NPS Form 10-900
(January 1992)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

RECEIVED 2280
APR 26 2013
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

OMB No. 10024-0018

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 Whitewater Passenger Depot
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 301 West Whitewater Street N/A **not for publication**
city or town Whitewater N/A **vicinity**
state Wisconsin **code** WI **county** Walworth **code** 127 **zip code** 53190

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _ nationally statewide X locally. (_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date: 4/17/13

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property x_ 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

Whitewater Passenger Depot	Walworth County	Wisconsin
Name of Property	County and State	

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

✓ entered in the National Register.	Edson H. Beall	6-12-13
___ 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 as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

contributing	noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	1 objects
1	1 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
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
LATE VICTORIAN

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
Foundation Limestone
walls Brick
roof Asphalt
other Wood

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.)

X 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.

X 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
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1891-1951

Significant Dates

1891

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Jennings, J. T. W.

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

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:
- X State Historic Preservation Office
- _ Other State Agency
- _ Federal Agency
- _ Local government
- _ University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.) (provided in NAD83)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	358171	4743352
2			
3			
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	Carol Lohry Cartwright				
organization	Whitewater Historical Society			**date**	May 21, 2012
street & number	W7646 Hackett Rd.			**telephone**	262-473-6820
city or town	Whitewater	**state**	WI	**zip code**	53190

DESCRIPTION

Site

The Whitewater Passenger Depot is located at the east end of the historic downtown commercial district in Whitewater, a small city in southeastern Wisconsin. It sits along the east side of Whitewater Street at the intersection with Fremont Street and is bounded on the east side by the railroad tracks and on the south side by a terrace that sits between the railroad tracks and a large parking lot. To the north of the building, across Fremont Street, is a large park that sits along an old mill pond, currently known as Cravath Lake. Known as Lakefront Park, it consists largely of open lawn spaces with parking areas, and is landscaped with typical urban park amenities.

The topography of the site around the building itself is flat. Lawn spaces punctuated with a few medium-sized trees surround the building on two sides. The largest lawn is in front of the building in the long setback between the building and Whitewater Street. The second, and smaller, lawn space sits between the building and the parking lot to the south. Along the north side of the building, which is much closer to Fremont Street, is a wide terrace between the building and the street. The east side of the building has no lawn space due to its proximity to the tracks.

A wide concrete pad (constructed circa 2002) runs around the entire building and two concrete walkways run between this pad and the parking lot to the south and the sidewalk to the west along Whitewater Street. The concrete pad gradually rises along the south elevation to the currently-used entrance to make it handicapped accessible. On the east side of the building, along the tracks, the concrete pad runs up to the gravel-covered railroad right-of-way. Originally, part of this pad was wider and served passengers accessing trains; however, it was shortened in the 1990s when the Department of Transportation widened the gravel right-of-way between the depot and the tracks.

Also on the site is a cast-iron horse fountain that sits in the walkway near the Whitewater Street sidewalk. No current documentation is available regarding the original location and construction date of this fountain, but it is thought that it was moved from Main Street sometime in the mid-twentieth century. Documents and historic photographs do not show it as part of the original depot site.

The fountain has a large bowl sitting on a short turned column on a square base. A large classically-influenced turned column topped with a globe light rises up from the center of the bowl. Four spouts project from the bottom of the column and spray water into the bowl. The bowl is decorated with a repeating pattern of classical motifs featuring rosettes, acanthus leaves, and torches. Because it was

not constructed as part of the original depot site and was moved here at an unknown time, it is a decorative, but non-contributing resource to the site.

Exterior

The depot is a one and one-half story red brick and grey limestone building with a rectangular form. It has a massive and steeply-pitched hip roof with very wide overhanging eaves and two large projecting gables. Although the form and massing of the building is typical of small railroad depots of the period, its architectural details, particularly in the decorative gables, suggest a combination of Late Victorian styles, including the High Victorian Gothic and Romanesque.

The large hip roof extends well past the depot walls creating large soffits that are covered with horizontal boards that suggest horizontal wainscoting or paneling. Supporting the overhang are very large knee-brace brackets. The support system of the brackets features vertical, horizontal, and diagonal boards and each bracket includes decorative bull's eye blocks. The ends of the brackets are attached to the walls of the building. A large chimney rises from the roof at the south end of the building. It is constructed of red brick and features limestone trim.

Main Elevation
The main or west elevation of the building features the larger of the two projecting gables, a large set of entry doors, and symmetrical fenestration. The main entrance on this elevation sits at the center and consists of double eight-panel heavy wood doors that are permanently closed and no longer have their hardware. Above the doors is a large two-light transom and the entrance is decorated with a very heavy rusticated limestone frontispiece that features alternating widths and a large lintel. There is also a smooth limestone sill under the doors. To either side of this entrance are two sets of three large openings filled with original single-light double-hung sashes covered with mid-twentieth century aluminum storm-screen combination windows. These window groups are also decorated with heavy rusticated limestone surrounds with alternating widths. Similar limestone is used at the corners of the building to make quoins, also with alternating widths. The red brick wall is laid in a common stretcher bond and sits on a tall and heavy rusticated limestone foundation.

