

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Francesville Commercial Historic District

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: Each side of Montgomery Street between Brooks and Salem Streets and each side of Bill Street between Yellow and Lyman StreetsCity or town: Francesville State: IN County: PulaskiNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

____ national ____ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A ____ B x C ____ D_____
Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☒

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN

County and State

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

32

Noncontributing

11

buildings

0

0

sites

0

0

structures

1

0

objects

33

11

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

GOVERNMENT: city hall

EDUCATION: library

GOVERNMENT: post office

RELIGION: religious facility

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: hotel

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

GOVERNMENT: city hall

EDUCATION: library

GOVERNMENT: post office

RELIGION: religious facility

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne

LATE VICTORIAN: Gothic

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS:

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: BRICK

walls: BRICK

STONE: Limestone

roof: ASPHALT

other: METAL

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Francesville Commercial Historic District lines the north/south and east/west main corridors through the center of town and is partially bordered by the Monon Railroad on the west. Most buildings date to the late 19th century and early 20th century, though significant mid-20th century development continued to shape the character of the district. Styles include simple Italianate and Neoclassical, as well as Gothic Revival buildings. Most of these stylistic classifications are due to a few public buildings in the district including four churches and a Carnegie Library.

Narrative Description

The Francesville Commercial Historic District essentially lines the north/south and east/west main corridors through the center of town extending a few blocks in each direction (photos 004-05, 23). The district grew with the construction of the Louisville, New Albany & Chicago Railroad (later the Monon Railroad) that borders most of the west side of the district and crosses Montgomery Street through the district. Most buildings date to the late 19th century and early 20th century and are brick, but the district demonstrates continued development into the mid-20th century with several buildings constructed up to 1967. Many of these buildings are constructed of random-coursed Bedford stone ashlar (photos 13, 22-23).

The district is composed mostly of commercial buildings as well as the historic and present post office buildings, the town hall and fire department building, and Carnegie Library (photo 10). Also of note are four churches that terminate the north, south, and west ends of the district (photos 09, 18, 22). Another building that demonstrates the importance of the railroad to Francesville is the grain company co-operative that is at the south end of the district between Bill Street and the railroad (photo 19). Only three residences are part of the district due to their position between commercial buildings and/or churches. Of particular note is the National Register-listed Mallon Building on the northeast corner of Bill and Montgomery Streets (photo 11). The two-story building was constructed in 1899 with simple Commercial Style/Romanesque Revival details.

The district's commercial architecture is composed mostly of simple, commercial vernacular buildings with a few examples of Italianate design. Other styles include Gothic Revival used for the Methodist Church (1904, photo 07) and Salem Church (1952, photo 22), the Neoclassical design of the Carnegie Library (1915, photo 10), and the interesting use of Mission Revival for

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

the Catholic Church built in 1951 (photo 08). The three homes in the district are examples of the American Foursquare (Methodist parsonage), Bungalow style, and carpenter-adaptation of the

Queen Anne style (photo 16). Most of the district's modern architecture accentuates horizontal lines, particularly in the application of Bedford stone ashlar. Two have features of Contemporary design with inversely tapered pilasters that support canopies at the Francesville Town Hall (1967, right side of photo 13) and Gutwein Building (1956, right side of photo 17).

The district's non-contributing resources are mostly rendered as such due to modern materials, such as metal, vinyl, or non-historic wood, that has been used to cover existing historic buildings (photos 13 and 15). A few non-contributing buildings are due to late, c. 1983 and later, construction dates (left side of photo 02).

A complete list of resources follows:

Montgomery Street, south side heading west.

117 E. Montgomery St. George Haring Hardware Store, 1950. Contributing
Middle of photo 02

The one-story building has walls composed of concrete block and a front façade composed of limestone ashlar. The façade features a symmetrical arrangement with a recessed entry in the center, with wood door, flanked by groups of vinyl windows. Each group features a large picture window flanked by 1/1 windows. The building has a flat parapet capped with stone.

George Haring was born in 1882 and had moved to Francesville to begin a harness shop in the same location as this building prior to 1920. Haring's building was one of the last frame buildings standing in the district when he replaced it with this stone building by about 1950. Haring gradually converted his harness shop to a hardware store in the early part of the 20th century in keeping with changes from horse powered machinery to gas powered machinery.¹ The hardware closed after Haring's death in 1967 and the contents were offered at auction in 1968.

115 E. Montgomery St. Sullivan Building/Francesville Mercantile, c. 1900. Contributing
Right side of photo 02

The one-story brick building was once two-stories as is evidenced in the three stone sills that now are part of the building's front parapet wall. The storefront is flanked by pilasters of brick and features a recessed entry with modern door and storefront windows. The storefront wall is mostly modern wood that rises to a steel lintel that forms the top of the storefront.

The building was constructed as a two-story building c. 1900 and served for a time as a hardware store. J. C. Werner dry goods, shoes, and grocery store located in the building during the 1910s and operated his grocery store through the 1920s. After the Christmas Fire in 1944, Sullivan Drug Store, which opened in 1937, moved into this building.

¹ "George Haring" *Journal & Courier* (Lafayette) 14 Aug 1967. Pg. 6. Col. 3

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

111 E. Montgomery St. Commercial Building, c. 1925. Contributing
Left side of photo 01

The one-story brick building has a storefront composed of a brick wall with two large wood display windows and wood paneling. A hipped roof canopy is at the top of the storefront and a modern entry door is on the west end. A large enframed panel of header brick is in the parapet.

The building was constructed c. 1925 and became home to the *Francesville Tribune*. The building is marked as a printing shop in the 1933 Sanborn Map, indicating that it had a long history as home to the newspaper office. The first newspaper published in town was the *Francesville Courier* which began in 1854 by J. G. Winegarden. It became the *Westside Enterprise* in 1888. The *Francesville Tribune* began in 1897 and was owned by Herbert Ames from 1927-1970.

109 E. Montgomery St. Commercial Building, c. 1910. Non-contributing
Second from left side of photo 01

The two-story building has modern cast stone and wood shingles on its façade. The storefront is composed of large metal display windows and door, c. 2020. The second story has three 1/1 wood windows. The modern materials render the building non-contributing. The building served as a meat market in the early 1910s.

114 W. Montgomery St. William C. Myers Opera Block, 1908. Contributing
Left half of photo 03

The one-story brick building is situated on the southwest corner of Montgomery and Bill Streets. While the building was once two-stories and has had substantial modification to its storefronts, its cutaway corner, segmental-arched entry, and date stone carved with W. C. Myers Opera Blk are important to the character of the town's main intersection. Patterned brickwork, a steel lintel, and brick pilasters also identify aspects of the building's original design.

This site was first occupied by a hotel that was constructed in 1853. The opera house was constructed by William C. Myers in 1908 with commercial storefronts on the first story and the opera house, later known as Myers Theatre during the 1930s, on the second story. The storefronts in 1912 included a barbershop on the corner, a furniture store and grocery store in the Montgomery storefronts, and the town post office was located in the Bill Street storefront south of the opera house stairway. In 1968, V & R Myers Market opened in the building.

118 W. Montgomery St. Commercial Building, c. 1900/1955. Contributing
Second from right side of photo 03

The one-story building has Bedford stone ashlar on its storefront façade with two recessed entries and two modern wood display windows. The building has a modern awning covered with asphalt shingles and the parapet is covered with vinyl siding. This building was constructed during the early 1900s and faced with Bedford stone about 1955. The building included a printing shop and millinery in its west and east storefronts, respectively, in 1912. Later, a cream station was moved to the printing shop location and the opera house stairs were moved to the south end of the building.

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

Montgomery Street, north side, heading east.

