

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

I. Name of Building or Site

(1) Common Herman J. LOFTSGORDON HOUSE	(2) Historic (if applicable) same
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II. Location

(1) Street Address 2429 Center Avenue	(2) Ward (available @ City Clerk) 16th
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III. Classification

(1) Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.) residential property	
(2) Zoning District R 4	(3) Present Use Single family residence

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

(1) Name(s) Henry S. Lufler, Jr.	
(2) Street Address 2429 Center Avenue	(3) Telephone Number 249-3259

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

(1) Parcel Number 0710-053-3901-7	(2) Legal Description Lot 1, Block 17, Elmside Addition to Madison
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VI. Condition of Property

(1) Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins) Excellent	
(2) Altered or Unaltered? Unaltered on exterior	(3) Moved or Original Site? Original
(4) Wall Construction Frame with stucco exterior	

(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 house consists of a large two story structure with full attic and dormer windows in the main portion. There is an attached garage to the rear fronting on Hudson Street. A brick faced foundation extends to form the base of the front porch which also includes brick columns. The Center Avenue facade masks the mass of the house because the porch roof also extends over a projecting room. This roof runs across the entire front and divides the height. The overhanging eaves from the main roof echo the line and visually cut the mass. The high gable on the Hudson Street side relates well to the brick chimney which sweeps up from the foundation.

The house is of frame construction with stucco in a style typical of many built in the first part of the 20th century in Madison where the influence of the Prairie Style had popularized this type of construction. There are two fireplaces in the house. Steel framed windows were used throughout.

The interior has oak crown molding, oak trimmed windows, oak doors and oak stairway. Heavy beveled glass was used in the entryway lights and in the library and parlor doors. A "Florida Room" is on the rear of the second story over the enclosed garage. The room has windows on three sides and a small porch. It has a view of Lake Monona down Hudson Street. Since it is unheated it can be used only in summer when "Florida" type temperatures prevail.

The present owner removed some unfortunate later improvements such as artificial wood section panels from the living room. A butler's pantry was removed during an earlier kitchen remodeling.

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

VII. Significance

(1) Original Owner Herman Loftsgordon	(2) Original Use Residence
(3) Architect or Builder Unknown	(4) Architectural Style Vernacular
(5) Date of Construction 1918 (Current Assessor's Records)	(6) Indigenous Materials Used none
(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. City Directory of Madison, 1904-1968.
2. New Atlas of Dane County Wisconsin, 1899.
3. "Herman Loftsgordon, 84, Civic, Banking Leader, Dies", Capital Times, September 14, 1967.
4. "High Hopes Biggest Asset When Loftsgordon Firm Started in '07", Capital Times, September 4, 1959.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

IX. Form Prepared By:

(1) Name and Title Dick Wagner	
(2) Organization Represented (if any) not applicable	
(3) Address 754 Jenifer Street	(4) Telephone Number 257-5270
(5) Date Nomination Form Was Prepared March, 1981	

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

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

From 1919 to 1946, a period of twenty-seven years, the house at 2429 Center Avenue was the home of Herman Loftsgordon and his family. Herman, who built the home, was the first of five Loftsgordon brothers who settled in Madison. The family was active in civic affairs and were prominent in Eastside activities. The family established roots in the old Elmside Plat on the eastern shore of Lake Monona before the area was a part of the city.

At the turn of the century Madison's corporation line ran along the eastern edge of Farwell's Addition on the line of the present Division Street. Further out along the lakeshore were Schuetzen Park and the Elmside development. Elmside was patterned on a small scale after the late 19th century garden type suburb with a spacious central boulevard, circular park and curving lakeshore drive. A four block area containing the old Simeon Mills house, on Park Place, now known as Sommers Ave., was not originally divided into lots in the plat. In and near the Elmside area the Loftsgordons established their businesses and their residences.

Herman Loftsgordon came to Madison in 1904 from the family farmstead near Mr. Horeb. It was a time when Madison's growing industries and prospects were drawing many Norwegian descended youths, particularly to the eastside. The young Herman worked as a clerk at various stores including the Hub. Three other brothers came in 1907 and established the Loftsgordon Bros. Lumber Co. on Atwood Avenue. The family lived at 802 Park Place (now 2701 Sommers Avenue). By 1911 Herman had moved on to become a bookkeeper and then teller with the Merchants and Savings Bank. In 1918 he was one of the founders of Anchor Savings and Loan. In 1930 he changed his career from banking to real estate and insurance. His office on Atwood Avenue was next to the family lumberyard.

His many activities were focused on the eastside, from Security State Bank where he was a vice-president, to the Eastwood Theater which he helped develop, to the Eastside Businessman's Association which he headed as president in 1937 to the Sons of Norway and the Ygdrasil Literary Society. In 1926 he ran unsuccessfully for mayor. For many years before his death in 1967 he was chairman of the board of Anchor Savings and Loan.

Prior to building the house at 2429 Herman and his wife Amanda, also from the Mt. Horeb area, resided next door. The surrounding blocks formed an enclave for the family. Henry, Martin and Oscar of the lumberyard resided at 2421 Center, 224 Ohio St., 2701 Sommers respectively. This early 20th Century pattern of an extended family located in one proximate area with residences and businesses nearby was destroyed by urban growth and mobility as the century progressed. One family moved to Maple Bluff, another to Monona and one member was a longtime resident of the Lorraine Hotel. When Herman left Center Ave. after World War II he resided in Monona and then subsequently on Morrison Street.