

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1019

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Sigma Pi Fraternity House

other names/site number Catholic Student Center; Parish House Apartments

## 2. Location

street & number 108 McLean Street

N/A	not for publication
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city or town Iowa City

N/A	vicinity
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state Iowa code IA county Johnson code 103 zip code 52246-3727

## 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Perry W. Smith DSHPO 11/12/2013  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*John Edson H. Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

*12-31-13*  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is 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.)

EDUCATION: education-related

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multiple-dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Tudor  
Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: STONE: Limestone  
BRICK

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

### **Summary Paragraph**

The Sigma Pi Fraternity House is located on a large, tree-covered site at the northeast edge of the Manville Heights residential neighborhood in northwest Iowa City. It is adjacent to a group of large, early 20<sup>th</sup> century fraternity houses and medium scale apartment buildings. Constructed in ca. 1929 based on a Tudor Revival Style design attributed to fraternity house architect Myron E. Pugh of Madison, Wisconsin, the Sigma Pi Fraternity House has a 3-story rectangular plan with a steeply pitched intersecting gable roof and random ashlar limestone cladding on the front and sides and brick on the rear. The front façade has a symmetrically placed gabled entrance bay set between front-gabled wings; one wing has an extended roof line over a 1-story sun room. Fenestration includes paired, multi-light casement windows of varying sizes in most openings. Feature window groups on the first floor include two groups of four windows topped by contiguous stained glass windows containing heraldic symbols in circular center lights. Two chimneys – one exposed and the other interior – extend three-and-half stories at the gable ends. The fraternity house was rehabilitated using the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* as a 16-unit apartment building in 2011-2012 under both Federal and State investment tax credit programs.

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### **Narrative Description**

#### *Site:*

The Sigma Pi Fraternity House is located at 108 McLean Street on a double-lot parcel measuring 142 feet across the front with a depth of approximately 170 feet. The parcel is in a wooded upland residential neighborhood on the west side of the Iowa River as it meanders through northwest Iowa City. The surrounding neighborhood known as "Manville Heights" takes its name from an addition platted in 1910 bearing the same name. The lot is level to gently sloping across the front two-thirds from west to east; it drops off along the paved rear parking lot to a steep ravine that extends downward from west to east. McLean Street is a narrow paved residential street that extends east from a parallel corridor of fraternity houses and apartment buildings located along the north-south streets of Ellis Avenue and Ridgeland Avenue, both of which terminate at McLean Street on the north in front of the Sigma Pi Fraternity House. The site has more than a dozen mature oak trees scattered throughout the park-like setting surrounding the building. The access drive extends north from McLean Street along the west side of the building to the parking lot at the rear or north side of the fraternity house. Because of the depth of the property and the horizontal expanse of the fraternity house, the parking lot is minimally visible from either the public street or sidewalk that extends along the front of the property. The parking lot is connected to adjacent properties to the north via a pedestrian bridge that crosses the ravine at the northeast corner of the fraternity house property.

#### *Building:*

This Sigma Pi Fraternity House was built in ca. 1929, about five years after the two lots comprising this building site passed to the Xi House Company in December 1924. The construction date is confirmed by State University of Iowa yearbook photographs. An examination of the 1933 Sanborn Map also shows the parcel with the building in place as a part of a group of similar sized fraternity houses extending north along Ellis Avenue and Ridgeland Avenue south of McLean Street. City directory records show the Sigma Pi Fraternity still residing at the fraternity's former building at 923 E. Iowa Avenue in 1926 and first listed at 108 McLean in 1930. Ca. 1929 is, therefore, a construction date consistent with public records for the building. It should be noted that the 1933 Sanborn Map, the first to depict this area of Iowa City, shows the building in place with its current footprint in 1933.

This 3-story fraternity house is an example of the Tudor Revival Style as applied to a large-scale residential or multi-family building form. Architectural historians Virginia and Lee McAlester would categorize its design as part of the Stone Wall Cladding sub-type of the Tudor Revival. The fraternity house has a poured concrete foundation with random ashlar limestone cladding on the exterior and front and end walls, a rare sub-type for Tudor designs in Iowa City. The rear façade is clad in reddish brown-colored brick with the brick laid in common bond; stone quoins tie the rear wall to the side walls. The building has an east-west rectangular floor plan with a complex gabled roof plan. A steeply pitched side-gabled roof extends over the main 3-story block with intersecting front-gabled wall dormer sections at each end. At the east end of the building, the east slope of the front-gabled section has a flared extended slope over a 1-story sunroom wing. As a result,

the east side-gable roof's gabled end presents itself as a dormer-like feature on the east façade with a pair of small flared shed-roof dormers lower on the slope. Three flared shed-roof dormers of taller height appear on the front and rear slopes of the main block as well. The roof sections have narrow eaves along the slopes and no eaves nor parapets on the gable ends. A massive exposed limestone-clad 3½-story chimney is centered on the west gable end with an internally constructed chimney at the east gable end. Both chimneys have extended red brick stacks at the top for additional height of several feet.

The main entrance to the building is centered on the south façade facing McLean Street. It is recessed inside a projecting, partially enclosed, stone-clad entrance bay that has a steep-pitched front-gable roof that reaches into the second story and a recessed opening with a flattened ogee arch (see interior lobby view of front entrance, Photo 8). The front door has a channel-cut finish and the same flattened ogee shape. A stone carving around the entrance bay opening has a geometric design that includes the shield of the Sigma Pi Fraternity and the original Old English styled light sconces. The side walls of the entrance bay have rectangular openings filled with turned spindles and are positioned high on the side walls. The balance of the first floor on the front façade has single, narrow 6-light sash on both sides of the entrance bay and feature window groups further to the left and right. Each feature group has four large 8-light fixed or casement windows with a row of four multi-light square transom sash above. Each of the square adjoining sashes has a circular center light with a leaded light design featuring the fraternity's shield insignia and other heraldic designs. Radiating sash surround the circular light with this patternwork repeated in each of the transom sashes. The lights are a mix of clear and stained glass.

Second floor windows are symmetrically arranged in two groups of three 8-light casement sashes above and flanking the entrance bay and paired 8-light casements in the outer bays. On the attic/third floor, paired 6-light casements are evenly spaced including beneath the gable peaks of the outer bays and across the shed roofed dormers of the side-gable slope of the main block. The sole exception is the center shed dormer above the entrance bay that had three 6-light sashes rather than two. Similar paired multi-light sashes are arranged in on the west gabled end and the rear façade. On the west end, the reuse of the internal space as bedrooms has required the use a combination of wider operable window for egress with a narrower multi-light fixed sash. The east gabled end differs because of the presence of the sunroom on the first floor. Here semi-circular arched openings on the first floor retain their original large transoms and are now set above window units below that feature stacked horizontal single-light sashes that are either operable or fixed.

*Integrity:*

The Sigma Pi Fraternity House retains sufficient integrity from the period of significance identified, ca. 1929 - 1943, to qualify for National Register listing. A summary of the seven aspects or qualities of integrity appears below:

- **Location:** The location for the Sigma Pi Fraternity House in the northeast corner of the Manville Heights Addition remains the same as the dates of significance when the building built and occupied by the Sigma Pi Fraternity. The fraternity house now converted to apartments continues to be within the double-lot parcel where it was originally sited with scattered, mature deciduous trees and lawn surrounding the building.
- **Design:** The design for the Sigma Pi Fraternity House retain a significant portion of the building's original exterior design and a number of the building's most character defining interior elements of design from their period of significance. The design is attributed to Myron Pugh and the primary features of this building and a comparative building in Urbana, Illinois continue to exemplify Pugh's favored design features.
- **Setting:** The setting for the Sigma Pi Fraternity House remains substantially the same as ca. 1929-1943. The spacious lot has not seen the construction of auxiliary buildings and the large number of oak trees remains in a mature state. The only difference is the expanded size of the rear parking lot and the pavement of the lot and access drive with concrete. This change is relatively minor and does not detract from the visual integrity of the building itself.
- **Materials:** The principal materials originally used for construction of Sigma Pi Fraternity House continue in use in 2013 with a few exceptions. The exception would be the replacement of original multi-light wood casement and fixed sashes with multi-light, insulated glass in wood casements and fixed sashes. Important historic windows such as the featured multi-light groups and their accompanying stained glass transoms remain preserved. Similarly on the interior, heavy textured plaster, stained woodwork, original wood floors, the original beamed ceilings and fireplace are retained in the adapted use of the building as apartments.

