the 1930s and ceased printing in 1959 when it combined with the rival paper, the *Delavan Enterprise*. The Delavan Republican Building was used as a small general store called Gambles in the 1960s and 1970s.⁷

Bolver & Lackney Building

324 E. Walworth Avenue

1908

The three-story Bolver and Lackney building sits on a concrete foundation that extends up to a low curb with no basement. The rest of the large commercial building is red brick on its main north facing façade and plain brick around the rest of the building. The east and west sides of the building are obscured by the adjacent commercial buildings on both sides. The first floor façade consists mostly of plate glass windows and replacement aluminum storefront windows that span from the curb to the ceiling. The center of the façade has a recessed entrance with a metal door. The effect of the extensive glass is unlike the other commercial buildings along the street. Each end of the façade consists of shallow brick pilasters that extend from the exterior party walls along the east and west facades. The brick continues across the top of the third floor, creating a frame around the entire front façade. At the top of the first floor is a metal I-beam at the interstitial space of the second floor. Small diameter metal structural columns are clearly visible behind some of the storefront mullions. The second and third floors of the facade have the same composition: structural I-beams at the floor plates and a ribbon of plate glass windows in six equal bays. The plate glass windows in each bay span from the floor to the ceiling. The third floor is a few feet taller than the second floor. At the top of the third floor the brick “frame” as described above, terminates at the bottom of the cornice. The projecting cornice is pressed metal with floral and swag motifs and brackets at each end; the metal is painted. The building has a sloped roof (refer to Photo #4).

The historical record has conflicting information about the building at this location. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps from 1892, 1895 and 1904 all show this lot as unimproved. The 1910 Sanborn map indicates that there is a one-story brick building at this location with “skating rink” noted as the use. An undated historic photograph at the Delavan Historical Society shows a street view from sometime before 1913 (in the photograph, the 1913 brick street has not been installed) and in the photograph, the one-story brick building is clearly visible and is a city garage. At some point an automobile related business, the ‘I Fix Em’ garage, owned by Edward Durkee and Bert Dinsmore, occupied the site. It is

⁷ City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

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unclear if this contemporary three-story façade of the Bolver and Lackney Building was constructed in place of the garage building that preceded it or whether, as has been suggested, the Bolver and Lackney is actually a two story addition on top of the existing garage. Since its construction the building has served as a department store, the large Rustad Drug Store location from 1945 to 1964, and as a bookstore.⁸

Holstein-Friesian Building

107 N. Third Street

1914

Located off of the main commercial street this two story brick office building sits on a concrete and brick foundation and has fenestration and architectural details on all four of its facades. The first floor is a few feet above grade and has a pair of concrete steps at each end of the main west façade. The entire building is of yellow brick. The basement level has a series of glass block windows around the building and a band of brick in a soldier course demarcating the first floor. The two symmetrical doors at each end of the main façade have matching concrete hoods supported by large scroll brackets and feature an electric light fixture centered over the entry. The original doors have been replaced with metal and glass commercial doors. In between the doors on the first floor is a set of five windows in a ribbon centered on the façade. These tall windows are divided into two lights and have a concrete sill and a soldier course of brick at the header that is shared by all five of them. Other windows around the first floor on other facades match these, but are arranged with irregular spacing and do not have a distinct header, though they are arranged symmetrically on each façade. The first floor terminates at a concrete sill band that continues around the building on all four facades. The second floor double-hung windows sit on the shared concrete sill with brick headers and a second concrete band is located immediately above them. On the main façade there are vertical bands of brick framing the windows, a detail not found elsewhere on the building. A few feet above the second concrete band is a simple concrete cornice that juts out from the façade approximately one foot; there is a brick parapet above and a concrete cap. This cornice and parapet wall continues on all sides of the building. There is also a small brick chimney that extends above the flat roof (refer to Photo #9).

The Holstein-Friesian Advanced Registry Office, located at 107 North Third Street, was constructed in 1914 for use as an office building. The Registry checked, recorded, and published records of purebred Holstein and Friesian cattle across the United States. Led by Walworth County native, Malcolm H. Gardner, the organization had its headquarters in Wisconsin. The Holstein and Dutch Friesian Breeders Organizations merged in 1885 and was influential in the southeastern part of the state with its large dairy economy. The building became known as the medical building when it was sold to doctors Neal Crowe and T.L. Jacobson for a medical clinic in 1931 when the Holstein-Friesian office moved to

⁸ Hall, Ginny. *Walk around Delavan's Business District*, page 3; General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society; City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

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Madison, Wisconsin. The building has remained a professional office building since its construction.⁹

