

PH0664502

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 8 1978
DATE ENTERED JUL 7 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Miller Town Hall

AND/OR COMMON
Old Miller Fire Station #7

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Intersection of Miller Ave., Old Hobart
Road, Grand Boulevard

CITY, TOWN Gary VICINITY OF 1st
STATE Indiana CODE 018 COUNTY Lake CODE 089

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of Gary

STREET & NUMBER 401 Broadway

CITY, TOWN Gary VICINITY OF STATE Indiana

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Office of the County Recorder

STREET & NUMBER Lake County Governmental Complex

CITY, TOWN Crown Point STATE Indiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE None

DATE
 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Miller Town Hall is located on a triangular shaped lot formed by the intersection of Miller Avenue, Old Hobart Road, and Grant Boulevard in Gary, Indiana. The structure is a rectangular two-story brick structure constructed in 1911.

The main portion of the structure measures forty feet by twenty-four feet. The front elevation (south) has three bays with an entry in the center bay. The double-hung windows on this, the north, and east sides have two over two lights. Windows on the west side have one over one light. The main entry has double paneled wooden doors, a plain transom, and a flat limestone hood supported by brackets. Above the entry is a limestone plaque with the words, "Town of Miller."

The second story windows have plain brick molded surrounds and limestone sills. A limestone string course runs below the first floor windows while a brick string runs above the second story windows. Above this string course is a metal parapet entablature with dentils. Projecting brick bands run around the structure on the first story.

The kitchen addition on the west side is one story brick structure on a raised basement. On the south side there is a double set of double-hung windows with three lights over one. The two single windows on the east side also have three lights over one. The kitchen is about eighteen by twelve feet.

The kitchen and hose tower were added in the 1920's when the building was converted from a town hall to a fire station. The hose tower is brick and measures nine by six feet and rises to a height of twenty-eight feet. On the west side a large fire door was placed in the west wall. In 1976 this door was removed and the three bay facade was restored.

The only interior feature of note is a pressed tin ceiling in the large meeting room on the second floor. In the 1940's a small wooden dispatcher's office was added to the north side. In 1976 this addition was removed.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1911

BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. J. Ver Plank

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Miller Town Hall is significant locally for its role in the development of Gary, Indiana.

The Town of Miller was established long before the Gary steel mills started to alter the landscape of Northern Lake County. A small village developed in 1874 at the point where the Michigan Southern and Baltimore & Ohio Railroads crossed near Lake Michigan. The settlement was named Miller after the Railroad foreman who supervised construction at the stop. In the late nineteenth century the town's economy was based on fishing and supplying ice to Chicago.

This quiet existence was disrupted in 1906 when the United States Steel Corporation turned a deserted area into the largest steel region in the country. Miller consisted of 9 square miles and had a population of 700 in 1907 when the boom town of Gary was incorporated. Gary early threatened to annex the town of Miller. It may be that the voters of Miller were demonstrating their independence when they voted 58 to 0 on June 3, 1910, to construct an electric lighting system building and meeting hall.

Town officials selected J. J. Ver Plank as the architect. Born in 1875, Ver Plank had opened an office in Gary in March, 1908, well aware of the opportunities available for an architect in a newly created city. He designed a number of structures in the area, including the Gary Theatre, First Presbyterian Church, Gary Commercial Club Building, and the Savage Building.

On September 13, 1910, the Town Board voted to accept plans for the building prepared by Ver Plank and electric lighting system specifications drawn up by George F. Peterson. To fund the project, the Board voted on October 7 to issue bonds in the amount of \$12,000 and to award the construction contract to Wilber Cross.

The completed structure was finished in April, 1911, and housed the electrical system equipment on the first floor, and a meeting hall was on the second floor. In addition to serving as a town hall, the building was used for dances, box socials, and a meeting place for civic and community organizations and the town board.

The residents of Gary became interested in Miller in 1910; seeking relief from the city summer heat, many people came to enjoy the beaches. The City of Gary wanted a park in the area; however, Hobart Township was not about to pay for a park which would benefit only Gary. In 1913 the people of Miller refused to lease land to the Gary Park Board, and in 1915 they opposed an attempt to set up a joint park board.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gary Post-Tribune, "Jubilee Edition," June 3, 1956.
 "History of Miller", Esther Pearson, Tape in Gary Public Library
 Howat, William F., Standard History of Lake County, Indiana and the Calumet Region.
 Lewis Publishing Co.: Chicago & New York, 1915
 Town of Miller Board of Trustees Minutes, Volume 1, located in Gary City Hall
 Moore, Powell A. The Calumet Region, Indiana's Last Frontiers. Indianapolis: Indiana
 Historical Bureau, 1959

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	4,7,8	2,2,0	4,6	0,5	2,5,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C							D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
 Richard N. Hagelberg, Monitor

ORGANIZATION
 Community Development Program

STREET & NUMBER
 401 Broadway

CITY OR TOWN
 Gary

DATE
 December 15, 1976

TELEPHONE
 219-882-0131

STATE
 Indiana 46402

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 2-13-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<u>Charles A. ...</u> DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	<u>...</u> MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: <u>...</u> KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE <u>7-5-78</u>

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Gary sought to settle the matter of the park by annexing Miller in December, 1918. According to local tradition, the annexation was successful because many of the Miller men were gone, serving in World War I. The park question was finally resolved in 1919 when U.S. Steel purchased 120 acres along Lake Michigan and gave it to the City. The annexation caused the construction of streets between Gary and Miller and encouraged growth of the urban area in that direction.

In the 1920's the Miller Town Hall was converted to Gary Fire Station #7. The structure continued as a fire station until 1975 when it was converted to a local community center.

Because most of Gary was constructed after 1920, the architectural heritage of the area is much younger than other cities in Indiana. The Miller Town Hall is significant locally as one of the oldest brick structures in Miller and Gary. However, the structure is more significant locally as a reminder of Miller's brief period of independent existence.