

East Toledo Masonic Temple
401 MAIN STREET, TOLEDO, OHIO
City of Toledo Landmark Application Package



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ANALYSIS

The process for landmark designation outlined in the Toledo Municipal Code, **Chapter 1111.1000 Historic Districts and Landmarks (Designation or Expansion), Section 1111.1104 Report Contents** states the following:

- A. Whether the district or landmark proposed to be designated is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;

Currently applying for designation on the National Register of Historic Places.

- B. Whether the district or landmark proposed to be designated provides significant examples of architectural styles of the past;

The former Masonic Temple and Finkbeiner Furniture storefront located at 401 Main Street and Fourth Street is a rectangular, brick, stone, flat roof, and 4-story, 60,000 square foot structure originally built in 1913. The architecture style is considerably related to the term “Chicago School” which was developed during 1875 to 1925. The original ground floor tenant was Finkbeiner Furniture of which was Toledo’s mayor Carty Finkbeiner grandfather Arthur who owned the business moved from Freidman Block to the Masonic when it opened at Fourth and Main in 1913. The basement had several businesses including a bowling alley and boxing gym, the first floor was primarily retail space, and the top floor was occupied by the masons. The well beloved F.S. Myers and Son Furnishings moved to the masonic during the 1930’s and occupied space until 1963.

The architecture of course is what exemplifies the grandness of the structure. The verticality of windows from ground level to the 4th-story, ornamental detail along the façade, the traditional brick and stone masonry, the simplistic patterned awnings, color palette, and most of all the highly expressive Romanesque entrance along Fourth Street. Additionally, the symmetrical layout of the building along Fourth and Main Street embody the envelope as a focal point. The load bearing columns and walls within the structure are still structurally sound. The history of the former Masonic Temple brings tremendous light on the experiences and memories that were once shared in this “Chicago School” style building on the East Side of Toledo, our future is in our past.

C. a description of the district or landmark to serve as an informational resource. The description must include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. a geographic description including location and its relationship to the entire City;

The subject property is a 0.28-acre site that is located on the East side of Toledo along the Main Street corridor and the corner of Fourth Street. The Main Street corridor runs North-West to South-East while Fourth Street runs North-East to South-West. The structure is South-East from the Docks, International Park, Glass City Metropark, and Marina Loft development along Main Street. According to the National Register of Historic Places, East Toledo is approximately 0.25 mile North-East and Yondota is directly South-West of the site.

2. a description of the general land uses;

The subject property is zoned Storefront Commercial (CS), to the immediate North-East and South-West is Duplex Residential 6,000 (RD6). Within the general vicinity of the property are Parks and Open Space (POS), Limited Industrial (IL), Regional Commercial (CR), Mixed Commercial-Residential-Planned Unit Development (CM-PUD), and Multi-Dwelling Residential – 36 Units Per Acre (RM36).

3. a general description of the building conditions;

The former Masonic Temple and Finkbeiner Furniture storefront located at 401 Main Street and Fourth Street is a rectangular, brick, stone, flat roof, and 4-story structure originally built in 1913. As result to being vacant for several years, the current condition is poor both interior and exterior but has desirable opportunity to become renovated for future functionality. Much of the existing windows will need to be restored as to several of them being shattered and left untouched. The masonry of the structure will also need some restorative elements as to several being weathered away over a century, much of which are crumbling to pieces. However, the building still holds tremendous value to its historical integrity, much of the original stone ornamentation detail can be seen amongst the façade along Fourth Street and the Main Street corridor. Additionally, the structural envelope is in good condition minus the lack of upkeep maintenance over time. Overall, the former Masonic Temple has historical, structural, and design elements worth saving and restoring to be nominated on the National Register of Historic Places.

4. a general description of the socio-economic characteristics;

The future use of this structure is for Mixed Commercial – Residential (CM). The former Masonic Temple built in 1913 is a building ARK views as prime for redevelopment. The 4-story, 60,000 sq. ft. commercial building will be redeveloped as senior affordable housing. There will be 42 residential units which will consist of 1 and 2 bedrooms on floors 1-4. The basement will consist of tenant programming to include laundry, management office, multi-purpose room, exercise room, small offices available to service providers. The building will receive a complete top to bottom renovation to provide much needed quality affordable housing to Toledo seniors.

