

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

Name of Building or Site

Common

Chi Phi Fraternity House

Historic (if applicable)

Chi Phi Fraternity House

Location

Street Address

610 N. Henry Street, aka
 200 Langdon Street

Aldermanic District

Eighth

Classification

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

Building

Zoning District

R6

Present Use

Fraternity House

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

Name (s)

Kappa of Chi Phi Alumni Association - Craig Roberts (President)

Street Address

1609 Droster Road
 Madison, WI 53716

Telephone Number

(608) 221-1609

Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)

Parcel Number

0709-144-1938-2

Legal Description

SE 176 feet of NE 58 feet of
 Block 4, Original Plat.

Condition of Property

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

Good

Altered or Unaltered?

Altered

Moved or Original Site?

Original site

Wall Construction

Sandstone

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance.

In the heart of the Langdon Street Historic District, on the northwest corner of Langdon and Henry Streets, sits the Chi Phi Fraternity house. A handsome example of the Tudor revival style, the Chi Phi Fraternity house features a steeply pitched roof, crenelated parapets and false half timber and stucco construction. The building was designed, and later built, in 1928 by Law, Law & Potter Architects. The primary materials of construction are limestone (rubble stone) and cast stone with steel casement windows and a shingle roof.

The building has served as the residence of the Chi Phi Fraternity since it was built and the residents have kept it in good condition, with minor interior alterations over the years. The exterior of the building, featuring the original casement windows, remains unchanged.

Inside, the ground floor still retains its wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, with wood trim highlighting each room. The living room features a cathedral ceiling with brass chandeliers. A stone fireplace and detailed woodwork outlining each of the windows can also be found in this room. The plaster ceiling in the library is highlighted by detailed artwork taken from the Fraternity crest.

Up on the second and third floors, the terrazzo floors and plaster walls and ceilings are still intact and in good condition. Most of the original dormitory rooms and studies have been partitioned and converted into single and double occupancy living quarters.

The basement has experienced the most alterations. Some of the walls have been removed and most of those remaining have been covered with wood paneling. A limestone fireplace was replaced with fieldstone and has been sealed for safety purposes. Finally, a laundry facility occupies the space that was, at one time, a kitchen.

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

Original Owner Kappa of Chi Phi Alumni Assoc.	Original Use Fraternity House
Architect or Builder Law, Law & Potter Architects	Architectural Style Tudor revival style
Date of Construction 1928	Indigenous Materials Used Sandstone

List of Bibliographical References Used

1. City Directories
2. Tax Records
3. Kappa of Chi Phi Chapter Archives
4. A Monograph of the Works of Law, Law and Potter Architects, Madison.
No publisher, 1937.

Form Prepared By:

Name and Title

David R. Wyatt, Secretary; Craig Roberts, President
and Katherine Rankin, Preservation Planner

Organization Represented (if any)

Kappa of Chi Phi Alumni Association and City of Madison

Address

1609 Droster Road
Madison, WI 53716

Telephone Number

(608) 221-1609 and 266-6552

Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

12/30/93 and 3/2/94

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

Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:

The Chi Phi Fraternity House is architecturally significant as a handsome example of the Tudor Revival style. It is also one of the best examples of noted local architects Law, Law and Potter's work in this style. It is one of the most accomplished designs for the many fraternity and sorority houses that were built along Langdon Street in the 1920s and it is also significant as an excellent, late example of the use of our indigenous material, sandstone.

Historical Background

In 1919 Chi Phi Fraternity purchased the property on which this beautiful house now stands. The present house was built in 1928 and is now conservatively estimated at \$250,000. The Chi Phi Fraternity house is in nearly original condition, with minor internal alterations made over the years to provide additional living space.

In late 1824, the Chi Phi Society was founded at the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University). Some time later, the Chi Phi Fraternity and the Secret Order of Chi Phi were founded at the University of North Carolina and Hobart University, respectively. Then, in 1872, these various orders of Chi Phi were united into the Chi Phi Fraternity. The Chi Phi Fraternity as we know it today is the oldest national fraternity still in existence.

