

56-742



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Paducah City Hall  
other names/site number McNP-56  
Related Multiple Property NA

### 2. Location

street & number 300 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street

NA	not for publication
NA	vicinity

  
city or town Paducah  
state Kentucky code KY county McCracken Code 145 zip code 42003

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  
\_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

 1-13-17  
Signature of certifying official/ title Craig Potts/SHPO Date

**Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office**  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

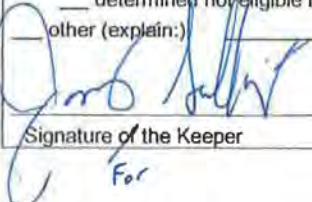
In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

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:)

 7-13-2017  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
For

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**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	0	buildings
		district
1		site
		structure
		object
2	0	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

NA

0

**6. Function or Use**

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

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

Government: City Hall

Government: City Hall

**7. Description**

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

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

MODERN MOVEMENT: New Formalism

foundation: Concrete

walls: Concrete

roof: Concrete

other: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Narrative Description

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### Summary Paragraph

The Paducah City Hall (McN-P-56) is located at 300 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, in Paducah, McCracken County, Kentucky. The building measures 120 feet square, including a thirty-foot concrete columned portico surrounding the two-story municipal building. Entrances are centered on the east and west elevations with concrete ramps on the north and south elevations that lead into the basement which houses parking and storage. The structure was built as part of the original Downtown Civic Center Zone under the local Urban Renewal initiative. City Hall faces the Dolly McNutt Plaza, a civic space with a landscape design encompassing an entire city block. Designed in 1963 by internationally known architect Edward Durell Stone of New York, and local consultant architect Lee Potter Smith, the complex is described by former Mayor Tom Wilson as the city's architectural jewel. Completed in 1965, the Paducah City Hall is part of a unique and prolific collection of Stone's New Formalist designs, the first of his works to be erected in the State of Kentucky and the finest example of New Formalism architecture in Paducah. The building is in need of structural and maintenance repairs but continues to retain integrity. The City Plaza was part of Stone's original design concept and proposal to the City administration for the Paducah City Hall project in 1963. Due to financial constraints, its construction was delayed until 1968, with completion in 1970. The area proposed for listing is less than one acre, and includes one contributing building, City Hall and one contributing site, the City Plaza, later renamed to honor Mayor Dolly McNutt.



### Ownership and Use of the Site

Local history holds that the land on which the City Hall currently sits was the original Old Paducah City Cemetery, which was relocated in 1847 to accommodate growth of the city.<sup>i</sup> However, no solid evidence was

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<sup>i</sup> Research was conducted at Paducah City Hall, City Commission record books #2- 24, 1836 to 1963.

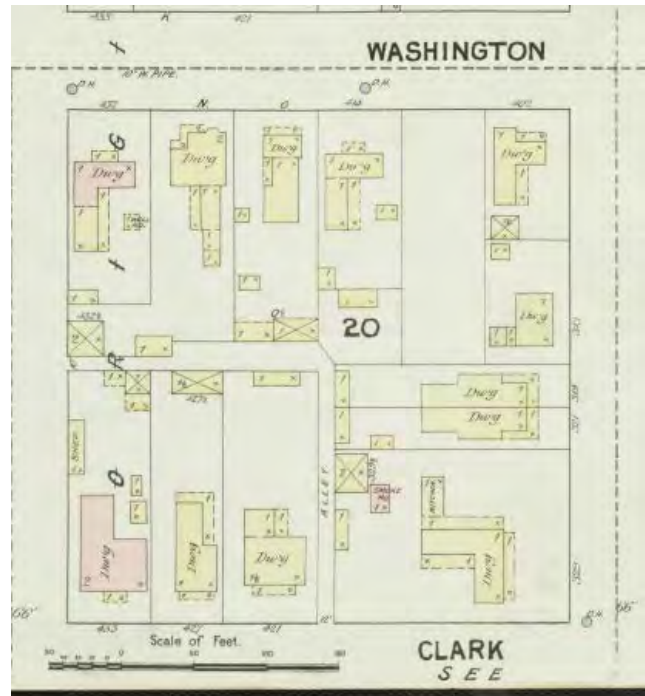
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found to support this claim, as no internments were uncovered during the extensive construction of the City Hall building.<sup>ii</sup> Deed research, historic Sanborn Maps and Paducah 1889 Birds Eye view Map (Figure 1 and 2) show the blocks which the current City Hall building and Downtown Civic Center zone occupy as fully developed private residences as early as 1879.<sup>iii iv</sup>



**1889 Bird's Eye View of Paducah**



**1889 Sanborn map of block taken for City Hall**

On May 22, 1962, Paducah's Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency received a letter from the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency that federal capital grant funds in the amount of \$891,755.00 had been allocated for Project No. KY R-30, Paducah Downtown Civic Center Project. On July 17, 1962 a resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Paducah authorized the Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency to acquire certain property in the downtown civic center at a fair and reasonable price for the purpose of constructing a new City Hall. This property took all of Block 20 and was bounded on the north by Washington Street, on the east by Fourth Street, on the south by Clark Street, and the west by Fifth Street.

