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**United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

**historic name** Pelican Lake Hotel  
**other names/site number** The New Pelican Lake Hotel

**2. Location**

<b>street &amp; number</b>	745 US Highway 45		N/A	<b>not for publication</b>
<b>city or town</b>	Town of Schoepke		N/A	<b>vicinity</b>
<b>state</b> Wisconsin	<b>code</b> WI	<b>county</b> Oneida	<b>Code</b> 085	<b>zip code</b> 54463

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title  Date 11/20/12

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Pelican Lake Hotel

Oneida, County, Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet  
 \_\_\_ determined eligible for the  
 National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ determined not eligible for the  
 National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ removed from the National  
 Register.  
 \_\_\_ other, (explain:)

*Edson H. Beall*

*1.14.13*

*lou*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

### 5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		Contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district		sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> site		objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources  
previously listed in the National Register

0

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Hotel

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Hotel

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century

American Movements

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls brick

roof rubber

other concrete

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property

County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

**Period of Significance**

1928 – 1961

**Significant Dates**

1928

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Susedik Construction Company<sup>1</sup>

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

<sup>1</sup> Fred Chermak, Jr. Interview.

Pelican Lake Hotel  
Name of Property

Oneida County  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File** (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 331475 5041405  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

**name/title** Mary Jane Hettinga  
**organization**  
**street & number** P.O. Box 367  
**city or town** Lac du Flambeau

**state** WI

**Date** 9-6-11  
**telephone**  
**zip code** 54538

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Wisconsin

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	date
organization	telephone
street & number	zip code
city or town	state

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Pelican Lake Hotel  
Town of Schoepke, Oneida County, Wisconsin

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The 1928 Pelican Lake Hotel has always had a significant presence as a landmark in the unincorporated Village of Pelican Lake, the Town of Schoepke, in Oneida County, Wisconsin. Pelican Lake, a 3,585 acre lake,<sup>2</sup> is a well-known and favorite fishing lake in northern Wisconsin. The strategically sited hotel is not only on the shore of this beautiful lake, but also, when it was built, was across the street from the railroad depot (since razed). The brick hotel faces east and is set back 50 feet from US Highway 45. A four foot public sidewalk runs parallel to the highway with a five foot six inch sidewalk leading to the hotel; another sidewalk abuts the front of the building. There is no landscaping in the front of the hotel but there is a row of bushes along the south border and there are a few more bushes near the north end of the building. An asphalt driveway on the south boundary of the property originally encircled the hotel to make it easy for deliveries. There is parking for 18 to 20 cars in the wide driveway.

The property covers less than an acre of land and encompasses 250 feet of lake frontage. The land behind the hotel slopes gently to the lake and to an L-shaped dock<sup>3</sup>; mature fir and deciduous trees are grouped near the shore. Close to the hotel are two large picnic tables and several black metal chairs facing the lake. A fire pit is also nearby.

The Village of Pelican Lake is 19 miles from Rhinelander and 27 miles from Antigo, both northern Wisconsin tourist areas. The village is about 3 blocks in length with a post office, gas station, bar, motel, and bait shop. It is surprising to find a commercial brick hotel in such a small village in northern Wisconsin.

#### EXTERIOR

The brick clad hotel measures 86 feet across the front elevation (east) and has a flat rubber roof with two chimneys, a short one on the south and a taller one on the north. Irregular in shape, the structure is two stories except for a one-story area in the northwest corner. Included in the one story section are the kitchen, the pantry, a half bathroom, and a small room off of the kitchen.

The distinctive and unique feature of this commercial structure is the geometric design that appears on the front (east) elevation. The majority of the brick is laid as stretchers; however, variously sized concrete squares and diamonds, inserted amidst the bricks, create geometric patterns. Bricks are alternately turned on end, on their sides, or laid vertically to create different design elements. In other areas the brick has been raised to create rectilinear shapes. By using the brick ends and sides, in combination with concrete shapes, a stylized arrow is created and decorates the top of each pilaster, and a shorter version appears again just below the second story. The front and the south elevation

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<sup>2</sup> Wisconsin Lakes, p.108.

<sup>3</sup> This is a modern dock and is not included in the resource count.

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were a part of the original brick façade that was first constructed in 1912. (This will be discussed in more detail in another section of this document.)

The brick used in these areas is a variegated red and does not match the rest of the building. The brick used on the 1912 façade was probably from the Antigo-based Grabowsky's Brickyard. One of the Grabowsky houses in Antigo has the same brick on the porch pillars as found on the east and south elevations of the hotel. Edward Grabowsky and his wife Laura arrived in Antigo in the fall of 1886; the following spring he started a brickyard in his backyard. He had learned the trade from his father in Germany. He moved the yard to a larger location in 1912.<sup>4</sup>

In 1928 when the present hotel was built, common red brick was used to construct the building. The east (front) elevation and part of the south elevation, from 1912, were left intact when the rest of the building burned in 1926. The common red brick was used to in-fill the porte-cochere on the south elevation and to construct the new building. The contrast between the two different brick types is very evident on the north elevation.

A porte-cochere was added in the 1928 construction on the south end of the building. Because automobiles were gaining in popularity it was an added amenity to be able to drive through and drop off guests at the hotel. According to Cultural Resource Management: "The gasoline-powered automobiles begin to appear regularly in the state in 1899. In 1905, there were 1,492 registered vehicles in Wisconsin. By 1916 the number had jumped to 124,603".<sup>5</sup> The passage of the public roads law in 1911 climaxed the campaign for state and local roads and ushered in a new era of transportation in Wisconsin.<sup>6</sup>

#### EAST ELEVATION

The main façade of the two-story all brick hotel is divided into five sections delineated by decorative pilasters that rise above the parapet roof. A concrete belt course divides the two floors. Below the white painted belt course are two rows of raised brick that connect the pilasters. The design creates a long rectangle by connecting the two rows at each end with raised brick; each corner has a decorative square of concrete, painted white.

A stylized design is on each pilaster next to the rectangle. It is made up of brick squares with white concrete squares inserted. Below, raised brick creates a "Y" design leading to a diamond shape with a concrete diamond inserted.

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<sup>4</sup> Antigo Daily Journal.

<sup>5</sup> Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin; 8-1.

<sup>6</sup> Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin; 8-2.