- **Workmanship:** Though adaptively reused as an apartment house since 2012, the Sigma Pi Fraternity House retains much of the building's original workmanship. The building's exterior random ashlar stonework remains unaltered demonstrating how stone-cladding was handled during the 1920s for such a design. The same is true of the execution of the stained glass windows on the front façade, and the substantial quantity of original interior cabinetry and millwork. These varied crafts provide evidence of the craftsmen's labor and skill during original construction.
- **Feeling:** The Sigma Pi Fraternity House retains a strong sense of place largely due to the buildings and streets that comprise its immediate environment. The building continues to provide housing largely for students but in the form of individual apartments rather than dorm rooms. The coming and going of students on foot and on bicycles is retained on this edge of the residential blocks of Manville Heights and the traditional fraternity house neighborhood. Street width, sidewalks, and tree cover traditional to this neighborhood are retained in 2013.
- **Association:** The fraternity house continues to demonstrate the building's strong association with the historic development patterns in the Manville Heights neighborhood during the late 1920s. The continued proximity of the fraternity house to other Greek houses erected during the 1920s and apartment houses constructed during the following decade demonstrates this continued historic association. Though now rehabilitated for use as residential apartments, the building's occupants are affiliated with the University of Iowa student population including professional schools and hospitals located on the University's West Campus. The internal arrangement of private units diminishes common areas to some extent. However, the retention of the main entrance lobby harkens back to the building's use as a Greek House. The location of the building near the University's Arts Campus and Medical School, a collection of other fraternity houses, and a residential neighborhood highly favored by University academic staff continues the association of this building with its history as an education related facility. To the casual observer, there are no outward indications that the building is not still used as a fraternity house.

#### *Historic Rehabilitation Plan and Alterations:*

In 2011-2012, an historic rehabilitation plan was developed for the reuse of the former Sigma Pi Fraternity House. Completed under the guidance of the National Park Service and the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office, the building's interior dormitory rooms and public areas were redeveloped into 16 single-bedroom and studio apartments, utility rooms, and retained public space. Work was carried out in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. Because of the adapted reuse as residential living space, conformance with local building codes necessitated some changes including sprinklers, modification of window sizes in bedroom windows on secondary facades, door opening dimensions, fire wall construction between units, separation of plumbing and HVAC, extension of the secondary exit stairs from the third floor, and other requirements. Original architectural elements were retained wherever possible with some elements surface mounted for future modification without necessitating the disturbance of historic fabric. Nearly all of the original casement windows had been removed approximately 40 years ago and replaced with metal single light sashes. During the historic rehabilitation, new window units were installed using multi-light insulated glass in wood casements to match the configuration of the original windows. The exceptions were for windows in bedrooms, which required larger sized casement units for egress alongside narrower fixed multi-light panel.

Other historic elements retained include the stained glass transom windows featured on the front façade and the metal light sconces at the entrance. On the interior, the original channel-cut Tudor Style entrance door opens into the 1929 lobby arrangement. Here the original space contains the short balustrade of the central staircase, refinished hardwood floors, textured plaster ceilings and walls with an "English" pattern, French door openings with intact doors, and an Old English pendant-style ceiling light. At each end and along the north side of the first floor, apartments have been designed to retain original features including beamed ceilings, textured plaster, the semi-circular main fireplace, and the original dining room's built-in buffet. Interspersed at the edges of the larger rooms and tucked in existing alcoves are a few new dividing walls and doors for bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and closets. Where original features such as the fireplace are retained, they are now the point of interest in the respective living unit's space. Original openings throughout the building retain stained woodwork while new moldings, trim and doors have painted finishes to identify their newer installation. In the basement and on upper levels double-loaded corridors have apartments arranged along each side. These spaces retain original ceiling heights, alcoves, closets, and on the third floor, slanted ceiling walls and dormer spaces.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1929-1943

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1929

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

**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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance spans the years ca. 1929 – 1943. This period covers the initial construction of the Sigma Pi Fraternity House through its use for dormitory housing by first the Sigma Pi Fraternity and subsequently by both the Sigma Pi Fraternity and the Xi Psi Phi Fraternity. The period of significance ends for the building's use as a fraternity house when the property went into receivership in 1943. The building subsequently was transferred to the Catholic Diocese of Davenport and used as a Catholic student center. No significance is claimed for this period of occupancy.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

Not Applicable.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Sigma Pi Fraternity House is significant under both Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A this fraternity house is associated with the development of a form of collegiate housing in Iowa City that reached its peak in the decade following the end of World War I – the Greek House or fraternity and sorority house. The fraternity house was planned and built between 1926 and 1929 during the second and final wave of homebuilding in the Manville Heights residential neighborhood in which it is located. This homebuilding boom was underway following completion of construction of the new University General Hospital on the West Campus between 1924 and 1928. The Sigma Pi Fraternity House's construction also came during the peak period of fraternity house development at the State University of Iowa (University of Iowa) that took place on both the east and west sides of the Iowa River. The Great Depression's impact on the University extended to fraternity houses such as the Sigma Pi House forcing it into receivership during World War II. Under Criterion C, this building is significant architecturally as a well-preserved local example of the Tudor Revival Style and of an important residential sub-type for this style, the fraternity or sorority house. It also is an example of the Stone Clad Tudor Revival architectural sub-type. The Sigma Pi design is based on a design by fraternity house architect Myron E. Pugh who also designed fraternity houses in Indiana, Wisconsin and Illinois. The Tudor Revival Style was one of several early 20<sup>th</sup> century revival styles employed locally for domestic architecture beginning in the decade following World War I and reached its peak during the late 1920s and early 1930s in the Manville Heights neighborhood.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Under Criterion A, the Sigma Pi Fraternity House is associated with the development of a form of collegiate housing for State University of Iowa students that reached its peak at the conclusion of World War I when University enrollment was in a major growth pattern. Student enrollment at the University mushroomed from nearly 1,500 in 1900 to more than 6,000 by the 1920s. This growth was on top of the general population growth seen community wide. Iowa City nearly doubled from 7,987 in 1900 to 10,091 in 1910 to 11,267 in 1920 to 15,340 in 1930. With this growth came the demand for both more and better housing opportunities for students. Housing traditionally available in the personal homes of students or in boarding houses was no longer sufficient or adequate.

Response to the demand for University student housing the end of World War I paralleled the national movement to erect Greek Houses or fraternity and sorority houses. Greek organizations were social groups for students that dated back to the end of the Civil War in conjunction with the State University of Iowa. The earliest Greek houses were simply converted private dwellings both clustered and scattered in several residential areas on the east side of the Iowa River. After the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the University's Greek houses were mainly in three locations: 1) around and east of College Square along E. College Street and E. Burlington Street, all east of the campus and downtown; 2) north of the downtown and along N. Dubuque Street and N. Clinton Street on the east side of the Iowa River; and 3) after Manville Heights Addition opened on the eve of World War I, in a multi-block area on the west side of the Iowa River along N. Riverside Dr., Ellis Ave. and McLean St. These three Greek house neighborhoods were strongly identified with the University. The fraternity and sorority houses in their midst provided a major share of student housing in the years before the University built and operated its own dormitories beginning in the 1930s.

Construction of the Sigma Pi Fraternity was part of the west side fraternity building initiative led by Bert Manville, owner and developer of Manville Heights. He first attempted to sell the large bluff-top lots that overlooked the Iowa River and the University's East Campus to the University itself. In ca. 1915, no one within the University was able to anticipate the growth that would take place in the near or distant future and declined to accept Manville's proposal. After World War I, Manville turned to alternative opportunity to sell off large multi-lot parcels – buyers able to undertake the costly development of large scale, architecturally interesting fraternity houses. He intended to have these landmark buildings set the tone for the residential development he was promoting in adjacent blocks of the Manville Heights residential neighborhood. More than coincidentally, Manville's personal residence was at the south end of the proposed fraternity house row he was promoting.