The projecting gable of the main elevation is larger and more decorative than a similar gable on the east elevation. It has a very steep gable roof, a red brick wall, and elaborate limestone trim. At the gable peak there is a triangular limestone panel outlined in rusticated limestone trim. Topping the panel is a triangular motif of small raised rusticated limestone blocks. Under this decoration is a rectangular rusticated limestone block that has been carved with smooth inset trefoils. The block is flanked with rounded triangular rusticated limestones.

Under the triangular stone panel is the main wall of the gable, which is red brick and heavily accented with rusticated limestone banding. Four rounded brick pilasters rise from the lowest limestone course and end at the top with stepped triangular stone caps. Two shallow pilasters rise from the center of the gable wall and define the openings. The limestone banding runs through the two sets of inner pilasters and end at the stone caps of the outer pilasters. In between the two sets of inner pilasters are openings. At the top is a single horizontally-placed rectangular opening flanked by two large rusticated limestones. Below this level is a similar horizontal opening flanked by taller vertical openings. At the lowest level of the gable are three larger vertical openings. Single lights fill all of the openings. This gable, plus the one on the east elevation, was meant to add space and light to an attic half-story that was designed into the depot, but never used by the railroad.

East Elevation
Like the west elevation, this elevation, which faces the tracks, has red brick walls, a central entrance, large windows, and a decorative gable projecting from the roof. However, there are some differences between the two elevations. The central entrance features that same double wood paneled doors with transom and heavy limestone surround and lintel. But, above the lintel is a very small limestone plaque of hands grasping, symbolic of the community welcoming travelers. The flanking windows are slightly different, as well. To the north of the entrance, the set of three windows are identical to those of the main elevation. To the south of the entrance, there is one similar window, but instead of two more windows, there is a limestone-clad bay of three windows, also double-hung sashes with single lights. Similar corner quoins decorate this elevation.

The projecting gable on this elevation is smaller than that of the west elevation, but similarly decorated. It has an identical triangular stone panel with the blocks and trefoil as the west elevation gable and two of the rounded pilasters with stepped caps flanking the gable ends. A single limestone line of banding and an additional set of flat pilasters define the two sets of openings. Above the banding, in the center, is a very narrow horizontal opening flanked by large rusticated limestone blocks. Below the banding is a larger horizontal opening flanked by narrow vertical openings. All the openings are filled with single lights. This gable has the same limestone trim at the edges and below the openings and pilasters that is seen on the west elevation gable.

North and South Elevations
The north elevation is decorated with four openings that sit under the eaves. Two of the openings are a set of paired windows, while the other two openings are individually placed on the wall. The openings have the same heavy rusticated limestone surrounds as the windows of the east and west elevations, but the windows filling the openings are smaller single-light, double-hung sashes. These windows light the interior bathroom and closet spaces.

The south elevation of the building has only one opening, a central entrance that originally was the secondary entrance into the depot, but at least since 1974, it has been used as the main entrance. It features a single door that is similar to the other entry doors except that two of the wood panels have been replaced with glazing. Above the door is a wide transom and there is a tabbed stone surround that is similar to those used around windows. The entry opening in front of the main door was slightly enclosed for the placement of a screen/storm door that is a modern replica of a Victorian-era screen door.

Interior

Waiting Room
The interior of the building consists of two main spaces: the waiting room and the ticket office-gentleman's smoking lounge that was once separated by a wall, plus a bathroom and a closet. The entire interior has very high ceilings that are coved throughout except for the bathroom and closet. All of the wall surfaces are covered with wide board wainscoting or what some refer to as "boxcar" paneling. Even the ceiling surfaces are covered with this material. A chair rail runs throughout the interior along with a picture rail. These moldings help keep the paneling in place, but there are also vertical boards that sit around openings that serve a similar purpose. The cove between the walls and ceiling consists of a very wide molding. There are also horizontal and vertical boards laid in a pattern of two large squares holding the ceiling panels in place. Hanging from the ceiling are two "schoolhouse" type globe light fixtures that are reportedly not original to the building. [1]

In the waiting room, the floor is covered with narrow oak boards that in some areas appear to be patched. It is likely that these were heating and ventilation grates for the original furnace system in the building. These grates were probably removed when a new system was added in the1970s that replaced them with baseboard units. The baseboards, themselves, are wide moldings. There are three interior doors in the waiting room. Two are in the north end and lead into the bathroom and closet. They are plain eight-panel wood doors with period hardware. A similar door fills an opening from the waiting room into what was the original gentlemen's smoking room.