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All of the fenestration throughout the building is double hung with two lights, except for the three picture windows on the first floor. All have wooden frames with concrete sills; the second floor windows have aluminum storm/screens. The major difference between the fenestration on the two floors is that the first floor windows have transoms surmounted on all of the windows. The double hung windows measure 40 inches by 63 inches, without the transoms, while the picture windows are five feet, six inches square. There are four smaller windows in the main (third) section. The fenestration on the second floor lines up with the first floor.

The center section of the hotel has the stepped parapet gable; below the gable is a large concrete diamond, painted white, with two smaller diamonds on each side. A diminished version of this decoration is repeated in each section.

The main entrance is in the central (third) section and features ten-light French doors with a six light transom surmounted. On either side of the doors are two light double hung windows, smaller than the other windows. This entrance leads to a small foyer and then into the lobby. Above, on the second floor there are two windows that mimic the narrow windows on the first floor, except for the transoms. A pair of double hung windows is above the French doors and fills in the same size opening.

Starting at the south end of the building, in section one, is the original porte cochere; today there is a wooden paneled overhead garage door with a eight light transom. The garage door was added circa 1950. On the second floor there are two evenly spaced double hung windows. This section and the one on the north end are smaller than the middle three sections.

The second section has the living room and features three window on the first floor: A picture window with a five light transom in centered in the space; double hung windows with three light transoms are on either side. The three windows on the second floor have the same placement.

The third section is the main section previously discussed.

The fourth section features a twelve light entrance door with a wooden paneled screen door. This door leads to the barroom. Proceeding north is a picture window with a five light transom and next to that is a double hung window with an air conditioner in the transom. On the second floor there are three double hung windows and no transoms.

The fifth and last section is a smaller section and has another door, this time leading to the meat market and grocery store. The door has twelve lights with a two-paneled storm door, with six lights. There is only one window in this section, a picture window with a five light transom. The second floor has

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only two double hung windows like the first section.

#### SOUTH ELEVATION

The same brick and decorative features continue on the south elevation. This short section of wall has four pilasters and the use of headers to create a design; a concrete band, not painted, is between floors. The former porte-cochere measures 26 feet in length, east to west, and 13 feet in width. By enclosing the area it can be used as a garage or for storage. Having an overhead garage door at each end makes it convenient to use.

Common brick was used to in-fill the porte-cochere. Three glass block windows are on the first floor; the two large ones measure 63 inches wide by 43 inches high, a smaller one is 23 inches by 46. They are all set in concrete and the larger ones are separated from the smaller one by a wooden door of vertical boards, with one light. The second floor has two double hung windows.

After the building steps back 13 feet, the south elevation continues for 46 feet, 10 inches. Five double hung windows on the first floor have three light transoms. Above the transoms are two rows of brick headers forming an arch; the arch is found on the first floor fenestration on all elevations except the front (east). On the second story there are four double hung windows. A metal fire escape is attached to the brick wall with an exit door on the second floor.

#### WEST ELEVATION

The west elevation has a two-story section on the south end and a one-story section on the north end. The fenestration on the west elevation is similar to the south elevation, with five evenly spaced windows on the first story and three on the second story.

The one story section begins with a small porch featuring an exit from the butler's pantry, with three concrete steps leading to a 10 by 10 foot concrete slab. The door has six lights with a three light transom overhead.

The building extends ten feet to the west and then measures 18 feet 6 inches north to south. There is one double hung window in this section.

#### NORTH ELEVATION

The north side of the one story section measures 46 feet 6 inches from east to west and has two entrances: the west entrance leads to the kitchen and has a porch that is 40 inches off of the ground

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and measures 8 feet, east to west, and 4 feet 4 inches, north to south. A wooden balustrade encircles the porch with wrought iron railings on each side of the six open steps. There are three double hung windows with three light transoms east of the porch. One of the windows has a metal exhaust fan where the transom once was. Below these windows the stone foundation is visible with two light basement windows.

Another entrance is at the east end of the one story section. This door leads to a small hall connecting the kitchen and the barroom. A cellar door is next to the building and measures four feet by seven feet six inches. Adjacent to the cellar door there are seven concrete steps that stretch 15 feet, north to south. These steps lead up to a 25 inch wide sidewalk that abuts the building and continues around the building to the front elevation.

The two-story section meets the one-story section next to the east entrance and extends north 13 feet; the north elevation is 35 feet 10 inches, east to west. The west side of this section has two double hung windows on both floors. The first floor windows have the three light transoms overhead.

On the north elevation of this section there are two double hung windows on the second story with another metal fire escape leading from an exit door. There is only one double hung window on the first floor with a three light transom.

#### INTERIOR

The 9,600 square foot hotel has nine rooms on the first floor, not including bathrooms and closets; the second floor has 18 guest rooms even though they are numbered to 19 (there is no number 13) plus three bathrooms and several closets.

All of the rooms in the hotel have plastered walls and ceilings; however, a few ceilings on the second floor have been covered over with acoustical tiles. Also, the library has a pressed wood ceiling. Exposed waterpipes for the radiators are suspended from the ceiling in the living room and dining room. The woodwork is stained in dark brown. Crown molding is found in the lobby, living room and dining room. Original light fixtures are in the lobby, the living room and the dining room. Almost all of the floors have been carpeted except for the kitchen, the barroom, the foyer and the bathrooms.

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FIRST FLOOR

Foyer

The main entrance to the hotel is through 10 light French doors into a small rectangular foyer that measures 7 feet 2 inches by 5 feet wide; another set of matching French doors leads into a lobby. A single 10 light door on the south side of the foyer leads to the living room.

Lobby

The lobby is a large open room, irregular in shape, 14 feet, north to south by 17 feet ½ inch, with a small alcove in the northeast corner for a perfect place to read or have a quiet conversation. A storage closet is in the southwest corner of the room. A large steel beam runs east to west. There is carpeting on the floor.

The lobby has several doorways leading from it: on the left (south) are French doors that lead into the living room; on the north wall is a doorway leading to the bar room with a smaller one further west that also leads into the barroom. At the end of the hall is a large men's bathroom; before the bathroom, on the south side of the hallway, is a door leading to a closet that also serves as the entrance to the basement. West of this door is a small women's bath.

A new opening, leading from the barroom, was cut into the north wall in the late 1930s or early 1940s, when the lobby became a cocktail lounge and a more convenient passage was needed.<sup>7</sup> The cocktail lounge was in the lobby for many years and it is not clear when it was changed back to a reception area.

