

**TEMPORARY HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT  
DISCH/RISING/MORGAN PUDDLERS' COTTAGE  
FEBRUARY 2021**

**I. NAME**

Historic: Disch/Rising/Morgan House

Common Name: Puddler's Cottage

**II. LOCATION** 2530 South Superior Street

**Legal Description** Tax Key No. 5010308100  
Village of Bay View in NE ¼ SEC 9 & NW ¼ SEC 10-6-22  
Block 3 Lot 8 & SLY ½ Lot 9

**III. CLASSIFICATION** Site

**IV. OWNER** Sheri E. Aiosa (recent seller)  
607 Aspen Street  
South Milwaukee, WI 53172

2530 S Superior LLC  
Justin Koneck, Registered Agent  
10125 South 52<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Franklin, WI 53132

**ALDERMAN** Ald. Marina Dimitrijevic 14<sup>th</sup> Aldermanic District

**NOMINATOR** Joseph Paterick

**V. YEAR BUILT** C. 1868

**ARCHITECT:** Unknown, likely carpenter/contractor built

**NOTE:** This property will be included in the South Superior Puddlers' Cottages Historic District when that district is reviewed for Permanent Historic Designation by the Historic Preservation Commission in the near future. This particular property well as the other puddlers' cottages in the 2500 block of South Superior are part of the larger Bay View National Register Historic District, listed in the National Register August 23, 1982. There was concern that the recent sale of this Property would lead to demolition of the house and / or barn and new development and would impact this most intact block of puddlers' cottages

**VI. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

THE AREA
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The area of Bay View around the nominated property is the oldest section of what was platted as the Village of Bay View in 1868 by the Milwaukee Iron Company, and is located about three and a quarter miles from Milwaukee's central business district. This company was established by Eber Brock Ward on March 8, 1867 as part of his vast empire of iron and steel mills, railroads, mines and lumber companies, headquartered in Detroit, Michigan. He also had mills in the Chicago area. The sprawling plant went into operation April 8, 1868. The first blast furnace went into service April 15, 1870. He selected this location just southeast of Milwaukee for its cheap land, access to water and rail transportation (ore and coal being important) and room to grow a community that would be near the plant and avoid city taxes. It was located in the Town of Lake, a mostly rural area. The land acquired by the Milwaukee Iron Company was originally part of the Worthington Farm (70 acres) and the McDougall Farm (44 acres) as well as Paul B. Place's 5.17 acres. The Town of Lake tax rolls in 1870 annotate that the company set aside about 85 acres for the plant and the remainder for residential building lots. By 1873 the tax rolls show Milwaukee Iron Company having a tract of 6.17 acres. The total acreage differs slightly in different accounts but the above numbers come from the Town of Lake Tax Rolls. The value of the company's holding rose from \$90,000 in 1868 to \$147,000 in 1870 to \$270,000 by 1884.

It is the Milwaukee Iron Company that changed the course of Milwaukee's history, launching its future as an industrial manufacturing city. Ward's mills initially rolled iron into railroad rails and were said to be "the first in the country to use the new Bessemer process on a large scale." The Bay View plant became the second largest rolling mill in the country and the largest employer in Milwaukee county. This resulted in a workforce numbering in the thousands. Workers who specialized in the iron and steel industry were imported from England and Ireland and Wales initially, only to be supplemented with other immigrant groups such as Poles and Italians. There is much already written about Bay View and it is not the intent of this report to chronicle the community's entire history. (John Gurda, Bay View, Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Board of regents, 1979 pages 12,13; Bernhard C. Korn, The Story of Bay View. Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1980 p 52, 53)

By the spring of 1868 it was reported by the Milwaukee Sentinel that a village had sprung up within a year. The paper continued that "25 buildings had been erected, including a store and large boarding house, and 10 more are contracted for. They are mostly small cottages, costing about \$500 each, but are exceedingly neat in appearance, and very comfortably furnished...Within two months the village will contain 700 or 800 inhabitants, all of whom will derive their support from the rolling mill." (As quoted in Gurda, page 15)

The street grid in this portion of Bay View does not follow true north-south, east-west orientation as streets were aligned with the Lake Michigan shoreline. Original street names included the names of the Great Lakes such as Superior, St. Clair, Michigan, Erie and Ontario but some were later changed, sometimes as many two or three times. Superior, Ontario and St. Clair retain their original names. Other street names reflected the early families and prominent individuals of the area.

The area around the nominated property is mostly residential with a few commercial properties located on corners. To the north, at the northeast corner of South Superior and East Russell Avenue, is vacant land once occupied by the Milwaukee Iron Company, later the North Chicago Rolling Mill and then Illinois Steel. The housing stock is varied in character, mostly frame, with some cream brick and masonry structures. The scale of development is low rise with few buildings exceeding two and a half stories. Single family cottages and houses are common with some houses converted to multi-family at a later date. Some as-built duplexes are also located here and only a handful of apartment buildings are visible. Newer development has added residences of larger scale and proportions that occupy most of their

lots. One example is the tall Bay View Terrace Condominiums (1964) that towers over the neighborhood at twelve stories. It is located directly east of the nominated property.

The nominated property at 2530 South Superior Street is located at the south end of a row of puddlers' cottages, so called due to their single story and occupancy by workers of the Milwaukee Iron Company. One of the jobs at the rolling mill was classified as "puddler" and city directories confirm there were puddlers occupying the cottages in the 2500 block of South Superior Street. Puddlers "used a long metal rod to stir (puddle) molten iron in the bottom of a long furnace....Puddlers earned more than five dollars a day, and rollers almost six and a half." Other occupations at the rolling mill included rollers, roughers, beaters, hammermen, nobblers, picklers, and shearman." (Gurda p 14) The term "puddlers cottage" came to be associated with such modest cottages in the Bay View neighborhood as a nod to someone who worked in the mill.