5. a description of existing developmental plans or programs within or including the historic district or landmark;

The Toledo 20/20 Comprehensive Plan identifies this site for Neighborhood Commercial future land uses. The plan introduces that the entire Main Street corridor from North-West to South-East to become Neighborhood Commercial future land use, while the surrounding developments to be Single Family future land use within East Toledo and Yondota.

6. a list of neighborhood organizations within or serving the historic district or landmark.

- **East Toledo Family Center:** The East Toledo Family Center has a long history of “serving the people of East Toledo. It began in 1901 as the Neighborhood Association, but soon became fondly known in the community as simply the ‘Neighborhood House.’ To present day, it has served more people and provided more programs than at any other time in its long history.”
- **One Voice for East Toledo:** One Voice for East Toledo focuses on engaging, educating, and empowering interested residents, church, school, agency, and business volunteer leaders in building a livable, healthy, and sustainable east Toledo Community. One Voice volunteer residents are working to create and make change one block at a time.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Michaels, Larry R., and Ronald J. Mauter. *East Toledo at Work: A History of Business & Industry of East Toledo*. Bihl House Pub., 2006.

“Plan Commission.” *City of Toledo*, toledo.oh.gov/departments/plan-commission.

“Toledo Lucas County Public Library Digital Collections.” *Ohio Memory*, www.ohiomemory.org/digital/collection/p16007coll33/search.

PHOTOS



Photo 1: 401 S. Main St. circa 1930. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website



Photo 2: 401 S. Main St. circa 1913. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website