Basement

Originally, the basement was accessed only from the outside. Today it accessed through the closet. There are still remnants of a closet such as shelving and coat hooks. A door on the east side of the closet has a metal covering and leads to the basement stairway. Down in the basement, it is obvious that an entrance was broken through the brick wall so that the basement could be accessed from the interior. This probably was done when the lobby became a cocktail lounge. The basement has a stone foundation and several rooms such as a cold storage room, a furnace room, a coal room and a laundry room. The building was once heated by radiators but the radiators have been disconnected and there is no heat now. Unlike many old buildings, this basement has extremely high ceilings. There are two

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<sup>7</sup> Chuck Porten, phone interview, August 31, 2011.

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levels in the basement and legend has it that liquor was served in one of these rooms during prohibition.<sup>8</sup>

#### Living Room

The living room is a welcoming room with several pieces of overstuffed furniture, a large wide screen TV, a piano and a small organ. The room measures 23 feet 10 inches, north to south, by 22 feet wide, east to west. A light door leads to the porte-cochere (garage now), on the south wall. A double hung window is on either side of the doorway. Two double hung windows with three light transoms are on each side of a large picture window on the east wall of the room. A large steel beam runs east to west. An alcove, like the one in the lobby, is next to the foyer. A large display case fills the west wall, with historical items and also items for sale.

In the northwest corner is the original registration desk in an area that measures 5 feet 6 inches by 6 feet 9 inches. The wooden counter is 42 inches wide and 4 feet 6 inches long. The solid wooden front is 41 inches high on the east side; a 33½ inch square post helps to create a small office area. On the other side of the post is a swinging door that is connected to another smaller counter.

Beyond the registration area, on the north side of the hall, is the enclosed stairway leading upstairs. Ten 40 inch uncarpeted wooden steps lead to a three feet seven inch by four foot two inch landing where the stairs turn east and eight steps lead to the second floor. At the bottom of the stairs, mounted on the wall is a sign that says: "For maid service, push button." Next to the sign is a mousetrap with a button on it. A storage closet is next to the stairway on the same wall.

On the south wall, before the dining room, is a guest room for handicapped guests. Previously, it served as the living room for the hotel owners. It was a good place to relax and was conveniently located for the running of the hotel. The room measures 14 feet 7 inches, east to west, by 10 feet 2 inches. It has one double hung window, with a three light transom, centered on the south wall.

#### Dining Room

French doors lead into the spacious square dining room measuring 29 feet 6 inches, both in width and length, with nine windows that mimic the living room windows. Five windows on the west side of the room overlook Pelican Lake. Four identical windows are on the south wall, with two on either side of a

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<sup>8</sup> Fred Chermak, Jr. Interview. Fred Chermak, Jr. reported that when he was in grade school two men stopped him and asked him to take them into the basement. They were federal agents looking for illegal liquor. Mr. Chermak said he did not show them the hiding place for the liquor and the agents could not find it so they left.

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brown brick fireplace. The fireplace, 9 feet in length, extends into the room 33 inches and has a heavy wooden mantel 56 inches from the floor. The wood burning fireplace has glass doors on the opening. On the north wall are the "in" and "out" doors leading to the butler's pantry. Also on this wall is a water faucet - not a bubbler, but a place to draw water. There is one ceiling fan and six lights on chains with white decorative globes; a steel beam runs north to south. Four large radiators, painted silver, are in the room. The carpet is multicolored.

#### Butler's Pantry

This small room has three walls lined with cupboards and an outside door on the west wall; two swinging doors lead from the dining room and two more lead into the kitchen on the north wall. The room measures 9 feet, east to west, by 16 feet.

#### Kitchen

The kitchen is a large commercial kitchen measuring 26 feet, east to west by 17 feet wide. On the west end of the kitchen is a small bath measuring 3 feet 9 inches by 6 feet 3 inches, with a double hung window on the south wall. A room at the west end of the kitchen is a room that was for "Auntie" the cook, according to Mr. Porten. The cook was Mary Chermak's aunt. The room measures 11 feet 5 inches, north to south, by 9 feet 8 inches.<sup>9</sup> Two double stainless steel sinks are on the west wall.

On the east wall, a large commercial stove with a long stainless steel hood dominates the room. In the southeast corner of the kitchen is a small closet. There are several large worktables. It is a working commercial kitchen and very well-equipped. A door with six lights on the north side leads to a small porch; three windows are also along this wall. All of the windows are double hung and have three transoms overhead. The window on the east end has an exhaust fan where the transom once was. The flooring is red quarry tile.

The door at the east end of the kitchen leads to a small hall that contains the walk-in refrigerated locker. The entire south wall is filled with the locker. The heavy oak door that measures 30 inches wide by 71 inches in height has three 12 inch hinges. To the right of the door is a beautiful fluted oak pilaster. Left of the large door are two small glass doors, 25 inches by 37½ inches, with heavy brass latches. These small doors give access the refrigerator shelves without having to enter the locker. Above is another cupboard measuring 24 inches by 36 inches. In the middle of the cupboards is a sign that proudly claims that the J. & G. Lesser Company of Milwaukee, WI was responsible for the whole unit. The interior of the large refrigerated locker is 6 feet 10 inches deep, by 8 feet 3 inches long. It is

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<sup>9</sup> Chuck Porten Interview.

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no longer refrigerated but it still has the coils on the ceiling.

There are four doorways in this small rectangular hall that measures nine feet, east to west, by four feet wide; on the west. is the entrance to the kitchen; to the east, the barroom; to the north, a doorway to the library and a door to the outside. This three paneled door has four lights with a three light transom overhead.

#### Library

The library's north wall is lined with floor to ceiling bookshelves, painted black. One double hung window interrupts the shelving. The west wall has two double hung windows. The room is rectilinear in shape and measures 33 feet 4 inches, east to west, by 11 feet 9 inches. The east wall has one large picture window that measures 5 feet 6 inches square, an entrance door with 15 lights, and an outside storm door. The south wall has one doorway that leads into the back of the bar (the barroom is the adjacent to the library). The south wall is finished in brick at the east end; the west end of the wall is finished in board and batten. The ceiling is 8 feet in height and has wooden cross beams painted black, creating squares. Heavier beams run north to south; white painted pressed wood is beneath the squares. The library is a place for playing board games, cards games, putting puzzles together or for reading one of the many books.

