

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Greek Revival Style

Greek Revival was the dominant style of American domestic architecture between about 1830-1850 during which its popularity led it to be called the “National Style”. The style was particularly common in areas of rapid development during the 1830s-1850s. There was increasing interest in classical buildings in the United States at the close of the 18th century based on Roman and earlier Greek examples found through archaeological investigations. As a young democracy, Americans sought to find precedents to establish their democratic ideals in the form of its architecture. Rome and particularly Greece, provided these precedents because of their early experiments in democracy. Two factors enhanced the Greek influence in the United States: the Greek War for Independence during the 1820s and 1830s and the American War of 1812. The Greek War found sympathetic citizens in the United States and the American war with the British in 1812 lessened the interest in British architecture. The Greek Revival style seemed only appropriate for a nation undergoing a new experiment in governing, called democracy, that had philosophical roots based on Grecian models of governing. This style is represented by some of the town’s earliest architecture, though some of the examples were relocated from Eagle Village by teams of horses and oxen when the Michigan Road community began to decline and the railroad showed more promise in the new village of Zionsville beginning in 1852.



This simple one-story house at 240 S. 2nd Street is one of the oldest surviving houses in Zionsville dating to about the time of the village’s founding in 1852. The house is also one of the finest examples of the Greek Revival style with a symmetrical façade, cornice returns, 6/6 windows, and an exceptional entry.

Greek Revival: 240 S. 2nd Street, c. 1850

Gothic Revival Style

The Gothic Revival style had been popularized in house design books in the middle part of the 1800s and became popular in Midwestern towns by the 1850s. A handful of houses in Zionsville exhibit Gothic Revival touches, probably derived from pattern books, such as tracery bargeboards or pointed arch windows in the gable end. The pattern books gave hints for other building types. A.J. Davis' *Rural Residences* (1837) included a design for a Gothic Revival "Village Church" as well as Gothic Revival houses. Andrew Jackson Downing's book *Victorian Cottage Residences* (1842 with later reprints) also included a design for a "Rural Church." A religious revival in Britain in the early 19th century renewed interest in church construction and in the English Gothic style. In religious architecture, Gothic Revival reached full expression in the United States.



This house at 255 W. Pine Street, while not a typical example of the Gothic Revival Style, has a few features commonly associated with the style as applied to residential architecture. The steeply-pitched roof and front, central gable are common in Gothic Revival cottages of the mid-19th century. Extensions of purlins, like exposed trusswork, and the interesting trim above the doorway are also characteristic of the style.

In most communities, the style is commonly found on religious architecture, however, Zionsville's residents chose to use other popular styles in church building.

Gothic Revival: 255 W. Pine Street, c. 1860

Second Empire Style

The Second Empire style was uncommon in most Midwestern communities. Mansard roofs with dormer windows are the predominant features of the short-lived style. The style was considered modern, rather than part of the broad use of romantic styles, and borrowed heavily from French architecture of the period. The district has one example of this style, though modified, at 290 N. 4th Street.



Zionsville has just one example of Second Empire architecture, a residence located at 290 N. 4th Street. Though it has undergone modifications, its significance lies in its stylistically-typical mansard roof with window dormers.

Second Empire: 290 N. 4th Street, c. 1890

Italianate Style

The Italianate style was popular between 1850 and 1880, particularly in Midwestern towns where the expansion of railroads brought wealth to communities and created a building boom during the period. The style traces its roots to England as part of the Picturesque Movement; the movement rejected formal classical ideas of art and architecture that were popular for 200 years. The Picturesque Movement emphasized rambling informal Italian farmhouses, but as the style entered the United States it was often modified and embellished into a truly Americanized style. The first Italianate house was constructed in the United States in the late 1830s. The style was popularized by house pattern books by Andrew Jackson Downing during the middle part of the 1800s, but its popularity began to wane as it began to be replaced by the Queen Anne Style in the last decades of the 19th century.



The Italianate Style is well-represented in Zionsville, particularly in the handful of two-story “Italianate Cube” houses such as this one located at 520 West Ash Street. The house has tall 4/4 windows with shaped surrounds, nicely detailed porch, and pairs of scroll brackets supporting the eaves. The unusual frieze is decorated with panels and frieze-band windows, and the roof is topped with a short cupola.

