

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**SENT TO D.C.**

9-23-94

### 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 Bloomington School - Village Hall  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Location

street & number 108 East Lake Street  not for publication  
city or town Bloomington  vicinity  
state Illinois code IL county DuPage code 043 zip code 60108

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

William L. Wheeler, SHPO 9-20-94  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____

Bloomington School - Village Hall  
Name of Property

DuPage County, Illinois  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/School

Government/City Hall

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Specialty Store

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Wood

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other

**Narrative Description**

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

Bloomington School - Village Hall  
Name of Property

DuPage County, Illinois  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

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)

Education

Politics/Government

**Period of Significance**

1891 - 1937 Education

1938 - 1944 Politics/Government

**Significant Dates**

1891

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Harnbel, Charles, Builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

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

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Bloomington School - Village Hall  
Name of Property

DuPage County, Illinois  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 4 1 0 3 2 0 4 6 4 5 3 7 0  
Zone Easting Northing  
2         

3           
Zone Easting Northing  
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 Joan-Marie Moss  
organization Village of Bloomington date July 5, 1994  
street & number 201 South Bloomington Road telephone 708-980-8539  
city or town Bloomington state IL zip code 60108

**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 Village of Bloomington  
street & number 201 South Bloomington Road telephone 708-893-7000  
city or town Bloomington state IL zip code 60108

**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 Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Bloomington School - Village Hall

### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Bloomington School - Village Hall sits at the southeast corner of the intersection of Lake Street (US 20) and Third Street in the Village of Bloomington, Bloomington Township, DuPage County, Illinois. The building is located near the center of the original Village of Bloomington in Bloomington Township, which is located in the extreme northern part of DuPage County and is bounded on the north by Cook County, on the east by Addison Township and on the west by Wayne Township. The building was constructed in 1891 by builder Charles Harnbel on lots 8 and 9 of block 3 of the plat of the town of Bloomington, commonly known as 108 E. Lake Street.

This is the only known two-story frame school house constructed in the Bloomington vicinity, most school houses being single-story structures. The Bloomington School was one of three schools serving Bloomington between 1891 and 1920. The Roselle Public School, a four-room school house built in 1874, was replaced by the Saulk Pioneer School in 1925. The German School, located in Roselle was run by the Lutheran Church. It was built in the 1899 and served as a school until 1920 when a new school building replaced it. It was subsequently moved and converted into a residence.

Although the Bloomington School - Village Hall was "modernized" in 1937-1938 and was renovated in 1977-1978, at which time wiring, plumbing and insulation were replaced, the building has maintained its historic integrity.

The two-story building is of wood frame construction, with a simple rectangular plan. The land is basically level although the lots on which the school is located slope gently to the northwest. The building is painted red; the decorative wood trim and pedimented caps above doorways and windows is gray. Originally the windows all had shutters but they were removed between 1912-1924. The gabled roof is asphalt. A bell tower with a mansard roof and brackets is perched atop the pitched roof. The tower which once was open to accommodate an old school bell is now enclosed with wood panels. The bell was removed circa 1938 and was replaced with a siren and a flag pole, both of which remain in place.

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Bloomington School - Village Hall

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The building's front facade faces west. The front entrance, an enclosed wood porch, is centrally located on the west side of the structure with a 6/6 double-hung window on either side of it. The porch is above ground level and has two doorways, one on the north side and the other on the south. Four wood steps lead to the north entrance while five lead to the south entrance. Both stairways have wood banisters. The modern doors have nine panes of windows while the lower half of the wood doors have two panels. The porch also has a 4'10" picture window facing west. It was installed in the 1978. The porch has an hipped asphalt roof. Above the porch a wood store sign is mounted to identify the building as "Hats-N-Hides", the store that is currently renting the property from the village. On the second story, positioned immediately above the front porch, is a pair of 4/4 double-hung windows positioned side by side with a 4/4 double-hung window on either side. All windows on the west facade, with the exception of the picture window have pedimented caps. Above the second story windows and just below the roof peak is a triangular wood trim with segmental wood shingles. Decorative paired brackets are located underneath the front facade roof eave. On both corners of the front facade are rain spouts connected to eave troughs that run the length of the roof on the north and south.

The north elevation has been changed somewhat. The first floor was originally lined with four equidistant 4/4 double-hung windows and a door, all with pedimented caps. The door has nine window panes above two wood panels. When the building was rented to the village in 1938, the north elevation was modified to accommodate the fire vehicles. Thus the second and third windows (from west to east) on the first floor were removed and the fourth window was enclosed with a wood panel. A garage door was cut to accommodate ingress and egress of the village fire truck and apparatus. In 1942 a 7'10" addition to the north was built moving the garage door out and extending the area where fire equipment was housed to accommodate a new fire truck that was too long for the building. This off-center entrance was replaced in 1977-1978 with a large show window, a larger version of the show window on the front of the building, allowing additional light and display area for a retail establishment. A double door access with both doors having nine panes of window glass over two wood panels, allows access to the building on the east side of this extension. The five equidistant 4/4 double-hung second story windows all have pedimented caps and have not been altered.