#### Barroom

The barroom is rectilinear in shape, measuring 27 feet 7 inches, east to west, by 16 feet 10 inches, north to south. The 11 foot plastered ceiling has two hanging lights and two track lights. The walls are covered with board and batten wainscoting, stained brown, with 30 inches of plastered wall above. The dominant feature in this room is of course the large bar measuring 19 feet, east to west, with a back bar that is 21 feet in length and has two mirrors above it. The main bar is 45 inches high and 18 inches wide and has a 24 inch outside radius on both ends. In front of the bar sit 13 black wrought iron bar stools with red cushions. There are five tables with red and white-checkered table cloths and accompanying chairs. A piano is against the south wall. On the east wall is a 12 light door with a three light transom overhead, and a screened door on the outside. A large picture window, the same size as the one in the library, is on this wall; a smaller double hung window is north of it. The flooring is variegated brick linoleum. A storage closet is in the southwest corner of the room.

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SECOND FLOOR

The second floor has 18 guest rooms, divided by two hallways. The main hallway runs north to south, and is 69 feet 5 inches in length, and 5 feet 6 inches wide. There are seven rooms on the east side of the hall and one bathroom. The rooms along the east side vary in width from 8 feet 4 inches to 12 feet 3 inches and are all 17 feet in length, east to west. At the north end of the hall is a doorway that leads to a small narrow hall, nine feet, east to west, by 4½ inches wide; straight ahead is a bathroom, which served as a private bathroom for the owners. On the east and west side of this small hall is a bedroom. This area may have been for special guests because it is separated from the rest of the rooms. On the east side of the bathroom is a hall, 6 feet by 3 feet 4 inches that leads to an exit for the fire escape. On the west side of the hall are two more bedrooms, a bathroom and a large linen closet. The bedrooms are both 15 feet 2 inches, east to west; one is 8 feet and the other one is 9 feet 3 inches north to south. Originally, the bathrooms were segregated – one for women and one for men.

A smaller hallway runs east to west and intersects the main hallway. This hall is 47 feet in length and is 5 feet wide. There are four rooms on each side of the hall. The rooms on the south side of the hall measure 11 feet 10 inches in length and vary in width from 13 feet 9 inches to 7 feet 6 inches. These rooms are interrupted by a short hall, 4 feet 6 inches wide and 13 feet long, that leads to an exit door for the fire escape. The rooms on the north side of the hall are 12 feet 3 inches, north to south, and vary in width from 7 feet 11 inches to 12 feet 6 inches.

The guest rooms are furnished according to the size of each room. Some rooms have double beds, others have king sized beds or twin beds. Every room has at least one window. Some rooms have closets but most have racks mounted on the wall for hanging clothes.

The first owners, the Chermaks, lived on the second floor over the barroom, in room #18, a convenient location to listen for night guests. One of the trains arrived at four in the morning and the Chermaks wanted to make sure that they heard the night bell. Timothy Bawden writes in his article, "Escape to Wisconsin: The Early Resort Landscape of Northern Wisconsin, 1890-1920", that the resort owners say that running a resort was more than just a business; it was a way of life. It took the whole family to run the resort. That was certainly true of the Chermak family.

Integrity

The overall appearance of the 1928 hotel is still intact; its integrity has not been compromised by any major additions or alterations since the massive reconstruction in 1928.

There have been minor additions, such as an overhead garage door on the porte cochère. On the south

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elevation the porte cochère has been filled in with common brick and glass blocks for windows, and a wooden door has also been added.

An aluminum band, painted white, was also added and covers the concrete at the top of the parapet where once it was just concrete painted white. All of the building's brick is currently being tuck-pointed and the concrete sills and wooden window trim will also be painted white.

On the north elevation the small wooden porch off of the kitchen has been replaced.

The interior is also intact and the rooms are still in their original places. The bathrooms have been updated but are still the same size. Electrical and plumbing work has been completed and brought up to code, and plaster repair and painting has been completed. A few of the rooms now have acoustical tile on the ceiling rather than plaster.

The overall appearance from the street differs from 1928 only because of the overhead garage door on the porte cochère.

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Pelican Lake Hotel is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The Pelican Lake Hotel is eligible at the local level because of its commercial importance to the village of Pelican Lake. The community was proud to have a hotel of this stature, a commercially styled building, in their small village. The hotel has always been the most important landmark in the village and the entire area. It provided income for many who worked there as well as being a magnet to attract travelers and tourists to the area. Beautifully sited on a 3,585 acre pristine lake, it is also on the main road in the center of the village and originally was strategically located across the street from the railroad station. Later, the modern road brought people to the hotel by automobile. Most of the many resorts that once existed around Pelican Lake are no longer in operation. Even when the other resorts were operating, the hotel was more sophisticated than many of the resorts and offered more amenities. It played an important role in the village as it became the gathering place for the entire area for important events in the lives of the citizens. Almost everyone who lives or even once lived in the area has a fond memory associated with the hotel. The hotel has not changed in appearance and its integrity is still intact. The period of significance is from 1928, when the building was constructed, and extends to the end of the historic period in 1961.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Pelican Lake was named for the white pelicans that came to the lake to feed, journeying from their nests on the Wisconsin River. Pelican Lake was platted in 1882 but not recorded until May 1883 when it was a part of Neva Township in Langlade County. In 1885 it was in Forest County and finally became a part of Oneida County in 1897 with a new name for the township: Schoepke, after August F. Schoepke, one of the earliest pioneers and the first postmaster in 1882.

In 1889, an item in a Crandon paper noted: "Eighteen men are coming from Chicago to fish on Pelican Lake."<sup>10</sup> This was even before the white pine had all been cut. The lake was popular because of the abundance of large muskies, walleyes and northern pike. It was a fisherman's paradise.

Pelican Lake was first reached by rail in 1882. The first railroad was the Milwaukee, Manitowoc and Green Bay, chartered in March 1870. In 1873, the road was consolidated with the Manitowoc and Green Bay and Western Railroad and finally became known as the Milwaukee, Lake Shore and Western. The railroad tracks reached Antigo in 1881 and the next year Pelican Lake.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> "A History of the Village of Pelican Lake", p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p.8.