At the south end of the waiting room is a fireplace. This unusual feature is seen on the original plans, so was built to the architect's original design. The fireplace has a small firebox surrounded by glazed tile in a red brick pattern that mimics the exterior walls. There was a tiled hearth, but it is not extant and the hearth consists of a stone slab. The mantel and surround is light-finished oak with a classical motif of turned columns, an entablature with cornice and dentil row, and a paneled over mantel with a denticulated cornice. Above the mantel is a backing of red bricks that are similar to those used in the building walls.

[1] Photographs submitted with this nomination show a large stove in the waiting room. The stove was not part of the depot. It was stored in the building.

To the east of the fireplace is the ticket window. According to the plans, this window had additional decoration, including an oak counter and elaborate brackets, but is currently just framed with plain boards and it has a mid-twentieth century style wood counter. The windows in the waiting area are all original with their original hardware and have almost all of their original glazing.

The original bathroom at the north end of the waiting room was built for women's exclusive use. It had the same wood floor as the waiting room but was, in the late twentieth century, covered with ceramic tile flooring. Modern vinyl type panels were added to the lower walls of this room and a modern toilet installed. In the early 2000s, a new vanity and sink was added to this room. The closet has no features except some period coat hooks and added shelves.

Ticket Office/Gentleman's Smoking Room
The gentleman's smoking room was originally separated from the ticket office by a full wall, but the wall was removed probably during the museum conversion in 1974, making this area larger. The wall and ceiling surfaces of this area of the building are identical to those of the waiting room, as is the wood trim and window details. In this area, though, the original wood floor was covered with circa 1974 "indoor-outdoor" carpeting that was glued to the wood surface. The gentleman's smoking room has no unusual features, but the ticket office has a counter set into the bay window. According to the original plans, this counter was also of oak, but it was altered with a mid-twentieth century "Formica" style counter and wood cabinets were built underneath. Along the south wall of the ticket office, a large bookshelf was built into the space. It has been partially removed, but will be returned to this space during the upcoming renovation of the building.

Basement
The basement of the building runs under the entire building and can be accessed only through an exterior staircase covered with a large, heavy, metal door located in the concrete pad along the west elevation. It has a concrete floor and the furnace room is framed out from the rest of the space. Running through the basement is an unusual stone-constructed storm sewer that is about three feet high and about as wide. Originally, this storm sewer was operational, but in the late twentieth century, the openings were closed and the sewer diverted away from the building. However, the structure is still extant. This structure divides the basement into two large spaces. The basement walls are exposed limestone and the space is currently vacant.

Renovation
In 2009, the City of Whitewater received a transportation enhancement grant to rehabilitate the depot for the Whitewater Historical Society's local history museum. Most of this rehabilitation involves exterior cleaning and tuck-pointing, interior moisture control, making the basement usable dry storage space, and refinishing interior extant surfaces. No major decorative elements will be lost in this project. Specifically, the windows will be rehabilitated and not replaced, as will be all doors. The double wood doors on the east and west

elevations will be made operational and the main entrance will be through the doors on the west elevation. The door on the south elevation will remain a handicapped accessible and staff entrance only.

The basement storm sewer will be removed and the basement will be renovated into a storage and work space, but no new partitioning or drywall will be added. On the main floor, the wall between the ticket office and smoking room will be rebuilt as per original plans for an office and research room and a new temporary gallery space. The waiting room will house the permanent local history gallery.

Because of the building's use as a public space, a handicapped accessible bathroom will be built in the closet area and the existing back wall will be moved slightly to accommodate building codes for this use. The existing bathroom will be removed and in its place will be a new interior staircase to the basement storage and work room. The architect's plans have made these alterations in keeping with the historic character of the building and retaining as much historic fabric as possible.

Also planned in the renovation will be the return of the decorative elements of the ticket window based on the original plans, and rehabilitation of fireplace elements. On the exterior, there will be no changes, but the original metal cresting will be replicated and returned to the roof peak.

SIGNIFICANCE[2]

The Whitewater Passenger Depot is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C for its significance at the local level. It is nominated under criterion A for its association with the growth and development of rail transportation in Whitewater. Whitewater was one of the first stops on the first railroad built in Wisconsin. The railroad link in Whitewater helped make the community an important industrial town in the nineteenth century. The original depot was a nondescript frame building that became the freight depot in 1891 upon the completion of this building. The freight house, as the old depot became known, was demolished in the 1990s, making this building the only extant resource related to the most important method of transportation of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the railroad.

The building is also nominated under criterion C for its local architectural significance as a fine and unusual example of a typical small-town depot enhanced by High Victorian style details and distinguished by its high integrity. It was the work of master architect J. T. W. Jennings, who had an important architectural career in Wisconsin, beginning with his work for the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad (Milwaukee Road). The distinctive appearance of this depot can be attributed to the talent of Jennings, who went on to design important buildings in Madison, Wisconsin.