Unlike the urban neighborhoods with consistent setbacks, more uniform lot sizes and consistency in form, this portion of Bay View retains its village-like character with residential properties of varying 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century styles.

#### BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The puddler's cottage at 2530 as being named after its first three owners, William Disch, Horace C. Rising and John W. Morgan.

The cottage sits on Lot 8 Block 3 of the Village of Bay View plat and also now incorporates twenty-five feet of Lot 9 to the north. As a result, the parcel is the largest on the east side of 2500 block of South Superior Street. This creates a generous side yard to the north and there is a side yard separating 2530 South Superior from 2538 South Superior. The setback from the sidewalk is in line with the other puddlers' cottages to the north. Landscaping is minimal with a large evergreen at Superior Street on the north side lot and a flower bed along the south side of the house. To the rear is a carriage barn that is in part one-and-a-half story and one story. Access to the barn is through the alley to the east. There are no curb cuts along South Superior.

The cottage is a one-story, front gable structure that sits on a brick foundation with an asphalt shingled roof. A small utilitarian cream brick chimney rises from the apex of the roof toward the rear. A small gabled el extends north from the rear of the house. The front façade features a center entrance with enclosed front porch that has a hip roof. The porch rests on a concrete foundation. The entry door /storm door appears to be aluminum. On either side of the enclosed porch is a small slider window set high in the wall. To either side of the entry porch is a one-over-one sash window.

The south elevation lacks architectural details but features two one-over-one sash.

The north elevation features two one-over-one sash on the main body of the house and two on the extended el. An entry is located where the rear el extends from the house and features a metal storm door. It opens to a concrete stoop and is sheltered by a metal awning and features a metal post and railing.

The rear or east elevation is simple in design. Its major feature is a flat roofed 16-foot by 24-foot addition that was constructed in 1964. The addition is located at the northeast corner of the house and extends north beyond the rear gabled el. Small horizontal slider windows are located high in the wall on each elevation.

Behind the house is a sizable one-and-a-half story and one-story carriage barn that is rectangular in footprint with a gabled roof above the one-and-a-half story portion and a shed roof above the one-story portion. A window is located in the east elevation gable end and there

are two garage doors that open to the alley. On the west facade facing the house is an entry door and two windows in the gable end. The north and south elevations have no windows.

The cottage at 2530 South Superior has had modifications over the years and the National Register nomination acknowledges these changes as part of the nature of this working class community.

The rear barn was constructed as we see today in 1894 by owner John W. Morgan as a rebuilding of an earlier pre-existing stable. We know the earlier owner, Horace C. Rising, had a buggy, sulky, cart and harness per records in the Rising probate files. That could date the original barn to 1875 or possibly earlier under owner William Disch. Per the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1910, this was the only carriage barn on the block and one of the very few built behind a cottage in the original Bay View area. Typically, only the houses of managers or businessmen had carriage barns behind their residences. Over the ensuing decades many if not most of these have been demolished and replaced with garages.

The \$100 rebuilt carriage barn structure had a post and sill foundation, used 10 by 10 timbers and was 22-feet by 26-feet in footprint. The structure was given a raze-and-remove order by the Department of Neighborhood Service in August 1967. Owner Alan French subsequently rehabilitated the stable/barn and the work was completed in November 1971. Since that time what appears to be vinyl siding has been applied over the exterior, some of which is falling off the structure.

Owner J. Kramer applied asbestos siding over the house in 1950/1951 at a cost of \$500. He also did interior bathroom remodeling (1951) and electrical upgrades (1956).

Long term owner Alan French constructed the 16 by 24 rear addition for two rooms and a bath in 1964 at a cost of \$2500. Kitchen remodeling followed in 1967.

French also enclosed the front porch in 1977. Sometime after the Historic Preservation survey of 1990, the house was re-sided with vinyl.

## PROPERTY HISTORY

Historically, most of Bay View fell into Section 9, town 6 north, range 22 east and Section 10, town 6 north, range 22 east, the area bounded by today's Lincoln Avenue to the North, Oklahoma to the south, the Kinnickinnic River valley to the west, and Lake Michigan to the east. Most of Section 10, however, lies in Lake Michigan.

This particular lot, Lot 8 in Block 3 of the Village of Bay View, was one of twelve lots comprising Block 3. Block 3 is bounded by East Russell Avenue, South Superior Street, East Ontario Street and South Shore Drive.

Lots were originally platted as fifty feet wide by one hundred and fifty feet deep. Lots 7, 8, and 9 retained their original dimensions through most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This can be attributed to the fact that they belonged to individual property owners who also lived on the premises. Lots 10, 11 and 12 to the north along Superior Street were all subdivided so that more cottages could be built on those parcels. Lots 1 through 6 on the Shore Drive side of the block are now part of a condo development.