Italianate: 520 W. Ash Street, c. 1870



The Italianate Style is also represented in Zionsville by civic and commercial architecture. The Christian Union Church, 395 W. Walnut Street, was built in 1870, and also served as Boone Post 202 of the Grand Army of the Republic from 1898 to 1926, then the Francis Neidlinger Post of the American Legion from 1919 into the 1960s.

The simple gable-front brick building features full-round arched doorway with transom and 4/4 windows. Simple brick arches form hoods over the windows and doorway. The building is marked by an early historic marker placed by the Zionsville Historical Society in 1965, a time when the village began celebrating its history.

Italianate: 395 W. Walnut, Christian Union Church, 1870

Stick Style

This style essentially followed the popularity of the Italianate style and was the precursor to the Queen Anne. It enjoyed just a short time of popularity and was frequently used in the design of railroad buildings, like depots. The style employed the use of stick work in its facades to create interesting geometric compositions and often had open trusswork in its gables.



This small one-story cottage at 155 N. Main Street has minor indications of the Stick Style, but is the village's only example. Stick work in the front gable divides it into geometric shapes filled with clapboards and shingles. Exposed rafter tails and minor trusswork at the top of the gable accentuate the style. An early 20th century remodel produced the large brick corner porch.

The style was applied to a house form found with great regularity in Zionsville. The one-story, gabled-ell form was an efficient and affordable type that offered easy separation of rooms all with daylight and ventilation.

Stick Style: 155 N. Main Street, c. 1900

Queen Anne Style

The Queen Anne style was popular between 1880 and 1910; it was named and popularized by a group of 19th century English architects led by Richard Norman Shaw. The historical precedents used had little to do with the Renaissance style popular during Queen Anne's reign; rather they borrowed from late medieval examples of the preceding Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. Spindework popularly used with the style and free classic subtypes are American interpretations and became the most dominant form of the style in the United States. Changes in taste and a rise in popularity of Colonial Revival led builders to simplify the Queen Anne style after the turn of the century.



The Methodist Episcopal Church of Zionsville chose the Queen Anne style in which to construct their building in 1894. This was an unusual choice in the height of popularity for the Gothic Revival style for religious architecture. While the building features Gothic-inspired windows, its repeated patterns of shingle work, wood belt courses, bands of picket-like trim, as well as gable trim, all point to an adaptation of the Queen Anne style. Also unusual are its Star of David art glass windows in the gables and open belfry composed of arches topped with a tall spire.

Queen Anne: M. E. Church, 75 N. Main Street, 1894



This large home at 450 W. Ash Street is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style, though reserved, on residential architecture. The house features a wrap-around porch of turned posts and spindework frieze, cutaway corners, and cross-gabled roof featuring shingle work in the gables. A band of picket-like trim, matching that of the M. E. Church, delineates the gables from the wall below.

Queen Anne: 450 W. Ash Street, c. 1860/1890

Free Classic Style

Free Classic architecture, which began to take prominence over the Queen Anne style by the late 1890s, was more reserved in its use of ornamentation, though several features had been used with great regularity in the Queen Anne style including basic porch treatments.



Zionsville has just a few homes that should be categorized as Free Classic. Most of these lack extensive trim more commonly found on Queen Anne homes, but retain sufficient features as a reserved interpretation by carpenters. This house located at 405 N. Maple Street, built c. 1890, features a wrap-around porch and cross gables, but is more subtle with its classically-inspired cast-concrete porch columns and simple shingle work in the gables. Window trim is reduced to simple hoods. An unusual feature of the house are the tops of the gables being enclosed and faced with shingle work.

Free Classic: 405 N. Maple, c. 1890

Classical Revival Style

This style emerged at the turn of the new century and continued into the 1930's in American cities. Several events and trends fed the movement toward Classicism. Planners of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 embraced classicism for most of the fair's major buildings. The Federal government adopted classicism for its expanding number of courthouses and post offices, beginning in the 1890's. While Americans had often chosen variants of classical-inspired architecture for civic projects, the new classicism was usually grander in scale. The style coincided with America's political and economic rise, as well as the coming of age of American cities. By the late 1910's and into the 1920's, as a robust American economy permitted, the style was being executed with greater attention to classical styling. However, in residential design, the popularity was more-or-less short-lived. Its popularity fell off by the 1920s.