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The impetus for the railway system was for the shipping of lumber and supplies associated with the lumber business. The railroad played a major role in the expansion of northern Wisconsin. "The extension of rail service into the sparsely populated northern portions of Wisconsin characterizes railroad development in the state during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Spurred by generous land grants, bestowed by the federal government and distributed by the state legislature, totaling nearly three million acres. The railroad pushed northwards to exploit the vast stands of white pine and the rich deposits of copper and zinc."<sup>12</sup>

It was only a year after the new township was named that the Beach Hotel was built on the shore of Pelican Lake. The 1898 Beach Hotel was a large three-story frame building complete with a wrap around veranda on all four sides, gabled dormers and an open bell tower. It was the first resort built on Pelican Lake and the owners--John F. Pergande, August G. Nagel, and Henry G. Nagel--spared no expense. It was the hub of all activity in the area and conveniently located across the street from the 1905 railroad depot.

In 1912 the new owners, Charles J. Burns, Andrew J. Mclain, and William A. Curtis formed the Pelican Lake Hotel Corporation. Dramatic remodeling and updating was done to the Beach Hotel. Besides adding electricity and indoor plumbing, they drastically remodeled the front of the hotel. The veranda was removed and replaced with a brick façade starting at ground level. There were two levels to the basement and this new remodeling involved the upper level. Because of the new entrances, these basement rooms became accessible at the ground level. The frame building behind the brick façade remained the same. It was a strange combination-- the Queen Anne building and the new commercial brick front façade. The owners wanted to put the past behind and move into the modern age, and were making a statement with the brick façade. It was an effort to create a more commercial looking building and to bring the hotel up to date. The village was becoming more prosperous, due to the influx of tourists, and they wanted to play a major role. Besides changing the appearance of the hotel they also changed the name to the Beach Inn.

Calamity struck in 1926 when a huge fire swept through the village and destroyed most of the buildings. The brick façade was all that was left of the Hotel Pelican (the name had been changed by the Kulbackis when they bought the hotel in 1923).

Frank Susedik, with his daughter Mary and her husband Fred Chermak, bought the property the year after the fire. They built a commercial brick hotel on the same foundation as the 1898 Beach Hotel and they began operation in May of 1928. They called their new business the Pelican Lake Hotel. Mr. Susedik owned a construction company in Cudahy, WI and according to his grandson, Fred

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

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Chermak, Jr. in a phone interview on August 30, 2011, stated that it was his grandfather's company that built the hotel.

In 1934 the Chermaks took over and changed the name to the New Pelican Lake Hotel and even had the name painted on the tall chimney. Striped awnings were added to the first floor windows on the front façade and a large wooden fish was mounted over the entrance. The Chermaks successfully ran the hotel until 1970.

Jack and Barbara Rowe and Richard and Antoinette O'Gorman bought the hotel from the Chermaks and changed the name to The Old Hotel in 1970. It became the Great Fish Inn next when Eugene and Shirley Kaczkowski bought the hotel in 1987. The hotel was then vacant for many years.

The hotel changed hands again in 2010 when Steve and Julianne Artus purchased the building. They have been busy restoring it and once again the hotel is open even though they have not completed the restoration. It will only be open in the warm months because the heating is not operational. The rooms are not rented nightly, but rather the entire hotel is rented to groups from Friday noon to the next Thursday noon. The guests are able to use the hotel on their own, and they are able to use the large commercial kitchen if they like.

Today, many of the resorts in the north woods have changed or become obsolete. Many of the people who once stayed in the resorts and hotels now own their own homes on the lake. The resorts certainly played an important role in the changing of the economy of the north woods.

After all of the pine was cut, people who wanted to remain in the northwoods turned to farming. Even the University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture encouraged farming in the cutover land of the northwoods. But because of the pervasive pine stumps, the acidic soil and the short growing season, farming was not successful. Between 1900 and 1920, 25,000 farms were established in northern Wisconsin, but by 1920 it was evident that farming was not the answer.

Many of the region's early settlers began building small cabins on their farms to rent out to summer tourists. They realized that if they wanted to survive they needed to find a new livelihood and tourism became their salvation. It was the automobile that changed the face of the northern areas. When the state realized that farming was not a prosperous way of life in this region, it began to organize a campaign for tourism. But in order to get the tourists to the remote areas of the north woods, better roads were needed. By 1930 the state was putting one million dollars into advertising the natural beauty of Wisconsin.

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Railroads as the primary means of travel to the northwoods declined with the improved roads and the automobile. In 1911, the State Aid Road Law was passed ushering in a new era. Railroad usage continued to decline with the improved roads and development of State Highway 51, US Highway 12 and US Highway 45. According to Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: "In 1905, there were 1,492 registered vehicles in Wisconsin. By 1916 the number had jumped to 124,603."<sup>13</sup>

"By 1912 people in the north woods were actively encouraging tourism. A group of area men formed the Fish and Game Protective Association of Northern Wisconsin and published a booklet to attract tourists. They stated: 'The Association was organized for the purpose of protecting and fostering the fish and game of Northern Wisconsin. Plus active efforts to preserve and protect the beauty and advantages for sport and outings offered to the vacationist and tourist.' Resort owners took out ads and the booklet was geared to the office worker and not the wealthy, but the common man. How could one resist the increasable plethora of fish, crystal lakes and pine and fresh air."<sup>14</sup>

The wealthy businessmen from Chicago and other large cities did not need these ads to learn about the beauty of the north woods. They were well aware of the bountiful hunting and fishing because either they had been involved with the white pine industry or they had heard about it from their friends. These men could take the train from the big cities and if their destination was Pelican Lake they could simple walk a short distance from the depot and be at the Pelican Lake Hotel.

#### RECREATION AND RESORTS

As tourism grew in the northern part of the state so did the number of resorts. Most of the early resorts in Oneida County were on the "American Plan", which meant that meals were included. Usually there was a main lodge where meals were served and social activities took place. The guests could rent a small cabin near the lodge or stay in the lodge.

As more people purchased automobiles the more they traveled north. Automobiles allowed people to travel off the main roads and find new possibilities for vacationing in the north woods. By the 1930s railroads were having a hard time competing with private automobiles. However, the special "fish trains" were still popular into the 1950s.

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<sup>13</sup> Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Volume II, 8-1.

<sup>14</sup> Joyce Laab, A Collection of Northwoods Nostalgia (Sun Prairie, WI Royal Publishing Company, 1980), 95.

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When the sports fisherman began traveling to the north woods after the white pine was cut, in the late 1800s and early 1900s, they stayed in old lumber camps with very primitive conditions. Gradually as women and children joined the men it became necessary for the conditions to improve. These new resorts answered their needs.