Lot 8 first appears in the Town of Lake Tax Rolls in 1868, shortly following the creation of the plat called the Village of Bay View, laid out by the Milwaukee Iron Company to provide lots and cottages for its workforce. It is the only lot in Block 3 shown with an individual owner; the remainder of the lots that were not listed are assumed to be held by the Milwaukee Iron Company. The owner of Lot 8 was William Disch and his 50-foot by 150-foot lot was valued at

\$300, indicating a house was on the lot. Unlike Milwaukee, the Town of Lake tax rolls do not separate out the value of the real estate from the value of improvements, such as houses, on the property. The valuation of the parcel changed very little in the ensuing years, rising to \$350 in 1873 then down to \$325 in 1880. (Town of Lake Tax Rolls, Milwaukee City Records Center 1868-1886)

#### WILLIAM DISCH 1868 - 1874

Only a little is known about William Disch at the present time. He first appears in the city directories in 1868, working as a laborer then teamster for the Milwaukee Iron Company. Coincidentally, 1868 is the year his name is associated with Lot 8 in Block 3 of the Milwaukee Iron Company's subdivision called the Village of Bay View in the Town of Lake tax rolls. Bay View did not have house addresses in these early years and most listings in the city directories simply indicate "Bay View" as the location for a residence. William is shown only in the 1874-1875 directory as living on Superior in Bay View. The census enumeration for the Town of Lake in 1875 shows a William Disch as head of a household consisting of four males and two females with no details or other names given and no specific street location. (Town of Lake Tax Rolls; Milwaukee City Directory; Ancestry.com Census Enumeration 1875)

William's disappearance from the directories starting around 1877 (some years of the city directory are not in the Municipal Reference Library's collection) coincides with the period of upheaval at the Milwaukee Iron Company. A national financial panic slowed down orders for rails in 1873. Company founder Eber Brock Ward died on January 2, 1875 and the company went into bankruptcy and closed in October, 1876. The plant reopened in January of 1877 under a receivership but no William Disch appears in the directories thereafter for some time. In January 1878 the Milwaukee Iron Company was purchased by the North Chicago Rolling Mills, a Ward-owned mill that had been reorganized. (Gurda pages 18-19)

That William Disch is the first purchaser of a lot in this block of Bay View is significant. During the nineteenth century only three lots in the entire block are known to have had owner occupants per information gleaned from tax rolls and census records. With the Register of Deeds office at Milwaukee County Courthouse currently closed due to the pandemic, we have to rely on such other sources as tax rolls and city directories and census information to establish ownership and occupancy.

We will not be able to determine conclusively if William Disch built the house standing today at 2530 South Superior or if he purchased the house and lot from the Milwaukee Iron Company as it is known they constructed a number of dwellings for their workers to rent or purchase. We do know William Disch was living on Superior Street.

We do have a marriage registration for a William Disch marrying a Margaret Collar on January 1, 1866. This William's parents were Anna and John Disch and he was born in Glarus Switzerland. Margaret's parents were Margaret and John Collar. At this time it is not known if this was the same William associated with our Lot 8.

A William Disch reappears in the directories in 1891 (no occupation) at today's 2714 South Superior (old number 446 Superior), along with a Henry G. Disch (bookkeeper) and a John W. Disch (bookkeeper). Permit records for this address show that it was built in 1890 by Henry Disch.

Various Disch family members including a William moved to today's 610 East Otjen in 1892 (old number 30 Otjen), a towered house built in 1891 and designed by Andrew Elleson. At this address lived Henry G., Jerry W., and John W. as well as a William described as "farmer" (1892, 1895) and then without an occupation, presumably indicating retirement. It is not known if this was the William connected to 2530 South Superior. Sadly, this household does not appear in the 1900 census. If

this is the same William perhaps he owned land elsewhere and it would explain why he is absent from the Milwaukee directories for periods of time. A search of maps from the 1876 Historical Atlas of Milwaukee County does show a W. Disch as owning 16.96 acres in the NE ¼ of Section 23 in the Town of Lake along the lakeshore. Without the ability to check deeds, we can only speculate at this point. This could explain the city directory listing William as a farmer. (Illustrated Historical Atlas Of Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, Chicago: H. Belden & Co., 1876, Map of Town of Lake)

The Disch family grew to at least thirteen listings in the city directories and the family relationships are not clear. The same names were used among different generations and the city directories did not always list middle initials that distinguished them from one another.

Over the years of Disch ownership the value of Lot 8 shifted slightly from year to year. In 1869 the value went up from \$250 to \$300 then remained stable until 1872 when it rose to \$350. It would remain steady at \$350 through 1879, then drop to \$325 from 1880 through 1883, then climb again to \$450 in 1884, then fall to \$400 thereafter. These changes in valuation were commensurate with such valuation changes in adjacent lots. In 1887 Bay View was annexed by the City of Milwaukee and the city tax rolls, housed at Milwaukee Central Library, are not accessible at the present time.

Per tax rolls, a new owner of Lot 8 appears in 1875 by the name of Horace C. Rising.

HORACE C. RISING 1875 - 1891
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Horace Rising shows up as a 28-year old in the 1870 census, working for the Bay View pioneer Elijah Stone Estes as a farm laborer. Horace had been born in Ticonderoga, New York on March 4, 1840. It is not known at this time why he relocated to Wisconsin. He married Elijah's daughter Mary Susan Estes in Dunkirk, Wisconsin on April 15, 1868 and the couple had two children Bertha Eva and Pearl. Bertha was born in Dunkirk on August 15, 1869 while Pearl was born in April, 1873 in Milwaukee. Bertha and Pearl were both remembered in the wills of Elijah and Zebiah Estes in the late 1880s and were the only grandchildren referred to in documents. Bertha and Pearl's inherited money but their interest in the real estate inheritance was sold to the Estes children, (Ancestry.com, information on the Rising and Estes families)

In 1875 Horace Rising acquired Lot 8, our nominated property, from William Disch. Mary Susan Estes Rising died on April 19, 1876. He remarried to a woman named Margaret about whom further research needs to be conducted. They eventually had two children of their own, Harvey J. and Helen R.