217 W. Montgomery St. St. Francis Solano Catholic Church, Mission Revival, 1951.

Contributing

Photo 08, middle of photo 09

The stuccoed building has a gabled-ell plan with shaped gabled walls on its front (south) façade and west façade. The building features metal art glass casement windows covered with plexiglass. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The front façade has a pair of modern metal and glass doors centered in the wall. A segmental-arched window of art glass is east of the door. A segmental-arched niches with a platform that carries a statue of St. Francis Solano is centered in the gabled parapet, which is capped with stone and stuccoed. A cross surmounts the parapet. A four-sided tower rises from behind the east half of the gabled parapet and features a segmental-arched louvered opening for the belfry. The tower is capped with tile coping. A cornerstone is in the lower west corner of the façade and is carved with a cross and 1951 on its west face and St. Francis Solano and a cross on its south face.

The Catholic congregation formed from members who were attracted to Francesville during construction of the railroad. They first assembled in 1853 and the first mass was held at homes in 1856. The Catholics were the first to construct a church in Francesville, in 1867 at this site (nearer the intersection). It cost about \$1000 to build. The church was replaced in 1951 with a new building after nearby Medaryville also received a new Catholic church. This building was designed by Neil Lyon, local congregant, and built by Fred Vollmer & Sons.² The atypical choice of Mission Revival likely relates to St. Francis Solano himself. A Spaniard from Cordoba, Solano served Catholics in South America from 1589 to his death in 1610.

201 W. Montgomery St. Francesville-Salem Township Carnegie Library, Neoclassical, 1915.

Contributing

Right side of photo 04, photo 10

The two-story building has a raised base of cut fieldstone set in grapevine mortar joints. It is capped with stone from which the main level's brick walls rise and are punctuated by modern 1/1 wood windows with stone sills and transoms. A belt course of soldier brick and a tall entablature cap the first story walls. A brick parapet rises above the entablature and is capped with stone. The building has a hipped roof covered with tiles. The front façade features a wide set of steps that lead to a projecting limestone portico centered on the original building. The portico is composed of wide pilasters and Doric columns that flank a recessed entry. The entry has a modern door and side-lites and a historic stained art glass transom. A building stone is above the transom. The portico's entablature has a frieze carved with PUBLIC LIBRARY. A stone pediment tops the portico. Groups of windows flank the portico. Each group is composed of a wide 1/1 window flanked by narrow 1/1 windows and transoms composed of multiple panes. A modern addition was made to the west side of the building and follows many of the same features except for the cut stone basement.

² "New St. Francis Edifice at Francesville" *Journal & Courier* (Lafayette). 27 Oct 1951. Pg. 6. Col. 3

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

The library was a collaboration between Salem Township and the Town of Francesville when a committee requested funding from Andrew Carnegie to construct the building. Two lots were purchased, one by the town and the other by the township, and \$9000 in funds were received from Carnegie to construct the building. The building opened to the public and dedicated on November 2, 1916. The first librarian was Doris Petra.

201 W. Montgomery St. Military Memorial, 1952. Contributing (object)
Photo 10

A granite monument with tapered sides and rounded top is located off the southeast corner of the library and was dedicated in 1952 to those who served in the military.

101 W. Montgomery St. Peoples State Bank of Francesville, 1902/c. 1964. Contributing
Photo 21

The one-story building has walls composed of random courses limestone ashlar in both rusticated and smooth finish. The façade has an entry with modern metal and glass display windows and door that encloses a small vestibule. The windows are set on a low wall of stone and have a stone sill. The top part of the entrance is covered with a fabric awning. The entrance is flanked by windows divided into two large panes with stone sills. A drive-through window and canopy are on the west side of the building.

The first bank in Francesville was organized by J. T. Bledsoe in 1891. The State Bank was organized in 1902 and constructed a building on the northwest corner of Montgomery and Bill Streets, at this location. The State Bank failed in March 1930, but a new bank was reorganized by July 1930 and became the People's State Bank.³ The bank expanded north and west of its original footprint and remodeled the buildings into their current appearance as one bank building about 1964. The bank made state news in 1956 when it was robbed by four men from Chicago.

102 E. Montgomery St. Mallon Building, Commercial/Romanesque Revival, 1899. Contributing
National Register of Historic Places (1999)
Left half of photo 11

The two-story brick building has a cast iron storefront with large display windows and transoms composed of art glass. The façade is divided into two storefronts by an iron pilaster with a cutaway corner storefront on its west end and a recessed storefront entry in its east half. A cast iron column supports the second story over the cutaway corner. A row of brick dentils is above the storefront's cast iron lintel. Brick pilasters flank the second story which features six 1/1 wood windows with rusticated stone sills and lintels. The parapet is composed of a brick cornice that features rows of corbels that support a projecting wall of brick that is topped with rows of brick dentils. The corner pilasters rise slightly above the parapet. The west façade has similar features with a cast iron storefront in its north end.

J. H. Mallon began his clothing and grocery business by 1869 and was known as the bee hive due to the number of people who frequented it. In 1872, they moved into a new frame building

³ Town of Francesville 1853-2003, pg. 48

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

which was destroyed by fire in 1893, after which this building was constructed in 1899 for the Mallon store. The fire also consumed the Bledsoe bank and Kruger store located in the same block. The corner store reopened as Minkert's Dry Goods & Variety Store in 1949.

106 E. Montgomery St. Commercial Building, c. 1900/1945. Contributing

Second from right in right half of photo 11; middle of photo 12

The two-story brick building has a modern storefront divided into four bays by historic cast iron pilasters. The storefront is covered with wood and modern windows. A stairway door is in its west end and recessed entry and large metal display window is in its east end. A large pent roof canopy covered with asphalt shingles is above the storefront and continues onto the building at 112 E. Montgomery. The second story has five 1/1 wood windows with rusticated stone sills. The parapet was rebuilt c. 1945 above the windows and is capped with concrete.

The building, which had been built after the 1893 fire, had a drug store and hardware in the west and east storefronts, respectively, by 1912. A fire on Christmas 1944 destroyed the interior of the building and adjacent building to the west after which the second story façade was altered. At the time of the fire, the buildings were occupied by Ross E. Nolan's grocery store, which opened in 1890, the Nolan clothing store, Sullivan Drug Store, and Ray Ellis's Royal Blue Grocery.⁴

112 E. Montgomery St. Commercial Building, 1945. Contributing

Second from right side of photo 12

The two-story brick building has two storefronts, both covered with modern wood, with modern windows and entry doors. A pent roof canopy covered with asphalt shingles continues above the storefronts from the building at 106 E. Montgomery. The second story features three large windows composed of glass block. The parapet is capped with concrete and metal flashing. The building is a substantial reconstruction of a building that burned in the Christmas Fire of 1944.

114 E. Montgomery St. Commercial Building, 1956. Contributing

Right side of photo 12

The one-story building has random-coursed Bedford stone ashlar with a wide, recessed entry in its west half. The entry features a wide wood door with full window. A group of three wood display windows is in the east half and features a wide center window flanked by 1/1 windows on a stone sill. The alley wall and back wall are composed of concrete block. A frame building that sold farm equipment occupied this site until about the time of the Christmas Fire in 1944. This building was constructed in 1956.

116 E. Montgomery St. Commercial Building, 1947. Contributing

Left side of photo 13

The one-story building has a brick façade tabbed into a concrete block alley façade on its west wall. The building's storefront is composed of five wood display windows on a stone sill. The westernmost window is part of a cutaway corner for a recessed entry with a wood door with full window. A shallow pent roof canopy extends over the storefront. The brick facade is capped

⁴ "\$80,000 Fire at Francesville" *Journal & Courier* (Lafayette) 26 Dec 1944. Pg. 1. Col. 6

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

with stone and a front-gabled wall is covered with metal. This building has had a long late 20th and early 21st century history as Rod's Pizzeria.

118 E. Montgomery St. Commercial Building, c. 1940/2023. Non-contributing

Middle of photo 13

The small gable-front building has metal siding on its façade with a metal door and two small 1/1 windows.