The cost-sharing project required that the City of Paducah contribute a portion of the project funds. On February 27<sup>th</sup> 1962 the City Commission approved to have funds available for early land acquisitions, demolition, relocation and administration to the URCDA in the amount of \$213,820.00.<sup>v</sup> In addition, an agreement between the City of Paducah and the URCDA was approved which outlined the proposed plan for the "Downtown Civic Center Urban Renewal Area." In it, the City agreed to provide certain grants-in-aid, estimated at \$464,479.00 under Title I financial assistance. The City agreed to convey the following areas over to URCDA for public use: Block 1, parcel 3 (the old city Hall and No. 1 Fire Station) and Block 1, Parcel 10 (Police Change Building and Parking Lot), and for a market value of \$171,000.<sup>vi</sup> These funds were deposited into a Local contribution Account to be transferred as necessary to the appropriate accounts of Project KY R-30.

<sup>ii</sup> Deed research was conducted at McCracken County Courthouse from 1847 to 1965.

<sup>iii</sup> *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: Paducah, Kentucky* Sanborn Map Company, 1886, 1891, 1896, 1901.

<sup>iv</sup> City Directories, 1876, 1879, 1884.

<sup>v</sup> Minutes of Paducah Board of Commissioners, Book 24, July 17, 1962, pg. 411.

<sup>vi</sup> Minutes of Paducah Board of Commissioners, Book 25, July 17, 1962, pg. 329.

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In addition, funds from a bond issue and sale of the Riverside hospital helped cover the total costs of the new City Hall project, estimated at \$1,900,000.00.

### **Character of Site and Area**

Located on the west side of the Downtown Civic Center zone and three blocks southwest of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers, the building sits centered on its lot surrounded by mature willow and oak trees and a vast green space. The lot is bordered by concrete sidewalks. It is flanked on the south by a public parking lot, a post office to the west, and commercial buildings to the north (Photos 3, 4 and 5). The building faces the Dolly McNutt Plaza to the east, which features a fountain and memorials for veterans who served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War (Photo 2). The plaza was part of Stone's original vision for the civic center zone. It is being incorporated into the boundary because the City Hall building and the Plaza reinforce each other's design.



### **Stone's original model for the City Hall and Plaza (completed 1963; photographed 2016)**

The symmetry and use of geometric joint pattern in smooth concrete identical to the City Hall site creates a continual flow and continuity with the plaza clearly defining their connection as one design and the architect's intent.

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Photo 3



Photo 5



Photo of Plaza from City Hall

### Exterior Description

Constructed at the height of a local urban renewal, the Paducah City Hall presents one of Stone's New Formalism designs of the 1960s. The illusion of monumentality, given by the structure's overall form and materials, was a common theme in Stone's municipal designs of this era. Stone's design exhibits classical influences with its symmetry in form while incorporating geometric dimensions in every aspect of its details.



Photo 1

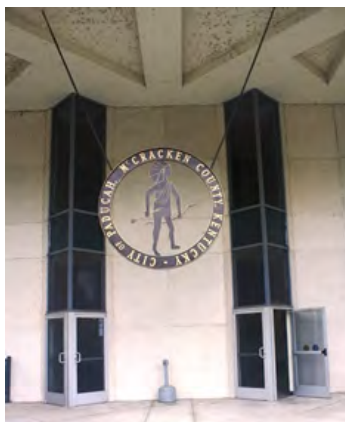


Photo 8



Photo 9

Centered above the primary entrance, on the west façade, hangs a six-foot round bronze medallion denoting the City of Paducah logo (Photo 8). To create an illusion of floating, Stone designed the upper two levels to sit on a textured podium cantilevered over what was originally designed to be a moat with a perimeter band of landscaping. Each elevation consists of eight window bays projecting outwardly in a "V" shape with narrow plate glass aluminum windows. The exterior walls are formed by white precast concrete square panels with an exterior finish of exposed aggregate, adding another textural element (Photo 9). Square fluted concrete columns support a thirty-foot portico that wraps the entire building. Each column is centered within a geometric concrete pattern on the underside of the overhang, with an interlocking diamond pattern within the fascia (Photos 10 & 11).