Contemporary

Bradley's Department Store 222 E. Walworth Avenue 1887, remodeled 1962

The two story commercial storefront building occupies two lots and sits on a mix of stone and concrete foundation. Originally a brick and stone Italianate style storefront building, the Bradley's Department Store underwent significant changes in 1962 when it was remodeled. The main façade faces north while the east and west facades are obscured by the adjacent buildings. The first floor of the main façade has a centered entrance of double glass doors recessed at an angle from the street. This entry vestibule has large metal storefront windows on a stone tile base on both sides and painted plaster walls with a metal canopy above. The rest of the main façade on the first floor consists of symmetrical series of four large plate glass windows on both sides of the entry in walls of small ceramic tiles and a base of stone tiles. The second floor is completely obscured behind a facade of asbestos panels in a rectilinear pattern in regular horizontal rows extending up to and obscuring the parapet, approximately fifteen feet above. The symmetrical façade features a vertical sign in the center of the second floor façade with the name "Bradley's" spelled out vertically facing both east and west. From these signs the wall is angled back to a center line and on these planes, finished with horizontal wood siding, are two large script letter "B's" facing the street. There is no fenestration on the second floor, and the parapet is only marked by some visible flashing. The building likely has a gently sloped roof (refer to Photo #3).

William Wallace Bradley, a merchant tailor, settled in Delavan in 1892 and opened a clothing store. In 1874, he purchased the lot at 222 East Walworth Avenue and opened Walworth County's first department store in an existing building. In 1887, a new and larger building was constructed on the site. W.W. Bradley and Co. was inherited by Bradley's sons-in-law, W.H. Tyrrell and J.J. Phoenix, and the two later sold the company to the G.K. and J.O. Boughton in 1918, though the business retained its original name. S.G. McKoy bought the business in 1949, and his family still owns and operates it to this day. There was a large renovation and expansion of the building in 1962, and the contemporary façade and layout date from this period.¹⁰

⁹ General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society; City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

¹⁰ Hall, Ginny. *Walk around Delavan's Business District*, page 5; General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society; City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

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Building Inventory

The following inventory lists every building in the district and includes the address of the property; the historic name; the date or circa date of construction; the resource's contributing (C), non-contributing (NC), or previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) class; and architectural style of the building.

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Style</u>
107 N. Third Street	Holstein-Friesian Building	1914	C	20th Century Comm.
100-400 E. Walworth Avenue	Walworth Avenue - Vitrified Brick Street	1913	NRHP	Structure
210 E. Walworth Avenue	Mullins Brothers Saloon Building	1898	C	Italianate
212 E. Walworth Avenue	The Delavan Republican Building	1904	C	Italianate
216-218 E. Walworth Avenue	Citizens Bank of Delavan	1906	C	Neoclassical
221-225 E. Walworth Avenue	Kissel Automobile Agency Building	1890/1954*	C	Contemporary
222 E. Walworth Avenue	Bradley's Department Store Building	1887/1962*	C	Contemporary
227 E. Walworth Avenue	Kissel Automobile Agency Annex	1895/1956*	C	Contemporary
228 E. Walworth Avenue	Building	1890/c.1960*	C	Contemporary
229 E. Walworth Avenue	Haase & Stonewall Building	1895	C	Italianate
230 E. Walworth Avenue	Schultz Brothers Company Building	1958	C	20th Century Comm.
231-233-235 E. Walworth Ave.	Hollister Block	1871	C	Italianate
237 E. Walworth Avenue	Bradley Block	1887	C	Italianate
239 E. Walworth Avenue	Allott Block	1887	C	Italianate
301-303 E. Walworth Avenue	Wisconsin State Bank	1909	C	Neoclassical
302 E. Walworth Avenue	Stall Block	1909	C	Commercial Vernacular
305 E. Walworth Avenue	Mathison's Store Building	c.1910/1960/1980	NC	Italianate
306 E. Walworth Avenue	Littlefield's Store Building	c.1900/c1980	NC	Commercial Vernacular
307-311 E. Walworth Avenue	Butts Block	1904	C	Italianate
310 E. Walworth Avenue	Building	c.1900/c1950	C	Commercial Vernacular
312-314 E. Walworth Avenue	McSorely's Market Building	1902	C	Italianate
313 E. Walworth Avenue	Elkman Block	1903	C	Italianate
318-320 E. Walworth Avenue	Passage Block	1907	C	Commercial Vernacular
319-321-323 E. Walworth Ave.	Shanahan Block	1910	C	Italianate
322 E. Walworth Avenue	Downs Block	1909	C	Italianate
324 E. Walworth Avenue	Bolver & Lackney Building	1908	C	20th Century Comm.
328 E. Walworth Avenue	Knights of Pythias Building	1916	C	Mediterranean Revival
335 E. Walworth Avenue	Delavan Post Office	1914	NRHP	Neoclassical
338 E. Walworth Avenue	Phillips 66 Filling Station	1992	NC	Contemporary

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401-403 E. Walworth Avenue	Building	1993	NC	Contemporary
404 E. Walworth Avenue	Aram Public Library	1908	C	Neoclassical
405-407 E. Walworth Avenue	Delavan Theater Building	1928	C	Mediterranean Revival

*Remodeling of facades to a contemporary appearance

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C as an architecturally and historically important collection of commercial and civic buildings that together constitute a well-defined and visually distinct geographic and historic entity. The District is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture and under Criterion A in the area of Commerce, historically important as the traditional and long-standing center of commercial activity in the city.

