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NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 10024-0018

Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Dover Street School and Social Center
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 619 East Dover Street N/A **not for publication**
city or town Milwaukee N/A **vicinity**
state Wisconsin **code** WI **county** Milwaukee **code** 079 **zip code** 53207

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _ nationally _ statewide X locally. (_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Daina Lenbuna 3/4/2016
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Office - Wisconsin
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _ meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Woodland Hotel	Clark	Wisconsin
Name of Property	County and State	

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
X entered in the National Register.
___ See continuation sheet.
__ determined eligible for the National Register.
___ See continuation sheet.
__ determined not eligible for the National Register.
___ See continuation sheet.
__ removed from the National Register.
__ other, (explain:)

by Barbara Wyatt 5-10-16

Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as as apply)

X private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

X building(s)
district
structure
site
object

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

contributing	noncontributing	
1	2	Buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	2	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	stone
walls	brick
roof	asphalt
other	

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

8. Statement of Significance

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

X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

_ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

_ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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

Property is:

_ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

_ B removed from its original location.

_ C a birthplace or grave.

_ D a cemetery.

_ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

_ F a commemorative property.

_ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1912-1965

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Holbrook, Walter A.
E. Townsend Mix Company
Van Ryn and DeGelleke, Architects

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

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):
X preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
_ previously listed in the National Register
_ previously determined eligible by the National Register
_ designated a National Historic landmark
_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:
X State Historic Preservation Office
_ Other State Agency
_ Federal Agency
_ Local government
_ University
Other
Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.56 acres

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1			
2			
3			
4			

☒ See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Terry Tatum, Consultant				
organization	MacRostie Historic Advisors			**date**	October 21, 2015
street & number	53 W. Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1142			**telephone**	(312) 786-1700
city or town	Chicago	**state**	IL	**zip code**	60604-3560

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Ellen Higgins				
organization	CommonBond Communities			**date**	October 21, 2015
street & number	1080 Montreal Avenue			**telephone**	(651) 310-9265
city or town	Saint Paul	**state**	MN	**zip code**	55116-2311

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Start description on line below

Summary

The Dover Street School and Social Center is located at 619 East Dover Street in the Bay View neighborhood of Milwaukee, Wisconsin; a lakefront neighborhood on the city's South Side. The 2-3 story plus raised ground level Dover Street School and Social Center was built in four stages, resulting in a roughly L-shaped footprint with slightly irregular massing overall. The building, featuring a stone foundation, painted masonry walls, and flattened roofs hidden behind raised rooftop parapets, is primarily rectilinear in design reflecting its early 20th century addition and post-fire remodeling. The original school building was built in 1889-1890, followed by a west addition in 1893, both of which were designed in the Queen Anne architectural style with Romanesque style details. A south addition built in 1909, was constructed in a simpler, Classical-inspired design void of any ornamental details. In June 1910, most of the top floor and part of the second floor of the 1889-1890 and 1893 sections were destroyed by a fire, including the high-pitched Queen Anne style roof. The school building was subsequently rebuilt later that year in a form and style based on the 1909 addition. Besides rebuilding the upper portion of the school, a small two-story addition on the school's northeast corner filled in an existing indentation in the overall mass of the school building and provided expanded space for the principal's office and teacher's room. In more recent years, the building had a few, changes to the exterior, including painting the original cream city brick on the exterior, as well as installing replacement windows and new doors. The exterior paint colors include a black base, red mid-section and parapet, black sills, white lintels, and black cornice. The building, however, retains the vast majority of its exterior forms and details that exemplify its significant history as one of Milwaukee's pioneering school-based social centers from 1912 to sometime around the mid-1960s. The building's interior retains its historic configuration of halls, classrooms, cloakrooms, assembly hall, offices, and other spaces that also exemplify this significant history.

Site and Setting

The school building is located on a large parcel of land that extends from East Dover Street on the north to East Potter Avenue on the south. Oriented north toward Dover Street, the school is one of the largest buildings in its neighborhood of small-scale, late 19th- and early 20th-century houses and flat buildings. Although the street grid is not precisely oriented to the compass direction, the front of the school building is referred to as north-facing for clarity. The Dover Street School and Social Center was originally built in 1889-1890 as the Seventeenth District School, No. 1, set back approximately thirty feet from the public sidewalk on a gently-rising hill a half block west of South Kinnickinnic Avenue. Because of the gentle slope of the school lot, the building's ground level (or basement) becomes fully above ground in the 1909 addition to the south. The building is located on a large lot that extends from East Dover Street on the north to East Potter Avenue on the south, a public alley to the west, and a surface parking lot to the east. Originally smaller in size, the school lot was expanded over time to accommodate the expansion of the school building itself, and the addition of school parking and school recreational activities, and is 4.56 acres in area. Along with the school building, the lot contains landscaped grounds, a parking lot to the east, a small playground with equipment immediately adjacent to the school to the southeast, and a larger playing area on the southeastern edge of the lot, closer to South Kinnickinnic Avenue. The lot is edged by concrete retaining walls and modern, non-historic chain-link fences

installed along public walks and the east alley. Immediately surrounding the building to the west is a public alley, beyond which are single-family houses and small flat buildings oriented to Dover and Potter streets. The lot is bounded to the east by the Gothic Revival-style St. Lucas Evangelical Lutheran Church building, a house just southeast of the church building, and landscaped grounds, all oriented toward South Kinnickinnic Avenue.

Building Exterior

North Facade

The primary facade of the Dover Street School and Social Center faces north onto Dover Street and displays elements of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture, primarily in the detailed entrance surround. Aside from the driveway and center loading entrance, the ground level is only partially exposed to the north. The façade is generally broken into four sections: a stair tower located on the far east side, which is significantly set back from the wall plane; the slightly projecting original school building with main entrance; a center section, which features a loading entrance at ground level; and the westernmost section, featuring large bands of horizontal windows and decorative brickwork. The façade, although once displaying more distinctive features of the Queen Anne style such as high-pitched gabled roof, gabled wall dormers, roof dormers, chimneys and roof spire, now exemplifies a more simplified design with Classical style details. The Classical tripartite design features a rusticated stone base, mid-section, and parapet above a rusticated stone band and simplified cornice. The north facade is regularly fenestrated with a variety of replacement windows ranging from single windows to horizontal rows of windows. Most windows are one-over-one double hung metal sash. Flat stone sills and either flat brick arches, rusticated stone lintels, or exposed metal lintels with decorative rosettes span each window opening. Sills and lintels have generally been painted black or white.

The base of the east stair tower (from the 1889-1890 and 1893 sections) has a rusticated stone base and stone post-and-lintel grid that are Romanesque in detail. The ground level double door entrance with transoms serves as a secondary pedestrian entrance. The narrow, three-story (including fully exposed ground level) stair tower protrudes slighting from the east facade, featuring a painted, flat, brick arch above the tower's double door entrance. The first story window features a similarly painted rusticated stone lintel. The second story window is arched and features a gauged semi-circular brick arch above, which has also been painted white. Detailed brickwork is located between the first and second story windows.

The two-bay original school building, located to the west of the stair tower, is two stories in height with a recessed third story having a simple projecting cornice which continues around the building. First story windows are large single openings with flat brick arches above. Second story windows feature a single opening with one-over-one double hung sash and flat brick arch to the east, followed by a group of three double-hung sash with metal lintel in the center, and a small double-hung sash window with rusticated stone lintel above to the west. The slightly recessed third story features three, single-window openings, regularly spaced, with one-over-one double hung sash with flat brick arches above. The East Dover Street entrance, which serves as the main pedestrian entrance to the building, is located on the far west end of the original school building. The entrance is situated several feet above the level of the public sidewalk and accessed by a set of concrete stairs at the edge of the property line. The Romanesque-style entrance surround is the most stylistically distinct element of the building. It features a set of non-historic double doors with arched, multi-light transom, and semicircular

gauged brick arched door surround, which has been painted white. The entire entrance surround is topped with a high-pitched front facing gable, referencing the original Queen Anne style of the building. A Queen Anne-style plaque with “1889,” the original date of construction, sit above the main entrance.

The center bay features long horizontal bands of six, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows on the first and second stories, flanked by single window openings to the east and west on the first and second stories. Single window openings are topped with a flat brick arches and large center window openings feature exposed metal lintels with decorative rosettes. Third story windows openings feature a group of three one-over-one double-hung sash with flat brick arch flanked by a pair of one-over-one double-hung sash also featuring flat brick arches above. A small, single window opening, in a bay slightly recessed from the face of the building, is located to the west. The third story features windows grouped in pairs of two or three with a single window opening to the west. A driveway and recessed loading dock are at ground level to the west, providing access to the building's ground floor. Another Queen Anne-style plaque bearing the words "Public School," rests above a horizontal band of first floor windows.

The westernmost bay is similar in design to the center bay, with long bands of horizontal windows consisting of six, one-over-one, double-hung sash. Window openings feature black painted stone sills and white painted metal lintels with decorative rosettes. Decorative brickwork stretches along the horizontal windows between the first and second stories and between the second and third stories.

West Facade

The building’s west wall faces a public alley, connecting East Dover Street with East Potter Avenue. The regularly fenestrated facade can be divided into four distinct sections. A small portion of the original two-story building is located to the far north and is significantly recessed from the rest of the wall plane. It features two sets of single window openings on each story; each containing one-over-one double hung sash windows with flat arches above. The next section, located on the northwest corner of the 1893 addition, features a projecting stair tower to the south. This section is two bays wide with three single window openings to the north; one small opening flanked by two larger openings. All openings have aligned flat brick arch lintels and feature one-over-one, double-hung replacement sash.

The second bay, which slightly projects from the face of the adjoining bay, features a row of small, single window openings with flat arch lintels. The window opening on the first floor has been infilled with glass block, while the second and third story windows feature replacement sash typical of the building. The third story, above a simple brick course which has been painted black and the adjoining stair tower, is a row of four single window openings. All windows feature flat stone sills, flat brick arches, and one-over-one double-hung sash windows, with the exception of the center two windows which have been infilled with glass block. South of the stair tower is a single window opening located on the second story.

The two-story west stair tower is similar in design to the stair tower located on the east side of the building. A rusticated stone base and stone post-and-lintel grid are Romanesque in detail. The ground level double door entrances with transoms and painted flat brick arches protrude from the north and south ends of the stair tower, serving as secondary pedestrian entrances. The ground level of the stair tower is three bays wide due to the north

and south entrances. It features two single window openings with flat brick arches flanked by four-light window openings, which feature rusticated stone sills, lintels, and mullions. Window lights have been infilled with brick. The first and second story windows feature a similarly painted rusticated stone lintel and flat stone still, which run continuously across both openings. Detailed brickwork is located between the first and second story windows.

The next section of the wall is slightly set back. It features horizontal bands of windows grouped in sets of six, which span the first, second, and third stories. All windows feature flat stone sills, exposed metal lintels with decorative rosettes, and one-over-one double hung sash windows. Detailed brickwork spans the length of the windows between the first and second stories.

The last section of the west facade is part of the 1909 addition. This eight-bay section is regularly fenestrated with pairs of one-over-one double hung windows spanning the fully exposed ground level, first story, and second story. First and second story window openings feature flat stone sills and metal lintels with decorative rosettes. The red brick on the parapet has been left unpainted.

South Facade

The main portion of the south facade fronting East Potter Avenue, consists of the 1909 addition to the west and a small, recessed portion of the 1893 addition to the east. The south wall of each stair tower is also visible. The 1909 addition can be broken into three sections with a centrally located main entrance. The facade is regularly fenestrated with the same one-over-one double hung replacement windows as the rest of the building. The west and central sections feature flat brick arches and stone sills at each window opening. A centrally located entrance is simple with brick pilasters, three single non-historic metal doors with side lights, and boarded up transoms. Second story window openings in the center bay are elongated with transoms above. The east section features pairs of double-hung windows with flat stone sills and metal lintels above each opening. The most prominent non-rectilinear feature of the entire building is a one-story semicircular extension, which originally housed the school's kindergarten. The semicircular extension, located on the east end of the 1909 wing's south-facing facade, features a rhythm of window openings around the curve: single-paired-triple-paired-single; the sash are one-over-one, double-hung. The building is topped with a brick parapet that remains unpainted.