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Photo 10



Photo 11

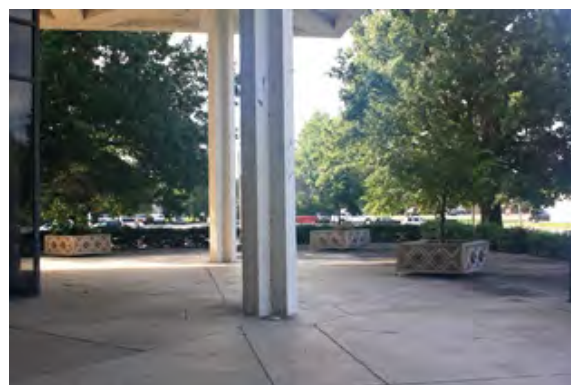
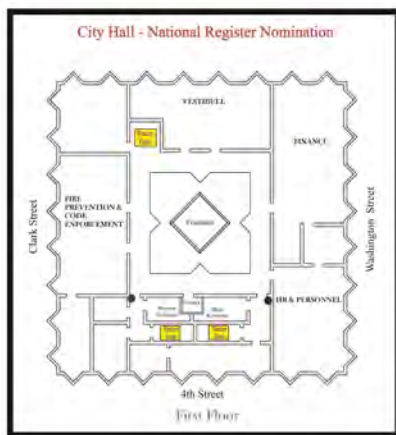


Photo 12

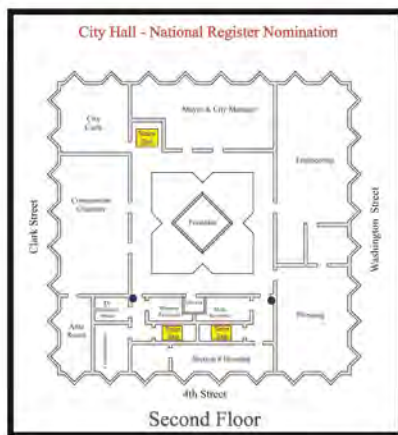
Stone thoughtfully incorporated his geometric motif into the landscaping architecture of the site as well, utilizing the same geometric patterns found on the structure as part of the concrete podium at the base of the columns: this pattern continued out the front to the sidewalks. To add to the visual aspect, decorative textured concrete planters, featuring diamond motifs, are placed around the portico and at the primary entrances (Photo #12). To increase the verticality of the building, Stone topped it with a pyramidal lantern measuring 50' square at the base and containing 118 diamond shaped skylights emitting facets of light into the atrium below.

### Interior Description

Hallmark characteristics of Stone's municipal commissions during this era integrate grandeur and natural elements into the interior form and design. The interior focal point of Paducah's City Hall is a prodigious two-story 60-foot tall atrium with an interior sunken courtyard. Stone denotes these levels distinctly on his drawings as the "Upper Court" and the "Lower Court".



First floor plan



Second floor plan



Basement plan

The pyramidal lantern extrudes twenty feet above the roofline over the atrium, utilizing natural light to fill the space. The skylights are enhanced with a framed walnut grid, creating a vast contrast between the white ceiling texture, light and wood (Photos 13 & 14). A geometrically designed mezzanine balcony overlooks the "lower court" with an open white terrazzo stair located in the southeast corner. The interior walls of the open courtyard, second level mezzanine and commission chambers are adorned in rich walnut paneling (Photos 15 & 16). The first level floors are a combination of white smooth concrete and textured aggregate designed in the same exterior geometric pattern that flows from the vestibule into the first level public space to create a sense of one level plane (Photo 17). Originally, this pattern was carried out the front door to the sidewalk. An elevator is located in the center of the north wall and restroom facilities are

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located in the northeast corners of both the first and second floors (Photo 18). The sunken courtyard is adorned with triangular concrete planters with diamond-shape motifs and contains a 10-foot bronze and copper floral motif fountain. The fountain was an initiative of the Paducah City Beautification Board, who commissioned regional artist James L. Garner from Cape Girardeau in 1970<sup>vii</sup> (Photo 19).



Photo 13



Photo 15

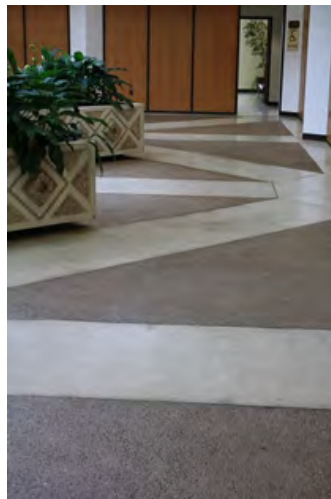


Photo 17



Photo 18

The City Hall floor plan exhibits symmetry with an organized sense of space. Its offices on the first and second floors along the perimeter face toward the atrium area. The council chambers and offices of city manager, mayor, engineering and planning are located on the second floor ( Photos 20, 21, & 22). The basement level is dissected by the underground drive and parking area (Photo 23). This concept is one Stone began to use beginning with his 1954 design of the New Delhi Embassy (See Figures 3, 4, and 5). Stone felt “that the idea of a monumental building rising from a sea of multi-colored, tail finned automobiles just revolting.”<sup>viii</sup> The basement originally housed the police department, jail and courtroom but currently is used for training, employee break room and storage. An aluminum and glass enclosed elevator lobby is located in the center of the basement parking garage (Photos 24,25,26 & 27).



