

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)
Revised January 30, 2008

Name of Building or Site

Common Name

Atrium Building

Historic Name (if applicable)

Maeder Building/Ellsworth Block

Location

Street Address

21-23 North Pinckney Street

Aldermanic District

4

Classification

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

building

Zoning District

C4

Present Use

Office and retail

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

Name(s)

Osorio Investments LLC

Street Address

19 N Pinckney St

Telephone Number

Legal Description (available at City Assessor's Office)

Parcel Number

070913330068

Legal Description

Lot 10, Block 101, Original Plat,
exc. NE 12 ft used as alley right-of-way.

Condition of Property

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

Excellent

Altered or Unaltered?

Altered

Moved or Original Site?

Original Site

Wall Construction

Sandstone (21 North Pinckney Street)

Sandstone (23 North Pinckney Street)

City of Madison

LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

Historical Data

Original Owner

Fritz Maeder (21 N Pinckney)
Ellsworth Brothers (23 N Pinckney)

Original Use

Fritz Maeder confectionery
Ellsworth Brothers Grocery

Architect or Builder

unknown

Architectural Style

NeoClassical Revival (21)
Italianate (23)

Date of Construction

1871 (both)

Indigenous Materials Used

Sandstone

List of Bibliographical References Used

Madison City Directory. Madison: G.R. Angell and Company, 1911, 1914, and 1919.

Madison City Directory. Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1921, 1923, 1925, 1929, 1931, 1935, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960, 1961, 1962, and 1975.

Madison, Wisconsin. City of Madison Department of Planning and Development. Building Permit Records.

Madison, Wisconsin. City of Madison Office of the Historic Preservation Planner. Survey File and Tax Rolls.

Madison, Wisconsin. Wisconsin Historical Society. Archives.

Mollenhoff, David V. *Madison: A History of the Formative Years.* Second edition. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003.

Williams, Zane. *Double Take: A Rephotographic Survey of Madison, Wisconsin.* Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.

Form Prepared By

Name and Title

Elizabeth L. Miller

Organization Represented (if any)

Madison Trust for Historic Preservation

Address

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Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

November, 2007

City of Madison Landmarks Commission

LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance.

Two buildings comprise this property. The two-story, sandstone Maeder Building stands at 21 North Pinckney Street. The Ellsworth Block, at 23-25 North Pinckney Street, is a three-story, sandstone structure. Each was erected in 1871, and possesses a gently-sloping, shed roof hidden behind a parapet. Because these buildings are set within a block of contiguous commercial structures, only the front (southerly-facing) facades are visible.

The Maeder Building displays a three-bay front façade. The storefront, most recently updated in 2002,¹ is set within a plain, rectangular opening. It is composed of a recessed, off-center entrance, and fixed, single-pane display windows, framed by what appear to be cast-iron posts, and surmounted by a band of fixed, transom windows. The NeoClassical Revival features of the second story are believed to date from sometime between 1905 and 1920.² The second story is veneered with pale, glazed brick and displays three, round-arched openings with surrounds of brick headers accented with a stone keystone, resting on a continuous stone sill. The keystone embellishing the central window is carved with the letter "N."³ Each opening holds a single-pane, fixed window (a recent replacement) and a semi-circular transom. A decorative, iron balustrade appears at the base of each window. A narrow, projecting stone belt course can be seen above the windows. At the frieze, small stone panels with raised swags alternate with decorative brickwork. The existing plain cornice board above replaced the early twentieth century projecting classical cornice after 1934.⁴

Originally, the Maeder Building displayed Italianate details in a sandstone finish, and was very similar in appearance to the Ellsworth Block. The storefront consisted of a central recessed entrance, flanked by multipane display windows. At the second story, segmental-arched window openings were framed with stone hood moldings accented with prominent keystones. A paneled frieze and a deep, bracketed cornice with a dentilled molding, modillion blocks, and a semi-circular cap topped the building.⁵

The storefront of the Ellsworth Block was remodeled several times, most recently in 2005.⁶ Presently, rusticated stone piers and cast-iron posts frame single-pane display windows and multipane, fixed transoms. The entrance into the first floor is recessed and set slightly off center. A door at the east end of the façade provides access to the upper floors. Originally, a central entrance opened onto a staircase, and divided the first floor into two retail spaces. Each space

¹ Building permit, January 7, 2002, on file, City Department of Planning and Development, Madison, Wisconsin.

² Photo, 1905, published in David V. Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, (second edition), (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), p. 269; and survey file, 21 North Pinckney Street, on file, office of Historic Preservation Planner, City Department of Planning and Development, Madison, Wisconsin.

³ This probably stands for "Nelson." Nelson Realty owned the building from at least 1922 until at least 1930.

Nelson and Son Jewelers occupied the storefront from 1922 until 1961. The "N" suggests a 1920s date for the façade remodeling.

