

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 Property

Historic name: Weil and Company/Gabriel Richard Building

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 305 Michigan Avenue

City or town: Detroit State: MI County: Wayne

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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:

 A B XC D

<p>Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>MI SHPO</u></p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>Signature of commenting official:</p> <p>Title :</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

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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

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Chicago

Classical Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Terra Cotta, Brick

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 Weil and Company/Gabriel Richard Building is a ten-and-a-half-story tall Chicago Style commercial building, with Classical Revival terra cotta decoration, located at the southwest corner of Michigan Avenue and Washington Boulevard in downtown Detroit. The terra cotta-clad building was constructed in 1914-15 and has a traditional tri-partite design with two-and-a-half-story tall base, a six-story tall shaft, and a two-story tall top with a parapet wall around a flat roof. The footprint is an irregular wedge shape, with the intersecting streets meeting at about a 120-degree angle. The site is flat, and the building's street sides face east on Washington Boulevard and north on Michigan Avenue.

Narrative Description

The three-bay wide north facing and five-bay wide east facing facades are identical in cladding and ornamentation. The bays are separated by vertical piers, giving the building a vertical emphasis to contrast with the strong horizontal lines of the tri-partite design that are typical of the Chicago Style. The white terra cotta displays Classical Revival decorations such as garlands,

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egg and dart molding and keystones. The base of the building is two and a half stories tall, and the bottom six feet of the terra cotta piers are clad in tan granite. The one-and-a-half-story tall storefront openings contain newer aluminum and glass-framed equal width windows that have transom windows above. Flat metal canopies supported by guy wires project outward from each masonry opening at the transom window sill lines. On the north elevation the center bay storefront opening has a projecting terra cotta cornice across the top whose fascia is enriched with raised detailing – a center cartouche with festoons extending out of both sides. The entrance to the upper floors of the building is located in the westernmost bay and has a set of aluminum and glass doors with a transom. The easternmost bay contains a recessed entrance door at the corner of the building. The storefronts on the east elevation have recessed entrance doors at the north corner of the northernmost bay and in the southernmost bay. On both the north and east elevations the terra cotta spandrels in each bay above the storefront openings have a slightly raised central panel. At the second floor each bay has a large masonry opening that contains a set of three one-over-one double-hung windows.

The bottom and top of the six-story tall middle or shaft section of the building's tri-partite design are each demarcated by a projecting terra cotta band at the sill lines of the third and ninth floor windows. The bands are decorated with garland swags separated by scrolled consoles located at the center of each bay and between adjoining bays. The eighth-floor triple windows have segmental-arch heads that emphasize the top of the six-story shaft or mid-section of the façade. Each has a central fluted keystone that rises to the base of the projecting decorative terra cotta band above. The broad window bays in the remainder of the building's street-facing facades each contain a set of three one-over-one double-hung windows in square-head openings.

The top two floors of the building are the most decorative. The terra cotta piers between the bays are framed and have a raised vertical line of flowers down the center of the pier. The top of the wall has a fascia with a wave molding decoration capped by an egg and dart molding. The window bays each contains a set of three one-over-one double-hung windows. The parapet wall is of white glazed brick with a stone coping. A terra cotta merlon extends above the wall in line with each of the vertical piers of the building.

The non-street-facing south side elevation is five bays wide and is comprised of a plain red brick wall divided by brick piers. The terra cotta cladding of the east façade wraps around for the east foot of the wall. There are no openings below the third floor which has one mechanical vent. The fourth through tenth floors have one-over-one double-hung windows with limestone sills. The opening locations are aligned vertically on all floors although some have been filled in with mechanical grills or brick. The eastern bay has a single bank of window openings next to the vertical pier. The center of the five bays has paired openings. The two west bays each have one bank of window openings next to either side of the brick pier separating to two bays.

The broad west elevation abuts a three-story tall neighboring building and is clad in red brick. The elevation is void of openings with the exception of four one-over-one double-hung windows with limestone sills located in the center of elevation on the fifth through tenth floors. The elevator penthouse walls are flush with the main wall and extend one story above the main roof line.

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The building's plain red brick non-street-facing south and west facades stand at right angles to the ends of the street-facing fronts they adjoin; thus, because the street facades adjoin at a 120-degree angle, these two facades would intersect at an acute angle of about sixty degrees – but the building's rear corner is cut back, with narrow vertical strips of wall facing the space. Both wall segments are clad in red brick, with one wall facing south and the other west. The south-facing wall segment has three one-over-one double-hung windows, with limestone sills and lintels, each at the second through tenth floors. The center windows are narrower than the outer two. The west-facing wall segment has a metal fire escape attached to the entire wall and has two window openings, with limestone sills and lintels, each at the second through tenth floors. The northern openings have one-over-one double-hung windows and the south openings are boarded over or have been converted to solid doors.

