

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

I. Name of Building or Site

(1) Common

The Phi Gamma Delta House

(2) Historic (if applicable)

same

II. Location

(1) Street Address

16 Langdon Street, Madison 53703

(2) Ward (available @ City Clerk)

Ward 08 District 4

III. Classification

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

building

(2) Zoning District

R6H

(3) Present Use

Fraternity House

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

(1) Name(s)

Fiji Building Association - James Krogstad, Treasurer

(2) Street Address

802 West Broadway, #101 Madison 53713

(3) Telephone Number

(608) 222-0656

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

(1) Parcel Number

0709-144-0903-6

(2) Legal Description

Lot 3 Block 78, Original Plat

VI. Condition of Property

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

good

(2) Altered or Unaltered?

unaltered

(3) Moved or Original Site?

original site

(4) Wall Construction

stone load bearing

(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:

From the tree-arched green of Langdon Street, the Phi Gamma Delta house appears to be a modest, comfortable residence of two stories built of rusticated local limestone.

The front facade features a flat-roofed entrance pavilion with a drip-molding decorating the doorway. A smaller, two-story pavilion to the right has a steeply pitched hipped roof. Between, a flat-roofed dormer projects from the wide expanse of gable roof sloping down to the first floor. All windows are casement style with narrow muntins. Window widths vary, creating bands of two, three or four casements per opening.

Behind the gable-roofed front pavilion, which is known as the Alumni House, is a two-and-one-half story wing extending toward the rear of the property. Because of the steep slope of the land toward the lake, the roof of the wing is actually lower than the front Alumni house. Windows in this dormitory section are also banded casements. Hipped-roofed and flat-roofed dormers add interest to the main gabled roofline. The rear pavilion, which contains the Great Hall, is a flat-roofed section with two, very large banded casement windows trimmed with drip moldings. A one-story wing provides a terrace for the Great Hall and is pierced by massive round-arched openings. A large chimney tower rises from the roof of the Great Hall along the back wall of the dormitory wing.

Very few alterations have occurred since the building was constructed. In 1968, some rooms in the dormitory section were partitioned to make smaller rooms and closets. On the exterior, no major alterations have taken place.

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

VII. Significance

(1) Original Owner Fiji Building Association	(2) Original Use Fraternity House
(3) Architect or Builder Law, Law, & Potter - Architect J. A. Findorff & Son - Builder	(4) Architectural Style Tudor Revival
(5) Date of Construction 1928	(6) Indigenous Materials Used Locally quarried sandstone
(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 of Madison Annexed Assessment Roll.
2. Madison Landmarks Commission Ordinance (33.01).
3. Purnell, William H. and Richard L. Jones, "Mu's New Lodge is Most Unusual," Vol. 51, No. 3, The Phi Gamma Delta, December, 1928.
4. Jones, Richard Lloyd, "Some Notes on Mu's Fifty Years," Vol. 66, No. 5, The Phi Gamma Delta, May, 1948.
5. Evjue, William T., "The Phi Gamma Delta House," The Capitol Times, May 3, 1966.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

IX. Form Prepared By:

(1) Name and Title Katherine H. Rankin, Preservation Planner, and Jonathan K.S. Kiehau, Fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta Treasurer	
(2) Organization Represented (if any) Fiji Building Association	
(3) Address Post Office Box 566 Madison, Wisconsin 53701	(4) Telephone Number (608) 251-6790
(5) Date Nomination Form Was Prepared February 27, 1983	

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

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

The Phi Gamma Delta house at 16 Langdon Street was built in 1928 and has served as the home of that fraternity ever since. The building was designed by the Madison architectural firm of Law, Law and Potter, a firm that built many of Madison's finest houses in the 1920s, including several fraternity and sorority houses in the Langdon Street area.

In 1924, the fraternity commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to prepare the plans for their new fraternity house. Several relatives of Wright were members of this fraternity. His design, however, was so unusual that the national office rejected it and the fraternity selected Law, Law and Potter to produce a more conventional design.

Wright and the fraternity devised the basic layout of the building. The fraternity believed that the typical domestic layout used for fraternities and sororities was not entirely adequate. Therefore, Wright proposed a three part building to serve the three basic functions of fraternity life. The modest, two-story front section of the building is called the Alumni Cottage and contains a reception room and accommodations for visiting alumni. The lakeside pavilion houses the social functions of the fraternity, with its Great Hall and basement tap room. Connecting the alumni cottage and the Great Hall is a long, narrow, four-story dormitory section separated from the social rooms to insure a quiet and studious atmosphere.

Law, Law and Potter used this scheme in their English Tudor design. The house is in very nearly original condition, the only major alterations being partitions in the sleeping rooms.

Many famous Wisconsin men have been members of the fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta at the University of Wisconsin. Many more men have been locally recognized leaders. A few of the more well-known members who have lived in this house are Wisconsin industrialist Ralph S. Evinrude, manufacturer Fred Maytag, current state Attorney General Bronson LaFollette, and publishers William T. Evjue, Donald B. Abert and Jenkin Lloyd Jones.