122 E. Montgomery St. Francesville Town Hall & Fire Department, 1964-1967. Contributing

Right side of photo 13

The one-story, hipped roof building has a façade composed of random-coursed Bedford stone ashlars. The facade has two large garage doors in the center, flanked by pilasters of stone. The west half features projecting pilasters of stone, inversely tapered, that support a pent roof. A raised flower bed with stone wall is between the pilasters. A wood door with window in the top is near the east pilaster. A group of three wood windows and a pair of wood windows are west of the door. A building stone is between the group and pair of windows. The east half is a modern addition that is covered with vinyl siding and has two pairs of casement windows. The building was originally constructed with a flat roof but received a hipped roof when the addition was made to the east.

The building was dedicated on September 21, 1967, after approximately three years' construction. An early location for the fire department was a brick building located on Brooks Street, just south of Montgomery Street, on the west side of the road. The building was outfitted with a fire bell on the roof. In 1912, the department had one hook & ladder truck, one hand chemical engine, and fire pails to combat fires. The new building was the result of the Francesville Community Improvement Foundation that constructed the \$50,000 building, all raised with donations, and sold it to the town for \$1.00. When built, the building included town offices, township trustee office, a jail, meeting room, and garage for fire equipment. The jail cells were repurposed from an earlier building and were purchased by the town in 1889. At one point during construction, a convoy of farm trucks drove to Bedford, Indiana, to pick up 75 tons of limestone.⁵

James Street, north side

104 E. James St. Commercial Building, c. 1950. Non-contributing

Seen in the left background of photo 17

The one-story building fronts Bill Street with a shorter gable-front storefront section. The building is covered with metal.

⁵ "Celebrate at Francesville" *South Bend Tribune* 24 Sept 1967. Pg. 7. Cols.2-4

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN

County and State

James Street, south side

101 E. James St. Gutwein House, Queen Anne, c. 1900. Contributing
Photo 16 and 17

Garage, c. 1980. Non-contributing

The two-story house is constructed in a large, lazy-T-plan form with entry facing the intersection of Bill and James Streets. The house has a brick foundation and cement shingle (c. 1940) siding with 1/1 wood windows, mostly in pairs. The gabled roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The gables are covered with patterned wood shingles. The prominent feature of the home is the inside corner entry in a projecting, two-story, three-sided bay with a cutaway wall facing the intersection. It has a small wrap-around porch of turned posts and a spindle frieze. The entry is composed of a wood door with full window. Narrow windows flank the door in the other two walls of the bay. The projecting bay's second story has two 1/1 narrow windows in the cutaway wall and narrow 1/1 windows in the other two walls. The bay's roof is hipped and returns into the main gabled roof of the house.

The home belonged to Philip and Louisa (Koch) Gutwein during the first half of the 20th century. The Gutweins were natives of Austria-Hungary and came to the United States in 1906. Gutwein first farmed, then opened the Gutwein Milling Company in town in 1920. The company expanded into livestock feed sales, which became the exclusive product of the company in 1950. He was also pastor of the Francesville Apostolic Church from 1906 through 1952. Louisa died in 1938. Philip died in 1958 at the age of 97 years, leaving 191 descendants at his death.⁶

Salem Street, west side.

110 S. Salem St. Francesville United Methodist Church, Gothic Revival, 1904. Contributing
Photos 07 and the left side of 09

United Methodist Parsonage, American Foursquare, c. 1905. Contributing

The brick church has a random-course fieldstone base topped with a limestone cap. The building has a T-plan with a corner entry tower on its southeast corner toward the intersection of Salem and Montgomery Streets. The building has Gothic-arched stained art glass windows with rusticated stone keys and a stone sill course. The building has a simple brick cornice with returns on its gabled parapet walls. The parapets are capped with stone and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The front (south) façade features a large Gothic-arched art glass window centered in the south-facing leg of the T-plan. It is divided into four rectangular windows at the bottom and by wood tracery in the top.

The entry tower is to the east and recessed with a concrete porch and steps that lead south and east. The first story features an entry composed of two modern metal doors and an historic art glass transom with Gothic arch in its south wall and two small Gothic-arched art glass windows in its east wall. A stone belt course is near the bottom of the arches on the first story. A stone sill

⁶ Obituary for Philp Gutwein, *Francesville Tribune*, 25 Dec 1958

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

course is in the second story with two Gothic-arched windows in the south and east walls. A belt course is near the bottom of the arches on the second story also. The belfry features two Gothic-arched louvered openings in each of the four walls. The louvers have stone sills. The top of the tower features corbels that carry a stone ledge forming the bottom of the parapet. The tower's parapet is crenellated with rusticated stone caps.

The Methodist congregation organized in Francesville in 1853. They constructed their first building in 1872 at the northwest corner of Bill and Yellow Streets at a cost of \$2200. When the new building was constructed at this location in 1904, the Methodists sold the old church to an Evangelical Reformed congregation. This building was built at a cost of \$7000 and is based off the Akron plan for sanctuary and classroom space.

Monon Avenue, west side.

101 S. Monon Ave. Commercial Hotel, Italianate, 1901. Contributing

Left side of photo 04 and photo 06

The two-story brick building has a rubblestone base and a cutaway northeast corner facing the intersection of Montgomery Street and Monon Avenue. The building has five bays of segmental-arched windows with brick hoods and stone sills on its north façade. The east façade has nine segmental-arched openings on the first story, some entries and some windows, and six segmental-arched windows on the second story. The buildings windows and doors are modern metal and vinyl and some openings have been filled in with wood. The cutaway corner features a modern entry door and segmental-arched transom, which is covered with wood. The second story features brick pilasters on the corners that flank two panels of brickwork in lieu of a window. Pilasters are also on the second story's south and west corners. The building has a tall brick parapet with a patterned brickwork frieze and corbelling to support the cornice. The parapet is capped with a course of concrete block.

The building was constructed in 1901 by J. Coey. It was known as the Commercial Hotel and was one of three hotels in Francesville. The original hotel was built in 1853 on the site of the opera house. The Koster Block was built in 1900 and housed a large hotel on the southwest corner of Montgomery and Brooks Streets. The Commercial Hotel was convenient for people arriving at the depot, just east of the hotel. It had a kitchen and large dining hall that hosted Chamber of Commerce meetings as well as church groups. Ed Merrill was proprietor in 1910; H. C. Jentz, a merchant, took over the hotel in 1920. In 1924, the hotel became the Hotel Weldon, owned by Conrad J. and Minnie Weldon and included a taxi service.⁷ It was sold to Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Crittenden of Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1946.⁸ The building was converted into apartments known as Town Square Apartments.

⁷ Town of Francesville 1853-2003, pg. 28

⁸ "Ann Arbor Couple Buys Hotel Weldon" *Indianapolis Star*. 01 Feb 1946. Pg. 20. Col. 1

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN

County and State

Bill Street, east side going south.

104 S. Bill St. Former Francesville Post Office, Italianate, c. 1890. Contributing

Middle of photo 01

The two-story brick building has a cutaway corner wall facing the intersection of Montgomery and Bill Street. The building has storefronts in the east end of its north façade and south end of its west façade. Both storefronts feature central, recessed entries flanked by cast iron columns with large modern wood display windows. The upper part of the windows is covered with boards. The doors are modern and the upper part of the recessed entry is covered with boards between the columns. The building has a corner entry flanked by fluted trim boards. The entry has a segmental-arched top and has been filled in with wood. A large display window is south of the corner entry and has also been filled in with wood. There are two door and window openings east of the corner entry. These have stone sills and segmental arches and are filled in with wood in the transom areas.

