



Dr. McCann House
212 East Main Street

This is a wonderful example of a late 19th century ‘shingled’ house, with the tall half gambrel in front, rambling Gothic plan and wrap around porch. The huge brown frame house was the office and residence of Dr. John J. McCann from the 1930’s to the 1950’s.



The John C.
Blanchard House
253 East Main Street

This fine example of Italianate styling, so popular in the post Civil War period, has remained structurally unchanged since being constructed. Built for attorney-investor -politician John C. Blanchard in 1880 by George Badger, the house is constructed of locally made two course brick and veneered with pink variegated Ionia sandstone. Many of the home’s original features have survived more than a century of use. The house remained in the Blanchard family until 1934 and was purchased from the second owner, Leon Lockwood Jr. in 1974 on behalf of the Ionia County Historical Society. The Blanchard House is open for tours, special events and provides a step back in time for area residents and visitors.

The original Blanchard home was located at 201 East Main Street which is also part of this walking tour - pictured below.



Dodge Home
E.H. Stanton House
233 East Main Street

This house was built in the mid 1870’s by Erastus E. Stanton, one time Mayor of Ionia. There were some subsequent owners and tenants and various changes were made. Additional restoration work was completed by the Lawther family in the 1980’s. The present front porch appears to have been added later, and though the architecture has many Italianate characteristics, it also has some Greek Revival style elements, making this an eclectic style.

Ionia Walking Tour

Due to its often original and unique structure, Ionia is recognized for hosting two historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places. The following homes and buildings are located in the Ionia Historic District, which is bound by Summit, Pleasant, Jefferson and Main Street. These are just a few of the many impressive 19th century homes and public buildings in our community. You won’t regret walking through the Ionia Downtown Commercial Historic District, which begins at West Main and Washington Streets and ends at Dexter and Library Streets. Ionia owes its initial settlement to Samuel Dexter, who led a group of New York settlers to the area in 1832. Only 30 years later, Ionia had become a booming community, and achieved cityhood in 1873. The combined growth of the railroad, logging and manufacturing industries before the Civil War gave individuals and their families an opportunity to build thriving businesses and livelihoods. Many prominent figures in the community choose to build homes in the heart of the city. These individuals included State Representatives, government officials, physicians and other notable local figures.

Enjoy your tour.



1
Ionian Community
Library
The Hall Fowler
House
126 East Main Street

This magnificent example of Italianate styling is one of the few existing structures of its size in western Michigan. The Hall Fowler House is constructed of locally fired brick and native Ionia sandstone. This home was constructed in 1869 for Frederick and Mary Hall. Mr. Hall was a prominent local banker, State Representative and became the first Mayor of Ionia in 1873. The Hall's only child, Marion Hall Fowler, donated the home to the city in 1903 for use as a library.



3
W. D. Arnold
House
156 East Main Street

This is a textbook Italianate house, with double bracketed eaves and double arched windows, the Doric portico and iron balustrade for finishing touches. A 1873 city map shows the W.D. Arnold house as one of only three structures on the block at that time. A fine example of Italianate styling, the home has 12 foot ceilings on both floors, tall oak sliding doors between the main rooms, and original woodwork throughout, lovely cared for through the years.



5
The Hampton Rich
House
164 East Main Street

This is a textbook example of a Greek Revival house with a massive two-tiered "Giant Portico" and east wing gallery, probably built in the late 1860's when the style was just going out. It was the home of Hampton Rich in 1891, President of People's Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Michigan.



2
The Cupola House
144 East Main Street

Another key visual landmark in Ionia, this home was built in 1878 for Dr. Oscar Long, who served as the Medical Superintendent for the Michigan Asylum for the Criminally Insane in Ionia for many years. It is basically an Italianate style, with a very distinctive Queen Anne cupola and wrap around porch to give it an eclectic look. Dr. Long also held a private practice in the home, as did Dr. Albert Grant, Dr. Edward Spaulding and Dr. Loren Benedict. The home is currently under full restoration following a fire.



4
Dr. Joslin's House
161 East Main Street

This Italianate house with two story bay and deep colonnade porch was built by Dr. Lester Joslyn in about 1875. This structure served as his family home and medical practice. At one time, the house was used as a dormitory for drivers of horse drawn cabs, and in 1936, was the office of Batson & Andres Electric Company. Longtime Ionia Theatre Projectionist Otto Batson grew up in the house before it was again purchased in the 1980's.



6
The original
Blanchard House
201 East Main Street

This Greek Revival house was built in the post and beam style in the late 1840's by John C. and Augusta Brewer Blanchard. The family occupied this house until they built the mansion down the street. Unique to his house is the use of very heavy oak trim throughout the structure.