

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)

Name of Building or Site

Common
Halvorson Mound Group

Historic (if applicable)

Location

Street Address
5395 Yahara River Road

Aldermanic District
Eighteenth

Classification

Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.)
Indian Mounds

Zoning District
AW

Present Use
County park

Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's office)

Name (s)
Dane County

Street Address
City County Building
Room 114
Madison, WI 53709

Telephone Number
266-4172

Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)

Parcel Number
0809-231-0094-7

Legal Description
See attached

Condition of Property

Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins)
Good

Altered or Unaltered?
altered

Moved or Original Site?
not applicable

Wall Construction

not applicable

Legal Description
Halvorson Mound Group
Yahara Heights County Park

SEC 23, T8N, R9E PART OF S 1/2 OF NE 1/4
& PART OF NW 1/4 OF SE 1/4 COM E 1/4
COR, TH N 52 DEG 31 MIN W 1658.7 FT TO
POB, TH S 40 DEG 00 MIN W 555.17 FT, TH
S 27 DEG 45 MIN E 120.41 FT, TH S 58 DEG
30 MIN E 127 FT, TH N 40 DEG 50 MIN E 28
FT, TH N 33 DEG 50 MIN W 143 FT, TH N 03
DEG 15 MIN E 130 FT, TH S 73 DEG 45 MIN
E 261 FT, TH N 84 DEG 30 MIN E 134 FT,
TH S 81 DEG 00 MIN E 100 FT N/1 TO WLY
BANK YAHARA RIVER, TH SWLY ALONG SD BANK
TO THE E-W 1/4 LINE, TH W ALONG SD LINE
TO S 1/4 COR NE 1/4, TH S 0 DEG 10 MIN W
186.4 FT, TH S 58 DEG 30 MIN W 50.67 FT,
TH S 86 DEG 40 MIN W 235 FT, TH S 26 DEG
40 MIN W 135 FT, TH N 77 DEG 00 MIN W 80
FT, TH N 13 DEG 45 MIN E 118 FT, TH N 60
DEG 15 MIN E 50 FT, TH N 67 DEG 40 MIN W
468 FT, TH S 81 DEG 00 MIN W 135 FT, TH
S 63 DEG 50 MIN W 204 FT, TH S 20 DEG 40
MIN W 45 FT, TH S 62 DEG 30 MIN W 164 FT
TH S 31 DEG 00 MIN W 185 FT, TH N 62 DEG
30 MIN E 150 FT, TH W 125 FT TO N-S 1/4
LINE, TH N ALONG SAID LINE TO S COR OF
YAHARA HEIGHTS PLAT, TH N 57 DEG 51 MIN
E 943.47 FT, TH N 37 DEG 29 MIN EAST
559.58 FT, TH SELY TO A POINT THAT IS
1658.7 FT N 52 DEG 31 MIN W OF THE E 1/4
COR AND POB.
& PRT NE 1/4 SE 1/4 SD SEC W OF YAHARA R
IV.

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance.

The Halvorson Mound Group currently consists of three effigy mounds located in Yahara Heights County Park, Dane County, Wisconsin. These include a panther and bear effigy and an oval mound. The mounds are now located within a woodlot at the northern end of Yahara County Park. Past descriptions indicate that this group originally contained five mounds.

Charles E. Brown first recorded this mound group along with the Reverend F. A. Gilmore on July 20, 1911 (Brown 1912a). Brown (1912a) reports the presence of three effigies, an oval, and a linear mound. Brown (1912b) next described the mound group as being located on the Halvorson Farm on the north side of the Yahara River, and consisting of three effigies and an oval mound. The mounds are separated by 200-300 feet, and are located in a pasture with scattered clumps of oak trees. The individual mounds are described as follows (Figure 1):

- 1) A panther effigy 228 feet long and ca. 2.5 feet high, the head pointing north, located within 35 feet of the river bank.
- 2) Similar to the panther effigy mound, but lacking the long, tapering caudal assemblage. This mound is 85 feet long, and 17 feet wide at its widest.
- 3) An oval mound 50 feet long, 30 feet wide, and three feet high.
- 4) A wildcat/lynx, with a length from head to tail of 144 feet. The tail is 40 feet long, the legs are 28.25 feet and 31 feet long, the body is 20 feet across at its widest, and the mound is about 2.5 feet high.

A single linear mound (the fifth mound mentioned in Brown 1912a) is described as being located on an elevation "hundreds of feet north" of this mound group (Brown 1912b). It is described as being 210 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 1.5 feet high. The mound is oriented northeast to southwest, and is surrounded by oak trees (Brown 1912b).

By 1979, Peterson (1979) and Salkin (1983) reported that only the panther and bear effigies still remained. Peterson described the panther as Brown's Mound No. 1. It had a length of almost 200 feet and a height of almost 2 feet, with the mound having two small potholes in the body area. The second surviving mound is a bear effigy, most probably Brown's Mound No. 2. This mound is about 72 feet long and 20 inches high, with a single pothole in its body.

