

Site Inventory Form
State Historical Society of Iowa
 (December 1, 1999)

State Inventory No. **52-01548**

New Supplemental

Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) _____

Relationship: Contributing Noncontributing

Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries

National Register Status:(any that apply) Listed De-listed NHL DOE

9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance Number _____

Non-Extant (enter year) _____

1. Name of Property

historic name F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 5 S. Dubuque Street

city or town Iowa City

vicinity, county Johnson

Legal Description:(If Rural) Township Name _____

Township No. _____ Range No. _____ Section _____ Quarter of Quarter _____

(If Urban) Subdivision Original Town

Block(s) 80

Lot(s) part of Lot 1

3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]

4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]

5. Classification

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

If Non-Eligible Property

Enter number of:

- buildings
- sites
- structures
- objects
- Total

If Eligible Property, enter number of:

Contributing Noncontributing

- 1 — buildings
- sites
- structures
- objects
- 1 — Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).

Title Iowa City Central Business District Study - 2017 UPDATE

Historical Architectural Data Base Number 52-127

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

02E15 COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store/billiards hall

02E COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store/

01B DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling (upper floor)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

02G02 COMMERCE/TRADE/Restaurant/bar

01B DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling (upper floor)

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

09F05 COMMERCIAL/Brick Front

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____

walls 15G SYNTHETICS/Permastone

roof _____

other _____

Narrative Description (SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended

- A Property is associated with significant events.
- B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
- C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
- D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Johnson
City Iowa City

Address 5 S. Dubuque Street

Site Number 52-01548
District Number

Criteria Considerations

- 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)

02 ARCHITECTURE

05 COMMERCE

Significant Dates

Construction date
1883 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates
ca.1930 (façade)

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder

Architect

Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

10. Geographic Data

UTM References (OPTIONAL)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Alexa McDowell, Architectural Historian

organization AKAY Consulting

date 10/2017

street & number 4252 Oakland Avenue

telephone 515-491-5432

city or town Minneapolis

state MN

zip code 55407

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION (Submit the following items with the completed form)

FOR ALL PROPERTIES

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____

- See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.
- Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or non-contributing status)
- Barn:**
 - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
 - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
 - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility: Yes No More Research Recommended
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: _____

Evaluated by (name/title): _____ Date: _____

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

Page 1

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

Johnson

Name of Property

County

5 S. Dubuque Street

Iowa City

Address

City

7. Property Description

The Epeneter Building (Image 01) was built as a two-story, two-bay masonry commercial building constructed in ca.1879 (south half) and ca.1883 (north half). For much of its history, the building functioned as a unit, the configuration of the storefronts and upper story changing through time. It wasn't until ca.1930 that the two halves of the building began to function autonomously; replacement of a shared one-story rear addition with a two-story rear addition with dedicated access to each of the two halves marks the transition. The re-facing of the north half (5) may have been undertaken at that same time – a period in which PermaStone was a new material thought to provide a relatively quick and easy way to alter an aging façade. Svendsen indicates that assessor records note an unspecified remodeling in 1930. The north half of the Epeneter Building remains independent of the south half, which each building under separate ownership (2017).

Image 01. Historic Image - View looking north along S. Dubuque Street - 1893



(Source: State Historical Society of Iowa.)

This 1893 image provides a clue as to the building's original appearance. 5 S. Dubuque accounts for the north (right) half of the Epeneter Building.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

Page 2

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

Johnson

Name of Property

County

5 S. Dubuque Street

Iowa City

Address

City

The Epeneter Building (north half) is located mid-block in a contiguous line of commercial buildings dating to a similar construction era and sympathetic in size and scale. As noted, the building façade was altered in the 1930s, the upper story being clad with Permastone, a cast stone product. The alteration resulted in a significant modification of the original stylistic character. However, the re-façade dates to more than fifty years of age and as such is considered historic in its own right. The Permastone is laid with a defined cornice line in the upper wall plane (2017).

The upper story is further characterized by the location of three windows, placed equidistant in the upper story. Window openings have a flat head with Permastone lintels and sills. The windows appear to retain wood frames. The sash are double-hung, 4-over-1 (2017).

Although the storefront has been altered from the original, retention of what is likely the original prism glass storefront transom is notable – few survive in the Iowa City downtown. Otherwise, the storefront has a recessed entrance on the south with a modest sized display window on the north – the window is operable to connect the interior bar/restaurant to the outdoors when weather permits. The wall beneath the display window is brick clad. Seating has been located on the sidewalk with a small deck established in the street parking spot (2017).