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Bloomingdale School - Village Hall

The east elevation has a small one-story addition that houses the rest rooms. It appears to have been added on to the original structure shortly after it was built. The addition originally housed chemical toilets, a closet ran from east to west along the back of the addition for the boys and another for the girls south of it. An outside entrance was located at the northeast corner of the addition where it joins with the main building. The door on this side had been closed off with a wood panel. The addition has an asphalt gable roof and a single 4-pane window on the north, east and south elevations. A single 6/6 double-hung window is located towards the southeast corner of the second floor. A brick chimney sits atop the roof.

The south elevation second story has seven evenly spaced 6/6 windows beginning at the south corner. An eighth 6/6 window is separated from those by the approximate distance of a window. Wood pedimented caps adorn only the first, third, fifth and seventh windows and the eighth separated window farthest to the west. There is a window on the first floor directly beneath each of these. On the first floor the window nearest the front of the building is smaller than the rest. All first floor windows with the exception of the three at the back of the building are 6/6 double-hung windows. The three at the back of the building have been closed in with wood panels. None of the first floor windows have pedimented caps. A new heavy metal emergency door from the second story opens to an open metal stairway. The emergency fire escape was installed prior to 1924.

Entering the building from the western front entrance, the enclosed front porch is separated from the single room of the main floor by an old heavy wood seven-panel door. The single room had been separated into an east and west room by non-loadbearing walls when the building was adapted for use as the village hall and fire and police departments. However, they have been removed restoring the building to the way it was when it was a school with one classroom upstairs and one downstairs. A small room with a service counter is located immediately to the left of the front entrance and is currently used for checking out sales of merchandise. This room was a cloak room when the building was used as a school; when the building was used as the village hall it was adapted to provide a counter where fines were collected and bills paid. Immediately to the right of the entrance was a second smaller cloakroom. Both had individual hangers.<sup>1</sup> A stairway to the second story with tongue and groove wood paneling is situated just inside the front entrance in the southwest corner of the building. The ceiling is decorative metal. Light is provided primarily by track lighting.

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Bloomington School - Village Hall

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The walls are covered with plasterboard and paneling. All electrical and heating pipes and metal support beams are exposed. The inside windows and doorways have wood corner block casings. The floor area, where the fire trucks had been housed, is lowered necessitating a step down and a step up to reach the back of the building. The main room is extended to the east by an additional room that was added to accommodate the rest rooms which have been modernized. The door frame and the hollow core door to the rest rooms are new.

The second story is also one single room which was used as offices when the building was used as the village hall. At the top of the stairs on both the southwest and northwest corners of the building are small rooms used as offices and storage. In the southeast corner is a metal emergency door what was added during the renovation of the building. Lighting is provided primarily by track light fixtures.

There is no stairway to the attic, a ladder must be used to get to it. It is completely closed in and unfinished. There is no basement.

The building was "modernized" in 1937-1938 and adapted to public use as a Village Hall and police and fire departments and rented to the Village of Bloomington by District # 13 when Central School was built two blocks to the southwest. In 1977-8, at which time the interior non-loadbearing walls were gutted and the loadbearing walls were covered with plaster board and paneling, wiring, plumbing and insulation were replaced. All floors have since been covered with carpeting.



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Bloomington School - Village Hall

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### NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bloomington School - Village Hall, in the village of Bloomington, IL is locally historically significant for Criterion A for its association with education as a well-preserved example of a two-story town schoolhouse in Bloomington Township. Its period of significance for education is from 1891, when the school was built, to 1937, when it was rented to the village and adapted for public use as a fire and police Station and Village Hall. The school was built to serve the neighboring citizens of the original town of Bloomington in Bloomington Township as one of DuPage County's District Schools. Before the Bloomington School was built, children attended school in any available home, a log building, and in the former Baptist Church on Franklin and Bloomington Road.<sup>2</sup> At the time of its use, this school was designated as District #7. But due to school consolidation and changing needs of the area the school was re-designated #13 in 1902 and a new school was built to replace it in 1937. Although many early schools were either demolished or left to decay, the Bloomington School, survives as one of the few extant examples of a district schoolhouse with historic integrity left in DuPage County.

The Bloomington School - Village Hall is also locally significant under Criterion A for politics/government for its role as the headquarters of the village's government. The period of significance for politics/government under Criterion A, is 1938, when it was used as a government office, public meeting hall and police and fire department, until 1944, the fifty-year cutoff for the National Register of Historic Places.

### EDUCATION

The foundation of free public school legislation in Illinois began with the Northwest Territory Land Ordinance of 1785 passed by the federal government. This land ordinance created the laying out and surveying of townships in the territories of the Northwest and for the setting aside of Section 16 in each township for educational

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Bloomington School - Village Hall

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purposes. When territories became states in this region, the sale or lease of these lands would be set aside to create a permanent school fund.

In 1825 under the sponsorship of Joseph Duncan of Jacksonville, the Illinois legislature passed a free public school law that provided for the taxation of property for educational purposes and would have almost assured free public education far in advance of other Midwestern states, but protests against the law were so overwhelming that the next legislature repealed the law ending free public school education in Illinois for many years.<sup>3</sup>

The 1830 Illinois legislature began chartering private subscription schools to individuals, joint stock companies and religious organizations.

Settlers began arriving in Bloomington Township as early as 1833. Bloomington, one of the earliest settled communities in DuPage County, was originally a farm community first settled in 1834 by Lyman, Silas and Harvey Meacham. There were roughly 12-15 families living in the settlement at the end of 1834. The settlement was situated on Lake Street, originally the old Chicago-Galena Highway. It became a major stopping off place for travelers and a rest stop for the Frink and Walker's stage coaches and westward bound travelers that traveled this main highway.