The south wall of the 1893 building generally features large horizontal bands of one-over-one, double- hung replacement sash windows with flat stone sills and metal lintels with decorative rosettes. Two single window openings are located in the center bay of the first and second stories, between each horizontal band of windows. The third story is similarly fenestrated with a single window opening to the west followed by a pair of double-hung windows with transoms flanking a protruding window box with boarded up window. The easternmost section of the 1893 addition features, on each floor, a horizontal band of six windows.

The base of the east stair tower (from the 1889-1890 and 1893 sections) has a rusticated stone base and stone post-and-lintel grid that are Romanesque in detail. The ground level, double door entrance with transoms serves as a secondary pedestrian entrance. The narrow, three-story (including fully exposed ground level) stair tower projects slighting from the east elevation, featuring a painted flat brick arch above the tower's double door entrance. The first story window features a similarly painted rusticated stone lintel. The second story window is

arched and features a gauged semi-circular brick arch above, which has also been painted white. Detailed brickwork is located between the first and second story windows.

East Facade

The east facade of the Dover Street School and Social Center displays portions of each of the three periods of construction. To the south is the 1909 addition, recessed from the face of the 1893 and 1889-1890 portions of the building. The one story- semi-circular extension protrudes from the southernmost point. The remainder of the 1909 addition can be broken into two sections. To the north of the semi-circular extension is a regularly fenestrated two-story, plus fully exposed, ground level portion of the building. It features three, single window openings with one-over-one double-hung replacement sash on each level, with the exception of a door with transom located in the northernmost bay of the ground level. All window openings have flat stone sills and flat brick arches above. The building is topped with a rusticated stone band, simple cornice, and unpainted brick parapet wall. A brick chimney, slightly recessed from the face of the 1909 addition to the south, reaches from the ground to above the second story roof line.

The northern section of the 1909 addition is slightly set back from the chimney. This short, three-bay section features pairs of one-over-one double-hung replacement windows with flat stone sills and metal lintels with decorative rosettes. This section is closed off by modern chain link fencing, which is enclosing mechanical and electrical equipment.

The building's 1893 and 1889-1890 sections meet in the center of the east stair tower. The wall is regularly fenestrated with single window openings on the three-story 1893 addition and large horizontal bands of windows on the 1889-1890 portion of the original building. The southernmost section features two single window openings on the first, second, and third stories. All windows hold one-over-one double-hung replacement sash with flat stone sills and a mix of rusticated stone lintels (first story), metal lintel spanning the length of both openings (second story), and flat brick arches (third story). Smaller single window openings are located to the north just before the stair tower. The first story window has been infilled with glass block. All others feature similar double hung windows with stone sills and flat brick arches above.

The two story east stair tower is similar in design to the stair tower located on the west side of the building. A rusticated stone base and stone post-and-lintel grid are Romanesque in detail. The ground level double door entrances with transoms and painted flat brick arches protrude from the north and south ends of the stair tower, serving as secondary pedestrian entrances. The ground level of the stair tower is three bays wide due to the north and south entrances. It features two single window openings with flat brick arches flanked by four-light window openings, having rusticated stone sills, lintels, and mullions. Window lights have been infilled with brick. First story window openings feature a similarly painted rusticated stone lintel that spans the length of both single window openings. Two arched single window openings with brick painted arches above are featured on the second story. All first and second story windows have flat stone stills, which continue across both openings. Detailed brickwork is located between the first and second story windows.

The 1889-1890 original building is located to the north of the stair tower and can be broken into three bays. Directly north of the stair tower is a small, single window opening located on the first, second, and third stories.

The first story window has been infilled with glass block. All others feature similar double hung windows with stone sills and flat brick arches above. In the center bay are large horizontal bands of six one-over-one double-hung replacement sash windows featuring flat stone sills and metal lintels with decorative rosettes. The two-story northernmost bay features a single window opening on both the first and second story. Openings feature one-over-one double-hung replacement sash with stone sills and flat brick arches above. There is no cornice on the second story bay.

Building Interior

The Dover Street School and Social Center closed as a school in 2012. It retains about two dozen classrooms, a top-floor assembly hall/gymnasium, a cafeteria and adjacent kitchen, ground-floor bath and shower rooms, and many storage rooms. The building has 66,629-square-feet of floor area. The front (Dover) entrance has a small outer vestibule that opens to a short flight of steps up to the building's first floor and a north-south entrance corridor. The inner double doors of this vestibule are original wood- and glass-paneled doors. To the left as you enter the building is a suite of rooms for the school principal and administrative staff. The entrance corridor then intersects with the main corridor running east-west the length of the first floor. Classrooms and associated cloakrooms in the 1889-1890 and 1893 sections of the building open off this corridor, while enclosed stairways are at either end. Due to the configuration of the classrooms and cloakrooms, the corridor has a somewhat irregular arrangement. Near the western end of the corridor, an intersecting north-south corridor extends south from the east-west corridor and provides access to the 1909 wing. This corridor opens up into a wide vestibule area with built-in wooden student lockers, believed to date from 1935, off of which open classrooms. An enclosed south stairway with historic metal staircase posts and banisters opens off this wide hall vestibule as well.

This overall configuration is repeated on the second floor of the building. The chief difference is that the second-floor corridor immediately above the entrance corridor dead-ends with a suite of rooms set aside for the use of teachers.

Classrooms on the first and second floors are large and rectangular with wood floors and large blackboards. Classrooms in the 1909 addition also have wood cupboards built into round-arched niches. Each classroom has direct access to adjacent cloakrooms, many of which retain original built-in wood storage cabinets and wood wainscoting.

The ground floor of the school building has classrooms in the 1893 and 1909 sections, including the semi-circular kindergarten room in the 1909 wing, and an assortment of spaces in the 1889-1890 section, including restrooms, showers, an industrial/manual arts room, a kitchen and adjacent lunchroom, and various storage and utility rooms. These ground floor rooms were also used for decades by the Dover Street Social Center. The boiler room and related spaces are in a rear one-story section nestled in the intersection of the original 1889-1890 section and 1909 wing.

The top floor of the 1889-1890 and 1893 sections has a large assembly hall that also served as a gymnasium, a secondary gymnasium, and associated classrooms, all accessed through vestibules at the top of the east and west stairways. Historic wood-paneled doors open from the west vestibule into the auditorium. The auditorium itself

has a raised stage at the north end and a small alcove, flanked by wood piers, that is a transition space between the auditorium and the east stairway.

Throughout the interior, walls are generally of plaster and wallboard and floors are of wood. Ceilings in general are of acoustic tile. An assortment of wood storage units (cupboards and lockers) remain in some corridors, classrooms, and cloakrooms. An interior rehabilitation in 1959 covered most wood wainscoting, although some remains visible in cloakrooms. At that time, most interior doors and door trim were replaced.

Alterations after 1910

The Dover Street School and Social Center has undergone limited renovations since its overall current form and appearance were established in 1910 (at the time of the fire reconstruction). Despite these renovations, the overall historic character of the building's exterior remains almost entirely unchanged from the 1910 reconstruction, while interior changes reflect the building's updating over time due to its continued use as a school building and social center.

The first changes to the building after 1910 came in the late 1910s and early 1920s. In 1917 plans by the Milwaukee School Board architectural department and Van Ryn and DeGelleke, Architects, were prepared for renovations to the 1889 building and 1893 addition, although these were not finally undertaken until 1921. Upgrades to the heating plant, windows and finishes were part of the 1921 alterations. Floor plans from this period indicate that the names of several rooms appear to have been changed to reflect, perhaps, new additional functions added due to the building's use as a social center. For example, a ground-floor room was relabeled "Billiard Room," reflecting the installation of this popular game as one of the diversions of the Dover Street Social Center. In addition, shower rooms may have been added at this time, based on these plans, the availability of showers being one of the most popular features of social centers.

Some the school's interior features were also changed or updated in a 1959 rehabilitation, which occurred during the period of significance. At this time, most interior doors were replaced and interior door trim simplified. Much wood wainscoting in corridors and other spaces was covered with wall board in this rehabilitation, although many cloakrooms retain visible wainscoting. Original wood trim was replaced. East and west stairways appear to have been updated at this time, although they retain some historic wainscoting.

Windows were replaced in 1995 with extruded insulated aluminum windows in historically-appropriate sizes and configurations. Aluminum trim covers the original wood brick moldings. Exterior doors were replaced in 2005 with insulated aluminum doors, although historic inner vestibule doors remain. At some time (date not known), the building's exterior masonry was painted.

Despite these changes, the Dover Street School and Social Center's exterior and interior retain the vast majority of character-defining features from its period of significance. The building retains its historic parcel and its historic exterior form and the vast majority of exterior details that exemplify its history after 1912 as a historically-significant social center. The building retains its historic floor plan, room configurations, overall sense of interior space, and many interior features.

Integrity

The Dover Street School and Social Center retains excellent historic integrity from its period of significance (1912 to 1965) as one of the earliest social centers in a Milwaukee public school. Built over time with an original building, two additions and a partial reconstruction after a fire in 1910, the building's physical appearance reflects its period of significance when it housed a Milwaukee social center.

The building retains its overall exterior appearance from this period, retaining its overall historic site, form, and the vast majority of details dating to 1910 (the time the front façade was renovated after a devastating fire). The building also retains its interior floor plan and many interior details, including walls, floors, built-in cabinetry, wainscoting and staircase details.

Changes to the exterior of the building include new aluminum windows with historically-appropriate sash configurations, new exterior doors, and painted masonry walls. Interior changes chiefly occur from 1959 and before, during the building's period of significance, and include new wallboard covering historic wainscoting and remodeled stairways. These interior changes reflect the on-going use of the building for its historic purposes as a public school and social center and do not detract from the building's historic significance or historic visual character.

___End of Description of Physical Appearance

___Insert Statement of Significance

Summary

The Dover Street School and Social Center is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for Social History as the site of the Dover Street Social Center, one of Milwaukee's earliest Progressive Era neighborhood social centers.

From 1912 through at least the 1960s, the Dover Street Social Center was an important component of Milwaukee's innovative social center program, providing after-hours classes and recreation for residents of the city's economically- and ethnically-diverse Bay View neighborhood. Milwaukee's social center program, managed by the Division of Municipal Recreation and Adult Education of the Milwaukee Public Schools, was a historically-significant part of Milwaukee's 20th-century history. Itwas one of the most comprehensive and long-lasting of these programs in the United States and continues to reflect early 20th-century progressive efforts to improve education and inspire community in American cities. The Dover Street Social Center was among the first five social centers in Milwaukee under this innovative city-wide social center program operating in public school buildings, and it was for many years the only such center in the Bay View neighborhood. The Dover Street School and Social Center exemplifies the significance of Milwaukee's school-based social centers in the larger social, educational and recreational history of the city.

The period of significance of the Dover Street School and Social Center is based on its use as a social center and extends from 1912 (the year that the Dover Street Social Center was founded) to 1965 (reflecting the period of time the social center was most active with the Bayview community).

The building retains excellent historic integrity in the context of its use as a social center, the history of which is exemplified by the building's post-1910 exterior appearance and interior spaces used for social center functions, including the ground-floor kindergarten room and rooms used for billiards and industrial arts, upper-floor classrooms used for adult-education classes, and top-floor assembly room/gymnasium, used for dances, sports and larger events.

The Early History of Milwaukee's Bay View neighborhood and the Construction of the Dover Street School

The Bay View neighborhood, where the Dover Street School and Social Center is located, has a distinctive history within the larger history of the City of Milwaukee. Its origins as a company town separate from Milwaukee, its long-time geographic isolation due to both natural and manmade barriers, its strong working-class history, and a relatively stable residential population throughout its history all combine to give Bay View residents a distinctive sense of place, which can be seen in the role that local institutions such as the Dover Street School played in the community.