The proposed Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District has boundaries roughly delineated along Second Street, the rear of the properties facing the north side of East Walworth Avenue on the 200, 300, and 400 blocks, Fifth Street, and the rear of the properties facing the south side of East Walworth Avenue on the 200, 300, and 400 blocks. The district is located near the center of the city of Delavan and is comprised of 26 contributing resources, 4 non-contributing resources, and 2 resources already listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The contributing resources include good representative examples of several of the most popular styles, applied to commercial and civic architecture, in Wisconsin during the period of significance (refer to Photo #11, Photo #12, Photo #13, and Photo #14).

The period of significance reflects a century of commercial and civic architecture and planning, beginning in 1871 with the construction of the district's oldest extant commercial structure, the Hollister Block at 231 East Walworth Avenue. Since the mid-nineteenth century, commercial businesses constructed in the downtown district conformed aesthetically to Italianate, Commercial Vernacular, and Twentieth Century Commercial styles. The period of significance ends in 1962 with the significant alterations to the Bradley's Department Store at 222 East Walworth Avenue, the last contributing resource to be built in the district. Additionally, 4 buildings within the district are considered non-contributing as they have suffered sufficient loss of architectural integrity or fall outside the period of significance.

The commercial and civic buildings within the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District are well preserved and have much the same appearance today as they did years ago. Exterior alterations to the original buildings have been minimal and have generally been limited to window replacements in their original openings, and storefront alterations and replacements; avoiding widespread elimination of the historic brick facades, and Italianate and vernacular cornice lines. Many of the mid-twentieth century storefront alterations reflect the evolution and continuation of commercial activity during that era. The changes are representative of the stylistic tone of the mid-twentieth century as building owners sought to appeal to and attract shoppers. These stylistic alterations illustrate the shift in popular design and marketing philosophies for retail businesses. Probably the best example of this

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design shift is the Bradley's Department Store, which received a full, designed remodel of its façade, reflecting the architectural taste of the 1960s. The buildings and their functions within the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District are well preserved and have much of the same appearance and use today as they did when they were constructed. The result is now one of Delavan's most architecturally intact historic commercial areas.

Methodology

The Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District was identified for its concentration of commercial storefronts and civic buildings arranged along four blocks and constructed between 1871 and 1962, having local significance under National Criterion A in the area of Commerce and C in the area of Architecture. The district's architectural resources were evaluated utilizing the Wisconsin Historical Society's *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*; research centered on evaluating the resources within the district utilizing the Italianate, Commercial Vernacular, Neoclassical, Twentieth Century Commercial, and Contemporary styles subsections of the Architecture study unit and other sources.

Historic Context

Walworth County became a part of the Wisconsin Territory in 1836 and was rapidly settled and subdivided. The first known settler in the area was a man named Allen Perkins, though he only stayed for a few years. By an act of the Territorial Legislature in 1838, the town of Delavan was formed in the southwestern quarter of the county. Henry and Colonel Samuel Phoenix settled along Turtle Creek and named the area after the notable temperance leader E.C. Delavan. The brothers, two successful businessmen from New York State, intended to establish a Temperance Colony pledged to "temperance, sobriety and religion; and where should a poor despised colored man a chance to set his foot, he might do it in safety," according to Samuel Phoenix's journal. The Phoenix brothers soon held claim on much of the land that would become the City of Delavan and founded a Baptist Church and a Temperance Hall in 1839. From these two institutions grew the first anti-slavery and temperance societies in Wisconsin. The Phoenix family established a dam and mill and invited other temperance followers from New York to settle in the area.¹¹ The temperance hall, located along West Walworth Avenue, also served as an inn, though it was often inhospitable to those not in line with the temperance settler's thinking. The Phoenix brothers died in 1840 and 1842 respectively.¹²

¹¹ "History," Delavan Lake Area Chamber of Commerce website. <www.delavanwi.org/wp/delavan-wi-chamber/history/> accessed December 23, 2014; & "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website. <www.delavanhistory.org/some-history/> accessed December 23, 2014.

¹² "Temperance House," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website. <www.delavanhistory.org/some-history/> accessed December 23, 2014; Yadon, W. Gordon, ed. *History of Delavan*. Delavan, WI: 1982, pages 3-6.

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The temperance stand of the community was broken in 1845, and a new set of settlers came to Delavan along with Edmund and Jeremiah Mabie, proprietors of the U.S. Olympic Circus. At the time the largest travelling circus in the United States, the Mabie brothers chose Delavan for their winter quarters in 1847. By this time Delavan was already a thriving center for business in Walworth County with over two dozen businesses in the town and over 400 residents by the end of the decade. In 1846 the town's borders were permanently established, two years before Wisconsin achieved statehood.¹³