Rising worked for the rolling mill at a laborer, helper and heater. Horace died of apoplexy on March 10, 1890 at his residence. His probate documents indicate that his real estate was valued at \$3,500 and that he left one buggy (appraised at \$50) one 1 road cart and one sulky (appraised at \$35) and one single harness (appraised at \$15) . The household goods were not itemized and no mention was made of a horse although having a buggy and sulky indicated that was likely. The barn that is behind the house today, but reconstructed, was likely built by Horace Rising given the information in probate records or else built by William Disch and already on the property when Horace Rising purchased Lot 8.

Widow Margaret ("Maggie") C. Rising continued to live in the house through 1891.

On June 9, 1890 her stepdaughter Bertha Eva Rising married John William Morgan who was also living in Bay View at 2502 South Shore Drive (old number 308 Beulah) . Bertha and John made their residence at 2522 South Superior (old number 322 Superior) on property that had been owned by Myron Disch, likely related to the William Disch of the nominated property. The Morgan's then moved into 2530 South Superior in 1894. It is not known who occupied 2530

South Superior in 1892 and 1893. Margaret Rising is not shown in the Milwaukee city directories after 1891. In John W. Morgan's obituary it lists his mother-in-law as Mrs. Marguerite Murray of Chicago so she apparently remarried.

#### JOHN W. AND BERTHA RISING MORGAN 1894 -1933

John W. Morgan was born in England June, 1865 and came to this country in 1873. There were a number of John Morgan's appearing in the Milwaukee city directories starting around 1882 and other Morgan's who worked as puddlers and nail feeders, helpers and boilers presumably at the rolling mills and all living in Bay View. John W. Morgan first appears in the 1888 city directory as a clerk working in the Chamber of Commerce building (today's Mackie Building). He was living at 2502 South Shore Drive (old number 308 Beulah) with David Morgan (puddler) and Lizzie Morgan (teacher) and began working for Illinois Steel as a clerk in 1890. He married Horace Rising's daughter Bertha on June 9, 1890 two months after her father's death. The two lived at 2522 South Superior (old number 322 Superior) until 1894 when they moved into Bertha's old home at 2530 South Superior, the subject of this nomination.

By the 1900 census the Morgan's had two sons, Horace C. (named after his grandfather) born June, 1891 and Bradley J. born October 1896. In addition, Bertha's divorced sister Pearl Rising Humphrey was also living with them.

John W. Morgan was shown in the census records as freight agent (1900), railroad (1910) and traffic manager at the steel mill (1920). In 1920 his sons likewise worked at the steel mill, Horace as a fireman and Bradley as an office clerk. In the 1930 census John W. Morgan was listed as transportation superintendent at the steel mill.

In 1930 per the census, the Morgan home at 2530 South Superior was valued at \$5,000 with some houses on the block valued higher and some lower.

John W. Morgan died on Tuesday March 30 1931 at the age of 65. Services were held at Niemann & Sons funeral home at 2486 South Kinnickinnic Avenue on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Hulen and Rev. Williams gave the service and Lake Lodge No. 189 F. and A. M., escorted by Wisconsin Commandery No. 1 K. T. accompanied the body. The entombment was at Niemann's mortuary. (Milwaukee Journal, 1931 March 11, page 23) Bertha died shortly thereafter in 1933.

It was under the ownership of the Morgan's that the rear barn was rebuilt per permit records dated October 24, 1894. The wood frame building with 10 x 10 timbers measured 22-feet x 26-feet. The foundation was post and sill. It was referred to as "barn" in the permits and the project cost \$100. This confirms that there had been a barn at the rear of the property under the ownership of the Rising family if not with the Disch family and that Morgan likely had a horse and carriage.

Bertha Rising Morgan lived in the house for a year after her husband's death. The house sat vacant in 1933 and Bertha died in 1933.

#### LATER OWNERS

Through the Milwaukee city directories we can construct a list of subsequent occupants/owners.

#### HERBERT AND GLADYS PETERS

In 1934-1935 Herbert and Gladys Peters occupied the premises. Herbert worked as an assistant operator for the sewerage commission.

RUEBEN F. AND NORA MOEN

In 1940 Rueben F. Moen, his wife Nora and five others were on the premises as renters. Moen was the assistant manager of the Clancy Drug Company.

George and Vera Konings

In 1945 George and Vera Konings and their daughter Betty were on the premises and the city directories show them as renters. Konings worked as a grinder at the Barclay Foundry. Mrs. Konings was one of the charter founders/members of TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) established with her friend Esther Manz in Milwaukee in 1948 over discussion at the Beulah Brinton Social Center. It was seen as a way for the overweight to shed pounds through mutual support on the order of Alcoholics Anonymous. The club was enormously popular and spread to other states and even Canada. (Milwaukee Journal 1948 April 9 page 51 and April 20 page 39; [https://www.tops.org/tops/TOPS/History2.aspx#:~:text=1948%20%E2%80%94%20Esther%20Manz%20and%20three.can%20Keep%20Off%20Pounds%20Sensibly\).&text=2013%20%E2%80%94%20TOPS%20and%20the%20Medical,genes%20that%20may%20influence%20obesity](https://www.tops.org/tops/TOPS/History2.aspx#:~:text=1948%20%E2%80%94%20Esther%20Manz%20and%20three.can%20Keep%20Off%20Pounds%20Sensibly).&text=2013%20%E2%80%94%20TOPS%20and%20the%20Medical,genes%20that%20may%20influence%20obesity) )

Albert and Susan Henk Kramer

The Kramers were the owners of 2530 South Superior by 1950. Albert Kramer's occupation is not listed in the directories. Permit records dated November 16, 1950 show that Kramer was having asbestos siding added to the exterior. The \$500 project was completed by March 28, 1951. Kramer also remodeled a bathroom in 1951 and did electrical upgrades in 1956. Susan Henk Kramer passed away at the age of 71 on November 11, 1963. Albert Kramer died in August 1966 at the age of 79. He had already moved from South Superior to 3744 South 77<sup>th</sup> Street by the time of his death. The house was listed for sale in the spring of 1964 as having a ceramic bath, carpeted living dining rooms, 3-car garage. The asking price was \$13,500. (Obituary Susan Kramer, Milwaukee Journal 1963 November 12 page 45; Obituary Albert Kramer, Milwaukee Journal 1966 August 4 page 53; Open House Listing 1964 March 22, Milwaukee Journal page 157)

Alan J. French 1964 – 2017 (estate through 2020)

The final long term owner occupant of this puddler's cottage was Alan J. French and he and his wife Violet acquired the cottage in 1964. They had previously lived at 753 East Homer Street. French worked as a salesman for the Continental Baking Company a bakery which through many mergers and acquisitions was known for Wonder Bread and Twinkies.

