

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

State Inventory No. 52-01487 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 Hotel Jefferson
 other names/site number Jefferson Hotel, Jefferson Building

2. Location

street & number 125-131 E. Washington 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) 81 _____ Lot(s) Part of Lot 1

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)	Number of Resources within Property		
	If Non-Eligible Property	If Eligible Property, enter number of:	
Enter number of:	Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	—	<u>1</u>	—
<input type="checkbox"/> district	—	—	—
<input type="checkbox"/> site	—	—	—
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	—	—	—
<input type="checkbox"/> object	—	—	—
	—	<u>1</u>	—
			<u>Total</u>

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)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>01D DOMESTIC/hotel</u>	<u>02A01 COMMERCE/TRADE/business/office building</u>
<u>02E COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty</u>	<u>02E COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty</u>
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>06C LATE 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/Neo-</u>	foundation <u>10 CONCRETE</u>
<u>Classical Revival</u>	walls <u>03 BRICK</u>
_____	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)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	A Property is associated with significant events.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Johnson
City Iowa City

Address 125-131 E. Washington Street

Site Number 52-01487
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)

05 COMMERCE
02 ARCHITECTURE

Significant Dates

Construction date
1913 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates
1926 (upper two floors)

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder

Architect
H.L. Stevens Co., Chicago
Builder

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, Architectural 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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Hotel Jefferson	Johnson
Name of Property	County
125-131 E. Washington Street	Iowa City
Address	City

7. Property Description

The 8-story Hotel Jefferson was constructed in two phases; the lower six floors were completed in 1913 with the top two floors were added in 1926. The hotel replaced the 1860 Metropolitan Block, which was destroyed by fire in October of 1912 (2017).

This prominent corner hotel building is an example of the Neo-Classical Style. When it was constructed it was equal in height to the Johnson County Savings Bank, which was built at the southeast corner of Washington and Clinton Streets the previous year. The addition of two floors in 1926 made the Hotel Jefferson the tallest building in the downtown until construction of the 11-story Ecumenical Towers was completed in ca.1980.

The Hotel Jefferson has a skeletal steel construction system with brick curtain walls and concrete floors and roof. Built on a prominent location, the building contains five bays facing onto both Washington and Dubuque streets. Centered entrances faced onto both streets. Following the 20th century design philosophy popularized by Louis Sullivan, the building is organized in three sections: base (storefront), shaft (upper six stories), and capital (cornice). The base (storefront) consisted of large plate glass shop windows with three rectangular multilight transoms in each bay. A stone beltcourse separated the storefronts from the second floor. In 2000 the nearly identical storefront treatment for each bay consists of black glazed brick beneath new shorter, plate glass windows set in metal frames. The former transoms are closed and fixed awnings with a gray-black exposed aggregate finish and segmental arch shape project slightly from the wall in each bay. The original cream colored brick clad pilasters separating each storefront bay are retained (Svendsen, 2001).

The shaft (upper six stories) extends from the second through the sixth floors with paired 1/1 double-hung windows in each opening except the corner bays. The window openings are framed in cream colored brick that matches that used on the first floor. Along the north and south facades, one pair of windows opens onto metal fire escapes. The original building's balustraded parapet was removed when the top two floors were added to form the building's third vertical section (capital). The capital consists of the original decorative cornice that now serves as a beltcourse between the sixth and seventh floors, the seventh and eighth floors themselves, and the cornice/parapet. The beltcourse is constructed of limestone with elaborate decorative brackets featuring classical ornamentation set between each bay. A similar motif is repeated in the cornice with modillions added between the brackets. Window treatment for the outer bays of the two top levels is the same as the lower levels. The three central bays, however, have smaller windows separated by embossed panels between the seventh and eighth floors and with round arches over the eighth floor windows. The building has a reinforced concrete foundation with dark brick used for the walls and cream colored brick and limestone trim as noted above. Brick pilasters separate the bays (Svendsen, 2001).

Original appointments for the hotel, which make it one of Iowa's finest at the time it opened included an electric elevator, a 250-ft. artesian well, and rooms with hot and cold running water, telephones, steam heat, and electric lights. During 1933 and 1934, artwork was commissioned through the WPA federal artist's project for the lobby and the mezzanine of the hotel. Mildred Pelzer painted nine murals depicting the history of Iowa City and Johnson County, which have subsequently been removed. In addition to the hotel lobby space the first floor also contained a cigar shop, a barbershop and several retail spaces. The hotel's restaurant was on the second floor (Svendsen, 2001).

The H.L. Stevens Co. of Chicago, a firm that specialized in hotel construction, designed the hotel. The firm also designed the Hohenschuh Mortuary at 13 S. Linn Street in 1917 for Will Hohenschuh who, with several other prominent Iowa City businessmen, was responsible for construction of the Hotel Jefferson. The hotel was constructed at a cost of \$200,000 (2017).

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Hotel Jefferson

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Name of Property

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125-131 E. Washington Street

Iowa City

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City

In 2017 the building appears largely unaltered from the previous description. The building's first floor continues to be occupied by multiple retail businesses and the upper stories remain in use as office space.