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: TRANSPORTATION

Historical Background

The Whitewater Depot represents the growth and development of the railroad in the community, an on-going historic event that was significant to the growth and development of the community as a whole. It was an early stop on the first railroad built in the state and, when the depot was built, it was a stop on Wisconsin's most important rail line at the height of passenger rail transportation.

According to Wisconsin's *Cultural Resource Management Plan*, rail construction in the state began in the 1850s with several small companies laying track. By 1865, most of these small lines were consolidated under three large railroad companies and by 1868, there were over 1,000 miles of track in the state, almost all in southern Wisconsin. Consolidation of rail lines continued in the later nineteenth century and by 1900 the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul (Milwaukee Road), the Chicago & NorthWestern, and the Minneapolis, St. Paul, & Sault Ste. Marie (Soo Line) railroads dominated the state. These large lines built extensively as railroad transportation reached its peak. By 1900, there were 6,500 railroad miles constructed in Wisconsin.

[2] The date of construction for this building was verified by articles in the *Whitewater Register*, January of 1890 through April of 1891. The period of significance was determined by the completion of the construction of the building in 1891 and the end date of passenger service in Whitewater in 1951.

Construction peaked in 1916 and railroad transportation began a decline after World War I. After World War II, highways took over as the most important American transportation system and railroad companies shrank their operations considerably, along with a reduction in the miles of track.[3]

Whitewater's railroad link was the result of the earliest rail line construction in the state. After the formal establishment of the Wisconsin territory in 1836, most people expected the territorial legislature to immediately give a charter for a rail line and several businessmen and speculators developed plans for railroad companies. One of the most important efforts was in Milwaukee. Byron Kilbourn (the founder of Milwaukee) and others were advocating a Milwaukee to the Mississippi River line running through the lead region.[4]

No rail lines were given charters until the late 1840s due to economic problems and political infighting between rail line promoters and companies building stage lines and plank roads. In 1847, Kilbourn and his supporters finally received a charter for a rail line from Milwaukee to Waukesha. By the time of statehood in 1848, there were nine rail charters approved and Kilbourn had received another charter to extend his line to the Mississippi. However, money was still tight and it would be a struggle to raise the capital needed to actually build track.[5]

Kilbourn's railroad was initially incorporated as the Milwaukee, Waukesha, and Mississippi River Rail Road Company, but is always referred to as the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad. Its initial funding came almost entirely from the City of Milwaukee, which saw the link between Milwaukee and the Mississippi River as a boon to its economic success. The construction of the rail line was divided into five sections: Milwaukee to Waukesha, Waukesha to the Rock River, the Rock River to Madison, Madison to Mineral Point, and Mineral Point to the Mississippi River in Grant County. The company estimated that they could complete the first section by June of 1850.[6]

Construction on the rail line began in October of 1849. Just the fact that this line had reached the point of construction was a major success since other roads given charters were unable to obtain enough funding to begin planning. It was probably due to the political shrewdness of Byron Kilbourn and his Milwaukee connections that his line was the first to get to this stage. And the challenges of building this line at this time cannot be emphasized enough. The route encountered much swampland and the line literally had to be "carved" out of the wilderness that was Wisconsin. Meanwhile, Kilbourn and

---

[3] Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), Transportation, 6-1—6-2.
[4] Axel S. Lorenzsonn, *Steam and Cinders The Advent of Railroads in Wisconsin 1831-1861* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2009), 32-49.
[5] *Ibid.*, 56-59.
[6] *Ibid.*, 70-71.

others were also engaged in selling stock for moving the rail line west from Waukesha, a task that was easier after construction on the line actually started.[7]

On September 25, 1850, the Milwaukee and Mississippi's Engine No. 1 was set on the first half mile of track laid in Milwaukee and Byron Kilbourn drove the locomotive to the end of this track and back. Five miles of track (Milwaukee to Wauwatosa) were completed by November of 1850 and when the track was completed 10 miles to Elm Grove by December 17, 1850, the charter allowed for operations to begin and for the rail line to actually begin charging for freight and fares. The line was built through modern-day Brookfield and, by February of 1851, Waukesha was in sight. Waiting for the rails in Waukesha were two large stone buildings, a two-story depot, and a large car barn where cars were to be built. When the tracks reached Waukesha, four passenger cars were waiting.[8]

Wisconsin's first railroad reached Waukesha in February of 1851 and, on March 4, 1851, regularly scheduled daily passenger trains began running between Milwaukee and Waukesha. In April, a freight train was added to this schedule. Although still financially precarious, the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad started to plan for westward expansion. By July 1851, the rail line extended seven miles southwest out of Waukesha to modern-day Genesee Depot. A rift between principals in the company threatened the rail line and affected contracts for further construction. Ironically, Byron Kilbourn, whose persistence in getting the company off the ground resulted in Wisconsin's first rail line, was now seen as overextending his influence in the company and even selling illegal stock. In January of 1852, the board of directors removed him as president of the company. Kilbourn tried to take over the board by manipulating stockholders, but ultimately failed. He had overreached and, despite being Wisconsin's most important railroad pioneer, Kilbourn was now out of the company.[9]