Photo 20



Photo 23

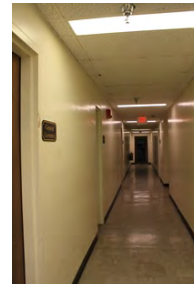


Photo 25

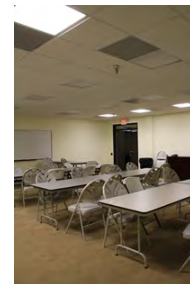


Photo 26

## Description of the Dolly McNutt Plaza

Not long after the completion of Paducah’s City Hall building, landscape architects from Lexington Kentucky, Scruggs and Hammond, and engineers from Paducah, Edward T. Hannan and Associates, drew plans for the plaza using Stone’s original design concept and maintaining his original intent for the Civic Center Zone

<sup>vii</sup> *Garden Clubs begin Drive for City Fountain Fund.* Sun-Democrat, Wednesday, January 28, 1970.

<sup>viii</sup> Stone, Edward Durrell. *The Evolution of an Architect.* 1962. Pg. 138.



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Complex. Paducah’s City Hall was completed in 1968 and faces the City Plaza, which occupies one square city block measuring 318’ x 332’. The Plaza perimeter continues the rhythm of the public sidewalks and mature tree plantings from the adjacent City Hall lot. A transitional entry from the sidewalks is located at each midway point of the plaza boundary lines, with concrete steps that lead into the common spaces. The Plaza features two levels of design: the Upper Plaza and the Lower Plaza. Symmetrical balance is achieved by the incorporation of planters, shrubs and lighting in each corner of the plaza and geometric joint patterns throughout the textured concrete that surround each level. This balance continues with terraced concrete stairs that focus attention on the plaza’s 44’ x 34’ oblong pool and fountain. Although, the final pool concept varies slightly from Stone’s original model for the City Plaza, which included a smaller center pool with outlying smaller pools at each corner, the continual flow of the material composition, design and unity in theme with the City Hall design clearly reinforces their connection as one design.