As with other outlying Milwaukee neighborhoods, earliest ethnic-European settlement in what would become the Bay View neighborhood took the form of scattered farms, with cabins and farmsteads throughout the area by

the 1840s.[1] Historian Bernhard Korn has stated that the earliest settlers took it upon themselves to establish at least one country school in these earliest years. [2] The Town of Lake was established in 1838 and over the next few years began to provide basic services.[3] One of these was a school on East Bay Street, built in 1854.[4] Most residents that benefited from these early schools were farming families from Wisconsin or New England; many immigrants from southwestern Germany also farmed in the area.[5] Between 1843 and 1844, Milwaukee's German community substantially grew with the incoming of 1,000 to 1,400 German immigrants each week throughout the summer.[6] By the 1850s, the city's German population had peaked at an all-time high and would continue to serve as Milwaukee's dominant ethnic group from that point forward.[7]

The following year, in 1855, a railroad connecting Milwaukee with Chicago, the Chicago & NorthWestern Railway, began operations. Running through what would become Bay View, it had a station near what today is Conway Street.[8] However, it was not until the establishment of the Milwaukee Iron Company in 1867 that the rural character of Bay View changed. Established on the outlet of Deer Creek onto Lake Michigan, the new factory was founded by Eber Brock Ward to produce steel rails for railways. He chose this location due to its access to regional ore supplies. Such raw materials were easily shipped to this site by both water and rail shipping routes, via Lake Michigan and the rail line that ran through the area.[9]

This location outside the then-established city limits of Milwaukee required Ward to build a company town to house company workers and their families. He laid out streets and sold lots for what became Wisconsin's first company town, which he named Bay View. Ward recruited skilled laborers from Britain for their technical knowledge of steel mill design and operation. The company town of Bay View grew over the next decade, with the development of commerce and the establishment of churches and schools, into a pocket of British culture. New workers were encouraged to build their own homes on lots purchased from Ward.[10] As the company town attracted laborers, demand for housing led to the subdivision of land immediately outside the town to the west. In the late 1870s, land owner Joseph Williams subdivided his 34 acre parcel west of Kinnickinnick Avenue, and platted new streets including Dover and Potter streets.[11] Unlike the community built around Ward's rolling mill, Williams' land attracted primarily German and Polish immigrant laborers that worked in the mills and at other manufacturers that established in the area.[12] In 1879, Bay View and adjacent subdivisions were incorporated

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[1] Carlen Hatala and Paul Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources Survey*, vol. II, p. 7.
[2] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, p. 121.
[3] Ron Winkler, *Bay View*, p. 11.
[4] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, p. 122.
[5] Town of Lake, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, United States Census, 1850; 1860.
[6] Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, Madison, State Historical Society of Wisconsin: 1986.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Winkler, *Bay View*, p. 7.
[9] Winkler, *Bay View*, p. 21.
[10] *Beulah Brinton House*, Interim Historic Designation Study Report, City of Milwaukee. Site: http://www.city.milwaukee.gov, accessed: February 3, 2016. 4.
[11] H. Belden & Co, *Lake Township, Milwaukee County Atlas*, 1876, site: historicmapworks.com accessed: February 3, 2016.
[12] Bay View, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, United States Census, 1870; 1880. District 179, Milwaukee, Wisconsin,

with a population of 2,592 on 892 acres of land. Despite labor issues relating to wages at the Rolling Mills, which led to a deadly protest in 1886, new residents continued to arrive at Bay View. Eight years later, Bay View's population had reached 4,000, staining the village's infrastructure. Unable to meet rising costs, the village agreed to annex to the City of Milwaukee. [13]

During these early years of suburban development, from 1867 to its annexation by Milwaukee in 1887, Bay View saw the construction of several public school buildings. These were built to address the increasing numbers of additional immigrant laborers and their families from Britain, Germany, and Poland. All of these suburban-era schools have been demolished. The first was built on East Bay Street in 1854, two schools (one wood-frame and one brick) were constructed on Wentworth Avenue, south of Russell Street, in the 1860s and 1870s, and a brick school was built in 1883-1884 on Dover Street, west of South Kinnickinnic Avenue at the site of the current Dover Street School and Social Center.[14]

This earlier school building was short-lived, however, as it was deemed inadequate in size and student capacity from its opening. Bay View's annexation by Milwaukee in 1887 then saw increased residential development, and the need to replace the building was realized almost immediately by the Milwaukee Public Schools. In May 1889, the Milwaukee Common Council approved a new school building for the Dover Street location and solicited proposals from interested architects.[15] The chosen firm was the E. Townsend Mix Company, Architects. Mix himself had been a noteworthy Milwaukee architect since the 1850s.[16] However the building's design was probably handled by Mix's partner, Walter A. Holbrook, as Mix had already by that time moved to Minneapolis.

During the summer of 1889, the older Dover Street school building was demolished, and construction of the new building began. Bay View builder and brick manufacturer Martin Davelaar & Son was the construction contractor. The building's cost was $36,000. Construction proceeded quickly and the new school building's completion was celebrated with an event on April 12, 1890, that included patriotic music, dozens of singing children, and the firing of a cannon.[17]

This new school building, named the Seventeenth District School, No. 1, by the Milwaukee Public Schools, forms the original 1890 section of the current Dover Street School. It originally had a picturesque Queen Anne-style appearance with a high-pitched roofline (removed in a 1910 reconstruction after a fire). Romanesque-style ornament marked the front (Dover Street) entrance and a decorative panel bearing the words "Dover School" was placed between first and second-floor windows. It held eight classrooms (including a kindergarten) with

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United States Census, 1900.

[13] Upon annexation, Bay View became part of Milwaukee's 17th Ward. In 1885, the areas which would form the 17th Ward had a total population of 14,413. Thomas J. Cunningham, *The Blue Book of the State of Wisconsin*, Milwaukee: Milwaukee Lithographic & Engraving Company, 1891. 598; Winkler, *Bay View*, p. 8 & 21.

[14] Winkler, *Bay View*, p. 48 & 49; Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, p. 122.

[15] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, p. 139.

[16] Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, p. 140.

[17] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, pp. 139-140.

associated cloakrooms, a first-floor principal's office, a second-floor teacher's room, playrooms, and a large third-floor gymnasium and assembly hall.[18]

Bay View neighborhood growth soon outstripped the school's capacity, and a west addition was built. West Bay View grew quickly in the 1890s following the purchase of the Rolling Mill by Illinois Steel in 1889. The new owners greatly expanded the mill to produce a wide range of steel products besides rails. New German and Polish immigrants arriving to work at the mill spurred the additional development of west Bay View.[19] In 1892, existing trolley service from Milwaukee along Kinnickinnk Avenue was replaced by electric street car lines, which joined the area more closely with the greater city, prompting additional developments.[20] The new school addition was designed by architect Walter A. Holbrook, the Mix Company partner presumed responsible for the original 1889-1890 building. Expansion of the earlier building had been foreseen and this addition fit stylistically and functionally. Design began in 1892 and the addition, containing six classrooms and adjacent cloakrooms, was completed in 1893 at a cost of $23,600.[21]

More than a decade later, in June 1907, the Milwaukee School Board voted to expand the Dover Street School, as the area once again felt the strain of its growing population. Beginning around 1900, new immigrants from northern Italy had begun settling in east Bay View, occupying the oldest worker housing built near the steel mill. At the same time, the influence of the Rolling Mills to attract labor diminished as newer manufacturing plants were built in the area.[22] Several new plants were built in west Bay View, which attracted new residents from a variety of European countries, and contributed to the need for greater school facilities. Plans for this expansion were most likely produced by the architectural department of the Milwaukee Public Schools. Construction began in 1909 on this addition, which was built towards Potter Avenue to the south and, coupled with the earlier building and addition, created an expansive L-shaped school plan. This south wing took advantage of the downward slope of the school property, extending the existing building's basement, first floor and second floor as full floors in the new addition. Rectilinear in overall form, the new addition was more modern and utilitarian than the existing building, with a low-pitched roof hidden behind a raised parapet and a visual emphasis on rectangular bands of windows. This design was broken by a one-story round bay, which extended a new ground-floor kindergarten into the south schoolyard and flooded the room with light from expansive windows. A new boiler room/coal storage room was nestled where the new addition and older building met, while classrooms and cloakrooms, connected by expansive hallways, were placed on all three floors. The cost originally budgeted for this addition by Milwaukee Public Schools was $8,568, although final bids accepted by the School Board raised this cost to $13,488.[23]

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[18] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, pp. 139-140.
[19] *Bay View Historic District*, 51.
[20] "Extensive Improvements Proposed: Milwaukee Enjoying a Building Boom," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 19, 1892. 5.
[21] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, p. 140-141; Architectural drawings, Milwaukee Public Schools, Facilities and Maintenance Archives.
[22] *Bay View Historic District*, 51-52.
[23] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, p. 141; Architectural drawings, Milwaukee Public Schools, Facilities and Maintenance Archives; Milwaukee Public Schools, *Proceedings of Milwaukee School Board*, 1908-1909, pp. 300; Milwaukee Public Schools, *Proceedings of Milwaukee School Board*, 1909-1910, p. 465.

Students and teachers had roughly a year to enjoy the newly expanded Dover Street School before a fire erupted in the building on the night of June 9, 1910. The blaze destroyed the 1890 and 1893 sections' roofs and third floor (including the assembly hall/gymnasium) and much of the second floor. The recently completed 1909 addition escaped destruction, but was damaged by smoke and water, as was the rest of the earlier sections of the building.

The Milwaukee School Board voted by the end of June 1910, less than a month after the fire, to quickly repair and rebuild the building, using the existing 1909 wing as a stylistic guide. The steeply-sloped roofs built as part of the 1889-1890 and 1893 sections were removed where not already destroyed by fire, and a new low-pitched roof and raised parapet, similar to that of the 1909 addition, was constructed. Existing chimneys were reduced in height. Also, at this time, a small two-story front addition was built that squared out the northeast corner of the building for an enlarged first-floor principal's office and second-floor teacher's room. New windows, flooring, trim and finishes, where necessary, matched the 1909 addition. Although rebuilding continued into fall 1910, enough work had been completed that classes were again being held in the refurbished building by mid-September.[24]

The Social Center Movement in Milwaukee

The Dover Street School, comprised of its original 1889-1890 building, 1893 and 1909 additions, and 1910 reconstruction, was a Milwaukee public school for roughly 120 years, from 1890 to 2011. More noteworthy, however, was its simultaneous use during much of this period as the Dover Street Social Center, providing evening and weekend activities for both children and adults. The history of Milwaukee social centers, managed by the Division of Municipal Recreation and Adult Education (today Recreation and Community Services) of the Milwaukee Public Schools, is significant in the social history of Milwaukee and as part of the larger history of the Progressive Movement of the United States, which peaked in the years just prior to World War I. The Dover Street Scholl and Social Center is historically significant as the building that housed one of Milwaukee's earliest social centers. Arising from widespread unrest from labor-capital conflicts in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, coupled with the economic and social stresses that large-scale immigration placed on American cities, the Progressive Movement sought to create an America that was more egalitarian in its economy, more inclusive and nurturing in its schools and colleges, and more uplifting in its social and community institutions. Urban settlement houses founded during this period, including Chicago's Hull House, were arguably the best-known institutions that worked to lift immigrants from marginal slums into the American middle class. However, innovative public recreation facilities were also an important part of the Progressive Movement. The conceptual development and implementation of the neighborhood fieldhouse in Chicago in the first decade of the 1900s is one aspect of this larger movement to bring both wholesome play and education to the masses. Milwaukee's social center movement, embodied by its "Lighted Schoolhouses" such as Dover Street School and Social Center, is a locally-significant part of this larger movement.

As early as 1902, educators and social reformers wrote about the need for community-based recreation for both

[24] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. I, p. 141; Winkler, *Bay View*, p. 50; Milwaukee Public Schools, *Proceedings of Milwaukee School Board*, 1909-1910, pp. 464-465.

children and adults, along with educational opportunities for adults. John Dewey, a well-known education professor at the University of Chicago, was typical of these advocates. In his article, "The School as Social Center," published in *The Elementary School Teacher* in October 1902, Dewey noted that America's cities and towns were experiencing difficulties related to the rapid change in population and cultures found in urban areas.