The new president of the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad, John Catlin, soon had the railroad's financial affairs in order and the line was extended to Eagle by the end of January of 1852. The professionalization of the company continued with the employment of a certified civil engineer, Edward H. Brodhead, whose task it was to supervise the continuation of the line to Madison. During the summer of 1852, the rail line was approaching Whitewater. The link to Palmyra from Eagle came in August, and then the line reached Whitewater in September of 1852. A great celebration was held in Whitewater with about 300 people coming from Milwaukee to join a crowd that the *Milwaukee Sentinel* estimated was between two and three thousand people.[10]

Why the line came to Whitewater is a valid question as it was certainly not on a direct route west.

---

[7] *Ibid.*, 81-89.
[8] *Ibid.*, 102-109.
[9] *Ibid.*, 110-127.
[10] *Ibid.*, 127-133.

General literature does not explain how the route was devised, but it is probable that this first line wanted to serve the heavily wheat-producing areas of Walworth and Rock counties without straying too far from the westerly course to Madison and the Mississippi. Did the community lure the road? According to the *Early Annals of Whitewater*, meetings were held in the fall of 1849 regarding the purchase of stock in this line by local people. The *Early Annals* state that Leander Birge, Rufus Cheney, and Prosper Cravath were appointed as a committee to meet with the railroad board of directors to "have the road pass through Whitewater." It was stated that the farmers of the area wanted an alternative to the "slow, plodding . . . miserable. . . almost impassable roads" between Whitewater and Milwaukee.[11]

The *Early Annals* reported that in the spring of 1850, the directors of the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad began soliciting area farmers to purchase stock in the line. When the line came to Whitewater, the *Annals* state, the community was all "astir; produce and provisions of all kinds and in large quantities were daily coming in. . . and the town began to put on quite a business-like air. All were excited, even the old fogies . . . were forced to acknowledge that . . . there might be something new under the sun. . . . all rejoiced at the good time already come, and looked forward to the better times coming." So, it may have been that due to the concerted interest of Whitewater's citizens and the successful selling of stock (some of the local farmers even mortgaged their farms to buy stock) that the company, in part, decided to come through Whitewater.[12]

Freight records show the importance of the railroad for the Whitewater economy. Out of Milwaukee, the freight trains carried retail goods, lumber, wood products, coal, stoves, brick, and livestock. Going east, the trains carried wheat to the Milwaukee markets, as well as other agricultural products like corn, oats, barley, potatoes, hogs, wool, lead, and shot. Farmers had another profitable venture with the railroad, selling wood for the engines. Whitewater grew significantly during this period, fueled by trade no doubt fostered by the railroad.

The Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad continued to move west, then north to Madison. The line was built out of Whitewater to Milton, and then the company was paid to build a spur line to Janesville. The line then moved north, reaching Stoughton in January of 1854, and by May of 1854, the tracks came to Madison. Now people could travel, albeit not exactly due west, between Milwaukee and Madison entirely by rail. For a brief moment, the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad could boast of being the only rail line in Wisconsin, but this was short-lived. By the end of 1854, 152 miles of track existed in Wisconsin. Most of it was owned by the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad, but there were lines completed between Fond du Lac and just north of Waupun, between Beloit and

[11] Prosper Cravath and Spencer Steele, *Early Annals of Whitewater* (Whitewater: Whitewater Federation of Women's Clubs, 1906), 84-85.
[12] *Ibid.*, 86, 93.

Footville, between Brookfield and Watertown, and between Racine and Walworth County.[13]

As the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad continued to drive to the Mississippi River, other roads were making plans to do the same. But, the Milwaukee and Mississippi was first, completing its road at Prairie du Chien in April of 1857. The pre-Civil War period was a volatile one for the small railroad companies in Wisconsin, and small companies started merging while even more new companies were formed. Despite the sometimes financial uncertainty of the railroad industry at the time, the railroad was now a permanent fixture in the southern third of the state and no matter how the companies changed over the next few decades, railroads were no longer a fad, but an integral part of the state's transportation system. The economic depression that began in 1857 would make a significant impact on the railroad industry and change the major players, but the railroad tracks were here to stay.[14]

The Development of the Milwaukee Road
The financial crisis of the late 1850s sped up railroad consolidation as smaller companies went under or were purchased by better financed companies. One of the major players to come out of this era was the Chicago and NorthWestern Railroad, which built a continuous 198-mile line between Chicago and Oshkosh. This line would become the main rail line in eastern Wisconsin well into the twentieth century. The crisis in the late 1850s would also see the corporate demise of the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad, but soon would come the rise of what could be called its successor, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad, or the Milwaukee Road.[15]