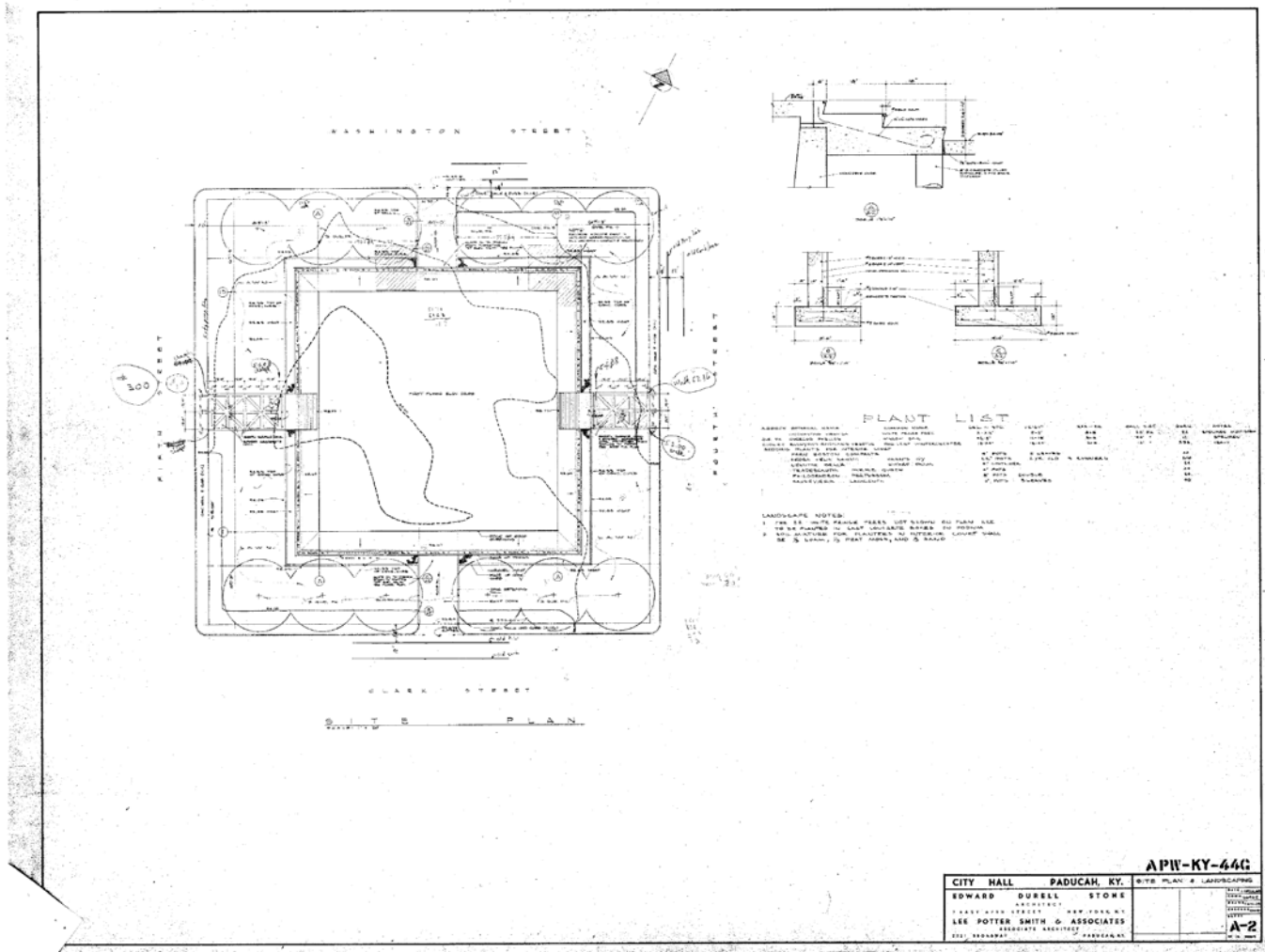


In 1986, the City Plaza was renamed the Dolly McNutt Plaza in honor of Alice “Dolly” McNutt the first woman to become the mayor of a second-class city in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, in 1971, a State Legislator and Paducah City Commissioner. During her tenure in office the city enjoyed many federal funds that went for improvement of the infrastructure such as improved sewers.



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### Stone's 1963 plan for the Plaza

Stone's civic designs of this era consciously utilized natural landscape, water features and plantings as prominent elements skillfully merged with the man-made constructions. Although the role of his plazas and landscape architecture were designed to be complimentary components of the main structures, often times they had the ability to stand as a solitary element. The original intent of the design of Paducah's City Hall building included a contiguous plaza that would act as the centerpiece to Paducah's Civic Center Zone. The overall design of City Hall and the Plaza show the importance that Stone placed on urban planning, incorporating his belief that natural elements in the built environment were integral to any project's setting.

### Changes to the Property since the Period of Significance

The original design and flow of the Paducah City Hall building remains unchanged since its completion in 1965. The majority of the interior fabric within the public spaces remains consistent with the original design (compare Photos 28 and 29 with Figures 6 & 7). Some necessary upgrades to HVAC, sprinkler systems, electrical and general interior remodeling within the office spaces has occurred over the years. Some of the unique structural design features there have been water leakage issues over the years, particularly into the basement level of the building. In 1988, the City attempted to fix these problems by applying a waterproofed concrete topping to the top of the exterior podium and to waterproof the surrounding planter boxes. Even though the original exposed aggregate topping was covered, workers took care in maintaining the original form of Stone's geometric design (See Photo 30). At this same time, the front exterior stairs were replaced and a

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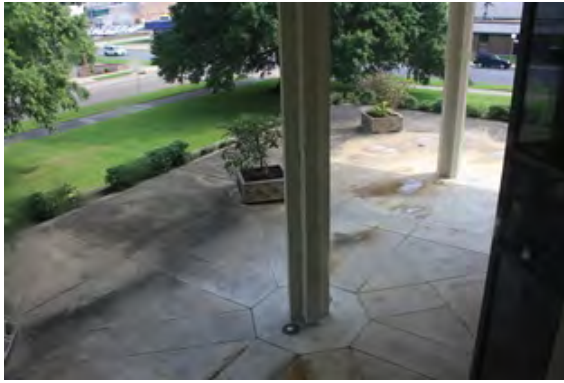
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handicap ramp was constructed to meet ADA requirements. The design of the required ramp carefully placed it out of street view by installing it behind the planter. A new black wrought iron railing was also installed down the front steps, along the new handicap ramp and along the podium edge (Photo 31).



**Photo 28**



**Photo 30**



**Photo 30**

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**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.