> We find that our political problems involve race questions, questions of the assimilation of diverse types of language and custom; we find that most serious political problems grow out of underlying industrial and commercial changes and adjustments; we find that most of our pressing political problems cannot be solved by special measures of legislation or executive activity, but only by the promotion of common sympathies and a common understanding.[25]

Dewey advocated as a solution, the innovative and creative use of schools, which he saw as neighborhood-based institutions that could help all people in a given community:

> This of itself would tend to develop a sense of something absent in the existing type of education, something defective in the service rendered by the school. Change the image of what constitutes citizenship, and you change the image of what the purpose of the school is. Change this, and you change the picture of what the school should be doing and of how it should be doing it. The feeling that the school is not doing all that it should do in simply giving instruction during the day to a certain number of children of different ages; the demand that it shall assume a wider scope of activities having an educative effect upon the adult members of the community, has its basis just here. We are feeling everywhere the organic unity of the different modes of social life, and consequently demand that the school shall be related more widely, shall receive from more quarters, and shall give in more directions.[26]

On October 25, 1911, Woodrow Wilson, then-Governor of New Jersey and soon to be President of the United States, spoke to the First National Conference on Civic and Social Center Development, held at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Wisconsin. In his speech, Wilson stated, "The object of the [social center] movement is to make the schoolhouse the civic center of the community, at any rate in such communities as are supplied with no other place of common resort."[27] He went on to note, "The study of the civic center is the study of the spontaneous life of communities. What you do is to open the schoolhouse and light it in the evening and say: 'Here is a place where you are welcome to come and do anything that it occurs to you to do.' "[28]

Wilson later stated,

> [The creation of social centers] is the means by which we shall create communities. And nothing else will produce liberty - you cannot have liberty where men do not want the same

[25] John Dewey, "The School as Social Center," *The Elementary School Teacher*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (October 1902), p.75.
[26] Dewey, "The School as Social Center," p. 76.
[27] Woodrow Wilson, "The Social Center: A means of common understanding," pp. 3-4.
[28] Wilson, "The Social Center: A means of common understanding," p. 4.

> liberty, you cannot have it where they are not in sympathy with one another, you cannot have it where they do not understand one another, you cannot have it when they are not seeking common things by common means, you simply cannot have it . . .[29]

By the early 1910s, social centers housed in public schools were being instituted throughout the United States. In 1913, Clarence Arthur Perry of the Sage Foundation issued a report that noted that 338 schools in 101 cities throughout the country were used as social centers during the previous year. "New York had 48 such centers and Chicago 16, while Philadelphia, Boston, Columbus, Detroit, Jersey City, Louisville, Rochester, and Trenton are also among the cities included in this list."[30]

Milwaukee had begun to experiment with evening activities for adults in 1908, when the Milwaukee School Board authorized after-school activities on a small scale in the Sixth District School, No. 1 (later Fourth Street School, now Golda Meir School), the Fifth District School, No. 1 (later the Boy's Trade Annex), and the Eighteenth District School, No. 1 (later Maryland Avenue School). The *Annual Report* of the Milwaukee Public Schools noted that the purpose of such centers was not "to tempt children away from well-ordered homes and interfere with the family life, but rather to provide a place for study and congenial occupation during the evening, for those less fortunate in home surroundings."[31]

The existence of these embryonic social centers then combined with an important political change in Milwaukee municipal government -- the election of Socialist Emil Seidel as mayor in 1910 and the establishment of a substantial voting bloc of Socialists on the city's Common Council and School Board. As a member of the Social Democratic Party, which espoused Socialist values and goals, Seidel and his fellow party members in city government strongly supported social reforms, including the establishment of community-based social centers. They saw such social centers as a means not only to provide education and wholesome recreation for working-class Milwaukee residents, but as a means by which to encourage public debates and political discussions in public schools. (Such political activities were tried in Milwaukee social centers briefly in the 1910s, then abandoned as too divisive.) With strong blocs on both the city's Common Council and School Board, these Socialists saw an opportunity to further both public recreation and their party's political goals.[32]

A discussion of the transition from *ad hoc* recreational activities to a well-thought-out, comprehensive program of school-based social centers was included in the *Annual Report* of the Milwaukee School Board for the 1911-1912 school year.

> For five or six years desultory attempts were made to carry on various activities at some of the school houses under the general title of Social Centers. In some years a few thousand dollars were set aside for the work; in other years, nothing. Something resembling playground work

[29] Wilson, "The Social Center: A means of common understanding," pp. 7-8.
[30] "School Social Centers," *The Elementary School Teacher*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (October 1913), p. 52.
[31] Milwaukee Public Schools. *Annual Report*, 1908-1909, pp. 21-22; Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. II, p. 284.
[32] Elizabeth Jozwiak, "Politics in Play: Socialism, free speech and social centers in Milwaukee," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol, 86, No. 3 (Spring 2003), pp. 10-21.

> was done in a few instances in connection with vacation schools. For a few years these vacation schools were conducted, then lacking funds, the board discontinued them. It came to be recognized that two or three things, at least, were true with reference to this work generally: First there must be a fund with which to pay expenses; the ordinary revenues of the schools were not enough to maintain the regular school work and also to provide for this new activity. Second, the necessities and opportunities for the work must be studied; taking the existing conditions as a starting point, wise and practicable plans for organizing and doing it must be mapped out. Third, proper supervision is essential; no new thing of this sort will go forward successfully unless it is looked after - and well looked after.[33]

In 1911, the Wisconsin state legislature, at the request of the Milwaukee School Board, passed legislation that allowed the School Board to maintain and equip recreational activities, evening and vacation schools in its own buildings. It also authorized money to be used towards public recreation and social centers, "no more than two-tenths of a mill[ion] annually," as mentioned above, and gave the School Board the authority to hire staff for such centers.[34] With this steady and stable source of revenue for social centers, Harold O. Berg, a Milwaukee school principal, was promoted in 1912 to head the newly-established Division of Municipal Recreation and Adult Education (now the Division of Recreation and Community Services) of the Milwaukee Public Schools.

Soon after, five Milwaukee public schools, including the Dover Street School, were selected as the first to house social centers as part of this new city-wide endeavor with each opening an in-house social center in 1912. Along with the Dover Street School, the selected school buildings included the Detroit Street School (demolished), Forest Home Avenue School (1516 W. Forest Home Avenue, extant), Fourteenth Street School (now Siefert H.O.R. School, 1547 N. 14th St., extant), and Fourth Street School (now Golda Meir School, 1555 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, extant).[35]

These new social centers used the existing school buildings, but made a few changes to them. The 1912-1913 Milwaukee Public Schools *Annual Report* noted, "By means of partitions, the school basements were converted into rooms. These were painted, whitewashed, heated, brilliantly lighted with electricity, and were used as reading rooms, billiard rooms, shower bath and locker rooms, club rooms, and directors offices."[36] Staffing was provided specifically for the new social center activities, and a wide variety of activities were planned. "Bands, orchestras, glee clubs, dramatic clubs, and kindred organizations were formed. Instruction was given in sewing, swimming, handwork, millinery, cooking, dancing, gymnastics, English and essential requirements for citizenship papers." The Milwaukee Public Library provided books for the centers' reading rooms. All of these functions were accommodated in the new Dover Street Social Center. More than 226,000 people used the five

[33] Milwaukee Public Schools. *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, pp. 55-56.
[34] Milwaukee Public Schools, *Annual Report*. 1911-1912, p. 55-56.
[35] Elizabeth Jozwiak, "Politics in Play: Socialism, free speech and social centers in Milwaukee," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol, 86, No. 3 (Spring 2003), p. 13; Milwaukee Public Schools, *Annual Report*. 1911-1912, p. 59; Milwaukee Public Schools. *Annual Report*, 1912-1913, p. 143.
[36] Milwaukee Public Schools. *Annual Report*, 1912-1913, p. 143.

centers during the first six months of their operation.[37]

In November 1915, Margaret Wilson, President Woodrow Wilson's daughter, visited Milwaukee to see the city's social centers (her father had been an early advocate of neighborhood social centers). To a newspaper reporter, Miss Wilson noted, "The social centers are the foundation of democracy, so that the argument against them may be taken as an argument against democracy."[38] She toured three social centers, including the Dover Street Social Center, noting, "What is being done in Milwaukee is an inspiration to the social center movement all over the country."[39] The article went on to note that "The Dover-st [sic]people had evidently learned that Miss Wilson was coming their way, for the schoolhouse was crowded and the welcome which Miss Wilson received as she entered was enthusiastic. When Miss Wilson left the building at 10:45 o'clock, a large crowd was gathered on the school grounds to cheer the president's daughter."[40]

Early History of the Dover Street Social Center (1912-1917)

Opened in 1912, the new Dover Street Social Center had roots in an earlier activity at the Dover Street School when the year before, in 1911, a group of local boys were allowed to use the school's assembly hall/gymnasium after hours for basketball. The extra-curricular use of the school building for what was dubbed the "Echo Basketball Team" had been deemed a great success and may have encouraged the establishment of one of the first-generation social centers at the Dover Street School. The center received its own staff, including O.G. Gilbert as the center's first director.[41]

Starting out, the Dover Street Social Center was open four nights per week and had a wide array of activities for Bay View residents.[42] Some of these were part of an activities menu found in all five of the early social centers, including table games, a "quiet room", reading rooms, billiards, hot and cold showers, and gymnastics for women. Over time, Walsh and his assistant, Dorothy Enderis, encouraged each center to schedule activities tailored to the specific interests of their communities.[43]

Walsh and Enderis also encouraged users from all levels of Milwaukee society, regardless of wealth or whether or not they were immigrants. Although the social centers were perceived as important tools in the assimilation and uplift of Milwaukee's immigrant population, the city's leaders recognized that a social center program that was available to all city residents would enjoy greater political and financial support, and would not suffer the perception of "charity" that settlement houses often labored under.[44]

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[37] Milwaukee Public Schools. *Annual Report*, 1912-1913, pp. 143-144.
[38] "Miss Wilson Praises the Wisconsin Social Center," *Milwaukee Journal*, November 4, 1915.
[39] "President's Daughter Joins in Social Center Gaieties," *Milwaukee Journal*, November 5, 1915.
[40] Ibid.
[41] *The Dover Annual*, 1917, pp. 10-11.
[42] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. II, p. 285.
[43] *The Dover Annual*, 1917, pp. 10-11; Social center flyers, Division of Municipal and Adult Recreation, various years.
[44] Elizabeth Jozwiak, "Politics in Play: Socialism, free speech and social centers in Milwaukee," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol, 86, No. 3 (Spring 2003), p. 15.