The Wisconsin (Kappa) Chapter of Chi Phi was founded in the spring of 1915 when the Red Triangles Club, a local fraternity, was granted a charter. The Red Triangles was organized in 1911 for the purpose of bringing together the leaders of the college. The Chi Phi Fraternity believes that when a man comes to the University his prime purpose is to gain an education. Chi Phi believes that education should be scholastic, athletic and social. Over the years, Wisconsin Chi Phis have done well in scholarship, athletics, activities and every other aspect of University life. In fact, in recent years, members of the Chapter were contributing members to the *Badger*, the *Daily Cardinal*, and the *Wisconsin Engineer*. The house has consistently maintained a scholastic average well above the University average. Chi Phi always ranks in intramural athletics, including several first places in recent years in hockey, football and basketball.

The Kappa Chapter of Chi Phi also boasts numerous prominent alumni including Irwin Meier, the Publisher of the *Milwaukee Journal*; Chuck Robb, U.S. Senator, Virginia; John Weaver, Chancellor, University of Wisconsin; Neil Burmeister, President, The Johnson Company; and Bill Strang, Dean, UW School of Business.

Architectural Significance

The firm of Law, Law and Potter was one of two premier architectural offices in Madison during the post-World War I era. James R. Law founded his own firm in 1914 and made his brother, Edward, a partner in 1919. Ellis Potter became a partner in 1925. Law, Law and Potter designed some of the most important commercial and institutional buildings in Madison, including the Gay Building, the Tenney Building, the Wisconsin Power and Light building, First Congregational Church,

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (5)

West High School and Longfellow School. In addition, they designed some of the finest Period Revival style houses in Madison, Maple Bluff and Shorewood Hills.

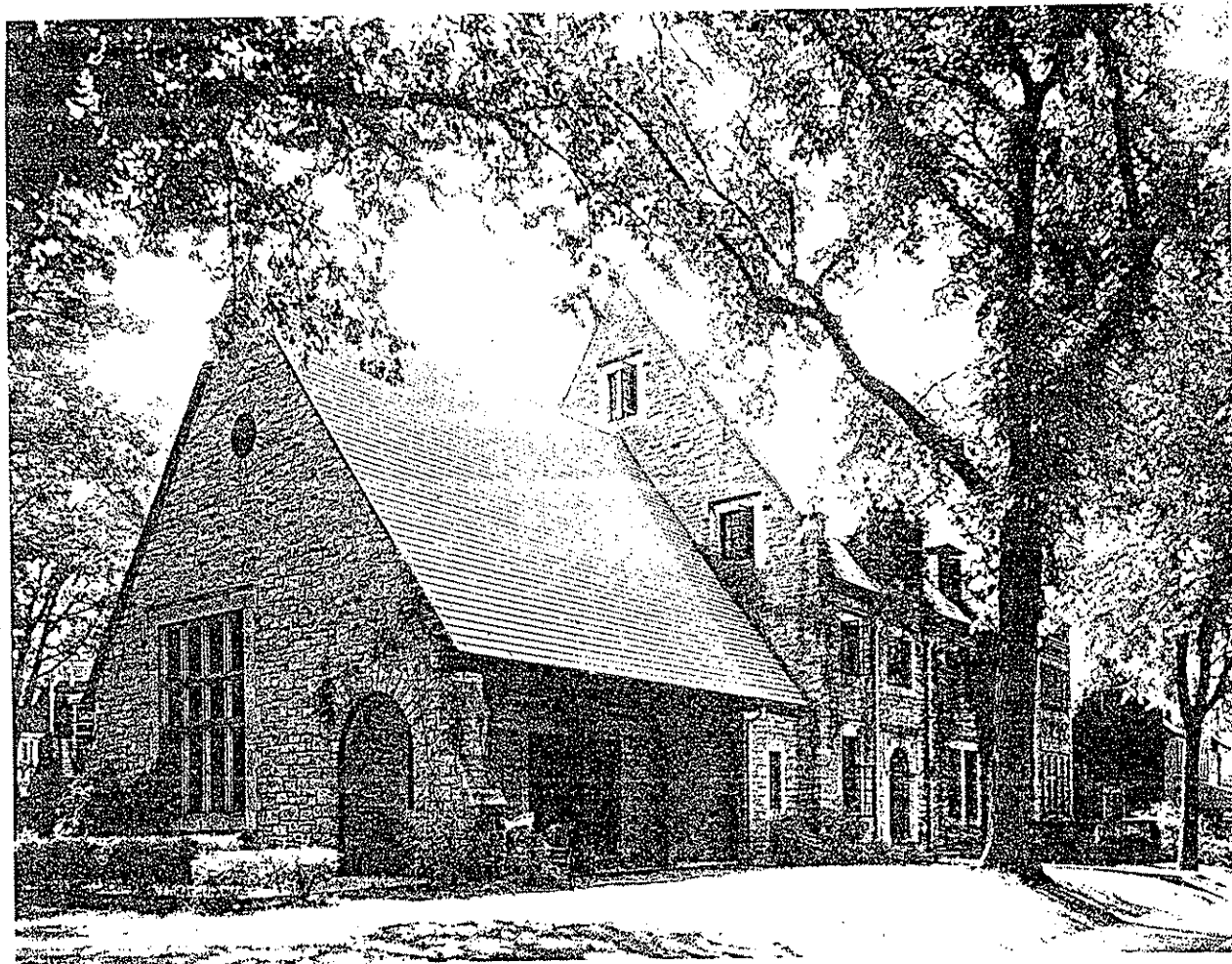
Law, Law and Potter designed at least fifteen sorority and fraternity houses. In 1937 the firm produced a monograph of some of their finest works. Included in the monograph were five sorority and fraternity houses: Phi Gamma Delta (16 Langdon Street), Sigma Alpha Epsilon (627 North Lake Street), Acacia (108 Langdon Street), Phi Mu (22 Langdon Street) and Chi Phi.¹ The Phi Gamma Delta house is a stone Tudor Revival style building that is already listed as a Madison Landmark. The original design of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house was an elegant example of Georgian Revival style, but the building has suffered from insensitive alterations. The Acacia house is an accomplished version of the Mediterranean style and Phi Mu is a lovely Tudor Revival style building executed in brick. Except for the altered Sigma Alpha Epsilon house, all of the other houses featured in the architects' monograph are probably eligible to be Madison Landmarks as good examples of their respective Period Revival styles. The quality of the design of the Chi Phi house clearly ranks with these other excellent works.