**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)**

This nomination follows the National Register convention for a property meeting Criterion C: the Period of Significance, 1963-1965 indicates when the architectural design was conceived and constructed. This Period of Significance recognizes the architectural significance of the building.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A**

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Landscape Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1963-1965

1970

**Significant Dates**

1963-1965 Dates of Design and Construction of City Hall

1970- Date of Completion of Dolly McNutt Plaza

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Stone, Edward Durell (Architect)

Smith, Lee Potter (Associate Architect)

Edward T. Hannan & Associates (Engineer)

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## Statement of Significance

### Summary Paragraph

The Paducah City Hall (McNP-56), at 300 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Paducah, Kentucky, is locally significant under National Register Criterion C for its significance in local Architecture. Referred to as a “shrine to Democracy” the building symbolizes the prevailing will of the citizens of Paducah and three administrations committed to renewal and economic resurgence of the City. The building and adjacent plaza became the face and new image of the city and a symbol of progress under Paducah’s Local Urban Renewal Program and the Federal Capital Grant Program for Urban Renewal under Title I. With the design of an internationally known architect, and the most prominent representation of New Formalism design in the city of Paducah, the property is architecturally significant, evaluated within the historic context of *“New Formalism Architecture in Paducah, Kentucky 1960-1965.”* The building resulted from the City collaborating with a prominent architect to express its distinct identity through a landmark Civic building. The building’s striking design—employing the classical symmetry, colonnaded portico and geometric elements—displays Paducah’s most accomplished instance of New Formalist design. The Period of Significance begins in 1963, the original construction date and runs until 1970, when the Dolly McNutt Plaza’s construction was complete. The property’s significant period continues to contribute to the architectural environment of the City of Paducah as an unprecedented local architectural monument and a symbol of a mid-century progressive movement within local government into the present.

### Historic Context: New Formalism Architecture in Paducah, Kentucky 1963-1965

#### Research Sources

A general understanding of New Formalism Architecture in Paducah and architect, Edward Durell Stone- a primary source came from his autobiography, *The Evolution of an Architect*, which provided direct insight into plans, thoughts and desires for outcomes. The book written by his son, Hicks Stone, *A Son’s Untold Story of a Legendary Architect* also was used to help build this context and Edward Durell Stone’s book from 1968, *Recent and Future Works*. Sources from the Kentucky Heritage Council: Kentucky Historic Resource Inventory: DAOB-10; DAOB-12; DAOB-39; DAOB-47; DAOB-48; and JFEI-76. Rachel Kennedy, Historic Survey Program Coordinator with Kentucky Heritage Council, Daniel Vivian, Assistant Professor and Director of Public History, University of Louisville. Mark Gelertner, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in their Cultural and Technological Context* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), and an architectural building survey of the City of Paducah.

#### Architect Edward Durell Stone (1902-1978)

Edward Durell Stone was born in Fayetteville Arkansas in 1902 to one of the founding families of the state. He began attending the University of Arkansas at age sixteen, shortly after his mother died. An art teacher took an interest in him and saw his talent for drawing. She informed his older brother, James Hicks Stone, who was an architect in Boston, that he should be encouraged to embrace this talent. James was fourteen years his senior and took a fatherly interest in Edward, asking him to join him in Boston. That summer was filled with James introducing Edward to the arts and architecture all over Boston, New York and Washington. His moment of inspiration to become an architect came when he saw Paul Cret’s Pan American Building, with its lush court garden, tropical vegetation, birds, fountains and brilliant colored tile. When he returned to Boston he began to work toward his goal of becoming an architect, but in an unusual fashion. He studied French, freehand drawing,

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and mechanical drawing and took a job as an office assistant at the Alexander Francis Law Firm. In the evenings, he went to the Boston Architectural Club to study architecture. Some of the professors from M.I.T. and Harvard contributed their time to the club and that is how Stone developed a relationship with Henry R. Shepley. Seeing Stone's potential, Shepley asked him to come to his office as a draftsman. In Stone's opinion, Shepley was one of the first architects, trained in the Beaux Arts tradition, to recognize the merit of new ideas in modern design and to encourage young architects in those methods. A larger influence to Stone was his brother Hicks, who instilled two philosophical attitudes upon him 1) a singleness of purpose and 2) an open mind. Hicks felt that the first came with an average amount of energy and ambition but keeping an open mind was much harder and the only way to solve all the possible solutions to any problem. Stone carried this philosophy through his career as a governing rule for the conduct of his life and in judging both architecture and people.<sup>ix</sup>

In 1927, Stone won a design competition for the prestigious Rotch Travelling Fellowship which took him throughout Europe and North Africa for two years. Looking back, Stone describes his winning design as completely idyllic and modern in spirit by incorporating an office in a suburb surrounded by gardens. During this period, stylistic movements under the umbrella of Modernist Architecture were beginning to develop across Europe. The theme of this movement was associated with an analytical approach to the function of buildings, a strictly rational use of materials, an openness to structural innovation and the elimination of ornament. Stone's first exposure to the Cubist and International styles occurred while in Europe perhaps influencing his designs and opening him up to new ideas early in his career. He was impressed by these "modernist" structures and the use of glass, concrete and open courts. He also mentions in this autobiography viewing the Barcelona Pavilion of Mies van der Rohe, describing how its simple rectangular platform and roof, with walls continuing out from the interior to form quadrangles and courts was in Frank Lloyd Wright's opinion "the breakdown of the rectangular box and a significant modern monument."<sup>x</sup>