Sigma Pi Fraternity's construction also became part of the building boom that paralleled growth of the University campus west of the Iowa River during the late 1920s. This development included major University buildings associated with the establishment of new sports facilities - the Field House (1927) and Kinnick Stadium, formerly Iowa Stadium (1929) and hospital facilities beginning with Westlawn, a dormitory for student nurses (1919), the Psychopathic Hospital (1921) and most importantly the new General Hospital (1928). The extension of the University with the development of its new "West Campus" with these and later building complex was paralleled by the development of the Manville Heights residential

neighborhood and the west side fraternity group that included the Sigma Pi Fraternity House in ca. 1929 and 10 fraternity houses nearby.

As noted previously, the fraternity house building trend in Iowa City was also part of a historic national and regional trend. Large parcels near major university campuses saw developers build fraternity and sorority houses and then lease or sell the turn-key projects to Greek organizations. One such developer was Ralph S. Crowl of Madison, Wisconsin. Crowl owned a construction company and retained a full-time architect, Myron E. Pugh, who designed dozens of Greek houses in a variety of revival designs for Midwest campuses including the University of Wisconsin in Madison, the University of Illinois in Urbana, the University of Iowa in Iowa City, and the University of Indiana in Bloomington. In the latter instance, Pugh designed eight separate Greek houses as a part of Crowl's development of Jordan Quadrangle, all nonextant in 2013. The design for Sigma Pi Fraternity is attributed to Pugh (see discussion under Criterion C below) tying the Sigma Pi Fraternity House's development to the Greek house building trend throughout the balance of the country. Involvement by Crowl's company in the construction of the Sigma Pi house has not been confirmed. It is possible that Crowl's company was involved, based on the fact that his firm has been confirmed as being responsible for construction of the ca. 1928 Phi Beta Pi House at 363 N. Riverside Drive, another design that Pugh was responsible for in Iowa City.

The Sigma Pi Fraternity was the original fraternity to build and occupy this house sometime between the purchase of the property by the Xi House Company in December 1924 and the recorded occupancy of the house by the Sigma Pi Fraternity according to city directories in 1930. In 1936 the Sigma Pi Fraternity was joined by the Xi Psi Phi Fraternity as occupants of this fraternity house, most likely because of reduced enrollments at the University of Iowa during the Great Depression years. In 1938 the building was occupied by a third group, the Psi Omega Fraternity, in yet another change in occupancy intended to increase occupancy. Financial difficulties during the balance of the decade of the 1930s and the beginning of World War II saw the property transfer at a sheriff's sale for unpaid taxes to the First Trust and Savings Bank of Davenport, Iowa in 1943.

Shortly thereafter the property transferred to Terry Baker and his wife believed to be from eastern Iowa and resident members of the Davenport Catholic Diocese. Shortly after their acquisition it passed to Diocese of Davenport. In subsequent years, the building held a number of activities for the newly established "St. Thomas Moore Catholic Church." From 1943 to 1947 the building held a chapel. The Catholic Student Center and Newman Club for Catholic students attending the University of Iowa was located here from 1943 to 1969. It is unclear whether there continued to be residential space for students in the building or residential space for St. Thomas Moore's resident priest initially. In 1947 a separate St. Thomas More Catholic Church was established in a Quonset-hut building (nonextant) on an adjoining parcel to the northeast (405 Riverside Drive). A new St. Thomas Moore Catholic Church was constructed in 1966 on the same parcel. The building at 108 McLean Street continued to serve as a parish center and a rectory after a new student center - Newman Center - was built on East Jefferson and North Clinton streets on the east side of the Iowa River. The former fraternity house/student center building was vacated in the late 2000s when the new St. Thomas More Catholic Church removed to Coralville, Iowa.

Under Criterion C, the Sigma Pi fraternity house is a well-preserved example of a stone-clad variation of the Tudor Revival Style in Iowa City adapted for a multi-family design - the fraternity or sorority house. This stone-clad variation is less common in the community where most Tudor Revival buildings employ brick and stucco finishes. The Tudor Revival Style was one of several early 20<sup>th</sup> century Revival styles employed citywide for domestic architecture beginning in the decade following World War I and reached its peak during the late 1920s and 1930s. Single-family residences ranging from large-scale landmark houses to vernacular cottages with Tudor detailing survive in residential districts of Iowa City including the Melrose Historic District (NRHP-listed), the Brown Street Historic District (NRHP-listed), the Northside Historic District (NRHP-listed), the Longfellow Historic District (NRHP-listed), the College Square Historic District (NRHP-listed) and other local neighborhoods. In these instances, the residences use brick and half-timbered stucco as well as shingle cladding and clapboard finishes. Steeply pitched gables, Tudor window and door surrounds, incorporation of prominent exposed chimneys, and other Tudor detailing identify these houses. At least two important Tudor Revival Style churches were also built locally on the east side of the river - St. Paul's Lutheran Church (NRHP-listed) for campus students and the Unitarian-Universalist Church. Both employ brick and stucco masonry in their designs with half-timbering incorporated into the Unitarian-Universalist Church.

The Sigma Pi Fraternity House was planned and built between 1924 and 1929 during the second wave of homebuilding in the Manville Heights. Manville Heights Neighborhood was formally surveyed in 2008-2009 with the findings reported in the *Manville Heights Neighborhood Historical and Architectural Survey* report completed in March 2010. It was reported in that study that the Sigma Pi Fraternity was one of 23 individual Tudor Revival Style dwellings identified as potentially NRHP-eligible buildings, either individually or as particularly significant contributing resources in potential historic districts. In addition, the Tudor Revival Style was used for at least four of the 13 fraternity houses built in the Manville Heights

neighborhood. Elsewhere in Iowa City, at least another half dozen Greek houses feature Tudor Revival designs. Of all of the local Greek houses, none was stone-clad as Sigma Pi House, however. As a result of this material choice by the architect, the building's design invests heavily in stone carving for entrance surrounds and fraternity emblems. Additional decorative elements of note for this fraternity house include leaded window designs and an elaborate front door – all intact. Other Tudor Revival Greek houses on both the west side and east side of Iowa City are combinations of brick lower levels with stucco half-timbering in the gabled peaks and upper levels or entirely built of brick. In all of the Tudor Revival designs, including the Sigma Pi Fraternity House, steeply pitched gable roofs, sometimes with extended slopes for special effect on entrances or wings, were employed.

The Sigma Pi Fraternity House was completed in ca. 1929 according to yearbook photographs and is believed to be one of two west side fraternity houses designed by Myron Edwards Pugh. He was born in Chicago in 1890 where he attended the public schools, graduating from Crane Technical High School. According to research completed by the staff of the Wisconsin SHPO, he later attended the night school at the Art Institute, studied design at the Armour Institute (later Illinois Technical), becoming a registered architect in the State of Illinois in 1918. From 1910-1915, Pugh was employed in the architectural office of Daniel H. Burnham in Chicago; from 1917-1919 with Palmer Graves; and from 1919-1921 in the offices of R. W. Koch in Detroit. Pugh moved to Madison, Wisconsin in 1921 where he first worked as an architect for Law, Law, and Potter (1921-1926). In 1926, he opened his own office and within a short time was working principally for the Crowl Construction Company, a real estate development and construction company operated by Ralph S. Crowl. In 1933 as building declined as the Great Depression progressed, Pugh closed his office.

The attribution of the Sigma Pi Fraternity House design to Pugh is based in part on the fact that he is documented as having completed another nearly identical sorority house (see Figure 4) near the campus of the University of Illinois in Urbana. Like the Sigma Pi House in Iowa City, the former Delta Tau Delta House at 711 W. Ohio Street in Urbana was completed in 1929; 40 sorority girls moved in during September according to a local newspaper account ("Sorority Enters New Tudor Home, *Daily Illini*, Sept 7, 1929). Both buildings have steeply pitched side-gable roof with massive front-gable wall-dormers at each end with identical gable end designs. In both cases the buildings have extended slopes for the right dormer gable roof line that emphasize entrances into one-story sections of the buildings. Both buildings also have dormitory rooms in the upper third floor-attic levels in order to provide three full levels of occupancy and sleeping rooms for 40 occupants. Stone is the material of choice in both buildings with the Sigma Pi House employing well-executed masonry work using coursed limestone. Since Pugh also designed a large number of fraternity houses at the University of Indiana during the earlier years of the decade, it is possible that he developed a preference for Indiana limestone. This was evident in the close, but not identical, designs of the Sigma Pi and Delta Tau Delta houses.