The interior of the building has been remodeled an unknown number of times. Commercial spaces fill the east two thirds of the first floor of the building and are presently unfinished with wood and concrete floors and exposed concrete piers. The entrance lobby for the upper floors is located in the west third of the first floor. The lobby has marble tile floors and wainscot with painted gypsum board walls above. The ceiling is of suspended gypsum board. The elevators have modern aluminum doors and frames.

The upper floors are subdivided into double-loaded corridors with offices. The finishes vary but typically feature carpeted floors, painted gypsum board walls, and suspended acoustical tile ceilings. The basement contains the one apparent remnant from the Weil and Company furniture store use of the building: the bottom of an unused staircase contains a small section of metal railing supported by fluted newel posts resembling classical columns. The balustrade is decorated with classical swags that resemble inverted fleur-de-lis with a harp added to the top.

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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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1914-15

Significant Dates

1914
1915

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Marshall & Fox

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.)

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Built in 1914-15 for the Stott Realty Company, the Weil and Company/Gabriel Richard Building housed the Weil and Company furniture store from its 1915 completion until the firm's closing about 1943 and then from the late 1940s until 2015, under the name Gabriel Richard Building, housed some administrative functions of the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit. The building is significant under National Register criterion C as an intact example of a Chicago Style commercial building designed by Chicago architects Marshall & Fox, the only example of their work in Detroit.

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

The Weil & Co. Building is a Chicago Style tall commercial building constructed in 1914-15 with a steel frame; tripartite façade design with low base, tall central or "shaft" section, and low cap or top part; and non-load-bearing white terra cotta exterior cladding. A number of architectural and technological innovations in the late 1880s and 1890s made such buildings possible. Beginning around 1884 innovations in manufacturing steel brought the price low enough to make feasible steel framing for buildings instead of wood, masonry and iron. Steel framing enabled taller buildings to be constructed due to its advantages in strength, tensile and compression properties, over cast iron. About the same time electric lighting and technological innovations such as telephones and typewriters came into much more widespread use. "The synergetic effect of all these innovations was to change radically the nature of business communications and building illumination. Within a few short years these innovations had become basic to American urban culture, and, coupled with the increasing pressure of urban populations and the concomitant intensive use of land, these innovations made the development of the tall, self-contained skyscraper desirable, possible, and perhaps inevitable" (Roth, 173).

Chicago architect William Le Baron Jenney's Home Insurance Building in Chicago built in 1884-85 reflects important advances on earlier iron-framed buildings in having a metal (in this case still iron rather than the soon to be ubiquitous steel) skeleton structure with some almost entirely non-load-bearing exterior walls (see Turak, 237-63). Within a few years after that steel framing with fully non-load-bearing exterior wall construction had become the norm for taller commercial buildings.

As tall building design and technology evolved, including the use of steel rather than iron framing and exterior terra cotta wall cladding, the expression of design evolved with it. Louis Sullivan introduced the idea of a tripartite design for the exteriors of tall office buildings. Sullivan's exterior design for the Wainwright Building in St. Louis, Missouri, embodies a tripartite exterior composition form with its base containing large glass storefront windows, a tall middle section with strong vertical accent formed by narrow piers separating banks of windows between them for offices, and a low upper section or cap of different, more ornamental design hiding the mechanical equipment at the top of the building. This general tripartite exterior design form was perfected in Sullivan's Guaranty Building built in Buffalo in 1895 and came into widespread use thereafter well into the twentieth century by architects with national reputations such as Chicago-based Daniel H. Burnham.

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Skyscrapers and commercial buildings in Detroit were directly influenced by the similar development taking place in Chicago. The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition with its "White City" of huge buildings in various historical styles executed in light-hued materials reminiscent of marble popularized the use of light-hued exterior cladding materials – such as used in the Weil & Co. Building – in place of the more bright-hued ones such as red and orange sandstone and terra cotta frequently used in recent years before then.

Chicago buildings such as Sullivan's 1899 Gage Building and D. H. Burnham & Co.'s 1903 Railway Exchange Building with their light terra cotta-clad exteriors and large areas of windows soon influenced Detroit architecture – for example Stratton & Baldwin in 1906 in their design of the J. Sparling Company store on Woodward (demolished) as well as the D. J. Healy Building designed in 1910 by the Chicago firm Postle and Mahler. Both of these buildings were clad in light colored terra cotta, but in 1915 Baxter, O'Dell and Halpin used red terra cotta cladding in their design of the T. B. Rayl Company Building located on Woodward and Grand River, reminiscent of Sullivan's Guaranty Building (Ferry, p. 185).