French is responsible for the exterior as it appears today. He took out a permit dated June 17, 1964 to construct a 16-foot by 24-foot flat roofed addition to the north east corner of the rear that added two bedrooms to the house. The \$2,500 project was completed by February 3, 1965. The kitchen was remodeled per permit dated February 9, 1967 when the arch over the kitchen sink and stove was removed and new cabinets were installed at a cost of \$700.

In August 16, 1967 the city ordered the rear barn demolished due to deferred maintenance that resulted in rotted sill plates, loose siding, out-of-plumb walls and a roof in poor condition. French worked it out with the city that the barn would be rehabilitated. A permit was taken out October 8, 1971 to raise and underpin the entire structure with new foundation and footings and a concrete slab. The walls were straightened and new wind braces added, damaged siding and trim was replaced and the doors were made operable. The \$2,000 project was completed November 11, 1971. The current garage doors show its use as a garage.



French installed a gas fired forced air furnace in August 1971. He later had the front porch enclosed in July 1977 for \$250.

It may have been around the time of the front porch enclosure that vinyl siding was applied over the asphalt siding. Permit are not required for vinyl siding applications.

The last major project of the French ownership was the acquisition and demolition of the house next door addressed at 2524 South Superior. It was located on Lot 9, one of the three lots that have been owner occupied since the community's earliest days. Lot 9 had been split at some time in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century and its 50-foot width made to accommodate two dwellings, 2524 South Superior and 2522 South Superior. The southernmost of these dwellings sat on a 25-foot sliver that was acquired by Alan French and then demolished in 1996 at a cost of \$6,300 for the house and \$1,000 for the garage. It is not known at this time why French wanted to demolish the house.

French passed away at the age of 89 on July 23, 2017, preceded by his wife Violet and son Jay French.

The house was put up for sale last year and sold by Mr. French's daughter Sheri Aiosa to developers with the name 2530 S. Superior LLC whose registered agent is Justin Koneck.

## **VII. SIGNIFICANCE**

The Disch-Rising-Morgan Puddlers Cottage at 2530 South Superior is significant for its history and architecture.

The house's history is intimately tied to the establishment of the Milwaukee Iron Company and the creation of an industrial village from scratch from what had been mostly farmland. The purpose behind the platting of the subdivision named the "Village of Bay View" and the building of worker cottages to "seed" the development was done to provide for a workforce that was close to its employer and allow for a community to develop. Not only were cottages built but lots were available free to churches. Not many communities with this background survive in a recognizable state, either having been razed for redevelopment or cleared for renewal or even removed for further industrial expansion. For reasons yet to be uncovered, the Milwaukee Iron Company only sold three lots in this block to owners who lived on the premises from the earliest days of the community. Our subject house is one of these and shows that these owners had ties to the Milwaukee Iron Company/Illinois Steel into the 20<sup>th</sup> century before the plant was closed in 1929 and then demolished in 1939.

In recognition of Bay View being Milwaukee's first industrial suburb a portion of it, the oldest residential section, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in August 23, 1982.

The architectural importance of 2530 South Superior is not in its reflection of a particular style of design. Rather it is a property type that is rapidly disappearing around Bay View, the one story worker's cottage. The one story, front gabled frame cottage was not architect designed but rather constructed by talented carpenters. They were not all identical, lined up as exact repetitions of each other as seen in many of today's developments. Some had more detail than others; window arrangement and style could differ but front doors faced the street. Sometimes there was an original porch. These buildings were not disparaged by their owners but viewed as modern and efficient with all the major requirements as a living and dining room, a separate kitchen, a pantry and at least two bedrooms. The worker's cottage has survived better in Bay View than in other neighborhoods. Such structures could be seen in neighborhoods like Walkers Point or Brewers Hill or East Village but in contrast to Brewers Hill or East Village, these workers cottage were left mostly intact in their original form. They were not moved to the rear of their properties nor were they raised up to accommodate a raised basement below. Additions tended to be at the rear of

the existing cottages if the lot coverage allowed and not many lots were cut into multiple small pieces as seen in East Village or Brewers Hill.

These cottages were appreciated over the decades and even nicknamed “puddlers’ cottages” to reflect their origin and association with the Milwaukee Iron Company.

Only in the last few decades have these cottages been looked on as throw-away buildings. Tear downs are occurring more regularly as new buyers want to leverage taller and bigger and denser residences on the lots. One such cottage was demolished just last year on S. Shore Drive for a bigger house with all the latest amenities. This nomination was submitted in response to concern for 2530 being razed in whole or in part or altered by constructing additional structures on the site, the largest parcel in the 2500 block.

This house will be included with the other puddlers’ cottages in the 2500 block of South Superior to form a local historic district in the near future.

## SOURCES

Ancestry.com. Information on all the occupants and owners connected with this property through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Gurda, John. Bay View, Wis. University of Wisconsin Board of Regents, 1979.