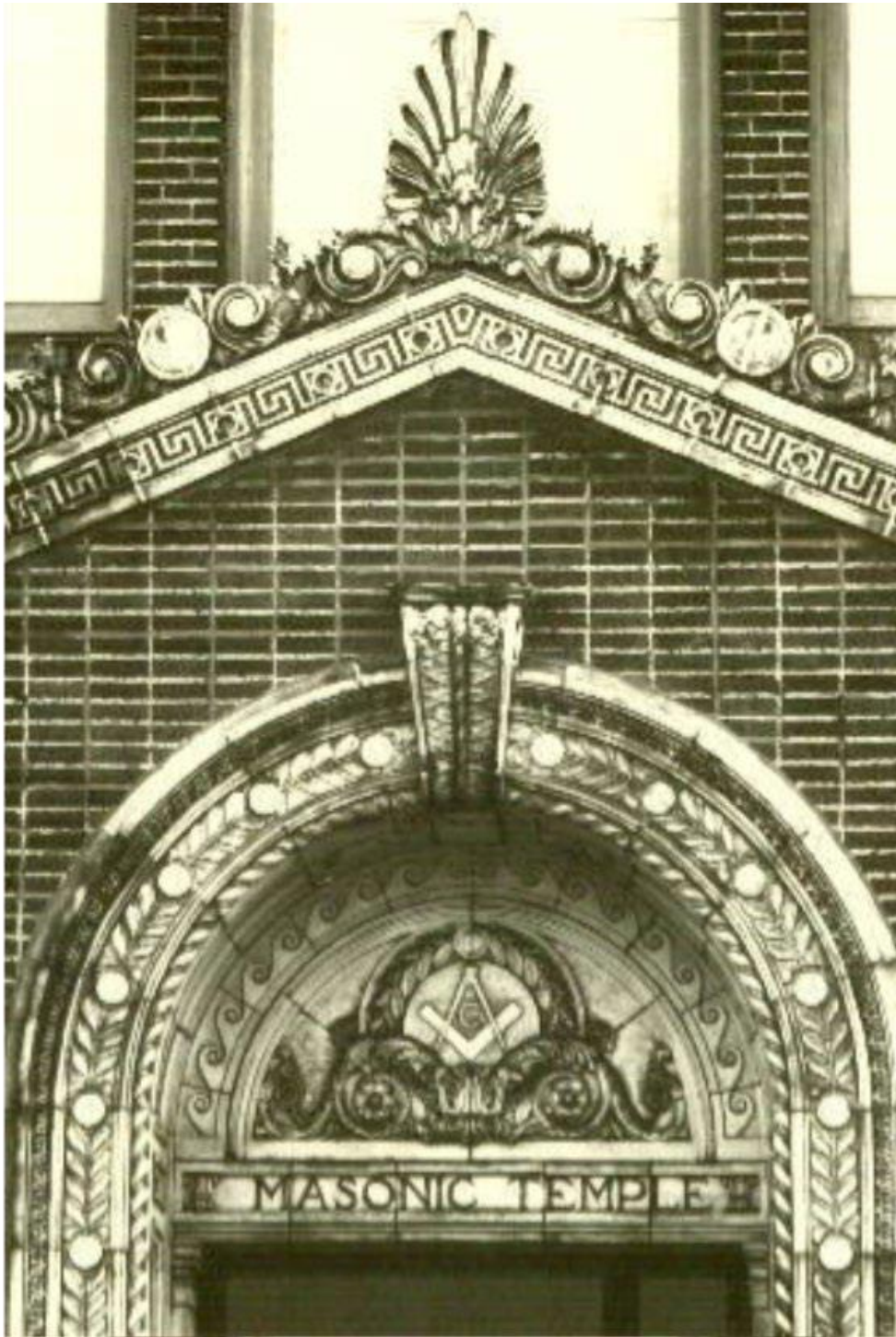


Photo 3: 401 S. Main St. circa 1980. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website



Photo 4: 401 S. Main St. circa 2000's. Source: Signature Associates website

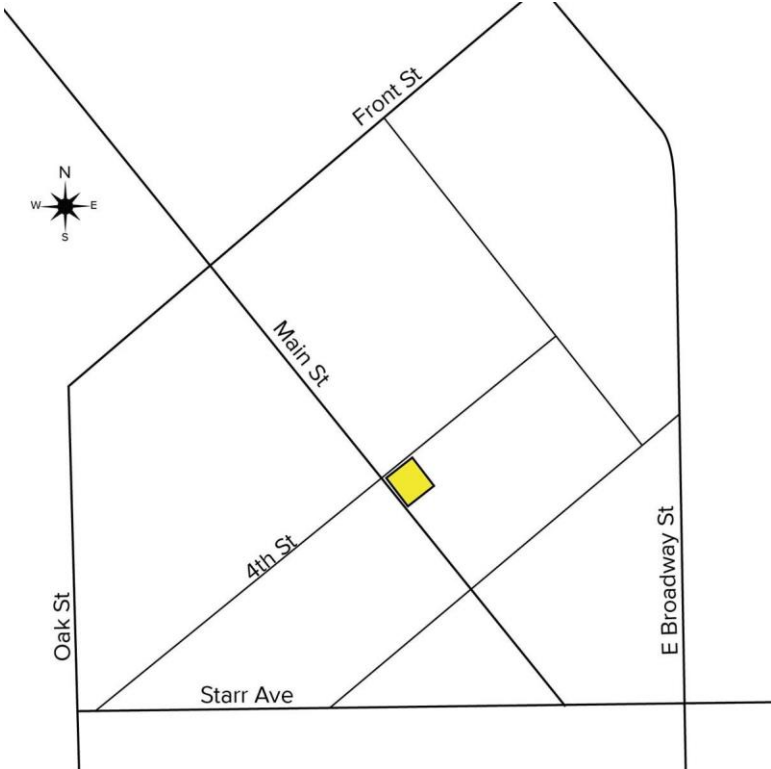


Photo 5: 401 S. Main St. circa 2000's. Source: Signature Associates website



Photo 6: 401 S. Main St. circa 2020. Interior window view. Credit: ARK Development



Photo 7: 401 S. Main St. circa 2020. Interior wall & window. Credit: ARK Development