Noted Chicago architect Daniel H. Burnham's own firm and its successor firm of Graham, Burnham & Co., formed after Burnham's death in 1912, designed three Detroit skyscrapers, beginning in 1909 with construction of the Ford Building in which "he followed the Chicago tradition by expressing the steel frame with the clean sharp lines of the white terra-cotta facing" (Ferry, p. 187). In 1910 Burnham's firm designed the Dime Building and in 1915 Graham, Burnham & Co. the David Whitney Building, both with light terra cotta facades with classical detailing (Ferry, p. 188). About the same time prominent Detroit architect Albert Kahn also used white glazed terra cotta and Sullivan-inspired elements in some of his commercial buildings, including the Grinnell Building in 1908, the Boulevard Building in 1913, the Woodward Building in 1915, and the 1919 Finsterwald Building (housing another furniture store), which is located on the north side of Michigan Avenue opposite the Weil & Co. Building (Ferry, p.187).

Hawkins Ferry sums up the importance of Detroit's lesser known Chicago style commercial buildings, including the Weil & Co. Building, in his *The Buildings of Detroit*:

But to speak only of the important office buildings of this period in Detroit is to overlook a large number of excellent smaller commercial buildings which, because of the limitations of time and space, must remain unnoticed. It should be pointed out, however, that much of their merit stems from the influence of the Chicago school. Most of white brick or terra cotta, they may be easily recognized by their generous window areas and functional simplicity.

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Marshall & Fox

A June 1914 newspaper story on the Weil & Co. Building's forthcoming construction lists the building's architects as the Chicago-based firm of Marshall & Fox (*Detroit News*, June 25, 1914). The firm was founded in 1905 as the partnership of Chicago native Benjamin Henry Marshall (1874-1940) and Reading, Pennsylvania native Charles Eli Fox (1870-1926). Marshall began his career as an apprentice in the Chicago architectural firm of Marble and Wilson in 1893, rising to partner after Marble's death in 1895. In 1902 he formed his own firm and designed the Iroquois Theater, Chicago, which was destroyed by fire shortly after completion in 1903. Charles Fox studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and moved to Chicago in 1891 to work for Holabird and Roche as a specialist in steel construction. Fox served as the construction specialist and project manager while Marshall utilized his talents as a designer and entrepreneur to solicit prestigious commissions from Chicago's elite (University of Texas Alexander Architectural Archive).

The firm was known for their opulent hotel, apartment building, theater, and residential works, but also designed numerous bank, commercial and office, and warehouse buildings (Westfall, projects list, 22-27). One of their earliest clients that lasted for ten years was the South Shore Country Club for which the firm designed a number of buildings beginning in 1906 and culminating in a large Mediterranean style clubhouse in 1916. In 1910 the firm designed the Blackstone Hotel in Chicago for which they received an Illinois Chapter American Institute of Architects ("AIA") Gold Medal. Other notable Chicago buildings the firm designed include the Stewart Apartments, the Drake Hotel, the Sheridan Trust and Savings Bank, and the Lake Shore Trust and Savings Bank Building.

At the time of Charles Fox's application for membership in the AIA in 1915, a letter in the file from Illinois Chapter American Institute of Architects' secretary, Webster Tomlinson, states, "The firm of Marshall & Fox would probably rank as one of the first three in the amount and importance of work done in Chicago." The AIA admitted Charles Fox to membership on May 30, 1915.

Other buildings designed by the firm include the Russell-Lamson Hotel in Waterloo, Iowa; the Julien-Dubuque Hotel in Dubuque, Iowa; and the Kaskaskia Hotel in LaSalle, Illinois. In Michigan the firm's commissions include the national register listed Louis G. and Marie Young Kaufman summer house, Granot Loma, a very large rustic log (though steel-framed) building constructed between 1919 and 1923 on the shore of Lake Superior northwest of Marquette (Eckert, p. 499-500). In 1929 the firm designed the Park Place Hotel in Traverse City (this was after Fox's death in 1926, when Benjamin Marshall ran the firm). Marshall retired in 1935 and the office was then reorganized as Walton and Kegley. The firm became Walton and Walton in 1950 and remained in business until 1969.

