

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic John Hill House

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 230 West Sixth Street not for publication

city, town Erie vicinity of congressional district 24

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Erie code 049

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Dr. George J. D'Angelo

street & number Sterretania Rd, R.D. #1

city, town Fairview vicinity of state Pennsylvania 16415

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Erie County courthouse

street & number West Sixth Street

city, town Erie state Pennsylvania

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 7/25/79  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records PHMC

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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

The John Hill House is a transitional building incorporating elements of both Greek Revival and Italian Villa architectural styles. The original frame structure consisted of a two story square building four bays wide, with a small one story wing to the rear. The house acquired its present irregular plain and asymmetrical composition in the late 1850s when south and east wings were added. In 1891, the property line was moved twenty feet to the north to provide space for the erection of a brick two story combination coach house and servants quarters. This building was then connected to the main dwelling by the elevation of the rear wing to two stories. The present house measures ninety-seven feet in length, and has a maximum width of forty-- eight feet.

The general appearance of the house is "picturesque". Wall surfaces retreat and reappear, modulated by balconies, porches, and window bays. The south wing has a poured concrete facade whose surface has been lightly scored to resemble large square blocks of smooth-faced coursed ashlar. The east wing has a clapboard facade and wood block quoins. However, the same stylistic elements are present in both wings. The dominant features of the front of the house are the roof line and windows. The gable roof is slightly pitched and has wide eaves supported by prominent brackets. Its broken silhouette is accented by a stringcourse and arcaded corbel table. There are three interior brick foreplace chimneys. Windows are round-headed, hooded, and often grouped in twos. There is a one story window bay in the south wing, and a two story window bay in the east wing. Above the south bay is a balustraded balcony whose recessed compound window is framed by Corinthian columns and quatrefoil tracery. The main entrance is enclosed by a three bay screen porch, and consists of a large molded panel and arched fanlight.

The entrance hall is flanked by a formal reception room on the right; and a parlor, small sitting room, and dining room on the left. At the far end is a dog-leg stair with balustered railing and ornamental bracketing. There are arched marble fireplaces in the reception room and parlor, as well as the bedrooms directly above; and a square wood foreplace in the dining room. The bay windows have elaborate decorative features and trim, as well as recessed shutters. Ceilings in the entrance hall and reception room are panelled with carved light fixture mountings.

The rear wing contains a kitchen and pantry on the first floor, and additional service rooms on the second floor. The floor plans lack cohesion, indicating a series of remodelings over the years.

# 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"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	Material Culture

Specific dates

Builder/Architect John Hill & Various/John Hill & Various

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The John Hill House is important architecturally since it represents the best remaining example of the Italian Villa style which was widely adopted in the homes of Erie's wealthy families during the late nineteenth century. It also has some significance historically because of its association with the development of the city's material culture during the same period.

The house was originally built ca. 1836 by William Johns, a former Burgess and prominent physician of the time. In 1840, ownership passed into the hands of Pierre Simon Vincent Hamot, an Erie pioneer who had become a wealthy and successful merchant-banker. Hamot lived in an imposing mansion overlooking the harbor which his heirs later donated for the purpose of establishing a hospital. Hamot presumably bought the Johns property for his daughter, but it is doubtful whether she and her husband, who had interests in Central America, spent much time there.

In 1854, the house was acquired by John Hill. Although a carpenter by trade, there is evidence that Hill soon developed into an accomplished builder and architect. He had been in charge of certain portions of construction in the new Court House. Later he was to design and build a series of Romanesque Revival commercial structures along North Park Row and the west side of State Street. However, it was the "Picturesque" additions which Hill made to his own residence which give it the distinct quality deserving of association with his name.

While Hill set the architectural tone for the house, it was left to a later owner-George Selden to provide the social imprint. Selden was a man of cosmopolitan background who had travelled widely. He had made a considerable fortune in the Erie City Iron Works which produced boilers of international reputation. Selden actually bought the house in 1888 for two nieces and never lived there, but it was the most opulent of the several Selden residences in the immediate neighborhood. As mentioned, the house was extended to the north to accommodate a growing staff of domestics.

The house remained in the Selden family until 1921 continuing to reflect the mood of economic vitality enjoyed by the community in the first two decades of the century. However, since World War II, the tree-lined mansion dotted neighborhood in which it is located has declined. Many of the other fine dwellings have either disappeared, or been converted into college fraternities and apartment buildings. The John Hill House itself had not been kept up by its more recent owners. The present owner has indicated an interest in completely restoring the structure and deeding it to the Erie Philharmonic for use as a musical arts building.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Representing the two opposite but popular styles of the mid-nineteenth century, the John Hill House reflects the prosperity of an emerging industrial and transportation center during the late 1800s.

