

Old School House

PROJECT NOTES

Site

1.6 acre sand dune

Construction

timber frame “post & beam”

Dimensions

167’ wide by 264’ deep

Architect

Unknown

Builder

Jonas Crouse, a Douglas farmer and builder, with local ship carpenters

Materials

white pine timber frame;
clapboard siding;
fieldstone foundation

Early uses

3 to 4 classrooms plus play lot;
1st–12th grade education;
a community gathering place;
a training school for teachers

Today’s use

modern 3-level History Center with
assembly and exhibition rooms,
Art Gallery, and archives

Restoration

2007–09

Present-day owner

Saugatuck-Douglas
Historical Society

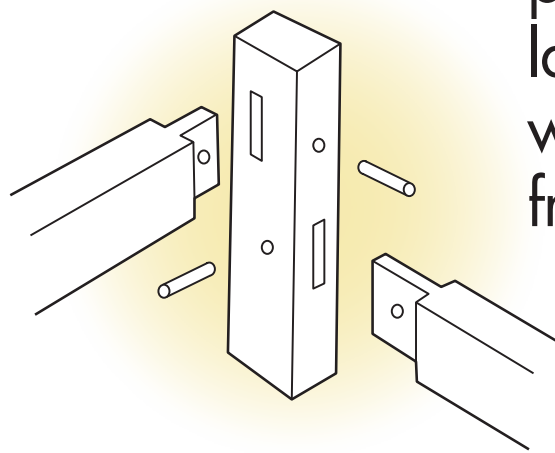
Historic designation

Michigan and National
Register of Historic Buildings

An Public

BUILDERS' NOTES

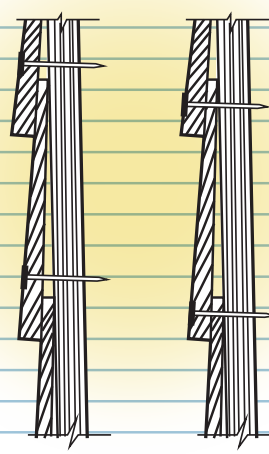
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Traditional, White Pine post and beam framing; large beams joined with wood pegs; pre-balloon frame.

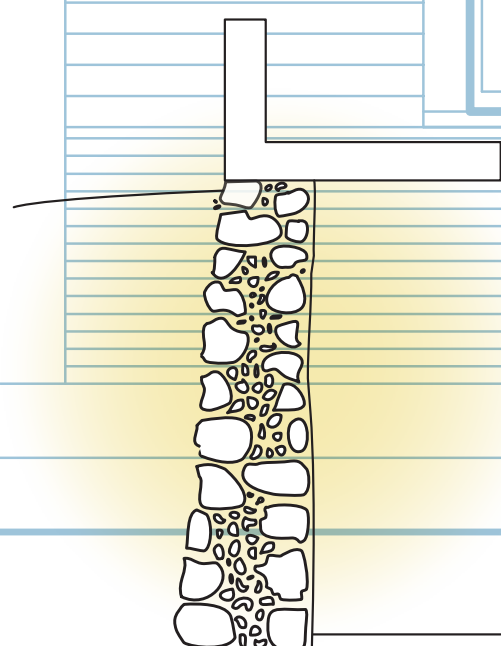
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Traditional beveled clapboard; narrower tongue and groove below first floor windows used to deflect rainwater more rapidly.



15

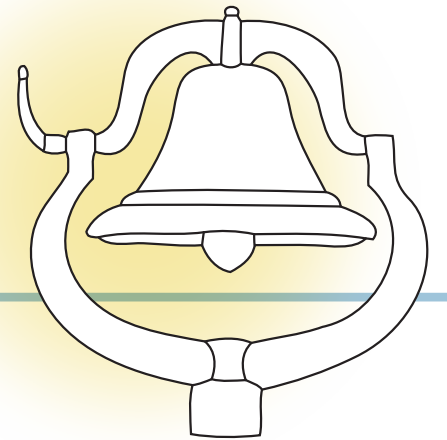
Rubble fieldstone foundation which was locally available; a traditional *Michigan basement*.



how to American School

2 Louvered bell tower, or cupola, with finial, reflects the community's dedication to education.

3 Present-day bell cast for the 1893 Columbian Exhibition.



13 Traditional Italianate cross-gabled roof.

6 Broad frieze boards below eaves.

7 Tall, symmetrically placed, fashionably *modern* windows.

9 Classical pediment portico above double door.

10 Paired panel doors at front entrance.

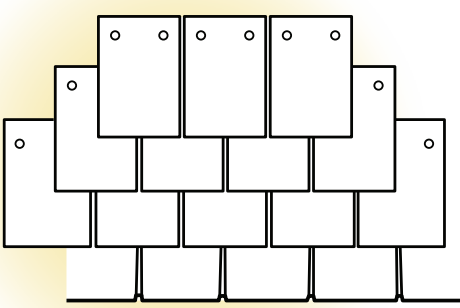
11 Engaged classical double columns.

