

27

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Main Street Commercial Historic District

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: Intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue

City or town: Middletown State: Ohio County: Butler

Not For Publication:  NA

Vicinity:  NA

### 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

Barbara Pove DSHPO for Inventory & Registration December 27, 2013

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

Ohio Historic Preservation Office, Ohio Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title : \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
 determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
 other (explain:)

Joe Edson / H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

2-22-14  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:   
Public – Local   
Public – State   
Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)   
District   
Site   
Structure   
Object

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	sites
<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	structures
<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	objects
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 8

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution
- COMMERCE/TRADE/business
- COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
- SOCIAL/meeting hall
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility
- 
- 

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution
- COMMERCE/TRADE/business
- VACANT
- 
- 
-

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

LATE VICTORIAN/Renaissance Revival

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Beaux Arts

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Neo-Classical Revival

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Concrete, and Stone

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

### Summary Paragraph

The Main Street Commercial Historic District is centered on the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue in downtown Middletown. Central Avenue divides Main Street into North Main Street and South Main Street. The district is comprised of 14 contributing resources and one non-contributing resource. Four contributing resources and the one non-contributing resource are sited on North Main Street. The four contributing buildings on North Main Street include: the seven-story, Beaux Arts-style former First & Merchant Bank building on the northwest corner of the intersection; the three-story, Renaissance Revival-style former Masonic Temple; the two-story, Queen Anne-style Shew Building; and the one-story, Beaux Arts-style Fenzel Building. The non-contributing resource on North Main Street is the two-story former Montgomery Ward building. The remaining ten contributing resources are sited on South Main Street. Two of these contributing resources are large bank buildings: the seven-story, Art Deco-style former Middletown Building and Deposit Association Bank building and the Neo-classical Revival-style former Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company building. The remaining resources on South Main Street include the U.S. Hotel, the former Rose Furniture building, an Italianate-style commercial building, a Queen Anne-style commercial building, the Pickwick Building, two domestic buildings now partially utilized for commercial purposes, and the Sorg Opera House. The resources south of the U.S. Hotel are also all contributing resources to the existing South Main Street Historic District (NR #78002015) which was listed on the National Register in 1978. This historic district is comprised of both domestic and commercial resources, but it primarily includes the residences that are associated with individuals responsible for the growth and

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

development of Middletown during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Together, the 14 contributing resources of the Main Street Commercial Historic District possess both architectural and historical significance and retain the integrity necessary to be listed on the National Register. The collection of buildings demonstrate the growth and development of commercial and economic interests in Middletown from the early nineteenth century through the early twentieth century and also represent distinctive architectural characteristics of commercial buildings constructed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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### **Narrative Description**

The Main Street Commercial Historic District is centered on the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue in Middletown, Ohio (Figures 1, 2, and 3). The city of Middletown is located in northeastern Butler County with a small portion of the city extending into northwestern Warren County. The city occupies approximately 26 square miles and is located approximately half way between Cincinnati and Dayton. As of 2010, the population of the city was 48,694 (US Census Bureau 2013). The city is located along the eastern bank of the Great Miami River. The two primary streets in the city are Central Avenue (east-west) and Main Street (north-south) which intersect approximately a half mile east of the Great Miami River. North and South Main Street are separated by Central Avenue. Originally called Third Street, Central Avenue was renamed "Central" in 1923 because it had become the primary commercial corridor for the downtown area. Many prominent citizens of Middletown constructed domestic residences along South Main Street, while many commercial buildings were constructed at the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue. The residential area of South Main Street and the commercial buildings in the southern portion of the Main Street Commercial Historic District are included within the South Main Street Historic District (NR# 78002015). The South Main Street Historic District was listed on the National Register in 1978, and consists of 76 contributing buildings, one contributing object, and four non-contributing resources. Eight buildings located along South Main Street contribute to both the South Main Street Historic District, and the Main Street Commercial District (Figure 4).

**2 North Main Street** – The former First and Merchants National Bank building is a seven story, Beaux Arts-style building featuring a large round-arched entrance with a griffin sculpture atop the keystone on the east (front) elevation. The building is three bays wide and seven bays long and was constructed in 1921. The east elevation fronts onto North Main Street while the south (side) elevation fronts onto Central Avenue (Photos 1 and 2). The first two stories of the east and south elevations are concrete made to look like stone (Photo 3). The upper stories, which are separated from below by a continuous concrete cornice on the street-facing elevations, are cream brick with similar concrete faux-stone quoins on the corners (Photo 4). The windows on the lower two stories of the south elevation are large round-arched windows extending the full two stories (Photo 5). These windows are 12-pane replacement units with four-pane replacement units in the arched portions. A decorative concrete balustrade and an ornate cornice with dentil ornamentation are located along the roofline of the street-facing elevations, and a third cornice is located below the top story of the building. The west (rear) elevation and north (side) elevation are red brick with possibly original three-over-three wood-frame windows. A large archway cityscape mural is painted on the blind lower two stories of the west elevation (Photo 2). An

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

internal brick chimney extends from the northwest corner of the roof. Three small concrete planters with small shrubs are located along the sidewalk south of the building. A ca. 1923 photograph shows that the original entrance on the east elevation was a projecting foyer possibly accessed by a revolving door (Figure 5). In addition, the photograph shows that the windows in the upper stories of the building were originally one-over-one windows. The large round-arch windows on the first story of the south (side) elevation were composed of a large central pane with three-pane side units flanking the central pane. The round-arched portions had a large central pane flanked by smaller single panes (Figure 5). Despite these minor alterations, the building retains sufficient architectural and historical integrity to contribute to the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**4 North Main Street** – The former Masonic Temple was constructed by the Jefferson Lodge of the Royal Arch Masons in 1883 (Crout 2000). The Renaissance Revival building was constructed with common-bond red brick (Photos 6, 7, and 8). Historic photographs show that the first story of the building was utilized for commercial purposes since the building's construction (Figures 5 and 6). The original two store fronts were flush with the façade of the building, but have now been recessed (Figure 7, Photos 6 and 7). The two recessed commercial store fronts are a combination of concrete and metal construction. These now vacant store fronts are accessed by modern metal-frame business doors and flank the main entrance to the building. The main entrance to the building is through paired wood replacement doors with faux-antique hardware. The transom above the main entrance is comprised of multiple little panes arranged seven high by 14 across. The transom has begun to deteriorate and has begun to bulge out from the building, possibly as a result of weakening lead muntins. Above the transom is a small wrought-iron balconnette supported by decorative curving brackets over the main entrance. The windows in the second story of the building are large one-over-one wood frame units and appear original. These windows are protected by metal-frame storm windows. A belt course, adorned by the Masonic "G" and square symbol and the date "1883," separates the second and third stories. The third story windows are round-arched stained glass units with architectural embellishments, including ornamental key stones, enhancing the window openings. The central stained glass window extends above the flanking stained glass side units. Above each of the side stained glass units is a small one-over-one window. The parapet at the top of the building is emblazoned with "MASONIC TEMPLE," but the "N" in "MASONIC" is missing (Photo 9). The north (side) elevation is blind. The lower portion of this elevation is sided in corrugated metal with a faded Coca-Cola advertisement painted above. The Coca-Cola advertisement dates back to at least ca. 1915 (Figure 7, Photo 7). The west (rear) elevation has two-over-two wood-frame windows on the second and third stories. A metal fire escape has been added to the west elevation, and the upper northwest window and center second story window openings were converted into fire exits (Photo 8). A new Masonic Temple was constructed on Marshall Road in 1975, and the former Masonic Temple building now appears vacant. With only minimal alterations, the former Masonic Temple overall retains excellent architectural and historical integrity and contributes to the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**16 North Main Street** – According to a plaque on the front of the Shew Building, it was erected in 1896 and rededicated in 1994. It is likely that the building was renovated in ca. 1994 for its rededication. The building is two stories in height and exhibits elements of the Queen Anne style

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

of architecture (Photos 10 and 11). The first story of the east (front) elevation is altered with a stucco cladding. A lintel supported by four pilasters denotes the slightly off-center main entrance, which contains a recessed modern wood door in the center bay. To either side of the door, the end bays have modern wood-frame side lights that are framed by pilasters and flush with the exterior facade. A modern recessed side entrance is located on the northeast corner of the east elevation, and it is also framed by a lintel supported by pilasters. The prominent feature of the building is a large projecting bay window over the main entrance (Photo 12). The projecting bay window has three round-arched windows. An additional round-arched window is located above the side entrance. The windows appear to be original one-over-one wood-frame units protected by metal frame storm windows. The arched portions of the windows have decorative sunburst patterns. The roof line features a parapet, cornice, and decorative frieze (Photo 12). The south (side) elevation is blind and clad in corrugated metal. A small one-story concrete-block addition has been added to the blind west (rear) elevation. The exposed portion of the north (side) elevation is red brick with one-over-one wood-frame windows. Historic photographs show that the first story was originally a store front, but the store front was in-filled, likely in ca. 1994 prior to the building's rededication (Figure 8). The second story, including the projecting bay, has experienced little alteration. Despite the altered first story, the building overall retains sufficient architectural and historical integrity to contribute to the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**20 North Main Street** – The Fenzel Building is a small one-story commercial building constructed in 1906 as Casper Fenzel's jewelry store (Crout 2000) (Photos 13 and 14). The building features a Beaux Arts façade on the east (front) elevation. The architectural ornamentation is made of glazed terracotta tiles (Photo 15). The main entrance is a mid-twentieth century metal frame door with aluminum handles. Flanking the main entrance are mid-twentieth century curved glass show windows with faux marble bulkhead panels. The main entrance and show windows are framed by the tile, and an ornate cornice supported by decorative tile brackets and is located on the roofline. A center panel reads "Fenzel" (Photo 15). While formerly a jewelry store, the building is now used by the Middletown Board of Realtors for their office. The north and south (side) elevations are not visible because they share common walls with the neighboring buildings. The west (rear) elevation of the building is painted brick with a modern door with a header light on the southwest corner of the building. Additional openings on this elevation have been in-filled by concrete block. A ca. 1924 photograph shows that the show windows were originally straight and not curved (Figure 8). Although the main door is not visible in the ca. 1924 photograph, the current door is clearly a replacement door. The building retains a fair level of architectural and historical integrity and contributes to the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**24 North Main Street** – The former Montgomery Ward building was constructed sometime between ca. 1924 and ca. 1929 (Photos 16 and 17). Historic photographs taken during that time show the two-story brick building replaced a one-story building with round-arched bays (Figures 7 and 8). It is possible that the former Montgomery Ward building incorporated at least a portion of this original building because the Butler County Auditor's Office lists a construction date of 1890, but the current building has been altered. The large two-story red-brick building rests on a concrete foundation and occupies a rectangular footprint. The first story of the east (front)

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

elevation has been in-filled by cream-colored bricks. A ca. 1929 photograph shows that the first story was originally a series of show windows utilized by the department store (Figure 9). The four window openings in the second story of the east (front) elevation have been in-filled by concrete block. In addition, the parapet on this elevation has been topped by concrete block, replacing a basic white cornice (Figure 9). The north (side) elevation is now blind because three small windows have been in-filled by brick. The west (rear) elevation maintains its utilitarian appearance with exposed vent work and a cargo door. The façade has experienced a lot of in-fill and alterations. Because of the extent of these alterations, the former department store building lacks architectural and historical integrity and does not contribute to the Main Street Commercial District.

**11 South Main Street** – The former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building is a large seven story building constructed in 1930 (Figure 10; Photos 18 and 19). Local architect, Harold W. Goetz, Sr., designed the Art Deco style building (Crout 2000). The front (north) and side (east and west) elevations of the building are sheathed in smooth sandstone. The north elevation is six bays wide and fronts onto Central Avenue while the west elevation is eight bays wide and fronts onto South Main Street. The main entrance on the north (front) elevation of the building is through an inset archway flanked by large sculptural reliefs of griffins sitting on pilasters (Photo 20). Griffins were utilized as architectural ornamentation for financial institutions because of the legend of griffins guarding large gold stashes (Photo 21). Below each of the griffins hangs a large elaborate electric light fixture. Ornate scrollwork, done in relief, adorns the top of the arched entryway. The main entrance is through modern metal-frame doors. Marble panels sheath the ground level of the north and west elevations, while the majority of the building is constructed of concrete made to look like sandstone blocks. Above the griffins and scrollwork ornamentation are uniform window openings. The windows are modern metal-frame units with hinged lower panels and fixed upper panes. A blind, four bay, utility area extends above the top level of these windows. Although the main portion of the bank building appears vacant, heavy metal grills remain covering the first story windows on the north elevation and the window on the northwest corner of the west (side) elevation. Three large windows comprised of four larger central panes flanked by four smaller panes on either side are located on the west elevation (Photo 22). A side entrance with a large ornate light is located on the southwest corner of the west elevation. The south (rear) elevation is blind with a modern shed-roof glass-wall addition constructed on the southeast corner of this elevation. A branch of the Fifth Third Bank operates out of this addition. The exterior of the upper stories of the south elevation is brick. The lower two stories of the east (side) elevation share a common wall with a two-story section projecting from the main portion of the bank building. This two-story section also is sheathed in the same smooth sandstone as the main portion of the building. A ca. 1940 postcard photograph of the building show that the first story of the two-story section was originally a display window (Figure 11). This display window has been in-filled with concrete paneling and two modern metal-frame windows. The three original metal louver windows visible in the ca. 1940 postcard have been replaced by modern single-pane, metal-frame windows. The area above each window is adorned with a flower cartouche. The upper stories of the east elevation of the main portion of the building are identical to the upper stories of the west elevation. Art Deco architectural details featuring a stylized geometric motif surround the roof line on all elevations except on the south elevation. Historic photographs show that the original industrial sash windows have been

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

replaced by modern metal-frame windows, and the main entrance has been altered by replacing a smaller entrance protected by a wrought-iron gate with the current paired metal-frame modern business doors and metal-frame sidelights (Figure 11 and Photo 20). The remaining portions of the building remain unaltered. Despite these alterations, the former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building overall retains architectural and historical integrity, and is one of the few examples of Art Deco architecture in Middletown. This building contributes to the historical and architectural significance of the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**2 South Main Street** – The former Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company building was designed by the architectural firm of Walker and Weeks out of Cleveland, Ohio (Johannesen 1999:163). The building was constructed in 1928 by contractor Ed Frisch under the direction of bank president W. O. Barnitz (Crout 2000; Figures 12, 13, 14, and 15; Photos 23 and 24). The two-story bank building's main façade is on the east elevation and fronts onto South Main Street. The north (side) elevation fronts onto Central Avenue. The building has a Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture with a large pedimented portico and entablature supported by six large concrete Corinthian columns resting on a marble paneled base on the south elevation (Photo 26). The pediment extends above the roofline and features dentil detailing and a circle window. The main entrance has modern metal and glass doors, with a concrete Neo-Classical broken-pediment surround adorned with an urn decoration (Photo 25). The windows on this elevation are metal frame replacement three-over-three windows with concrete headers supported by ornate concrete scroll brackets. The north (side) elevation has five large windows comprised of six larger center panes flanked by smaller side lights. This elevation is embellished by eight Corinthian pilasters. Elaborate scroll architectural details highlight the areas between the tops of the pilasters. A cornice with dentil ornamentation extends along the roofline of this elevation as well. A one story addition with a Neo-Classical revival style wraps around the south (side) and west (rear) elevations of the building. In 1963, several buildings south of the bank building were demolished to make way for this addition and to provide additional parking areas for the expanded customer services (Crout 2000). The visible portions of the south and west elevations of the main building above the one-story addition are blind and lack any architectural ornamentation. Historic photographs show that the main portion of the building has experienced little alteration, with the exception of the replacement of the large windows on the north elevation (Figures 13, 14, and 15). Despite the altered windows, the building retains a high level of architectural and historical integrity and contributes to the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**30, 32, and 34 South Main Street** – According to the South Main Street Historic District nomination, the U.S. Hotel Building was constructed in 1831 and is the oldest hotel in Middletown (Clark 1977). The building features a Victorian Italianate architectural style and is constructed of brick (Photos 27, 28, and 29). The building is three stories in height with a five-bay east (front) elevation. The first story of the building is divided into two store fronts with sheet metal bulkheads. The upper stories feature ornamental hooded window openings with wood-frame one-over-one windows likely dating to the early twentieth century, because the glass appears to have been machine-made. The cornice line is adorned by dentils, corner brackets, and a ribbon-style motif. The parapet at the top of the building is inscribed with "U.S. Hotel" (Photo 28). Multiple additions added to the west (rear) of the building extend the building approximately 200 feet (Photo 29). Several one-over-one windows pierce the north (side)