The second story features modern 1/1 wood windows with stone sills and segmental arches. There are five windows in the north and west façades. The north façade is wider, and the windows have an irregular spacing. The upper part of the second story features brick pilasters at its corners that corbel outward to frame the brick cornice. The cornice features rows of corbels that join to form small arches across the top of the wall.

The building has been occupied by a number of businesses during its time. The post office was once located in the building prior to several moves. The building also had a dry goods store and grocery store on the first story in 1912.

106 S. Bill St. William D. Busch Building, Italianate, 1887. Contributing

Middle of photo 14

The two-story brick building has a storefront flanked by brick pilasters. The storefront, c. 1970, features a recessed glass entry door and metal stairway door on its south half. The north half features a large metal display window. The transom area is covered with a fabric awning and vinyl siding. A pressed metal cornice tops the storefront. The second story features three modern 1/1 metal windows with stone sills and pressed metal hoods. The building has a nicely-detailed pressed metal cornice composed of brackets and a pediment in the center. The pediment has WM. D. Busch in raised metal letters and a tympanum of patterned metalwork. The pressed metal cornice strongly resembles George Mesker & Co. products, for example, #7017 from their 1908 catalog.

William Busch and J. Coble constructed a one-story building with three storefronts in 1887 to house Busch's hardware store and Coble's saloon. By 1900, Busch added a second story over his hardware store. Busch purchased a stock of hardware goods in Chicago for \$800. The original building cost \$2500 to construct and included the hardware, saloon, and D. W. Strauss's Drugstore in the center storefront (now the building adjacent to the south).⁹

⁹ Town of Francesville 1853-2003, pg. 13

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN

County and State

108 S. Bill St. Old Corral Bar, 1887/c. 1925. Contributing

Right side of photo 14

The one-story brick building has a modern, c. 1980, wood storefront with a recessed metal entry door. The entry is flanked by small windows and the storefront has a modern pent roof with wood shingles. A historic, c. 1964, sign extends from the parapet above the pent roof on a steel pole. The parapet features a brick panel enframed with header brick.

The building has had a long history as a restaurant and bar. Ernest Smith moved his tavern to this location, a restaurant previously owned by Ted Myers, in 1952. He was the proprietor of "Smitty's Tavern" which was opened in 1929. Smitty's was sold to George Logan who reopened the business as the Old Corral in 1964.

122 S. Bill St. United States Post Office, c. 1920/1957. Contributing

Left side of photo 15

The two-story building has a façade composed of random-coursed Bedford stone ashlar. It features a recessed entry with metal and glass door flanked by large metal display windows in the first story. A pent roof covered with metal is at the top of the first story. The second story features two sliding windows with stone sills and lintels. A middle opening has been filled in with block. This building has been the location of the United States Post Office in Francesville since 1957. A post office has served the town since the first one opened in 1853 and has operated out of a number of business blocks.

124 S. Bill St. Commercial Building, c. 1920. Non-contributing

Middle of photo 15

The two-story building has a storefront with a modern door and large metal display windows. A fabric awning is above the storefront. The façade is covered with vinyl siding.

128 S. Bill St. Commercial Building, c. 1938. Non-contributing

Right side of photo 15

The one-story building has vinyl siding and modern storefront windows and door. It features a pent roof over the storefront and a stepped parapet.

210 S. Bill St. Gutwein Building, 1956. Contributing

Right side of photo 17

The one-story building is composed of random-coursed Bedford stone ashlar and features a hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles. The façade has projecting pilasters of stone that are inversely tapered and flanked a wood entry door with full window. Large metal display windows are to each side of the pilasters.

236 S. Bill St. Francesville First Christian Church, 1961/2003. Contributing

Photo 18

The large church building has had a few additions over the years, but the front (south) façade features an older, wide gabled section. The building is composed of random-coursed Bedford stone ashlar and stained art glass windows in the older section. The front façade has two pairs of

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

modern metal entry doors flanked by stained art glass windows with stucco panels above them that extend into the gable. The gable features a large full-round arched stained art glass window with stone arch and key.

The First Christian Church in Francesville organized in April 1866. The congregation constructed their first building in 1904 at this location. In 1961, a building campaign was completed to renovate the building and add an educational wing, which was dedicated on August 20, 1961. This gives the building its historic, mid-20th century appearance on the northeast corner of Bill and Lyman Streets. A modern addition was made behind the building and to the east in 2003.

Bill Street, west side north going.

303 S. Bill St. Tate & Lyle Grain Company/Mill & Creamery, c. 1925. Contributing
Photo 19

The one-story mill building is constructed in three narrow, gabled sections facing north. The walls are composed of buff-colored glazed brick. The building has metal windows and doors with stone sills. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The front façade (facing Lyman Street) has a raised first story with a wide set of concrete steps that lead to two doors. A small window is west of the west door. A pent roof extends above the doors. The gable wall is covered with vinyl siding.

This building is part of the farmers' cooperative that formed in 1919. Eight individuals contributed funds to raise \$20,025 needed to purchase the Farmers' Elevator Company that had been in business for only three years. Over the decades, additional grain bins and buildings were added.¹⁰ This building was constructed c. 1925 as an office for a creamery that was part of the broader complex.

233 S. Bill St. Front-gabled Pole Building, 1974. Non-contributing
Side-gabled Utility Building, 1950. Contributing
Both buildings feature metal siding, doors, windows, and roofing.

229 S. Bill St. Municipal Building, 1950. Non-contributing
The side-gabled building is covered with modern metal siding and roof and features four large garage doors.

125 S. Bill St. Robinson's Implement Building, 1947. Contributing
Left side of photo 20

The wide, one-story building is constructed of dark tan-colored brick with two beltcourses of red brick at the top and bottom of the parapet which is capped with clay tile. The facades feature brick pilasters capped with stone just below the parapet. The front façade is divided into five bays by pilasters. Each bay features a large metal display window except for the south bay. The

¹⁰ Town of Francesville 1853-2003, pg. 76

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

north bay has a deeply recessed entry centered between display windows. A historic metal sign pole with lights extends from above the storefront over the second bay from the north.

Robinson's Implement Service was started in 1936 by Roy Robinson who contracted with Minneapolis-Moline to sell their farm equipment and machinery. He constructed a building on the northeast corner of James and Bill Streets in 1938, then built this building after World War II in 1947. Robinson died in 1954 after which time his wife, Leona, and son, Gene, continued the business.

119 S. Bill St. Gable-Front Building, c. 1920/1990. Non-contributing

Second from left side of photo 20

The building features a wide front gabled parapet and is covered with metal. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The façade has a modern garage door in its south half and modern entry door and windows in its north half.

117 S. Bill St. Commercial Building, c. 1910. Contributing

Middle of photo 20

The two-story brick building is divided into three bays by pilasters on its front façade. The storefronts between the pilasters are modern, c. 1990 infill with brick and entry doors and display windows. The second story features two segmental-arched 1/1 vinyl windows with brick hoods and sills in each bay. The building features a tall parapet composed of rows of corbels that support a brick cornice at the top of the wall, which is capped with concrete.

The building served as a movie house in its early years. The 1912/1933 Sanborn Map shows the building has a large auditorium with a stage at the front and balcony at the rear. The balcony was built over two small corner shops and a middle entry. The Devon Theater was opened by Al Linback across the street from this building in 1938.

120 N. Bill St. Commercial Building, c. 1913/1980. Non-contributing

Right side of photo 21

The two-story building is attached to the rear of the bank on Montgomery Street. It has walls composed of stucco between reinforced concrete frame members. Narrow metal casement windows and a door punctuate the bays divided by the concrete frame. The top of the building has metal siding. The building has a hipped roof also covered with metal. The building was originally constructed and occupied by the Francesville Masons in 1913 before it was sold to the bank and remodeled.