Like all of Milwaukee's social centers, the Dover Street Social Center was intended to discourage delinquency through the availability of alternative activities, and to encourage a sense of community and belonging among a strongly-immigrant Bay View population. In a historic resources survey of the Bay View neighborhood, authors Carlen Hatala and Paul Jakobovich, commented on the "Americanization" aspects of the social center program and its importance to Bay View residents, especially Italians:

> They were intended to Americanize children by "indirectly teaching them the values of fair play, sportsmanship, and group cooperation" in an "American" environment where English was spoken, American sports and games were offered, and staff were American. The programs were successful because the workers at the centers did not directly challenge the cultural traits of the immigrants. The Dover Street Center as a result became an important cultural as well as recreational center of Bay View's second generation Italians as well as some of the older immigrant Italians.[45]

The Dover Street Social Center was used by all facets of Bay View residents. By the 1910s, Bay View was a mix of long-time residents and newly-arrived immigrants. The neighborhood's earliest residents had been skilled iron workers, their families being from the British Isles and encouraged to come to the new community by the Milwaukee Iron Company. They had settled mostly on the east side of the community, south of the company plant between Lake Michigan and the Chicago & NorthWestern Railroad tracks. As the community developed through the 19th century, Germans became the largest ethnic group. Many of them lived in the central part of the community on either side of Kinnickinnic Avenue and in the vicinity of the Dover Street School and Social Center. The Irish were also an important ethnic group, as were Italians, who came to Bay View largely in the early 20th century and lived in the northern part of the neighborhood. Other ethnic groups were also represented in Bay View. Such a diverse community, with a variety of languages and cultural traditions, was very much the kind of place that social centers, with their "melting-pot" aspirations, were intended to support.[46]

The names and countries of origin listed for participants in four of the classes and activities at the Dover Street Social Center in the 1917 *Dover Annual*, an illustrated magazine published in support of the social center, illustrate the wide range of ethnic backgrounds served by the center. In the millinery class held during the 1916-1917 social center season, last names included Bearman, Carmody, Freed, Fuhrman, Girdwood, Guckenberg, Honzlechek, Jagunt, Lawler, Leary, Loppnow, Meyer, Nickel, Riesen, Sidebotham, Smith, and Zimmermann. The men's basketball teams had members with last names that included Zabel, Nelson, Nugent, Battenberg, James, Schade, Tulley, Quast, Loefller, and Cleveland. Members of the women's gymnasium class had last names that included Behling, Bingenheimer, Carlson, Cheriveznik, Conley, Dibley, Elsby, Estes, Fowler, Friese, Goldberg, Hacker, Klaeser, Larsen, Miestickow, McDonald, O'Brien, Newman, Prye, Racine, Roberts, Ryan, Schneider, Smith, Wolff, and Zoeller. The "English to Foreigners" class included students from Italy, Hungary,

[45] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. II, pp. 285-286.
[46] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. II, pp. 24-47; John Gurda, *Bay View, Wis.: Centennial Edition*, Chapter 2.

Austria, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Russia, Finland and Bosnia.[47]

Social center activities at the Dover Street Social Center were held throughout the building, although the ground floor was the focus. The kindergarten room and other rooms on the ground floor, including the industrial / manual arts room, were used for social center activities, including table games and billiards. The ground-floor bathroom and shower facilities were key to the social center's success, as many of the users of the social center found bathing there easier than at home. The top-floor assembly hall was used for dances, games, club events and other larger activities, while classrooms on the first and second floors, as well as corridors, were used for classes and other purposes.[48]

In the first year of its existence, the Dover Street Social Center offered basketball on Tuesdays and Thursdays with "match games" on Saturdays. Women were taught folk dancing on Thursdays, and both men and women learned ordinary dancing on Saturdays.[49] A glee club, debating society, and women's club were also scheduled.[50] On Wednesdays, motion pictures were shown.[51] In 1917, the social center director, Conrad Jennings, started the Bay View Civic League "for the advancement of Americanism and American ideals," engaging as speakers "men prominent in the business, political and judicial life of the city."[52]

That same year, in 1917, five years after its establishment, the Dover Street Social Center published an annual report that detailed the center's early history and the kinds of activities that it supported. In the *Dover Annual*, O.G. Gilbert, principal of Dover Street School and the early head of the school's social center, discusses the center's early years. He notes the initial preparation of the school and its inherent flexibility to serve as a social center.

> The necessary gas and electric lighting had been provided and the following rooms had been equipped - the Game Room, the Club Room, the Pool Room, the Shower Room, the Gymnasium and two night school rooms. Class rooms were made ready to receive sewing and fancy work classes, dramatic clubs, etc. The assembly hall was so arranged that it could be used for various purposes. In five minutes, with the proper amount and kind of assistance, it could be converted into a baseball field, a basketball field, a dancing hall, an entertainment hall or a civic club room.[53]

Gilbert notes that the Dover School and Social Center was so popular with Bay View residents during the first year of operation that the original schedule of three evenings a week had to be expanded to four evenings only two weeks after its opening in 1912, then expanded again to five evenings a week within a few months. He

[47] *The Dover Annual*, 1917, pp. 14, 33, & 38.
[48] *The Dover Annual*, 1917.
[49] "Commerce Night Studies," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, October 30, 1912.
[50] "Civic Center plans work," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, December 29, 1912.
[51] "Movies' Aid Enlisted by the Social Centers," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 5, 1913.
[52] "Organize Civic League at Social Center," *Milwaukee Journal*, October 14, 1917.
[53] *The Dover Annual, 1917,* p. 10.

then mentions that an early success of the social center was a boys basketball league of ten teams that kept the assembly hall bleachers filled night after night. A seven-team league of girls basketball teams was also successful. A men's and two women's gymnastics classes were popular. The center's musical groups prospered, including an orchestra, band and chorus, as did a drama club. The club also had popular sewing and "fancy work" classes.[54]

Gilbert stated that the Dover Street Social Center started out with an attendance of 250 per week, which grew to more than 600 during the first year of operation, often leaving only standing room or even closing classes and entertainments to additional participants. Especially popular were "Community Programs" that featured the center's orchestra, band and Dramatic Club, along with the Game Room, the Billiards Room, and the showers. "Evening Neighborhood Sociables [sic.]" held on Saturday nights were so popular that attendance had to be capped at 200.[55]

Gilbert then mentions that, during the second year of operation, the Dover Social Center's millinery class gained in popularity, as did indoor baseball. Other events and activities that he mentions include "the Dancing Clubs and classes, the Boy Scouts, the Campfire Girls, the Newsboys Club, the Navigation Class and the Naturalization Class."[56]

The 1917 *Dover Annual* went on to document the wide array of activities that were at that time being programmed by the Dover Street Social Center. Miss Carrie Starkey wrote about the center's industrial classes. She listed the enrollment of several classes, including 51 participants in dressmaking, 41 in handcraft, and 40 in millinery. The age of participants in the handcraft class ranged from 16 to 60 years.[57] The *Annual* went on to discuss and illustrate a wide variety of current activities, including Boy Scouts, basketball teams for both boys and girls, women's gymnastics, the center's Glee Club, Band and Orchestra, the Newsboys Club, members of the "Rough-house Room," the Dramatic Club, and the "Quiet Game Room."[58]

The array of activities was impressive, meant to serve school-age children, young men and women without families, and married couples. Basketball and other organized team sports were very popular at Dover, as they tended to be at other social centers. Billiards was also popular among young men; early concerns about the game faded as school board officials realized how many men were enticed into the social centers by the game. (In floor plans of the Dover Street School and Social Center from 1917-1921, one of the basement rooms appears to have been relabeled "Billiard Room.") Women, both young and old, were drawn in by sewing and handicraft classes. Various kinds of clubs met at the Dover Street School and Social Center, including debating and drama. Uniformed clubs such as the Boy Scouts and Campfire Girls also used the facility. The center's "quiet room," where board games and reading materials beckoned, was also popular. The Center boasted a chorus, a band, dancing and socials. A "Married Peoples' Dancing Class," which originally met in the ground-floor

[54] *The Dover Annual*, 1917, p. 10.
[55] *The Dover Annual*, 1917, p. 10.
[56] *The Dover Annual*, 1917, p. 11.
[57] *The Dover Annual*, 1917, p. 13.
[58] *The Dover Annual,* 1917.

kindergarten room, boasted 72 members in 1916-1917 and was moved to the third-floor Assembly Hall. (The 1917 *Dover Annual* noted that the class was visited by President Wilson's daughter Margaret when she had visited the Dover Street Social Center the year before.) English as a Second Language classes were a mainstay at Dover, along with classes on civics and American government.[59]

Social centers, including the one housed in the Dover Street School, continued in use through World War I, although attendance declined due to many earlier users being away as soldiers. One war-related activity at Dover Street mentioned in the press was military drill for women wanting to join the war effort, which attracted more than 500 girls to the initial meeting in November 1918.[60]

Growth of the Dover Street Social Center (1918-1945)

With the coming of peace in 1918 and the return of young soldiers to Milwaukee, attendance at the Dover Street Social Center quickly rebounded. Conrad Jennings, principal of the Dover Street School, noted that the start of the 1919-1920 school year had found the school's social center attracting a larger attendance than at any time in its history of operation. Yet, the neighborhood's rapid growth before the Great War was over. With the signing of armistice and several immigration acts between 1917 and 1924, the number of new immigrants in Bay View declined nearly to zero. The area was no longer a point of entry for new immigrants seeking unskilled work, but instead had become another working-class Milwaukee neighborhood. The 1920 United States Census for west Bay View shows that the vast majority of residents were either first or second generation or had emigrated prior to the war.[61] Neighborhood social centers also expanded their programing from providing language classes and other tools for assimilating new residents, to include social activities where the community could meet and interact outside of work and school.

Attendance was made easy with Dover Street and other social centers being open every night during the week except Sundays. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, men had classes, while Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays were devoted to classes for women. In 1919, Dover Street had popular basketball and volleyball teams, as well as a wide variety of classes in subjects such as drama, sewing, cooking, mechanical drawing, and dancing. Motion pictures were run for children on Saturday afternoons.[62]

In its February 7, 1920, issue, the *Milwaukee Journal* praised the city's social centers as a force for good:

> Milwaukee has gone as far as any city in the country in making its school houses centers of community educational and recreational activities. There are now 11 school social centers in the city, three of them recent.
>
> The school social center is a place for all in the neighborhood, adults as well as children, to

[59] *The Dover Annual,* 1917.
[60] "Plan Military Drill for Women on Dec. 5," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 22, 1918.
[61] District 195, Ward 17, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, United States Census, 1920.
[62] "Crowds Attend Social Centers," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, October 8, 1919.

> spend their evenings profitably. In these centers instruction and entertainment are combined. There are classes in commercial branches, drawing, manual training, cooking, sewing, and household management. The foreigner who wants to learn English or get a knowledge of American government so that he can become naturalized has opportunity at the social center. . . .
>
> The social center work, seen at close range, speaks for itself. It should be developed and expanded as time goes on. It teaches the young American ways and ideas and it makes their elders better Americans.[63]

In a separate article on July 26, 1920, the *Milwaukee Journal* stated, "More and more school buildings should be used evenings and Sundays as neighborhood houses. There are something like 70 schoolhouses in Milwaukee and only a small number of them are available at present as social centers. All of them for which there is a demand should be devoted to this purpose."[64]

Throughout the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, the Dover Street Social Center remained an important part of Milwaukee's robust social center program managed by Dorothy Enderis, who had been promoted to head of the Municipal Recreation and Adult Education Division with the resignation of Mr. Berg in 1920. By 1922, there were 10 social centers in Milwaukee public schools scattered through the city, including Dover Street. In 1925, there were 15 social centers in Milwaukee public schools, while in 1943, there were 21.[65] The city's social center program, with Dover Street as a significant center in the program, continued to provide educational and recreational opportunities for both adults and children in the Progressive Era spirit of uplift and progress.

Throughout these two decades, Milwaukee's social centers, including the Dover Street Social Center, continued to provide a wide variety of activities and classes. Many were available citywide in all centers, while others were available only in a select few social centers. In addition, new classes and offerings were continually being made available, based on changing demand by Milwaukee citizens.

A flyer for the 1922-1923 social center season called the program "The Lighted Schoolhouse. The Great American Opportunity," a phrase that had come into use to describe the early social centers in the citywide program, including Dover Street, in the early 1910s. The flyer listed a variety of activities for Dover Street, including cabinet and furniture making; lessons in canning, cooking and baking; classes in dressmaking, millinery, fancy needlework, and basket weaving; instruction in "parliamentary law and government;" and women's gymnastics. Basketball and indoor baseball were included among other athletic sports. English as a second language classes were also held. Called "the neighborhood 'get together' places" in the flyer, Dover Street and other social centers also had "readings rooms containing the daily papers and a score of the most

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[63] "School Social Centers," *Milwaukee Journal*, February 7, 1920.
[64] "Neighborhood houses," *Milwaukee Journal*, July 26, 1920.
[65] Milwaukee Board of School Directors, Extension Department, "Free Evening Schools, Social Centers," 1922. Milwaukee Board of School Directors, Extension Department, "The 1925-6 Season of the Evening Schools and Social Centers," 1925; Dept. of Municipal Recreation and Adult Education, *Social Centers are Citizens' War Service Stations*, September 13, 1943

popular magazines, rooms with table games, billiard rooms, athletic game rooms, both hot and cold showers, and facilities for club meetings."[66]

The 1924-1925 school season saw 15 social centers in use, including Dover Street. Classes offered that year included "applied arts, cabinet making, china painting, lamp shade making, millinery, knitting and crocheting, sewing and home nursing."[67] Instruction in public speaking, debate and drama clubs, "elementary law" classes, and various kinds of music groups, including bands and choruses, were also offered, along with classes in English as a second language. An article in the October 5, 1924, issue of the *Wisconsin News* noted that the Dover Street Social Center was noteworthy for offering reedwork and other handcrafts.

