

**Site Inventory Form**  
**State Historical Society of Iowa**  
 (December 1, 1999)

State Inventory No. 52-01095

New  Supplemental

Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship:  Contributing  Noncontributing

Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries

National Register Status:(any that apply)  Listed  De-listed  NHL  DOE

9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance Number \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Extant (enter year) \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Iowa City Masonic Temple

other names/site number Iowa City Masonic Building

**2. Location**

street & number 312 E. College Street

city or town Iowa City

vicinity, county Johnson

Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name \_\_\_\_\_

Township No. \_\_\_\_\_ Range No. \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter of Quarter \_\_\_\_\_

(If Urban) Subdivision Original Town

Block(s) 62

Lot(s) see full legal

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]**

**4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]**

**5. Classification**

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

*If Non-Eligible Property*

Enter number of:

- buildings
- sites
- structures
- objects
- Total

*If Eligible Property, enter number of:*

Contributing Noncontributing

- 1 buildings
- sites
- structures
- objects
- 1 Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).

Title  
Iowa City Central Business District Study - 2017 UPDATE

Historical Architectural Data Base Number  
52-127

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

03A04 SOCIAL/meeting hall/fraternal organization

02A01 COMMERCE/TRADE/business/office building

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

03A04 SOCIAL/meeting hall/fraternal organization

02A01 COMMERCE/TRADE/business/office building

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

06C LATE 19th & EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/

Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation 10B CONCRETE

walls 03 BRICK

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**8. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

- Yes  No  More Research Recommended
- Yes  No  More Research Recommended
- Yes  No  More Research Recommended
- Yes  No  More Research Recommended

- A Property is associated with significant events.
- B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
- C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
- D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Johnson  
City Iowa City

Address 312 E. College Street

Site Number **52-01095**  
District Number

**Criteria Considerations**

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B Removed from its original location.
- C A birthplace or grave.
- D A cemetery.
- E A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F A commemorative property.
- G Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

01 ARCHITECTURE

29 SOCIAL HISTORY

**Significant Dates**

*Construction date*  
1914  check if circa or estimated date  
*Other dates*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

*Architect*  
Charles A. Dieman & Co., Cedar Rapids

*Builder*  
Hoar & Parkington, Cedar Rapids

**Narrative Statement of Significance** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bibliography  See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

**10. Geographic Data**

**UTM References (OPTIONAL)**

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Alexa McDowell, Historian

organization AKAY Consulting

date 10/2017

street & number 4252 Oakland Avenue

telephone 515-491-5432

city or town Minneapolis

state MN

zip code 55407

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION** (Submit the following items with the completed form)

**FOR ALL PROPERTIES**

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____

- See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.
- Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

**FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL**

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or non-contributing status)
- Barn:**
  - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
  - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
  - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

**State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line**

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:  Yes  No  More Research Recommended  
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated by (name/title): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

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Iowa City Masonic Temple

Johnson

Name of Property

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312 E. College Street

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## 7. Property Description

This freestanding 3½-story brick fraternal hall was built in 1913-1914 on a vacant parcel that had previously been grounds for the residence that stood at the northeast corner of Linn and College streets. In ca. 1980 a 4-story elevator addition was built at the southwest corner of the building. The building is set well back from the street and alley (Svendsen, 2001).

The Iowa City Masonic Temple is an example of the adaptation of the Classical Revival or Neo-Classical style to a fraternal hall. The design was based on the south face of the State University of Iowa's Schaeffer Hall on the Pentacrest. The building has five bays across the front with a nearly square footprint. The tile block walls are clad in reddish brown brick with Bedford stone for trim. Its 3½-story height (four interior levels) includes a raised basement with a stone water table and an entrance and elevator addition at the southwest corner. The three center bays are delineated by four stone columns of the Ionic order rest on masonry pedestals. An entablature rests on the columns beneath the third floor. It has a plain architrave and frieze with a row of dentils along the cornice. The center bay contains a pedimented entrance, which is reached from the street level by two flights of steps. A pair of plate glass and metal doors is set beneath a horizontal transom. To either side of the entrance steps are pedestals containing the building's original cast iron ornamental light standards with spherical white glass globes (Svendsen, 2001).

To either side of the entrance doors are 1/1 double-hung windows with flat-topped transoms. These windows are set in stone surrounds with semi-circular arches and carved stone infill sections beneath the arches. On the second level beneath the entablature, smaller 1/1 windows are set between the columns with matching windows above the entablature. Like the first floor these windows are all set in stone surrounds. The balance of the building's fenestration consists of double-hung windows except for the single light windows in the raised basement level. In the first floor outer bays the 1/1 windows have stone sills with transoms above. Semi-circular arches composed of a single row of soldier bricks have stone squares at the arch spring lines and along the upper edges of the windows. Bricks laid in a stack bond pattern form the vertical edges of the windows and infill panels above the flat topped windows are laid in a basketweave pattern. Windows in the outer bays on the second and third floors have similar treatments but without the semi-circular brick arch or basketweave section (Svendsen, 2001).

The building has no cornice in the traditional sense. Instead a corbeled masonry band spans the third floor windows above the entablature approximately 3' below the top of the parapet. The corbeling includes upper and lower courses of soldier brick in line with the windowsill and lintel with three projecting courses in between. Above the entablature section, these courses are Bedford stone but in the outer bays they corbeled brick. A stone (or precast concrete) coping finish off the parapet edge with a metal crown molding set above the windows in the center bays (Svendsen, 2001).