130 N. Bill St. Bungalow, 1919. Contributing

The side-gabled one-and-a-half story house has vinyl siding and 1/1 wood windows. A shed roof extends from the main roof to cover a full-width front porch. The roof is supported by wood posts. A modern metal entry door is in the north end of the façade and a pair of French doors is in the south end of the façade. A dormer with a gabled roof and a group of three windows is centered on the façade. The group of windows is composed of a fixed middle window flanked by 1/1 windows.

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN

County and State

204 N. Bill St. United Salem Church of Christ, Gothic Revival, 1954. Contributing

Photo 22

Garage, c. 1920/1954. Contributing

The gable-front church has walls composed of random-coursed rusticated Bedford stone ashlar. The building has stepped buttresses on the side walls of the nave. These divide the nave into bays which feature small gothic-arched windows composed of stained art glass. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The front façade has a small porch centered on the façade with ashlar walls that support wood posts that carry a low-pitched gabled roof. The entry has a pair of wood doors with small art glass windows and a transom in a gothic-arched surround. A cross composed of glass block is centered in the gable wall.

This is the location of the original Methodist Church, built in 1872. It was sold to an Evangelical Reformed congregation, or the Salem Church, after the Methodists built a new building in 1904. The Salem congregation was composed of several German immigrant families. In 1954, they replaced the Methodist building with a new stone building. The congregation disbanded in 1986.

Brooks Street, west side.

101 S. Brooks St. IGA Supermarket, 1983. Non-contributing

Left side of photo 02

The gable-front pole building (facing north to Montgomery Street) has metal siding and roof with a corner entry and metal storefront windows in an enclosed vestibule fronting Montgomery Street.

This was the location of the Koster Block, a large two-story brick building constructed in 1900 for stores, a hospital, and hotel. In 1936, it was sold to Howat Farms who remodeled it into a corn processing facility. The building was razed and this grocery store was constructed in 1983.

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
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.)

- ☐ 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN

County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1887- 1967

Significant Dates

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Lyon, Neil

Fred Vollmer & Sons

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the construction of the Busch Building in 1887 (right side of photo 01), at 106 S. Bill Street and ends with the completion of the Francesville Town Hall and Fire Station in 1967 (right side of photo 13). This 80-year period demonstrates the growth and viability of the small railroad town in the late 19th century into the mid-20th century.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Francesville Commercial Historic District is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A/Commerce. Commerce played the most important role in the development of the district, particularly related to the town's initial railroad boom era, and maintained significance into the middle part of the 20th century as the district clearly demonstrates continued growth with about a third of its buildings constructed or reconstructed during that period. Despite some recent auto-related businesses on the edge of town, downtown Francesville remains the commercial and civic core of Salem Township.

The Francesville Commercial Historic District also qualifies for the National Register under criterion C/architecture. The district exhibits a small collection of late 19th/early 20th century commercial and public architecture in the Italianate and Neoclassical styles as well as four churches in Gothic Revival and Mission Revival styles.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

ARCHITECTURE

The Francesville Commercial Historic District has examples of a few styles of late 19th and early 20th century architecture that typify small Midwestern railroad towns. The district's early commercial architecture reflects Italianate design often in subtle references to the style through a few features or details found in several two-story brick buildings. The commercial adaptation of styles in the early 20th century includes simple vernacular application in overall design and features on brick buildings in the district. The district's more robustly styled buildings, though, are its public buildings in examples of early 20th century Gothic Revival and Neoclassical styles. The last significant building, in terms of popular American styles, is an example of Mission revival architecture, also applied to a church building. Many other buildings, particularly in the

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

early to mid-20th century are one-story vernacular commercial buildings with few, if any, stylistic features of the era other than composition and massing.

Italianate Style

The Italianate style was popular between 1850 and 1880, particularly in Midwestern towns where the expansion of railroads brought wealth to communities and created a building boom during the period. The style traces its roots to England as part of the Picturesque Movement; the movement rejected formal classical ideas of art and architecture that were popular for 200 years. The Picturesque Movement emphasized rambling informal Italian farmhouses, but as the style entered the United States it was often modified and embellished into a truly Americanized style. The first Italianate house was constructed in the United States in the late 1830s. The style was popularized by house pattern books by Andrew Jackson Downing during the middle part of the 1800s, but its popularity began to wane as it began to be replaced by the Queen Anne Style in the last decades of the 19th century. Advocates of cast iron commercial blocks were publishing examples of Italianate commercial buildings as early as the late 1840s. Toward the end of the 19th century, several manufacturers produced catalogs of cast iron storefronts, which were widely sold and shipped across the country. Most were marketed for Italianate building designs.

There are three buildings in the district, all two-story brick commercial buildings, that have features related to the Italianate design. The building at 101 S. Monon (photo 06), the town's historic Commercial Hotel, built in 1901, is a large, two-story brick building with pilasters on its second story, segmental-arched windows, and a well-detailed cornice with varying patterns of brickwork coursing. The building has a two-story cutaway front corner entry that gave it prominence from the railroad depot across the railroad tracks. The building has similar features to the old post office building with a cutaway corner entry facing the main intersection at 104 S. Bill Street (photo 01). The building was constructed c. 1890 and features some cast iron storefront columns, segmental-arched windows, and a brick cornice. The adjacent building, at 106 S. Bill Street (middle of photo 14), has pressed metal features of the style that include a finely detailed pressed metal cornice and window hoods. The cornice features a pediment with WM BUSCH in raised letters. The building was built in two stages, 1887 and c. 1895.

Gothic Revival Style

The district's examples of Gothic Revival are two churches that demonstrate the evolution of the style at the beginning of the 20th century into the mid-20th century. Gothic Revival architecture was popularized by house pattern books in similar fashion to the Italianate style. Several house pattern books of the mid-19th century included designs for a Gothic church. The style gained its greatest and longest-lived popularity with religious architecture, as demonstrated in the district. This continued well into the 20th century in later versions of the style such as 20th century Gothic Revival.

Typical of many churches of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, two of Francesville's congregations turned to the Gothic Revival style when they built their buildings in 1904 and 1954. The Methodist Church (photo 07), located at 110 S. Salem Street, is a brick building that features steeply pitched gables, Gothic-arched stained art glass windows, and a corner entry tower. The tower has a Gothic-arched entry and pairs of windows and louvers in the belfry. The

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

tower has a crenellated parapet rather than a steeply pitched roof which demonstrates the evolution of church architecture at the turn of the century. The other church was constructed by a mostly German congregation at 204 N. Bill Street. It became the Salem Church of Christ and faced with Bedford stone ashlar in 1954 (photo 22). The small, gable-front building features small Gothic-arched windows, stepped buttresses, and a cross composed of glass block in the gable wall.

Romanesque Revival and Neoclassical Style

Several buildings in downtown Francesville reflect the shift in choices that builders, architects, and business owners were making in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Solid masonry construction was a must due to the threat of fire and limited resources to combat it. But other choices were related to building craft and style. The building at 117 S. Bill, (middle of photo 20) shows the change. The segmental arched windows on the upper floor are Italianate, but the arch treatment is integral to the building, rather than being an applied sheet metal hood. Other business blocks in the district have the more typical, applied Italianate elements. The pilasters and corbel work of 117 S. Bill are also part of the structural walls. The emphasis on structural ornament draws from the Romanesque Revival style. The Mallon Building, (photo 11) is a step further toward the Romanesque Revival style. The use of rock-faced stone lintels and sills, the extensive corbel and false machicolation work on the parapet, and the engaged, corbeled upper corner piers are examples of Romanesque Revival influence. Architects practicing in Eastern U.S. cities advocated the adoption and revival of Early Medieval French (Romanesque) architecture for religious, civic, commercial, and residential projects in the 1880s and 90s. Architect Henry Hobson Richardson became synonymous with the style. While the richly carved granite and limestone of landmark buildings was out of reach for most merchants, small town builders could give their masonry buildings a touch of the grandeur of these big city buildings through articulation of brick work and select use of stone. The builder also utilized an important 19th century innovation: cast iron storefronts. Several other buildings in the district have traces of their original cast iron storefront systems, but the fronts of the Mallon Building are completely intact.