> There are six classes making baskets, chairs, plant boxes, sun room furniture, etc., and the material on hand to supply these classes is valued at between $1,400 and $1,500. Another class in the school is industriously making hunting skiffs, a large number of which were turned out by the students last year. Mothers who desire to study in any of the classes are permitted to leave their children in a special nursery provided in the building.[68]

In the same article, Dorothy Enderis noted that the program took cues from local community members on what activities to offer and offered up statistics illustrating the program's popularity. "Instructors will be provided to teach anything desired upon application of a sufficient number of interested students. Last year the total number of hours in afternoon and evening classes were 1,075,468, and the average number of persons attending all centers over 98,000."[69]

A flyer for the 1925-1926 social center season continued to call the social center program "The Lighted School House. The Great American Opportunity," below a night picture of a school building with every window ablaze with light. The flyer continued with an inspirational quotation (today attributed to Dorothy Enderis), "During working hours man makes a living - during hours of leisure he makes a life." Inside, the flyer listed 13 social centers, including Dover Street, and reaffirmed the wide array of activities offered at them. These included various kinds of industrial and craft instruction (applied arts, cabinet making, china painting, cooking, home nursing, gesso work, lamp shade making, millinery, needlework, personal health and care, reedwork and sewing), games and sports (billiards, table games, basketball, boxing, indoor baseball, volleyball, and gymnastics for both men and women), musical and literary clubs, and civic and social organizations, including Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls. "Wednesday Evening Entertainments" and "Saturday Night Neighborhood Socials" were also offered. At the bottom of one of the pages, the flyer exhorted, "Visit the social center of your neighborhood. Become acquainted with your neighbors."[70]

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[66] Milwaukee Board of School Directors, Extension Department, "Free Evening Schools, Social Centers," 1922.
[67] "Social Centers Open Sept. 16," *Milwaukee Journal*, September 7, 1924.
[68] "Recreation is Aim at Social Centers," *Wisconsin News*, October 5, 1924.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Milwaukee Board of School Directors, Extension Department, "The 1925-6 Season of the Evening Schools and Social Centers," 1925.

That year, the *Milwaukee Journal*, in an article dated October 22, 1925, noted the class on tending to the sick at home offered by the Dover Street Social Center.[71] Later in 1925, the *Journal* followed with a story on the new offering of chess instruction at a few of the social centers, including Dover Street. This instruction was in support of a city-wide chess competition, including district and all-city tournaments.[72] A typescript in the City of Milwaukee's Legislative Reference Bureau's clipping file, dated December 3, 1925, noted that social centers, including Dover Street, offered Saturday movie matinees for children (one for boys and one for girls, admission 1 cent) and Wednesday evening showings for adults (admission 5 cents).[73]

In 1927, wrestling was offered, along with boxing and "keeping fit" classes, at the Dover Street School and Social Center. Boxing and wrestling met on Friday evenings, while the "keeping fit" classes, intended to be not "too strenuous," were on Tuesdays. According to the *Milwaukee Journal*, this was the first time that either wrestling or boxing had been taught during the winter in a Milwaukee school.[74]

The popularity and diverse offerings of Milwaukee's school-based social centers continued through the rest of the 1920s and 1930s. Even during the Great Depression, centers like Dover Street maintained their programs, guiding the community through difficult times. In 1929, the Rolling Mill which had driven development and settlement of the area finally closed as its owner, United States Steel, shifted production to its facilities in Gary, Indiana. The mill site was razed in 1939.[75] Between the Depression and World War II, Bay View transitioned from a community of immigrant laborers to a middle-class neighborhood of second and third-generation residents.[76] The role of the community center remained strong.

A wide variety of other activities were offered at either all social centers. All centers offered instruction in applied arts ("art novelties, gift articles, home decorations and household novelties"), knitting and crocheting, needlecraft, and sewing and dressmaking, both for beginners and experienced sewers. Ballroom dancing, "Old Times Square Dance Clubs," and "Married People Social Dancing Clubs" were also offered at all centers.[77]

Many classes were only offered at a selection of social centers, including Dover Street. These included instruction in art metal (pewter, wrought iron and bronze), "beauty culture" and personal care, photography (both beginners and advanced), woodworking (furniture and boat building), and drama classes.[78]

One of the newer classes offered at Dover Street, instruction in building and flying model airplanes, reflected

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[71] "Teach Care of Sick at Dover-st Center," *Milwaukee Journal*, October 22, 1925.
[72] "Social Centers to Play Chess," *Milwaukee Journal*, December 13, 1925.
[73] "Social Center Motion Pictures (Information obtained from Extension Department of School Board, Dec 3, 1925), "typescript in clipping files, Legislative Reference Bureau, City of Milwaukee.
[74] "Plan Wrestling, Boxing Classes," *Milwaukee Journal*, September 21, 1927.
[75] The mill site was eventually converted to park space before becoming the southern end of the Dan Hoan Bridge in the 1970s. *Bay View Historic District*, 52.
[76] Many residents in the 1940 Census are listed as tradespeople either as workers or proprietors of Bay View or Milwaukee-area businesses. District 202-203, Ward 17, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, United States Census, 1930, 1940.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.

changing technologies and demand. It offered lectures on the theory and history of aviation, as well as the mechanics of gas engines. Flying tournaments were scheduled with participants from the six other social centers that also offered similar classes.[79]

Sports remained a staple of the social centers. Basketball, indoor baseball, volleyball, and gymnastics were offered at all centers. Selected centers, including Dover Street, also offered boxing, billiards, and table tennis.[80]

Also, every social center had a "Children's Room" where parents could leave their children while participating in social center activities. Afternoon activities for elementary school-age children were held from 3:45 to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, as well as Saturdays at several social centers, including Dover Street.[81]

In addition, changing attitudes about appropriate interactions between young men and women had brought about the establishment of "Co-Recreation Rooms" in each social center. These spaces were run by "a hostess who aids young men and women in spending an evening of happy companionship in games, music, and informal visiting."[82]

Through these decades, the Dover Street Social Center remained a significant community place of meeting and learning, exemplifying Milwaukee's continued commitment to Progressive Era ideals of recreational and educational opportunities for all citizens through its city-wide social center program. Milwaukee newspapers would note the accomplishments of Dover Street Social Center participants in various social center programs. For example, in 1932, the *Milwaukee Journal* noted that a member of the Dover Street drama club, Adolph Herbstreit, had been chosen as one of two leading character actors in that year's city-wide social center drama tournament.[83]

Social centers remained active during World War II despite the focus of many Milwaukee residents on war efforts elsewhere. A social center program flyer from September 13, 1943, lists 21 social centers, including Dover Street, and notes, "Pool Your Efforts with Your Neighbors to Help Win the War on the Home Front." Many of the same activities previously offered continued to be staples in social centers, including applied arts, sewing and needlecraft, woodwork, photography, co-recreation rooms, various kinds of clubs, citizen preparation classes, dance classes, table games, and chess. Sports remained popular, including basketball, volleyball, boxing, indoor baseball, gymnastics, table tennis, billiards, and dart ball.[84] A *Milwaukee Sentinel* article from December 23, 1943, published photos of social center activities and noted the variety of classes.[85]

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[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Department of Municipal Recreation and Adult Education, *Social Center Bulletin*, Season of 1939-1940.
[83] *Milwaukee Journal*, May 10, 1932.
[84] Dept. of Municipal Recreation and Adult Education, *Social Centers are Citizens' War Service Stations*, September 13, 1943.
[85] "Work (and Fun) in Social Centers," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, December 23, 1943.

The Dover Street School and Social Center After World War II

Social centers in Milwaukee public schools, including the Dover Street Social Center, continued into the post-World War II era. In 1948, at the time of Dorothy Enderis' retirement, there were 35 social centers, almost all of them in public schools.[86] Milwaukee historian John Gurda has noted that "Golden Age Clubs" serving Milwaukee senior citizens, were started the year after in 1949, and that children with disabilities received their own activities and programs in 1961.[87]

In 1952, the *Milwaukee Journal* noted a Bay View grandmother who made a dresser at the Dover Street Social Center, where she had learned reed work thirty years earlier.[88] Three years later, in 1955, the *Milwaukee Sentinel* profiled Mrs. Cyrus Calkins, an elderly lady who had taken a class in oil painting at the Dover Street School and Social Center two years before, and was now being compared to painter Grandma Moses.[89]

In 1964, Milwaukee's social center program suffered cuts in funding, but additional funding for the program was found the following year with the passage of a tax referendum in favor of the program. "Our social centers will serve more areas of the city than ever before," stated Clarence H. Emigh, assistant superintendent of schools in charge of recreation and adult education.[90]

The Dover Street Social Center continued in operation until at least the late 1960s but had closed by 1991.[91] In 1991, the Milwaukee Public Schools still operated 14 Recreation and Community Centers, some of which were located in school buildings.[92] As late as 2011, Milwaukee Recreation continued to offer a wide variety of activities, including newer ones (hair-braiding, salsa dancing and African drumming) that reflected the city's ever-changing demographics.[93]

The Dover Street School itself continued in operation until 2011, when it was consolidated with another Bay View school, the Tippecanoe Public School, in the Fritsche Middle School building at 2937 S. Howell Ave. The Dover Street School was designated a Bay View Historical Society Landmark in 2001 in recognition of the building's strong historical importance to the Bay View community. Since its closing in 2011, the Bay View community has been outspoken about the need to preserve the school building.

Comparable Buildings

The Dover Street School and Social Center is historically significant as one of the first social centers established

[86] Elizabeth Jozwiak, "Politics in Play," p. 21.
[87] John Gurda, "The power of recreation," *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, December 3, 2011.
[88] *Milwaukee Journal,* May 21, 1952.
[89] Dorothy Madle, "Old in Years, Young in Art," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, October 16, 1955.
[90] "Expanded Social Center Program Ok'd," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, September 1, 1965.
[91] Email from Janet Key to Terry Tatum, March 12, 2015.
[92] Hatala and Jakubovich, *Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources*, vol. II, p. 285.
[93] Gurda, "The power of recreation."

with the creation of Milwaukee's city-wide social center program in 1912. There had been earlier, tentative efforts to have public recreational and educational programs in a very few public schools, starting during the 1908-1909 school year. The Milwaukee public school buildings that held these early *ad hoc* social centers during that school year were the Sixth District School, No. 1 (later Fourth Street School, now Golda Meir School) at 1555 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Drive (extant), the Fifth District School, No. 1 (later the Boy's Trade Annex), address not known, probably demolished, and the Eighteenth District School, No. 1 (later Maryland Avenue School, now Maryland Montessori School) at 2418 N. Maryland Ave. (extant). In the 1909-1910 school year, the social center programs at the Eighteenth District School had been dropped and the Eleventh District School, No. 1 (later Forest Home Avenue School) at 1516 W. Forest Home Avenue (extant) had a social center.

With the establishment of the Municipal Recreation and Adult Education Division, the social centers that were the first in this new city-wide program were located at the Dover Street School, the Detroit Street School at Detroit and Jackson streets (demolished), the Forest Home Avenue School at 1516 W. Forest Home Ave, (extant), the Fourteenth Street School (now Siefert H.O.R. School) at 1547 N. 14th St., and the Fourth Street School (now Golda Meir School) at 1555 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Dr. (extant). The Dover Street School and Social Center was the earliest such center located in the Bay View neighborhood and one of the first citywide. As such, it is one of a small handful of buildings that exemplify the significant social center program in Milwaukee throughout its long and distinguished history.