Photo 8: 401 S. Main St. circa 2020. Interior columns. Credit: ARK Development



Photo 9: 401 S. Main St. circa 2020. Interior columns. Credit: ARK Development

FIGURES



Figure 1: Finkbeiner Furniture Co & Masonic Temple Post Card (Front) circa 1900. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website

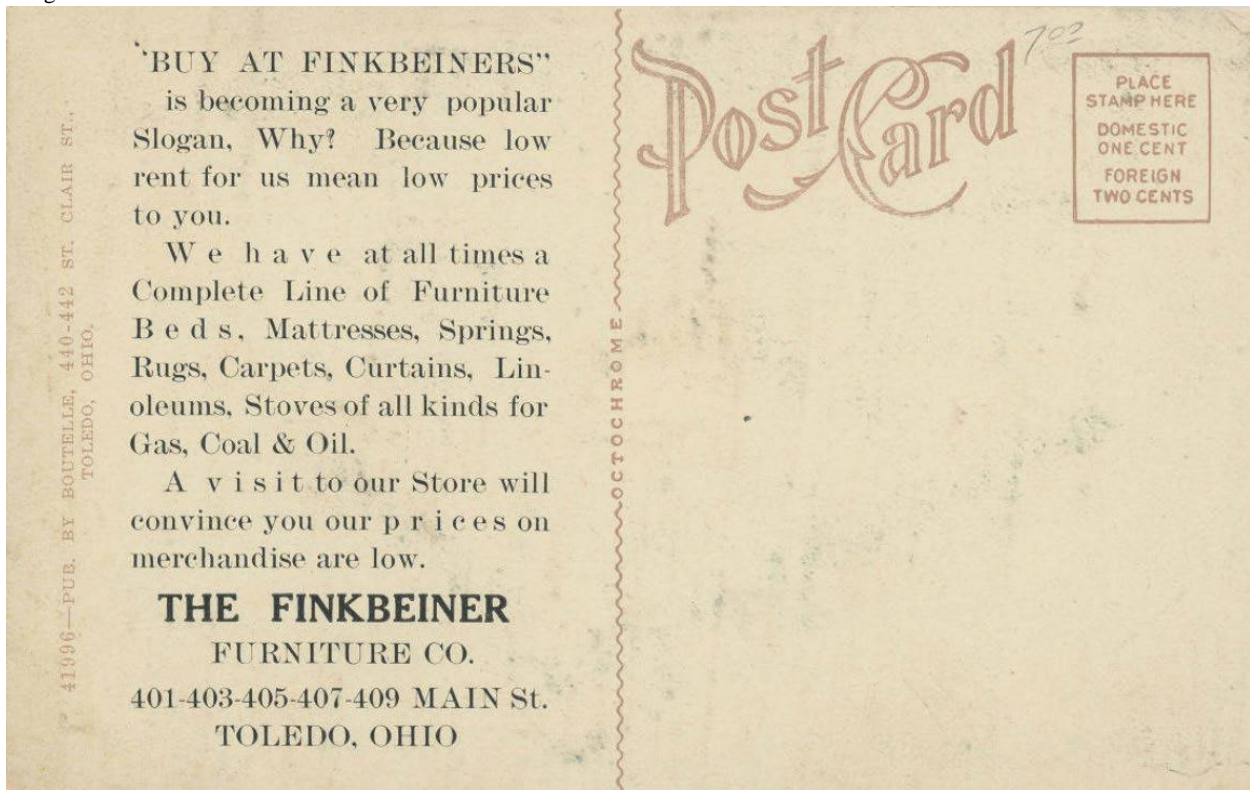


Figure 2: Finkbeiner Furniture Co & Masonic Temple Post Card (Back) circa 1900. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website



Figure 3: Finkbeiner Furniture Post Card (Front) circa 1908. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website