The Chi Phi house is constructed of sandstone, a material that is native to the Madison area. Of the sorority and fraternity houses and single-family residences featured in Law, Law and Potter's monograph, only the Phi Gamma Delta house and the Chi Phi house were constructed with stone as the major material. The use of our warm, golden-colored native sandstone is particularly appropriate with the English style. It gives these two buildings an appearance of solidity and dignity and evokes a more authentic British feeling than many of the fake half-timber and red brick Tudor Revival houses built here in the 1920s.

In the Langdon Street historic district there are a few other imposing sandstone houses, designed by other architects. These include the Kappa Kappa Gamma house (601 North Henry Street, Dutch Colonial) directly across the street from the Chi Phi house, the Delta Gamma house (103 Langdon Street, mid-Atlantic Colonial Revival), Delta Tau Delta (616 Mendota Court, also mid-Atlantic Colonial Revival) and the fine Tudor Revival Chi Psi house (150 Iota Court, a Madison Landmark). Because of their strong designs and solid masonry construction, none of these stone buildings have been significantly altered and all probably deserve landmark status.

The Chi Phi house is, therefore, among the finest examples of a Tudor Revival style fraternity/sorority house as designed by noted local architects, Law, Law and Potter. It is also architecturally significant as one of the several beautiful native sandstone houses built in the Langdon Street historic district.

¹Other Law, Law and Potter fraternity/sorority houses in Madison include Alpha Omicron Pi (636 Langdon Street, brick French Chateau), Alpha Xi Delta (12 Langdon Street, brick Tudor Revival), Beta Theta Pi (622 Mendota Court, brick Mediterranean), Delta Sigma Pi (132 Breese Terrace, brick Georgian Revival) and Kappa Alpha Theta (237 Lake Lawn Place, stucco Mediterranean).



CHI PHI FRATERNITY