A second fact supporting the attribution of the Sigma Pi House design to Pugh is that he has been confirmed as the architect for another SUU Greek house located close by – the Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity House at 363 North Riverside Drive in Iowa City. It employs a Colonial Revival Style design and is evidence of Pugh's frequently touted ability to employ various 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival Styles for Greek houses without ever using the identical design.

### *Summary*

In summary, the Sigma Pi Fraternity House derives significance under Criteria A and C for both its association with the peak development of both residential blocks and a form of collegiate housing – fraternity and sorority houses – in the booming Manville Heights Neighborhood. It also is a well-executed example of the Tudor Revival Style in Iowa City adopted for Greek houses in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It is attributed to one of the fraternity house movement's most important and prodigious Midwestern architects, Myron Pugh. Though also identified in local historical and architectural survey work as part of a potential historic district that includes another 10 fraternity houses built during the 1920s and two large-scale apartment buildings during the mid-1930s., the Sigma Pi Fraternity House is being nominated here only for its individual significance and not as a contributing resource to a potential district.

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## **9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

City directories for Iowa City, Iowa, 1911 - 1969.

Email correspondence with Rebecca Bird, Planner, City of Urbana, Illinois, March 2012.

Email correspondence with Richard Carlson, architectural historian with the Office of the State Archaeologist of Iowa, February and March, 2012 re: Pugh and Crowl's involvement with other UI fraternity design and construction work.

Email correspondence with Lane French, President, Sigma Pi, Xi Chapter, March 2012.

Email correspondence with Amy Hathaway, National Register & Survey Specialist, Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, re: "University of Illinois Fraternities & Sororities Multiple Property Listing," March 2012.

Email correspondence with Nancy Hiestand, Main Street manager, Bloomington, Illinois, March 2012.

Email correspondence with Alice Novak and Karen Kummer, authors of the "Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois MPS," March 2012.

Email correspondence with Dr. Joanne Stuttgen, historical researcher for Myron Pugh, architect, re: University of Indiana designs, Bloomington, March 2012; obtained related Myron Pugh documents including biography, list of projects, and interview summary for fraternity building developer, Ralph Crowl.

Gerber, John C. *A Pictorial History of the University of Iowa*. Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1988.

*Insurance Maps of Iowa City, Iowa*. (New York: The Sanborn Map Company; 1874, 1879, 1883, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1906, 1912, 1920, 1926, 1933, 1933-1970).

Mansheim, Gerald. *Iowa City: An Illustrated History*. Norfolk, Virginia: The Downing Company, 1989.

Novak, Alice and Karen Kummer, The Urbana Group. "Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois MPS Nomination," National Register listed 2/22/1990.

Perl, Larry. *Calm and Secure on the Hill: A Retrospective of the University of Iowa*. Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Alumni Association, 1978.

Persons, Stow. *The University of Iowa in the Twentieth Century: An Institutional History*. Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1990. Svendsen, Marlys, Svendsen Tyler, Inc. "Historic Resources of Iowa City, Iowa, Multiple Property Documentation Form." National Register listed 9/23/1994.

Property Transfer Records, Johnson County Auditor's Office, Johnson County Court House.

"Sorority Enters New Tudor Home," *Daily Illini* (Champaign-Urbana, Illinois), Sept 7, 1929.

Svendsen, Marlys, Svendsen Tyler, Inc. "Historical Resources of the Manville Heights Neighborhood of Iowa City, Iowa, Multiple Property Documentation Form (Amendment)." Submitted to Iowa State Historic Preservation Office, not submitted to National Register of Historic Places for listing, 3/7/2010.

Svendsen, Marlys, Svendsen Tyler, Inc. "Iowa Site Inventory Form, 52-04859 for Sigma Pi Fraternity House." Manville Heights Neighborhood Historical Architectural Survey, HADB 52-078, November 2009.

Richardson, Jim. *The University of Iowa*. Louisville, Kentucky: Harmony House Publishers, 1989.

Whiffen, Marcus. *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to Styles*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1985.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Iowa City, IA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.655 acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>621470</u>	<u>4613930</u>	3	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	4	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property includes a parcel located in the City of Iowa City, Manville Heights Addition, Block 3, Lots 10 & 11 and part of a vacated section Ridgeland Ave and a vacated alley.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary consists of the original lots acquired for construction of the Sigma Pi Fraternity House, 108 McLean Street. In addition, portions of a vacated section of Ridgeland Ave and a vacated adjacent alley to the north have been acquired for the property in the intervening years as the municipal government initiated vacation efforts.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Marlys A. Svendsen, Svendsen Tyler, Inc.  
organization for Parish Apartments, LLC date 4/8/2013  
street & number N3834 Deep Lake Road telephone 715/469-3300  
city or town Sarona state WI zip code 54870  
e-mail svendsent Tyler@centurytel.net

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

---

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Sigma Pi Fraternity House

City or Vicinity: Iowa City

County: Johnson State: Iowa

Photographer: Marlys A. Svendsen, Svendsen Tyler, Inc.

Date Photographed: March 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number: See Photographs 1 through 12 & Photograph Map Key, page 23.

---

**Property Owner:** Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Parish Apartments, LLC, c/o Mary Ottoson, Frantz-Hobart, Management Services  
street & number 3801 Beverly Road SW, Suite 300 telephone (319)390-0013  
city or town Cedar Rapids state IA zip code 52404

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

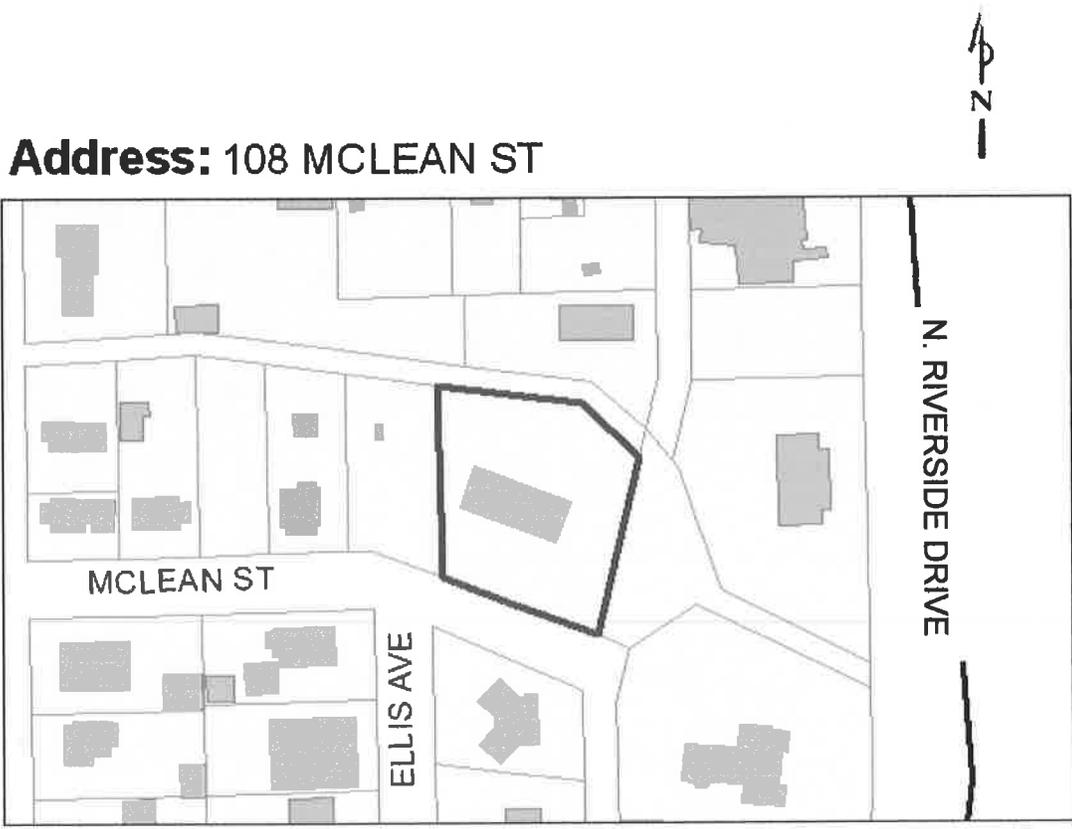
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