The Classicism of the 1915 Carnegie Library at 201 W. Montgomery resulted in good part from Andrew Carnegie's design review of library projects that he funded. Carnegie and his personal secretary firmly recommended that one of their stock library plans be used by communities. Furthermore, Carnegie called for libraries that he funded to be practical and simple, yet dignified. Neoclassicism fit the bill perfectly. The Neoclassical style emerged at the turn of the new century and continued into 1930s in American cities. Several events and trends fed the movement toward Classicism. Planners of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 embraced Classicism for most of the fair's major buildings. Twenty-seven million, or one-third of the total U.S. population, attended the fair. The style coincided with America's political and economic rise, as well as the coming of age of American cities. By the late 1910s and into the 1920s, as a robust American economy permitted, the style was being executed with greater attention to Classical styling. The original portion of the Francesville-Salem Township Library retains its Neoclassical plan, and its grand portico entrance with monolithic Indiana limestone Roman Doric columns *in antis*.

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival Style

The unusual presence of a building constructed in the *Spanish Revival style*, or Mission style is found in the district. St. Francis Solano Catholic Church, built in 1951, is a simple example of the style (photos 08-09). Buildings in this style are typically covered with stucco with wood pergolas or other features, including flat roofs, popular during Spanish Colonial times. The popularity in the United States grew from an interest in the Southwest during the first part of the 20th century. The building is covered with stucco and features elegantly shaped parapets on its gabled-ell form. The building has a simple, minimal façade with a pair of doors and niche in the gable. The niche has a segmental-arched top and features a statue of St. Francis. A square tower with a flat roof rises behind the gable's east end and features a segmental-arched window in the first story and louver in the belfry. A dark metal cross, resembling wood, surmounts the shaped parapet. The gable roof was once covered with red Spanish tile. The parish's choice of style may have been influenced by the life of St. Francis Solano, a Spaniard who was active in South America during the late 16th century.

Bedford stone/modern era

Of particular interest are the number of simple, one-story commercial buildings that have walls composed of random-coursed Bedford limestone ashlars. This was a common building material in Indiana, particularly in areas with close proximity to railroads that offered easy shipment from their southern Indiana quarries. The Monon Line through Francesville was a direct connection to Bedford, Indiana. Nine, or about a third of the primary buildings in the district, are constructed of this material during the 1950s-1960s. They include some of the most prominent buildings like the town hall (1967, right side of photo 13), People's State Bank (1902/1964, photo 21), and both the First Christian Church and Salem Church of Christ (photos 18, 22). The bank was rebuilt or faced with the material during the 1960s. Some have alternating rusticated and smooth stone, like the bank, others are fully rusticated like the Salem Church of Christ. The town hall and Gutwein Building (right side of photo 17) on South Bill Street both feature inversely tapered pilasters that support canopies, which was a popular feature in the modern movement of architecture in the mid-20th century.

COMMERCE

Francesville was established in 1853 in response to the construction of the Louisville, New Albany, & Chicago Railroad along the west side of Pulaski County. The region of Salem Township, in which the town is located, was nearly three-quarters prairie lands and fertile for agricultural production.¹¹ The land on which the town was platted was owned by William Rees, who had about ten acres under cultivation and a small log cabin that was within the boundaries of the future village. James Brooks, President of the Louisville, New Albany, & Chicago Railroad, purchased Rees' property to lay out a town and named it for his daughter, Frances.

¹¹ Goodspeed, pg. 531

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

Construction on the railroad began in 1847 and reached Michigan City in 1853. From there, it connected to Chicago. Brooks was from New Albany and the railroad retained ownership of lots upon which commercial buildings were constructed along the east side of the railroad until a judge determined the owners of the buildings also owned the lots in the early 1900s. The town was replatted in 1862 by J. M. H. Allison, at which time, the town plat was reduced by several blocks on its east and west sides. A few street names reflect the connection to the railroad including Brooks Street and Lyman Street, which was named for George Lyman, secretary of the railroad.¹² The railroad, which became the Chicago, Indianapolis, & Louisville Railroad by 1906, and later the Monon Railroad, carried President Lincoln's funeral train that made a stop in Francesville in 1865.

Alonzo Star constructed the first building in town in 1853. It was used for his dwelling and a store, as well as the first post office that opened in the same year. William Imes constructed the first hotel on the southwest corner of Bill and Montgomery Streets in 1853-54, immediately east of the railroad depot. It was named the Commercial House and remained in business until William Myers constructed the opera house on the site (photo 03). The name Commercial Hotel was then used when a new hotel was built on the southwest corner of Monon and Montgomery Streets in 1901. The name was retained until 1924 when it became the Hotel Weldon. Samuel Rishling opened the next store in Francesville, which offered groceries and dry goods. It was the oldest business in town by 1883. The first drug store opened in 1856 and later sold to J. T. Bledsoe, and J. H. Mallon opened his dry goods store with a partner named Daseke in 1869.¹³

Other stores in Francesville during this time, leading up to about 1890, included J. M. Jost's general store, L. N. Hollet's blacksmith shop, Applegate & Jones Hardware, James Concannon's gentlemen's furnishings, and Joseph Claus's blacksmith and wagon shop that opened in 1855. Leading up to 1893, most of the commercial buildings in town were frame construction. William Busch began a hardware store in 1887 and in partnership with J. Coble, constructed a brick building on Bill Street. Coble opened a saloon in his part of the building. This appears to be the oldest extant building in the district (right side of photo 01).

Two buildings are most related to the town's railroad history. One is the Commercial Hotel, later Hotel Weldon, built west of the railroad on Montgomery Street in 1901 (photo 06). The two-story brick building featured a kitchen and large dining room. By the 1930s, it also included a taxi service. The other building is part of the farmers' cooperative at the south end of the district. The building serves as offices and general storage for the cooperative (photo 19). By 1900, the district had four large mills and grain elevators as well as a lumber yard along the railroad's east side, behind the commercial buildings that front Bill Street, and at the south edge of town. Jacob Myers' elevator was the first complete grain elevator in town when it opened in 1896. It was destroyed by fire in 1916. It was located between the railroad and commercial buildings fronting Bill Street. A creamery also opened in Francesville in 1881, then a new one opened in 1887 which remained in business until 1899.¹⁴

¹² Goodspeed, pg. 541

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Goodspeed, pg. 545

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

Other important commercial buildings include Mallon's Building. The two-story brick building was constructed in 1899 on the northeast corner of the main intersection after a fire burned the original Mallon Building on the block (photo 11). Another two-story brick building was constructed on the southeast corner of the main intersection c. 1890 to house the town's post office and other stores (photo 01). By about 1902, a brick building was constructed on the northwest corner of the main intersection to house the town's long-standing community bank, which became the People's State Bank in 1930 (remodeled c. 1964, photo 21). The fourth corner of the intersection, which was occupied by the old Commercial House since 1854, was replaced by a two-story brick opera house and storehouses by William Myer in 1908 (photo 03). Other buildings followed in each direction from the intersection, which became established as the main commercial intersection in Francesville, a half-block east of the railroad.

Several store owners catered to travelers and railroad workers including George Rees who operated a saloon and Hazen's pool and billiard hall. In 1906, Pulaski County became a "dry" county with passage of laws by county officials prohibiting the sale of alcohol. At that time, Francesville had three saloons, all located on Bill Street, that catered to residents and travelers on the railroad. Francesville had a Temperance Society established since 1882 that boasted a membership of 111 men and women within ten years of its founding.