As early as 1836 Bloomington (which at this time encompassed both Bloomington and Roselle) was a thriving town with many varied commercial establishments, several hotels and inns, churches and commercial establishments. The original buildings have long since been demolished or moved.

Originally a part of Cook County, the Bloomington area was annexed to DuPage County on February 28, 1839, the same year that the village of Bloomington was officially established. The township was named Bloomington.<sup>4</sup>

The Census of 1840 names a number of merchants in the area including: Moses Hostler, Merchant; Henry Wilk, Saloon Keeper; Onera Woodworth, Cheesemaker; Rickerts Alex, Merchant; George Diebert, Shopkeeper; James Addex, Store Clerk; Jonathan Dunning; and Daniel Diebert, Merchant. The Dunning and Diebert store, on the northwest of the intersection of Main (Lake Street) and Second

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Bloomingtondale School - Village Hall

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(Bloomingtondale Road), which has long ago been torn down, was among the first prominent shops that served the area. It was most probably a grocer and dry goods store but records have not been found to substantiate this. A store was also located on the southeast corner of the same intersection.

Mrs. Harriet Gifford of Elgin taught school circa 1840 in a log school house that no longer stands on the far southeast corner of what is now the village of Bloomingtondale.<sup>5</sup> Other teachers, according to available School District Records, who taught in this school included Theresa Brown and May L. Hille. That building no longer stands.

Agitation for free public schools began in the Midwest's rising towns and cities among college educators, businessmen and journalists such as John Wright, founder of the *Prairie Farmer*. These reformers believed that free public schools would "preserve liberty and democracy through education, eliminate crime and poverty and lift men to their own standards of conduct."<sup>6</sup>

With support from John Wright, founder of the *Prairie Farmer* and other reformers, Illinois passed the Educational Law of 1841 which created township trustees to oversee all property in the township; allowed associations of inhabitants to acquire land, build schools and appoint three of their own as trustees to run the schools; and appointed County School Commissioners to sell school lands and apply their sale and township funds for the support of the schools.<sup>7</sup>

The Educational Law of 1845 allowed people to tax themselves if two-thirds of the legal voters of the school district supported it. The tax could not exceed fifteen cents of \$200 assessed valuation. The law also made the Secretary of State ex-officio Superintendent of Common Schools and the county commissioners were made ex-officio County School Superintendents requiring them to visit and supervise schools, examine teachers, and issue teaching certificates.<sup>8</sup> Eleven school districts were created in Bloomingtondale Township.

That same year, the village of Bloomingtondale became the third recorded town platted in the newly founded DuPage County and the first village to be platted in Bloomingtondale Township according to Bloomingtondale Historical Society's historical records.<sup>9</sup> Erasmus O. Hills, Hilamon S. Hills and Hiram Goodwin platted the town of

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Bloomington School - Village Hall

Bloomington. W.S. Hills is credited with the survey which was recorded January 11, 1845. Originally the village of Bloomington included Roselle, Medinah and Bloomington. The village of Bloomington had become a thriving community serving the surrounding farm community as well as travelers between Chicago and Galena. The government, consisting of Village President and Board of Trustees, oversaw the growth and development of the entire area.

Locally kept records for the first schools in the area, which were overseen by a board consisting of township trustees, are almost non-existent. As schools were consolidated and closed, records and equipment were typically thrown away or sold. The few records that remain appear to be contradictory -- that is primarily because they are incomplete and the progressive development cannot be fully substantiated. Several inquiries at the Township offices indicate that nothing remains in the way of documentation there. However, the DuPage County Superintendent of Schools office, has several documents including school district maps and Township Trustee records for the period when the Bloomington School served as an educational establishment in their files.<sup>10</sup>

In 1855 Illinois finally passed a free public school law joining other Midwestern states such as Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana and Ohio who passed free public school legislation in the late 1840s and early 1850s.<sup>11</sup> The new law made it mandatory that schools must be supported by local tax levies and be open at least six months per year.

In addition to the elementary school serving Bloomington, there was also a Bloomington Academy, which was taught in the building on the northwest corner of Franklin and Bloomington Roads. The Bloomington Academy apparently was some form of private high school opened in 1860. The Bloomington Academy had purchased the former Baptist Church building at the southwest corner of Franklin Street and Bloomington Road for use as a school. It closed a year later and the building was sold to the trustees of Bloomington School District #7 on October 1, 1861.

Bloomington School District #7 used the former Baptist Church - Bloomington Academy Building at the southeast corner of Franklin Street and Bloomington Road as a school from 1861 until 1891 when the school was moved to the new building to

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Bloomingtondale School - Village Hall

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the northwest. The old school building was then sold to the village who used it as a village hall. This building still stands today and serves as the Park District Museum. It is a wood frame, one story gabled roof building with six-over-six windows. Originally two entrances opened onto Bloomingdale Road, one has been enclosed. The interior has one large room, an office, and a rest room. It has been modernized with new walls and plaster.