In late 1860, the Milwaukee and Mississippi was bankrupt and its assets were sold in January of 1861 to the newly-formed Milwaukee and Prairie du Chien Railway Company. Then, under the leadership of Alexander Mitchell of Milwaukee, in 1863, the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company was organized and began buying up smaller railroads, including, in 1867, the Milwaukee and Prairie du Chien. By 1869, the Milwaukee and St. Paul had consolidated enough lines to control every through route in Wisconsin from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi and was a major competitor with the Chicago and NorthWestern for rail dominance in the state.[16]

After the Civil War the Milwaukee and St. Paul line began looking to grow beyond Wisconsin and the 1870s saw rapid growth in that development. In 1872, the company acquired the St. Paul and Chicago Railway Company with its routes along the Mississippi River. In 1873, the company opened its own route to Chicago, prompting the name change to the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company (CM&SP), a name that would stick until 1928. By the end of 1874, the CM&SP controlled

[13] Lorenzsonn, 179-189.
[14] *Ibid.*, 236-247.
[15] *Ibid.*, 282-287.
[16] Tom Murray, *The Milwaukee Road* (St. Paul: MBI Publishing Company, 2005), 20-22.

almost 1,400 miles of track and was looking to expand into the newly opened settlement areas of Iowa and the Dakotas. The company either built track or acquired smaller companies to make this happen and in the mid-1870s, they built two bridges over the Mississippi River (to take the place of ferries): one at Prairie du Chien and one at Marquette, Iowa. In 1876, they built a bridge to connect La Crosse and Minnesota.[17]

By 1880, the CM&SP controlled almost 4,000 track miles, up from the 1,400 controlled in 1874. Then, in 1884, the line reached Fargo, North Dakota, and in 1887, it reached Kansas City. In 1890, the line made an agreement with the Union Pacific Railroad to extend its service into Omaha, Nebraska. At the same time, the emphasis of the company shifted from its historic origination point of Milwaukee to Chicago, which had become the leading mid-western rail center. At the end of 1887, the CM&SP controlled 5,669 miles of track, had 740 locomotives, 375 passenger cars, 14,312 box cars, and 7,201 freight cars under its control and was becoming a national railroad.[18]

In 1890, when Whitewater began construction of its new passenger depot, the CM&SP was carrying 9.2 million tons of freight and 7.5 million passengers per year. Eventually, the CM&SP would build its own line to the Pacific Northwest. In May of 1911, the company began offering passenger service between Chicago and Seattle and, by 1913, the CM&SP had almost 10,000 miles of track.[19]

In 1925, the company entered the first of three bankruptcies of the twentieth century. But, this first one did not destroy the company, rather it resulted in a reorganization and a new name, the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific Railroad Company, made official in 1928. It was at this time that the moniker "The Milwaukee Road" became the popular and preferred company name. The name came from the common use of the first name of a railroad company to refer to a particular line. Prior to 1928, the railroad's common name, whether it was the old Milwaukee and Mississippi or the Milwaukee and St. Paul, always began with "Milwaukee," i.e., the Milwaukee line or Milwaukee railroad. The reorganized company, with its longer name, took advantage of this common usage by making "The Milwaukee Road" its advertising and corporate identity. This identity would remain until the demise of the line in 1985.[20]

The bankruptcy and reorganization of the Milwaukee Road gave it little financial flexibility; then came the Great Depression of the 1930s. Added to the poor economy were the multi-year drought conditions in the wheat-growing areas of Minnesota, the Dakotas and Montana, lowering agricultural revenue for the line. Passenger revenue declined by half, but the company still had to maintain most of

[17] *Ibid.*, 22.
[18] *Ibid.*, 22-25.
[19] *Ibid.*, 27-45.
[20] *Ibid.*, 24, 50-53.

its passenger schedules. In the meantime, automobiles and trucks were taking away from what little business was available. The result was a second bankruptcy in 1935, and another reorganization.[21]

After World War II, short-line passenger service died quickly as personal automobile travel became the preferred way to make trips to nearby towns. In Whitewater, one of the first stops on the first railroad in Wisconsin, passenger service ended in 1951. Gradually, in the later twentieth century, the Milwaukee Road began to phase out some of its operations in the west and northwest part of the U.S.[22] In the 1980s, the Milwaukee Road was on the market and in 1984, the Soo Line, with a majority of stock owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway, offered a bid that was accepted. At that point, the corporate entity of the Milwaukee Road died, as, ironically, did the Soo Line, which by 2005 was under the corporate logo of the Canadian Pacific Railway.[23]

In Whitewater, the legacy of the Milwaukee Road was long gone by 1985. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Whitewater Passenger Depot was mostly being used as a feed store, although telegraph service continued during this time from the old ticket office. Then, after much lobbying, the city of Whitewater acquired the Whitewater depot in 1973 in order to lease it to the Whitewater Historical Society for a museum that opened in July of 1974. The old freight house remained until the 1990s, when it was demolished for improved parking facilities.

