

MINNESOTA HISTORY / ARCHITECTURE INVENTORY FORM
NORTHFIELD COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
Rice County, Minnesota

PROPERTY LOCATION	
Property Name: Wheeler Building	Inventory No.: RC-NFC- 287
Address: 409 Division Street, Northfield, MN	PIN: 2206225034
QTR/QTR/T/R/S: NW NW Section 6 T111N R19W	
USGS Quad: Northfield, Minnesota	Plat Name: Original Town Block: 7 Lot: 33
UTM Z 15 487294E, 4922518S NAD 83	

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Construction Date: ca. 1887	Style: Italianate
Historic Use: commercial	Current Use: commercial
Property Type: commercial	Historic Context: "Commerce, 1856-1945"
Architect/Builder	Survey Name: Northfield Historic District Survey Revision Project, 2016
Previous NRHP Status: Contributing to Northfield Commercial Historic District	NRHP Recommendation: Contributing to Northfield Commercial Historic District
Form Prepared by: Landscape Research LLC	Survey Date: 3/2016



2016, looking east



ca. 1978 (right), looking east

Description

The Wheeler Building faces west on Division Street. This two-story, flat-roofed commercial building has a four-bay façade. The sheet metal cornice has eleven stamped modillions placed between corner brackets. The stamped detail includes scalloped motifs between the modillions and a slender molding at the base. Four second-story windows contain one-over-one, double-hung wood sash. Each window has a smooth terra-cotta, lancet-arched lintel, with incised detail framing a central rosette set in a quatrefoil. A smooth stone stringcourse unites the lintels, and another stone stringcourse joins the stone sills. Historic photographs show that it once had a small peaked panel centered at the cornice. The recessed entry is framed by large display windows. Historic hexagonal tile (possibly ca. 1900) in the entryway is intact. The signband area is covered, but the brick area around it suggests previous damage, probably when old signs and hardware were removed.

History

Although some sources date this building to the mid 1870s, it does not appear in photographs of the block from that period. The IOOF was an upper-floor tenant until 1899, followed by undertakers Ferguson and

Historic photographs: Northfield Historical Society

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Mitchell and later Dr. John R. Phillips. Crary's Bookstore was the owner when purchased by Sid Freeman in 1946. It next housed Odland Hardware and then Romy's Shoe Services. It was Stevenson's in the 1970s. A "mock mansard" roof above the display windows, as described in the 1979 NRHP historic district nomination, was removed for installation of the existing traditional storefront.

Significance and Historic Context(s)

This building is associated with the second period of Northfield's commercial development, from ca. 1880 to 1900, when 29 of the 65 historic district buildings were constructed. It is associated with the Northfield historic context, "Commerce, 1856-1945" (Northfield Preservation Plan, 1992).

Evaluation

This property was listed on the NRHP in 1979 as contributing to the Northfield Commercial Historic District. The exterior continues to retain historic significance and integrity and the building continues to contribute to the district. Survival of the entry tile is unusual among downtown Northfield buildings.

References

Edwins, Steve, ed. *Northfield Downtown Guidebook*. Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission, 1982, 18.

"Northfield Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1979.

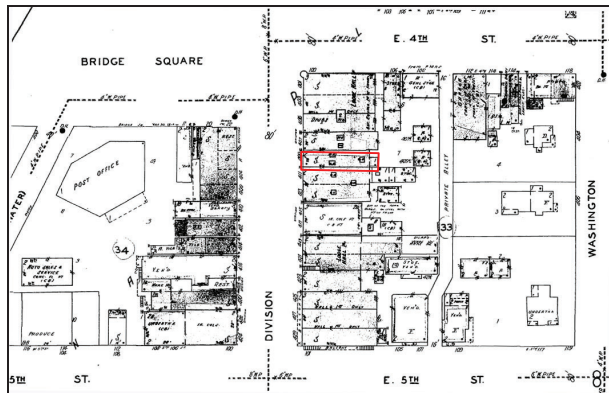
Northfield News. *All About Northfield, Minn: Directory of Name and Business Firms, Information in Regard to the City*. Northfield: Northfield News, 1889.

Northfield Historical Society. Photograph and research files. Northfield, Minnesota.

Sanborn Map & Publishing Company, New York. Northfield plates, 1886-1943.

Zellie, Carole. "Northfield Heritage Preservation Plan." Prepared for the Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission, Northfield, Minn. by Landscape Research, 1992.

Sanborn and USGS Maps



Sanborn Map and Publishing Co., 1930, updated 1943.



USGS: Northfield 1984.

Additional Photographs



2016, entry looking east

Historic photographs: Northfield Historical Society