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

elevation. A ca. 1900 painting shows that while the bulkheads and windows have been altered or replaced, the majority of the building remains unaltered and some of these alterations may have taken place within the period of significance (Figure 16). This building contributes to the historical and architectural significance of the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**36 South Main Street** – According to the South Main Street Historic District nomination, the former Rose Furniture building was constructed in ca. 1890, and was the first building in Middletown to utilize a large glass storefront (Clark 1977). The three-story brick building is now vacant and has suffered some deterioration (Photos 30 and 31). The first story of the east (front) elevation features an altered commercial storefront. The storefront has metal-frame display windows with brick bulkheads. The entrance has been in-filled with plywood painted white, and pierced by a modern metal door (Photo 30). The second story has metal-frame windows of various sizes, each with a single-pane transom. The third-story windows are uniform metal-frame windows with single-pane transoms, each separated by a Doric pilaster. The cornice is supported by basic decorative brackets (Photo 30). Multiple additions have been added to the west (rear) elevation (Photo 31). Despite these alterations, the building contributes to the historical and architectural significance of the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**44 South Main Street** – This commercial building is recorded in the South Main Street Historic District nomination as 44–46 South Main Street. According to the nomination, this building was once owned by an iron foundry that fabricated storefronts, and may have created the cast-iron Italianate façade for this building (Clark 1977). The building was constructed during the 1890s. The three-story, three-bay, brick building features a first-story storefront and a two-story side entrance portion which shares a common wall with 50 South Main Street (Photo 32). The building retains its entire first floor façade of cast iron. The upper stories feature ornate hooded one-over-one windows. The cornice is supported by decorative brackets. Several additions have been built on the rear of the building (Photo 34). With only minimal alterations, the building overall retains excellent architectural and historical integrity and contributes to the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**50 South Main Street** – This commercial building is recorded in the South Main Street Historic District nomination as 50–52 South Main Street. According to the nomination, this building was constructed during the 1890s (Clark 1977). The three-and-a-half-story brick building features a Queen Anne architectural style (Photo 33). The first story of the building has a storefront and a side entry to the remainder of the building. Although the storefront now has concrete bulkheads and metal-frame display windows, some of the original cast-iron ornamentation, including pilasters, remains intact. The upper stories of the building feature a domed bay window, two stories in height, with carved wood ornament. In addition, a vertical series of narrow windows topped by a round-arch window emphasize the vertical style of the building (Photo 33). The parapet has dentil ornamentation. Historic photographs show the domed bay window and the narrow vertical round-arch windows, but the first floor storefront is not visible (Figures 15 and 16). A three-story, shed-roof addition with multiple interior chimneys, likely constructed shortly after the front portion of the building was built, extends from the west (rear) elevation (Photo 34). This building contributes to the historical and architectural significance of the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

**56 South Main Street** – The Pickwick Building is one of the oldest commercial buildings in Middletown. According to the South Main Street Historic District nomination, the Pickwick Building was constructed in 1836 in the Federal architectural style (Clark 1977). The two-story, five-bay, brick building has a side-gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles with an internal brick chimney on the ridgeline on the south (side) elevation (Photo 35). The central bay of the first floor features the main entry adorned by two Doric columns topped by ornamental brackets and an oval stained-glass transom. The central bay of the second story has a smaller wood-frame one-over-one window and has had a wrought-iron balcony removed. The remaining bays have larger wood-frame one-over-one windows, and featured shutters during the 1978 survey that have since been removed. Several brick additions have been added to the rear of the building (Photo 36). The building has been utilized for numerous commercial purposes over the years. During the mid-1980s, the building experienced a substantial renovation, and then in 2000, the Middletown Historical Society purchased the building for use as its headquarters. A 1913 photograph shows that despite the renovations, the building continues to look the same (Figure 17). This building contributes to the historical and architectural significance of the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**64 South Main Street** – According to the South Main Street Historic District nomination, the house at 64 South Main Street was constructed in 1864 (Clark 1977). The two-story brick house has an Italianate architectural style with a side-gable roof sheathed in gray slate tiles. Two interior brick chimneys and two small gable windows pierce the roof (Photo 37). The building features a main entry with side lights and a multi-pane transom, Palladian motif window, and wrought iron railings. At the time of the 1978 nomination, much of the original interior woodwork remained. Although originally constructed as a domestic residence, the Middletown City Directories recorded a physician's office located at 62 South Main Street during the 1920s through at least the 1940s. In ca. 1920, physician Dr. Edward Bauer began operating a private medical practice out of the building. The 1940 U.S. Census recorded Edward Bauer as a surgical doctor with a private practice residing at 62 South Main Street with his wife and adult son. The house number was later changed to 64 South Main Street. The Butler County Auditor's Office classifies this building as a commercial office building with a mixed residential use. The building contributes to the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**68 South Main Street** – According to the South Main Street Historic District nomination, the George Barnitz Residence was constructed in 1870 in a High Victorian architectural style (Clark 1977; Photo 38). The two-story brick building has a cross-hipped roof sheathed in asphalt shingles with at least two interior brick chimneys. The first story of the residence has been altered by the addition of metal-frame commercial windows. The round-arch main entry has an ornamental Victorian style surround. The hooded round-arch windows on the second story are two-over-two wood-frame windows. The cornice is supported by paired eave brackets. The residential/commercial building contributes to the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

**57 South Main Street** – The Sorg Opera House is a substantial four-story building located on the east side of South Main Street. The South Main Street Historic District nomination recorded the Sorg Opera House at 53–67 South Main Street. According to the nomination, the Sorg Opera

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

House was constructed in 1890. The opera house was designed by architect Samuel Hannaford, who also designed the Sorg Mansion at 206 South Main Street and the Music Hall and City Hall in Cincinnati (Clark 1977). The west (front) elevation features a Richardsonian Romanesque architectural style with a red and white limestone façade (Photos 39 and 40). The first story of the building features two storefronts and a central main entrance. The second and third stories have mainly one-over-one replacement windows, but some original two-over-two windows remain. A red limestone balcony adorns the two central windows on the third story. The fourth story windows are large round-arch windows with red limestone round arches embellished with red and white limestone in a checker-board pattern above. The remainder of the building is red brick with several additions added to the rear portion of the building (Photos 39 and 40). A ca. 1920 photograph of the Sorg Opera House shows that the first story was divided into four storefronts and a central main entrance (Figure 18). In addition, the photograph shows that numerous commercial buildings were sited to the north of the Sorg Opera House, but those commercial buildings have since been demolished (Figure 18). The building contributes to the historical and architectural significance of the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

#### Criteria Considerations

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

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

ECONOMICS

**Period of Significance**

1831-1930

**Significant Dates**

1831, 1836, 1883

1890, 1896, 1906

1921, 1929, 1930

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Goetz, Harold W., Sr.

Hannaford, Samuel

Walker and Weeks

Frisch, Ed

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The buildings located within the Main Street Commercial Historic District are representative of Middletown's commercial and financial development and are some of the most impressive buildings architecturally in Middletown. The fourteen contributing buildings to the Main Street Commercial Historic District are significant for their association with the commercial and economic development of Middletown that was spurred by Middletown's substantial nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial successes (Criterion A). In addition, these buildings are significant because they represent a variety of architectural styles that embody the characteristics of nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings, which enhances the architectural character of Middletown (Criterion C). Architectural styles represented within the Main Street Commercial Historic District include: the Early Republic Federal style; the Late Victorian Italianate, Queen Anne, Renaissance Revival, and Romanesque styles; the late nineteenth and twentieth century Beaux Arts and Neo-Classical Revival styles; and the Modern Movement Art Deco style. The fourteen contributing buildings were constructed between 1831 and 1930. The period of significance for the Main Street Commercial Historic District begins in 1831 with the construction of the first building in the historic district and extends to 1930, when Middletown's economic vitality suffered as a result of the Great Depression. Because of this economic turn of fate, commercial construction within the Main Street Commercial Historic District halted in 1930 and did not resume in any significant fashion until the late 1960s.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Main Street Commercial Historic District is significant under Criterion A in the areas of COMMERCE and ECONOMICS for its role in the commercial and economic development of Middletown, Ohio. Some of the earliest commercial buildings within Middletown, including the U.S. Hotel at 30-34 South Main Street and the Pickwick Building at 56 South Main Street, were constructed near the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue. During the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, another group of commercial buildings, including the former Masonic Temple at 4 North Main Street, the Shew Building at 16 North Main Street, the Fenzel Building at 20 North Main Street, the former Rose Furniture Building at 36 South Main Street, and the Sorg Opera House at 57 South Main Street were constructed during an economic upswing for Middletown. Then in the 1920s, the three large bank buildings, including the former First & Merchant Bank building at 2 North Main Street, the former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building at 11 South Main Street, and the former Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company building at 2 South Main Street, were constructed to replace smaller buildings at the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue. The contributing buildings within the Main Street Commercial Historic District are illustrative of the commercial and economic development resulting from the industrial expansion and improvements in transportation in downtown Middletown.

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

The Main Street Commercial Historic District also is significant under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. Each of the 14 contributing buildings is unique, and together, embody the characteristics of nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. The earliest architectural style in the district is represented by the Federal-style Pickwick Building at 56 South Main Street. The U.S. Hotel at 30–34 South Main Street, the former Rose Furniture building at 36 South Main Street, the commercial building at 44 South Main Street, and the domestic/commercial buildings at 64 and 68 South Main Street characterize the Italianate style. The Shew Building at 16 North Main Street and the commercial building at 50 South Main Street represent the Queen Anne architectural style. The former Masonic Temple, at 4 North Main Street, features the Renaissance Revival architectural style. The Sorg Opera House at 57 South Main Street was constructed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The Beaux Arts architectural style is represented by the former First & Merchant Bank building at 2 North Main Street and the Fenzel Building at 20 North Main Street. The Neo-classical Revival style is embodied by the former Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company building at 2 South Main Street. The Art Deco architecture style is demonstrated by the former Middletown Building and Deposit Association Bank building at 11 South Main Street.

The exceptionally noteworthy architectural examples within the Main Street Commercial Historic District include the Sorg Opera House, the former Oglesby-Barnitz Bank building, and the former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building. The Richardsonian Romanesque-style Sorg Opera House was designed by architect Samuel Hannaford from Cincinnati, Ohio. Hannaford's most famous works include the Cincinnati City Hall and the Cincinnati Music Hall, which remains a center for culture in Cincinnati (Grace 2011:33-34). Both of these buildings have a Richardsonian Romanesque architectural style, and the Sorg Opera House serves as another excellent example of Hannaford's work. The Cleveland, Ohio, firm of Walker and Weeks designed the Neo-Classical Revival-style former Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company building. The firm of Walker and Weeks designed many of the major public buildings in Cleveland using the Classical style. In addition, the firm designed several bank buildings, numerous suburban residences, and many other lesser buildings (Johannesen 1999:1-3). The former Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company building serves as an excellent example of why "... the firm of Walker & Weeks is recognized as being instrumental to a large degree, in development of a fine style of architecture in the Mid-West" (Johannesen 1999:1). Finally, the Art Deco-style former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building was designed by local architect Harold W. Goetz, Sr. Goetz served on Middletown's Planning Commission during the early 1930s (*Hamilton Daily News Journal* 1934:13). He also designed a wing addition to the Middletown Hospital and the Bambo Harris Homes, a residential subdivision in Hamilton, Ohio (*Hamilton Daily News Journal* 1937:2; 1942:12). Designing the former Middletown Building and Deposit Association appears to have been the pinnacle of Harold W. Goetz, Sr.'s career, and the building remains an excellent example of a noteworthy locally designed building.

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH  
County and State

Name of Property

Historic Context

The city of Middletown was laid out in 1802 by Stephen Vail, a pioneer who had traveled to what would become the Middletown area from New Jersey. The original plat of the town contained 52 lots located east of the river (Simms 1906:6). The Main Street Commercial Historic District occupies the southern portion of Vail's original plat (Figure 19). The growth of Middletown during its early years was slow, and during the early 1820s, the trading center of the region was located in Jacksonburg, north of Middletown. Jacksonburg had a population of approximately 600-700 while Middletown only had a population of about 300. Middletown's fortunes would change with the construction of the Miami-Erie Canal. In 1825, the ground breaking ceremony was held for the canal in Middletown, and by 1827 the canal was opened from Cincinnati to as far north as Middletown (Crout 1965:70).

Some of the earliest general stores were opened in Middletown during this time. H. Crawford operated a general store, likely within the original plat of Middletown, during the 1820s. In 1828, Mr. Z. Brown started a general store in Middletown. He sold his merchandise for cash or would exchange goods for barter. He would accept "wheat, whiskey, lindsey, feathers, butter, beeswax, tallow, etc." in trade for his goods (Crout 1949:117). The canal provided these early general stores access to goods from east coast cities. General store advertisements from the mid-nineteenth century bragged of cheap goods including clothing, glassware, and staple dry goods that arrived to the stores from New York and Philadelphia (Crout 1949:117). None of these early general stores remain in the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

In 1833, Middletown was incorporated and canal traffic continued to increase. By the mid-1830s, approximately 1,000 travelers a week passed through the city via the canal. In addition to passenger service, the canal provided inexpensive transportation for freight, including agricultural and natural resources (Crout 1965:70-71; Clendenin and Miller 2011:104). During the winter of 1835-1836, Gardner Phipps and Sumner Hudson, originally from Boston, established a pork packing business in Middletown. Because of the Miami-Erie Canal, the pork packing industry in Middletown benefitted from affordable and efficient transportation. By 1840, three pork houses were operating in Middletown. During the winters of the mid-nineteenth century, between 10,000 and 20,000 hogs were butchered and packed, becoming Middletown's chief export. Distilleries and gristmills also operated in Middletown. The majority of these industries operated along the canal to make transportation as efficient as possible (Crout 1960:61-63).