As conditions improved, especially the housing, the wife and children began staying up north for the summer. They were able to escape the heat of the city, enjoy a more relaxed style of living and have a less stringent dress code. It meant a more leisurely way of life. The men, on the other hand, worked during the week and traveled by train for a visit on weekends. For example, they could board the train Friday evening in Chicago, take a berth overnight, have a good night's sleep, and arrive at their destination in the north woods the next morning. The process was reversed on Sunday night. By the 1950s the roads as well as the automobiles had improved so much that the railroads could not compete. In 1919, the Lakeland Times reported that the traffic on Highway 10 (roughly Highway 51) continued to be heavy and the license plates were from all over the United States.<sup>15</sup>

To accommodate all of the tourists, basic structures were constructed by the resort owners. Materials used were often found on the property of the resort. A common style was the vertical log and horizontal log structures. In the 1920s many of the resorts only had small cabins with no main lodge. Most of these small cabins had neither electricity nor indoor plumbing.

In the Village of Pelican Lake, resorts were springing up around the lake. One well-known resort was the Lakeview Resort, established by Joseph Friersteun before 1918. Shortly after 1918, Conrad Guth purchased the property and constructed a two-story lodge with 12 rooms on the second story. He changed the name to Lakeview Inn.<sup>16</sup> Today the lodge is still atop a hill overlooking the lake but it has become an apartment building.

Another popular resort on Pelican Lake was Weaver's Resort. It was located on a peninsula of land and was opened in 1918 by Harold Weaver. By 1924 there were ten housekeeping cabins and between 1924 and 1925 a lodge was built that also served as the owner's house.<sup>17</sup> They have one rental today.

Two groups or "clubs" made settlements on the lake. Both groups were organized in 1896; one group was called the Chicago Canoe Club and the other was the Antigo Island Club. The Chicago group was composed of young Chicago businessmen who came to Pelican Lake for vacation. They later bought land and called it Chicago Point. In the beginning they built a clubhouse, but later families began to

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<sup>15</sup> A Collection of Northwoods Nostalgia, p. 95.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Land of Lakes and Streams, p.23.

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build their own houses.<sup>18</sup> The Antigo Club had Articles of Incorporation that stated that the purpose of the club was to buy land and build a clubhouse strictly for the social pleasure of their members. They called their settlement Antigo Island.<sup>19</sup>

The Village of Pelican Lake became prosperous because of the tourism boom and many new businesses sprang up in the 1920s. It was during this period that the Pelican Lake Hotel was built. The brick commercial building made a bold statement to the world. It certainly made people take notice of the urban commercial building in this small village. It was not just a resort; it was a hotel with the amenities of a big city hotel. Because of its location on the main highway, the decline of the railroad did not affect their business.

The Pelican Lake Hotel was not just for housing guests, it was the center for all of the social activity in the area. Most important events were held at the hotel, such as weddings, birthday parties and all kinds of social gatherings. The dining room was open to the general public, not just to hotel guests. People could come by boat or car to dine and they did come from three neighboring counties.

In an article titled "A Touch of Pelican Lake . . . as I Remember It," Chuck Porten wrote that the Village of Pelican Lake was once a bustling community, especially in the 1940s and 1950s. He says he has watched it shrink from a village with two automobile dealers, three taverns, two grocery stores, two hotels, and five gas stations to what it is today.

In a phone conversation with Mr. Porten on August 30, 2011, he stated that the Pelican Lake Hotel was a very important building to the community. He said that people came from three counties to come to the hotel to eat the chicken dinners that Mrs. Chermak served. Porten recalled that many "famous" people stayed at the hotel, for instance Curly Lambeau; Frank Leahy, one of the "four horseman" of football fame who became a coach at Notre Dame; and the president of Pabst Brewing Company, who brought his executives for a few visits each summer.

Fred Chermak, Jr., son of the owners, is now 86 years old. He lived in the hotel for 15 years and loved every minute. He said one of the most memorable days for him was when a big black limousine pulled up to the hotel. A chauffeur emerged to open the back door for the couple, the owner of the Gillette Razor Blade Company and his wife.<sup>20</sup>

As the reputation of the hotel grew state wide, it gave a tremendous boost to the prosperity of the local economy. But the major impact it made was for the local people. Local and area organizations held

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> "The 100 Years History of the Antigo Island Club, 1886-1986", p.7.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

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their meetings at the hotel monthly. Karen Guth who wrote the booklet on the Antigo Club says that everyone was always welcome at the hotel. Many members of her family worked at the hotel. She said waiting on tables in the summer was fun because so many young people worked there and the tips were wonderful.<sup>21</sup> The hotel had an outstanding reputation in the community and was always a busy place. In addition to a bar and a restaurant, the building also housed a grocery store and a meat market. These businesses brought local people to the hotel.

The Rhineland Daily in May 14, 1970 wrote that the Pelican Lake Hotel was the headquarters for most civic and business affairs of the Pelican Lake community. Such organizations as the Chamber of Commerce, the Elcho-Pelican Lake Lion's Club, the snowmobile club, the community card clubs and all social activities were held at the Pelican Lake Hotel.

#### COMMERCE

Not until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century did the design of strictly commercial buildings emerge as a distinctive component of architecture. Standing apart from residential buildings they often ranked among the most conspicuous buildings in a community. The size and style of communities' commercial buildings served as an index to its achievement and potential. Main Streets across the country served as a magnet for commerce, fortified by such forces as the railroad and good roads.<sup>22</sup> The Pelican Lake Hotel was in a convenient spot for both the train and the car.

The Pelican Lake Hotel certainly brought the small community up a notch because of the commercial brick building. Most commercial buildings were designed to focus on the front façade. The hotel is a good example of the concept that all of the architectural detail and design was placed on the front. The detailed brickwork creates a unique design while the sides and back are plain.

The Pelican Lake Hotel is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because of its importance to the commercial history of the Village of Pelican Lake. Historically, hotels and other places of short-term lodging constitute one of the more wide-spread resource types found in settlements of every size and in every part of the state.

The earliest examples of hotels in Wisconsin were frequently among the first buildings in their respective settlements, providing shelter for transients and for new arrivals. The next generation of hotels followed quickly on the heels of the pioneer examples and these were usually of frame

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<sup>21</sup> Chuck Porten Interview.

<sup>22</sup> The Buildings of Main Street, p. 7

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construction. The coming of the railroad was often the catalyst that necessitated a larger place for lodging.

