

# APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION AS LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

## CITY OF PEORIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

PLEASE NOTE: Failure to complete any item on this application will deem the application incomplete, and it will not be processed for review by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Pursuant to Chapter 16, Article IV, Section 16-86 of the Code of the City of Peoria, I submit the following:

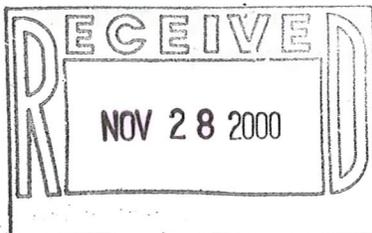
**I. APPLICANT(S):**

- A. Name: City of Peoria Historic Preservation Commission
- B. Company/Neighborhood Association name: Dean L'Homme, chairperson
- C. Address: 456 Fulton, Suite 402
- D. City, State, Zip: Peoria, IL 61602
- E. Daytime phone number: (309) 494 8600
- F. Applicant(s) signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**II. OWNER(S) OF SUBJECT PROPERTY:**

- A. Name: City of Peoria
- B. Company name: \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Address: 419 Fulton
- D. City, State, Zip: Peoria, IL 61602

Does property owner consent to proposed designation? Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_



III. **PROPERTY INFORMATION:**

- A. Street address: 212 SW Water St. (32 Liberty)
- B. Tax ID number: 18-09-426-006
- C. Legal description (required to be on attached form, "Attachment A", Legal Description, typed, single-spaced, one inch (1") margins)
- D. Property use: Vacant Restaurant
- E. Is property currently occupied? Yes  No
- F. Please attach a map delineating the boundaries and location of the property proposed for designation along with pictures/drawings of the building.
- G. Please attach a written statement describing the property and setting forth reasons in support of the designation proposed. **The written statement setting forth reasons in support of the proposed designation must meet one or more of the following designation criteria pursuant to Section 16-38 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance:**

**DESIGNATION CRITERIA**

1. Its character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, the county, the state or the United States of America.
2. Its location as a site of a significant local, county, state or national event.
3. Its identification with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the city, the state or the nation.
4. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction or use of indigenous materials.
5. Its identification as the work of a master building designer, architect or landscape architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, the state or the nation.
6. Its embodiment of elements of design, detailing, materials or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant.

7. Its embodiment of design elements that make it structurally or architecturally innovative.
8. Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature.
9. Its character as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure with a high level of integrity or architectural significance.

H. Description

Property condition:

Check one:

Excellent  Good  Fair  Deteriorated  Ruins  Unexposed

Check one:

Altered  Unaltered

Check one:

Moved  Original site

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance:

See attached.

I. Significance

Period:

Check all that apply:

18th Century     19th Century     20th Century

Specific date(s) (if applicable and known):

Areas of significance:

Check all that apply:

Architecture     Art     Commerce  
 Education     Engineering     Historic  
 Industry     Landscape Architecture     Religion/Philosophy  
 Sculpture     Social/Humanitarian