[https://www.tops.org/tops/TOPS/History2.aspx#:~:text=1948%20%E2%80%94%20Esther%20Manz%20and%20three,can%20Keep%20Off%20Pounds%20Sensibly\).&text=2013%20%E2%80%94%20TOPS%20and%20the%20Medical,genes%20that%20may%20influence%20obesity](https://www.tops.org/tops/TOPS/History2.aspx#:~:text=1948%20%E2%80%94%20Esther%20Manz%20and%20three,can%20Keep%20Off%20Pounds%20Sensibly).&text=2013%20%E2%80%94%20TOPS%20and%20the%20Medical,genes%20that%20may%20influence%20obesity). History of TOPS accessed on line February 21, 2021

Illustrated Historical Atlas Of Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, Chicago: H. Belden & Co., 1876.

Korn, Bernhard C. The Story of Bay View. Milwaukee, Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1980.

Milwaukee City Building Permits.

Milwaukee Journal (1880s-1980)

Sanborn Insurance Maps of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1894, 1910.

Town of Lake Tax Rolls. 1868-1886. On microfilm at the City Records Center. Starting in 1887 Bay View became part of the 17<sup>th</sup> Ward of the City of Milwaukee and tax roll information is housed at Milwaukee Central Library.

Village of Bay View. National Register Nomination. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places August 23, 1982.

Vollmert, Les, Hatala, Carlen, Jakubovich. Bay View Neighborhood Historic Resources Survey. Milwaukee, City of Milwaukee, 1990.

## IX. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Disch / Rising / Morgan Puddler’s Cottage be given temporary historic designation as a City of Milwaukee Historic Site as a result of its fulfillment of

criteria e-1 and e-5 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 320-21(3) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

- e-1 Its exemplification of the development of the cultural, economic, social or historic heritage of the City of Milwaukee, State of Wisconsin or of the United States.

Rationale: This puddler's cottage fits into overall historic pattern of industrialization that forever changed the landscape of America from the economy to the environment to residential development. Where such behemoth factories were constructed they drew a large workforce that required housing, shops, places of worship and community gathering places. Some factories located to already-populated areas; some created new towns from scratch. In this instance the Milwaukee Iron Company chose to start a community on formerly open land but while it platted a subdivision and erected some housing, it did not design or build or own all the housing as can be seen in such developments as Pullman, Illinois.

The property at 2530 South Superior Street is an important surviving example of the earliest form of workforce housing that was constructed in Bay View. It was one of only three individually-owned properties on its block and remained owner occupied for much of its history. It may have been built by the company itself in 1868 since it is so similar in form and scale to the row of dwellings to its north. It may also have been built by the first owner, William Disch since employees were encouraged to buy/build houses and put down roots. "Eber Ward, the mill's founder, who believed that home ownership produced steady workers and respectable citizens, made the houses available to his employees on easy payment terms. Interestingly, when wages were cut, he lowered the payments, and when the mill temporarily closed, he suspended them." (Bay View National Register Nomination Section 7 page 5).

This model of worker housing being privately owned instead of company owned enabled the modest cottage at 2530 South Superior and its neighbors to survive transitions in the industrial sector. Workforce housing was not new but what is different about Bay View is that there were boundaries between the manufacturing and the residential areas, created by a number of circumstances. The rolling mill did not expand and encroach into or destroy the community. Railroad lines formed boundaries that kept other factories from spilling over into the village. The same applied to the river systems. The City of Milwaukee did not grow southward immediately but at a pace that allowed Bay View to retain its own identity even after annexation to the city in 1887.

- e-5 Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

Rationale: The architectural importance of the Disch / Rising / Morgan Puddler's Cottage lies neither in its expression of high style design nor in the traditional preservation notion of "integrity". Worker housing was traditionally one story with a front gabled roof and an entry facing the street. Most were originally built on a post foundation with wood skirting cladding the area between the sill of the house and the ground. Full or partial basements were constructed later as the cottages were hooked up to the municipal sewer and water system. Windows were mostly rectangular in form, often with two-over-two sash, some having small pediments. Entry doors had transom windows. Many of the cottages just had front stoops but some had front porches such as the Disch / Rising / Morgan Puddler's Cottage

which still has a hip roof. Sometimes an “el” extended from the rear of the house, generally allowing for another entry.

The cottage was considered efficient, practical and suitable for family living in contrast with tenement houses that squeezed numerous people into one or two rooms. Unlike other 1860-1890 neighborhoods in the city, the cottages in Bay View tended to stay in place on their property and there is not the wholesale moving of such cottages to the rear of the lots or the lifting up of cottages to allow for a raised basement that held living space. When expansion was needed it most often came in the way of a rear addition or else, on occasion, adding an entire or partial story on top of the cottage. The National Register nomination recognized that Bay View’s housing stock shows alterations from its original appearance but that the form, scale, and lower density still conveyed the feeling of a small town.

The Disch / Rising/ Morgan House is a significant survivor of the type of worker housing that was being built at the time of Bay View’s origins. This can be considered an endangered building type in Bay View. In recent decades buyers have devalued the affordable simple puddler’s cottage in the rush to demolish and build bigger, taller, denser houses out of scale and out of touch with the neighborhood. The concern over the future of 2530 South Superior, be it demolition or adding more dwelling units to the site, led to the submission of this application for Temporary Historic Designation.

The rear carriage barn is an important part of the property and worthy of preservation. Carriage barns are typically associated with the larger houses of more prosperous families but in this instance a carriage barn behind a puddler’s cottage is highly unusual. The 1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows a scant few such structures behind the modest cottages. We know from probate records that Horace C. Rising had a buggy, cart and sulky during his ownership (1875-1891) and that the next owner, John W. Morgan rebuilt the barn in 1894. Unlike most owners of puddlers’ cottages the Rising’s and the Morgan’s must have had a higher income to afford to keep a horse and carriages.