The development of Middletown during this period shifted eastward from the Great Miami River and was centered along the Miami-Erie Canal because it offered the best transportation option (Crout 1960:61-63). Main Street was located between the river and the canal and benefited from the economic opportunities offered by the improving transportation system. The canal was located less than a quarter of a mile east of Main Street. The increasing business opportunities at this time resulted in the construction of the U.S. Hotel at 34 South Main Street and the Pickwick Building at 56 South Main Street. The Pickwick Building was originally constructed by Thomas Ward as a domestic dwelling in 1836, but the building became an inn and a stagecoach stop by the mid-nineteenth century. In addition to the hostelry services, these buildings were utilized for

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

various commercial interests, including taverns, coffee houses, retail, and offices (Middletown Historical Society 2008).

Early banking activities were centered in Hamilton, the county seat for Butler County located southwest of Middletown. In 1840, the Canal Bank was organized in Middletown, but did not offer full banking services, and many of the banking services utilized by Middletown residents continued to be furnished by the Bank of Hamilton. During the mid-1840s, Middletown businessmen and brother-in-laws, George Barnitz and William Oglesby, began operating a dry goods store in Middletown. Their store became a trusted and valued commercial enterprise for area farmers. By 1850, Barnitz and Oglesby parlayed that trust and formed the first bank in Middletown to offer full banking services including deposits, exchanges, and credits. This first bank operated on the southwest corner of the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue (formerly Third Street), the future site of the Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company building at 2 South Main Street (Crout 1949:36-37).

Although the Oglesby-Barnitz Bank was the first full service bank in Middletown, competition soon arose. In response to the National Banking Act passed by Congress in 1864, the First National Bank of Middletown was organized in 1865. Then in 1872, the Merchant's National Bank was established. In response to a growing demand for loans, the rival firms of the First Middletown Building and Savings Association and the Middletown Building and Savings Institution were chartered in 1868 to provide credit to Middletown residents. In 1875, the firms merged into the Union Loan and Building Association. This banking firm became the Middletown Federal Savings and Loan Association (Clendenin and Miller 2011:88-89).

As industry continued to grow in Middletown, a source of power to operate the mills and factories was required. On April 3, 1852, the mayor and city trustees authorized the Hydraulic Company "to construct a canal or race from the Northern limits of said Corporation through said Water Street . . . as far South as the Southern side of Lebanon Street, for the conveyance of water for Hydraulic purposes" (Crout 1960:86-87). This engineering resource would be known simply as the Hydraulic, and was located north of the Main Street Commercial Historic District. Local residents were allowed to withdraw water from the Hydraulic for domestic purposes and the city could pump water from it for the purpose of extinguishing fires, but the main purpose of the Hydraulic was to power industrial mills. The Hydraulic intersected the Miami-Erie Canal and a system of gates were constructed to allow canal boats access to the Hydraulic, greatly increasing the efficiency of transporting products to and from the industries sited along the Hydraulic (Crout 1960:86-89).

One industry that benefited greatly from the Hydraulic was the paper industry. Several paper companies were established along the banks of the Hydraulic, and by the late nineteenth century, Middletown was known as the "Paper City" (Crout 1960:95). The paper produced in Middletown ranged from low-grade straw and manila paper used for wrapping to some of the finest writing paper available. Paper for newsprint and medium-grade writing paper seem to have made up the bulk of the paper produced. The booming paper industry allowed for the construction of several of the residential buildings that contribute to the South Main Street Historic District (NR# 78002015). During the early years of the paper industry in Middletown, most of the

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

transportation needs were met by the Miami-Erie Canal, but by the mid-nineteenth century, a new quicker and more efficient transportation method, the railroad, began to compete with the canal (Crout 1960:95-97).

The dominance of the Miami-Erie Canal in commercial transportation declined in the mid-nineteenth century as a result of the construction of the nationwide railroad network. The growing population and the developing industrial base of Middletown, primarily as a result of being a port along the Miami-Erie Canal, made it an attractive location to be connected to the developing railroad network. The first Federal census that recorded the population of Middletown (n=1,087) was the 1850 census, and by 1860, the population of Middletown had almost doubled to 2,070 and jumped to 3,046 by 1870 (Crout 1960:90, 98). The growing population, the established industrial base, and Middletown's geographic location approximately halfway between Cincinnati and Dayton made it an economically attractive location for railroad construction companies in the region (Crout 1960:81-82).

In 1846, the Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton Railroad (CH&D) Company was created. The route to connect Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton was surveyed and passed along the west bank of the Great Miami River. In 1851, the CH&D was completed west of Middletown, along the opposite side of the river, through the small community of Madison (now known as West Middletown). The CH&D provided residents of both Middletown and Madison a more economical and efficient transportation route than what was provided by the Miami-Erie Canal. Even residents opposed to the CH&D, mainly because of its decision to pass through West Middletown instead of Middletown itself, celebrated the completion of this line. The CH&D would eventually be acquired by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) (Crout 1960:81-85).

While many Middletown residents were upset by the CH&D decision to locate along the western bank of the Great Miami River, in May 1851, survey of a new route linking Dayton to Cincinnati provided citizens of Middletown with hope that a railroad would be constructed along the eastern edge of the city itself. This railroad, twelve miles shorter than the CH&D, would be known as the Shortline Railroad. After two decades of difficulties ranging from contracting disputes to hesitant farmers denying right-of-ways, the Shortline Railroad was finally completed on the eastern edge of Middletown by the Cincinnati and Springfield Railroad (C&S) Company in 1871. In ca. 1872, a small wood-frame depot was constructed by the C&S Company on the northwestern corner of the railroad's intersection with Third Street (now Central Avenue), approximately one mile east of the intersection of the Main Street Commercial Historic District (Crout 1960:84).

Because the CH&D depot and the C&S depot were so important to Middletown, the Middletown and Madison Passenger Street Railway Company was established in 1879, and granted permission to operate horse-drawn street cars along Third Street (now Central Avenue). Since both depots were sited on the outskirts of the city at that time and the roads were gravel with rough sidewalks, people wanted an easy way to get to and from downtown to the depots. The street railway company was established to link the two railroad depots with each other by passing through downtown. The streetcar system was expanded along Main Street during the late nineteenth century. The horse-drawn street cars proved so popular in Middletown that they operated until 1914, long after every other horse-drawn line, except for one in New York City,

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

had shut down (Crout 1960:99). The horse-drawn cars were replaced by electric interurban cars (Figure 14).

With the completion of the railroads, Middletown was poised for another period of economic growth at the end of the nineteenth century. One of the most prominent members of the Middletown business community at this time was Paul J. Sorg. Sorg was born in Wheeling, West Virginia, in 1840 to German immigrant parents, Henry and Elizabeth Sorg. In 1851, the family moved from Wheeling to Cincinnati. Sorg was highly ambitious and was able to attend night school to gain a business education. He became an apprentice to a foundry moulder and quickly was promoted to foreman. In 1864, Sorg met a Cincinnati tobacco roller, John Auer. Auer was a skilled tobacco processor but was unable to keep books. Although Sorg knew nothing of tobacco processing, his night school classes had taught him book keeping. Sorg and Auer organized a tobacco firm which would consolidate with the firm of Wilson and Jacoby, who owned a factory in Cincinnati but lived in Middletown (Crout 1960:105–106).

In 1878, the newly consolidated firm constructed the large tobacco processing factory in Middletown, northeast of the Main Street Commercial District. Shortly after the factory was constructed, Sorg and Auer sold their interests in that company. Sorg and Auer formed a new business of their own and chose to construct their new Paul J. Sorg Tobacco Plant on the eastern edge of Middletown, across the street from the C&S depot. In 1898, the Continental Tobacco Company purchased the plant from Sorg. Eventually the tobacco factory came under the management of the P. Lorillard Company which operated it until the mid-twentieth century (Crout 1960:105–107). Thanks to the efforts of Sorg, companies such as the McSherry Manufacturing Company, maker of grain drills, and the Miami Cycle Manufacturing Company, maker of bicycles, moved their plants to Middletown. Sorg also used his wealth to support the construction of a church and a hotel (Crout 1960:106107).

Paul J. Sorg's biggest contribution to the Main Street Commercial Historic District was the construction of the Sorg Opera House. In 1890, Sorg hired architect Samuel Hannaford to design an opera house as a charitable gift to Middletown. Hannaford was a well-known architect who had designed the City Hall and Music Hall in Cincinnati, as well as Sorg's 35-room mansion located at 206 South Main Street. The opera house opened in 1891, and could seat about 1,200 people on the main floor and in the two balconies. Prior to the construction of the Sorg Opera House, entertainment options within Middletown were limited to smaller theaters such as the Bijou Opera House, which was replaced by the Sorg Opera House (Sorg Revitalization Group 2013). The Sorg Opera House remains a significant commercial resource in Middletown, and a community renewal project is centered on revitalizing the opera house.

Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, Middletown continued to experience population growth. In 1880, the population of community had risen to 4,538 (Crout 1960:98). The growing population of Middletown resulted in it becoming a city in 1886, with 810 out of 1,275 voters approving the town's upgrade to a city. Middletown was granted the status of a Grade 4B city with the approval of the state and county board (Crout 1960:98). The population of the city continued to rise during the last couple decades of the nineteenth century, growing to 7,681 in 1890 and then to 9,215 by 1900 (Crout 1960:98, 109). The booming economy of

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

Middletown can be seen in the 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for the city which show numerous commercial entities operating within the Main Street Commercial Historic District (Figures 20, 21, and 22).

In addition to the Sorg Opera House, several of the contributing resources to the Main Street Commercial Historic District were constructed during the economic boom of this period. The former Rose Furniture building at 36 South Main Street and the two commercial buildings at 44 and 50 South Main Street were constructed in ca. 1890. To take advantage of the growing population, including many people with disposable incomes, the former Rose Furniture building was the first commercial building in Middletown to utilize a large full-glass storefront to attract customers (Clark 1977).

On North Main Street, the former Masonic Temple was constructed by the Jefferson Lodge of the Royal Arch Masons in 1883. Unfortunately, a list of members could not be located, but it is likely that many prominent members of the Middletown business community were members. In addition to being utilized as a meeting hall for the fraternal organization of the Masons, several other Middletown social organizations would hold meetings in the building. Historic photographs show that the building also was used for commercial interests, including a restaurant and a Western Union office (Figures 6 and 7). In 1975, a new Masonic Temple was constructed on Marshall Road (Crout 2000). The former Mason Lodge currently appears vacant.

North of the former Masonic Temple, the Shew Building at 16 North Main Street was constructed in 1896. Various businesses operated out of the Shew Building throughout the years, including a plumbing business, a grocery store, and a Frisch's Big Boy Restaurant. Currently, the building is utilized as the Shew Law Office. Although the Fenzel Building was constructed in 1906, it still benefited from the economic boom that began during the late nineteenth century. The Fenzel Building was constructed by jeweler Casper Fenzel to be used as a jewelry store (Crout 2000). The booming economy produced a demand for jewelry which Fenzel supplied. The building is now occupied by the Middletown Board of Realtors.

At the start of the twentieth century, Middletown was experiencing an industrial boom. On January 1, 1901, the *Middletown News-Signal* published a scholarly edition summarizing Middletown's accomplishments of the nineteenth century. While the historical summary was educational, arguably the most important article in this paper concerned the future of Middletown. The American Rolling Mill Company (ARMCO) was poised to open a giant new industrial complex in Middletown for the purpose of steel production. Under the leadership of company president and treasurer, George M. Verity, ARMCO began operations in the middle of January, 1901, employing approximately 500 workers (Crout 1960:108-109).

After the death of Paul J. Sorg in 1902, George M. Verity became Middletown's leading industrialist and promoter. Verity was born in 1865, attended a variety of schools and finally graduated from high school in Georgetown, Ohio. He then attended college at Nelson's Business College in Cincinnati. Verity served as a store keeper for the camp grounds of the Cincinnati Conference of the Methodist Church because his father was a member of the organization. It was there that he met his future wife, Jean Standish, and began his business career. After Standish's

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

father passed away, Verity assumed the management of the family's wholesale grocery store and oyster depot. He successfully managed the store until Kroger chain grocery stores began to dominate the Cincinnati grocery market and the Standish family sold their store (Crout 1960:108–109).

In 1889, the American Steel Roofing Company in Cincinnati was having so much success that the company's owners were ready to open a new plant in Philadelphia and they needed to find an able manager to take over their Cincinnati factory while they worked to get the Philadelphia factory running. The owners had heard of Verity's business abilities and despite Verity only being 24 years old, he was offered the manager position for the Cincinnati factory. He accepted the offer and managed the company for ten years. While running this factory, Verity came to believe that if he were able to combine steel production and sheet rolling into one factory, then he would be able to cut costs as well as ensure a steady supply of sheet steel to process into a variety of finished products (Crout 1960:109–110).

Verity began searching around Ohio for a suitable location to establish this new factory. He narrowed it down between Middletown and Zanesville, Ohio. The site offered by Middletown proved more acceptable, in large part because of the convenient railroad access. On December 2, 1899, ARMCO was organized and the contract to locate the new factory in Middletown was signed. By July 12, 1900, the site of the ARMCO plant had been prepared, and the cornerstone laying ceremony was held. To celebrate this monumental occasion, stores and factories in Middletown were closed, and city residents formed a parade and marched to the factory site to enjoy the festivities. By 1903, the quality of ARMCO steel was well known, and a representative from the Westinghouse Electric Company traveled to Middletown with specifications for a new type of steel required by the growing electricity industry. ARMCO was able to create this specialty steel and sent its first shipment in June 1903. This specialty steel production enhanced ARMCO's respect within the steel industry and increased demand for its product (Crout 1960:110–112).

At the start of the twentieth century, the Middletown Business Man's Club was organized out of the Quixotic Club which was originally established in 1870 by V.C. Hatfield. The Business Man's Club was the "leading organization of the city, taking the initiative in all matters of pertaining to the industrial and business advancement of the community" (Simms 1906:86). The newly reorganized club held its first meeting on March 3, 1903, and by 1906, had a membership of over two hundred people. Every male citizen of Middletown over the age of 21 and of good repute was eligible for membership. The purpose of the club was to discuss and develop plans for business priorities and matters of general public interest. Most of the prominent men of Middletown, including both Paul J. Sorg and George M. Verity, were members of the group, and through their efforts, many new commercial and industrial ventures were encouraged as well as substantial publicity and advertising campaigns for the city (Simms 1906:86–88).

The 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show a few buildings replacements since 1895, but the bulk of the commercial buildings along Main Street remain unchanged (Figures 23, 24, and 25). The economic growth of Middletown was severely impacted by the Great Flood of 1913. Beginning on March 23, 1913, a steady rain began falling across Ohio. Over the next couple

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

days, a total of six to eleven inches of rain had fallen on the state. The ground was quickly saturated and the rivers began to rise. The Great Miami River, along the west side of Middletown, quickly topped its banks and spilled into Middletown. Historic photographs, taken on March 25, 1913, show the extent of the flood damage with water reaching near the top of the first story of the commercial buildings along Main Street and Central Avenue near the river. The Middletown business community was devastated by the flood, but clean-up began almost immediately. ARMCO supplied railroad equipment, adapted to utilize the street car lines along Main Street and Central Avenue, to assist with the clean up, and Middletown gradually began to recover, thanks in large part to the railroads being able to swiftly remove debris while bringing new construction materials into the city (Figure 17) (Crout 2000).