The village's only examples of Classical Revival architecture are a few commercial buildings on Main Street. This example, located at 10 South Main Street, is also an example of a two-part commercial building with a pressed metal upper façade. The building's perfectly symmetrical upper façade was once mirrored on the first story with a central stairway entry flanked by pilasters. The upper façade retains its tall 1/1 windows in repeating pattern divided by narrow pilasters of pressed metal to mimic stone construction, common on Classical Revival buildings. The building also features a nicely-detailed pressed metal cornice of rows of large and small brackets.

Classical Revival: 10 S. Main Street, c. 1900

Craftsman/Bungalow

A style that has a significant presence in the district is representative of the trend in residential design away from American or European precedents during the early 1900s. Craftsman/Bungalow architecture broke from revival styles. The Craftsman style was inspired in part by the work of brothers Charles and Henry Greene in California. Their work spanned from 1893 to 1914; in 1903 they began applying Arts & Crafts details to simple bungalows that quickly became popularized by several home magazines of the period, including Gustav Stickley's The Craftsman. The term bungalow originates in India where it refers to a low house surrounded by porches. The American form of the bungalow was publicized in California. The Craftsman style spread quickly through the country as an acceptable and desirable style for the growing middle class in quickly developing suburbs. These homes were further popularized in pattern books and other home magazines, as well as in local newspapers. The bungalow form and Craftsman style were popular from about 1905-1935.



This house at 110 S. 2nd Street, c. 1921, has an irregular massed plan and multiple gables faced with stucco and half-timbering. Heavy timbers support the wide-overhanging eaves and shaped openings are found over windows and the enclosed porch. While some of these features can be interpreted as Tudor Revival, the builder's eclectic mix is more Craftsman in composition.

Craftsman: 110 S. 2nd Street, c. 1921



A substantial number of small Bungalows, both one and two-story, were built in the early 1900s for Zionsville's growing population. This Bungalow at 290 W. Cedar Street has a common side-gabled form with substantial front porch. It also carries Far Eastern influence in its interesting brackets. The house also features unusual diamond-patterned upper window sashes. These added treatments elevate the house to a Craftsman Bungalow designation.

Bungalow: 290 W. Cedar Street, c. 1920

American Four Square

The American Four Square was popular at about the same time as the Bungalow. It offered more living space than most bungalows while having an Arts & Crafts feeling. It is thought to have grown out of the earlier Italianate cube-style house, but became more regulated in its floor plan with four rooms on the first floor and second floor. Because of its prevalence in the Midwest, it was also called the “cornbelt cube”. About a dozen examples of the American Four Square were constructed in the district, some identifiable with Colonial Revival or Craftsman features. The “Workingman’s Four Square”, a one-story version of the plan, is also represented in the district. “Workingman’s Foursquare,” is a term used by Alan Gowans in his book Comfortable Houses. The pyramid-roof cottage type was widely known in the U.S., with examples cited as far as Seattle, Washington; Anacortes, Washington; Park City, Utah; and Louisiana. Jakle noted examples in Upland South and Lower Midwest towns in his Common Houses in America’s Small Towns. The common denominators appear to be a late Victorian time period (after the 1880s, up to about 1910), and a pressing need for modest housing, typically associated with industrial expansion. Many researchers credit the rise of catalog housing and other periodicals with the spread of both these housing types.



A very basic form of the American Four Square style is this house located at 495 W. Poplar Street. Built of rock-face molded concrete block c. 1905, the house is a clear representation of the style with four over four room configuration and a full-width front porch. Dormers, most commonly on the front façade, are also characteristic of the style but is absent on this house.

Four Square: 495 W. Poplar Street, c. 1905

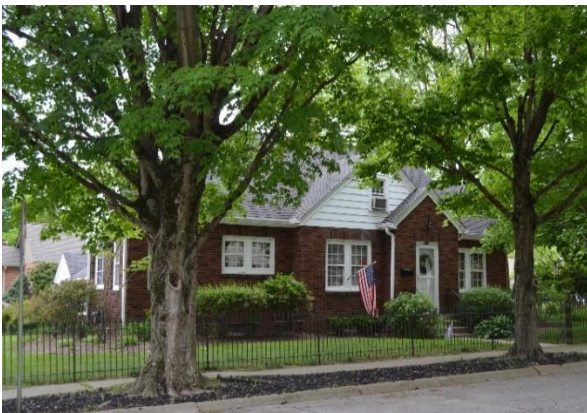


An interesting adaptation of the house type with the Prairie Style is located at 930 W. Pine Street. The house typifies the American Four Square with four over four room organization, but also features substantially-overhanging eaves pierced with dormers on each primary façade. The roof configuration is inspired by the Prairie Style.