build

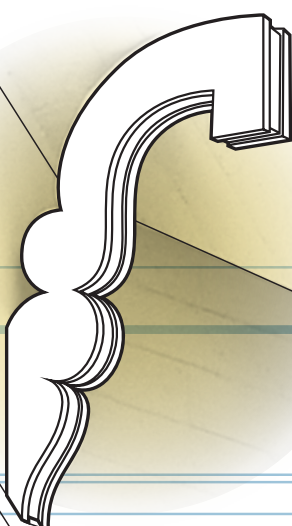
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Combination of Classical
and Italianate architectural
styles emphasizing visual
symmetry .

ARCHITECT'S
NOTES

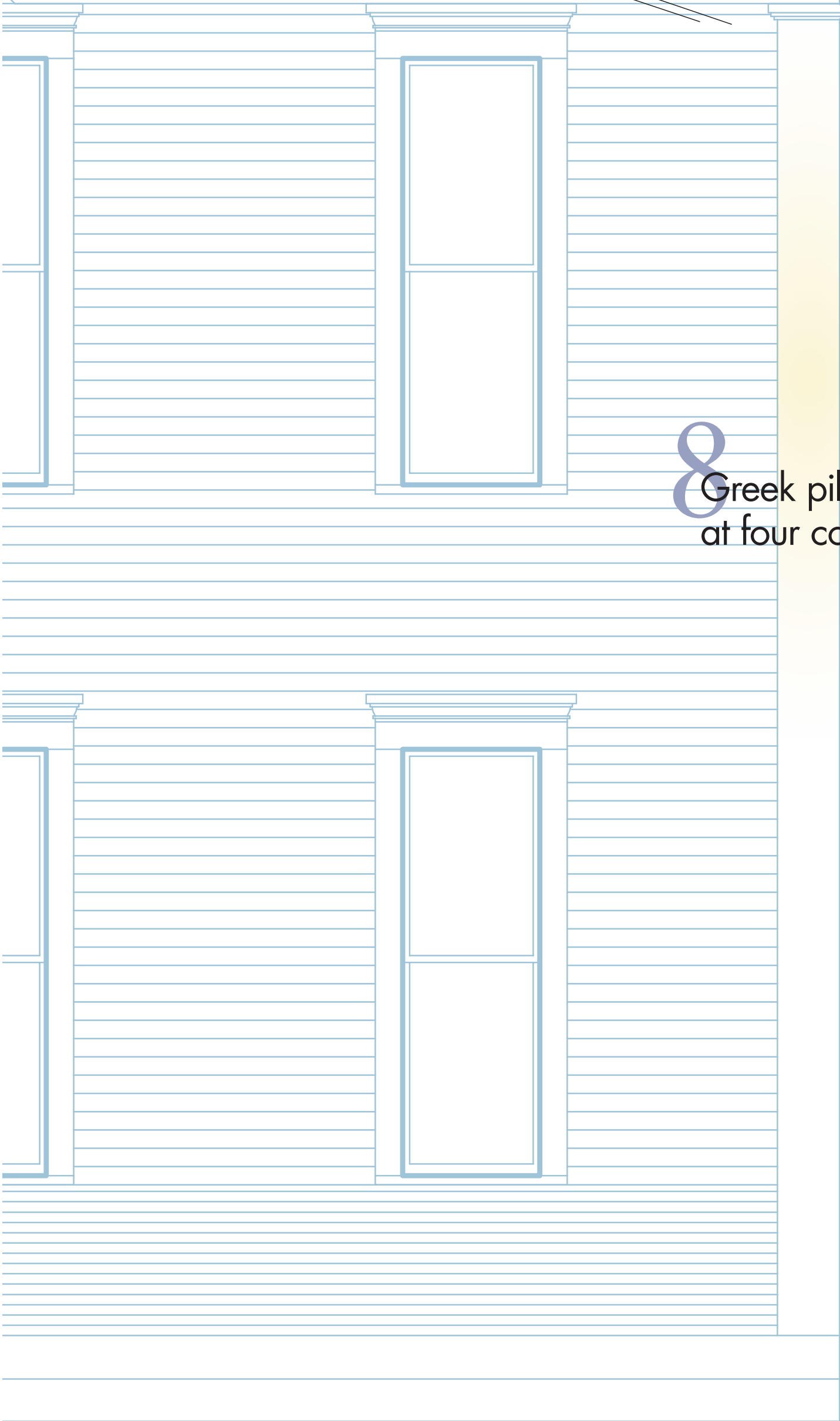
4
Wood shingled roof
from sourced from
area lumber mills.



