

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION

1. Name

Historic: Jacob Nunnemacher Estate

and/or Common: Evergreen Hotel / Wildenberg Hotel

2. Location

Street & number 3774 South 27th Street

Aldersperson: Ald. Terry Witkowski

District(s): 13th Aldermanic District

3. Classification

Category

building(s)
 structure
 object
 site

Ownership

public
 private
 both

Present Use

agricultural
 commercial
 educational
 entertainment

park
 cemetery
 religious
 private-
residence

government
 industrial
 military
 museum

transportation
 other
vacant

4. Owner of Property

Name: City of Milwaukee

Street & number: 809 North Broadway

City: Milwaukee

State WI

Zip 53202

5. Representation Existing Surveys

Inventory: Reconnaissance Survey City of Milwaukee

Date: 1979

federal state county local

Depository for survey records:

Organization City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation

Street & number 200 East Wells Street Room B-4

City Milwaukee

State WI Zip 53202

Previous historic designation:

National Register Date _____ Name _____
 City of Milwaukee Landmark Date _____ Name _____
 Other
Name of Program _____ Date designated _____

6. DESCRIPTION

Condition:

Check one:

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins

- original site
- moved date
- altered
- unaltered

Building form:

Number of stories 2

Foundation:

- stone
- brick
- concrete block
- concrete
- other _____

Roof:

- gable (flank end cross)
- gambrel (flank end cross)
- hip
- mansard
- flat
- other _____

Walls:

- clapboard
- brick
- stucco
- stone
- wood shingle
- slate
- terra cotta
- asphalt siding
- asbestos tile
- aluminum siding
- artificial stone
- other _____

Written description: (Continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

The Jacob Nunnemacher Estate consists of a rectangular, hip roof, cream brick residential building of Italianate Style that has a two-story central block flanked by one-story wings. The house is set back from South 27th Street and the main facade faces west. It was once part of a multi-acre holding that now consists of a 81,382 square foot site. The once-landscaped front lawn has been replaced with asphalt paving.

The hip roof extends out from the body of the house and feature brackets below which is a cornice in which ventilating grills are placed. Brackets and a cornice are still extant at each side wing.

In keeping with the former house's Italianate Style, the center bay of the 3-bay facade projects slightly and is somewhat more embellished. The first and second stories are separated by a brick belt course. The corners of the first story are designed to appear as pilasters with adjacent walls recessed slightly and ornamented with corbelling. The entrance is centered in the middle bay and features a rectangular opening flanked by sidelights and a transom. Above this entrance was once a large window opening on the second story. It has been bricked up leaving room for a short sash window. In front of the window is signage that reads "Ed Wildenberg" and "The Evergreen". Above the window is corbelling. The remainder of the windows on the facade are symmetrically placed. The windows to either side of the entry door have different glazing patterns with the long sash to the left or north possibly original. To the right or south of the entry is an opening filled with a 20-light window. The second story window openings have been bricked in and feature paired short, one-over-one sash. There is a window in each of the two side wings. The one to the right or south has been altered and is filled with a 20-light window. The opening to the left or north features a stone lintel and a pair of narrow windows that may be original.

A large recent-era porch now stretches across most of the front of the main block of the house. It has a flat, projecting roof and four courses of horizontal sheathing from which a pitched roof extends. This pitched roof is supported by four posts.

The walls of the house extend to the ground and no foundation material is evident.

The remaining three elevations of the house were not visible for viewing at this time.

Section 6 description continued

Historic postcards show that the front entry originally had an arched opening. The front porch just extended the width of the projecting bay. It featured a flat roof and paired ornamental columns at the corners. These columns rested on rectangular bases and there were short balustrades. Four or five steps led up to the porch deck from grade. A belvedere crowned the apex of the hip roof.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Areas of significance:

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | Jacob Nunnemacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | |

Date built or altered: c. 1860s

Builder/architect: Not known at this time

Written statement of significance: (continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

The Jacob Nunnemacher Estate is architecturally significant as one of the city's earlier Italianate buildings and one of only a couple of extant examples of the country estates that once characterized the open lands around the growing metropolis of Milwaukee. Villa Uhrig is another example of this type, located at 1727 North 34th Street. It was built fronting the Lisbon Plank Road in 1853-1854. Villa Uhrig is locally designated. Most all of such country houses were demolished as development swept outward from Milwaukee's core.

Although the Nunnemacher residence has been altered over time, it retains its original form, materials, roofline, and brackets as well as some interior features. It is recognizable as an Italianate residence and its scale is broader than examples in the city center. This house remains one of the oldest structures in the southwest part of the city. Alterations to the exterior are reversible.

Jacob Nunnemacher was a significant businessman in Milwaukee's early years. Born in Bad-Burg near Basel, Switzerland in 1819, Nunnemacher emigrated to Milwaukee in 1842 and established a successful meat market. His earnings allowed him to build his first distillery, at Humboldt, and then another in the west half of Section 18 in the Town of Lake in 1856. It is this latter location that is the subject of this nomination. Not only was the house built as a country home for Nunnemacher, but it provided an integrated system for his distilling business. The significant forested land supplied the wood to fire the distillery. Once land was cleared of trees, it was planted with grain to be used in the distilling process. The slops or leftovers from the distilling process were fed to Nunnemacher's large herd of fine cattle. Once fattened up, he would ship the cattle to his slaughterhouse downtown just west of his butcher shop. Nunnemacher's distillery was on a "large scale" and his trade extended over a wide territory. When the forests were depleted, and the competition grew, distilling did not make money at that location and the business ceased.

While the distillery was at its height, the lucrative endeavor allowed Nunnemacher to invest heavily in real estate and made him one of the richest men in Wisconsin by the time of his death on November 28, 1876. In 1852 he built a hotel at the southwest corner of North Water Street and East Wells Street, later known as the Wellington Hotel then the Blatz Hotel. In 1870 he built the Grand Opera House Block in which was located the Stadt Theater. When this theater later burned, Captain Frederick Pabst rebuilt the site as the Pabst Theater. It is said that he devoted much of his later years at his farm in which he took great pride. His four sons were all prominent figures in Milwaukee business and banking: Herman, Rudolph, Jacob, Robert.

The property was sold to Frank Riedl after Nunnemacher died. By 1932, there was a tourist camp on the grounds. The small cabins were an early version of a motel.

8. Major Bibliographical References

"A Pioneer Distillery is Now a Tourist Camp", Milwaukee Journal, Sunday July 31, 1932
"Hotel's past a tale tinged with trouble", Robert M. Riepenhoff, Milwaukee Journal February 24, 1981
Community Survey Form, 3774 South 27th Street, March 31, 1979
History of Milwaukee County, Howard L. Conard, edit. Chicago: 1895, volume 2 pp. 328-329

9. Property Description

Acreage: _____

Legal property description:

Lands in the SW 1/4 SEC 18-6-22 N 199' of S 894" of E 409.19' of W 489.19' TID #76

10. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Carlen Hatala on behalf of Ald. Terry Witkowski

Organization: City of Milwaukee

Street: 200 East Wells Street

City: Milwaukee

State: WI

Zip: 53202

Telephone (days) _____

(evenings) _____

Date: _____

Return to: Historic Preservation
City Clerk's Office
200 E. Wells St.
Room B-4
Milwaukee, WI 53202

(414) 286-5722