As can be seen in the above discussion, the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad and the resulting Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad (The Milwaukee Road) were significant transportation providers in Wisconsin during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The stop at Whitewater, beginning in 1852, saw almost the entire growth and development of the historic first rail line in the state and the development of one of the most important, if not the most important, rail line in Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Road. The Whitewater Passenger Depot was built at what might arguably be considered the height of rail transportation in the state. It was a showplace for both the Milwaukee Road and the local community.

Therefore, the Whitewater Passenger Depot is historically significant at the local level because it was, and still is, the most important symbol of rail transportation in the city. Rail transportation was the most significant form of transportation in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and depots were the center of this activity. The old freight house was demolished in the 1990s, leaving the passenger depot the only link to this important activity in the community.

---

[21] *Ibid.*, 53-56.
[22] *Ibid.*, 128-143.
[23] *Ibid.*, 144-148.

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE

The Whitewater Passenger Depot is architecturally significant at the local level because it is a fine example of a small town railroad depot with High Victorian details and because it was the work of a master architect, J. T. W. Jennings. According to Wisconsin's *Cultural Resources Management Plan*, the High Victorian Gothic style exhibits heavier detailing and massing than the earlier Gothic Revival style. High Victorian Gothic style elements include pointed arched openings, foliated and geometric patterns decorating wall surfaces, and polychromatic effects using materials of differing colors and textures. Examples of the style are relatively rare in Wisconsin and largely seen in public or institutional buildings.[24] In its use of materials and the tabbed widow surrounds, the building also recalls the small train stations designed by H.H. Richardson in the 1880s.

The Whitewater Passenger Depot has a typical small depot form; that is, it has a rectangular footprint with a large hip roof and wide overhanging eaves. But, its stylistic details make it stand out from other small depots. First, it has the polychromatic appearance and the decoration in the two Gothic-inspired gables that are typical of the High Victorian Gothic style. These details provide the materials of differing colors and textures that are distinctive of the style. The gables, with their pilasters that suggest pinnacles and panels that have the small squares and trefoil decoration, also strongly suggest a Gothic motif. The smooth, vermillion red bricks are heavily accented with the rusticated grey limestone that forms the foundation and the trim around the openings. This stonework treatment is seen in examples of the Richardsonian Romanesque.

While the exterior of the depot is highly decorative, the interior of the building is also distinctive. The use of the wide wainscoting or "box car" paneling is unusual, especially since it is also used for the ceiling throughout the building. The fireplace is also a notable feature. This classically-appointed detail contrasts somewhat with the simplicity of the wall and ceiling materials, but gives the depot's waiting room the ambience of a Victorian-era parlor. Most visitors to the depot question whether the fireplace was original to the building, but it appears in the plans executed by Jennings.

In a comparison with small town depots in the area, it is clear that this depot stands out for its stylistic characteristics. That is probably because it was the work of master architect J. T. W. Jennings (1856-1944). During Jennings' early career, he worked for the Milwaukee Road, from 1883 to 1893. In 1899, Jennings became the Supervising Architect for the University of Wisconsin, where he designed several of that campus's important buildings. In 1905, he began working as an architect in private practice in Madison and became quite successful before leaving the state to continue his career elsewhere. It was Jennings' brief

[24] Barbara Wyatt, *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), Architecture, 2-10.

tenure with the railroad and his obvious talent that resulted in Whitewater's unusual and decorative depot design.

A review of the original plans provided by the Milwaukee Road Historical Society reveal that Jennings' design, with large hip roof, supporting brackets and masonry dormers, and its unusual interior features was implemented closely to his original design. Jennings' hand written notes appear on the drawings indicating that he personally authorized design changes.

Integrity
One of the most important factors that add to the architectural significance of this building is its integrity. Almost all of the building's historic details are intact. All of the historic features of the building's exterior are extant with the exception of the metal roof cresting and the addition of the aluminum storm windows. The interior, despite decades of use as a museum, has also had few changes. Only the wall between the ticket office and the smoking room was removed along with some of the trim of the original ticket window. The rest of the depot's original plan is intact. The historic materials of the interior are also almost all intact, including the hardware on doors, trim around openings, wood floors, and the extensive original wood paneling.

The upcoming rehabilitation of the building will not significantly change this high integrity. Almost all of the historic features of the building will remain intact and the wall between the ticket office and smoking room will be restored using replicated materials. The metal cresting on the exterior will be replicated along with the decorative details of the original ticket window. Only the bathroom and closet area will be slightly altered with a mandatory handicapped-accessible new bathroom in the closet space and a staircase to the basement in the old bathroom space that is necessary for the improved operation of the Whitewater Historical Society's local history museum. These alterations will be done with a minimal amount of change to the building's layout and historic materials.