5
Wide overhanging
eaves supported by
48 decorative brackets
or corbels.



8
Greek pilasters
at four corners.

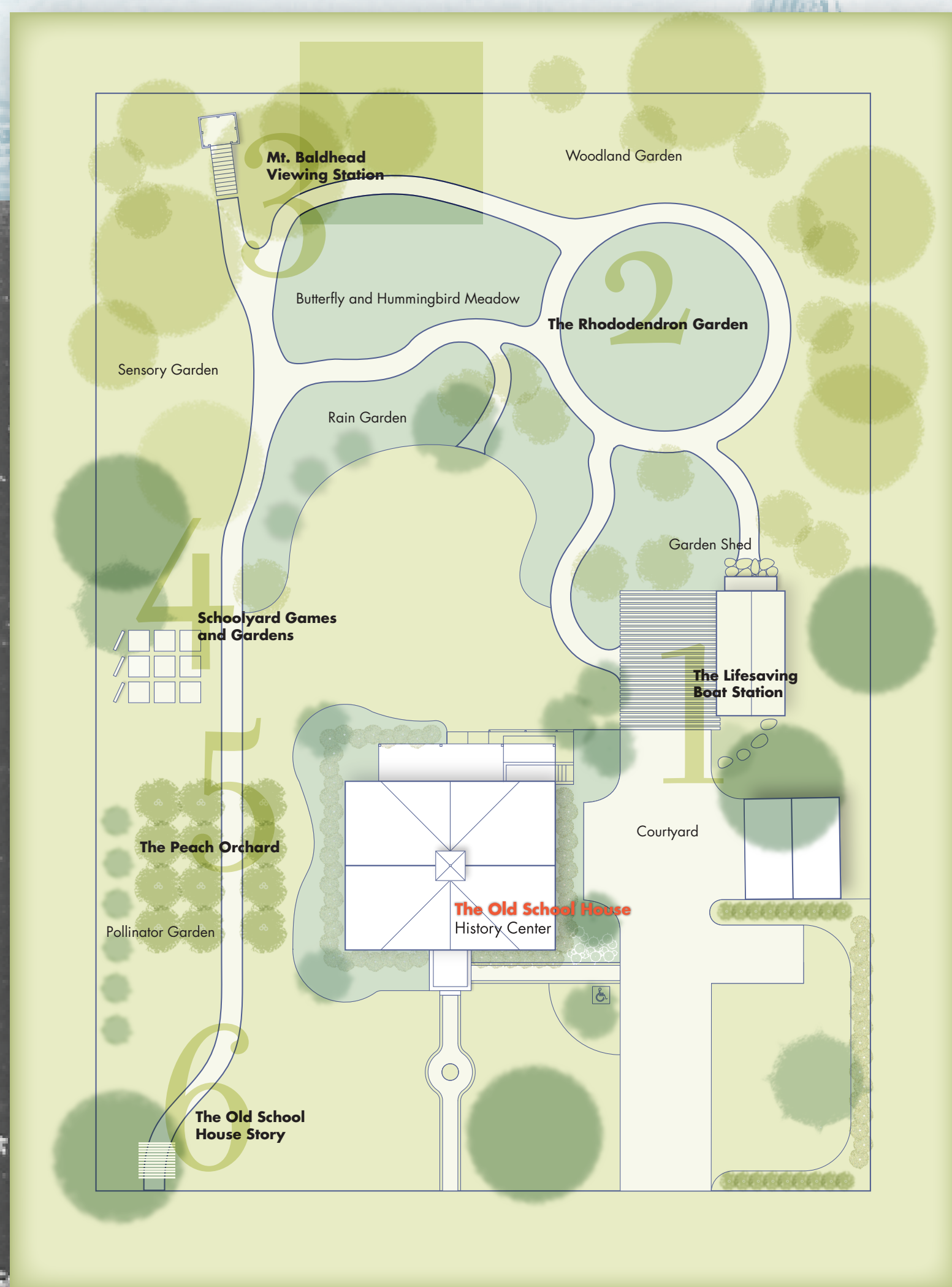


Becoming part of Douglas once again.

The Old School House History Center and Back-In-Time Garden

The School House opened its doors in 1867, replacing a one-room school nearby. Known then as the Douglas Union School and part of a new public school consolidation movement in Michigan, the school offered classes at all grades—pioneering in free high school education. The building served as a principal place for village activities and was designed to be the most impressive building in the village. Today it is the oldest remaining **union** school building in Michigan; it ceased to be a school in 1957.

Today, the structure stands as one of Michigan's finest examples of Civil War era school architecture and, once again, a place for activity and discovery. Along with new gardens, the building was restored by the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society (2006–12) as a place for the study, presentation, exhibition, and preservation of Saugatuck and Douglas area history.



*We welcome you to tour The Old School House
and travel the Back-In-Time pathway.*

James Schmiechen; display content, research, writer.
Kristi Mueller, mueller baker 2; display design.
John Capotoso; display fabrication.

SCHOOL HOUSE DOUGLAS MICH