Johns (n.d.) next mapped the mound group as part of the Dane County Indian Mounds Identification Project (Figure 2). He reports that the effigy mounds are in the same condition as they were in 1979, although now a large pothole is present near the head of the panther mound. Johns (n.d.) was also able to locate what he felt to be a remnant of Brown's oval mound No. 3. The two other mounds are thought to have been destroyed by agricultural activities prior to the 1970s (Johns n.d.).

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

Original Owner People of the Late Woodland Stage Effigy Mound Tradition	Original Use ceremonial and funerary
Architect or Builder People of the Late Woodland Stage Effigy Mound Tradition	Architectural Style not applicable
Date of Construction ca. 800-1100 A.D.	Indigenous Materials Used not applicable

List of Bibliographical References Used

- Brown, Charles E.
 1912a Fourth Addition to the Record of Wisconsin Antiquities. The Wisconsin Archeologist o.s. 10(4):165-185.
- 1912b Undescribed Groups of the Lake Mendota Mounds. The Wisconsin Archeologist 11(1):7-34.
- Johns, Larry
 n.d. Draft copy of nomination. Ms. on file, Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
- Peterson, Robert
 1979 The Wisconsin Effigy Mounds Project, I. Luther College Archaeological Research Center. Ms. on file, Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.
- Salkin, Philip H.
 1983 A Literature and Records Search on the Prehistoric Cultural Resources of Dane County, Wisconsin. Reports of Investigations No. 111. Archaeological Consulting and Services, Verona.

Form Prepared By:

Name and Title

Paul Kreisa and Larry Johns; and Katherine H. Rankin, preservation planner.

Organization Represented (if any)

State Historical Society of Wisconsin and City of Madison

Address

P.O. Box 2985
 Madison, WI 53701-2985

Telephone Number

266-6552

Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

February 10, 1993

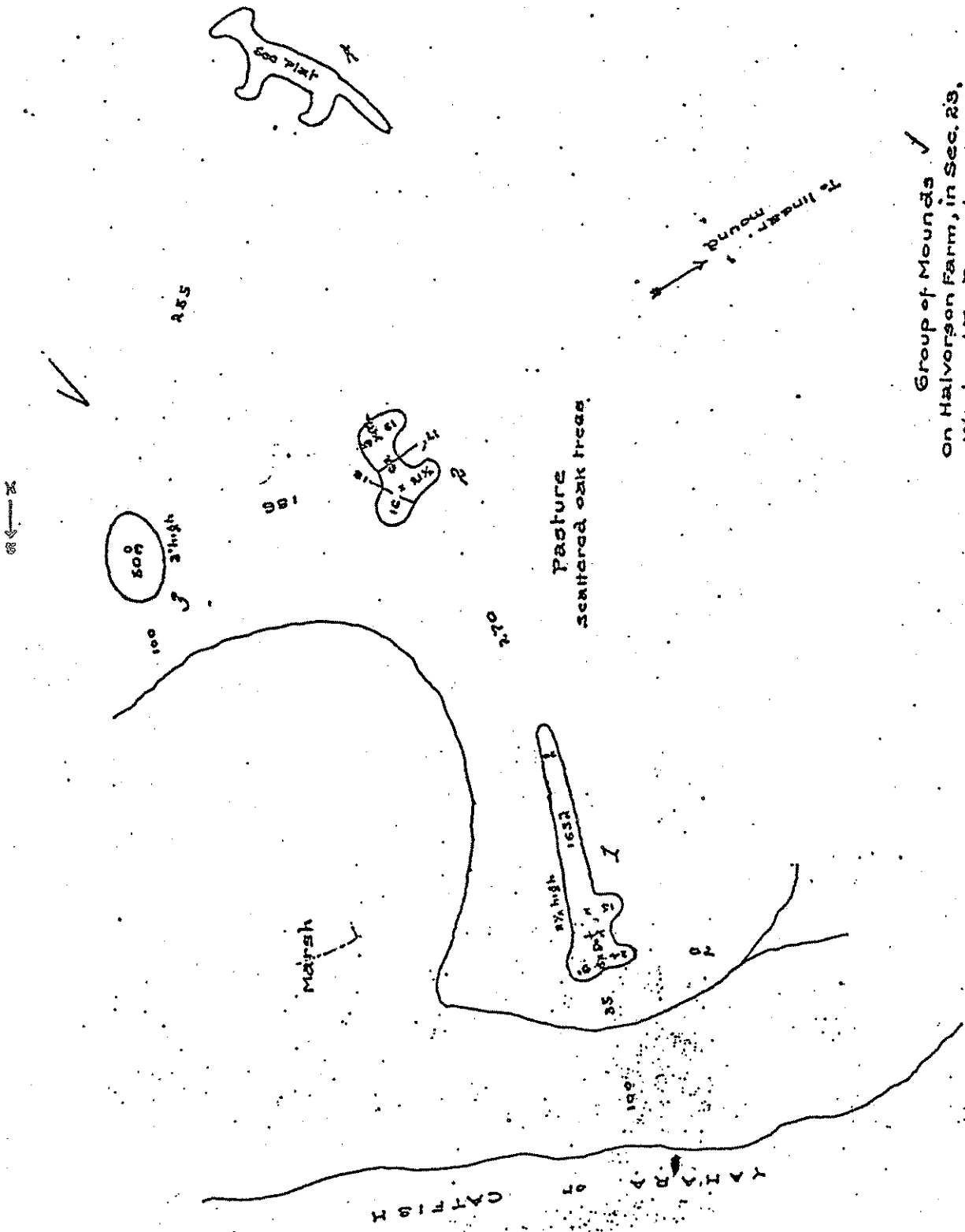
City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (4)

Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:

The Halvorson Mound Group contains at least two well preserved effigies out of a total of five original mounds located on the north shore of the Yahara River, in the Yahara Heights County Park, Dane County, Wisconsin. The two effigy mounds appear to be in the same condition as when they were first described in 1912 (Brown 1912b). In addition, a small remnant of the oval may be present, while the final two mounds have been destroyed. Aboriginal mounds derive their significance from their shape, location within a group, and the deposits within them. The extant mounds within the Halvorson Mound Group retain sufficient integrity to yield significant information on the Late Woodland Stage of Madison's prehistory.

The mounds date to the Late Woodland Effigy Mound Tradition based on their similarity with other dated mound types. The mounds retain a great deal of integrity individually, and represent the last intact members of a larger group. As such, the site is likely to yield information important to prehistory. Potential areas of research include the dating of mound construction, the function of effigy mounds and mound groups, the role of mound groups within the Late Woodland socio-economic systems, and the meaning of the mounds within the Late Woodland world view.

NOTE: While the entire parcel is nominated as a Madison Landmark, it is the intent of this nomination to protect only the Indian mounds and their environs. Therefore, building permits and other land disturbances will be reviewed by the Landmarks Commission only for an area within 100 feet of the boundaries of the mound group as shown on Figure 2.



Group of Mounds ✓
 on Halvorson Farm, in Sec. 29,
 Westport Tp., Dane Co., Wis.
 Notes taken by Chas. E. Brown,
 July 20, 1911.
 Not drawn to scale.

Brown MSS Box 21

Figure 1. 1911 map of the Halvorson Mound Group. Halvorson Mound Group, Town of Westport, Dane Co., Wi.

YAHARA HEIGHTS MG

47 DA-253 Town of Westport Dane County, Wisconsin
(as it existed on June 13, 1991)

Site surveyed by Robert A. Wasserman, James P. Scherer, Fabian Carrison and L. Johns
Sketches by Steve Rossmass, Eric Rappert, Dave Hebers, Neil Sturgeon, Jean
Price, Kathy DeBea, John Gutrook, Kathleen Allen and Dana Striving

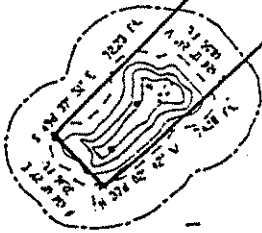
This site was surveyed as a part of the Indian Mounds Identification Project of the Dane County Parks Department using a Liets Set 4A Total Station. Directional control is by sunshots and distances determined by CPA. Our thanks to Liets Corporation and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering for the use of the Total Station.

This site was originally sketched by Charles E. Brown on July 20, 1911 and he sketched five mounds at that time. Presently, only the panther, lynx and a small conical foot identified by Brown remain. The linear, oval and effigy (lynx) have been destroyed by cultivation prior to the sites acquisition by Dane County. It is very possible that subsurface features of these mounds still survive. The panther and lynx are in fairly poor condition due to rotting and the small burrows, Dane County Parks property. The process of turning the protected woodlot that the mounds occupy into a preserve/look savannah. There are presently no known threats to this site.

Property Owners Dane County Parks
Parcel # 0009-E31-0034-7 (City of Hudson Parcel #)
Mound Areas (including State 3 ft setback)
Mound 1 - 2915.20
Mound 2 - 3412
Mound 3 - 7630.22
Total 10806.62 Sq. Ft.

State Plane Coordinates of CP on panthers
- 1927 MAG
- 1150.00 ft. to 40 ft.
X = 216343.00
Y = 421641.3

Site boundary



Line desc. of NE corner
S 87° 37' 32" E 17.91 ft.
S 84° 30' 32" E 19.53 ft.
S 84° 07' 44" E 17.43 ft.
N 84° 37' 44" E 18.97 ft.

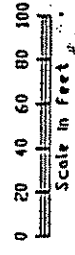
N 89° 21' 43" E 106.91 ft.

S 86° 51' 43" E 1153.73 ft.

SURVEY NQ10: Concrete monument with a brass cap found at the center of section 23

LEGEND

- ④ Mound w/panthers to 1 ft. panthers
- State of Wisconsin 9 ft. setback
- Dane County 23 ft. setback
- △ Contour Point
- ⊕ Center Section Corner
- ⊙ Boundary
- PT



Sewer Line Access

Yahara River

True-East

Figure 2. Current view of Halvorson Mound Group. Halvorson Mound Group, Town of Westport, Dane Co., Wi.