This property will hopefully become part of a historic district to include other puddlers’ cottages on the block, the last grouping of such cottages in Bay View.

**Preservation Guidelines  
For The  
Disch / Rising / Morgan Puddlers Cottage**

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding the temporary historic designation of the Disch / Rising / Morgan Puddler's Cottage. The intent of the commission is to preserve the historic, existing exterior features of the building and guide any changes and restorations that might be done on the exterior.

Building maintenance and restoration must follow accepted preservation practices as outlined below. Any exterior changes such as masonry repair, re-roofing, and so on but exclusive of routine painting of previously painted surfaces and trim, will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Most certificates are issued on a staff-approved basis and only major new construction or alteration requests typically will go before the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions.

**A.      Roofs**

Retain the gable roof shape. No changes can be made to the roof shape which would alter the building height, the roofline or its pitch. Retain the hip roof on the front porch.

Locate mechanical systems and vents on portions of the roof not visible at all from the public right of way and paint them out to minimize impact. Re-roofing requires consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness to ensure appropriate materials and installation and proper construction of flashing, gutters, downspouts and valleys.

Electronic devices such as, but not limited to, satellite dishes, antennas, and so on require review with historic presentation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness. The request for the installation of solar devices will be reviewed on a case by case basis based on provisions of 66.0401, Wis. Stats.

No large rooftop construction or addition is allowed, such as a full story, as this would have a negative impact on the historic character and proportions of the building. The building must be able to be "read" as a puddler's cottage. The construction of other rooftop features, such as but not exclusive to dormers, cupolas, and so on will be based on the house's ability to support such structures and its effect on the shallow roof pitch and requires review by the Historic Preservation Commission and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

When re-roofing, ridge vents are preferable where possible and any pan vents should be located on roof slopes not visible to the street. The chimney is simple and utilitarian in design and at mid-roof and it should be retained, but it does not have to function.

**B.      Materials**

**1.      Masonry**

- a. Masonry at this house is confined to the brick and concrete foundations. The brick has been painted. Painting masonry is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date. Covering masonry with other materials (wood, sheet metal, vinyl siding, etc.) is not allowed.

- b. Re-point defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, hardness, texture, joint finish and joint width. See the masonry chapters in the books, As Good As New or Good For Business for explanations on why the use of a proper mortar mix is crucial to making lasting repairs that will not contribute to new deterioration of the masonry. Using much harder, contemporary Portland cement mortar will not make a lasting repair and can damage the historic brick. Replaced mortar joints should be tooled to match the style of the original. Do not use mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or were not used when the building was constructed. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before starting any re-pointing.
- c. In the future should masonry cleaning be necessary (to remove paint, environmental pollutants, graffiti etc.) it should be done only with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting or high-pressure water blasting or the use of other abrasive materials (baking soda, nut shells, dry ice, etc.) on limestone or brick surfaces is prohibited by both these guidelines and state law. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. The use of accepted chemical products to clean masonry is allowed and a test panel is required before general commencement of the work. Work should be done by experienced individuals as the chemical cleaning process can have a negative impact on the masonry. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before any cleaning would begin.
- d. Repair or replace deteriorated masonry with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. The use of EIFS (exterior insulation and finish systems) which is synthetic stucco is not permitted. The application of plywood, metal, vinyl or other substitute products is not permitted. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before attempting work on the masonry.

## 2. Wood/Metal

- a. The building was originally wood clad but has been covered with asbestos siding (1950) and now vinyl siding (post 1990 specific date unknown). These guidelines allow the retention of the current siding material. Should the owner wish to remove this substitute siding and return the building to its original wood cladding that would be approved and a Certificate of Appropriateness would be required. Retain any original material, if it exists, whenever possible. Do not remove architectural features that are essential to maintaining the building's character and appearance such as the hip roof above the porch, and the el at the northeast corner of the house..
- b. Retain or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the original as closely as possible. Covering wood with aluminum or vinyl or other substitute material is not permitted but, as mentioned above, the current substitute siding can remain until the owner chooses to remove it or there is a need to remove it due to weather occurrences, etc. Spot replacement or spot

repair of current cladding is allowed. Under no circumstances will siding products with artificial wood grain be considered.

#### C. Windows and Doors

1. Retain existing window and door openings. Retain original doors and windows within those openings if any are extant. Doors are not currently visible. Storm doors are metal. Windows appear to be vinyl replacements. Today the windows have one over one sash at the front and sides of the house. Do not make changes in existing fenestration by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Small vinyl slider windows are located on the north and south walls of the enclosed porch as well as the 1964 rear addition. They can be replaced with one-over-one sash should the owner choose. Do not change the size or configuration of original window panes or sash. Approval of any new windows will depend on the proposal submitted and will require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Should doors need to be replaced, there are examples being made today that would be appropriate for the building. Consultation with Historic Preservation staff is required for replacements.

2. In the event any windows need to be replaced, consultation with Historic Preservation staff is required to determine appropriate replacements. New glass must match the size of the historic glass. Do not fill in or cover openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or concrete block. Basement windows are now filled in with glass block. They can stay but the owner may remove the glass block and return the windows to their original appearance or an appearance appropriate to the age of the building.