The Mabie brothers took over where the Phoenix brothers left off, taking over large portions of the township, owning the grist mill, holding positions of leadership in the community, and organizing a plank road and later a railway through Delavan. Their circus was successful and attracted other circus entertainers, encouraging the growth of Delavan as a center for circus related businesses. Twenty six different circuses wintered in Delavan from 1847 to 1894 including Harry Buckley's National Circus and Roman Hippodrome, W.C. Coup and Dan Castello's Egyptian Caravan, and Holland and McMahan's World Circus. W.C. Coup created the P.T. Barnum Circus, "The Greatest Show on Earth," in 1871 and was influential as the first to put circuses on railroads. The popularity of travelling circuses using Delavan as their headquarters, came to an end in the 1890s.¹⁴

Another nineteenth century institution that shaped the City of Delavan was the development of the Wisconsin School for the Education of the Deaf. Established in 1852, the school was situated on a hill west of the commercial center of Delavan along western part of Walworth Avenue and was constructed on land donated by Franklin Phoenix. The school consisted of a boarding house and Phoenix Hall, designed, like many other notable buildings in Delavan from the period, by Edward Townsend Mix, but was expanded many times from 1880 to 1962.¹⁵

By the time the Wisconsin School for the Education of the Deaf was well established Delavan was growing rapidly. The settlement was incorporated as a Village in 1856, and by the 1860s manufacturing plants, such as the Trumbull D. Thomas Windmill Co., the Logan Cheese Factory, the Van Velzer Cigar Factory, the Jackson Tack Factory, and the N.W. Hoag Grain Elevators brought industry to the area. Bird's eye views of Delavan from the 1870s and 1880s show an established commercial center with sprawling blocks of houses spreading out in every direction.¹⁶

¹³ Yadon, W. Gordon, ed. *History of Delavan*, pages 4-5; "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website; *Delavan Centennial Celebration, 1836-1936*. Delavan, WI: City of Delavan, 1936, pages 3-4.

¹⁴ Yadon, W. Gordon, ed. *History of Delavan*, pages 5-6; "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website; Ruth-Marsicano, Patricia. *Delavan, Images of America series*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2004, pages 63-64.

¹⁵ *History and Handbook of Day Schools for the Deaf and Blind*. Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1912; "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website; "History," Delavan Lake Area Chamber of Commerce website.

¹⁶ Ruth-Marsicano, Patricia. *Delavan, Images of America series*; "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website; Brosius, H., *Delavan, Walworth County, Wisconsin* (lithograph). Beck & Pauli, 1884.

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Development around the Village of Delavan began in earnest in the 1870s and 1880s as the lakes around the Village, specifically Delavan Lake, attracted resorts and tourists. Southeast Wisconsin offered many attractions related to the lakes, boating, mineral springs, and entertainment to city dwellers from Chicago, Milwaukee, and further east and Delavan was no exception. Private cottages and larger hotel resorts were built around the lake starting in the late 1870s and became a popular destination during the following decade. While not a part of Delavan, this development did spur more economic growth in the Village. Steamboat launches, restaurants, ballrooms, theaters, and pavilions became common and railway service to Delavan was commonplace.¹⁷

The last decade of the nineteenth century saw many more changes in Delavan as the village was incorporated as a city in 1897. Manufacturing expanded as the circuses' influence waned, and the downtown commercial district experienced rapid growth at the turn of the century as many of the wooden structures were replaced with larger brick commercial blocks.¹⁸ Much of this building was encouraged by a series of devastating fires, the first in 1876, and much larger ones in 1892 and 1893, which destroyed much of the downtown area. The experience of these fires encouraged the City to start a reliable source for water, and a water works, dependent on nearby springs, was introduced along with a brick water tower, reservoir, and pumping station in 1893. A new school was completed in 1894, and electric lighting made its widespread appearance in Delavan in 1896; the City was a booming and successful commercial center in Walworth County.¹⁹

By the early twentieth century, the commercial center of Delavan had two distinct portions, one in the east, centered on the new water tower park featuring service oriented businesses, and one to the west along East Walworth Avenue featuring storefronts, shopping, entertainment businesses, and civic buildings. Delavan had also become a recognized center for artists and professionals as a number of doctors, lawyers, and dentists, some legitimate and some not, took up residence in second floor offices of downtown Delavan. The Chicago Art Institute held its summer classes in Delavan for over fifteen years during the first two decades of the twentieth century and artists, such as William T. Thorne, Adolph and Ada Schulz, Frank Dudley, and Frank Phoenix, all had studios in the city.²⁰

The first paved street in Delavan was East Walworth Avenue from Main Street to Eighth Street. The

¹⁷ Ruth-Marsicano, Patricia. *Delavan, Images of America series*, pages 18-21; "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website.

¹⁸ Ruth-Marsicano, Patricia. *Delavan, Images of America series*, page 23; "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website; General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society.

¹⁹ Yadon, W. Gordon, ed. *History of Delavan*, pages 7-8; *Delavan Centennial Celebration, 1836-1936*, pages 6-27.

²⁰ Ruth-Marsicano, Patricia. *Delavan, Images of America series*, pages 30-31; "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website; General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society.

