

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

I. Name of Building or Site

(1) Common

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(2) Historic (if applicable)

Louis Hirsig House

II. Location

(1) Street Address

1010 Sherman Avenue

(2) Ward (available @ City Clerk)

2nd Aldermanic District

III. Classification

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

Building-Residence

(2) Zoning District

R2

(3) Present Use

Residence

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

(1) Name(s)

Mr. & Mrs. Rudolph Rechle

(2) Street Address

1010 Sherman Avenue

(3) Telephone Number

255-2487

V. Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)

(1) Parcel Number

0709-132-0102-9

(2) Legal Description

Block 165, part of Lots 1 & 2

VI. Condition of Property

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

Excellent

(2) Altered or Unaltered?

Unaltered

(3) Moved or Original Site?

Original Site

(4) Wall Construction

Stucco with brick base

(5) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the present and original physical construction and appearance (limit 500 words).

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

VI.(5) Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance:

The Louis Hirsig house remains today essentially as it was constructed, and is in excellent condition.

The house represents a compact-cubical form of Prairie architecture, rather modest in scale and is a form found in the Madison area as designed by Alvan Edmund Small.

The Louis Hirsig house exhibits characteristics of the Prairie School in a variety of ways. The gable roof has a generous overhang that suggests shelter, and provides a shadow line that emphasizes the horizontality of the composition. This roof is richly endowed with a red flat clay tile roof. The earthiness of the tile, along with natural stain colors, brown, on the trim imparts a feeling of materials in common with the ground, a trait that many Prairie architects developed.

The walls of the house are of stucco, rough textured, that gives the impression of closure against the elements without mass, and the entire composition is one of simple geometry, in keeping with Prairie design concepts.

Brick is used as a base for the home, and the contrast of materials makes a strong statement of the solid placement of the structure on the ground. The brick is repeated in pilasters at the door, and in smaller pilasters at the corners. Wood trim is used about the sash, and a decorative pattern is created by the vertical wood pieces set at the corners. Decoration is simple, limited and of natural materials.

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

**VII. Significance**

(1) Original Owner

Louis Hirsig

(2) Original Use

Residence

(3) Architect or Builder

Alvan Edmund Small

(4) Architectural Style

Prairie

(5) Date of Construction

c. 1913

(6) Indigenous Materials Used

None unique to area

(7) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the significance of the nominated property and its conformance to the designation criteria of the Landmarks Commission Ordinance (33.01), limit of 500 words.

**VIII. List of Bibliographical References Used**

1. On Alvan E. Small:  
Wisconsin, Its History and Its People, by Milo M. Quaife
2. 1924, Vol. 4, pp. 284-5.
3. On Prairie Architecture in Madison and Mr. Small's Work  
Prairie Architecture in Madison, Wisconsin; Influences, Forms and Form-Givers by Gordon D. Orr, Jr., 1971.
4. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Wisconsin.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

**IX. Form Prepared By:**

(1) Name and Title

Gordon D. Orr, Jr., Architect

(2) Organization Represented (if any)

Wisconsin Chapter, American Institute of Architects

(3) Address

2729 Mason Street

(4) Telephone Number

262-3000

(5) Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

August 19, 1974

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

VII.(7) Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:

The Louis Hirsig house is of local architectural significance as it represents a form of Prairie architecture found in Madison. The Louis Hirsig house is one of Madison's better examples of a compact-cubical form of Prairie architecture. Its forms are simple and easily related to the work of other prominent Prairie architects, particularly the work of George W. Maher, in the suburbs of Chicago. Alvan Edmund Small, the architect, was a Wisconsin man, born in Sun Prairie, but educated in the architectural profession through the route of apprenticeship.

Alvan E. Small first was employed by the Madison architectural firm of Conover (Allan D.) and Porter (Lew F.). After 12 years with the firm, Small worked for one year with Louis H. Sullivan in Chicago. He then returned to Madison, first in a partnership with Lew F. Porter, his former employer, then as a sole proprietor until 1922 when a partnership with John J. Flad was established that terminated in 1927. Mr. Small died in 1932.

Mr. Small exerted an architectural influence upon Madison, and the Prairie style was a form at which he was particularly adept. Most of his buildings in this period were modest in size, for important, yet not the most affluent, members of Madison's business and educational community. The Louis Hirsig house represents that period and type of home.