Statement of Significance

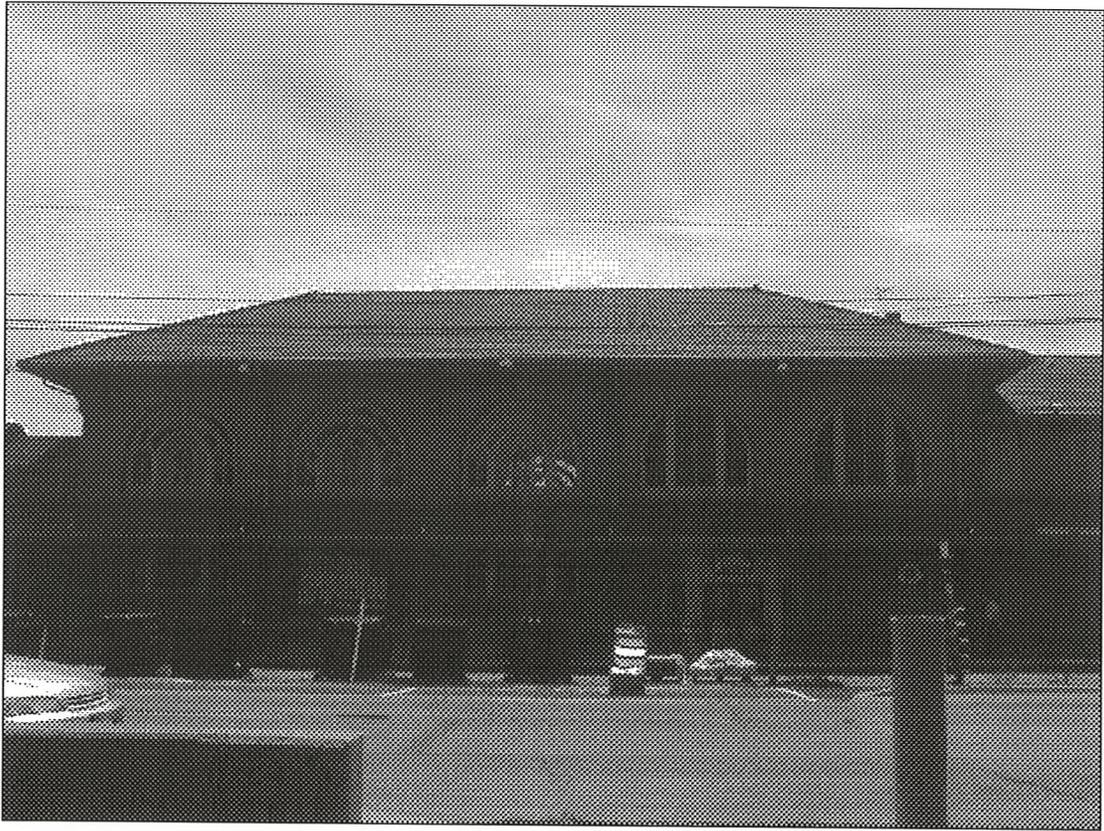
see attached.