Middletown experienced significant population growth during the early twentieth century. The population of the city had risen to 13,152 in 1910, then jumped to 23,584 in 1920, and reached 29,992 by 1930 (US Census Bureau 2013). The Main Street Commercial Historic District benefited from the improving road network during the twentieth century. As the automobile took on the prominent role for American transportation, Main Street through Middletown was incorporated into the Dixie Highway system. The Dixie Highway consisted of numerous improved roadways linked together to allow motorists to travel from northern Michigan all the way to southern Florida. The increased traffic would greatly benefit the commercial concerns operating along Main Street (Crout 2000).

The banking institutions in Middletown greatly benefited from this growing population and strengthening economy following the Great Flood of 1913. The First National Bank of Middletown and the Merchant's National Bank merged into the First & Merchant Bank, and then in 1921, the seven-story building at 2 North Main Street on the northwest corner of Main Street and Central Avenue was constructed (Clendenin and Miller 2011:88-89). By 1923, Third Street had become such an important business corridor for Middletown that it was renamed Central Avenue to reflect its importance (Crout 2000).

The Olgesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company followed the First and Merchant Bank's lead and constructed a new bank building in 1929. Following Oglesby's death in 1883, a corporation was organized to take over the bank, but the Oglesby and Barnitz name remained with the institution. In 1888, the first Olgesby-Barnitz bank building was demolished, and a new building was erected. The following year, the bank was reorganized into a state bank. By 1929, the Olgesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company had outgrown the bank building constructed in 1888, and they constructed their third and current building at 2 South Main Street, on the southwest corner of Main Street and Central Avenue (Figure 12) (Crout 2000). The bank eventually became Bank One, but now appears to be partially used as office space and partially vacant.

Not to be outdone, the Middletown Building and Deposit Association hired local architect, Harold W. Goetz, Sr., to design their seven-story building located at 11 South Main Street (Figure 10). Goetz utilized an Art Deco architectural style, which is a rare architectural style in Middletown. The former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building is one of the most prominent and recognizable buildings in Middletown. In 1985, the firm became the MidFed Savings Bank which merged with Fifth Third Bank in 1992. Currently a branch of Fifth Third

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

Bank operates out of the southern addition to the building (Crout 2000). The 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show the newly constructed bank buildings, while the remainder of the commercial buildings, with the exception of some additions, remained unchanged from 1912 (Figures 26, 27, and 28).

Construction of commercial buildings along Main Street was basically halted in 1930, following the onset of the Great Depression. In addition, the population growth in Middletown slowed during this period. Between 1930 and 1940, less than 1,300 citizens were added and the population only grew to 31,220. A little over 2,000 citizens were added during the next decade, with the population increasing to 33,695 in 1950 (US Census Bureau 2013). Following 1930, no additional commercial buildings were constructed along Main Street near the Main Street Commercial District until the late 1960s. During this time, several commercial building within the district were demolished and not replaced.

While the Dixie Highway proved to be a significant transportation resource for the district, the improving road network system, particularly the construction of the nationwide interstate system, would eventually hurt the district. The increasing reliance on the automobile resulted in the demolition of several commercial buildings along Main Street to create parking lots. During the mid-twentieth century all the commercial buildings between the Sorg Opera House at 57 South Main Street and the former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building at 11 South Main Street were demolished. In 1963, the president of the Olgesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company demolished the commercial buildings between his bank building at 2 South Main Street and the U.S. Hotel at 34 South Main Street (Crout 2000). The commercial building between the former Masonic Temple at 4 North Main Street and the Shew Building at 16 North Main Street was also demolished.

Beginning in the 1950s, construction of a major north-south highway, Interstate 75 (I-75), to connect northern Michigan to southern Florida began. I-75 passed approximately four and a half miles east of the Main Street Commercial Historic District. Because I-75 allowed travelers to more conveniently journey to locations throughout the country, the commercial development in Middletown shifted east, away from Main Street to along I-75. The population of Middletown fluctuated from 42,115 in 1960 to 48,694 in 2010 with some decades experiencing population growth while other decades suffered population loss (US Census Bureau 2013). Although the Main Street Commercial Historic District suffers from vacancy and some neglect, it has survived, and its contributing resources are representative of commercial and financial institution buildings, including some of the most impressive buildings in Middletown, that are significant for their association with the development of Middletown's architectural, commercial, and economic history.

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

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Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

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1906 *Middletown in Black and White*. The Journal Printing Company, Middletown, Ohio.
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2013 Sorg Timeline. Accessed July 2013. Available online at: [http://sorgoperahouse.org/?page\\_id=580](http://sorgoperahouse.org/?page_id=580)
- United States Census Bureau  
2013 Middletown (city), Ohio, Quickfacts. Available online at: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/39/3949840.html>

---

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: MidPointe Library System: Middletown

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

---

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.83

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

#### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16N Easting: 723039 Northing: 4377146

#### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary for the Main Street Commercial Historic District, from its northern most point, extends southeast along the north side of the former Montgomery Ward building at 24 North Main Street until reaching the west side of North Main Street. The boundary then turns southwest and runs along the western curb of North Main Street and crosses Central Avenue. At the southwest corner of Main Street and Central Avenue, the boundary turns to the southeast and extends across Central Avenue to the northeast corner of the former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building at 11 South Main Street. The boundary then turns to the southwest to encompass both the seven-story and two-story portions of the former Middletown Building and Deposit Association building, before turning to the northwest until reaching South Main Street. From here, the boundary turns to the southwest and extends on the eastern curb of South Main Street until reaching the northwest corner of the Sorg Opera House at 57 South Main Street. The boundary then extends around the Sorg Opera House to encompass the resource's parcel. The southern edge of the

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

boundary runs northwest along the south side of the Sorg Opera House and crosses South Main Street. In front of 68 South Main Street, the boundary turns to the southwest and runs along the western curb of South Main Street until it reaches 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. The boundary then turns to the northwest and follows the northern curb of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue until reaching an unnamed alley at the rear of the parcels along South Main Street. The boundary then turns to the northeast running along the eastern side of the alley until it crosses Central Avenue. On the north side of Central Avenue, the boundary makes a slight jog northwest before once again, running along the eastern side of the alley until it reaches the starting point.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary was chosen to encompass the historic resources located along Main Street that are associated with the commercial and economic development of Middletown, Butler County, Ohio. The district is centered on the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue as those were the two most important streets in the city of Middletown. The southern portion of the Main Street Commercial District overlaps the northern part of the South Main Street Historic District (NR# 78002015) to encompass all the commercial and economic resources associated with the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Benjamin M. Riggle/Senior Historian  
organization: Hardlines Design Company  
street & number: 4608 Indianola Avenue  
city or town: Columbus state: OH zip code: 43214  
e-mail bmriggle@hardlinesdesign.com  
telephone: (614)-784-8733  
date: April 26, 2013

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: South Main Street Historic District (Boundary Increase)

City or Vicinity: Middletown

County: Butler

State: OH

Photographer: Terry Glaze and Benjamin M. Riggle

Date Photographed: March 29, 2013 and July 11, 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 40 \_\_\_ Southeast corner of 2 North Main Street, looking northwest.
- 2 of 40 \_\_\_ Southwest corner of 2 North Main Street, looking northeast.
- 3 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of main entry on east elevation of 2 North Main Street, looking west.
- 4 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of upper stories of east elevation of 2 North Main Street, looking west.
- 5 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of round-arch windows on south elevation of 2 North Main Street, looking west.
- 6 of 40 \_\_\_ East elevation of 4 North Main Street, looking west.
- 7 of 40 \_\_\_ Northeast corner of 4 North Main Street, looking southwest.
- 8 of 40 \_\_\_ Northwest corner of 4 North Main Street, looking southeast.
- 9 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of upper level and parapet of 4 North Main Street, looking west.
- 10 of 40 \_\_\_ Southeast corner of 16 North Main Street, looking northwest.
- 11 of 40 \_\_\_ Southwest corner of 16 North Main Street, looking northeast.

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Butler County, OH  
County and State

- 12 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of bay and second story of 16 North Main Street, looking northwest.
- 13 of 40 \_\_\_ East elevation of 20 North Main Street, looking west.
- 14 of 40 \_\_\_ West elevation of 20 North Main Street, looking east.
- 15 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of parapet of 20 North Main Street, looking west.
- 16 of 40 \_\_\_ Northeast corner of 24 North Main Street, looking southwest.
- 17 of 40 \_\_\_ Northwest corner of 24 North Main Street, looking southeast.
- 18 of 40 \_\_\_ Northeast corner of 11 South Main Street, looking southwest.
- 19 of 40 \_\_\_ Southwest corner of 11 South Main Street, looking northeast.
- 20 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of main entry on north elevation of 11 South Main Street, looking south.
- 21 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of upper stories of north elevation of 11 South Main Street, looking south.
- 22 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of lower level of west elevation of 11 South Main Street, looking east.
- 23 of 40 \_\_\_ Northeast corner of 2 South Main Street, view looking southwest.
- 24 of 40 \_\_\_ Southwest corner of 2 South Main Street, view looking northeast.
- 25 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of main entry on east elevation of 2 South Main Street, view looking west.
- 26 of 40 \_\_\_ Detail of pediment and entablature on east elevation of 2 South Main Street, view looking west.
- 27 of 40 \_\_\_ Northeast corner of 30, 32, and 34 South Main Street, view looking southwest.
- 28 of 40 \_\_\_ East elevation of 30, 32, and 34 South Main Street, view looking west.
- 29 of 40 \_\_\_ West elevation of 30, 32, and 34 South Main Street, view looking east.
- 30 of 40 \_\_\_ East elevation of 36 South Main Street, view looking west.
- 31 of 40 \_\_\_ West elevation of 36 South Main Street, view looking southeast.
- 32 of 40 \_\_\_ East elevation of 44 South Main Street, view looking west.
- 33 of 40 \_\_\_ East elevation of 50 South Main Street, view looking west.

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

34 of 40 \_\_\_ Southwest corner of 50 and 44 South Main Street, view looking northeast.

35 of 40 \_\_\_ Southeast corner of 56 South Main Street, view looking northwest.

36 of 40 \_\_\_ West elevation of 50 South Main Street, view looking east.

37 of 40 \_\_\_ Northeast corner of 64 South Main Street, view looking southwest.

38 of 40 \_\_\_ East elevation of 68 South Main Street, view looking west.

39 of 40 \_\_\_ Southwest corner of 57 South Main Street, view looking northeast.

40 of 40 \_\_\_ Northwest corner of 57 South Main Street, view looking southeast.

### List of Figures

Figure 1. Location of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

Figure 2. Aerial photograph showing the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

Figure 3. NRHP property boundary map of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio with photo locations

Figure 4. Map showing the Main Street Commercial Historic District boundary in relation to the South Main Street Historic District boundary in Middletown, Ohio

Figure 5. Ca. 1923 photograph showing the First and Merchants National Bank Building and the Masonic Temple in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking northwest

Figure 6. 1887 lithograph image created by artist Frank Henry Howe showing Main Street north of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (Central Avenue), the Masonic Temple is on the left side of the image, in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking north

Figure 7. Ca. 1915 photograph postcard showing the Masonic Temple prior to the construction of the First and Merchants National Bank Building in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest

Figure 8. Ca. 1924 photograph of the west side of North Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

- Figure 9. Ca. 1929 photograph of the west side of North Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest
- Figure 10. 1930 photograph of the Middletown Building and Deposit Association Building being constructed in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest
- Figure 11. Ca. 1940 postcard photograph of the Middletown Building and Deposit Association Building in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southeast
- Figure 12. 1928 photograph of the laying of the cornerstone for the Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company Building being constructed in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 13. 1929 postcard of the Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company Building in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 14. Ca. 1930 photograph of the Cincinnati & Lake Erie Railroad Company's electric interurban car 119 passing of the Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company Building in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest
- Figure 15. Ca. 1938 photograph of the west side of South Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest
- Figure 16. Ca. 1900 painting by Herbert W. Fall showing the west side of South Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest
- Figure 17. 1913 photograph of the clean up following the Great Flood of 1913 showing the west side of South Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking northwest
- Figure 18. Ca. 1920 photograph of the east side of South Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking northeast
- Figure 19. Stephen Vail's 1802 plat of Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 20. 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the northern portion of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 21. 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southeast corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Butler County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

- Figure 22. 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southwest corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 23. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the northern portion of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 24. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southeast corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 25. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southwest corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 26. 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the northern portion of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 27. 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southeast corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio
- Figure 28. 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southwest corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

**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.460 et seq.).

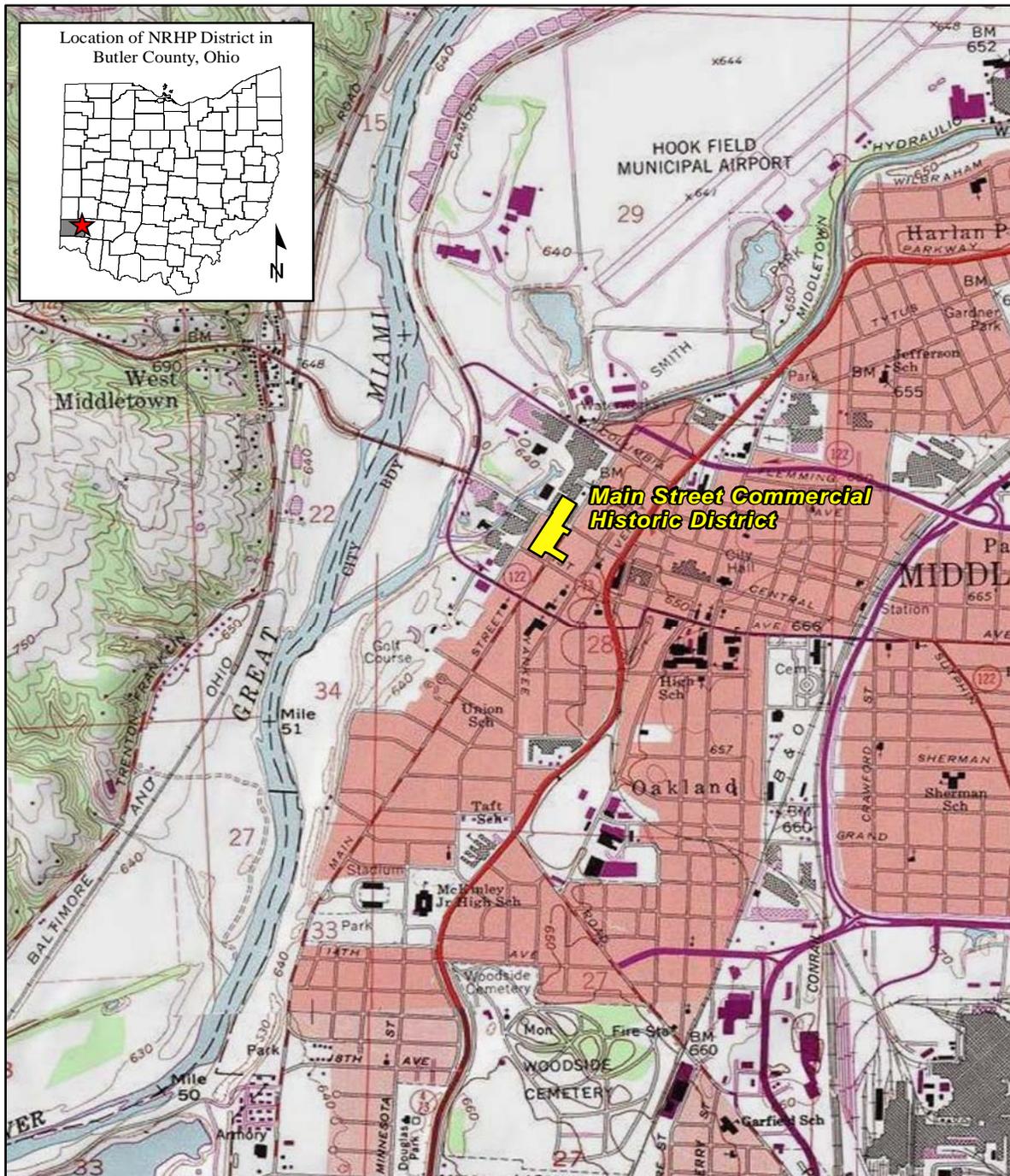
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property Butler County, Ohio
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 1