Prairie Style/Four Square: 930 W. Pine Street, c. 1905

Colonial Revival Style

The Colonial Revival style gained popularity after the Bicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 where it was heralded as an expression of the American identity. Planners of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago also called for pavilions that emulated American colonial architecture. The style became increasingly popular in the early 1900's and remained a desired style through the first half of the twentieth century. This early 20th century revival of the style borrowed directly from Colonial America's buildings in form and ornamentation. A few subcategories of the style emerged including Dutch Colonial Revival with gambrel roofs, Cape Cod, and simple Colonial Revival cottages. An interesting development occurred in Zionsville with regard to the use of this style. By the early 1960s, civic and business leaders in Zionsville welcomed the style into modern popularity, as a way to seemingly project the village's historic identity. Therefore, a number of large buildings including the post office were constructed using a modern interpretation of the Colonial Revival style into the early 1970s.



Most of the village's early Colonial Revival architecture are simple cottages, one or one-and-a-half stories built in the 1920s-1940s. This example at 515 W. Cedar Street features 6/6 windows and multiple gables with narrow overhanging eaves.

Colonial Revival Cottage: 515 W. Cedar Street, c. 1939



Noteworthy are Zionsville's many late Colonial Revival-styled buildings. While some modifications have been made to the former United States Post Office at 150 W. Cedar, early Colonial architecture was clearly the inspiration for its window surrounds and fluted porch columns. The Colonial Revival lantern capping the roof is topped by a copper roof and weathervane.

Late Colonial Revival: U.S. Post Office, 150 W. Cedar Street, 1962

Tudor Revival Style

The Tudor Revival Style more closely follows Medieval English prototypes than architectural characteristics of the early 16th century Tudor period in England. Typical features of the style include steeply pitched roofs, multiple front gables, stucco and the use of half-timbering in the stucco walls. The style was popular in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s. Romantic ideals of European houses, though small in scale, are clearly evident in the district.



This small house located at 505 W. Oak Street reflects the romantic ideal of European cottages with steeply-pitched gables, broad stone and brick chimney in its side gable, and its most striking feature of the style, the Tudor-arched entry door. The plank-style door features a small window of leaded glass in a diamond pattern.

Tudor Revival Cottage: 505 W. Oak Street, 1938

Prairie Style

The Prairie Style was born in Chicago; Frank Lloyd Wright was the architect most associated with the style. Wright's Winslow House in Chicago, constructed in 1893, is thought to be the first example of Prairie Style architecture. The style is one of only a few truly indigenous American forms and its highest concentration occurs in the Midwestern United States, particularly near the Chicago regional area. The popularity of the style was short lived; it lasted from about 1900 through 1930. Its emphasis was on the horizontal with architectural features of the house attributed to the vast expanse of the prairie. Particularly important stylistic features are low-sloped roofs and floor levels acting as vertical planes.



This house, located at 165 N. Main Street, was built c. 1925 and exhibits the Prairie Style most impressively with its wide overhanging eaves from its nearly-flat hipped roof. Adding to the character of the style is its clear division of horizontal planes, both by its extended front porch in brick, but also in its tall brick first story stepped out from the stucco/pebble-faced second story. Banding accentuates the second story and Craftsman Style windows are throughout the house.

Here the Prairie Style is also applied to the American Four Square type with common features such as projecting bays and dormers.

Prairie Style: 165 N. Main Street, c. 1925

Park Rustic/Rustic Revival

Park Rustic, a style that grew in popularity with the development of state and national parks, was the term for using local materials for simple building construction, and while it often had characteristics of the Craftsman Style, it related more to primitive building than higher refinements of Craftsman architecture. The Park Rustic architectural style grew in popularity in the United States from the early part of the 20th century into the 1940s. It saw its most prolific use during the Federal Relief projects of the 1930s. The style, which focused use of locally-derived natural materials, became a common architectural style of many of Indiana's state parks and our national parks. In Albert Good's 1935 book on park design, Good described the effort to introduce architecture into the park system as "the subordination of the structure to the environment".¹ He references the appropriate use of materials, including the rustic style, to their surroundings. Good states that if used successfully, the style, through the use of native materials in proper scale, avoidance of straight lines and over-sophistication, gives the feeling of having been executed by pioneer craftsmen with limited hand tools. The rustic style "thus achieves sympathy with natural surroundings and with the past."² Side-by-side log cabins were constructed in the 1930s at the west end of Sycamore Street in the style.