Conclusion

The Whitewater Passenger Depot is one of the most important historic buildings in the city. It was the center of modern transportation in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and it has been an important location for the interpretation of local history by the Whitewater Historical Society for almost 40 years. It is a symbol used today on the City of Whitewater's official logo. It is locally historically significant for its association with the important railroad industry. It is the most important building ever constructed for the railroad in Whitewater and represents the growth and development of this historically important method of transportation.

The building is an architectural "gem." Its small form contains big design elements of the High Victorian era. It was the work of one of Wisconsin's master architects, J. T. W. Jennings, who illustrated his talent with this early design in his career. The building's high level of integrity adds to its significance. The building is truly distinctive for its design, and construction methods and materials. For this reason, it is architecturally significant and worthy of listing in the National Register.

REFERENCES

Cravath, Prosper and Spencer Steele. *Early Annals of Whitewater*. Whitewater: Whitewater Federation of Women's Clubs, 1906.

Jennings, J. T. W. Whitewater Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Depot Plans. On file in the Milwaukee Road Archives, Milwaukee Public Library, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (Copy on file in the collections of the Whitewater Historical Society, Whitewater, Wisconsin.)

Lorenzsonn, Axel S. *Steam and Cinders: The Advent of Railroads in Wisconsin 1831-1861*. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2009.

Murray, Tom. *The Milwaukee Road*. St. Paul: MBI Publishing Company, 2005.

Wyatt, Barbara, ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Architecture, Transportation.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of this property has a rectangular shape and consists of the following description. Commencing at the intersection of the southerly line of Whitewater Street and the westerly line of Fremont Street (formerly Depot Street) said point being the northerly corner of Block A Depot Block of Tripp's Add. To the Village (now City) of Whitewater, Wisconsin; also the place of Beginning of the lands hereafter described to-wit; thence S52*42'40"W 109.97 feet; thence N38*45'40"W 104.99 feet to the southerly line of Whitewater Street; thence N52*42'E along said Street line 110.00 feet to the Place of Beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the property encompasses the historic location of the building since its construction in 1890. The specific modern boundary, in the form of a certified survey, was drawn when the property was sold to the City of Whitewater from the Milwaukee Road railroad company and corresponds with the current legal parcel. It was drawn by Joseph M. Biagi, surveyor from Elkhorn, Wisconsin and submitted to the Register of Deeds on March 13, 1973.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property:	**Whitewater Passenger Depot**
City:	**Whitewater**
County:	**Walworth**
State:	**WI**
Name of Photographer:	**Carol Cartwright**
Date of Photographs:	**May 23, 2012**
Location of Original Digital Files:	**W7646 Hackett Rd., Whitewater, WI 53190**

Photo #1 (WI_Walworth County_Whitewater Passenger Depot_0001)
East elevation, camera facing southwest.

Photo #2 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0002)
East elevation, close-up of projecting gable.

Photo #3 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0003)
Site view, camera facing north

Photo #4 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0004)
East and south elevations, camera facing northwest

Photo #5 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0005)
Interior, waiting room

Photo #6 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0006)
Interior, waiting room

Photo #7 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0007)
Interior, close-up of fireplace

Photo #8 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0008)
Interior, smoking room

Photo #9 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0009)
Interior, ticket office

Photo #10 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0010)
West elevation, camera facing southeast

Photo #11 (WI_ Walworth County _Whitewater Passenger Depot_0011)
North elevation, camera facing southwest

Figures: Additional Images

Figure 1: Hand colored postcard view c1900

Figure 2: Street view with non-contributing fountain, 2011

Figures: Additional Images

Figure 1: Hand colored postcard view c1900

Figure 2: Street view with non-contributing fountain, 2011

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

WHITEWATER QUADRANGLE
WISCONSIN
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW/4 WHITEWATER 15' QUADRANGLE

Whitewater Passenger Depot
Whitewater, Walworth Co. WI
UTM Reference:
16/358171/4743352
(NAD83)

C O L D S P R I N G
P A L M Y R A
W H I T E W A T E R
R I C H M O N D
S U G A R C R E E K
K E T T L E M O R A I N E S T A T E F O R E S T
L A G R A N G E

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1955. Field checked 1960

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Wisconsin coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 16, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1971. This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

UTM GRID AND 1971 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty — Light-duty
Medium-duty — Unimproved dirt
U.S. Route — State Route

WISCONSIN
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
AND WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

WHITEWATER, WIS.
SW/4 WHITEWATER 15' QUADRANGLE
N4245—W8837.5/7.5

1960
PHOTOREVISED 1971
AMS 3269 I SW—SERIES V861

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C.—1972

ISBN 0-607-59252-4

WHITEWATER

WHITEWATER

WHITEWATER