**Barcelona Pavilion, van der Rohe**

**Radio City Music Hall**

**Richard Mandel House**

While in Europe, Stone received devastating news that his brother Hicks had died, which broke all of his personal ties to Boston, and leaving him open to new opportunities. While in Stockholm, he met Leonard Schultze, the senior partner of Schultze and Weaver, who offered Stone a position in New York with his firm where he worked primarily on the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel project. His career continued with the offices of Reinhardt, Hoffmeister, Hood & Fouilhoux, who were among the architects associated on the Rockefeller Center project. Stone was the principal designer on the Radio City Music Hall and the Roxy Theater (later called the Center Theater), and he worked in conjunction with interior designers Donald Deskey and Eugene Schoen. In 1933, Stone was introduced by Donald Deskey to Richard Mandel who asked him to design a "Modern" home. Eager to explore his new ideas from abroad, he developed a very large and expensive home with an open plan constructed of concrete and steel in a design with International and Moderne influences. It

<sup>ix</sup> Ibid. Stone.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid. Stone.

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was touted by many as “the coming of a new era” yet others felt it was a “shock to sensibility.” Although Stone never fully accepted the metaphor by Le Corbusier, “houses are a machine for living” he used the characteristic industrial materials of reinforced concrete, glass and stucco in an enamored fashion throughout the 1930s. In contrast, Stone’s affinity for gardens and courtyards were incorporated strategically into many of the residential designs such as the Charles Liebman House constructed in 1937, the Albert C. Koch House in 1936 and the Henry Luce Mepkin Plantation in 1936. Even though Stone’s work was highly recognized and he received great acclaim for the Mandel House, residential projects began to wane due to the Great Depression; commercial construction projects came to a halt. While at work on the R.C.A. Building in Rockefeller Center, Stone first met Nelson Rockefeller. That association ultimately led to his renowned commission for the Museum of Modern Art in 1939.<sup>xi</sup>

In his autobiography, Stone mentions pivotal points that altered his mindset and design, one of which occurred in 1940 after a cross-country tour of the U.S. Prior to this trip, Stone had primarily been oriented toward European ideas regarding architecture not encountering the indigenous architecture and materials stateside. He states that, “this 1940 trip awakened me to the architecture we created but also led to my aversion of the international style and reality of unplanned land usage.”<sup>xii</sup> He applauds the well-ordered design of Yellowstone Park and its arrangement of rustic architecture sympathetic to its setting. In stark contrast, he deems Lake Tahoe in Nevada a devastation lacking a considered plan. He also mentions the majestic redwood forest as a living testimony to the durability of material and the San Francisco Bay Area’s informal architecture, conveying a sense of ease and cultivation. En route, he also stopped at Taliesin, Frank Lloyd Wright’s home in Wisconsin, touring for the first time one of Wright’s residential buildings. He was awestruck by its beauty, natural indigenous materials and the inclusion of the outside beauty in the total design. The influence of their friendship is evident in many of Stone’s commissions. In fact, Stone states that he considered Wright one of the greatest architects in history.<sup>xiii</sup> This friendship transformed Stone’s approach, and he believed that “if an architect conscientiously takes into account the circumstances which are unique to each building, the program of the client and his objectives, the climate, the setting—the combination of these circumstances if carefully analyzed should result in an original architectural solution.”<sup>xiv</sup> This experience led to a period of residential design during Stone’s career where he showed a new respect for natural materials. Stone called this his “Hair Shirt Phase” after the coarse shirts that monastic orders would wear to induce discomfort for repentance, cultivating spiritual growth. It referred to the rough texture of the materials and the rustic appearance of the structures he used in construction. Stone’s ex-wife Orlean observed that it was a result of his rural Arkansas upbringing and recreation of his childhood woodworking.<sup>xv</sup> His later residential commissions took on a more characteristic Wrightian roof form, with deeply cantilevered eaves and a strongly exaggerated horizontality. Stone attempted to incorporate fountains into his residential designs if his client would allow. In this same period, he began to find ways to eliminate the corridor as a device for circulation. His aversion to the corridor championed his aversion to the intruding automobile in his civic designs. Stone was known for saying, “Corridors are the curse of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and immediately establish an institutional dullness. You do not find them in classical architecture. The houses of Pompeii have no corridors.”

With the occurrence at Pearl Harbor, Stone took a break from his career and joined the Army during WWII, from 1942 to 1945, stationed in Washington DC where he was the Chief of the Planning and Design Section

<sup>xi</sup> Ibid. Stone.

<sup>xii</sup> Ibid. Stone

<sup>xiii</sup> Stone, Hicks. A sons’s untold story of a legendary architect. Rizzoli, New York, 2011by Charles Rossi.