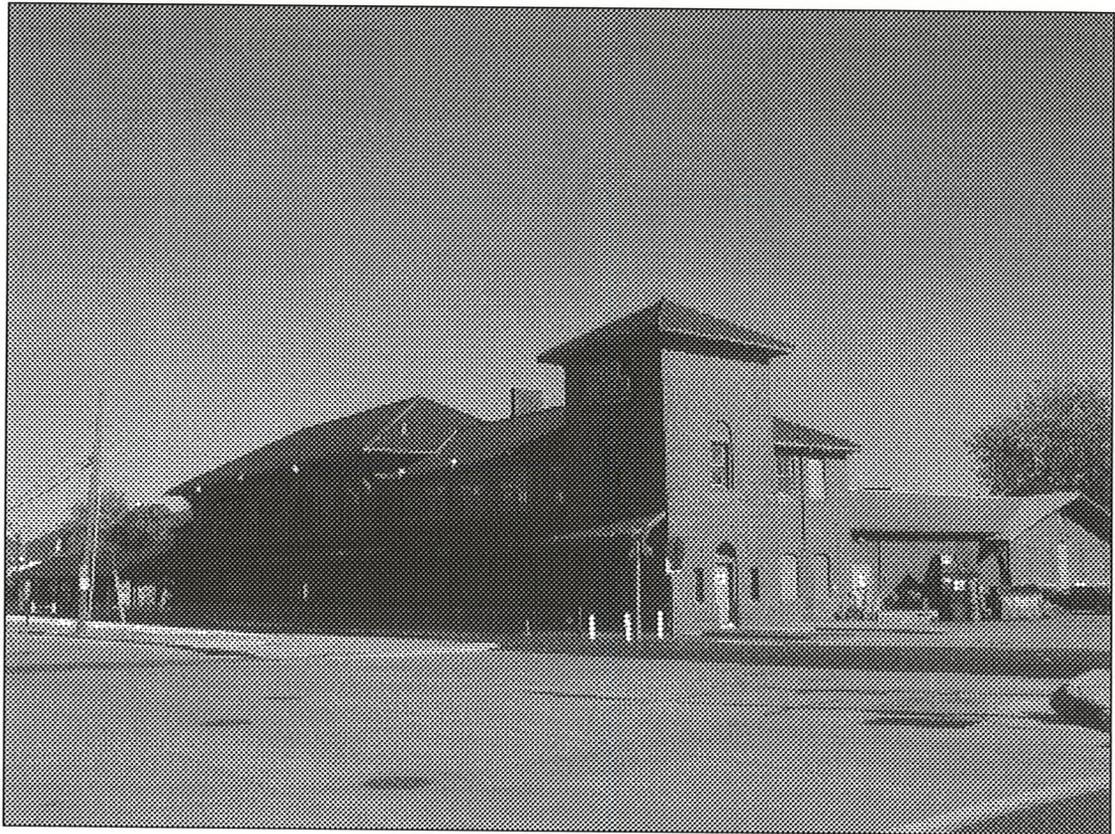
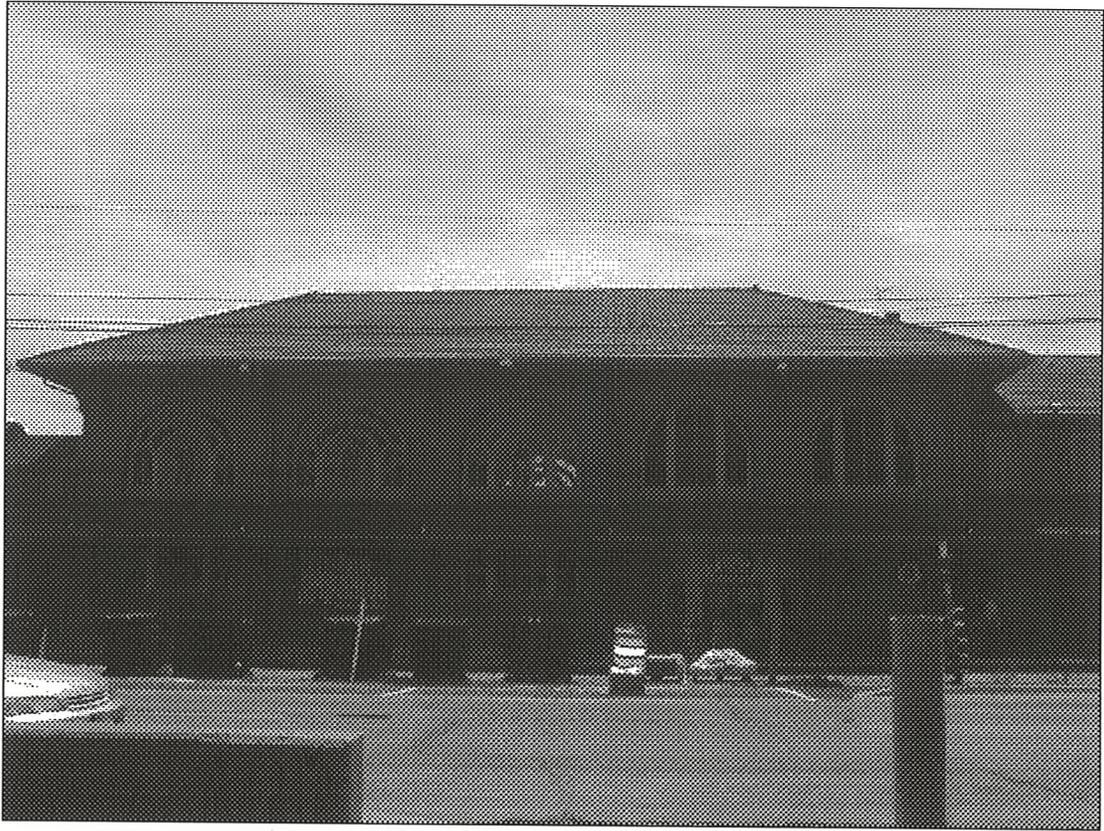
J. Major bibliographical references:

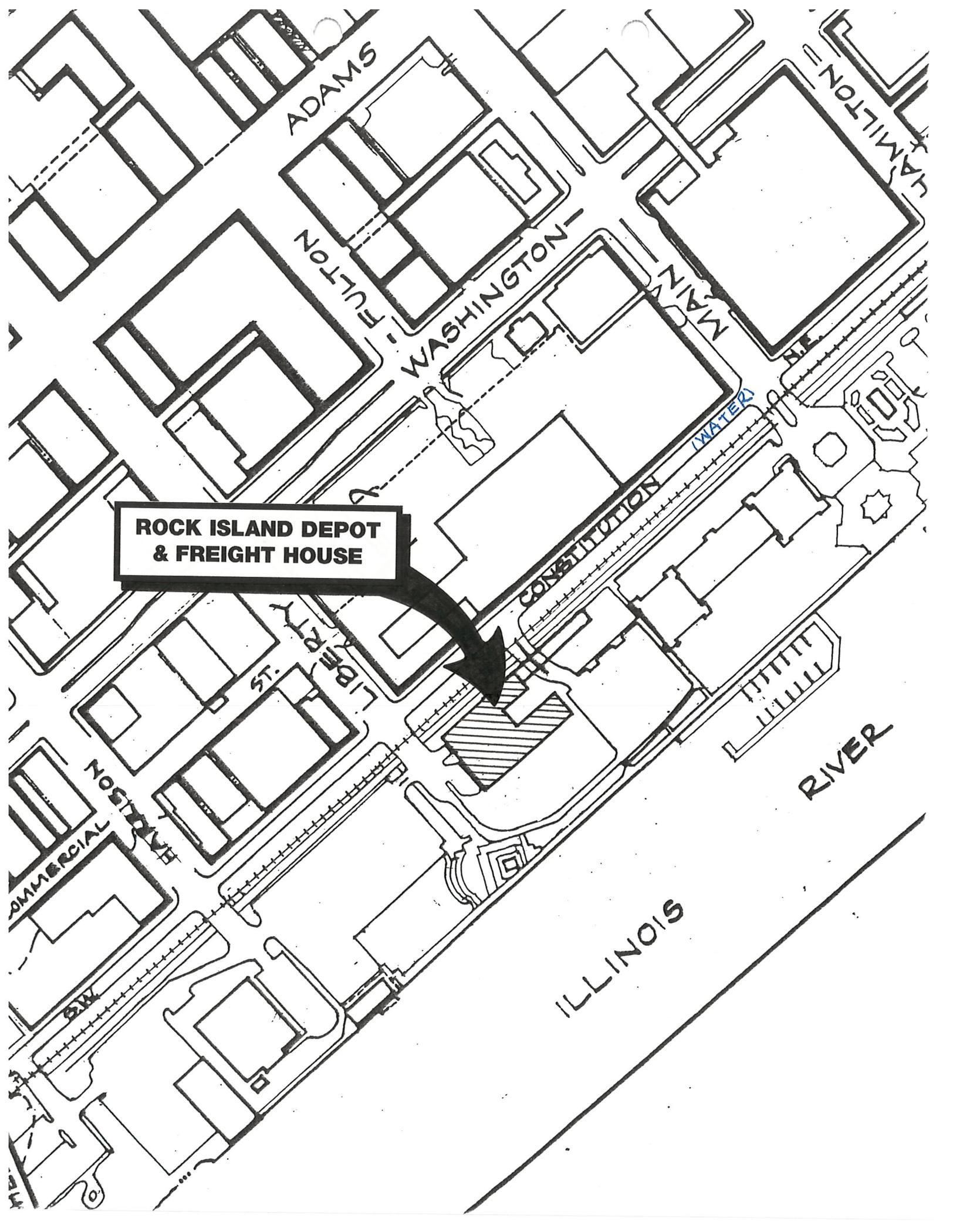
1. Montena, Richard. Application for National Register, 1978.
2. Kenyon, Leslie et. al. Peoria One. c. 1976.
3. Bobbitt, Charles and Ladonna. Peoria Post Card History. c. 1998.

**ATTACHMENT A  
Legal Description**

BIGELOW AND UNDERHILL. S ADD NE 1/4  
SEC 9-8-84 COMG 200.8. SE of NW  
COR LOT 6 BLK 52: TH SW 10. NW  
220.8. NE 422. SE 105.6. SW 182.  
LIBERTY STLYING EO.







**ROCK ISLAND DEPOT  
& FREIGHT HOUSE**

ADAMS

FULTON

WASHINGTON

HAMILTON

MAIN

WATER

CONSTITUTION

LIBERTY

ILLINOIS RIVER

COMMERCIAL

ILLINOIS

### **Reasons for Proposed Designation**

The Rock Island Depot and Freight House is important to the history of the City of Peoria as well as American history, as it symbolizes the coming of the railroad age, and the prime of Peoria's prosperous industrial years.

The subject property meets the following criteria for designation:

1. Its character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, the county, the state and the United States of America.
2. Its location as a site of a significant local, county, state and national event.
3. Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature.

The subject property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. Designation of the subject property as a local historic landmark will honor it by protecting the remaining architectural integrity from mistreatment.

A brief explanation of the condition of the subject property and a statement of significance follow. Greater detail can be found in the application for National Register Listing (attached).

### **Present and Original Condition and Use of Property (Including Architectural Elements)**

The Neo-Classical style building was built by the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad in 1891 for \$60,000 for timber, brick and iron. The foundation and ornamentation of the depot are Lake Superior sandstone (Peoria One, 1984). The eight-story south tower had a clock on all four sides that was demolished in 1939.