HDC 2013  
Source: USGS, ESRI  
Scale 1:24,000

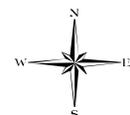
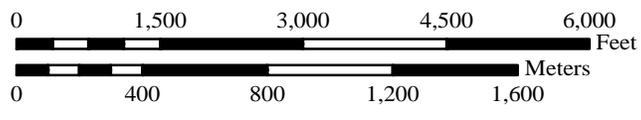


Figure 1. Location of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 2

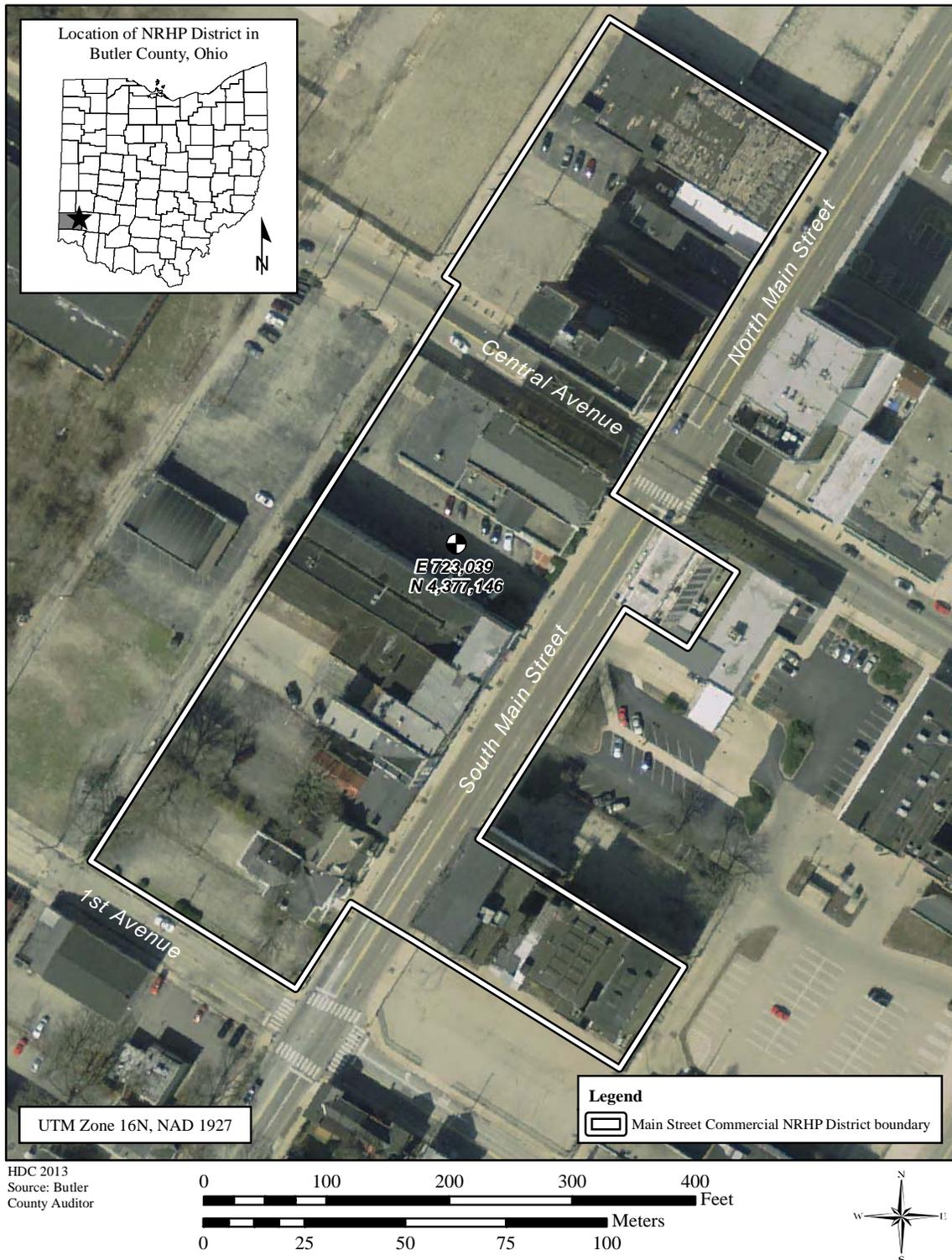


Figure 2. Aerial photograph showing the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 3



HDC 2013  
Source: Butler  
County Auditor

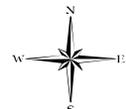
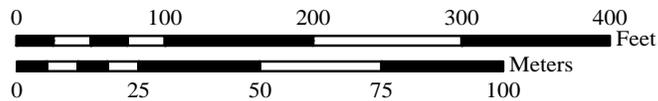


Figure 3. NRHP property boundary map of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio with photo locations

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 4



HDC 2013  
Source: Butler  
County Auditor

Figure 4. Map showing the Main Street Commercial Historic District boundary in relation to the South Main Street Historic District boundary in Middletown, Ohio

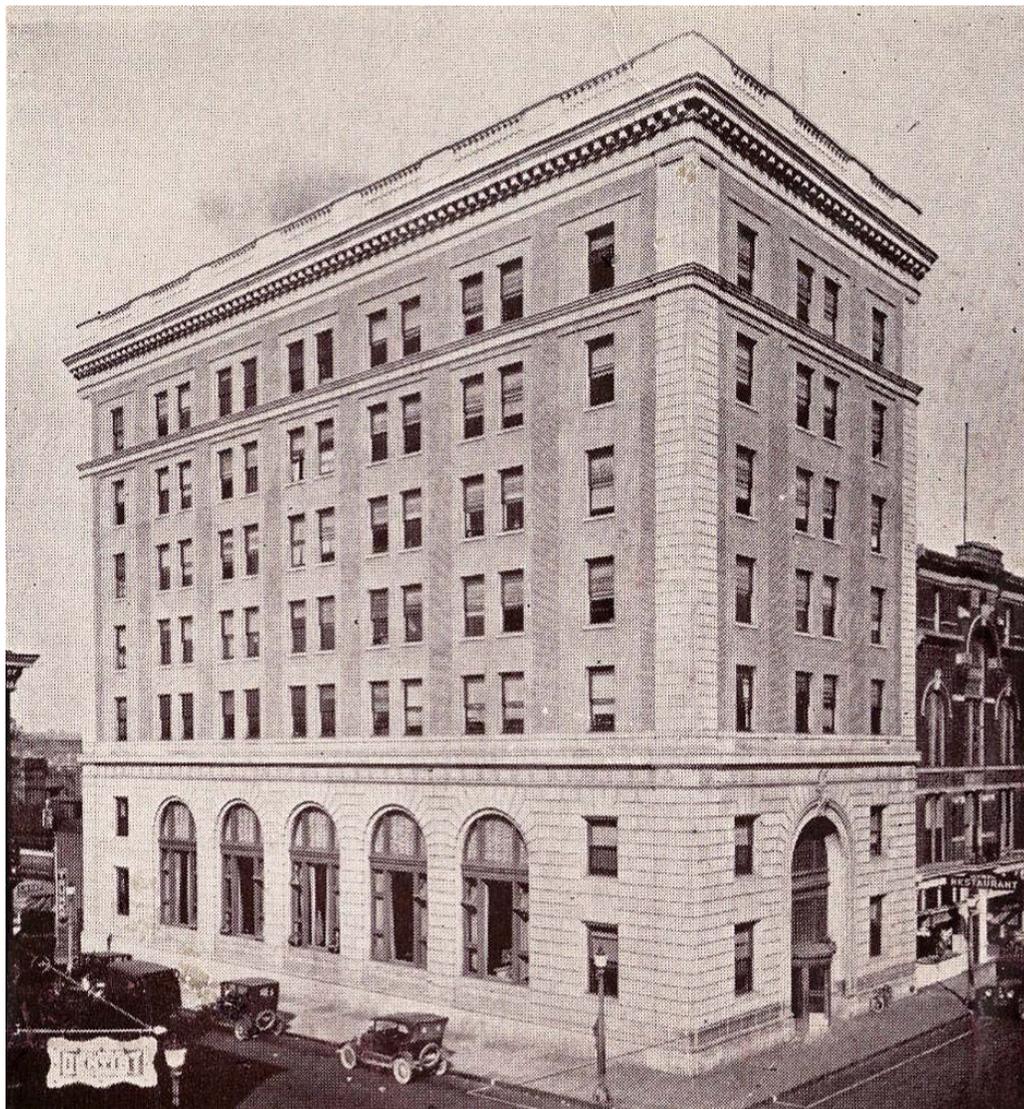
**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 5



**Figure 5. Ca. 1923 photograph showing the First and Merchants National Bank Building and the Masonic Temple in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking northwest**  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

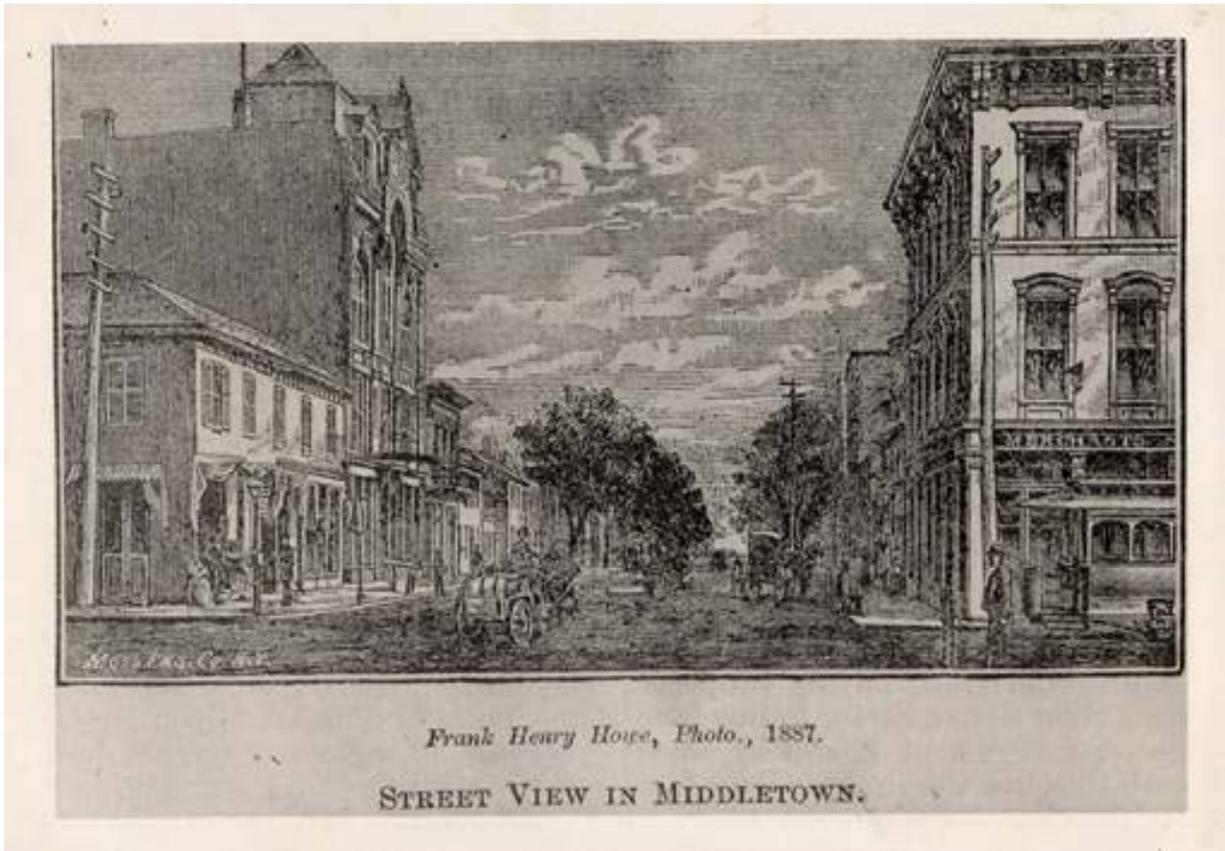
**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 6



**Figure 6. 1887 lithograph image created by artist Frank Henry Howe showing Main Street north of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (Central Avenue), the Masonic Temple is on the left side of the image, in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking north**

Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 7



**Figure 7. Ca. 1915 photograph postcard showing the Masonic Temple prior to the construction of the First and Merchants National Bank Building in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest**

Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

*Note the Coca Cola advertisement that is still visible*

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 8



**Figure 8. Ca. 1924 photograph of the west side of North Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest**

Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

*Note the Coca Cola advertisement that is still visible*

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 9



**Figure 9. Ca. 1929 photograph of the west side of North Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest**

Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 10



**Figure 10. 1930 photograph of the Middletown Building and Deposit Association Building being constructed in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest**  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 11



Figure 11. Ca. 1940 postcard photograph of the Middletown Building and Deposit Association Building in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southeast  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Butler County, Ohio

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 12



**Figure 12. 1928 photograph of the laying of the cornerstone for the Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company Building being constructed in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio**  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 13