Once a community was well established, its next priority was to give evidence of being a settled, growing, prosperous place. Very early Wisconsin commercial buildings and hotels were typically built of wood and were clad in clapboard, and in the days before meaningful and effective fire protection was available, such buildings tended not to last long. Along with increased size came buildings built of more permanent and fire proof materials such as brick and stone. Hotels were important commercial enterprises in Wisconsin's communities and they were also of enormous symbolic importance, being one of the ways in which outsiders judged a community's vitality and prosperity.

The Pelican Lake Hotel reflects this evolution and the important role that hotels played in small and large downtowns. The first hotel on the site had been a large Queen Anne building. Located across the street from the railroad station, it had the feel of a large domestic building. As the building evolved into the current all brick Pelican Lake Hotel, it acquired a greater commercial appearance and commercial presence in the downtown. The new building had an urban feel, having the appearance of a business block. Its commercial impact in the downtown was greater than the lodging provided by the hotel. The new building took on storefront business functions; a small grocery and meat market operated out of the building. The market's business was mostly local. Fred Chermak had previously owned two grocery stores and so it was an easy thing for him to continue, but very unusual to have within the walls of a hotel. This business, as well as the hotel bar had a separate public entrance on the street elevation. The bar was a gathering place for the locals as well as the hotel guests. As noted earlier, the hotel also operated a restaurant that was open to the public. In the small downtown, this building had a large commercial presence and importance.

The Pelican Lake Hotel is the major landmark in the village. The community is happy to see that the hotel is once again open after so many years. It looks the same as it always has, although some integrity has been lost because of the aluminum band on the parapet that covers the original painted concrete. The brick needs tuck pointing, and the trim needs painting, but that will all be finished in the near future. On the interior, plumbing and electricity has been updated and brought up to code, and plastering and painting have taken place, but other than that it is in its original condition. No remodeling has taken place except for the bathrooms. Steve and Julieanne Artus, the new owners, are in the process of having the brickwork repaired and eventually the hotel will be brought back to its original luster. Mr. Artus has deep roots in the community because his family has been coming to Pelican Lake for over 100 years and he knows how important the hotel was to his family and to the entire community.

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**Verbal Boundary Description:** Lot 5, Block 1, of the Pelican Village according to the recorded Plan thereof. Said Plat is part of Government Lot 5, Section 19, Township 35 North, Range 11 East.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundary of the Pelican Lake Hotel encompasses less than one acre and has 250 feet of frontage on Pelican Lake. This comprises the parcel that has always been associated with this property.

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**Pelican Lake Hotel**  
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**Photos by Mary Jane Hettinga, May 31, 2011**

Front elevation, east  
Camera facing west  
1 of 27 photos

Entrance, east elevation  
Camera facing west  
2 of 27 photos

Roofline over entrance, east elevation  
Camera facing west  
3 of 27 photos

South elevation  
Camera facing north  
4 of 27 photos

Closeup of south elevation  
Camera facing north  
5 of 27 photos

Porte-cochere, south elevation  
Camera facing north  
6 of 27 photos

West elevation  
Camera facing east  
7 of 27 photos

Lake Pelican and dock  
Camera facing west  
8 of 27 photos

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North elevation, one story  
Camera facing south  
9 of 27 photos

Northwest corner  
Camera facing south  
10 of 27 photos

North entrance  
Camera facing south  
11 of 27 photos

North elevation  
Camera facing south  
12 of 27 photos

Close-up of brickwork, north elevation  
Camera facing south  
13 of 27 photos

Lobby  
Camera facing west  
14 of 27 photos

Living room  
Camera facing south  
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Registration desk, living room  
Camera facing west  
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Dining room  
Camera facing south  
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Dining room  
Camera facing west  
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Dining room, water faucet  
Camera facing north  
19 of 27 photos