<b>Sigma Pi Fraternity House</b>
Name of Property
<b>Johnson County, Iowa</b>
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

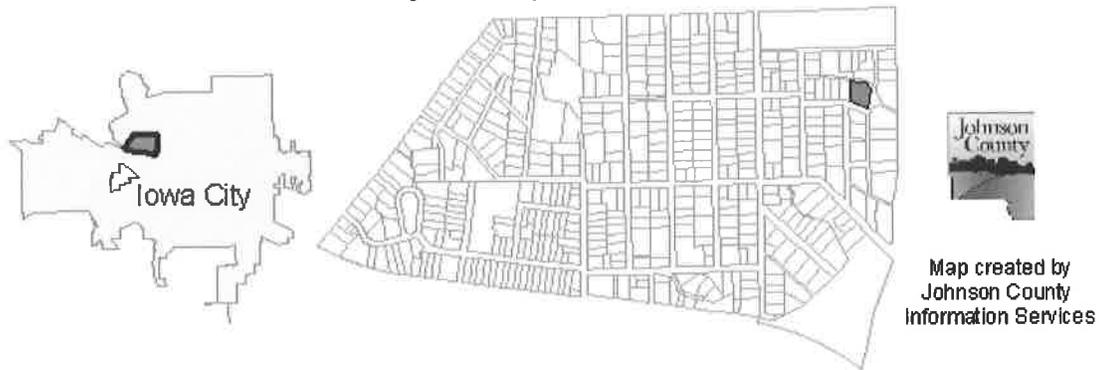
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Figure 1: Map of the Sigma Pi Fraternity House, 108 McLean St., Iowa City  
(Map generated by Johnson County Information Services).



Manville Heights Neighborhood



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

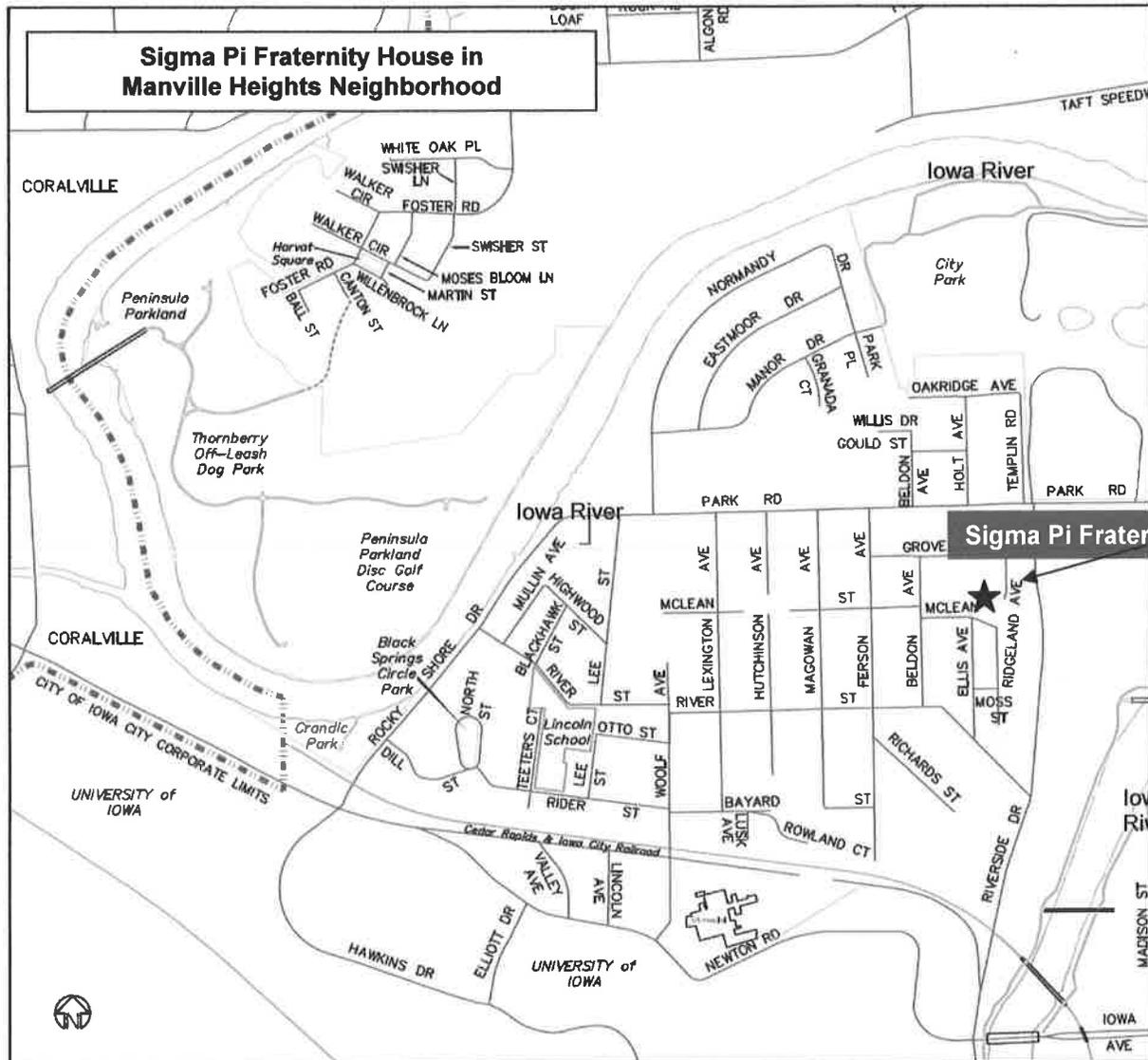
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

<b>Sigma Pi Fraternity House</b>
Name of Property
<b>Johnson County, Iowa</b>
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number          Additional Information         

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Figure 2: Location map for Sigma Pi Fraternity House in Manville Heights Neighborhood of northwest Iowa City (Map from City of Iowa City, Engineering Department, 2010)





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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

<b>Sigma Pi Fraternity House</b>
Name of Property
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N/A
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Figure 4: Comparison of images for Sigma Pi Fraternity House, Iowa City, Iowa - above; Original Delta Tau Delta Fraternity House now used as Sigma Pi Fraternity House, 711-713 W. Ohio St., Urbana, Illinois, photo date: 3/9/2008 - below ("Sigma Pi," available at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sigma\\_Pi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sigma_Pi); accessed 4/6/2013).



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

## Sigma Pi Fraternity House

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State

N/A

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Figure 5: Tudor Revival Style Dwellings and Fraternity Houses in Manville Heights (Manville Heights Neighborhood Survey for the City of Iowa City, 2010); fraternity houses are shaded and marked by \*.