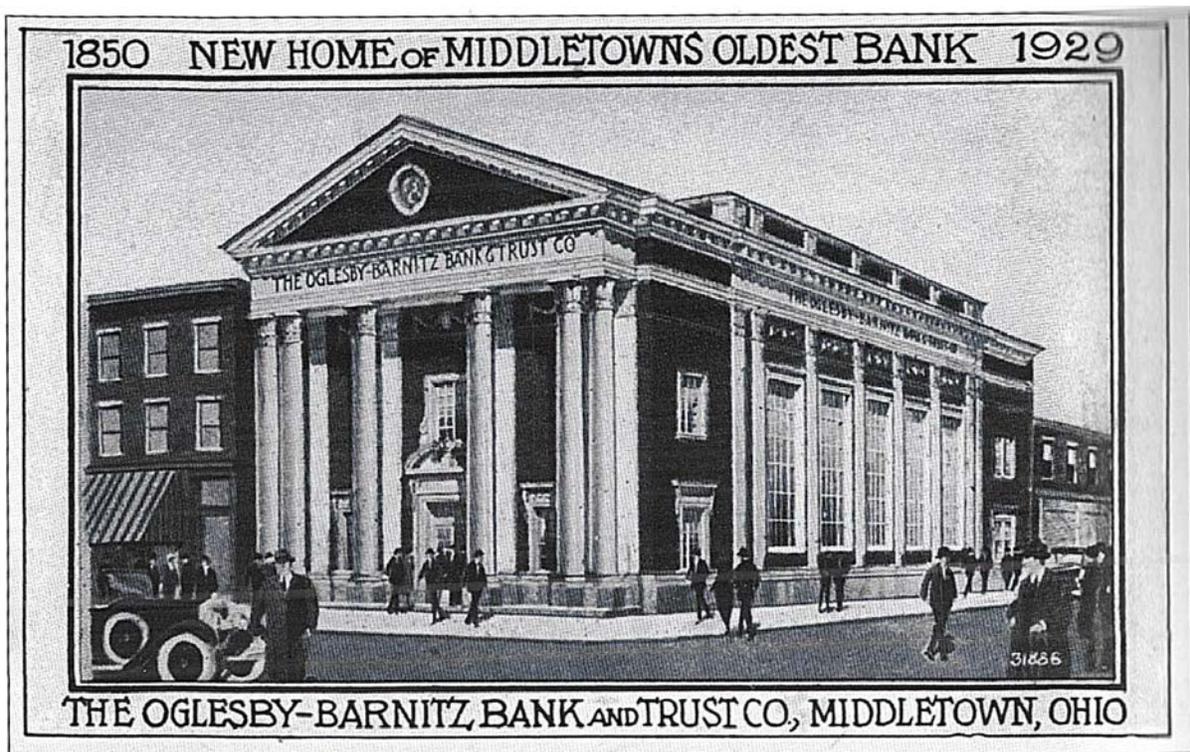


Figure 13. 1929 postcard of the Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company Building in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

Source: Clendenin and Miller 2011:90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 14



Figure 14. Ca. 1930 photograph of the Cincinnati & Lake Erie Railroad Company's electric interurban car 119 passing of the Oglesby-Barnitz Bank and Trust Company Building in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest

Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 15



**Figure 15. Ca. 1938 photograph of the west side of South Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest**  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

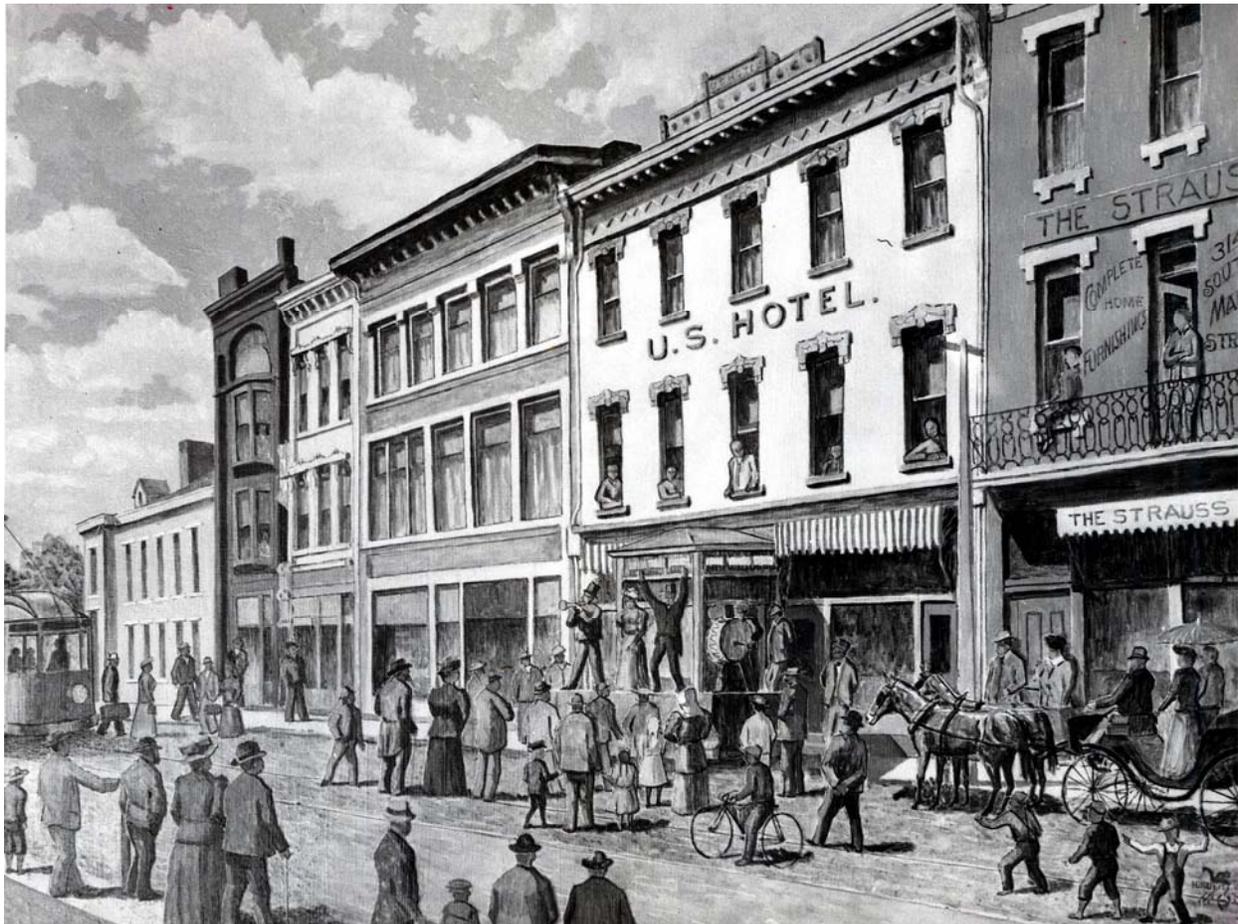
**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 16



**Figure 16. Ca. 1900 painting by Herbert W. Fall showing the west side of South Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking southwest**

Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 17



**Figure 17. 1913 photograph of the clean up following the Great Flood of 1913 showing the west side of South Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking northwest**  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 18



**Figure 18. Ca. 1920 photograph of the east side of South Main Street in the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio, looking northeast**

Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

*Note that only the Sorg Opera House remains*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 19

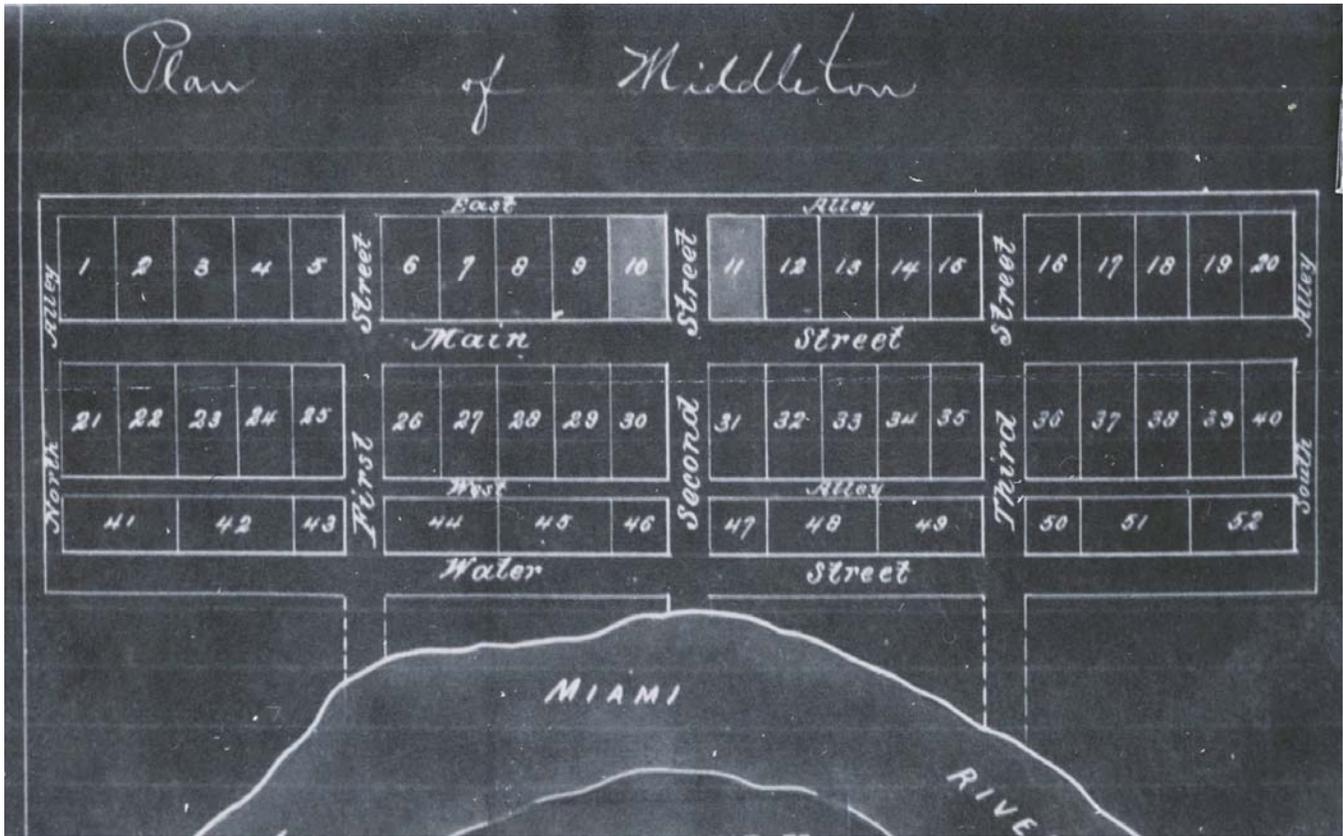


Figure 19. Stephen Vail's 1802 plat of Middletown, Ohio  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property  
Butler County, Ohio  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 20

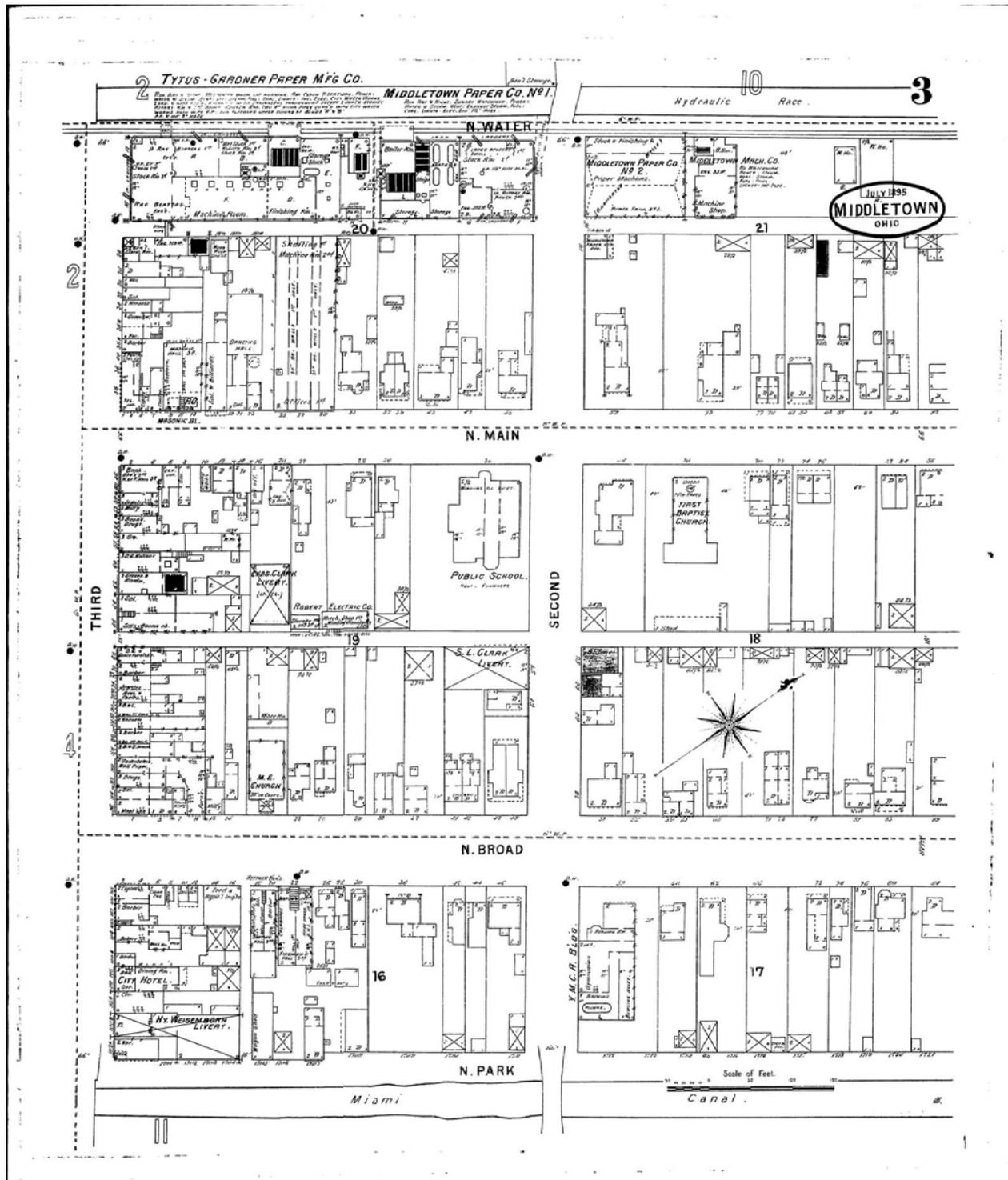


Figure 20. 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the northern portion of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property  
Butler County, Ohio  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 21