Weil & Company

Weil & Co., furniture dealers, was founded in 1897 when Moe C. Weil arrived in Detroit from Cincinnati. Weil was born in Monmouth, Illinois on June 4, 1867, to German Jewish immigrant parents. In 1893 the *Electrical Review* states he was assigned half a patent for an electric hose

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coupling by Joseph B. Strauss in Cincinnati. He was married to Cincinnati native Hattie Waldheim and in 1894 they lived with their daughter Florence in Cincinnati where he co-owned S. N. Weil Company, a liquor distributing business, with Alex Weil. The relationship between Alex Weil and Moe Weil is unknown.

It appears that Weil moved to Detroit specifically to open the new furniture business. His brother-in-law Aaron Waldheim served as president of Weil & Co. Samuel Summerfield was vice-president and Moe Weil was Secretary-Treasurer of the company. Waldheim lived in St. Louis, Missouri, where he opened and ran a branch of the May-Stern Furniture Company and later became a successful businessman and real estate investor.

The first Weil & Co. furniture store was located in a rented building on Woodward Avenue in downtown Detroit. Mr. Weil originally boarded at the Hotel Ste. Clair in downtown Detroit (from City Directories it appears his family did not move to Detroit with him until later). By 1899 he and his wife Hattie, along with their daughter Florence, lived on Peterboro Street located just north of downtown. A few years later the family moved to 25 (now 49) Virginia Avenue in what is now Detroit's New Center area where they remained until their deaths. The house is located in the national register listed Virginia Park Historic District. Their son Victor was born in Detroit in 1901. The Weils were active in Temple Beth El, the city's oldest Jewish congregation. In 1907 Mr. Weil was one of twelve delegates from Temple Beth El to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations taking place in Cincinnati. The 1911 edition of *Dau's Blue Book for Detroit* lists Moe Weil as a member of the Phoenix Club and the YMCA. His obituary lists him as a 32nd Degree Mason and a member of the Board of Commerce.

In 1902 Weil and John F. Wilmont, both of Detroit, were issued a Canadian patent for an extension table with a receptacle for leaves and a skirt that lifts up to access the receptacle. The 1907-08 *Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directory* listed the Weil & Co. officers as Aaron Waldheim of St. Louis, Missouri, as president, Emmanuel Adler as vice-president and Weil as secretary-treasurer. The company is listed as offering furniture, carpets and stoves. The store prospered and, in 1915 took possession of the nominated building.

Weil & Co. Building

The Weil & Co. Building was constructed for and owned by the Stott Realty Company. The company was founded in May 1911 by David Stott, who was its president, and three of his seven children were listed as officers in the company. David Stott was born in England in 1853 and came to Michigan at the age of thirteen in 1866. He worked as a dairy farmer and sold milk in Detroit. In about 1879 he established a flour mill that, located at Grand River and Warren in Detroit, he continued to operate until his death. The success of the flour mill enabled Stott to invest in real estate, primarily in downtown Detroit, beginning in the early 1900s. By 1911 he owned at least twelve properties, and a June 16, 1911, article in *The Detroit Journal* estimated his real estate holdings at one million dollars – the holdings listed in the story included, among the rest, the southwest corner of Michigan and Wayne that became the site of the Weil & Co. Building and the Hodges Building at the southeast corner of Griswold and State that later became the site of the David Stott Building. David Stott died unexpectedly of uremic poisoning in June 1916. His obituary called him “one of the largest real estate owners in the city” and noted

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that “almost every building he owned [the Weil & Co. Building among them] he had constructed of white tile” (*Detroit Free Press*, June 5, 1916).

Stott seems to have had plans for a hotel building at the site of the Weil & Co. Building by 1911 (“Would Consider Closing of Alley”), but nothing came of that. Construction of the new Weil & Co. Building began in 1914. A June 25, 1914, *Detroit News* story reported Stott Realty’s plan to build the building specifically for Weil & Co.’s use. The building, whose cost was listed as \$264,761.51, was initially leased to Weil & Co. for fifteen years, with Weil & Co. taking possession on April 9, 1915 (Phelps v. Stott Realty Co.). On November 1, 1915, Weil & Co. announced the opening of their new store in the nominated building the following Monday and also that, “Commencing tomorrow morning, every article of home furnishings in our [present] store at 188-190 Woodward avenue will be cleaned out in a great Removal Sale” (*Detroit Free Press*, Nov. 1, 1915). The new building offered a reported 110,000 square feet of floor space, all occupied by the store with its showroom, office, and warehouse space. The June 25, 1914, *Free Press* article claimed the new building would be “the largest building occupied exclusively by a furniture house in the middle west.” Such a claim is hard to verify or to disprove, but it is clear Weil & Co. as a retail furniture/carpets/stoves store was a large-scale commercial operation in Detroit’s downtown. Based on newspaper ads in the *Detroit News* in 1920 it appears that a number of furniture stores were clustered in this area of downtown Detroit. In addition to Weil & Co. fourteen furniture stores had ads, and five of them were located in the Michigan Avenue vicinity, including Finsterwalds, also on Michigan at Washington; Reliable Furniture on Washington near Michigan; Globe House Furniture and John R. Sullivan & Co. near Michigan and First one block west; and Peoples Outfitting on Michigan at Shelby one block east. Of these only the Finsterwalds building survives, but it has been severely altered. Besides the furniture specialty stores the large department stores such as Hudson’s and Crowley, Milner and Company, also located only a few blocks away, also sold furniture.

