

BUILDING WAUPACA part II RESEARCHING THE PROTOTYPE

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Types of Information I used and Sources:

1. Maps

Sanborn maps-Available from state and local historical societies. Can also be purchased on-line.

Plat maps-Lists property owners along with tracks, but does not indicate all spurs

USGA maps- Do not show all the tracks, but illustrates the lay of the land, along with lakes, creeks, swamps, and other topological features.

Railroad Profile maps-show location and number of spurs as well as bridges, street crossings, location of signals and other railroad items.

Railroad maps-corrected and revised as the track work changes. Not all buildings shown.

2. Newspapers and microfilms

Newspapers- Contains advertising and profiles of business. Try locating issues at the end of the year, the newspaper usually printed an advertising supplement with all the local businesses

3. Other Information on Industries

Gazetteers-show the name and a short description of businesses in the town

Post cards and photos

Phone directories

4. Railroad information-

Can be found in railroad historical societies or requested from the railroad themselves. Don't be afraid to ask, they may honor your request.

AFE (Authorizations For Expenditures)

May include diagrams of tracks or structures, as well as maps. Can be used to date track changes.

Physical measurements

At a minimum, measure board sizes, trim sizes and window/door dimensions. Can pace off a building length to get a rough idea. Use the sidewalk as an estimating tool; each square is a certain length. Count courses of bricks, or number of boards to estimate heights. Hardest dimension to measure is the roof overhang and pitch. Look for clues, such as shingle courses, or number of layers of roofing paper.

Draw a plan

I make a drawing of everything I model before I begin. It is a lot easier to resolve construction details and dimensions on paper than when you are in the middle of a project. Every building has certain distinguishing characteristics that set it apart from others near it. Don't forget to include these on your building to give it that prototype feel. Include them even if you kit-bash.

Make a mockup

I make a footprint of everything I build before starting. Place it on the layout and look for clearance problems. It is a lot easier to redraw a plan than to cut a building down to size. If the building is too large, I use selected compression, or leave additions off.

Check the height as well as the length and width, to be certain that everything looks "right" together.