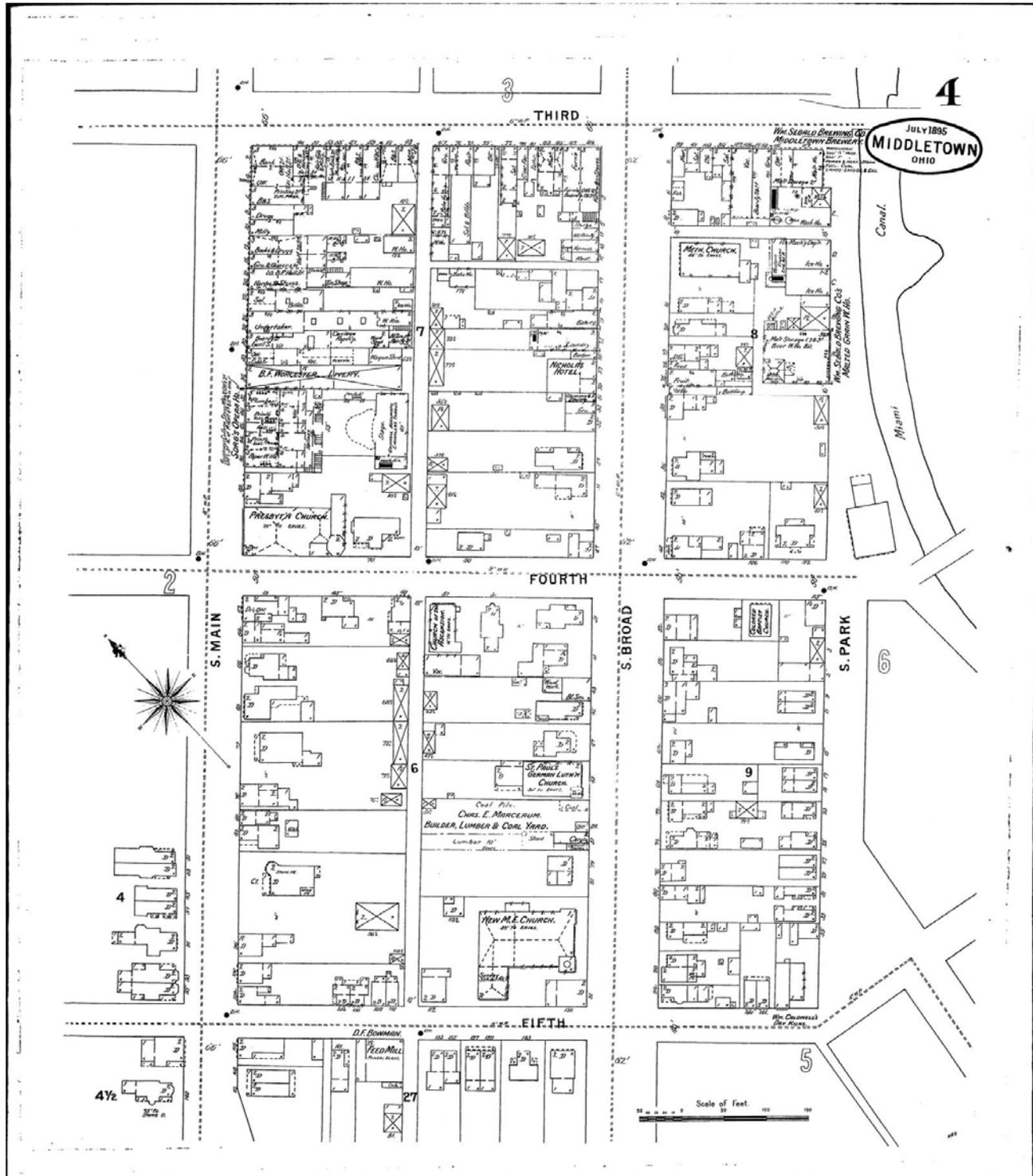


Figure 21. 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southeast corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page

22

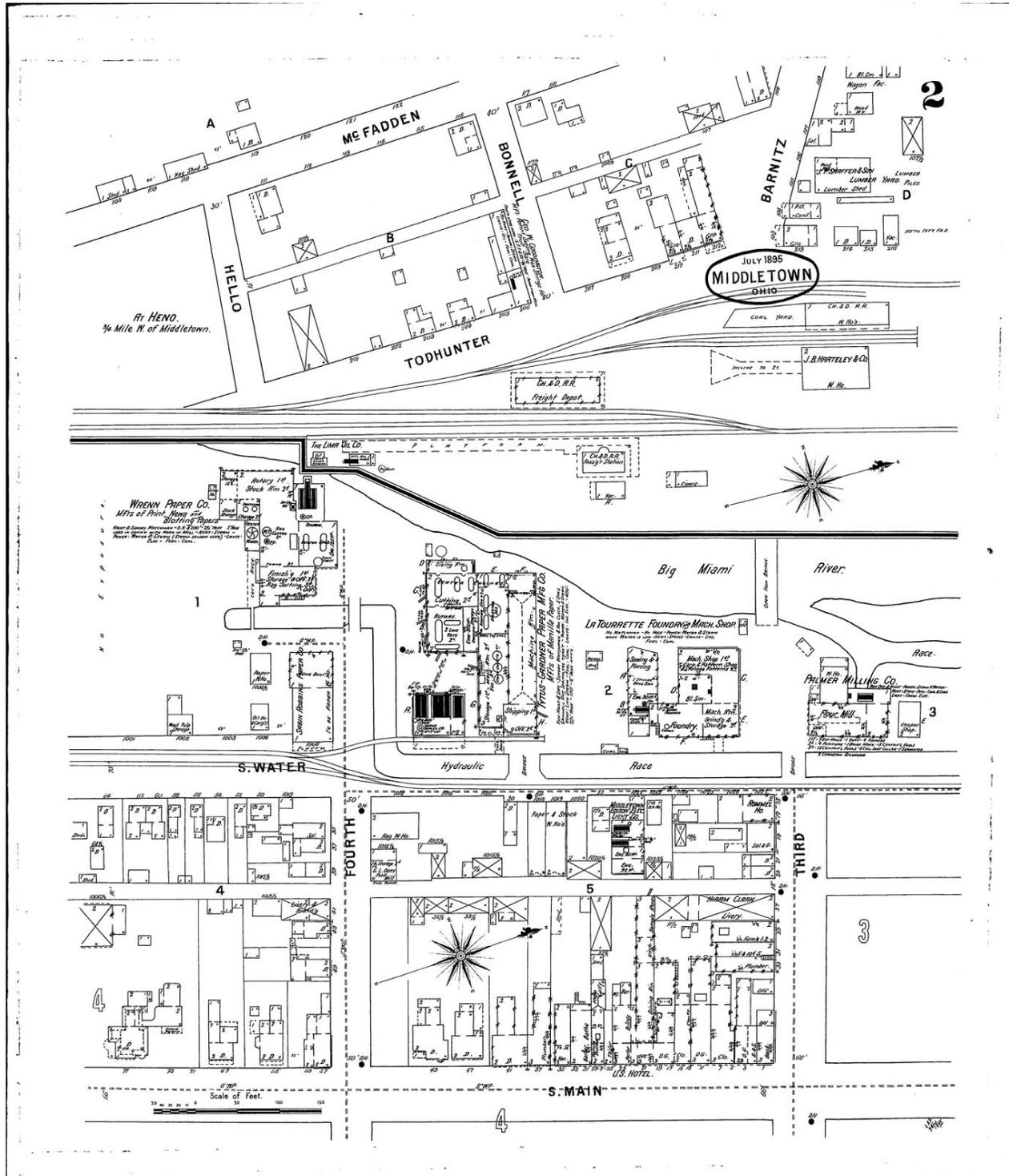


Figure 22. 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southwest corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 23

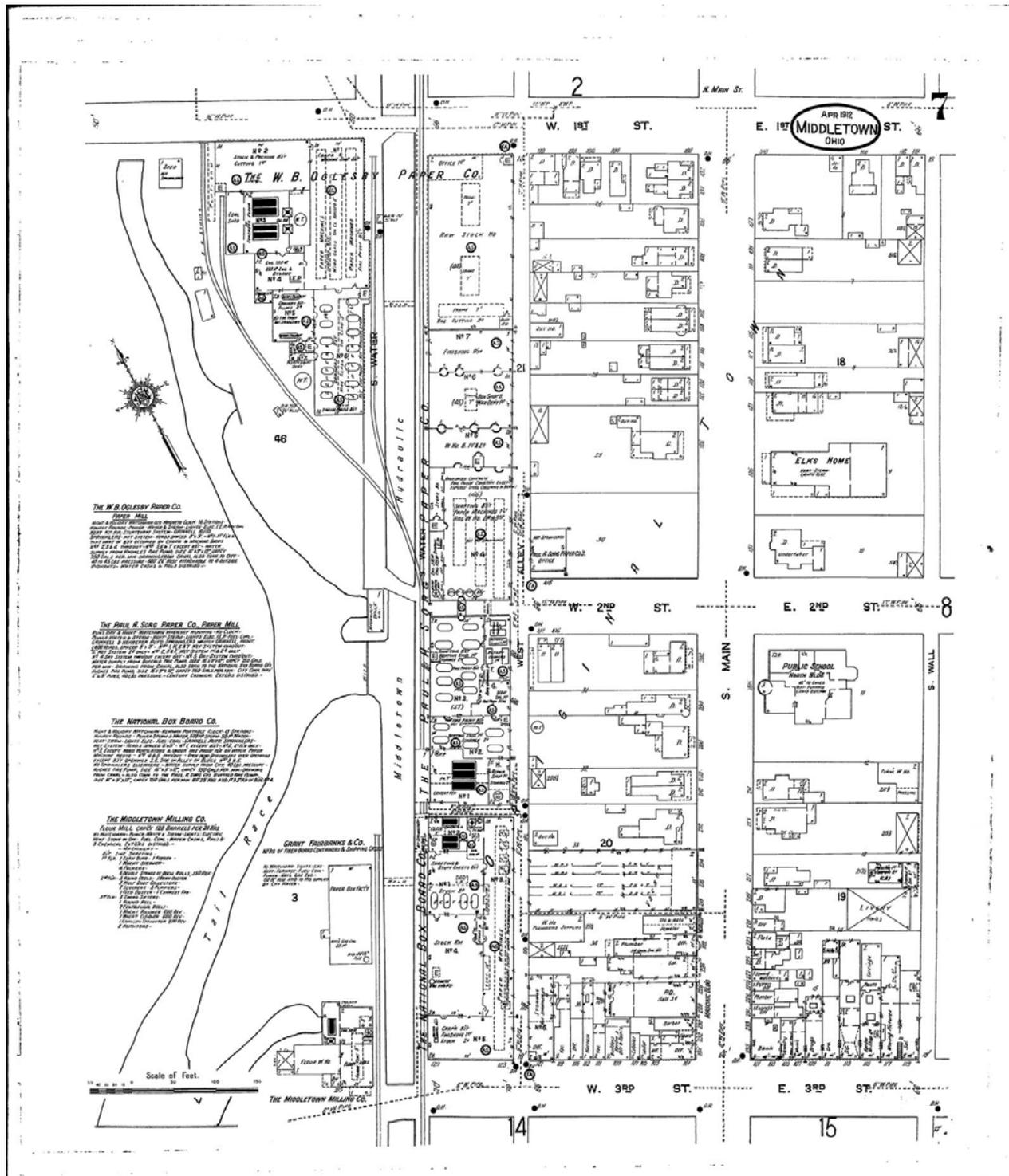


Figure 23. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the northern portion of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 24

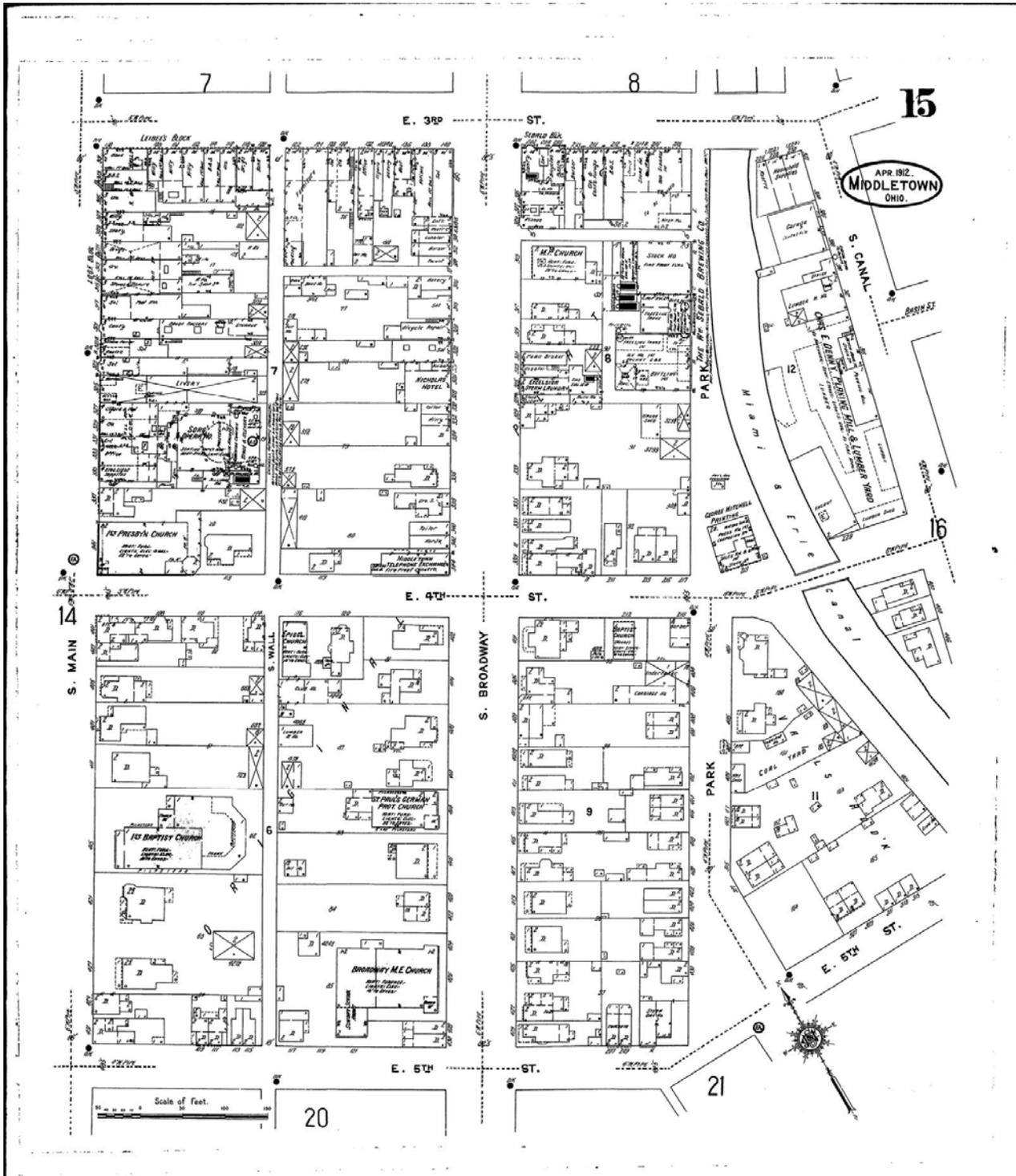


Figure 24. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southeast corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio

Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property  
Butler County, Ohio  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 25

