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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

CONTINUATION SHEET

Princeton Downtown Historic District, Princeton, Green Lake County, Wisconsin

Section number 7, Page 5

William R. Yahr Building (Contributing) 523 West Water St. 1901 Map No. 6

The highly intact William R. Yahr building is a two-story rectilinear plan Commercial Vernacular form building built in 1901 that is almost identical in design to the slightly later Tassler/Reetz Double Building (Map No. 2), built between 1905-1910. The W. R. Yahr Building measures 35-foot-wide x 65-foot-deep and its symmetrical cream brick-clad main façade faces north onto W. Water Street. This façade is framed by two-story pilaster strips and it is crowned by a corbelled brick parapet that is crowned by a fine sheet metal cornice. An early photo taken around 1910 shows that this façade's appearance today is almost identical with its historic appearance. The first story consists of a nearly full-width storefront having deeply inset partially canted entrances at either end that flank two very large display windows. The right-hand entrance door serves the second story while the left-hand one serves the first story and both were originally surmounted by tall one-light transoms that have now been filled with painted plywood. Three slender cast iron columns support the two main display window openings, which have now had their upper portions covered with plywood but which still retain their original cast iron bulkheads. Also intact is the original cast iron lintel that spans the entire width of the storefront and which is decorated with five cast iron rosettes.

The second story of the façade is almost totally intact. This story is four-bays-wide and each bay contains a single flat-arched window opening that is still filled with its original one-over-one-light double-hung wooden sash window. Two rock-faced cut stone string courses span the façade, one at the sill level of these windows and the other just above the window heads. A small panel of dogtooth coursed brick is also placed in the spandrel below each of the windows and the façade is crowned by a corbelled brick parapet wall that is surmounted by a sheet metal cornice whose end elements are decorated with raised ornamentation.

The William R. Yahr Building replaced two small earlier frame two-story buildings when it was built. Construction began in July of 1901 and was largely completed by the end of October, when the local paper noted that “W. R. Yahr has the plate glass front in his building and will have the handsomest show window in the city. The interior of the building is about completed and he advertises to open up with a complete line of furniture and caskets November 10th. “⁶

⁶Princeton Republic. July 25, 1901, p. 5; October 31, 1901, p. 5.