The Weil & Co. Building was designed by Chicago architects Marshall & Fox. How Marshall & Fox came to be selected is unknown, but it seems possible, even likely, that it was through Stott’s clients, Weil & Co. Marshall & Fox had designed the then recently completed Karpen Building, 910 S. Michigan Avenue, in Chicago, built in 1910-11 for S. Karpen & Bros., a large national furniture manufacturer based in Chicago. Chicago was a leading furniture market in the nation, and the new twelve-story Karpen Building – with its exterior, though dissimilar to the Weil Building, also displaying simplified classical detailing – was built to house S. Karpen & Bros.’ furniture showrooms and offices plus other rental office space (Chuckman Chicago Nostalgia, post card view; Rose, “Solomon Karpen”; Westfall, 11). Like Moe Weil and Aaron Waldheim, S. Karpen & Bros. company founder Solomon Karpen was also Jewish, born in 1858 in what was then West Prussia, now part of Poland (Rose, “Solomon Karpen”). It seems likely that Weil & Co.’s officers, including Moe C. Weil and/or Aaron Waldheim, would have visited the building in the course of buying trips to Chicago. (In 1910 Aaron Waldheim, the Weil & Co. president, hired another Chicago architectural firm, Daniel Burnham’s D. H. Burnham & Co., to design the Waldheim Building, a fifteen or sixteen-story office building investment property in Kansas City, MO, in somewhat similar classical-inspired style and light-hued terra cotta to the later Weil & Co. (see photo in Rebori, 113)).

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Historic photo, from Ebay sale, estimated 1920's

The Weil & Co. store closed for two days when Moe Weil died in 1920 at the age of fifty-two. He was buried in Woodmere Cemetery. It appears that his wife, daughter, and son continued to run the business after his death. His daughter Florence married Joseph V. Roemer in 1914 at Temple Beth El. Weil's son-in-law Joseph Roemer became involved with the furniture company. The 1922 issue of *Michigan Manufacturer and Financial Record* has an advertisement for investment firm Hamlin, Kay, and Nathan, and lists J. Victor Roemer as the secretary-treasurer of Weil & Co. among his other positions. Hattie Weil died in 1930 and left the company to her son Victor and daughter Florence with the stipulation that Victor continue to run the business. Weil & Co. existed at least until 1940. The city directory in that year lists Weil & Co. in the incorporated companies list with V. H. Weil as president and Mrs. Florence W. Roemer as secretary-treasurer. Victor Weil died in a plane crash in California in 1943 while serving in the US Air Corps. His sister is listed as still living at 49 Virginia Avenue on Detroit, her parents' former house. It appears that Weil & Co. went out of business soon after Victor Weil's death.

Gabriel Richard Building, 1945-2015

In 1945 the Stott Realty Company sold the Weil & Co. Building to St. Aloysius Roman Catholic Church, located a block to the north on Washington Boulevard. The church subsequently renamed the building the Gabriel Richard Building to honor Detroit pioneer priest Father Gabriel Richard. The church turned the building over to the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit for use as offices in 1948. At that time the Archdiocese was in the beginning stage of a large increase in its members, rising from 800,000 Catholics in 1945 to 1.3 million in 1960 (Tentler, p. 358).

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The history of the Archdiocese began when the first Catholics came to Detroit in 1701 with the city's founder, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac. St. Anne's Parish, founded then, is generally recognized as the oldest congregation in Detroit and Michigan. The original priests were sent as missionaries and served the local Catholic population as well as worked toward converting the Native American population to Christianity. The Catholic population of Detroit and the surrounding territory continued to grow and during the early nineteenth century was organized under the Diocese of Cincinnati.