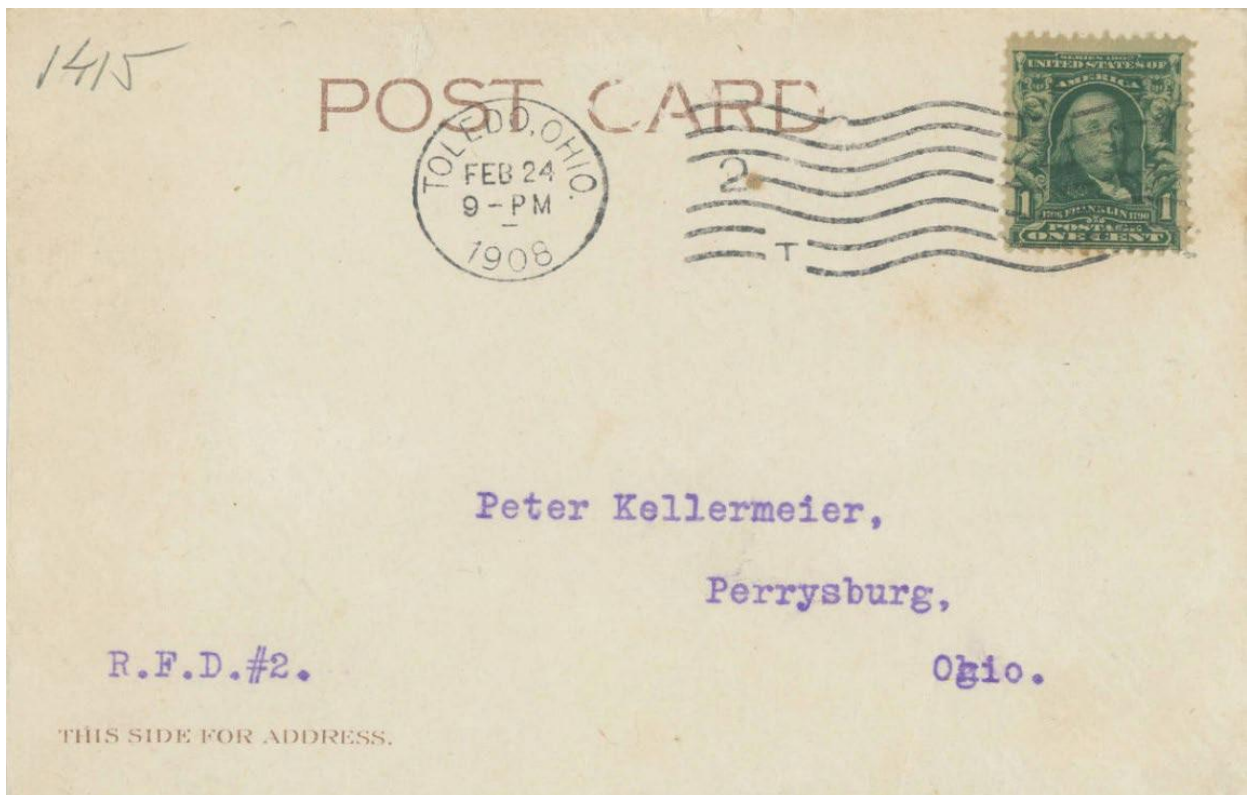


Figure 6: Finkbeiner Furniture Post Card (Back) circa 1907. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website