In the northern section of Bloomingdale, which later became Roselle, a four-room school known as the Roselle Public School was built in 1874. It was replaced in 1926 by a one story brick building which is named the Saulk Pioneer School.<sup>13</sup> The German School, organized by the Lutheran congregation that later came to be known as the Trinity Lutheran Church of Roselle, was built in 1899. That school was replaced by a new school in 1920. The original building was moved off-site and converted to a residence.

Earliest records at the DuPage County Education Department Superintendent's Office indicate that there was considerable restructuring and re-apportionment of school districts in the 1880s as the area grew. The records indicate that the Bloomingdale [Township] School District #1, was re-designated District #7 in 1881 and underwent several consolidations. Records also indicate that Martha Bunnell and C.J.E. Mather taught at the District #7 school in 1884 and that apportionment funds of \$130.66 were granted to District #7 which had a total of 154 students in 1885. These records indicate that this District #7 school was the largest in the township at that time. Unfortunately, these records are sketchy at best. They indicate that the school was divided into various age levels and that the classes covered rudimentary elementary education.

The village of Bloomingdale (including Roselle) was incorporated under new state law in February, 1889. Records maintained in the DuPage County Education Department Superintendent's office indicate that William Wangelieu was the Clerk/President of the board of seven officers responsible for overseeing education in the township, each member serving a one-year term.

The Bloomingdale School was built in 1891 near the center of the original village of Bloomingdale on the intersection of the old Chicago-Galena Highway (which was at this time called Main Street and later renamed Lake Street) and Third Street. It

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was heated by a large coal-burning stove in the northeast corner of the building, which has been replaced with a modern heating unit. There was no running water inside the building at first. Water was obtained from an outside pump in front of the building. The building was equipped with gas lights for a while, straw insulation and tin ceilings.<sup>14</sup> Early photos show that the windows had shutters but that they were removed sometime between 1912 and 1924. The Township Trustee Records document the cost of the building, with \$2,400 paid to Charles Harnbel, the builder, and \$180 to William Randecker for painting. They also indicate that the old District #7 school on the northwest intersection of Franklin Street and Bloomington Road was sold to the village of Bloomington in 1891 for \$400. The first year that the school was opened, the village of Bloomington consisted of 30 dwellings, one hotel, five factories, two stores and three churches according to the *Combined Atlas of 1904*.

Because this was a central elementary school in a thriving community when it was built, the Bloomington School is not typical of mid- and late-nineteenth century one-room schools built in the Midwest. The Bloomington School was built as a rectangular structure, with ten windows on each of its longer sides and one door squarely in the middle of its shorter side.<sup>15</sup> Unlike most rural one-room school houses, this building was a two-story structure with a separate classroom on each floor. One teacher taught four grades in each room.

District Number 7, where this school is located, was finally changed to District Number 13 in 1902.<sup>16</sup> Records maintained in the DuPage Superintendent of Schools offices also show that District 7/13 was the largest in the township with an enrollment ranging from 176-220 between 1891 and 1937.<sup>17</sup> Although it's difficult to substantiate more than perhaps 20-60 students attending this specific school at any given time.

Several local residents who were born and raised in Bloomington have been able to provide an insight into the usage of the building when it was a school. Lois Franzen, born and raised in Bloomington, and her parents attended Bloomington schools. Lois Franzen attended the Bloomington School from 1923-1929. She recalls the school name as Bloomington School. Franzen mentioned there were two rooms in this building; the first floor room was used for grades one through four and the second floor room was for grades five through eight. There was no kindergarten. Each room had one teacher who taught all four classes at the same time. Each class sat in a separate row with the lowest grade up front. Her graduating class consisted of four

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students.<sup>18</sup> June Sturm, 66, attended first through fourth grades in the school from 1934-1937. Her recollections coincide with Lois Franzen's. Reuben Bender, 84, remembers attending the Bloomington School circa 1921-1922 when he was in the seventh grade during the time his own school, Marquardt School, District #15 on Glen Ellyn Road south of Army Trail, was having toilets installed. He recalls that the Bloomington School had a single room on each floor. He also recalls that during that year the cloak room on the left of the front entrance opposite the stairway was being used as a temporary jail by the village.<sup>19</sup>

There is a major discrepancy between official trustee records and the recollections of students attending the school in terms of student enrollment. This discrepancy is due to combination of many factors. Most records, which were maintained when the township was responsible for overseeing the education system, have been lost. And the few that still exist are maintained at the DuPage County Superintendent of Schools Office on County Farm Road.<sup>20</sup> These records consisting of trustees records are incomplete, although they do give, by virtue of accounting records, a broad view of the practices used to oversee the township schools and occurrences in the township as well as a detail of teachers pay and expenditures incurred during the period in question. The trustees record books do give detailed accounts of what was spent for various District Schools by District number, who was paid to teach at any given time and the major expenditures incurred. However, due to the restructuring and renaming of Districts, it is difficult to determine the accuracy of interpretation. These records would indicate that enrollment at the District #7 school ranged in the area of 175-220 between 1891 and 1937, making this the largest district in the township at that time. Oral accounts given by residents in the area who attended the school, on the other hand, indicate that attendance was substantially less than the trustee records indicate. The differences between written and oral accounts can be understood relatively easily.