Father Gabriel Richard, for whom the nominated building was named in the 1940s, arrived in the Michigan Territory in 1798 to be the parish priest at St. Anne's and to supervise the missions in the territory. He was a proponent of education and established four schools, two for boys and two for girls. He organized food collections for the survivors of the 1805 fire that destroyed most of Detroit. He was instrumental in establishing the predecessor of the University of Michigan in Detroit in 1817 and was appointed its vice-president and one of the initial group of professors. He was elected as the Michigan Territory's representative in the United States Congress in 1823 and was responsible for obtaining the appropriation to rebuild the old pathway (now highway US-12) from Detroit to the already important point at the foot of Lake Michigan that would become Chicago. He died in 1832 after contracting cholera while nursing the sick and administering last rites to victims of the epidemic (Catlin, p. 301).

In 1833 Pope Gregory XVI created the Diocese of Detroit that covered the entire Michigan Territory, which at that time also included Wisconsin and a portion of Minnesota – previously Michigan formed part of the Diocese of Cincinnati. There were approximately 15,000 Catholics in the geographic area that would later become the State of Michigan (Tentler, p. 13). Just four years later, in 1837 the Diocese of Dubuque was created, slightly reducing the geographic area of the diocese. A second parish, for English-speaking (mainly Irish) Catholics, Most Holy Trinity, was established in Detroit in 1835. Although not an official parish, the Chapel of the Assumption, was erected by German Catholics east of the city in the 1830s.

In 1841 the diocese's second bishop, Belgium native Father Peter Paul Lefevre, was appointed. During his tenure the geographic area of the diocese decreased as population increased in the outlying territory. The 1837 creation of the Diocese of Dubuque had previously removed Minnesota. In 1843 the Diocese of Milwaukee removed all of Wisconsin. The Vicariate of Sault Ste. Marie covering the entire Upper Peninsula was created in 1852 and shortly became the Diocese of Marquette under Bishop Baraga who also assumed responsibilities for the Indian missions in the northern portion of the lower peninsula (Tentler, p.17). In 1867 Bishop Lefevre was able to get a Michigan law passed that recognized him as the sole owner of church properties in the diocese. The law was controversial as many congregations felt that they should retain control of their property.

The diocese's third bishop, German native Casper Henry Borgess, was appointed in 1869 and came from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. The geographic boundaries of the Diocese of Detroit were shrunk once again in 1882 with the creation of the Diocese of Grand Rapids. This left the Detroit diocese with twenty-nine counties in southern lower Michigan. The boundaries would not change in size again until 1937 (Tentler, p. 26). It was under Bishop Borgess that the

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organized diocese parochial school system had its beginnings. In 1873 Borgess required every parish to establish a primary school and Sisters from eight different orders came to Michigan to teach in the schools. In the 1890s under Bishop John Samuel Foley, secondary schools were founded.

In addition to the schools, Catholic parishes and Sisters were involved with charitable works, primarily administering to the poor and the sick throughout the diocese. A weekly newspaper, *The Michigan Catholic*, was founded in 1872 as the *Western Home Journal*. It was lay-edited and published with the endorsement of the diocese until 1920 when it was purchased by and subsequently published by the diocese (Tentler, p.8).

Growth of the number and size of Catholic parishes in the diocese between the last two decades of the nineteenth century and 1930 paralleled that of Detroit. As foreign immigrants and people from rural areas in both the North and South migrated to Detroit and southern Michigan's other cities, drawn by the industrial boom spearheaded by the rapidly growing auto industry, arrived, new parishes were established and parish plants with their church and other buildings constructed in both new residential neighborhoods and older ones that were being more intensively built up. The 1920s marked a high point of growth for the Catholic Church in the Detroit area, southern Michigan, and the nation in general. Detroit's incredible population growth in the 1920s included many Catholics, and by 1929 as many as forty percent of Detroit's inhabitants were "at least nominal members of the church" (Tentler, p.298). In 1924 Detroit elected its first Catholic mayor, who was re-elected in 1925.

In the post-World War II era through the 1960s the Catholic Church in the Detroit area continued to flourish. "Catholics were an integral part of Detroit's political establishment after 1930 and they dominated the city's political life in the 1950s and 1960s" (Tentler, p. 298). During this same period 222 parish buildings were constructed in the Diocese, including eighty-six churches and seventy-seven schools (Tentler, p. 306).

In Detroit the strong leadership of the two bishops who served between World War I and the late 1950s, Bishop Michael Gallagher from 1918 to 1937 and Cardinal Edward Mooney from 1937 to 1958, did much to centralize and expand the administrative affairs of the Diocese of Detroit. Tentler explains, "The decades after 1920 were also a time of administrative reform. The reach of episcopal authority was extended in nearly every diocese as administrative functions were more and more centralized in the local chancery."