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City of Delavan chose vitrified brick as the material for the improved street, and the project was completed in 1913 by the Birdsall-Griffith Company of Racine. The red brick is laid out in a running bond pattern parallel to the street and a herringbone pattern at intersections. At the same time curbs, sidewalks, and street lights were added to the commercial center of Delavan, and East Walworth Avenue from Fourth Street to Seventh Street was converted into a boulevard. The brick pavers were repaired and replaced in 1999 and follow the same pattern, layout, and materials of the original street.²¹ The Vitrified Brick Street along East Walworth Avenue in Delavan is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is included within this nominated district.

A few civic buildings were introduced to the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District during the early twentieth century. The Aram Public Library, at 404 East Walworth Avenue, constructed in 1907 and designed by the notable architects Louis Claude and Edward Starck, is an excellent example of their modified Neoclassical style and an important component of downtown Delavan. Likewise, the Delavan Post Office, constructed at 335 East Walworth Avenue in 1914 and designed by Oscar Wendroth, is another notable Neoclassical style design. The post office is also notable as the first small post office in Wisconsin to receive first class status in 1922.²² The Delavan Post Office is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is located within this nominated district.

Significance in the area of Commerce is evident in the commercial success of downtown Delavan which continued into the 1920s and 1930s. The eastern part of the downtown area developed a focus on service related businesses including artist's studios, repair shops, stone-cutters, and especially automotive dealerships and garages; while the western part of the downtown maintained a streetscape friendly to shoppers with restaurants, taverns, general stores, theaters, and specialty shops. While the Depression did affect Delavan, businesses continued to grow, and the city experienced increased manufacturing with the introduction of Borg Industries, Gibbs Manufacturing, Ajay Industries, and Sta-Rite Products, all of which kept business going in Delavan. Storefronts in the downtown changed considerably during this period as they were modernized and "improved." Indeed, many of the current storefronts in downtown Delavan date to the 1920s through the 1950s, although the buildings' construction dates from the late nineteenth century.²³

The 1960s through the 1990s witnessed continued growth of industries in Delavan; however much of this growth was on the edges of the city, and the downtown commercial areas stagnated. While some

²¹ Yadon, W. Gordon, *Delavan's Vitrified Brick Street*. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1995; "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website.

²² Causier, Charles W. and Joseph G. Jurkiewicz. *Delavan Post Office*. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1994; Hall, Ginny. *Walk around Delavan's Business District*, page 2.

²³ "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website; General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society.

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department stores and hotels continued, others went out of business. Fires in 1978 and 1979 further contributed to damage in the commercial center of Delavan.²⁴ While the city maintained the streetscape of East Walworth Avenue with beautification projects, other planning proposals led to the demolition of resources along East Walworth Avenue and especially along its side streets.²⁵ Currently, much of the commercial center of Delavan along East Walworth Avenue maintains its historic commercial character.

Architecture

The Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District is locally significant in the area of architecture because many of its buildings are good examples of popular commercial and civic architectural styles from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. As a whole, it is an area that maintains a high level of integrity that reflects the development of the district during the period of significance. The following are brief descriptions of the architectural styles represented within the district, listed in the chronological order in which they were popular, as well as good examples of those styles.

Italianate

The Italianate style was popular in Wisconsin from approximately 1850 to 1880, the period of time during which Walworth County experienced its fastest growth. Commercial variations are square or rectangular in plan and, at two or three stories in height, are often cubic in mass with 'flat' fronts. Its main elements include flat roofs with wide soffits and decorative brackets and details. The fenestration arrangement is regular and balanced with tall thin windows that are topped with decorative window heads or hood moldings. The windows may also be arched. Italianate buildings are often adorned with decorative symmetrical storefronts featuring large windows and doors. Commercial variations feature carefully composed front facades, 'flat' roofs, and utilitarian facades away from the street-facing front.²⁶

There are twelve buildings with elements of the Italianate style within the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District. Notable amongst these are the: Mullins Brother's Saloon Building, located at 210 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1898; the Delavan Republican Building,

²⁴ "Some History," Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society website; General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society.

²⁵ *Preliminary Planning Report - Delavan, Wisconsin*. Chicago, IL: Evert Kincaid and Associates, 1962; *North Second Street Redevelopment Plan - City of Delavan, Wisconsin*. Max Anderson Associates, 1982.

²⁶ Blumenson, John J.G. *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*. Second Ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1981.

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located 212 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1904; and the Hollister Block, a set of three storefronts at 231 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1871; all three of these are discussed earlier in this document.²⁷ The Butts Block, located at 307-311 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1904, is also a fine commercial example of the Italianate style and was the location of the local Wisconsin Telephone exchange from 1909 to 1959.²⁸

Commercial Vernacular

Commercial Vernacular is a general style for nineteenth century commercial buildings that do not quite fit into other high style categories. They may have elements of Italianate, Romanesque, or Queen Anne styles, but not enough to categorize them as that style. For instance, the first floor storefront may be reminiscent of a particular period, but there is no evidence of that period throughout the rest of the facade. Second story openings may have hood moldings or be arched, and the parapet of the building may be adorned with a decorative corbelled cornice. Early Commercial Vernacular buildings were constructed of wood, but were taken by fire over the years. The remaining buildings are made of brick or stone.²⁹