As of 2000, the interior of the Iowa City Masonic Temple retained much of the building's original Craftsman Style millwork with most of the original 16' hall and balcony top floor still intact. The building has an overall height of 38' with a depth of 84' and a distance across the back of 76'. Changes in the building design include replacement of the original multi-light casement windows with double-hung sash of various dimensions and installation of an elevator addition at the southwest corner of the building. The lodge room on the third level had theater seats from the former Strand Theater installed during the late 1940s (Svendsen, 2001).

The Iowa City Masonic Temple was designed by the Cedar Rapids architectural firm of Charles A. Dieman and Company and built by Cedar Rapids contractor, Hoar and Parkington. Plumbing contractor was Connell and Fisher of Iowa City. The original building was outfitted with both electric conduit and coal gas piping for lighting due to the uncertainty of electricity as a lighting source at the time. The original cost for the lot, building and furnishings was \$50,000 (Svendsen, 2001).

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In 2017, the building appears as previously described without significant alteration. No evaluation of the building interior was undertaken in 2017.

**Image 01.** View of the façade (south) looking north across E. College Street



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

## 8. Statement of Significance

The Iowa City Masonic Temple is a good example of a Classical Revival styled fraternal hall dating from a period of substantial new construction in the downtown prior to World War I. The retention of the building's superb masonry features and nearly intact interior enhance its architectural significance. As a result, the building is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. The resources is also eligible under Criterion A in association with the history of the Masonic Order in Iowa City. The Masonic Temple would be counted as a contributing structure to a potential historic district should such a district exist.

### Historical Background

At the time the Iowa City Masonic Temple was being planned, downtown Iowa City was going through a building boom. Other major buildings recently completed or underway nearby at the time included the new Carnegie Library at 220 S. Linn (1904), the new Post Office in 1904 (28 S. Linn), the Paul-Helen Building in 1910 (107-219 E. Washington), the First National Bank Building in 1911 (202 E. Washington), the Johnson County Savings Bank Building in 1912 (southeast corner of Clinton and Washington), the Hotel Jefferson in 1913 (131 E. Washington), and the Englert Theater in 1913 (221 E. Washington). Construction of two other fraternal halls came before and after the construction of the Masonic Temple – the B.P.O.E (Elks) Building in ca. 1908 (325 E. Washington) and the Knights of Columbus Hall in 1930 (328 E. Washington).

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Iowa City Masonic Temple

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The Masonic Temple appears to have been the first and only building constructed on this property. Prior to acquisition by the Masons, the land was owned by the Solomon Coldren estate, which also owned the Coldren family house at the northeast corner of Linn and College streets. Prior to building this headquarters, the Masons met in the third floor of the Morrison Building that was located at the southeast corner of Dubuque and Washington streets prior to urban renewal. This was one of 15 different rented locations the Freemasons occupied prior to building the current Masonic Temple. Iowa City Lodge No. 4, A.F. and A.M. was responsible for the new building, but in later years shared space with other Masonic organizations including the William Reynolds Lodge No. 667, the White Shrine of Jerusalem, the Eastern Star, the Order of Rainbow, the Order of DeMolay, the Iowa City Shrine Club, and others. This building was dedicated on July 28<sup>th</sup> 1914 which was coincidentally the date that Austria declared war on Serbia that marked the start of World War I. A number of prominent Iowa City businessmen and civic leaders have been associated with the Masons through the years including Chauncey Swan, territorial governor Robert Lucas, S.C. Trowbridge, W.E. Shrader, Bohumiel Shimek, O.E. Van Doren, and George Koser.

**Image 02.** Historic Image – ca.1915



(Source: State Historical Society of Iowa)

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Iowa City Masonic Temple	Johnson
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## 9. Major Bibliographic References (2001)

Iowa City city directories.

Property Transfer Records, Johnson County Auditor's Office.

Tax Assessor's Records, City of Iowa City Assessor.

Sanborn maps, 1874, 1879, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1906, 1912, 1920, 1926, 1933, and 1933 updated to 1970.

Summary Sheet, 312 East College Street, Urban Revitalization Act Study Area Survey, 1981.

Hibbs, Bob, "Welcome! To the Iowa City Masonic Building." Iowa City Masonic Lodge, (AF&AM), January 1998.

Weber, Irving, *Irving Weber's Iowa City, Volume 1*. Iowa City, Iowa: Iowa City Lions Club, 1976 pp. 128-129.

## 2017: References

Iowa City Public Library. Digital Photograph collection. <http://history.icpl.org>.

*Iowa City Then & Now*. Publisher unknown.

Mansheim, Gerald. *Iowa City: an illustrated history*. Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company, 1989.

State Historical Society of Iowa. Iowa City. Photograph Collection.

Slonneger, Marybeth. *Finials: A View of Downtown Iowa City*. Iowa City: Hand Press, 2015.

Svendsen, Marlys A. "Survey and Evaluation of the Central Business District." Prepared for the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission, 2001.

Svendsen, Marlys A. "Iowa City Masonic Temple: 52-01095." Iowa Site Form, 2001.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
**Iowa Site Inventory Form  
Continuation Sheet**

Site Number **52-01095**  
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**11. Additional Documentation**

Legal Description: Original Town, Block 62, East 20' of Lot 5, all of Lot 6.

Assessor: PIN 002+1010380010

Lat/Long: 41.659513/-91.531070

**Parcel Map - 2017**