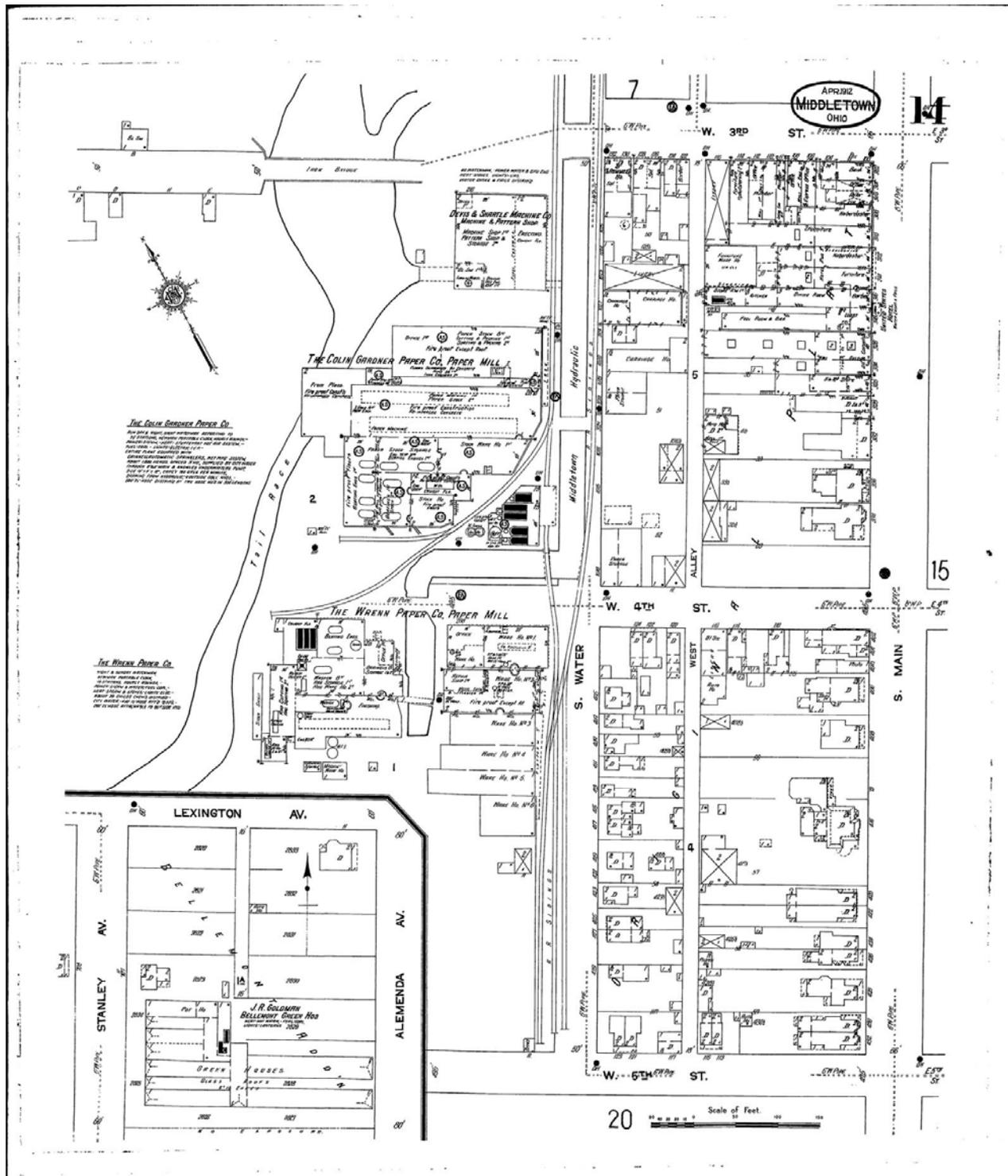


Figure 25. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southwest corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page

26

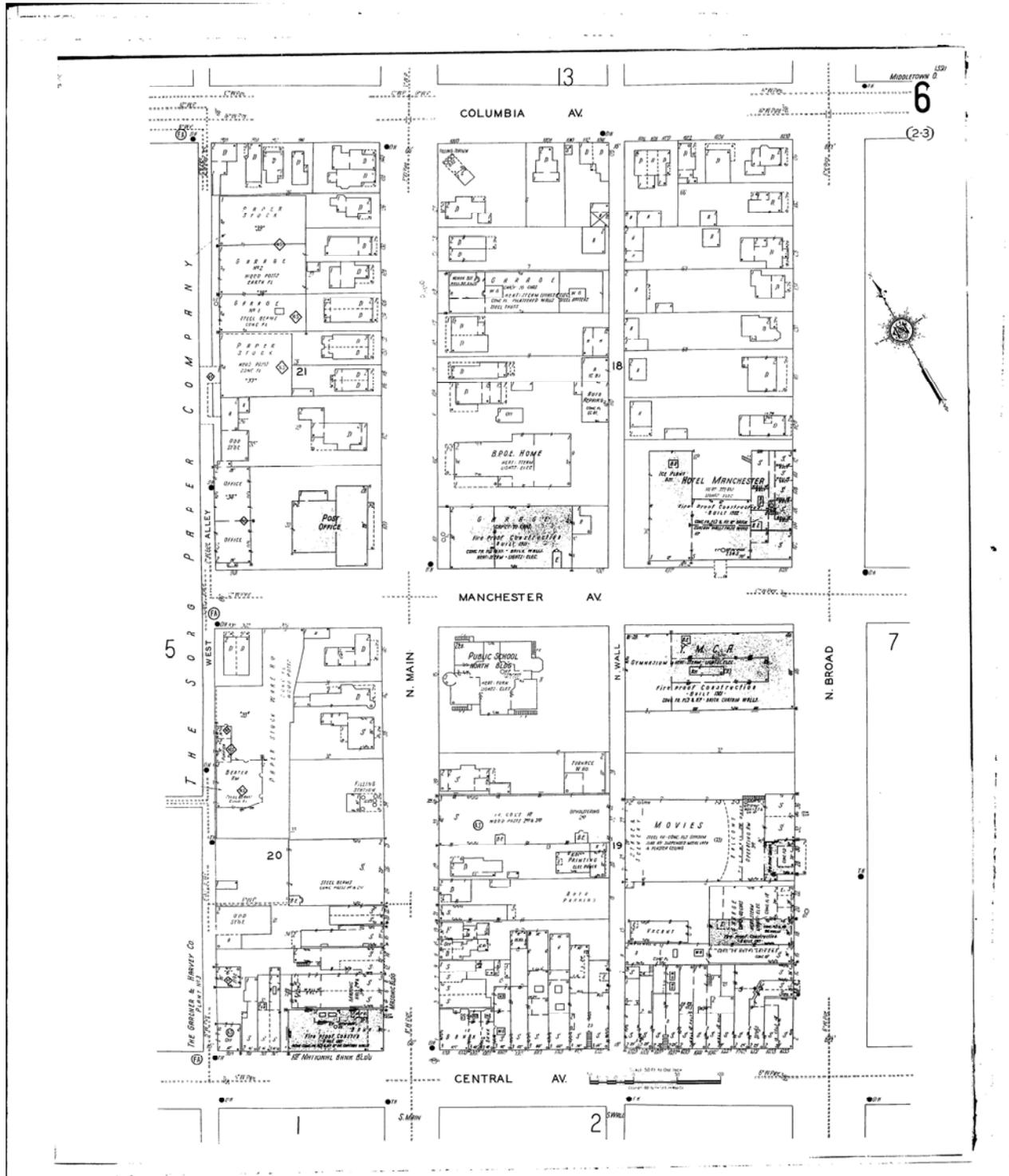


Figure 26. 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the northern portion of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property  
Butler County, Ohio  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 27

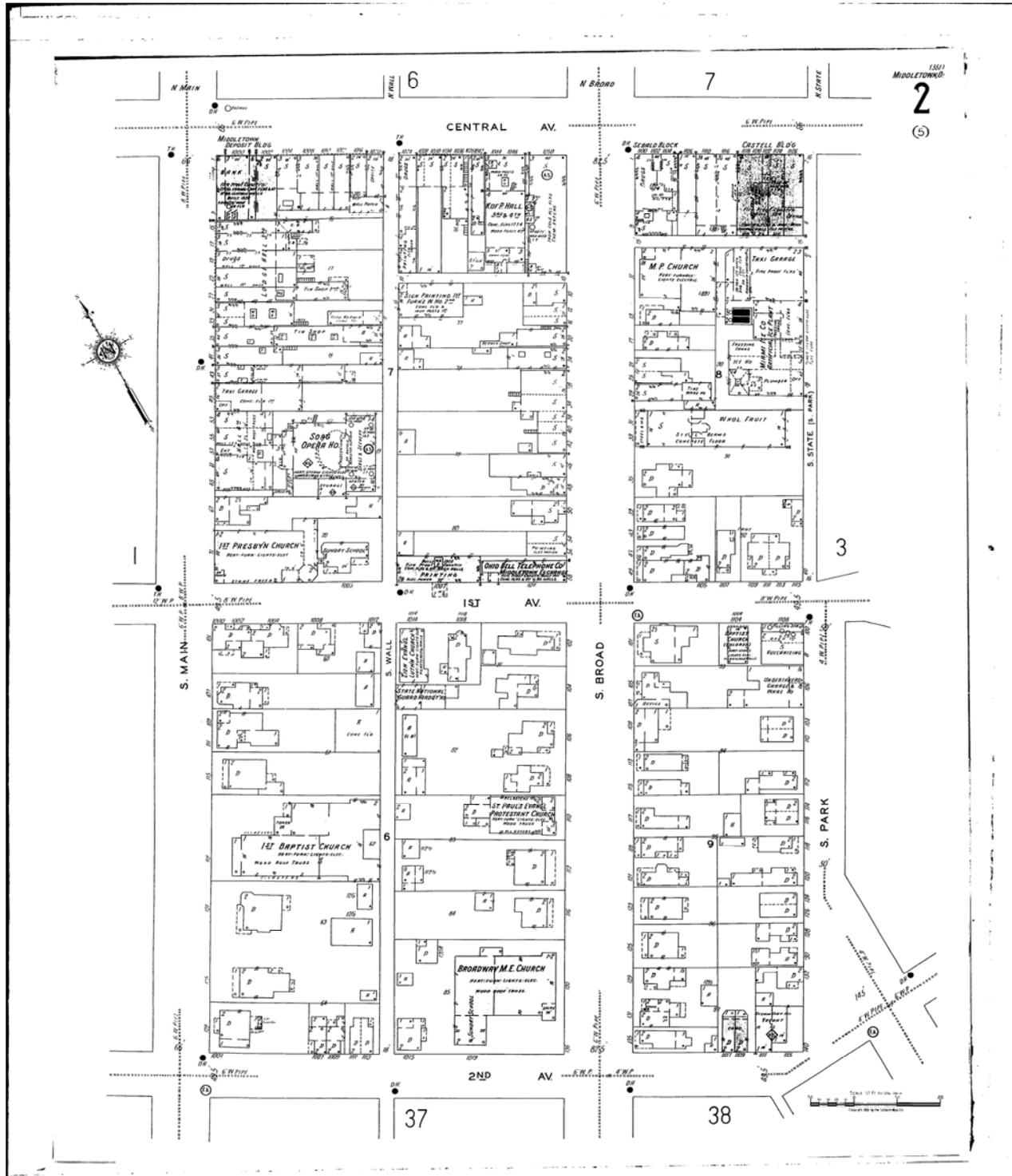


Figure 27. 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southeast corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Main Street Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property  
Butler County, Ohio  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 28

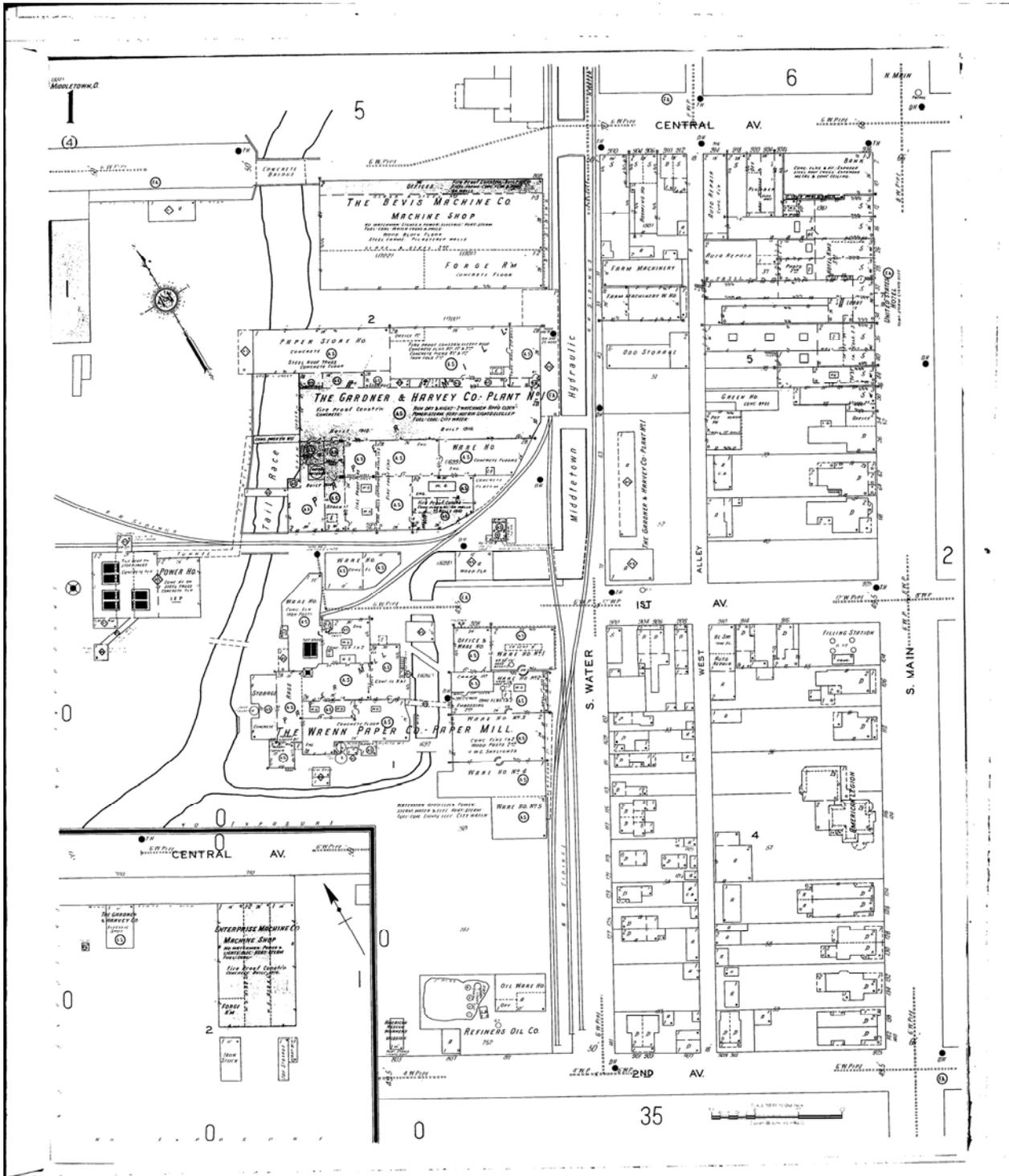


Figure 28. 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the southwest corner of the Main Street Commercial Historic District in Middletown, Ohio  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning



YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS IN CROSSWALK

YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS IN CROSSWALK

FIRST NATIONAL BANK

FIRST NATIONAL BANK  
of Southwestern Ohio  
SMITH BROTHERS





FIRST NATIONAL BANK



FIRST NATIONAL BANK

2

S. MAIN ST.

SIMMONS CENTRE

13:56





MASONIC TEMPLE



Art Central Foundation  
4 North Main



MASONIC TEMPLE

FIRST NATIONAL BANK

Art Central Foundation  
& North Main

Small white signs on the corrugated metal wall.



MASONIC TEMPLE





SHEW LAW OFFICE

16

The Shew Building  
Built in 1908  
by the Shew Brothers

MIDDLETOWN BOARD

FENZ



RADSSS



SHEW LAW OFFICE

E MIDD

FENZEL

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Cincinnati  
State





Cincinnati State





CENTRAL AVE  
MAIN ST







MAIN



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YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS IN CROSSWALK

YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS IN CROSSWALK











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HOTEL

U-S HOTEL II

Furniture

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U.S. HOTEL

U.S. HOTEL

HOUSE  
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CUTZ  
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*Furniture*



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THE COOPER MERCHANT BUILDING

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REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Commercial Building  
Office Space for Lease



THE  
COMMERCIAL  
BLDG

Universal Building

Snack Bar

S.O.R.G.  
REHABILITATION GROUP

ALL  
STOPS  
STOP