Conclusion

The Dover Street School and Social Center was an early, pioneering social center in Milwaukee's social center movement of the 20th century. As one of the city's first social centers, the building exemplifies the importance of public school-based social centers in the social, educational and recreational history of Milwaukee. With its intact exterior, including overall form and appearance dating to 1910, as well as interior spaces from its time as a social center, the Dover Street School and Social Center continues to tell the story of early twentieth century Bay View and one of Milwaukee’s most successful social improvement programs. The building is significant for its role as a social center from 1912, the date the center first opened, to 1965, reflecting its most active period amid a time of great change in the Bayview neighborhood.

___End of Statement of Significance

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___End of References

___Insert Boundary Descriptions

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary is the entire parcel associated with Dover Street School and Social Center and the address 619 East Dover Street. Dover Street forms the northern boundary and Potter Avenue forms the southern boundary. Based on Sanborn maps, this appears to correspond to the historic boundary of the school.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries encompass the entire parcel of land associated with the Dover Street School and Social Center in Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, WI.

___End of Boundary Descriptions

___Insert Photo Descriptions

Name of Property: Dover Street School and Social Center

City or Vicinity: Milwaukee

County: Milwaukee State: Wisconsin

Photographer: John Cramer
MacRostie Historic Advisors
53 West Jackson Blvd, Suite 1323
Chicago, IL 60604

Date Photographed: April 15, 2015

Location of Original Digital Files: Wisconsin Historical Society, Historic Preservation Division, Madison, WI

Description of Photograph(s) and Number:

1 of 14: Primary north elevation, looking southeast

2 of 14: North and west elevations from Dover Street

3 of 14: South and west elevations, looking southwest

4 of 14: East and south elevations

5 of 14: East elevation of 1909 addition (left) and 1889-1890 (section right)

6 of 14: Kindergarten bay, looking southeast

7 of 14: Interior, ground floor, northwest room

8 of 14: Interior, 1st floor corridor

9 of 14: Interior, 1st floor classroom

10 of 14: Interior, 2nd floor corridor

11 of 14: Interior, staircase, south corridor

12 of 14: Interior, staircase, 3rd floor

13 of 14: Interior, 3rd floor classroom

14 of 14: Interior, 3rd floor gymnasium

___End of Photo Descriptions

___Insert Figures

List of Figures:

Figure 1: Sketch plan, first floor

Figure 2: Sketch plan, second floor

Figure 3: Sketch plan, third floor

Figure 4: sketch plan, basement

Figure 5**:** North and west facades of the Dover Street School and Social Center from Dover Street circa 1927. (Source: *Where We Go To School:* Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Milwaukee Public Schools, June 1927).

Figure 6: South and east facades of the Dover Street School and Social Center from Potter Avenue circa 1917. (Source: *The Dover Annual*, 1917).

Figure 7**:** Evening sewing class at Dover Street Social Center, 1917. (Source: *The Dover Annual*, 1917).

Figure 8**:** Ladies' Gymnastics Class at Dover Street Social Center, 1917. (Source: *The Dover Annual, 1917)*

Figure 9**:** Rough House Room and Quiet Game Room at Dover Street Social Center, 1917. (Source: *The Public School as Municipal Neighborhood Recreation Centers* by H.O. Berg The American City, Vol XVI No. 1January 1917).

Figure 10**:** Community dances at Dover Street Social Center, 1910s. (Source: *The Dover Annual*, 1917).

Figure 11: Neighborhood entertainment at Dover Street Social Center, 1910s. (Source: *The Dover Annual*, 1917).

Figure 12: Personal hygiene class at Dover Street Social Center, 1926. (Milwaukee County Historical Society).

Figure 13: Aerial view of Dover Street School and Social Center in 1968, looking east. (Source: Milwaukee County Historical Society).

Figure 14: Site plan showing construction dates of building phases.
Figure 1: First floor sketch plan

Figure 2: Second floor sketch plan

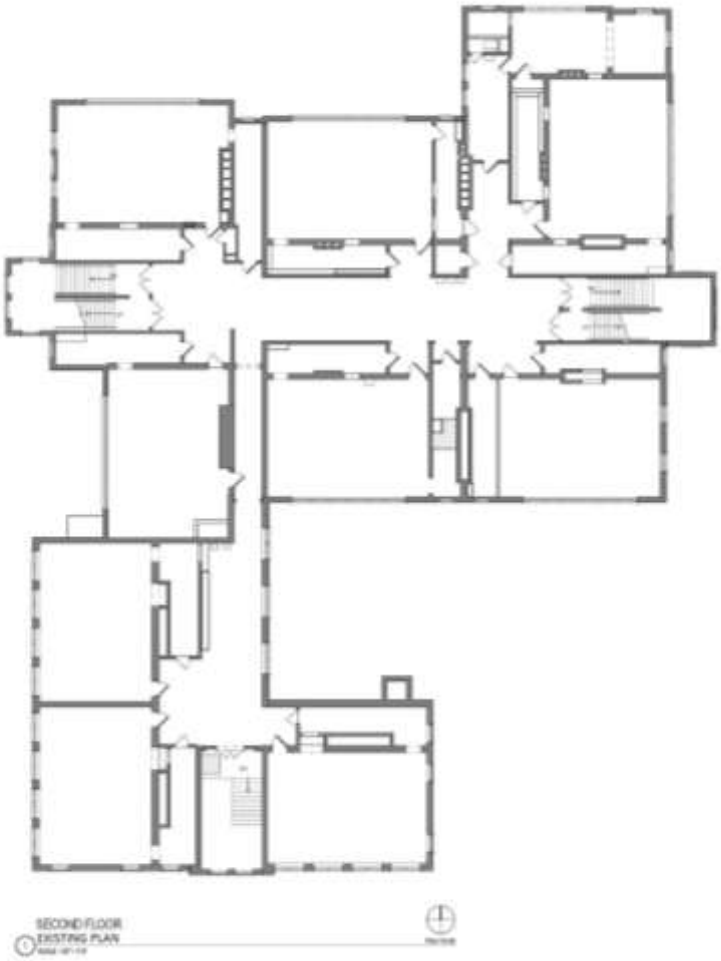


Figure 3: Third floor sketch plan

Figure 4: Ground floor sketch plan

Figure 5: North and west facades of the Dover Street School and Social Center from Dover Street circa 1927. (Source: *Where We Go To School:* Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Milwaukee Public Schools, June 1927).

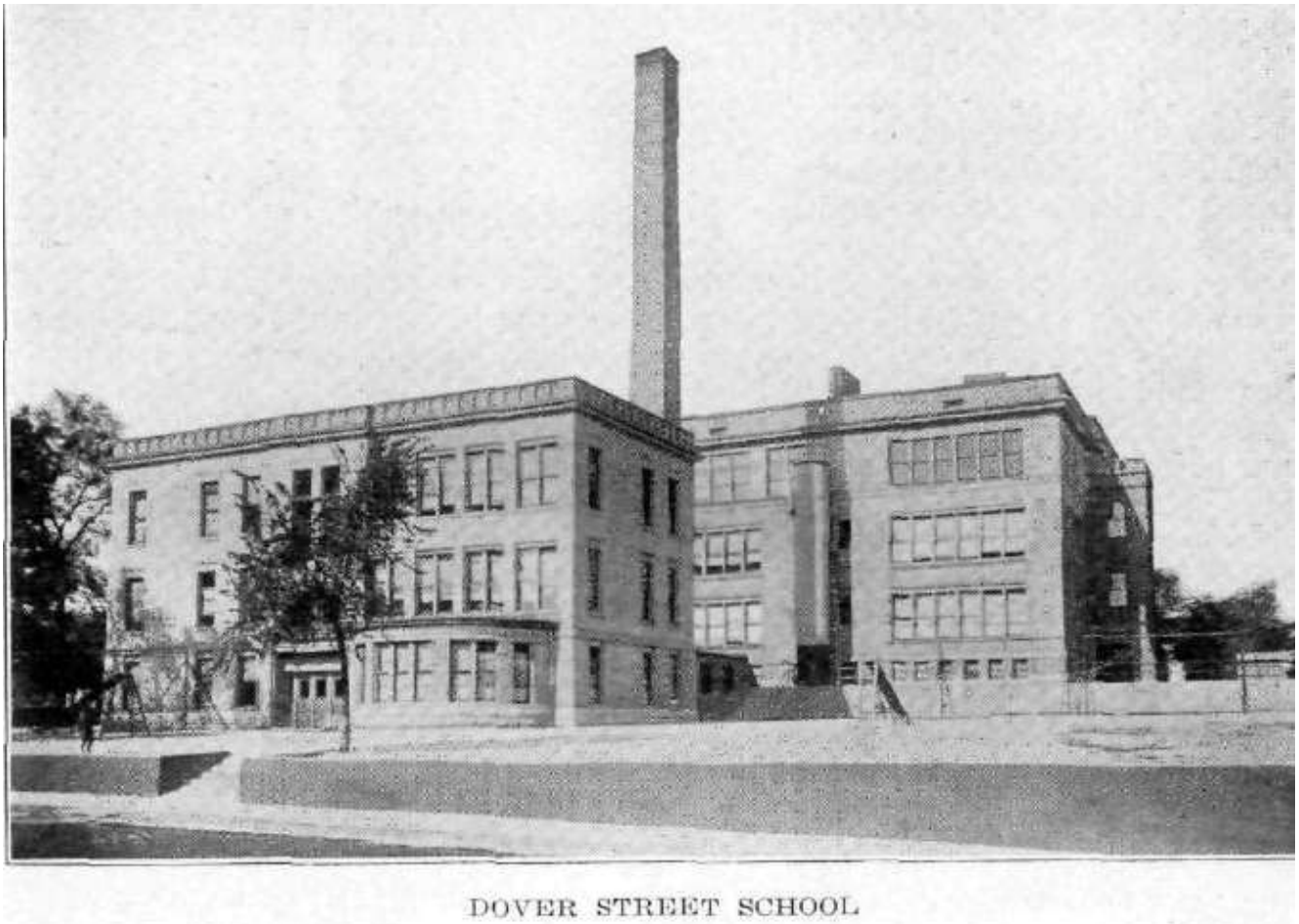


Figure 6: South and east facades of the Dover Street School and Social Center from Potter Avenue circa 1917. (Source: *The Dover Annual*, 1917).

