

City, Village or Town: **1 Eau Claire** County: **Eau Claire** Surveyor: **M. Taylor** Date: **10-20-81**

Street Address: **203 S. Farwell Street** Legal Description: **Lots 9&10 Blk 20 Village less than of Eau Claire; also S $\frac{1}{2}$ acre** Acreage: **one acre**

Current Name & Use: **City Hall** Current Owner: **Vac. Gibson St. City of Eau Claire, Stephen Atkins, City Mgr.**



Current Owner's Address: **203 S. Farwell Street**

Special Features Not Visible In Photographs:
 UTM: zone **15**
 Easting: **618740**
 Northing: **4962960**
 USGS Eau Claire East Quadrangle
 1:24,000 Interior visited? Yes No

Original Name & Use: 2 City Hall (ECMRA)	Source	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source
Dates of Construction/Alteration: 1916	A				
Architect and/or Builder: George Awsumb, Chicago	B				

3 Architectural Significance

Represents work of a master
 Possesses high artistic values
 Represents a type, period, or method of construction
 Is a visual landmark in the area
 Other: _____ None

4 Historical Significance

Assoc. with lives of significant persons
 Assoc. with significant historical events
 Assoc. with development of a locality
 Other: _____
 None

Architectural Statement:

See continuation sheet.

Historical Statement:

See continuation sheet.

5 Sources of Information (Reference to Above)

A on building

6 Representation in Previous Surveys

HABS NAER WIHP NRHP landmark
 other:

B The Municipality, February, 1916.

7 Condition

excellent good fair poor ruins

C Barland, L. 1965. The Rivers Flow On. p. 200, 253.

8 District: _____

pivotal contributing non-contributing

initials: _____ date: _____

D

9 Opinion of National Register Eligibility

eligible not eligible unknown
 national state local initials: **net**

E

F

S. Farwell Street

203

Plat Map #8

1P/27

CITY HALL (203 S. Farwell Street)
Intensive Survey Form - Continuation sheet (1)

ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT:

Description: Located just north of the former Eau Claire Public Library and attached to that structure by a glass-faced addition, the city hall is an imposing almost square structure rising two stories above a raised basement. The smooth ashlar walls are of buff Bedford limestone and the upper flight of entrance steps are fashioned from Carthage, Missouri, marble. A shallow projecting pavilion supported by four colossal Corinthian columns resting on square stone pedestals highlights the facade. The main centrally-placed entrance is framed by pilasters and an entablature that includes the building's name. Above the name is a large sculptural feature resembling a cartouche. The windows on the first floor are large rectangular openings decorated with swags above and blind balustrades below. The upper story windows are smaller, simply framed openings. Originally all of the windows were multi-paned but they have been replaced by large plates of glass. Marking the top of the flat roofed structure is a pronounced cornice underscored by dentils. A parapet interrupted by balustrades continues above the cornice.

In 1978-79 the interior of the building, which is ornamented with classical details, was altered as the neighboring library building was also being converted to city office use. Because of the alteration, the building's axial plan was obscured by the addition of desks and the permanent closing of the main entrance.

(1981 photos - 39/25,26)

Significance: The Eau Claire City Hall, designed by Chicago architect, George Awsumb, provides an architecturally significant example of Neo-Classical/Beaux Arts architecture. The two story stone structure, which complements its neighboring building, the Eau Claire Public Library, 217 S. Farwell Street, 1P/28 (it is also being nominated), successfully integrates elements of the two architectural styles that dominated institutional design in the early twentieth century. Within the city, the Federal Building, 500 S. Barstow Street, represents an additional and equally significant variation of the style; however, it is not being nominated because it is federally owned. City Hall was designated an Eau Claire landmark in 1976.

George Awsumb, a former resident of Eau Claire, attended the University of Wisconsin and the University of Illinois from which he graduated in 1906. Awsumb practiced in Chicago where he was affiliated with the firms Jenny-Mundie and Jensen and later Marshall and Fox. He also taught design at the Chicago School of Architecture located in the Art Institute (B). In designing the Eau Claire City Hall Awsumb used the already existing Neo-Classical library as a guide. The city hall and library are architecturally related, employ the same construction material, and together use the raised site to its best advantage.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT:

Eau Claire's first city hall was erected soon after the city was

CITY HALL (203 S. Farwell Street)
Intensive Survey Form - Continuation sheet (2)

incorporated in 1872. The two story brick structure stood on the northwest corner of Eau Claire and Farwell Streets and contained both city offices (on the second floor) and the fire station. This building was demolished in 1943. The new city hall was constructed in 1916 at a cost of \$72,000 (C).