Number	Street	Historic Building Name	Date	Occupation of First owner
701	Bayard St	Scott, John Hubert and Wilhemina, House	ca.1925	UI English
260	Black Springs Cir	Wendler, Arthur and Leda, House	ca.1941	UI physical education
<b>*303</b>	<b>Ellis Ave</b>	<b>Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity House/ Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity House</b>	<b>1925</b>	<b>Fraternity house</b>
<b>*117</b>	<b>Ferson Ave</b>	<b>Phi Rho Sigma Fraternity House</b>	<b>1926</b>	<b>Fraternity house</b>
212	Ferson Ave	Ruckmick, Christian & Kathryn, House	1925	UI psychology
227	Ferson Ave	Rose, Edward & Edna, House	1925	Pharm., Boerner Pharmacy
419	Ferson Ave	Righter, Charles B. and Miriam, House	1929	UI music, UI bands
230	Hutchinson Ave	Morgan, William H. and Mildred, House	ca.1931	UI religion
245	Hutchinson Ave	Pierce, Ira and Ruth, House	1930	UI pharmacology
329	Hutchinson Ave	Harper-Spielhagen House	1938	UI Iowa Mem. Union, director; physician
343	Hutchinson Ave	Cobb, William H. and Mildred, House	1927	UI auditor
351	Hutchinson Ave	Stronks, James E. and Ruth, House	1928	Manager, Standard Publishing Co.
327	Lee St	Leff, Arthur and Zella, House	1935	Lawyer
329	Lee St	Walters, Luke G. and Hilda, House	1934	UI General Hospital, barber
215	Lexington Ave	Davis, William and Della, House	1929	President, Iowa City Poultry and Egg Company
231	Lexington Ave	Roup, Andrew and Laura, House	ca.1935	No occupation
237	Lexington Ave	Boerner, Fred W. and Mahree Sarah, House	1931	Boerner's Pharmacy
440	Lexington Ave	Lienfelder, Placidus and Jane (Tenney), House	1936	UI medicine, ophthalmology
321	Magowan Ave	Lubin, Jack and Celia, House	1939	Pharmacist, Lubin's Pharmacy
344	Magowan Ave	Maruth, Louise, House	ca.1933	UI Memorial Union
406	Magowan Ave	Popoff, Stephen and Elda, House	1928	UI chemistry; UI Hospital, sec'y
414	Magowan Ave	Morrison, Thomas and Mary, House	1928	Pharmacist, Morrison's Pharmacy
<b>*108</b>	<b>Mclean St</b>	<b>Sigma Pi Fraternity House</b>	<b>ca.1929</b>	<b>Fraternity house</b>
300	Mclean St	Neumann, Siegmund and Edna, House	1940	Chiropractor
715	Park Rd	Albright, George and Anna (Close), House	1915	Physician
121	Richards St	Stromsten, Frank and Grace, House	ca.1927	UI zoology
<b>*302</b>	<b>Ridgeland Ave</b>	<b>Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House/ Tau Kappa Epsilon Fraternity House</b>	<b>1925</b>	<b>Fraternity house</b>
313	River St	Freyder, Ralph and Ruth, House	1931	Co-owner, Cerney, Palmer & Freyder, books
320	River St	Liechty, Ernest and Ailene, House	1936	Circulation mgr., Iowa City Press-Citizen
603	River St	Lierle, Dean and Pauline, House	1928	UI medicine, oral surgery
611	River St	Updegraff, Clarence and Erna, House	ca.1932	UI law
707	River St	Weber, Carl P. and Ruth, House	1932	Real estate
715	River St	O'Brien, Cecil and Mary, House	1928	UI medicine, ophthalmology
<b>*339</b>	<b>Teeters Ct</b>	<b>Alpha Kappa Kappa Fraternity</b>	<b>ca.1930</b>	<b>Fraternity house</b>

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National Park Service

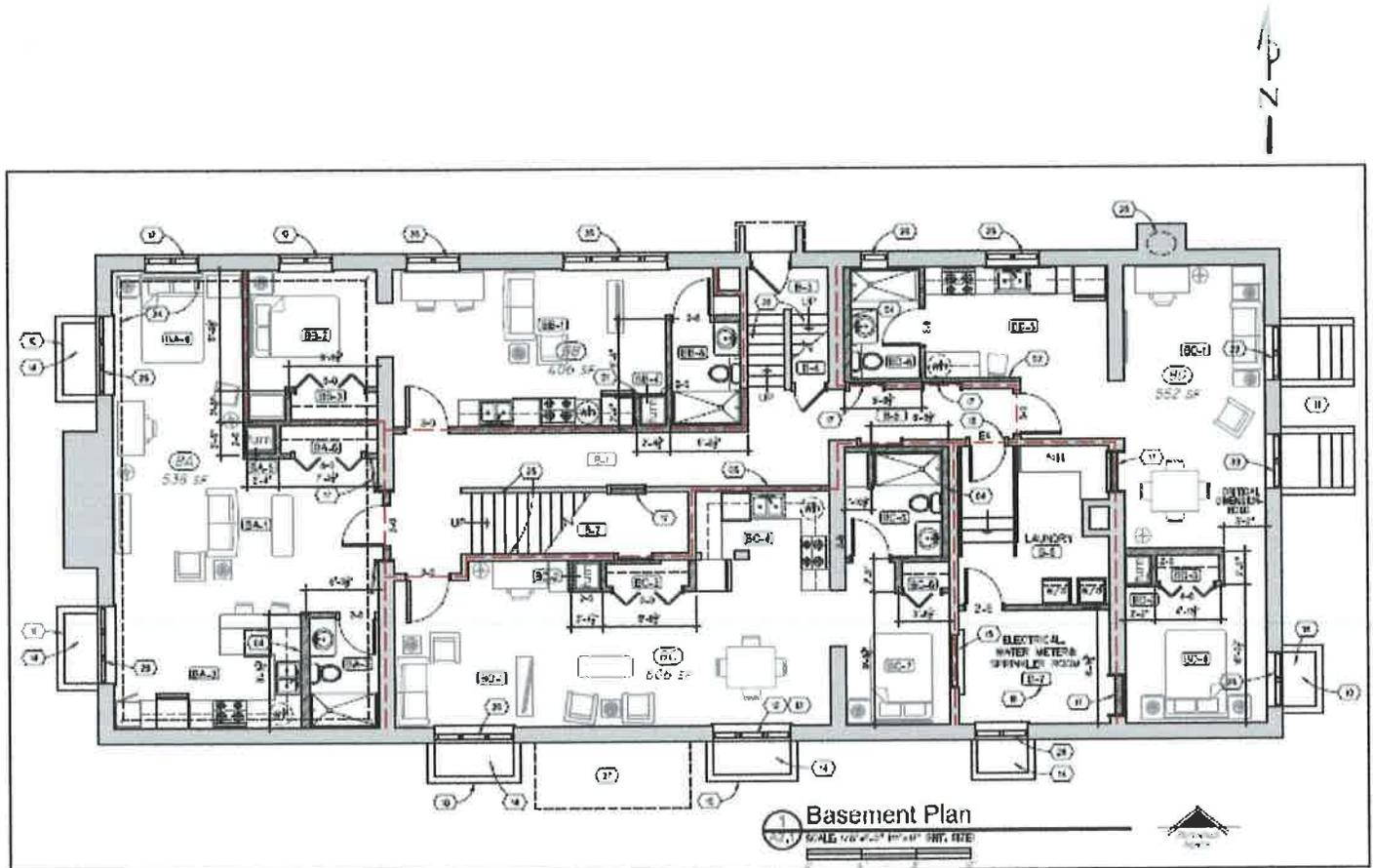
National Register of Historic Places  
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<b>Sigma Pi Fraternity House</b>
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Figure 6: Basement Floor Plan (John Shaw, AIA; submitted for Part 2, Historic Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit Application Floor Plans, 2/2/2012)