Several factors come into play. First, the enrollment records of the Bloomington trustees, appear to have been based on actual census counts taking into account all school age children within the District boundaries. Bloomington was a rural community made up primarily of farmers who moved to the area in what might be considered two waves. Most of the earliest settlers who moved from the east migrated westward while German immigrants moved into the area during the 1860-70's, prior to the construction of this school. Although many were prosperous -- 1870 census

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Bloomington School - Village Hall

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showed that Roselle Hough of Bloomington Township was one of five men whose real estate holdings and personal property classified them in the category of the well-to-do with a wealth established at more than \$200,000 -- most were hard-working immigrant farmers and merchants struggling to establish roots in their new home. Language presented a major barrier.

It was not uncommon, during the period when this school was open for enrolled students to be absent. Harsh winters, illness, and the necessity of the children to work the farms along with their parents contributed significantly to absenteeism.<sup>21</sup> And, it wasn't uncommon for the farm children to take turns going to school during those years particularly when shoes and warm clothing were scarce. It would appear that the discrepancies would then make sense, with the trustees records reflecting the numbers of school age children by census count and those who attended the school observing actual attendance.

Also, during the time that the Bloomington School was used for education, some of the Bloomington students attended the Roselle Public School, built in the 1870s, which was replaced by the Saulk Pioneer School in 1925. Others attended the German School, a privately-run school built in 1899 that was associated with the Lutheran Church in Roselle. That school was replaced by a new school built on the site and the original building was moved off-site. It was eventually adapted to a residence.

The Bloomington School continued to be the primary source of education in the village of Bloomington serving students almost exclusively until 1923 when St. Isidore School, a private religious school was opened. Classes continued to be held in the Bloomington School house until 1937, when it was replaced by the newly constructed Central School.



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Bloomington School - Village Hall

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### POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

From 1938 through 1944, the building was a locally significant building associated with the governmental/political administration of the Village of Bloomington. It served as a meeting hall for the village and as the focal point of political, social and governmental functions throughout this period of significance.

The village of Bloomington including Roselle was incorporated in 1889. The first Village President was Dr. Vanderhoof. In 1892 after the school had vacated the building at the northwest corner of Franklin Street and Bloomington Road, the village purchased it for use as a village hall. The first fire truck was purchased by the village in 1904 and in 1905 a firehouse on Washington Street, east of Bloomington Road was built. It was torn down in the 1970s. Until 1923 all ordinances and regulations specifically distinguished between the north section of Bloomington (Roselle) and the south (Bloomington). The fire truck and the library were equally divided between the two segments of the village. The fire truck was housed in Roselle, for half the year and in Bloomington, the other half. Meetings of the trustees were first held at various trustees' homes until 1892 when the former school building was purchased by the village for use as a village hall. In the 1920s regular meetings were held in the village hall but special meetings were held at Roselle.

By 1922, disagreement between the progressive north half of the village, which wanted to develop a strong business community, and the south half, which wanted to remain a rural farming community, led to the dissolution of the original joint incorporation of Bloomington on May 22, 1922, with Roselle and Bloomington each agreeing to go their separate ways.

Census records show that the population of Bloomington dropped to 300 in 1920. In 1922 the village of Bloomington, including Roselle and Medinah was dissolved. The village of Bloomington, sans Roselle and Medinah, was incorporated June 16, 1923. That same year (1923) the entire northwest corner of Lake and Bloomington Roads was wiped out by fire. The fire destroyed one of Bloomington's taverns and the drug store.

The 1925-1926 DuPage Directory shows that the newly incorporated Bloomington consisted of the Post Office, St. Paul's Evangelical Church, the school,

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Seth Smith's General Store, Fred Haase's Music Store, Krueger & Rentner's Service Station, the Bloomington Inn, John Heiden's Blacksmith Shop, William Randecker's Hardware Store, and two soft drink parlors. Dr. H.H. Valberding was the local physician. Only St. Paul's Evangelical Church, which was rebuilt in 1914, Randecker's Hardware Store, and the school remain today.

After Roselle and Bloomington dissolved their joint incorporation in 1922, the Village of Bloomington Trustees continued to meet in the town hall on Franklin and Bloomington Road in the building that had been built as the Baptist Church. That building is currently the Park District Museum. Bloomington was watched over by a town marshal, appointed by the Village President, who served in this capacity on a part-time basis. He used his own vehicle for transportation and was paid \$50 per year. The Bloomington Volunteer Fire Department, organized in 1923 consisted of 12 volunteer members and one elected chief of the department. Residents who called on the services of the Volunteer Fire Department were billed \$50 for services rendered.

In 1937 the Village Government consisted of a President, a Clerk and six Village Trustees. They were elected annually by the population. The President appointed the Street and Alley Committee, License Committee, Ordinance and Jurisdiction Committee, Accounts and Finance Committee, Auditing Committee, Fire and Water Committee, Health and Safety Committee and Social Improvement Committee. Each of these committees consisted of three members. The President also appointed the Treasurer, Marshal and Village Doctor each year. In late 1937, the town established the "Office of Chief and the Department of Police". This consisted of one man, the town marshal.<sup>22</sup> Trustees drew slips this year to implement the practice of staggering their terms of office. Three trustees would serve two-year terms and three would serve four-year terms.