Image 02. View of the Epeneter Building (north half), looking NW across S. Dubuque



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

When constructed in 1883 through ca.1930 the building at 5 S. Dubuque was part of a two-bay, two storefront building – the brick building at left (7 S. Dubuque) is the other half of the Epeneter Building.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

Page 3

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

Johnson

Name of Property

County

5 S. Dubuque Street

Iowa City

Address

City

Image 03. View of the Epeneter Building (north half), looking NW across S. Dubuque



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

8. Statement of Significance

The Epeneter Building (north half) represents a ca.1930 renovation, illustrating the evolution typical of a commercial district. While its former partner to the south remains expressive of its original, ca.1874 Late Victorian era character, the façade of the north portion of the Epeneter Building expresses the 20th century desire for modernization – the use of PermaStone as a cladding is firmly tied to the 1930s and 1940s. Like the Market Hall just across the street (2-4 S. Dubuque), the alteration of the upper façade confuses our understanding the building history – the historic relationship with the adjacent building remains unknown except by closer examination. In the case of the Epeneter Building, the two halves became autonomous through alteration of both the façade, a rear addition, and the separation of interior spaces. Also, the two halves of what was the Epeneter Building have separate owners. As a result, the significance of the north half of the Epeneter building is considered separate from its former other half.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

Page 4

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

Johnson

Name of Property

County

5 S. Dubuque Street

Iowa City

Address

City

The Epeneter Building (north half) represents the evolution of downtown Iowa City commercial buildings over time. The Permastone façade, which has defined its historic character for nearly 90 years, remains in very good condition. Further, the retention of the prism glass transom is notable. All told, the building retains a good level of historic integrity. As a result, the building is considered a contributing resource to a potential historic district under Criterion C. Further, the building is significant under Criterion A, contributing as it does to our understanding of the history of Iowa City commerce (2017).

Historical Background

As originally laid out, Dubuque Street was a major north-south street entering the central business district from the north. However, this fact was in conflict with the configuration of lots in the east half of Block 80, which were oriented towards Iowa Avenue. The strong pull of the Dubuque Street corridor won out, with buildings erected on lots reconfigured for east-west orientations. This building likely dates from sometime between 1879 when the lot was vacant and 1883 when fire insurance maps first depict a building of similar dimensions. Property transfer records show the property transferred in 1882 from Margaret Hunzinger, the widow of Gotlieb Hunzinger who owned and built the Park House hotel to the north of this building, to F.J. Epeneter, a billiard hall operator who operated his business from the building located at 7 S. Dubuque Street immediately to the south. Fire insurance maps show 7 S. Dubuque already in place by 1874 -some question remains about whether the building depicted is actually the Epeneter Building; most certainly the south half was in place by 1879. By 1883 the fire insurance map lists a saloon at 5 S. Dubuque but city directories do not show Epeneter operating a business here until 1904. It is possible that Epeneter leased the space to another billiards hall operator and/or operated it in conjunction with the storefront to the south. By 1901 Epeneters Billiards Hall again appears in city directories, but at 7 S. Dubuque. By 1904 the business was listed as operating on the lower level of 5 S. Dubuque and Epeneter's son and daughter-in-law, Charles and Hattie Epeneter, lived in the apartment above (Svendsen, 2001).

Image 04. Historic Image - View looking south along S. Dubuque Street from Iowa Avenue



(Source: State Historical Society of Iowa.)

The north half of the Epeneter Building is easy to spot by its Permastone façade.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