Zionsville has two side-by-side and relatively rare examples of Rustic Revival architecture built c. 1937. The hewn log structures feature dovetail joinery and recessed entries that mimic the dog-trot design of primitive cabin construction. The example at 760 W. Sycamore Street also features plank shutters, 6/6 windows, and a wood shake roof. The flagstone terrace wall adds to the character of the house.

Rustic Revival: 760 W. Sycamore Street, c. 1937

¹ Good, pg. 6

² Good, pg. 5

American Small House and Minimal Traditional

As the demand for housing increased significantly during and after World War II, developers were looking for ways to build quick, inexpensive homes for returning servicemen and others entering a workforce that itself was burgeoning. This resulted in what has become known as American Small House design. The district has a preponderance of these homes, particularly in infill or subdivided lots created after World War II. While the term is used loosely in this document for describing this type and period of building, the district has over 40 one-story, simple houses built with this overarching idea of quick, inexpensive housing. They do not exhibit features of any style, though the basic box and rooflines may evoke colonial architecture, particularly Cape Cod, for which the term “Minimal Traditional” may be used.



This house, located at 95 S. 3rd Street, introduces several concepts including Colonial Revival influence and Ranch house design in its simple one-story composition. The home’s multiple gables, 6/6 windows, prominent chimney near its understated front porch are attractive features that hint at Colonial Revival influence. The extension to the north with a nicely-detailed porch and breezeway to attach the garage is inspired by the Ranch style.

Minimal Traditional: 95 S. 3rd Street, c. 1948



This home at 350 W. Oak Street is characteristic of many houses of the American Small House movement. A tight configuration of the floor plan, but amenities such as a formal composition of the façade and porch were important to make the home attractive to buyers. This house includes a porch with trellis-like supports and a chimney centered in its east side gabled wall.

American Small House: 350 W. Oak Street, c. 1933

Ranch Style

By the close of the village's post World War II housing boom, Ranch houses were also gaining popularity. Between the mid-1940s and early 1960s, several small and medium-scale Ranch houses were constructed in the district. The Ranch style was developed from the one-story, basic linear rectangular plan of homes constructed in the west on ranches. The style was popular from the late 1930s into the early 1980s and often features hipped or low-pitched gable roofs. The district has frame, brick, and Bedford limestone examples of these homes.



The Ranch style house at 410 W. Ash Street is one of the best examples of Ranch architecture in the district. The modest-scaled house features a low-pitch hipped roof over its main mass and continues to the east with an enclosed breezeway and attached garage. The house has a modern interpretation of double-hung window divided lite configuration, including a broad picture window flanked by 4/4 windows in the living room. A pent roof extension of the main roof is supported by ornamental iron work and composes the porch. A popular choice for Ranch home construction in Indiana was random-coursed, rusticated Bedford limestone for the exterior.

Ranch: 410 W. Ash Street, c. 1951

Carpenter-Builder/Vernacular Architecture

The district has several types of vernacular architectural design, particularly related to the early founding of the town. These examples include variations of the gable-front, hall-and-parlor and side-gabled, central-gable, and I-house types. While a few of the vernacular types have elements of architectural styles popular during the period, many are simple examples of the type. There are a handful of early side-gabled houses which could be identified as hall-and-parlor, as well as a number of mid-20th century examples of side-gabled construction.

The gable-front was an early house type constructed in developing towns, often after the first generation of side-gabled homes were built. Narrow urban lots were more conducive to the gable-front house which had a narrow front wall compared to its longer sides. As the density of residential areas increased over time, lots were often split or platted smaller to accommodate a growing population that was still connected to its central business district. Smaller lots often restricted house construction to narrower front walls. Variations of gable-front design became a logical choice for more densely platted neighborhoods. The gable-front houses are mostly one-and-a-half stories. Other variations on the gable-front plan with added ells to the house include the T-plan (the floor plan resembles a capital “T”) and gabled-ell which loosely resembles a capital “L.”