Elected leaders, concerned citizens and local groups met long and often at this village hall to discuss improvements needed. In 1937, the trustees were busy restructuring the village. There were numerous properties that disconnected from the village. The Trustees voted to void all Ordinances passed prior to July 1937 and to pass new ordinances.<sup>23</sup> One of the first of the new ordinances adopted by the village trustees vote implemented payment of two firemen \$2 each per month for cleaning the fire truck a full month and \$1.25 per hour for all firemen for services at any legitimate fire call answered by the Fire Department. This year, the Trustees were involved in

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suits relating to thirteen property owners who chose to be released from the Village of Bloomington and had notified them that fire protection services would terminate in May, 1938 unless the Supreme Court reversed their decision on the Farm Disconnection Law. During this time, too, the trustees decided to restrict the number of taverns in the village to three.

In 1938, School District 13 rented the Bloomington School building at the southeast corner of Lake and Third Streets to the village of Bloomington for \$15 per month and the building was adapted for public use. The first meeting of the Bloomington trustees and the village officials was held in the old school building in August 1938.<sup>24</sup> This building also housed the police and fire departments, jail and village administrative offices.<sup>25</sup> The police and fire departments were located in the first floor. A large garage door was added to the north elevation to accommodate the vehicles which were housed there. The village offices and the courthouse were housed on the second floor of the building. During this time the old school bell was removed and was replaced by the Civil Defense Siren which is still in the tower.

The population at this time was just over 300. The trustees had limited liquor licenses (which were renewable each year) in the village to three. They also had voted to prohibit auto wrecking establishments within the village and to regulate and direct the location and business of second-hand junk stores. There were several churches in the area, including the Baptist Church on Lake Street, St. Paul's Church (the German Church) on First Street just south of Lake Street and St. Isidore's, on Army Trail and Gary Road. The village hall was the central place to make all the decisions pertinent to growth of the community during that time. It was also the place where residents went to vote. Elected officers were paid as follows for their services: president, \$4 per meeting; Clerk \$5 per meeting; Trustees \$3 per meeting. The Treasurer was paid \$36 per year and the Marshal was paid \$50 per year.

The village trustees oversaw the implementation of vehicle and dog licenses, removal of trees, staffing of the fire department, collection and expenditures of village funds, installation of street lights, maintenance of the streets, as well as the installation and maintenance of catch basins.

In 1940, the trustees passed a resolution that the use of the Village Hall would be free to village community gatherings and that the village would charge \$5 per day

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for light, heat, gas and janitor services, with the only restriction being that no intoxicating liquor shall be served in the Village Hall at any time. In February 1941 they officially granted the Women's Republican Club use of the Village Hall one afternoon during the week of February 9 free of charge.

Building permits were established in 1941. It was agreed that the Building Commissioner would receive the first \$100 from fees for building permits during a calendar year and all amounts over the first \$100 would be divided equally between the Building Commissioner and the village.

In 1942, the village trustees approved the Civilian Defense and Blackouts and Air Raid Warnings Ordinances, which established a new Municipal Defense Council of the Village consisting of the President and five other persons and delineated civil defense procedures for the village.

The building continued to maintain a high profile in public use. It was the hub of political and administrative activities as well as the center for public services provided to the village residents. Among those who used the building were the Red Cross First Aid Division, which used the building for a first aid station and the Women's Republican Club.

The village began negotiating with District #13 for the purchase of the building in April 1942 when the trustees agreed to purchase a new auxiliary tank truck. But negotiations were postponed and a 10-year lease was executed for \$15 per month. At the same time the trustees agreed to "alter and reinforce and reconstruct the Fire Engine Room and entrance according to specifications presented and agreed on and the President and Clerk sign a contract with the lowest bidder (R. Hills or J. Meyer). Approximate cost to be about \$330."<sup>26</sup> A "most modern type" fire signal system was installed in the bell tower. The flag pole that sits atop the building was donated to the village by St. Paul's Reformed Church and was erected by the Bloomington Athletic Club in 1943. Negotiations for the purchase of the Bloomington School by the village were finally completed and the building was purchased in 1949. It wasn't until October 1949 that the village of Bloomington purchased Lots 8 & 9, Block 3, Plat of Town of Bloomington with the former Bloomington School house on it for a price of \$5,500.<sup>27</sup>

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The village remained stable -- with very little activity or growth until 1960 when census records show a significant jump in residency. The population jumped from 338 in 1950 to 1,262. This was the beginning of a growth spurt that took Bloomington from a sleepy rural town of just over 300 residents to more than 12,659 in 1980. The growth began when farmers began selling off their properties to subdividers. Through the years of political and social growth changes in Bloomington, the village hall located in this building remained the hub of the city, providing space for everything from jails, to fire stations and public meeting rooms.

In June 1977, the Village Board approved up to \$100,000 expenditure for the renovation of the old Village Hall on Lake Street when the village offices moved to a new location on Bloomington Road. Renovation was carefully overseen by Village Planner Allan Kracower, including gutting the interior walls that had been erected to partition the building into separate offices, and replacing the wiring, plumbing and insulation, painting the exterior and landscaping. The Bloomington School - Village Hall building was chosen as a focal point for the rejuvenation of the Old Town area as a commercial center. It was subleased as a retail store thereafter.

The building is still owned by the Village of Bloomington and is sub-leased as a retail establishment to Hats 'N' Hides. It is located within the area designated by the village as the historical landmark of the original "Old Town Bloomington". Despite this new usage, modifications made are minimal and are not significant enough to lessen the historical importance of the building.