There are two contributing and two non-contributing Commercial Vernacular buildings in the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District; the notable Passage Block, located at 318-320 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1907, is unusual with its boomtown stepped cornice line, Italianate fenestration, and a lack of almost any other ornamentation on its facade.³⁰

Neoclassical

The Neoclassical style was a revival based on Greek and Roman classical styles. It was popular in Wisconsin from 1895 to 1935 as a result of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 which featured buildings of this style. The style features symmetrical, classical design with pediments, pilasters, and columns clearly defining the building's entry. Often constructed of stone, the buildings feature a defined base, middle, and top, large window openings, and simple detailing. The style became known as the architecture of monuments, public, and institutional buildings.³¹

Neoclassical style architecture in the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District, like elsewhere

²⁷ City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

²⁸ Hall, Ginny. *Walk around Delavan's Business District*, page 4.

²⁹ Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Vols. I, II, & III, A Manual for Historic Properties*. Madison, WI: Historic Preservation Division State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986. Architecture 3-10.

³⁰ City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

³¹ Blumenson, John J.G. *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*.

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in the first two decades of the twentieth century, can be found exclusively in institutional buildings and not commercial ones. There are four examples in the district including the Aram Public Library, located at 404 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1907; and the Wisconsin State Bank, located at 301-303 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1909, both of which are discussed earlier in this document. Another bank, the Citizen's Bank of Delavan, located at 216-218 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1906, exhibits Neoclassical style design though it has been significantly altered since its construction. The first Citizen's Bank building, constructed in 1880 and designed by Edward Townsend Mix in the Neoclassical style, was destroyed by a catastrophic explosion in 1890.³² The Delavan Post Office, located at 335 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1914, also exhibits a Neoclassical style design and is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³³

Mediterranean Revival

Another Period Revival style of the 1900s through the 1940s, the Mediterranean Revival style is relatively rare in Wisconsin. Buildings in this style are often architect designed and constructed of brick with stone trim. They may feature straight or arched openings, columns, stone balconies and porch railings, and low sloped, red clay tile, hipped roofs. The Mediterranean Revival style often exhibits flat wall surfaces, broken by arcading, terra cotta, plaster, or tile ornamentation, sometimes drawing on classical motifs. These characteristics of the style are found on both residential and commercial buildings.³⁴

There are two buildings in the district that exhibit the Mediterranean Revival style. The Knights of Pythias Building, located at 328 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1916, and the Delavan Theater, located at 405-407 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1928, were completed during the commercial heyday of downtown Delavan when most of the available lots had been filled in with commercial businesses. Both buildings are discussed earlier in this document.³⁵

Twentieth Century Commercial

The term Twentieth Century Commercial is a general stylistic term for twentieth century commercial buildings that do not quite fit into the high style categories described above. These are simple, undecorated buildings with little architectural detailing. The only ornamentation that may appear in the building may come in the form of decorative brickwork at the parapet.³⁶

³² General Files, on record at the Delavan Historical Society.

³³ City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

³⁴ Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Architecture 2-32.

³⁵ City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

³⁶ Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Architecture 3-10.

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Four Twentieth Century Commercial buildings were constructed in the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District. The Holstein-Friesian Building, located at 107 North Third Street and constructed in 1914, and the Bolver & Lackney Building, located at 324 East Walworth Avenue, do not clearly fit into any defined architectural style nor do they fall under the auspice of modern and contemporary architecture. Both of these examples are discussed earlier in this document. A post-war example of the Twentieth Century Commercial style can be found in the single story Schultz Brother's Company Building, located at 230 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1958. This 5 & 10 store has a brick façade with horizontal banding and a stepped cornice featuring a large central sign. The four can be understood as two pairs representing two periods of construction in downtown Delavan. The first was the introduction of more modern building methods, materials, and styles; and the second pair was constructed in the post-war period and replaced existing structures in the district with more modern buildings.³⁷

Contemporary

The term Contemporary is used to describe mid- and late- twentieth century buildings that cannot be ascribed to styles detailed previously in this chapter. Architectural historians and architects have identified names for many contemporary theories of architecture; however, buildings of these genres are now first reaching sufficient age to be evaluated for significance per National Register criteria.³⁸

The Contemporary style section of the Architecture Study Unit of the Wisconsin Historical Society's *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* dates the occurrence and popularity of contemporary style architecture in Wisconsin from approximately 1950 to the present. That text defines contemporary style buildings as those constructed during or after the mid-twentieth century that cannot be described in the manner of other preceding stylistic movements. It also notes that while architectural historians and architects have generated terminology for some movements within contemporary or modern architecture, these genres are just now reaching sufficient age to be viewed as historic and their scholarly value and significance recognized and understood.³⁹

Carole Rifkind describes modern architecture in her *A Field Guide to American Architecture* as the experimental and radical product of American Modernism and the European International Style taking on a mechanical appearance. Her text identifies modern architecture's common emphasis of simple geometrical volumes, expression of structure, sculptural character, self-containment, defiance of

³⁷ City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

³⁸ Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Architecture 2-37.