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National Park Service

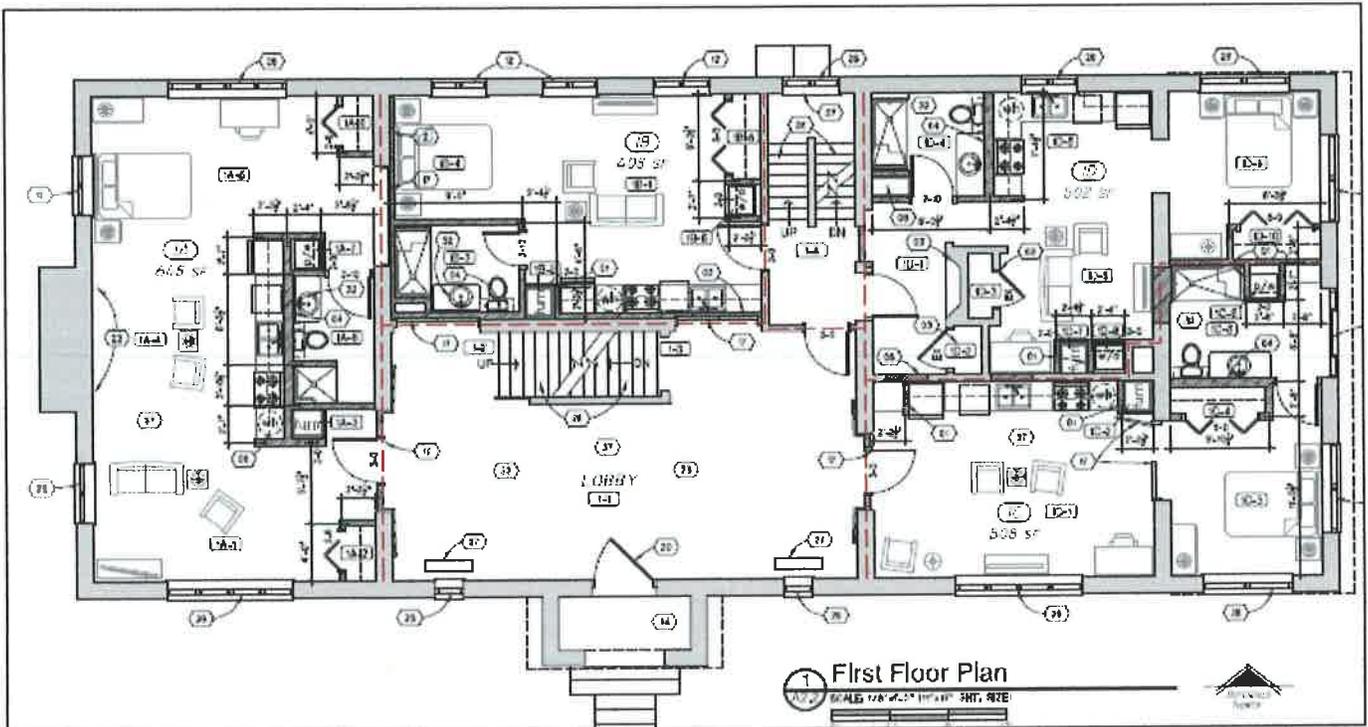
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

<b>Sigma Pi Fraternity House</b>
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Figures 7: First Floor Plan (John Shaw, AIA; submitted for Part 2, Historic Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit Application Floor Plans, 2/2/2012)





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National Park Service

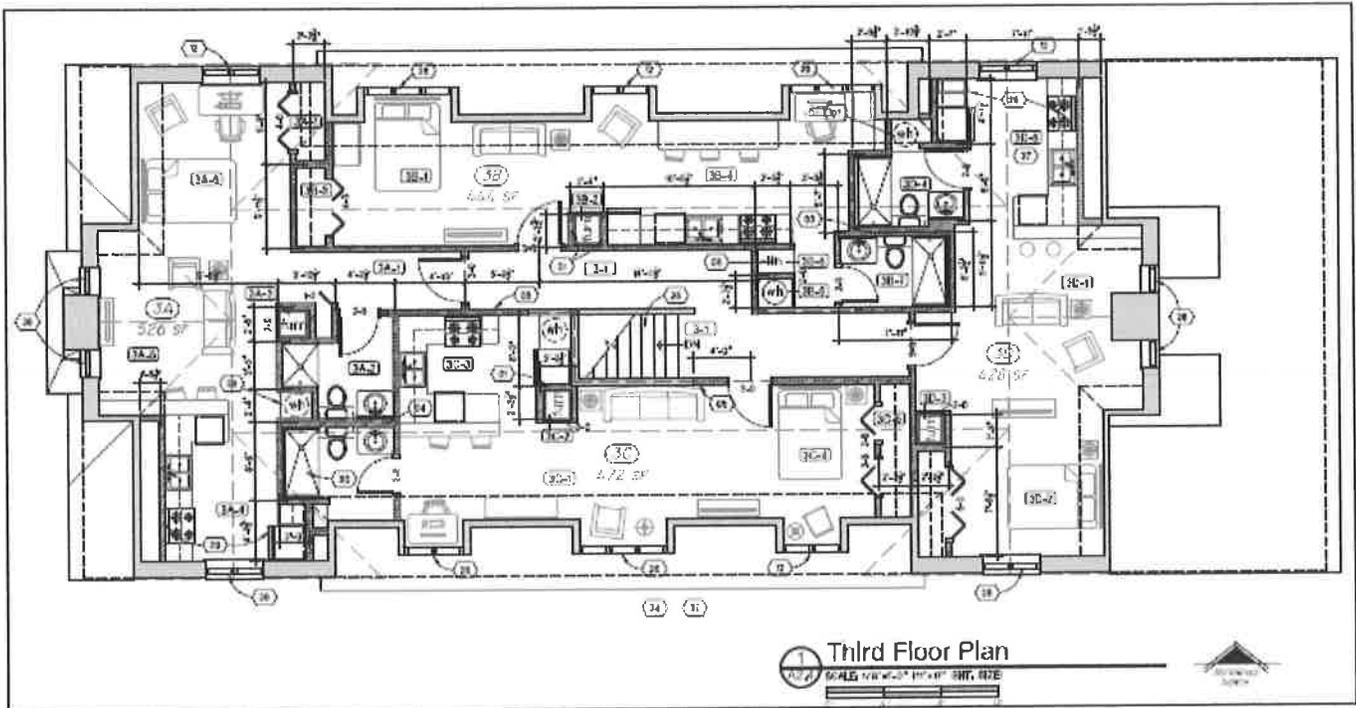
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

<b>Sigma Pi Fraternity House</b>
Name of Property
<b>Johnson County, Iowa</b>
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N/A
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Figures 9: Third Floor Plan (John Shaw, AIA; submitted for Part 2, Historic Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit Application Floor Plans, 2/2/2012)