While passenger service diminished on the railroad by the mid-1900s, Francesville was connected to the network of Indiana state highways when Highway 43 (now 421) was constructed along the town's west edge about 1930. This route follows much of the Monon Railroad in the northwest part of the state. The railroad remained important though, for area farmers to ship grain by rail from Francesville. The town's mid-20th century sustained growth and retail importance is seen in the number of buildings constructed during that period, or renovations to buildings during that time ending in the late 1960s. Robinson's Implement Service (left side of photo 20) was one of the largest buildings constructed in the district during this time, in 1947. It demonstrates the importance the town maintained to the farming community. Several other smaller buildings, including the Haring Hardware (middle of photo 02), which shifted from a harness shop to hardware by this time, were built in the 1950s. The bank was fully renovated with a modern look by about 1964 (photo 21). The United States Post Office also moved into its new quarters in 1957 on South Bill Street (left side of photo 15).

Along with the post office, several other public buildings in the community were constructed during the early to mid-1900s. The Methodist Church constructed a new building in 1904 on West Montgomery Street (photo 07). In 1915, the town and township went together to establish a Carnegie Library in the community (photo 10). In 1951, 1954, and 1961, the Catholic Church, Salem Church of Christ, and First Christian Church constructed new buildings at the edges of the district on West Montgomery, North Bill, and South Bill Streets. These are seen in photos 08, 18, and 22. And finally, after nearly a decade of planning, Francesville and Salem Township combined efforts again to construct and open a new town hall with a township office and fire station for the jointly owned department, in 1967 (right side of photo 13).

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

The Francesville Commercial Historic District retains several important restaurants and retail shops as well as the bank, post office, town hall, and other offices and services despite modern commercial development on the west edge of town on U.S. 421.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“\$80,000 Fire at Francesville” *Journal & Courier* (Lafayette) 26 Dec 1944. Pg. 1. Col. 6

“Ann Arbor Couple Buys Hotel Weldon” *Indianapolis Star*. 01 Feb 1946. Pg. 20. Col. 1

“Celebrate at Francesville” *South Bend Tribune* 24 Sept 1967. Pg. 7. Cols.2-4

“George Haring” *Journal & Courier* (Lafayette) 14 Aug 1967. Pg. 6. Col. 3

Goodspeed, Weston Arthur. Counties of White and Pulaski, Indiana. Chicago: F. A. Battey & Co., 1883.

Indiana Department of Transportation Maps: 1926, 1932

McAlester, Virginia. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.

“New St. Francis Edifice at Francesville” *Journal & Courier* (Lafayette). 27 Oct 1951. Pg. 6. Col. 3

Obituary for Philp Gutwein, *Francesville Tribune*, 25 Dec 1958

Pulaski County Sesquicentennial 1839-1989. Pulaski County Historical Society. Logansport (IN): Attebery Printing, 1990.

Sanborn Maps of Francesville, IN: 1912, 1912/1933

Standard Atlas of Pulaski County, Ind. Chicago: George Ogle & Co., 1906-07.

Town of Francesville 1853-2003. Fall Festival Committee (self-published)

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

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 # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 131-219-56012, 27, 30-39, 48-49, 54, 61

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 15 acres

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16

Easting: 509636

Northing: 4537351

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

2. Zone: 16	Easting: 510073	Northing: 4537405
3. Zone: 16	Easting: 510099	Northing: 4536776
4. Zone: 16	Easting : 509660	Northing: 4536754

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning at the southwest corner of Montgomery and Brooks Street, on the west side of Brooks Street, face south and continue in a line to the south property line of 114 S. Brooks Street. Turn west and follow the south property lines of 114 S. Brooks and 115 and 117 E. Montgomery Street to the west side of the alley between Brooks and Bill Streets. Turn south and follow the west side of the alley, crossing James Street, to the north side of Lyman Street, then turn west and follow the north side of the street to the west side of Bill Street. Face south and follow the west side of Bill Street to the south property line of 303 S. Bill Street for the parcels containing the creamery building. Turn west and follow the south property line to the east property line of the former Monon Railroad, then turn north and follow the east right-of-way line of the railroad, crossing Lyman and James Streets to a line extended east from the south property line of 101 S. Monon Avenue. Turn west and follow the line to the east side of the alley between Monon and Salem Streets, then turn north and follow the east side of the alley to the north edge of Montgomery Street.

On the north side of Montgomery Street, face west and follow the north edge of the street to the east side of the north/south alley west of Salem Street. Turn north and follow the east side of the alley to the north property line of 110 N. Salem Street, then turn east and follow the north property lines of 110 N. Salem and 217 W. Montgomery Street, crossing Salem Street, to the west side of the alley between Salem Street and Monon Avenue. Turn south and follow the west side of the alley to a line extended west from the north property line of 201 W. Montgomery Street, then turn east and follow the north property line, crossing Monon Avenue, to the east right-of-way line of the former Monon Railroad.

On the east property line of the railroad, turn north and follow the right-of-way line, crossing Yellow Street, to the north property line of 204 N. Bill Street, then turn east and follow the north property line to the west side of Bill Street. On the west side of Bill Street, follow a line south to the south side of Yellow Street, then turn east and follow the south edge of the street to the west side of the alley between Bill and Brooks Street. Turn south and follow the west side of the alley to the north property lines of 116, 118, and 122 E. Montgomery Street, then turn east and follow the north property lines to the west side of Brooks Street. Turn south and follow the west edge of Brooks Street to the south side of Montgomery Street, or the place of beginning.

Francesville Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN
County and State

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include the concentration of late 19th through mid-20th century commercial and public architecture development on the two main corridors in the town of Francesville. This includes some railroad/industrial related buildings in the south part of the district and churches on the edges of the district. Beyond the boundaries, the type of architecture changes rather dramatically to residential uses.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kurt West Garner
organization: Uptown Project, Inc.
street & number: 12954 6th Road
city or town: Plymouth state: IN zip code: 46563
e-mail: kwgarner@kwgarner.com
telephone: 574-780-1423
date: August 17, 2023

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
-

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN

County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: Francesville Commercial Historic District

City or Vicinity: Francesville

County: Pulaski State: Indiana

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: July 27, 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at the intersection of Montgomery and Bill Streets

1 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at the 100 block of East Montgomery Street

2 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at the intersection of Montgomery and Bill Streets

3 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking west on West Montgomery Street at the Monon Railroad

4 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east on Montgomery Street at the Monon Railroad

5 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at the intersection of West Montgomery Street and Monon Avenue

6 of 23.

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at the intersection of West Montgomery and Salem Streets

7 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at the intersection of West Montgomery and Salem Streets

8 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking west along the 200 block of West Montgomery Street, north side

9 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at the intersection of West Montgomery and Monon Avenue

10 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at the intersection of Montgomery and Bill Streets

11 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at the 100 block of East Montgomery Street

12 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at the 100 block of East Montgomery Street

13 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at the 100 block of South Bill Street, east side

14 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at the 100 block of South Bill Street, east side

15 of 23.

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Pulaski County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at the intersection of Bill and James Streets

16 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at the 200 block of South Bill Street, east side

17 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at the intersection of Bill and Lyman Streets

18 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at the intersection of Bill and Lyman Streets

19 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at the 100 block of South Bill Street, west side

20 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at the intersection of Bill and Montgomery Streets

21 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at the intersection of Bill and Yellow Streets

22 of 23.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking south down the 100 block of North Bill Street

23 of 23.