⁴ Photo by Angus McVicar, 1934, published in Zane Williams, *Double Take: A Rephotographic Survey of Madison, Wisconsin*, (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), pp. 104-105.

⁵ 1875 photo, on file, Archives, Wisconsin Historical Society (SHSW WHi(X3)6245).

⁶ Building permit, April 24, 2005, on file, City Department of Planning and Development.

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had a central, recessed entrance flanked by multipane display windows.⁷ Around 1920, the storefront was redesigned, with a central double entrance accessing the staircase, flanked by single entrances into the first floor retail space. Each retail space featured a broad, display window. A transom of opaque glass blocks and a classical, metal cornice unified the storefront.⁸ In 1964, a metal screen was installed over the front of the Ellsworth Block. When this was removed in 1977, the storefront was remodeled again, with tall, glass-and-metal display windows, glass-and-metal doors, and a plain, flat-roofed canopy extending across the length of the storefront.⁹

The upper stories of the Ellsworth Block retain much of their 1871 appearance. Stone pilasters frame the façade. Five bays of segmental-arched, 2/2 replacement windows in segmental-arched stone surrounds light the upper stories. Each surround is enriched with tooled or carved projecting impost blocks, and a prominent, carved keystone. The frieze displays a band of raised stone panels, surmounted by a projecting, classical cornice resting on simple, scrolled brackets. This cornice was added in 2005 and is a simplified version of the original cornice shown on historical photographs. The original cornice was much more imposing and featured ornate, monumental scrolled brackets, a deep modillion course and a polygonal cap.¹⁰ On the interior, the local architectural firm of Lew Porter and Alvan Small, who maintained offices upstairs, is believed to have created the soaring atrium on the upper floors in 1899.¹¹

Although the Maeder Building/Ellsworth Block has been altered over time, these changes are largely confined to the storefront. Alterations to the storefront are typical of commercial buildings and detract minimally from the overall appearance of the Maeder Building/Ellsworth Block. The upper stories of this property display very good integrity, despite the loss of the original cornices.

⁷ 1875 photo.

⁸ Photo by Angus McVicar, 1934.

⁹ Survey file.

¹⁰ 1875 photo.

¹¹ Survey file.

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

Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria.

Statement of Significance

The Maeder Building/Ellsworth Block at 21-25 North Pinckney Street, now considered one property, is eligible for Madison Landmark status under Criterion 3. This property is part of one of the few groupings of nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings remaining on the Capitol Square, which was Madison's prime commercial district from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. It conveys a sense of what downtown Madison was like in the early twentieth century, when the city's downtown had become a sophisticated, urban center. The Maeder Building/Ellsworth Block retains very good integrity.

The Maeder Building/Ellsworth Block also presents a good example of urban commercial architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Urban commercial architecture of the period typically displays a long, rectangular footprint, with the narrow end overlooking the street. Architectural style for these buildings is typically confined to the street façade(s) and consists of window sash patterns and applied ornamentation drawn from popular architectural styles of the day. The Ellsworth Block at 23-25 North Pinckney Street is one of many Italianate commercial buildings in downtown Madison. The intensive survey of the historic resources of Madison notes that the Italianate style was the most popular historical mode for commercial buildings, employed from the 1840s through 1900. Most of those that survive are of brick or stone. Perhaps the finest example is the neighboring Mason-Baker Block at 1 North Pinckney Street. Erected in 1871, it possesses excellent integrity and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.¹² Above the storefront, the Ellsworth Block's stonework is comparable. However, its integrity is not as good as that of the Mason-Baker Block, due to the altered storefront and replacement cornice. In addition, the Maeder Building's NeoClassical Revival upper facade is a good example of the many commercial applications of that style dating to the early twentieth century.¹³

History of the Maeder Building/Ellsworth Block

The Maeder Building was erected for confectioner Fritz Maeder in 1871.¹⁴ He operated a confectionery and fancy goods store in the building from 1871 until about 1877. Maeder was succeeded by Dr. Philip Fox, who maintained his office on the second floor, from at least 1883 until at least 1918. Harlow S. Ott's drug store occupied the first floor from at least 1904 until 1922. Nelson Realty owned the building from at least 1922 until at least 1930. Nelson and Son operated a jewelry business in the storefront until 1962.¹⁵ The current occupant is the Harvest Restaurant.

¹² Katherine H. Rankin, "Madison Intensive Survey: Architecture," report prepared for the city of Madison and the Wisconsin Historical Society, 2006, pp. 12-16.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁴ Tax rolls, city of Madison, on file, Madison Department of Planning and Development, Madison, Wisconsin.

¹⁵ *Madison City Directory*, (Madison: G.R. Angell and Company, 1904, 1907, 1911, 1914, and 1919); and *Madison City Directory*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1921, 1923, 1925, 1929, 1931, 1935, 1945, 1950, 1960, 1961, and 1962).