This small, one-story example of a gable-front house at 470 W. Linden Street is in the type's most basic form. The house, built c. 1880, features a simple, symmetrical composition of central entry flanked by windows. The added features of simple window and door hoods, door transom, and tall frieze board at the top of the walls indicate a nod to sophistication.

Gable-front: 470 W. Linden Street, c. 1880



This one-and-a-half story house at 220 N. Maple Street may exemplify the consideration that one portion of the house was built, followed by the second portion. The irregular height of the wing and its lack of detail found on the gable-front portion of the house would seem to indicate the wing followed construction of the gable-front portion. The house has simple features, such as 4/4 windows and turned porch posts.

Upright-and-Wing: 220 N. Maple Street, c. 1870

Thought to have developed from the gable-front house type is the upright-and-wing type which is composed of a gable-front section (upright) with a side-gable section (wing) on the side of the upright section. This housing type is thought to have developed from the initial construction of one part or the other first, followed by the construction of the second part of the house as funds permitted or as the family grew.



In contrast to the Upright-and-Wing type, the Gabled-ell type was constructed at one time and usually carries the features of the primary façade to the remainder of the house. This example at 295 N. Main Street demonstrates the gabled-ell type with nearly-matching rooflines for both the front-gabled and ell sections, and carries the details to the ell including a simple wrap-around porch with turned posts and spindle work frieze.

Gabled-ell: 295 N. Main Street, c. 1890



A variation of the gabled-ell and gable-front types is the T-plan. This example, located at 95 N. Elm Street, follows many of the other small one-story houses in the village, but was built in the form's hallmark trait, the plan forms a T with its front-gabled and side-gabled sections. While there have been several modifications to this house, it retains that basic form.

T-Plan: 95 N. Elm Street, c. 1890

Another house type is the central-gable house. The main floor plan is organized around a central passage and typically includes a stairway in the central hall for a second floor. The house has a high-pitched roof with side gables and a high-pitched central gable on the front, and sometimes back, of the house. The type was almost always associated with the Gothic Revival style because of its steeply-pitched roof.



Zionsville has a nice collection, though relatively small, of central-gable houses. This example features a broad front, central gable with equal-sized side gables. The house features 4/4 windows with simple shaped surrounds and transom over the entry.

Central Gable: 80 N. 3rd Street, c. 1868

The I-House became widely used throughout the Midwestern United States. It is identified by its side gables, single-pile construction, and full two-story height. Houses of this form were constructed between the 17th and into the 20th centuries in the United States. As a folk tradition of American architecture, the form began to fall out of fashion in the late 19th century, particularly in cities where building lots were typically arranged with their narrow sides fronting the street. The I-House was often constructed in the styles popular during the time it was built, most commonly the Federal and Greek Revival styles.



The village has just one example of I-House construction, located at 310 W. Hawthorne Street. Built c. 1875, the house has a central entry flanked by windows with a continuation of the three-bay composition to the second story. The house has simple 1/1 windows with its most interesting feature being a segmental-arched entry for its pair of wood doors.

I-House: 310 W. Hawthorne Street, c. 1875

Commercial Architecture

Many of the historic commercial buildings are described as one-part or two-part commercial buildings which indicates a visual division of their front facades vertically into sections, or parts. A one-part building indicates the building is likely one-story with a simple one-layer composition of its façade. A two-part building typically indicates the building is two-stories, though possibly more, but visually is understood as a two-layer composition to its façade. Several commercial buildings are also further described by the style in which they were constructed such as Italianate and Classical Revival. One building, the former grain elevator, is identified as parapet-front, which is a less formal composition of the façade but accentuated vertically with a tall parapet.



The former grain elevator constructed in 1947 on First Street is an unusual survivor denoting the village’s agricultural roots. While the building is strictly an example of utilitarian 20th century functional commercial architecture, its parapet and drive-through bay are its most significant features.

Former Grain Elevator, 1947



Another rare survivor of Zionsville’s history is the building constructed both for a Knights of Pythias “Castle Lodge” Hall and Town Hall in 1902. Again, a building stripped to its utilitarian function lacking discernable stylistic features, its most prominent feature is the tall stepped parapet crowning the three-story brick façade. Building name/date stones and segmental-arched window openings are also important features.

The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

Town Hall/Knights of Pythias Castle Lodge, 1902

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1878 Map of Zionsville