Page 5

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

Johnson

Name of Property

County

5 S. Dubuque Street

Iowa City

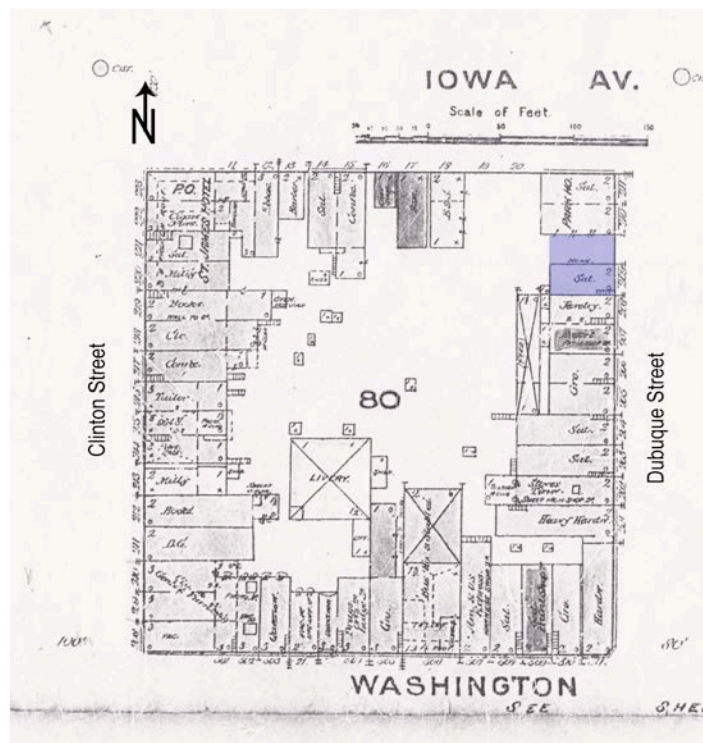
Address

City

The north half of the Epeneter Building (5 S. Dubuque) first appears on fire insurance maps in 1883 – the south half (7 S. Dubuque) already in place by the issuance of the 1879 fire insurance maps and perhaps by the 1874 fire insurance map (the evidence on the 1874 map is inconclusive).

This particular block of S. Dubuque Street was an especially popular location for saloons and billiard halls immediately following the Civil War with eight saloons located in the block between Iowa Avenue and Washington Street in 1868. This pattern changed somewhat in later years as various waves of prohibition and concern about the evils of idleness impacted the saloon and billiard hall trade. This may help explain the unusual retail decision made by brothers Charles and Thomas Epeneter by 1911. City directories show the two operating under the style “Epeneter Brothers” but their trade now included the sale of vacuum cleaners as well as billiards. In 1926 the property (including 7 to the south) was transferred to Joseph Rinella, Sr. who had a produce business in the shop space below #5 and resided in the apartment above the store. Joseph and his wife Josephine Rinella were immigrants from Sicily who settled in Iowa in the 1890s. This was the third location for a grocery or produce business. The Rinellas had settled here based on the encouragement of Mrs. Rinella’s Corso family which was also active as local produce vendors. After 1926, their son Joseph, Jr. continued to operate a pool hall beneath 7 and reside on the upper level. Retail users in 5 changed frequently after World War II with the upper level remodeled for apartment usage (Svendsen, 2001).

Figure 01. Fire Insurance Map – 1879



(Source: Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1879.)

The south half of the Epeneter Building is in place by the 1879 fire insurance map. Note that the north half remains a vacant lot.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

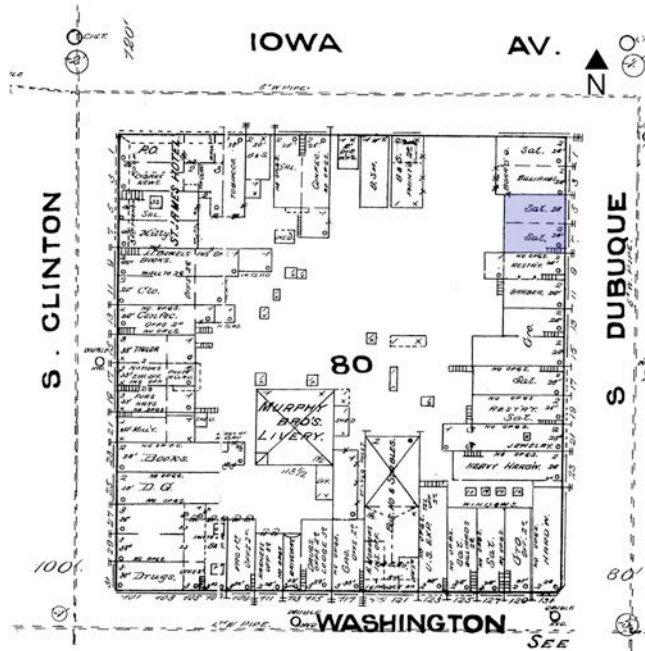
Related District Number

Page 6

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)
Name of Property
5 S. Dubuque Street
Address