In 1924 the former bishop's residence on Washington Boulevard downtown was sold and a new house built in Detroit's Palmer Woods neighborhood far from the downtown. That same year the Diocese constructed a new Chancery building to house the diocesan offices on Washington Boulevard. The construction of such a building to house diocese operations was stated to be the first of its kind in the United States (Doyle, p. 14).

In 1937 the Diocese of Detroit was elevated to an Archdiocese and placed in charge of the newly created Detroit Province which included all four dioceses located in Michigan, including the newly created Diocese of Lansing, previously part of the Diocese of Detroit (Tentler, p. 331). In

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1938 the Diocese of Saginaw was created and in 1970 both the Diocese of Gaylord and Diocese of Kalamazoo were created. All three of these dioceses were created out of larger dioceses in the Detroit Province. While the Chancery building served as the administrative headquarters for the Archdiocese of Detroit, the combined growth and expansion of Michigan's Catholic population and the Archdiocese's administrative duties necessitated additional quarters – the former Weil & Co. Building, now renamed the Gabriel Richard Building, located only about one block south of the Chancery building, became the location for a number of Archdiocesan administrative operations.

In 1943 Archbishop Mooney established the Federation of Catholic Charitable Agencies as the first step to bring the various Catholic Charities under chancery direction. He established the Catholic Family Center in 1946 and it was one of the first organizations located in the Gabriel Richard building. The remainder of the building was leased to other secular tenants. A craft supply store was located in the first floor retail space. The upper floors included a credit association, law office, and Michigan Bell Telephone, whose headquarters was a block away, leased two floors in the 1950s. As the Archdiocese grew the number of offices in the building increased and by 1968 the Archdiocese occupied all of the upper floors and leased the retail space to a camera shop. The education department was housed in the building which presumably oversaw the growing parochial school system. Most of the Archdiocese administrative departments were housed in the building, including the Parish Life and Services Department, Christian Services Department, Catholic Youth Organization, the Communications Department - including *The Michigan Catholic*, and the Information Technology Department. In 1984-85 a television studio was constructed in the building for a new Catholic television network called CTND which went on the air in January 1985. In 2011 the network affiliated with Boston based Catholic TV Network and still operates from Oak Park, Michigan.

With the decline in the number of Catholic parishes and population from the 1970s through the present time in 2015 the Archdiocese vacated and sold both the Gabriel Richard Building and Chancery and has moved to smaller office space elsewhere in downtown Detroit. The building has been sold to a private owner who intends to rehabilitate the building into apartments.

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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): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property about .23

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Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 42.195291 | Longitude: -83.030518 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

All that part of Lots 4 and 5 of the vacated alley on the plat of the United States Grant to the City of Detroit by the Governor and Judges, under Act of Congress of May 20, 1826, recorded in Liber 5, Page 128, City Records and described as: Beginning at the Northeast corner of said Lot 5, running thence West along the North line of said Lots 4 and 5, 57 and 73/100 feet to the Northwest corner of the East 18 feet of said Lot 5; thence South and parallel to the East line of said Lot 4, 122 and 12/100 feet to a point in the North line of a

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public alley; thence East, with the South line of said Lot 4, 16 and 53/100 feet to the West line of Lot 2 of said Sub if extended; thence South along said extended line 13 and 97/100 feet; thence East and parallel to the South line of said Lot 2, 96 feet to a point in the West line of Wayne Street; thence North, along the West line of Wayne Street, 99 and 83/100 feet to the Point of Beginning. Note: Wayne Street now known as Washington Boulevard.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are the entire lot currently and historically associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kristine M. Kidorf
organization: Kidorf Preservation Consulting
street & number: 451 E. Ferry Street
city or town: Detroit state: MI zip code: 48202
e-mail kristine@kidorfpreservationconsulting.com
telephone: 313-300-9376
date: March 2016

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.)

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Weil and Company Building

City or Vicinity: Detroit

County: Wayne State: MI

Photographer: Kristine M. Kidorf

Date Photographed: October 29, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 11: Looking south at building from a block to the north.
MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0001

2 of 11: Looking southwest at building.
MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0002

3 of 11: Looking west at east elevation of building.
MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0003

4 of 11: Looking southwest at north elevation of building.
MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0004

5 of 11: Looking northwest at south elevation building.
MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0005

6 of 11: Looking southeast at rear of building.
MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0006

7 of 11: Detail of original railing located in the basement.
MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0007

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8 of 11: Looking south in elevator lobby to upper floors.

MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0008

9 of 11: Looking east in first floor retail space.

MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0009

10 of 11: Looking west at detail of terra cotta on east elevation.

MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0010

11 of 11: Looking west at terra cotta detail between second and third floors.

MI_Wayne County_Weil and Company_0011

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.

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Wayne County, MI
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Longitude: -83.030518

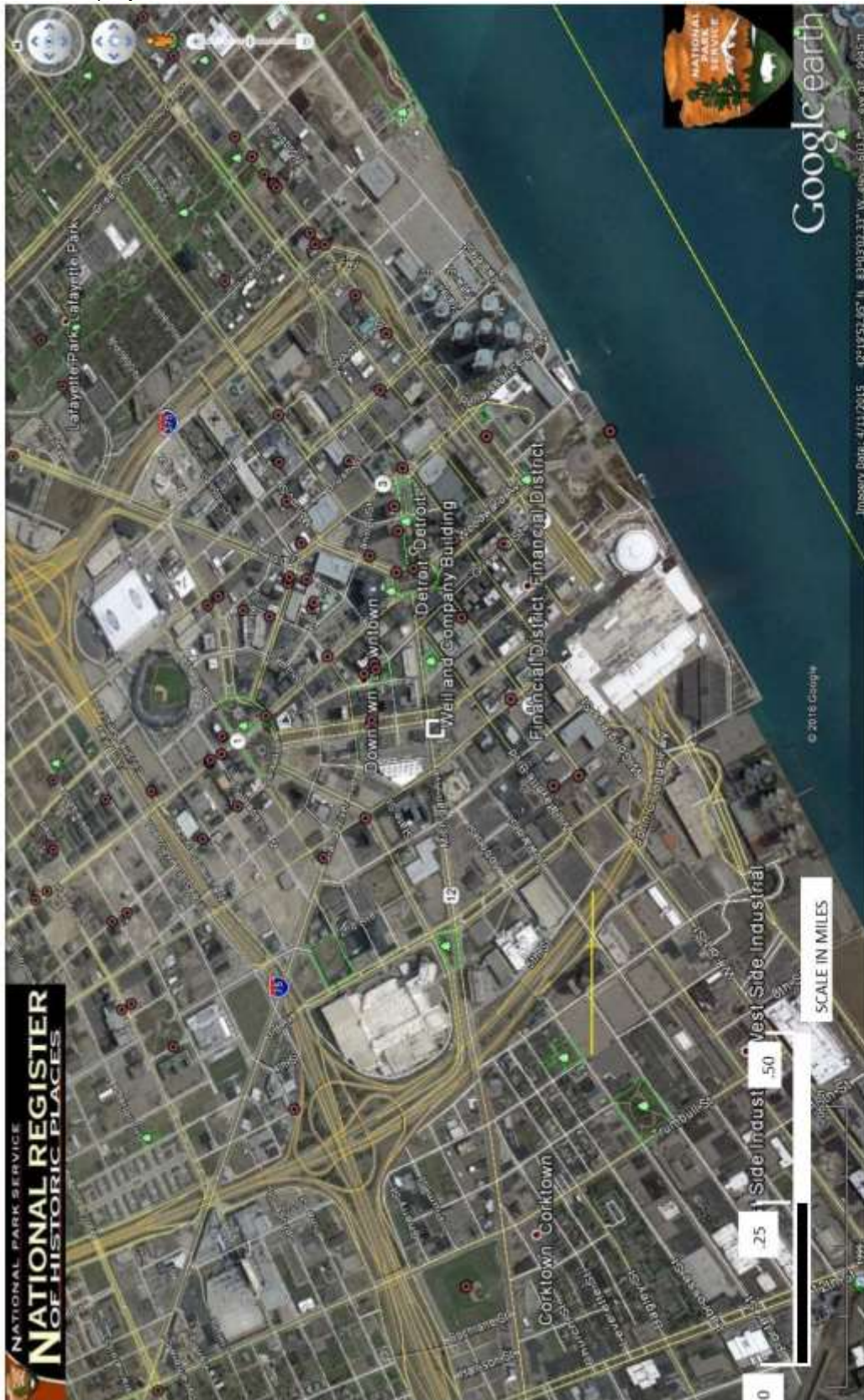
Latitude: 42.195291



WEIL AND COMPANY BUILDING
DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MI
LARGE SCALE MAP

Weil and Company/Gabriel Richard Building
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State



Longitude: -83.030518

Latitude: 42.195291



WEIL AND COMPANY BUILDING
DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MI
CONTEXT MAP

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
**NATIONAL REGISTER
OF HISTORIC PLACES**



WEIL AND COMPANY BUILDING
DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MI
LARGE SCALE MAP

Latitude: 42.195291

Longitude: -83.030518