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National Park Service

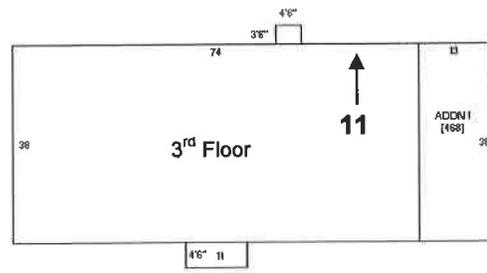
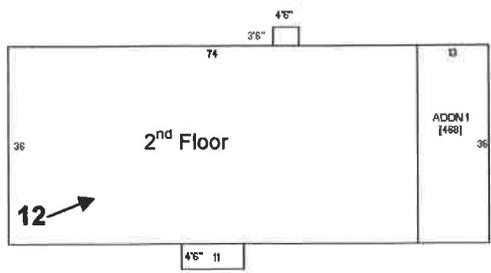
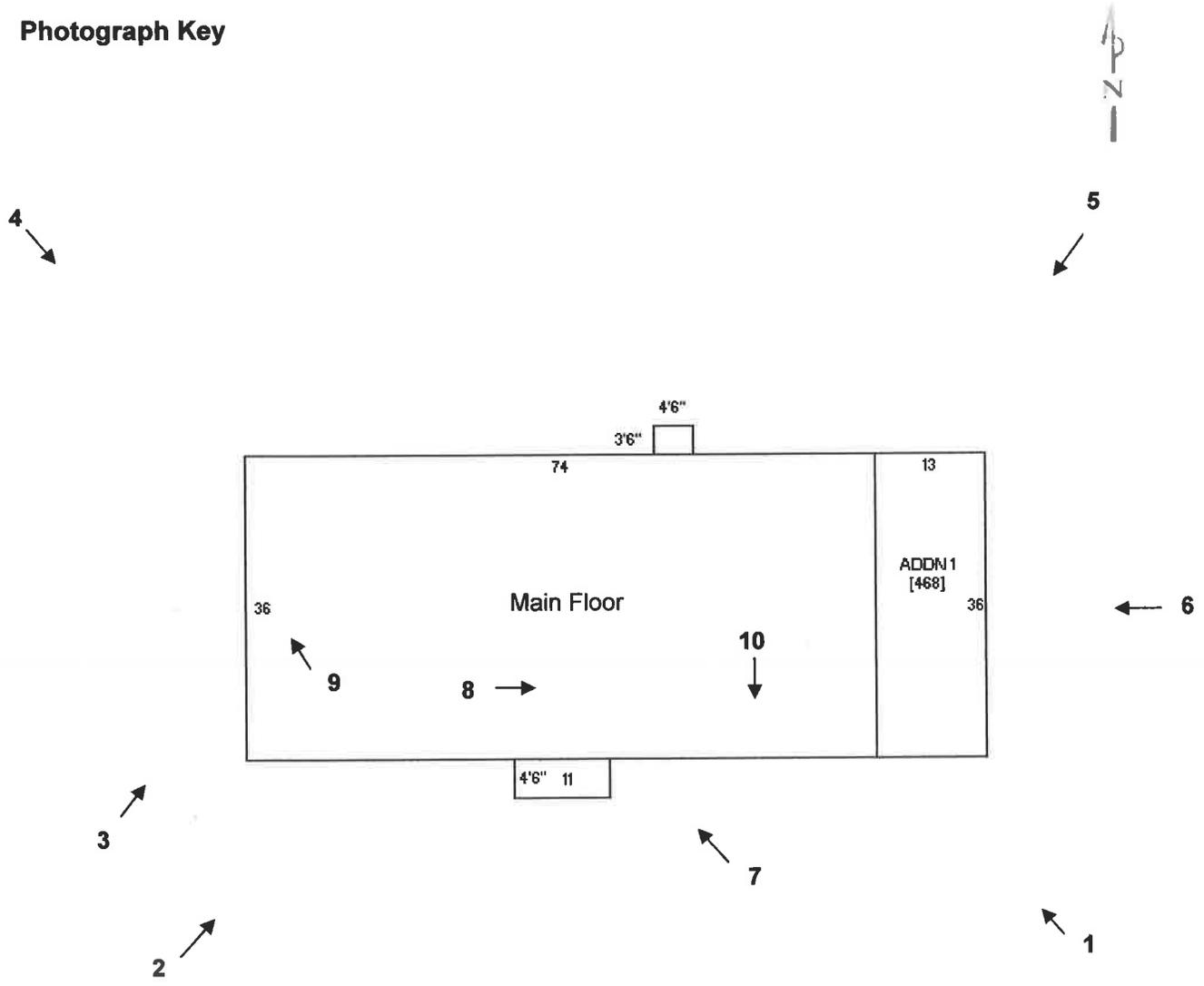
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

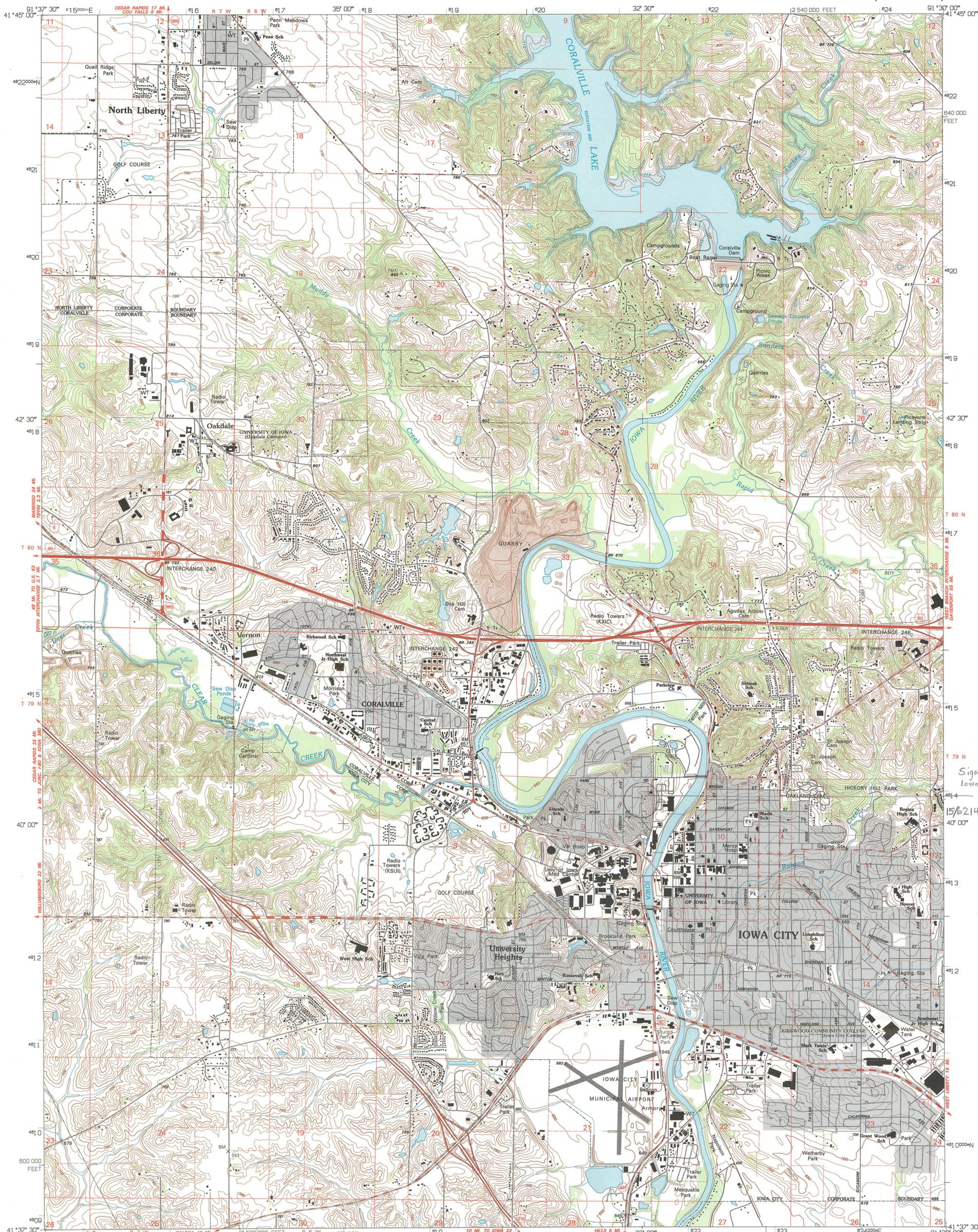
<b>Sigma Pi Fraternity House</b>
Name of Property
<b>Johnson County, Iowa</b>
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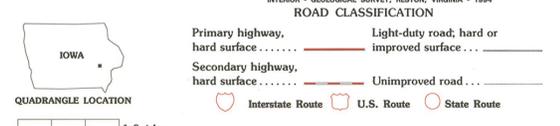
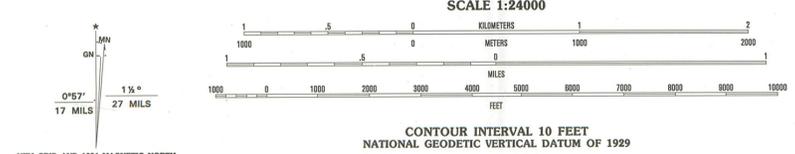
### Photograph Key





Sigma Pi Fraternity House  
Iowa City, Johnson Co., IA  
UTM Ref.  
15/621470/4613930

Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
in cooperation with Iowa Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1964. Field checked 1965. Revised from aerial photographs  
taken 1990. Field checked 1992. Map edited 1994  
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and  
blue 1000-meter ticks. Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 15  
10 000-foot ticks: Iowa coordinate system, south zone  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed  
corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83  
for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic  
Survey NADCON software  
Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern  
are subject to controlled inundation  
Gray tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3	1 Swisher
			2 Ely
			3 Sehn
4	5	6	4 Tiffin
			5 Iowa City East
			6 Williamstown
			7 Hills
6	7	8	8 West Liberty SW

**IOWA CITY WEST, IOWA**  
4191-F5-TF-024  
1994  
DMA 7667 II NE-SERIES 0876

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, IOWA CITY, IOWA 52240  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST







108

NO PARKING  
FIRE LANE











108

1	9
2	10
3	11
4	12
5	13
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18	26









