

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

I. Name of Building or Site

(1) Common

Italian Workmen's Club

(2) Historic (if applicable)

Italian Workmen's Club

II. Location

(1) Street Address

53715

914 Regent Street, Madison WI

(2) Ward (available @ City Clerk)

Fifth Aldermanic District

III. Classification

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

Building

(2) Zoning District

C 3

(3) Present Use

Club & Bar (Cellar Bar)

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

(1) Name(s)

Italian Workmen's Club

(2) Street Address

914 Regent Street
Madison, WI 53715

(3) Telephone Number

256-9885 (Cellar Bar)

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

(1) Parcel Number

0709-232-2409-5

(2) Legal Description

Lot 13, Block⁵ Central Home Addition

-being subdivision of outlets 11 and 12
University Addition.

VI. Condition of Property

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

Good

(2) Altered or Unaltered?

Altered

(3) Moved or Original Site?

Original Site

(4) Wall Construction

Brick & Mortar

(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:

Originally the building was built of brick and mortar with steel trusses for support. The original trim still exists and is very simple. Different bricks in reds, browns, and sandy golds were used. A simple design of horizontal rows of bricks every 8-10 inches was implemented. Around the front door and around the plaque above the front door, a simple brick design was also incorporated. Original windows were small and narrow.

At present, there are sections of brick from alterations made to the original building. (See attached photos.) At present the building measures 40' x 78' 2". The original plaque and the name "Italian Workmen's Club" both in mortar still exist at present.

The interior has been changed somewhat. The stage on one end has been removed.

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

VII. Significance

<p>(1) Original Owner Italian Workmen's Club</p>	<p>(2) Original Use Originally established to serve as a beneficial society to help defray the cost of illness, injury, and*</p>
<p>(3) Architect or Builder Originally, the clubhouse was built by volunteers from the club in 1922. Law, Law & Pötter in 1936.</p>	<p>(4) Architectural Style Vernacular</p>
<p>(5) Date of Construction 1922-Original 1936-Addition</p>	<p>(6) Indigenous Materials Used Brick & Mortar</p>
<p>(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.</p>	

VIII. List of Bibliographical References Used

1. Building Permit 3-10-1936
2. Plaque on Building
3. Valentine, Univ. MA Thesis, Pp. 85-87
4. Mollenhoff, pp. 423-425
5. City Directories
6. "A Brief History of the Italian Workmen's Club"
7. Greenbush Cookbook
- 8.

IX. Form Prepared By:

<p>(1) Name and Title Cheryl A. Jonovic, Historical Preservation Class, MATC student</p>	
<p>(2) Organization Represented (if any) -----</p>	
<p>(3) Address 53711 2689 McGaw Road, Fitchburg, WI</p>	<p>(4) Telephone Number (608) 273-1638</p>
<p>(5) Date Nomination Form Was Prepared 11-30-89</p>	

*funerals. Dances, meetings and wakes were also held in the building.

Additional Bibliographical References Used:

8. Met with some club members on 11/15/89, received much information from Nick Stassi, the Club Historian.

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

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

A group of Italian/Albanese men came to the U.S. in the early 1900's to escape starvation and unemployment in Italy. On January 18, 1912, the club Lavoratori Siciliani Muto Socorso e Benificenza was organized by the leaders of the small Italian community which was located in the swampy section of Greenbush, south of the Capitol Square.

Today, the club is known as the Italian Workmen's Club and still carries on the tradition of mutual aid for the members who are ill or injured in accidents, and also provides a death benefit.

The original men came to a city inhabited primarily by English, German, Irish, and Norwegian settlers. These Italian men had little to live on and few gave them employment. They become hard-working laborers to survive and earn enough to bring over their families from Italy. They took such jobs as cement workers, bricklayers, cobblers, and common laborers.

John G. Icke, the city engineer and later a private contractor employed these men in city jobs as well as private jobs. In wintertime, they worked in tobacco warehouses here.

Because of low earnings, few could afford the expense of illness, injury, or funeral costs. Theodore Paratore learned of a mutual benefit society in Chicago. He and twelve other men formed the club. The present clubhouse was built at 914 Regent Street with aid from Mr. Icke, who loaned scoop shovels, tools and other equipment to the club members who worked weekends on construction of the building. Except for the steel framework erection, the entire clubhouse was built by volunteer labor of the membership

Italian was spoken until 1948, then English was spoken. A women's auxiliary was organized on February 22, 1934.

In earlier years, dances, meetings, and wakes were held at the club. Also, in earlier years, the club staged a parade on Columbus Day with their own band being a part of it. The Italian-Americans and their families continue to join for a picnic on the 4th of July every year at Olin Park.

During W.W. II, the club was one of the foremost purchasers of U.S. War Bonds—demonstrating the member's loyalty to America and the progress they had made in becoming solid "American citizens". Over 40 of the club's members served in the Armed Forces during W.W. II.

Many of Madison's Italian community are now successful businessmen and civic leaders in the city.

But the Italian Workmen's Club is thriving and continues to be a symbol of mutual help. Over the years, many less fortunate Italians were helped over financial hurdles throughout this cooperative venture.

This club is open to all people of Italian descent. Today it sponsors the Festa Italia every year.

The Italian Workmen's Club is believed to be the oldest active Italian club in the U.S. It is an honor to nominate the Italian Workmen's Club as a Madison Landmark. The history of this building and the good that has been accomplished by its club members over the years, makes it historical signi-

ficant to the City of Madison.