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### ENDNOTES

Special recognition and appreciation are extended to David Newton, National Register Assistant, for his report on Point School, submitted to the National Register of Historic Places in 1992, which helped to substantiate some of the overview of the Educational History for this building.

1. Interview with June Sturm, who was born and raised in Bloomington and attended the school between 1933 and 1937, May 1994.

2. "Helping to Record Local History", Jean's Antiques, February 13, 1974 by Jean Minar Paris.

3. Pulliam, John Donald. "A History of the Struggle for a Free Common School System in Illinois from 1818 to the Civil War." Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, Urbana, 1965, p. 32.

4. Chicago Tribune, Wednesday, October 3, 1964 Section 9, p. 19.

5. 1874 Combination Atlas Map of DuPage County Illinois. Thompson Bro's & Burr., Elgin, Illinois, 1874.

6. Fuller, Wayne Edison. The Old Country School: The Story of Rural Education in the Middle West, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, p 40.

7. Cook, John W. The Educational History of Illinois, Chicago: Henry O. Shepard Company, 1912, p 40.

8. Pulliam, John Donald. "A History of the Struggle for a Free Common School system in Illinois from 1818 to the Civil War," Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, Urbana, 1965, p. 172.

9. 1874 Combination Atlas Map of Du Page County Illinois, Thompson Bro's & Burr., Elgin, Illinois, 1874.

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10. District trustees book including accounts paid and some of the redistricting as well as a Map.

11. The Old Country School: The Story of Rural Education in the Middle West, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, p. 41.

13. History of Roselle, Dorothy Sanborn, 1968.

14. "Helping to Record Local History" Jean's Antiques, by Jean Minar Paris, February 13, 1974.

15. Fuller, Wayne Edison. The Old Country School: The Story of Rural Education in the Middle West, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, pg. 72-3.

16. Bloomington Trustees Account Books in the DuPage County Superintendent of Schools Office at 421 County Farm Road.

17. DuPage County Board of Education Records, kept in the offices of the DuPage County Education Superintendent at 421 County Farm Road.

18. Interview with Lois Franzen, May 1994.

19. Interview with George Bender's sole surviving brother, Reuben Bender, whose family has resided in the area since the 1860's. May, 1994.

20. Trustee Records held in archive at the DuPage County Superintendent of Schools Office, 421 County Farm Road, Wheaton, Illinois.

21. Press, 1982, The Old Country School, The Story of Rural Education in the Middle West, Wayne E. Fuller, The University of Chicago p. 188-9.

22. The History of Bloomington by Jean Minar Paris, March, 1974.

23. Village of Bloomington Minutes, 1917-1939, p. 360.

24. Clipping from The Roselle Newspaper, August 1938.

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25. Sale documents held in a safe deposit box at First Chicago Bank by District 13.

26. Village of Bloomington Minutes, 1939-1949, page 35-6.

27. Records of sale maintained in Bloomington School District 13's lock box in the First Chicago Bank of Bloomington.



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### PERSONAL INTERVIEWS:

Reuben Bender, 175 N. Waters, Glendale Heights, IL. Interviews May and June, 1994

Franzen, Lois, 120 S 3rd, Bloomington, IL 60108 (708) 529-0120 Interview June, 1994

Heier, Greg, Curator, The Roselle Historic Museum, 102 S. Prospect, Roselle, IL (708) 351-5300:  
Interviews May, June and July 1994

Iden, Bob. Past President of Bloomington Historical Society, 201 S. Bloomington Rd.,  
Bloomington, IL 60108

Karouliussen, Becky, Curator, The Bloomington Park District Museum, 108 S. Bloomington  
Rd., Bloomington, IL 60108 980-7650

Krackower, Allen. Krackower & Associates. 100 Lexington Dr., Suite 150, Buffalo Grove, IL  
60089, (708) 537-6262, Interview March 1994

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Sharlau, Bev. RR1, 804 N 3450 Rd., Utica, IL 61373 interview and letter May, 1994

Sturm, June. 124 N. Bloomington Rd., Bloomington, IL 60108 Interviews May and June 1994

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### MISCELLANEOUS OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION

Bloomington Trustees Meeting Minutes - Official Transcripts From 1889 through 1950 held at the Bloomington Village Hall, 201 S. Bloomington Rd., Bloomington, IL 60108

County Recorder's Office, 421 County Farm Road, Wheaton, IL Documentation of Ownership