The freight house to the east was constructed in 1899, and rebuilt in 1908 by A.T. Hawk. It contains timber trusses with iron tension rods. The windows and doorways of both the depot and the freight house are spanned by elongated brick arches (Peoria One, 1984).

According to the application for National Register listing prepared by Richard Montena of Kenyon and Associates, the depot and freight house were both constructed in 1899 (Montena, 1978).

Changing transportation needs made the original use of the structure obsolete, however, new use followed, including the Community Workshop and Training Center in 1976. The most recent use was Riverfront Station, an upscale restaurant. The structure, owned by the City of Peoria, is currently vacant (Peoria One, 1984). Currently, the roof is known to be in disrepair.

### **Statement of Significance**

The construction of the Rock Island Depot served as a clear marker of the arrival of the railroad age (Peoria One, 1984) and the replacement of steamboats as a major means of transport (Peoria Postcards). It was constructed just a few yards from the Steamboat Landing (Peoria One, 1984).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC New Rock Island Depot and Freight House

AND/OR COMMON  
Rock Island Depot and Freight House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
32 Liberty Street

CITY, TOWN Peoria

STATE Illinois

VICINITY OF  
CODE 12

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 18th  
COUNTY Peoria  
CODE 143

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Development plans under consideration

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
City of Peoria

STREET & NUMBER  
419 Fulton

CITY, TOWN Peoria

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Illinois

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Peoria County Courthouse, Room 11, Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER  
324 Main

CITY, TOWN Peoria

STATE  
Illinois

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Inventory of Historic Landmarks in Peoria County  
Illinois Historic Sites Survey

DATE  
August 1972

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey

CITY, TOWN Carbondale

STATE  
Illinois 62901

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Rock Island Depot was constructed in 1899-1900 at 32 Liberty Street, Peoria, Illinois. The railroad station consists of a two-story depot and an adjacent one-story Freight House built at the same time. The property on which the buildings are located is between a department store and the Illinois River (Photo #1).

The building is of bearing wall construction with timber and iron work superstructure. Red brick with a recessed bonding course occurring every seventh row form quoins at the building's corners and pilasters between major arched window openings. The entire first level facade of the original clock tower is composed of this same brick coursing (Photos #6 and #9). The use of brick in this fashion is unusual and seems to substitute for the granite or other light colored stone faces used as building material during the late 1800's. A low base of Ashler masonry encircles the entire building complex. The base is of Lake Superior sandstone.

A low pitched clay tile roof with large bracketed overhang of Italianate character emphasizes the broad proportions of the lobby portion of the building (Photo #8). A similar roof at a slightly lower level designates the office and baggage area, having much shallower overhang without iron brackets. The narrow gabled roof of the waiting shed continues along one side of the building supported only by the brackets which terminate at the wall with stone corbels in the form of the railroad emblem (Photo #11). This shed continues for another 100 feet along the waiting platform, extending the horizontal appearance of the building. This shed is supported by square wood columns and brackets. At the original entrance to the Main Lobby from the waiting shed, the vestibule form was allowed to protrude through the lower roof of the shed and has its own stone-capped gable and a ball ornament at its peak. This entrance, with a simple arched pediment, has been insensitively bricked in and an aluminum frame window added. The aforementioned ornament has also been lost (Photos #2 and #14).

The adjacent freight house has a low pitched gable roof supported by King-post trusses of light wood and iron members (Photo #19). The roofing of the Freight House has been replaced with asphalt shingles. Some of the tiles were salvaged and stored for future use.

At the southwest corner of the office portion is the remaining lower third of a clock tower which was originally built to a height of 118 feet. Obviously impressed by its construction in 1900, a reporter for the Peoria Herald-Transcript said of the tower, "...while only sixteen feet square, (the tower) is embedded in a massive (below-grade) foundation 30 feet square and six feet thick." The tower's foundation held firm, but nature took its toll in another way on numerous occasions. According to Paul Stringham, who operated the newsstand at the Depot from 1933-1954, lightning struck the tower "a half dozen times", destroying parts and details with each blow (Photo #4). The upper portion of the symbolic tower was removed in 1939, terminated so as to be distinctive from the adjoining portion of the depot and roofed with a low pyramidal form with tiles from an old freight house.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The original tower was of Renaissance order; i.e., having heirarchical orders of base, shaft and capital, the latter was a temple form not unlike a building unto itself complete with pilasters, arched openings, and triangular pediments on all four sides (Photo #4). The placement of the tower at a corner of the elongated building seems to have precedence in the romantic notions of the late 1800's high Victorian styles and more specifically, with the Italian Villa style.