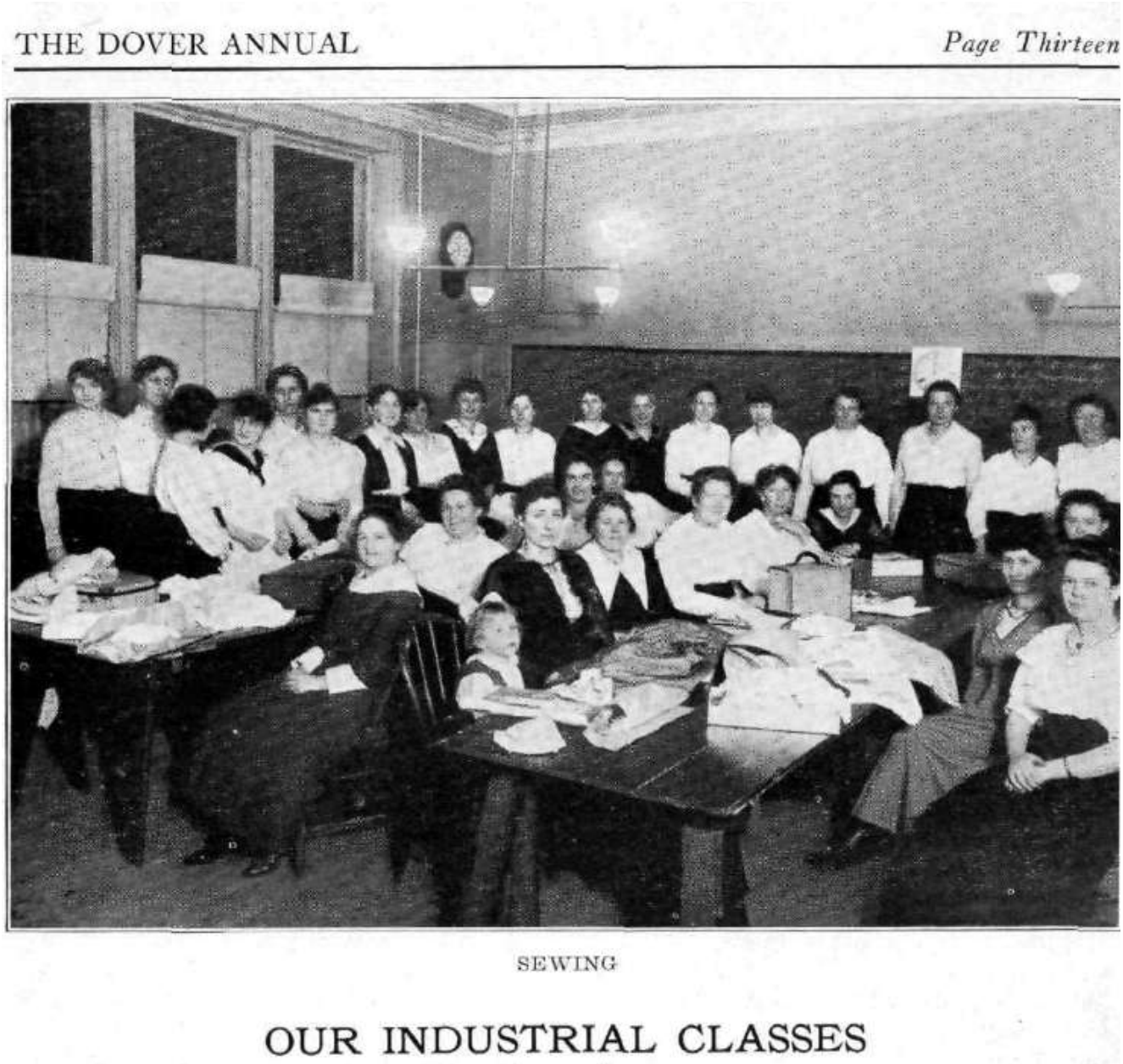


Figure 7**:** Evening sewing class at Dover Street Social Center, 1917. (Source: *The Dover Annual*, 1917).

LADIES' GYMNASTIC CLASS

LADIES CLASSES IN GYMNASTICS.

The above picture shows a few of the many ladies that enjoyed the class work in gymnastics at the Center during the season just closing.

Classes met in the well-equipped gymnasium twice each week for gymnastic exercise, dancing, apparatus work and games.

During the last season the classes enrolled seventy-five girls and all these are anxiously looking forward to the opening of the Social Centers next fall. We hope that the next season will bring forth more girls that are anxious to benefit from the splendid opportunity offered them.

It is never too late to join a class and one can never be too old to exercise. Therefore we urge married women as well as young girls to join the classes.

Figure 8**:** Ladies' Gymnastics Class at Dover Street Social Center, 1917. (Source: *The Dover Annual, 1917)*

THE "ROUGH-HOUSE" ROOM IN THE BASEMENT, USED FOR WORKING OFF SURPLUS ENERGY

"QUIET GAME" ROOM IN THE DOVER STREET SCHOOL, MILWAUKEE

Figure 9**:** Rough House Room and Quiet Game Room at Dover Street Social Center, 1917. (Source: *The Public School as Municipal Neighborhood Recreation Centers* by H.O. Berg The American City, Vol XVI No. 1January 1917).

Figure 10**:** Community dances at Dover Street Social Center, 1910s. (Source: *The Dover Annual*, 1917).

Figure 11: Neighborhood entertainment at Dover Street Social Center, 1910s. (Source: *The Dover Annual*, 1917).

Figure 12: Personal hygiene class at Dover Street Social Center, 1926. (Milwaukee County Historical Society).

Figure 13: Aerial view of Dover Street School and Social Center in 1968, looking east. (Source: Milwaukee County Historical Society).

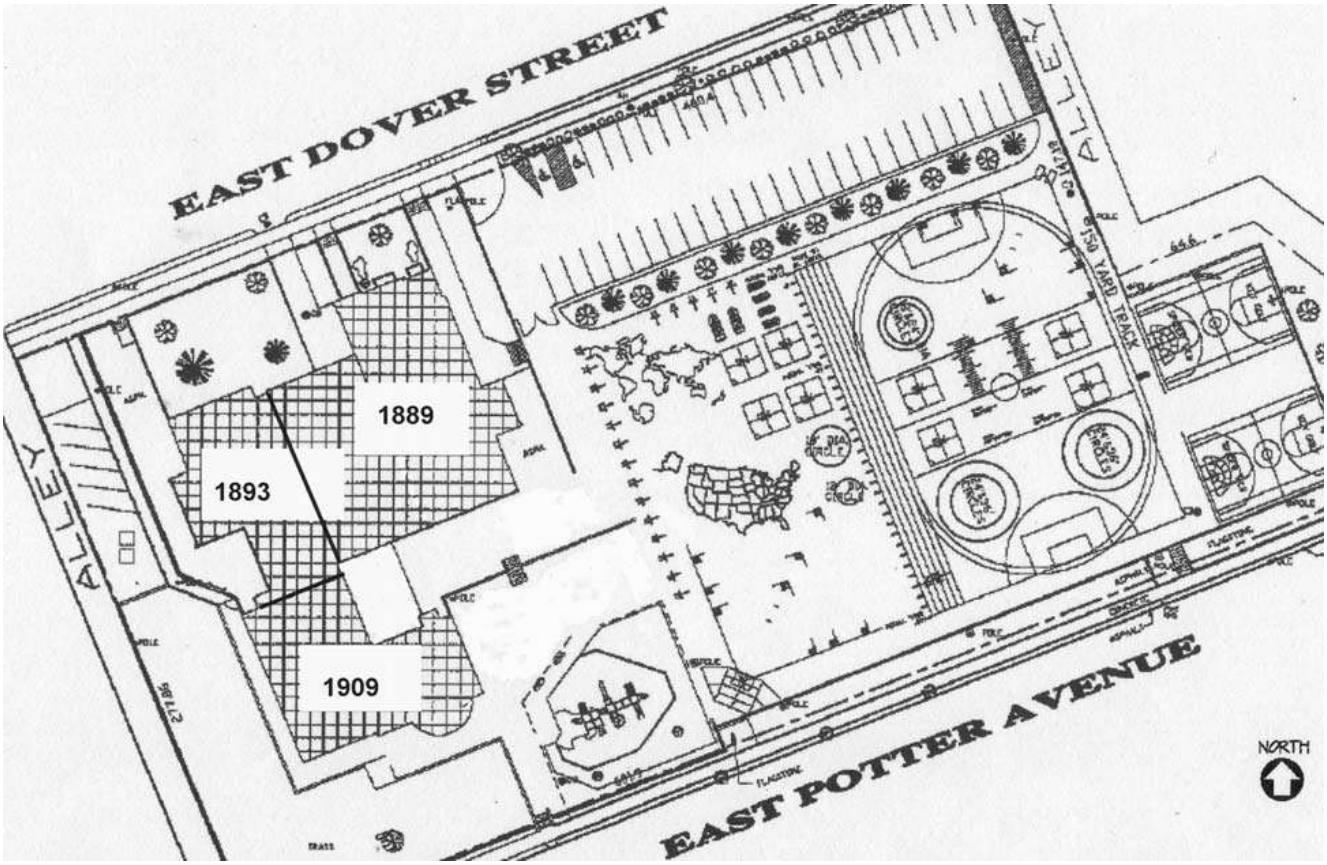
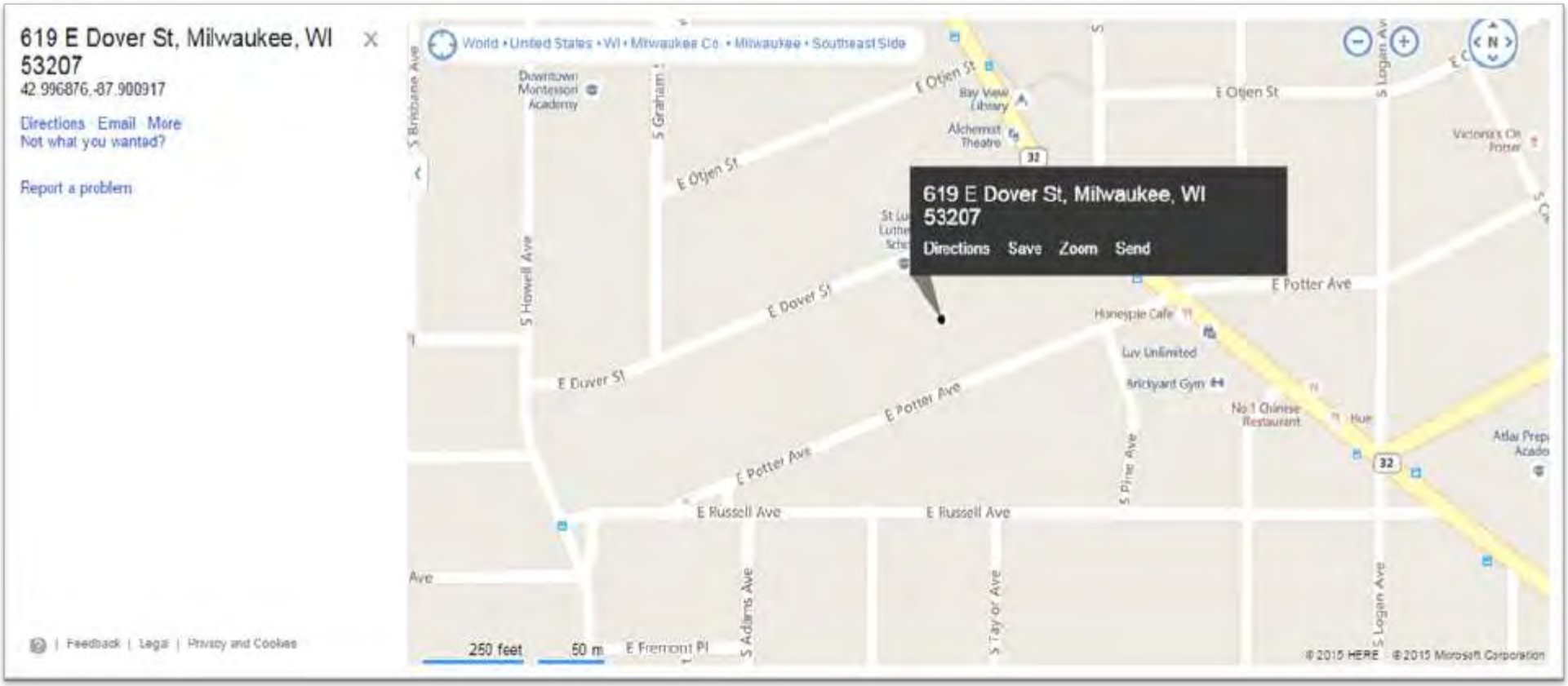


Figure 14: Site plan showing construction dates of building phases of Dover Street School and Social Center.

___End Figures



Dover Street School
619 East Dover Street – Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207
Latitude 44.996876
Longitude: -87.900917
**Coordinates based on WGS 84*

Scale: 250 feet 50 m

Dover Street School and Social Center, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, 1 of 14

NO PARKING

Dover Street School and Social Center, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, 3 of 14

Dover Street School and Social Center, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, 14 of 14

1889
DOVER
STREET
SCHOOL
PUBLIC SCHOOL

1889
SCHOOL
NO PARKING

EXIT

ROOM
13

EXIT
FIRE ALARM
EXIT
EXIT
FIRE
EXTINGUISHER
2