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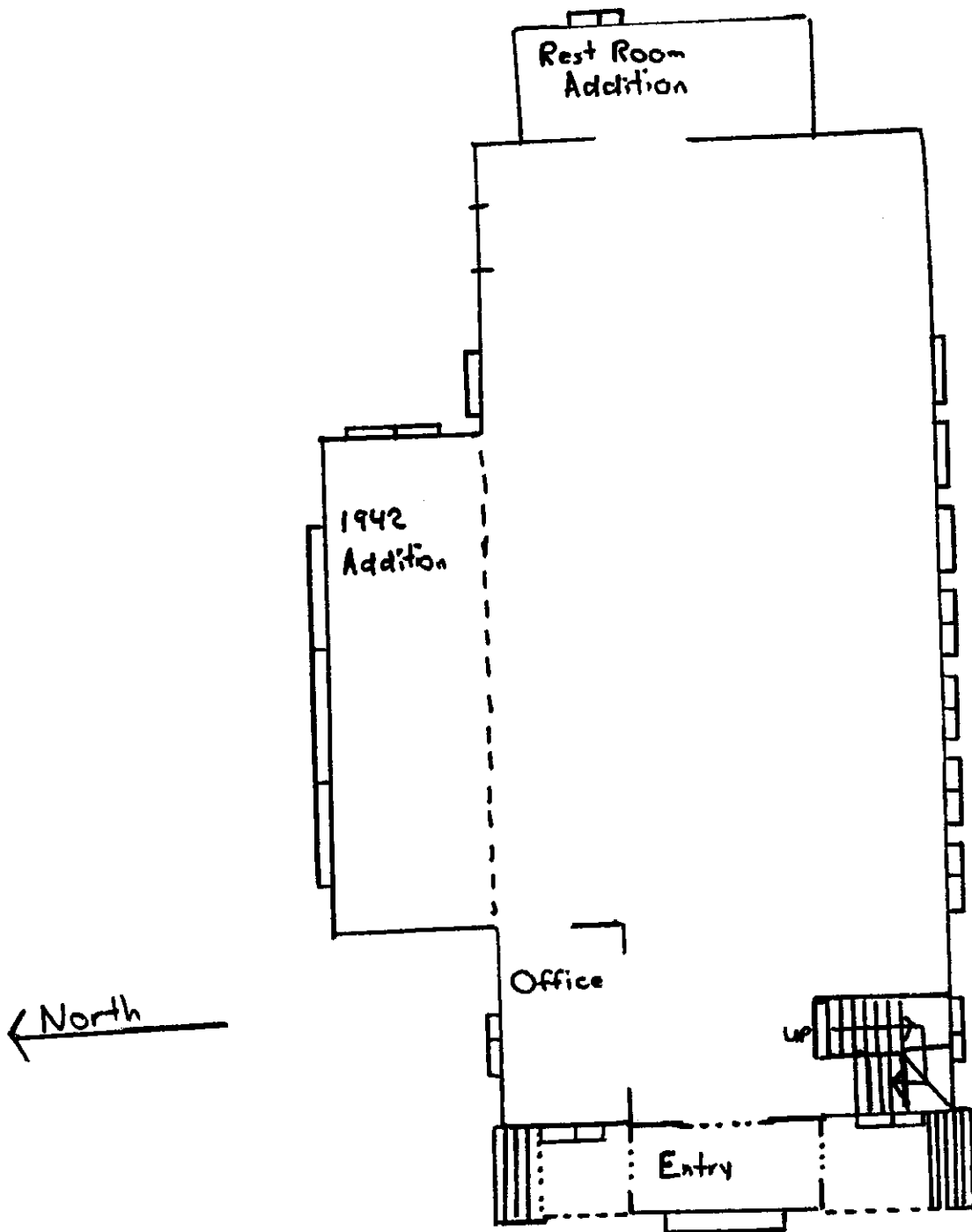
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## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 8 & 9 of Block 3 of the Plat of the Town of Bloomingtondale, a subdivision of part of the Northeast Quarter and the Northwest Quarter of Section Fifteen (15), Township (40) North, Range Ten (10), East of the Third Principal Meridian, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Book 4 of Deeds, Page 76 as Document 1502.

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the original school building and lots that historically have been associated with the Bloomingtondale School and the Village Hall and maintains historic integrity.



BLOOMINGDALE SCHOOL - VILLAGE HALL  
FIRST FLOOR  
(Not to Scale)



# United States Department of the Interior

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Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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Preservation Services

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. For further information call 202/343-9542.

NOV 4 1994

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 10/24/94 THROUGH 10/28/94

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number NHL Status, Action, Date, Multiple Name

- COLORADO, ADAMS COUNTY, Riverside Cemetery, 5201 Brighton Blvd., Denver, 94001253, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- COLORADO, LARIMER COUNTY, Hewes--Kirkwood Inn, 465 Long Peak Rd., Estes Park vicinity, 94001254, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- FLORIDA, GADSDEN COUNTY, Nicholson, Dr. Malcolm, Farmhouse, FL 12, N side, W of Havana, Havana vicinity, 94001272, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- FLORIDA, INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, Maher Building, 1423 20th St., Vero Beach, 94001274, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- FLORIDA, INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, Smith, Archie, Wholesale Fish Company, 1740 Indian River Dr., Sebastian, 94001275, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- FLORIDA, SARASOTA COUNTY, Out of Door School, 444 Reid St., Sarasota, 94001276, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, Gamma Phi Beta Sorority House, 1110 W. Nevada, Urbana, 94001270, NOMINATION, 10/28/94 (Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois MPS)
- ILLINOIS, DU PAGE COUNTY, Bloomington School--Village Hall, 108 E. Lake St., Bloomington, 94001263, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- ILLINOIS, DU PAGE COUNTY, Randecker's Hardware Store, 112 S. Bloomington Rd., Bloomington, 94001265, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- ILLINOIS, FULTON COUNTY, South Fulton Churchhouse, 2.2 mi. S of jct. of Astoria-Bader Rd. and US 24, Astoria vicinity, 94001264, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
- ILLINOIS, JERSEY COUNTY, Grafton Bank, 225 E. Main St., Grafton, 94000016, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION, 6/03/94 (Grafton MPS)
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