Probably due to the nature of the supporting walls, the entrance into the building through the tower is very narrow and flanked by two small windows not unlike the gunports of a fort. This arched opening is of extremely refined detail, including a broad band of radial tapered brick terminated by the raised brick drip ledge. The small windows, brick arched, and door opening are very palladium in form and, in this respect, relate to the distinctive and graceful arched windows that characterize the lobby. A simple arched glass fits above the flat stone lintel which is, in turn, supported on each side of the door by pilasters with simple stone capitals that face the door opening (Photo #-). That this elegant detailing surrounds the secondary entrance and that the tower itself is at the working end of the facility as opposed to the public entrance to the lobby, speaks of the incongruity associated with this picturesque style.

In 1948, the public portion of the station was remodeled in an insensitive but practical attempt to bring the aging building up to date with the "Rocket" trains which stopped at its platform. The elegance that had "struck the visitor at once" in 1900 was recorded in 1948 by the newspaper as "the erstwhile, dingy, half-century old" depot. Wood frame windows of oak were replaced with steel sash and glass block. Oak benches, darkened with age, were retired for more comfortable "easy chairs." All the dark woodwork was covered over or removed and the lower portions of the walls paneled in "light hued" paneling, and the upper walls painted in pastel green.

The adjacent Freight House is of the same brick as the Depot but is devoid of quoins and ornament except for a raised stepped brick pattern in the northeast gable (Photo #14). Windows are elongated as typical of Victorian proportions and have gently curved brick lintels. A deep overhang, again supported by brackets, continues along the entire south facade (Photo #17). This deep overhang lowers the apparent height of the Freight House and shades the wall from the intense heat of the summer sun. The trussed construction leaves the floor space free and clear for storage of goods or for other activities requiring open space (Photo #18). In 1965 a link was constructed between the Depot and the Freight House. It is of brick and is in keeping with the Freight House architecture.

The reminiescent classical architecture of the Depot Complex is typical of the late Victorian period as architecture moved away from exuberant spirit in a search for more ordered expression.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

"Modern Railroad", October 1952, "Rocket"

Iron Road to Empire, William Hoyer

Records from Peoria County Courthouse

Letter from "Chicago, Rock Island, & Pacific" Railroad Company,  
February 18, 1975 (April 27, 1966)

American Architecture & Urbanism, Vincent Sculley, 1969, Frederick A. Praeger,  
Publisher, New York City

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1899 - 1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rock Island Depot is a landmark in Peoria because it is the last remaining structure signifying the importance of the railroad in Peoria's history. The Depot is further significant because its eclectic character epitomizes the spirit and rebirth of the trade-based economy at the end of the nineteenth century.

The opening of the Rock Island Depot in 1900 was attended by "thronges of populous." Peoria had been a true rail transportation center rivaled only by Chicago in the Midwest previous to the 1880's depression. Railroads touched the lives of most Peoria citizenry as it was the only transportation link of consequence until expressways and air travel were established after World War II.

The Rock Island Depot is a building of contrasts and vitality. Familiar classical details were assembled to create a form identifiable as a Midwestern train station, using the classical arched windows below an Italianate bracketed overhang and the long, low profile which predates the Prairie Style of architecture. The Depot expresses a "picturesque eclecticism," which architectural historian Vincent Sculley has said was "...the only kind of architecture that could have made sense in this period."

The Rock Island Depot is a good example of Peoria architecture at the turn of the century. Its location on the waterfront and its architectural character established in brick, mortar and stone, the robust commercial nature of this community's past.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Peoria Public Library Clippings, October 10, 1954; March 29, 1966  
 Peoria Public Library, Information Compiled by WPA, late 1930's; unpublished  
 Peoria Journal Star, September 22, 1974  
 Peoria Herald-Transcript, March 31, 1900

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

QUADRANGLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ QUADRANGLE SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**  
 The boundary of the Rock Island Depot and Freight House Complex property is shown as shaded in red on the accompanying map obtained from the Peoria City Hall records, Scale 1" = 85', Date 9/28/35.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE  
 Richard M. Montena, Project Architect

ORGANIZATION  
 Kenyon and Associates, Architects

STREET & NUMBER  
 735 N. Knoxville

CITY OR TOWN  
 Peoria

DATE  
 309-671-7121

TELEPHONE  
 309-671-7121

STATE  
 Illinois 61602

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: CHIEF OF REGISTRATION \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_