Image 01. View looking west along E. Washington Street



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

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Hotel Jefferson
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Image 02. View of the E. Washington Street elevation (north)



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

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Image 03. View of the E. Washington Street elevation (north) storefronts



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

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Image 04. View of the S. Dubuque Street elevation (east) storefronts



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

8. Statement of Significance

The Hotel Jefferson is a well-executed and well-preserved example of a Neo-Classical Style high-rise commercial building associated with the construction boom in downtown Iowa City in the years immediately preceding and following World War I. Its scale and design were atypical of similar Iowa sized Iowa communities reflecting the impact that the State University of Iowa had on the commercial health of the community. Because of its historical association and quality of architectural design, the building merits individual National Register listing under Criteria A and C. It is also a contributing structure in a potential historic.

Historical Background

As originally laid out Washington Street was an important commercial street with an extra wide width (100-ft. rather than 80-ft.) that extended along the south edge of Capitol Square on the west through the central business district and then past College Green Park to the east before connecting to Governors Square, the planned location for the governor's residence. Within a few decades Washington Street housed the city's most important banks, a number hotels, and a frequently changing collection of retail establishments.

By the late 1890s this property housed the Hutchinson Block, which was owned by the Hutchinson family and sometimes referred to as the Metropolitan Block (other sources date the Metropolitan Block to 1860). This three-story building housed the Guzeman Knitting Mills on the upper floors when an explosion and fire destroyed the

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building in 1912. Following the fire, the land was leased to the Iowa City Hotel Company, a hotel development company led by a number of prominent Iowa City businessmen. William P. Hohenschuh, operator of a mortuary and vice-president of the First National Bank, was the new company's president. Vice-president was F.W. Kemmerle and Secretary was A.J. Feeney who operated the Iowa Brewing Co. at the northwest corner of Iowa and Gilbert Streets. Treasurer was George S. Carlson, Sr. who owned utility interests. Corporate counsel for the company was Ralph Otto, a former Iowa City mayor. The same group formed the Jefferson Hotel Company to manage the new hotel's operation.

Construction of the building began on March 1, 1913 and the hotel opened November 11, 1913. The architectural firm responsible for the building design was a Chicago firm that specialized in hotel design, the H.L. Stevens Company. Its construction allowed the opportunity for later expansion through the addition of floors – a technique that was employed by a number of hotels at the time. After an auspicious dedication ceremony the hotel was put in service with the claim that it was the “only fireproof hotel in Iowa City.” Upon opening it went by the name “Hotel Jefferson” with Thomas Hoffman as its manager. It was one of eight downtown hotels in Iowa City at the time.

Other first floor retail tenants at the time it opened were the Stewart Shoe Company with Hal Stewart, proprietor; the Harvat & Stach dress shop with Emma Harvat and Ann Stach, owners; C.A. Schmidt's barber shop, and Racine's Cigar Store No. 2, one of three cigar stores operated by Fred Racine downtown. Of these businesses, only the Stewart Shoe Company had previously been located in the Metropolitan Block prior to the fire. By 1930 the hotel was under the management of a different hotel operating company with George Kohler as manager. It was renamed the “Jefferson Hotel” and operated as “A Warden Hotel.” By the mid-1930s the hotel became a stop for regional and cross-country motorcoaches and the Jefferson Hotel Dining Room served a 25¢ breakfast and a 50¢ lunch to travelers and overnight patrons. By 1940 the local chamber of commerce had its offices here.

With the completion of Interstate 80 and the development of new motels along the freeway and along the U.S. Highway strip in Coralville in the 1960s, the landlocked Jefferson Hotel declined its occupancy. In 1967 the property was sold to the University of Iowa Facilities Corporation and has been used for office space for various University of Iowa departments and programs since then. Various retail tenants continue to occupy first floor spaces and the east front of the building now opens onto the Downtown Pedestrian Mall. The Jefferson continues to be the downtown's most striking visual landmark (Svendsen, 2001).

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Image 05. Historic Image: View looking east along E. Washington Street – 1913



(Image courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.)

This image records the Hotel Jefferson anchoring the end east of the block prior to the addition of the building's upper stories. The Johnson County Savings Bank is seen on the opposite corner (foreground).

Image 06. Historic Image: View looking west along E. Washington Street – 1930



(Image courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.)

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Address

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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.

Weber, Irving. *Irving Weber's Iowa City - Volume 1*. Iowa City, Iowa: Iowa City Lions Club, 1976, pp. 40-43.

"Iowa City Hotels, Motels, Restaurants - Jefferson Hotel, still under collection, 1913" and "Iowa City Hotels, Motels, Restaurants - Jefferson Hotel, ca. 1940." Photograph Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Iowa City, Iowa.

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. "Hotel Jefferson: 52-01487." Iowa Site Form, 2001.

Newspapers

Iowa City Press-Citizen. "Jefferson Hotel was hub of downtown." October 14, 2005.

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Name of Property	County
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11. Additional Documentation

Legal Description: Original Town, Block 61, Lot 1 except 40' North and South by 70' East and West in Southeast corner.

Assessor: 002+1010378001

Latitude/Longitude: 41.660175/-91.533394

Parcel Map - 2017