³⁹ Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Architecture 2-37.

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traditional identification of front or back and interior or exterior, rejection of ornament, and heavy emphasis on surface and texture. Organization of plan tends to be organized based on functional, and often extends laterally. Modern buildings tend to favor a low-profile, enhanced by its ground floor being directly at grade and attic-less, flat roof. Roof overhangs may blur the sense of indoor and out; plain wall surfaces are often offset by linear elements; while often large door and window openings do not violate the uninterrupted character of the walls. Windows are grouped in bands, either at full-room height or in the upper wall zones, are often a major feature. Technical advances with construction materials and engineering during the early twentieth century are heavily represented in the expression of contemporary architecture, which often employs reinforced concrete, insulating board, and glass as both window and wall.⁴⁰

Three contributing Contemporary style buildings in the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District were full-façade redesigns constructed in the post-war period and in each the contemporary style and interior layout were applied to existing commercial structures as large scale renovations. Perhaps the best example is the Bradley Department Store building, located at 222 East Walworth Avenue. It achieved its present appearance in 1962. The Bradley Department Store building was originally constructed in 1887 and has undergone many additions and alterations; the building is discussed earlier in this document. Likewise, the Kissel Automobile Agency Building, located at 221-225 East Walworth Avenue and its present incarnation constructed in 1954, and the Kissel Automobile Annex, located at 227 East Walworth Avenue and constructed in 1956, represent significant contemporary changes to pre-existing storefronts, garages, and livery stables.⁴¹ There are also two non-contributing Contemporary style buildings within the district that were constructed in the early 1990s and are too new to be considered for this nomination.

Architects

Louis Claude & Edward Starck

Louis Claude was born near Devil's Lake, Wisconsin in 1868 and attended school in Baraboo. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1891 with a degree in Civil Engineering and began working in a number of Chicago architectural offices including Burnham & Root and Alder & Sullivan. Edward Starck was born in Milwaukee in 1868 and attended school in Madison, Wisconsin. He likely attended the University of Wisconsin for a time, but did not graduate. Starck worked at a number of Wisconsin based architecture offices including those of David R. Jones and Edward Townsend Mix.

⁴⁰ Rifkind, Carole. *A Field Guide to American Architecture*. New York: New American Library, Inc., 1980, page 212.

⁴¹ City of Delavan Deeds; City of Delavan Directories; City of Delavan Fire Insurance Map.

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In 1896, Claude and Starck formed a partnership in Madison and continued to work together for the rest of their careers, designing over two hundred buildings. The firm produced a wide range of buildings, but specialized in educational and residential structures. In addition to some notable homes in Madison and more than thirty small public libraries across Wisconsin, Claude and Starck designed the Aram Public Library in 1907. The library's design, in keeping with Claude and Starck's extensive library work, demonstrates the stylistic inclination of the firm toward a progressive mix of the early Prairie Style into a Neoclassical form popular at the turn of the century. The firm dissolved in 1928 when both partners retired. Edward Starck died in 1947, and Louis Claude died in 1951. The design of the Aram Public Library at 404 East Walworth Avenue is attributed to Claude & Starck and was constructed in 1907.

Conclusion

The Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Commerce, historically important as the traditional and long-standing center of commercial activity in the city. It is also nominated under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a fine local example demonstrating the range of commercial and civic architectural styles during its period of development between 1871 and 1962. The district conveys a sense of historical and architectural cohesiveness through its architectural designs of 25 retail buildings, 2 banks, an office building, a theater, a post office, a library, and a vitrified brick street, all arranged along four blocks of East Walworth Avenue in the City of Delavan. Representative of the prevailing architectural styles of the time, Italianate, Commercial Vernacular, Neoclassical, Mediterranean Revival, Twentieth Century Commercial, and Contemporary styles are prominent within the district. The business and community buildings within the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District are well preserved, maintain architectural and historical integrity, and have much the same appearance today as they did years ago. The result is now one of Delavan's most architecturally intact historic commercial areas.

Statement of Archaeological Potential

Numerous effigy mounds have been identified over the last century surrounding Delavan Lake and Comus Lake flanking the City of Delavan on the south and north. Significant Native American settlement, of the both pre-historic Woodland Indians and Winnebago and Pottawatomie tribes, was common in the area of Delavan and many mounds have been disturbed since the settlement was established in the 1830s and 1840s. Given this fact, it is almost certain that the construction of the extant resources with the district would have greatly disturbed remaining archeological artifacts. While it is possible that Native American resources may be extant with the boundaries of the district, archaeological potential has not been assessed.

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Preservation Activities

The Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District has been fortunate in consistently attracting long-term business-owners who have taken pride in their historic properties and have maintained them. In addition, the City of Delavan and the Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society are proactive in promoting, protecting, and preserving Delavan's historic resources. In listing this district, the City of Delavan hopes to provide the opportunity for business owners to obtain tax credits and/or other incentives to maintain and restore their properties.