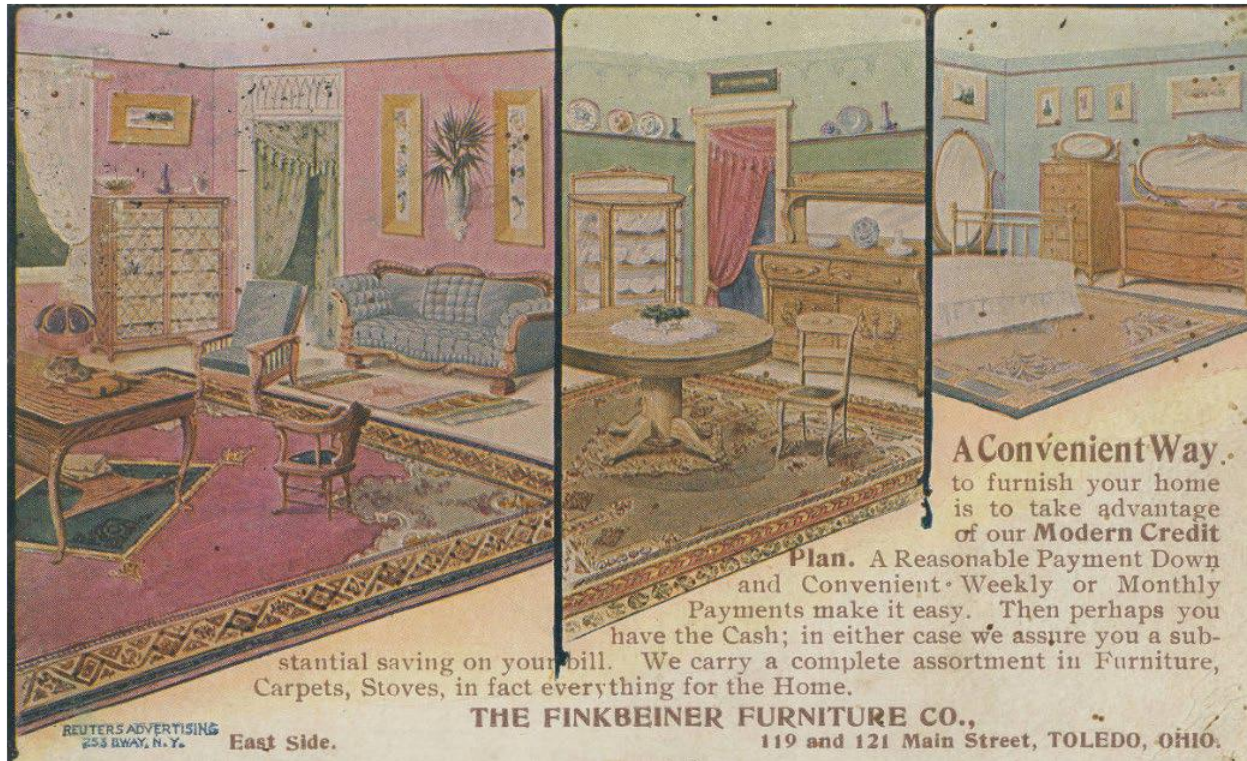


Figure 5: Finkbeiner Furniture Post Card (Front) circa 1907. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website



Figure 6: Finkbeiner Furniture Post Card (Back) circa 1907. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website

EAST TOLEDO AT WORK



The Masonic Temple, 401-409 Main Street, about 1915. This early postcard view of the landmark Masonic Temple, built in 1913 on the northeast corner of 4th and Main, shows its original ground floor tenant: Finkbeiner's Furniture. Toledo Mayor Carty Finkbeiner's grandfather Arthur moved the business from the Friedman Block to the Masonic when it opened at 4th & Main. The masons occupied the top floors, the first floor was retail, and the basement held several businesses over the years, including a bowling alley and a boxing gym. The Masonic lodges recently moved out, and the future of this great building is in doubt.

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(Since 1926)

MAIN at FOURTH

7 April 1935

Myers Furniture Advertisement, Masonic Building, 4th & Main, 1935. F. S. Myers & Son Furnishings began in 1926 at 557 East Broadway and moved to the Masonic in the early 1930s. This well-remembered furniture store remained there until moving to Oregon in 1963. Carl Michaels, grandfather of one of the authors, worked there for many years.

Figure 1: East Toledo At Work, Masonic Temple & Finkbeiner Furniture Co History Pg. 142 circa 2006. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website

EAST TOLEDO AT WORK



Bowling Alley, Basement of the Masonic Temple, c. 1960s. Many East Siders still remember the bowling alley in the Masonic at Fourth & Main. Not many, however, remember bowling in a shirt and tie.

Figure 2: East Toledo At Work, Masonic Temple & Finkbeiner Furniture Co History Pg. 143 circa 2006. Source: Toledo Lucas County Public Library Images in Time website