Any original windows on the building must be retained and repaired if possible. Vinyl, vinyl clad, metal, and metal-clad or fiberglass prime window units are not permitted. It is probable that original windows in the oldest part of the building were a two-over-two style and this should be considered when any replacements prove necessary. Storm windows and storm doors are encouraged for the preservation of the prime windows and doors. The Commission has approved wood storms. Any changes to doors and windows, including installation of new doors and windows, require consultation with Historic Preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

3. Steel bar security doors and window guards are discouraged. If permitted, the doors or grates must be of the simplest design and installed so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for this type of installation.

#### D. Trim and Ornamentation

The front porch is several steps above grade, has a concrete deck and stairs, and features simple metal handrails. The side porch at the east end of the north elevation has a concrete stoop and stairs with simple iron handrails. Its metal roof is supported by a metal post.

Trim is absent on this house except for minimal bargeboards that are terminated in a notched profile. Work on the trim, gables, porch and other details will require consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

E. Additions

No additions can be constructed on the front, north or south elevations as such an addition would adversely impact the character of the simple worker's cottage. The el that extends out from the northeast corner of the house may or may not be original. Many such cottages were built with this feature. However, the 1910 Sanborn Map does not illustrate this feature and instead shows a small inset porch at this location. Permit records do not document the construction of an el.

A rear addition already exists at the northeast corner of the property, built in 1964. It appears to have a flat roof and a minimal number of windows with slider sash. This addition can remain. Historic Preservation would support its removal and replacement with one that is more appropriate to the original house.

Should the owner want to expand, reconfigure, or replace the 1964 addition the commission will review any proposal for appropriateness. Approval shall be based upon its compatibility with the primary building in terms of window proportion and placement, building height, roof configuration, scale, design, color, and materials. Additions must be smaller than the original building and not obscure the historic building. They should either complement the historic building or have a neutral effect on it.

Outbuildings

An important structure on the property is the carriage barn located at the rear with access to the alley. We know that this type of accessory building was extant during the ownership of the Rising family and may have been built by the original Disch family. The Risings were prosperous enough to own a buggy, a road cart and a sulky (a light open two-wheeled vehicle with seating for one; often used for pleasure driving and racing) and a harness. A carriage barn would have been on the premises during that Rising ownership.

No alteration can be made to this carriage barn except for appropriate repairs and rehabilitation. It is an important artifact in showing that even more prosperous workers at the iron company could live in modest dwellings and have their own horses and carriages. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the structure has served as a garage and today features two garage doors.

F. Signs/Exterior Lighting

Given the residential nature of this property and adjacent properties, it is unlikely that any signage would be installed on the premises. Should there be an application for signage, plastic internally illuminated box signs with a completely acrylic face are not permitted. Approval will be based on the sign's compatibility with the architectural character of the historic building.

G. Guidelines for New Construction on the Site



See also Additions above. It is important that any proposed new accessory structures be designed to be as sympathetic as possible with the character of the house. Small scale structures such as a gazebo or fountain may be permitted depending on their size, scale, and form and the property's ability to accommodate such a structure. The building of any additional residences on the property is not allowed and will have an adverse effect on the original house as well as the block of uniform, original puddlers' cottages. The following categories are consistent with all sites that receive local historic designation.

1. Site work

New construction must respect the historic site and location of the building. The primary building on the site must maintain the appearance of a freestanding structure as it was built. Crowding in another structure to the north side or rear will diminish the historic importance of the original house.

2. Scale

For new construction, overall building height and bulk, the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof, and individual building components, such as overhangs and fenestration that are in close proximity to the historic building must be compatible to and sympathetic with the design of the original house. New construction is to be smaller in size and shorter in height than the historic building. New construction will not extend over the top of the current house. There had been another puddler's cottage to the north of the Disch / Rising / Morgan house. From photographs we know that its height, scale and form was consistent with the other puddlers' cottages on the block. It occupied a 25-foot wide by 150-foot deep parcel, part of the original Lot 9. This is now the north side yard for 2530 South Superior.

3. Form

The massing of new construction must be compatible with the goal of maintaining the integrity of the historic building as a freestanding structure. Arrangement of windows, doors, roof shape, and foundation openings must be compatible with the historic property.

4. Materials

The building materials which are visible from the public right-of-way and in close proximity to the original house should be compatible with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of original cladding materials used on the historic building. Faux wood grained panels, wood panels, cementitious panels, panels constructed of pressed wood, metal panels or corrugated metal, or panels made of other materials would be inappropriate for new construction

H. Guidelines for Demolition

It is not anticipated that the Disch / Rising / Morgan House would be demolished, either in whole or in part. Although demolition is not encouraged and is generally not permissible, there may be instances when demolition may be acceptable if approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. All of the following guidelines,

along with those required in subsection 11(h) of the ordinance, shall be taken into consideration by the Commission when reviewing demolition requests. These guidelines also apply to the rear carriage barn. Although carriage barns were a regular feature of the bigger and more prosperous houses in Bay View, they are uncommon in connection with puddlers' cottages. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century many have been demolished and replaced with garages so as a building type they have become increasingly rare. It is not a building resource that is commonly found nor easily reproduced.

1. Condition

Demolition requests may be granted when it can be clearly demonstrated that the condition of a building or a portion thereof is such that it constitutes an immediate threat to health and safety and is beyond hope of repair. This would generally be in case of a major fire or a natural catastrophe.

2. Importance

Consideration will be given to whether the building is of historical or architectural significance or displays a quality of material and craftsmanship that does not exist in other structures in the area.

3. Location

Consideration will be given to whether the building or portion of it contributes to the neighborhood and the general street appearance and has a positive effect on other buildings in the area.

4. Potential for Restoration

Consideration will be given to whether the building is beyond economically feasible repair.

5. Additions

Consideration will be given to whether the proposed demolition is a later addition that is not in keeping with the original design of the structure or does not contribute to its character.