Acknowledgments

The Fuldner Heritage Fund paid for the preparation of this nomination. This endowed fund, created through a generous donation by the Jeffris Family Foundation and administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society, supports the nomination of historically and architecturally significant rural and small town properties.

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Major Bibliographical References

There is a wealth of resources available on the history of the City of Delavan and Walworth County. The information and research already produced on these subjects far exceeds the scope of this nomination. The following bibliography contains works with considerably more breadth and information on individual historical subjects and buildings; in particular, the work of local historians whose research can be accessed through the Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The district consists of the legal parcels associated with all of the resources within the district and may be defined by the general description:

Beginning at the northwest corner of the lot associated with 221-223-225 East Walworth Avenue, continue east along the north (rear) edge of the lots fronting East Walworth Avenue across Third Street to the west edge of the property associated with 301-303 East Walworth Avenue, turn 90 degrees to the north and continue to the northwest corner of the lot associated with 107 Third Street, turn 90 degrees to the east and continue to the northeast corner of the property associated with 335 East Walworth Avenue, turn 90 degrees to the south and continue to a location perpendicular to the northern edge of the property associated with 401-403 East Walworth Avenue, continue to the northeast corner of the property associated with 401-403 East Walworth Avenue, turn 90 degrees and continue to the northwest corner of the property associated with 405-407 East Walworth Avenue, turn 90 degrees to the east and continue to the northeast corner of said property, turn 90 degrees to the south and continue across East Walworth Avenue and along the eastern edge of the property associated with 404 East Walworth Avenue to the southeast corner of said property, turn 90 degrees to the west and continue to the southwest corner of said property, turn 90 degrees to the north and continue to a point perpendicular to the southern edge of the property associated with 338 East Walworth Avenue, turn 90 degrees to the west, continue across Fourth Street and along the back or south edge of the lots facing East Walworth Avenue along the north side of the alley, continue across Third Street to the southwest corner of the property associated with 210 East Walworth Avenue, turn 90 degrees to the north to the northwest corner of said property, turn 90 degrees to the east and continue to a point perpendicular to the western edge of the property associated with 221-223-225 East Walworth Avenue, continue north across East Walworth Avenue to the beginning.

The boundaries of the proposed Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District are clearly delineated on the accompanying district map and enclose an area of 6.00 acres.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the proposed Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District enclose all the areas historically associated with the district's 32 resources. To the north, the boundary was drawn to exclude residential areas adjacent to Comus Lake, and to the east and south the boundary was drawn to exclude the historic residential portions of the City of Delavan. To the west the boundary was drawn to exclude commercial properties near Second Street that either lack integrity or were constructed well after the period of significance and to draw a clear distinction between the Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District and the rest of the historic commercial downtown along East Walworth

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Avenue. These commercial areas centered on the Water Tower Park, while having historic significance, have a distinctly different historic use and pattern of development and may also qualify as a historical district in its own right. Therefore, it was not included within this district's boundaries. The result is a cohesive district with as few non-contributing properties as possible.

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Name of Property:	Delavan Downtown Commercial Historic District
City or Vicinity:	Delavan
County:	Walworth County
State:	Wisconsin
Name of Photographer:	Rowan Davidson
Date of Photographs:	December 18, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files:	Wisconsin Historical Society 816 State Street, Madison, WI 53706

Photo #1 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0001)
210 East Walworth Avenue facade, camera facing south

Photo #2 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0002)
212 East Walworth Avenue facade, camera facing south

Photo #3 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0003)
222 East Walworth Avenue facade, camera facing south

Photo #4 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0004)
324 East Walworth Avenue facade, camera facing south

Photo #5 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0005)
328 East Walworth Avenue facade, camera facing south

Photo #6 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0006)
404 East Walworth Avenue facade, camera facing south

Photo #7 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0007)
405 East Walworth Avenue facade, camera facing north

Photo #8 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0008)
303 East Walworth Avenue facade, camera facing north

Photo #9 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0009)
107 Third Street facade, camera facing east

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Photo #10 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0010)
231, 233, & 235 East Walworth Avenue façade, camera facing north

Photo #11 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0011)
The corner of East Walworth Avenue & Third Street perspective, 301-303, 305, 307-311, 313,
319-321-323 East Walworth Avenue, camera facing northeast

Photo #12 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0012)
The corner of East Walworth Avenue & Third Street perspective, 239, 237, 231-233-235, 231, 229,
227, 221-225 East Walworth Avenue, camera facing northwest

Photo #13 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialHistoricDistrict_0013)
The corner of East Walworth Avenue & Third Street perspective, 230, 228, 22, 216-218, 212, 210
East Walworth Avenue, camera facing southwest

Photo #14 (WI_WalworthCounty_DelavanDowntownCommercialDistrict_0014)
The corner of East Walworth Avenue & Third Street perspective, 302, 306, 310, 312, 314, 318-
320, 322, 324, 328 East Walworth Avenue, camera facing southeast

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North side of the 300 block of E. Walworth Avenue, 1916.
Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society Photograph Collection.



North side of the 200 block of E. Walworth Avenue, circa 1960.
Delavan Wisconsin Historical Society Photograph Collection.