# 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Spencer, Herbert Reynolds. Erie, A History, (Erie: private printing, 1962).  
The First Hundred Years, 1840-1940. (Erie: Erie City Iron Works, n.d.)  
History of Erie County Pennsylvania (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1884, 2 vols.)  
Erie Pennsylvania Illustrated, 1888. (Erie: Herald Printing & Publishing Ltd., 1888)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .26

Quadrangle name Erie North, Pennsylvania

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

1	7	5	7	5	1	8	0	4	6	6	4	1	4	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title John R. Claridge

organization Erie County Historical Society date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number 417 State Street telephone (814) 454-1813

city or town Erie state Pennsylvania 16501

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

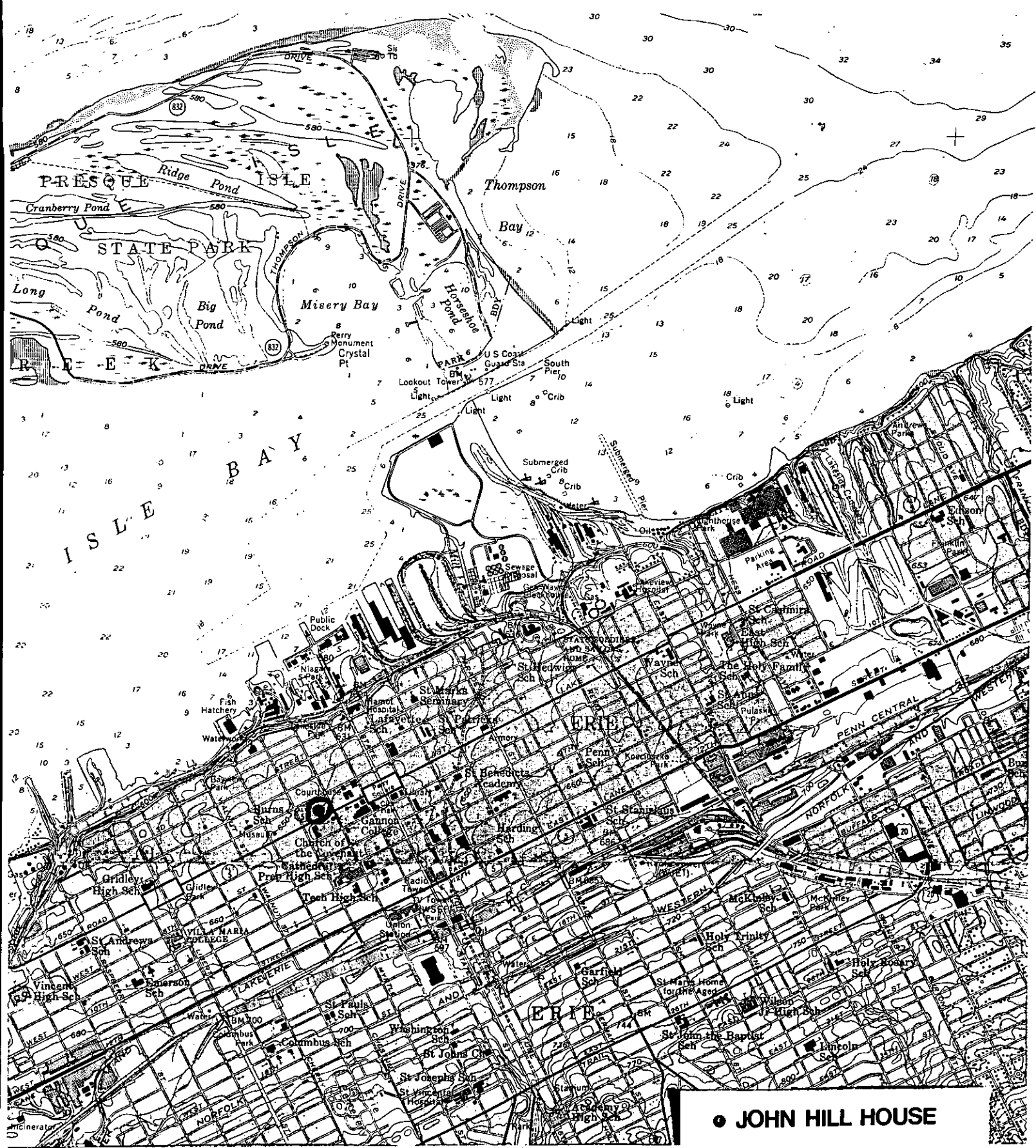
date \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration



● JOHN HILL HOUSE