Francesville Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Pulaski County, IN

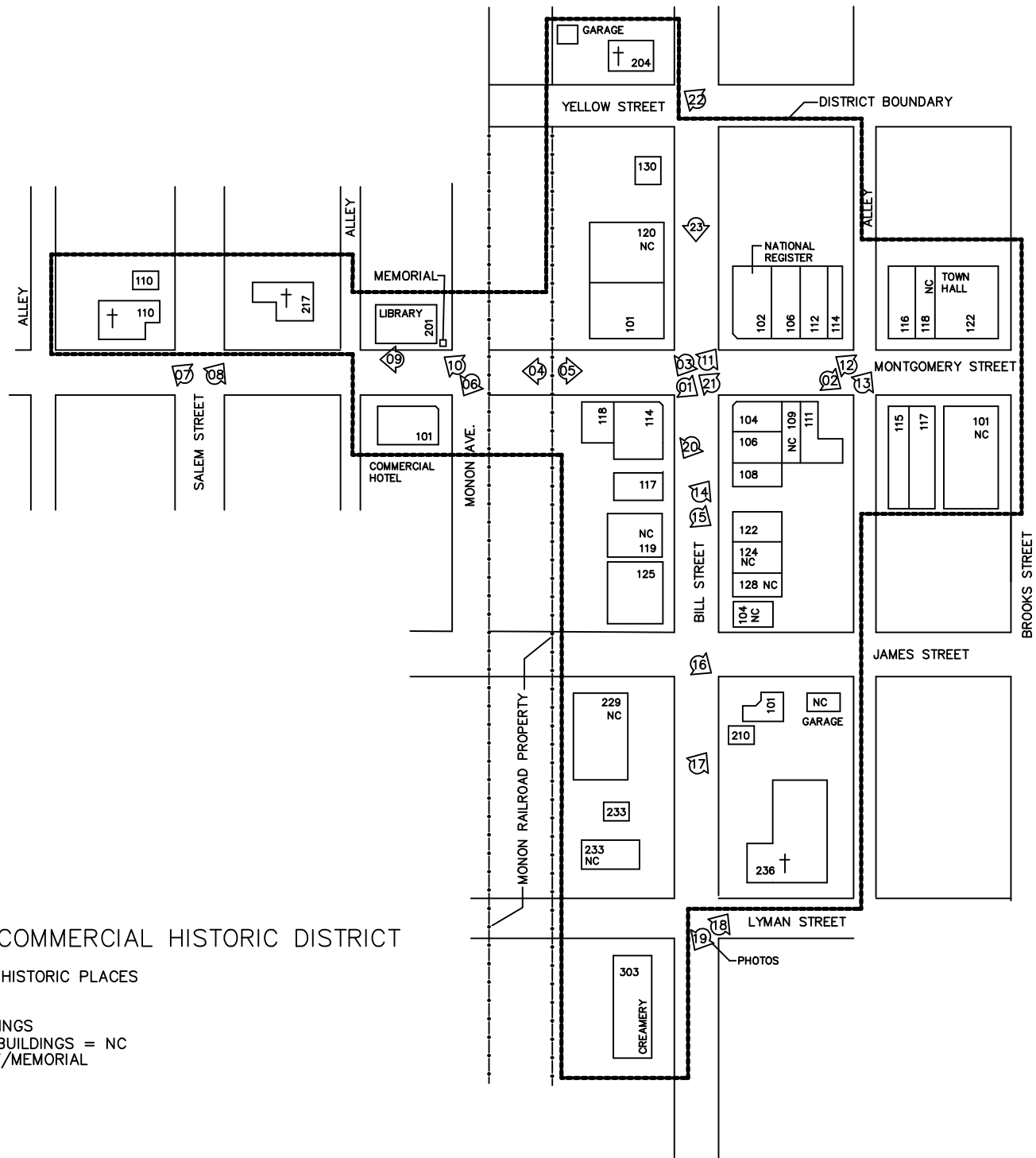
County and State

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

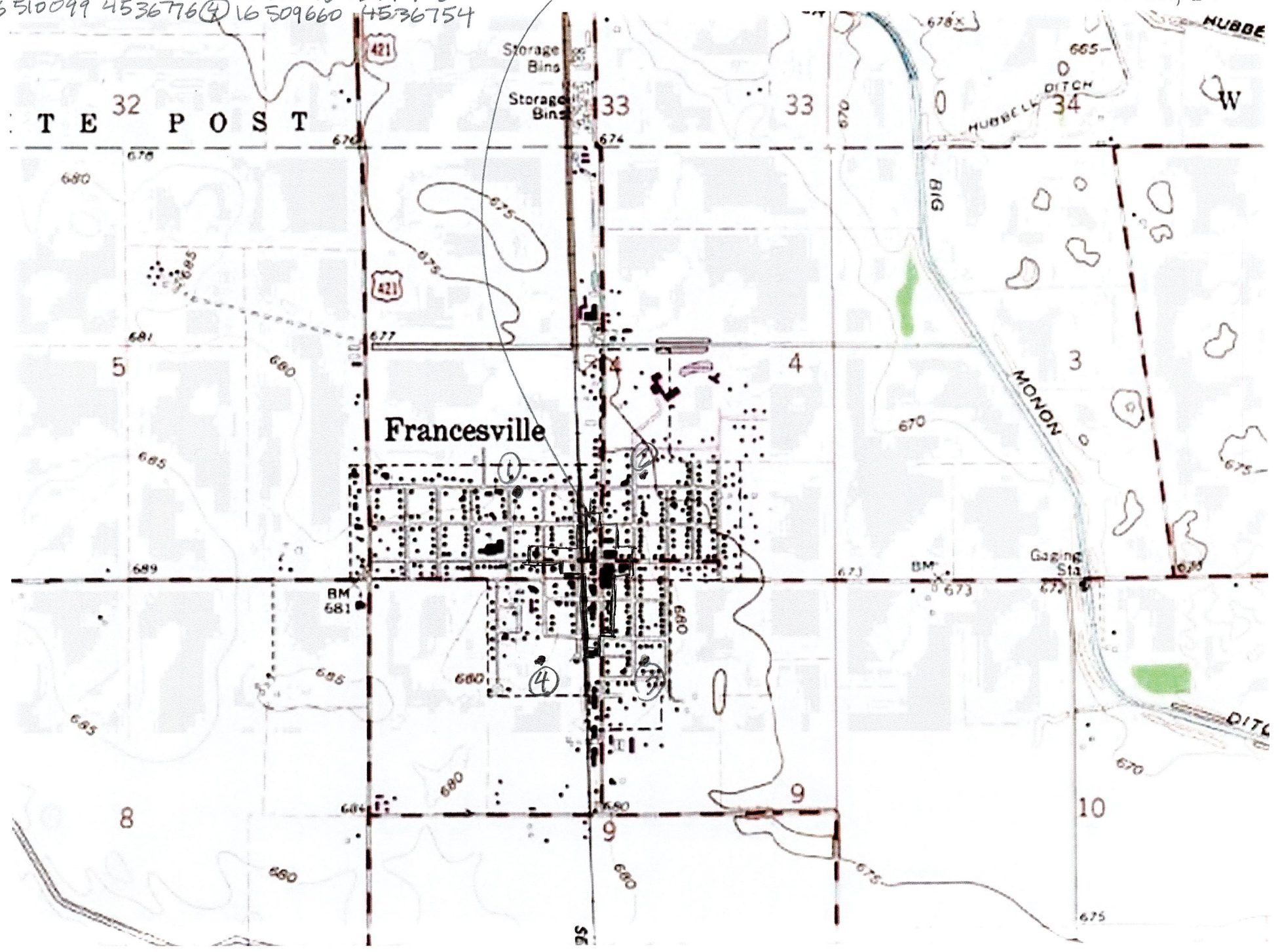


NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PULASKI COUNTY, IN
32 CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS
11 NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS = NC
1 CONTRIBUTING OBJECT/MEMORIAL



NAD 83 UTM's
 ① 16 509636 4537351 ② 16 510073 4537405
 ③ 16 510099 4536764 ④ 16 509660 4536754

FRANCESVILLE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Pulaski Co., IN





IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0001



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0003



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0004



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0005



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0009



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0011



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0014



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0015



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0019



IN_PulaskiCounty_FrancesvilleCommercialHistoricDistrict_0021