Significance - page 2

The Ellsworth Block was built in 1871 for William J. and Frank Ellsworth, with two retail spaces on the first floor. The Ellsworth Brothers Grocery was located in the storefront at #23 until 1885.

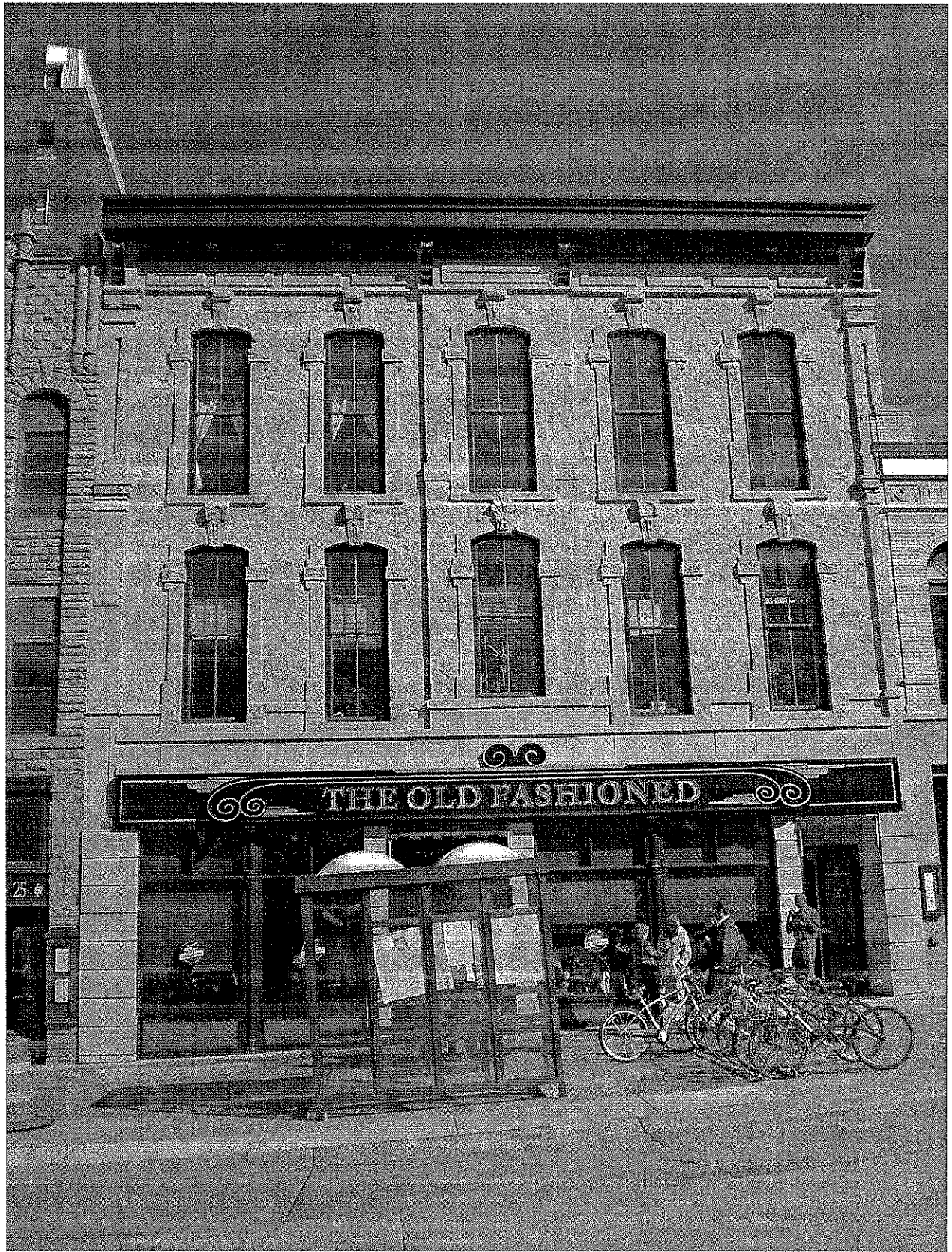
The Ellsworths retained ownership of the building until 1909, leasing #23 to a series of grocers until 1907. Pharmacist Albert Hollister was the first tenant of #25, remaining there until 1889.

By 1911, the Simpson Garment Company had moved into both storefronts. Later known as Simpson's Clothing Store, this firm purchased the building and remained in residence until 1969.

The Northwestern Business College (later the Madison Business College) occupied the third floor from 1871 until 1899. This educational institution had been established by A.S. Bacon in 1856, providing training in bookkeeping and other practical business skills, and offering college preparatory courses. After the college moved out, a series of offices occupied the upper floors, including architects Lew F. Porter (1902 to 1909) and Alvan E. Small (1902 to c. 1916).¹⁶

Presently, the Old Fashioned Restaurant is the first floor tenant, while offices occupy the upper stories.

¹⁶ Ibid; and survey file.



THE OLD FASHIONED

25