Kitchen stove  
Camera facing northeast  
20 of 27 photos

Refrigerated locker  
Camera facing south  
21 of 27 photos

Library  
Camera facing east  
22 of 27 photos

Barroom  
Camera facing west  
23 of 27 photos

Stairway  
Camera facing north  
24 of 27 photos

Bedroom, second floor  
Camera facing southeast  
25 of 27 photos

Bedroom, second floor  
Camera facing east  
26 of 27 photos

Main hall, second floor  
Camera facing south  
27 of 27 photos

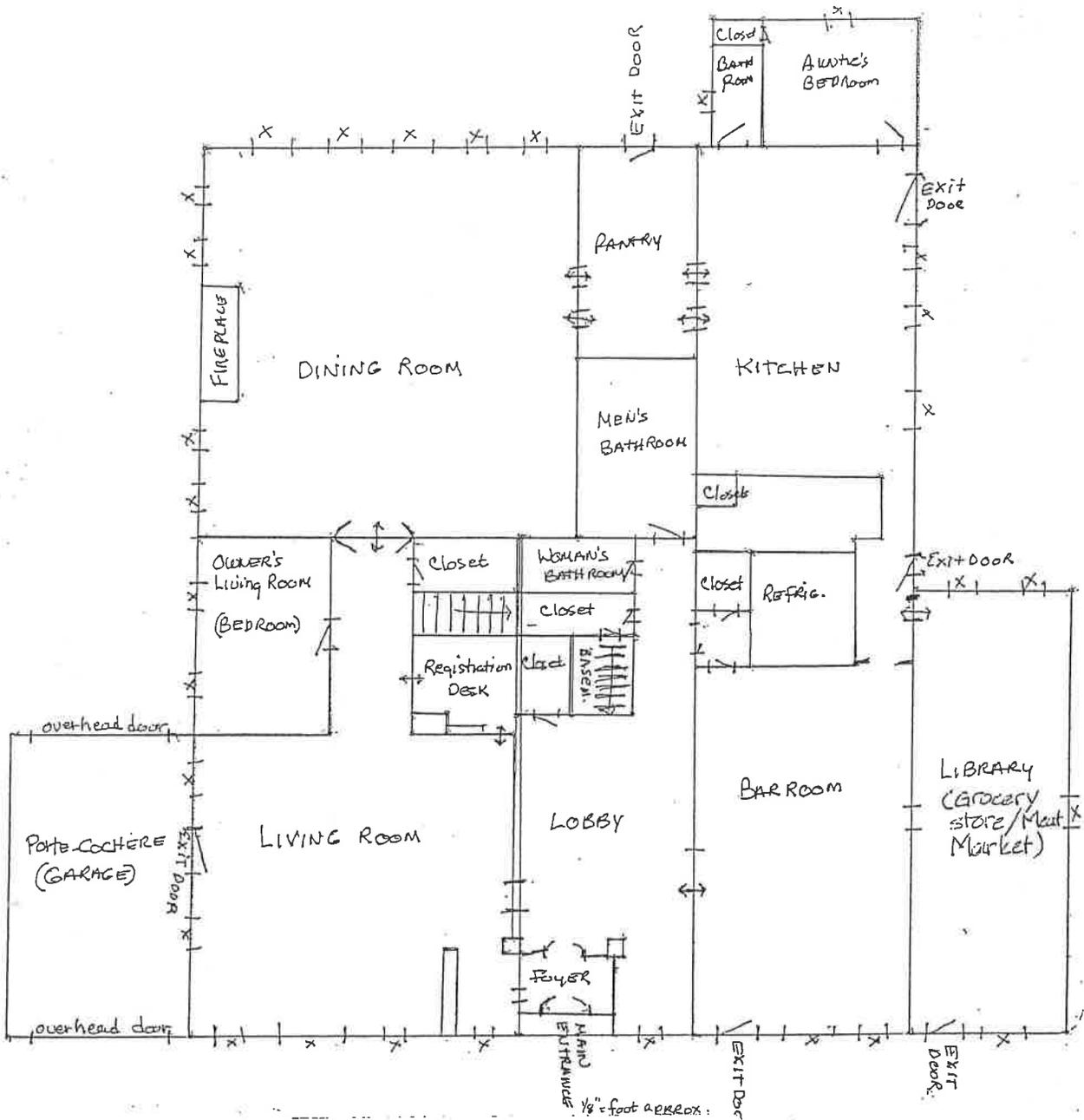
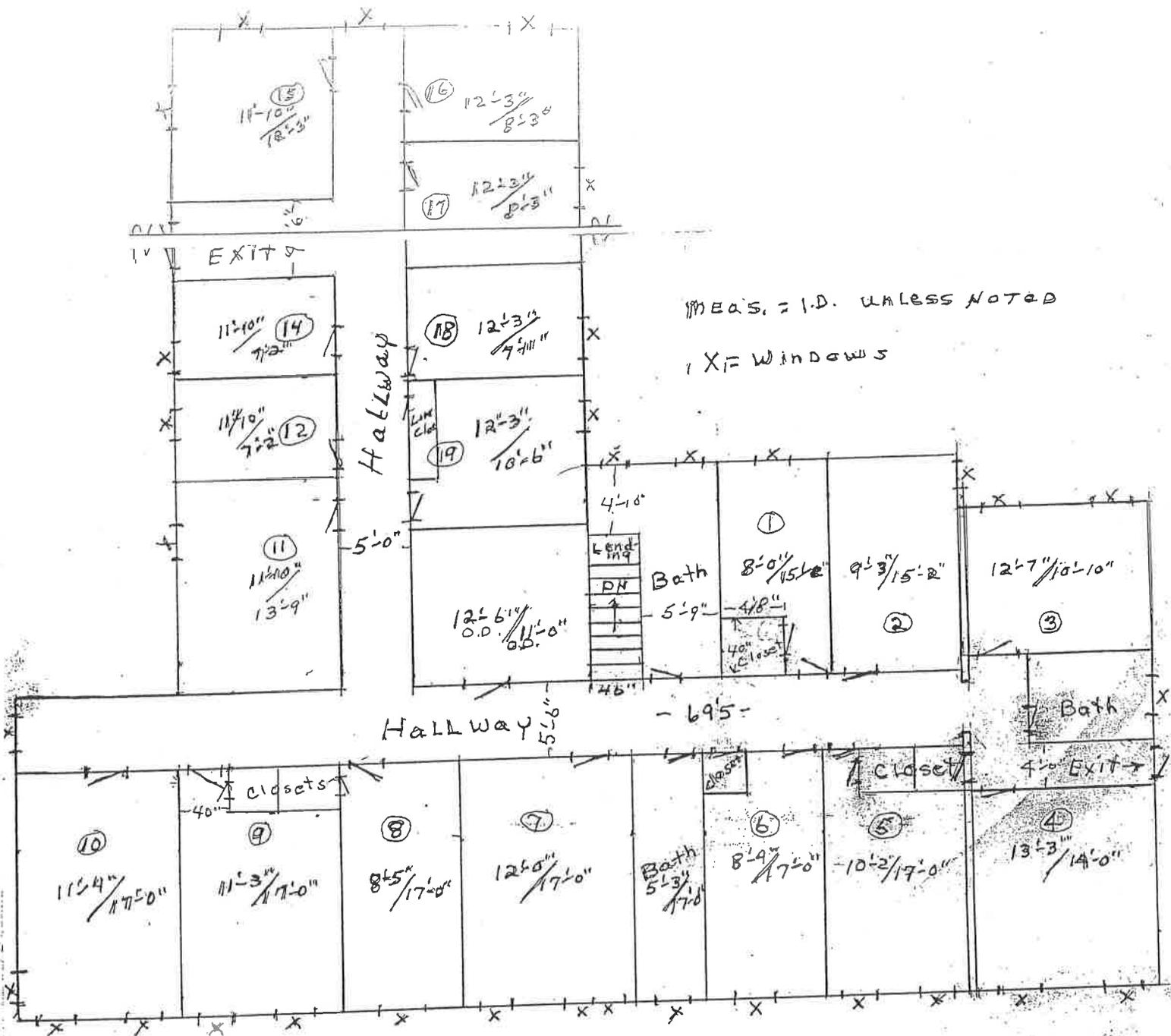


FIGURE 1:  
 PELICAN LAKE HOTEL  
 TOWN OF SCHOEPKE,  
 ONEIDA COUNTY, WISCONSIN





MEAS. = I.D. UNLESS NOTED  
 X = Windows

2ND FLOOR 1/8" = 1 Foot Approx.

FIGURE 2:  
 PELICAN LAKE HOTEL  
 TOWN OF SCHOEPKE,  
 ONEIDA COUNTY, WISCONSIN











Two-story red brick building with a fire escape on the left side. The building features several windows, including a white door on the second floor and a white door on the ground floor. The brickwork shows signs of wear and peeling paint.

Three-story red brick building with decorative architectural details, including a large garage door on the ground floor and a white door. The building features ornate brickwork and decorative elements on the upper floors.





















DUPY  
NOSSING