Johnson
County
Iowa City
City

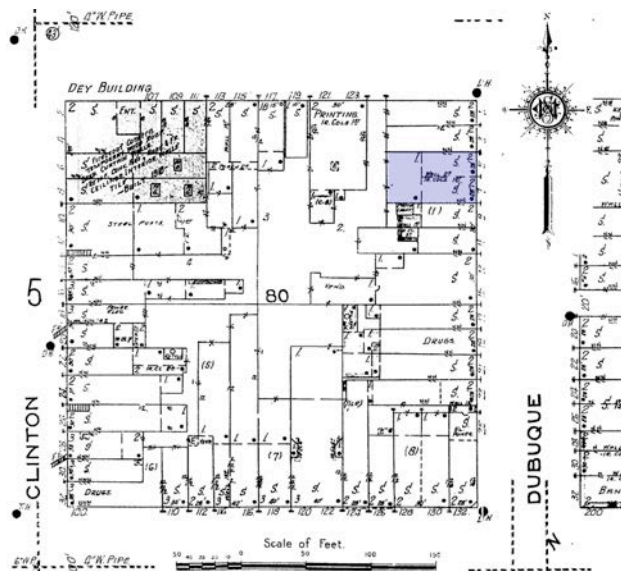
Figure 02. Fire Insurance Map – 1883



(Source: Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1883.)

By 1883, the north half of the building was in place.

Figure 03. Fire Insurance Map – 1926



(Source: Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1926.)

From ca.1910-ca.1930, the building shared a one, one-story addition on the rear.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

Page 7

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

Johnson

Name of Property

County

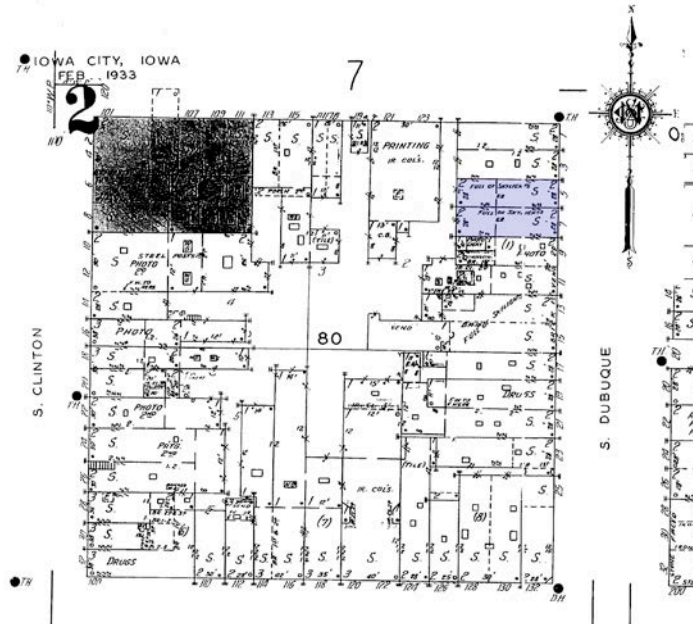
5 S. Dubuque Street

Iowa City

Address

City

Figure 04. Fire Insurance Map – 1933



(Source: Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1933.)

By 1933 the rear, shared one-story addition had been replaced by a two-story addition with dedicated association to each of the two halves of the Epeneter Building.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

Page 8

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

Johnson

Name of Property

County

5 S. Dubuque Street

Iowa City

Address

City

9. Major Bibliographic References (2001)

Iowa City city directories.

Property Transfer Records, Johnson County Auditor's Office.

Tax Assessor's Records, City of Iowa City Assessor.

Summary Sheet, 5 South Dubuque, Urban Revitalization Act Study Area Survey, 1981.

Sanborn maps, 1874, 1879, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1906, 1912, 1920, 1926, 1933, and 1933 updated to 1970.

Weber, Irving. "Business Community Stability: Three Generations in Business," *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, Iowa City, Iowa, April 20, 1985.

2017: References

Iowa City Public Library. Digital Photograph collection. <http://history.icpl.org>.

Iowa City Then & Now. Publisher unknown.

Mansheim, Gerald. *Iowa City: an illustrated history*. Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company, 1989.

State Historical Society of Iowa. Iowa City. Photograph Collection.

Slonneger, Marybeth. *Finials: A View of Downtown Iowa City*. Iowa City: Hand Press, 2015.

Svendsen, Marlys A. "Survey and Evaluation of the Central Business District." Prepared for the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission, 2001.

Svendsen, Marlys A. "Epeneter Building (north half): 52-01548." Iowa Site Form, 2001.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

Page 9

F.J. Epeneter Building (north half)

Johnson

Name of Property

County

5 S. Dubuque Street

Iowa City

Address

City

11. Additional Documentation

Legal Description: S. 20' of N. 60' and E. 67' of Lot 1, Block 80

Assessor: 002+1010311002

Latitude/Longitude: 41.661251, -91.533431

Parcel Map – 2017