<sup>xiv</sup> Ibid. Stone.

<sup>xv</sup> Ibid. Stone, Hicks .

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responsible for the over-all planning of multiple Army and Air Force bases. This short-term experience would factor into other more prominent government commissions for him down the road. When returning to New York City in late 1945, he reopened his office and resumed his residential work, along with commissions of commercial and institutional designs such as the El Panama Hotel project, Alabama State Office Building, Vanderbilt University and the Fine Arts Center at University of Arkansas.

In 1953, Stone says his life took another highly significant turn when he met his second wife, Maria Elena Torchio, an American-born daughter of a Florentine architect and a Barcelona mother. Stone stated that, “he was first married to architecture and needed a strong woman to organize, motivate, bolster, manage his finances and control his alcoholic urges,” Maria began to change his image, having him begin using his full name, Edward Durell Stone, and emphasizing other aspects of his public persona (See Figure 11- Photo With Frank Lloyd Wright and Maria Elena Torchio). Stone also credits Maria for bringing order to his existence. This newfound personal order or classical influence can also be seen within his emerging designs that followed shortly after their marriage.

In 1954, with Maria by his side, Stone began his commission for the Embassy in New Delhi. The project was guided by a new directive from the state department which he took very seriously: “to the sensitive and imaginative designer it will be an invitation to give serious study to local conditions of climate and site, to understand and sympathize with local customs and people, yet he will not fear using new techniques or new materials should these constitute real advances in architectural thinking.” Taking this opportunity with freedom of design, Stone created a concept that utilized many of his evolving design preferences, keeping an open mind for creative solutions while respecting the culture through its landscape. The building was raised on a podium, in the fashion of Greek and Roman temples, and housed parking beneath the building. Stone had an aversion to the automobile and strongly felt that the automobile and pedestrian should not be mixed and could be lethal unless controlled. In addition, he elected to place offices on two stories surrounding a center water garden to create a cooling affect. The entire building was shaded by a rectangular canopy supported by full height columns adorned with gold leaf to add a note of oriental opulence. Stone also implemented an ancient principle used in tropical climates by using terrazzo grilles for the exterior walls. He considered the end product a solution to the environmental conditions ultimately resulting in a temple.<sup>xvi</sup>



**New Delhi Embassy**



**Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium, Wayne State University**

The New Delhi Embassy building and its creator began to acquire a considerable amount of press with stories in Architectural Forum in 1955 and multiple times in 1957. The magazine commented that “Architect Edward

<sup>xvi</sup> Ibid. Stone.



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Durell Stone's already famed embassy office building has the most incredible serenity and grace of its façade fulfilled within by the magical shadowed water garden at the building's core.<sup>xvii</sup> The Embassy received an award from the American Institute of Architects, a display in the Museum of Modern Art, and praise from Eero Saarinen. Elements from this design become a part of Stone's next era of architectural endeavors, falling into the category of "New Formalism." Stone's designs were intended to reflect what he considered more universal values rather than what he called the "transient enthusiasms" of Modernism.<sup>xviii</sup> He considered Architecture complex by nature involving a great deal of time in the realization of each building and the architect needs to be its creator while considering its surroundings, function and the occupant.<sup>xix</sup> *Time* magazine proclaimed, "Edward Durell Stone was a pioneer modernist, undoubtedly the profession's freest spirit and by general consensus the most versatile designer of his generation" (See Figure 12- *Time* magazine cover).

### **The Modern Movement- New Formalism**

In the years following World War II, Modernism in America coincided with America's emergence as a world power. The movement in general claimed not to be a "style" but rather a cultured and compelling move towards rationality and purposefulness in architecture. It arose out of art, and reform efforts in Europe in the years after World War I with the Bauhaus school of design which sought to teach all artists, artisan and architects to work together in common, to drive toward "the building of the future."<sup>xx</sup> By 1958, the mainstream thought as noted by *Look* magazines' architectural editor John Peter claimed, "There is now a general body of theory and practice that constitutes a Modern style which rapidly is becoming as clearly defined as the Greek style or Gothic style, in almost every type of building- office, factory, bridge, dam, schools, hospital-modern architecture works. Only in private family dwellings, where human needs are scaled to modesty, does it lag".<sup>xxi</sup> The style soon represented the power of American Corporations and became a prominent design for government. Architectural historian, Alan Gowans stated, "strict Modernism was a natural: government is power. The style served to "create visual metaphors to confirm the power of those who held it."<sup>xxii</sup>

As the Modernist era progressed, the commitment of some of the most recognized Modernist architects began to waiver as they began to pull away from the accepted philosophy and its analytical approach to the function of buildings and elimination of ornament. The earliest designs associated with New Formalism were from Edward Durell Stone's 1953 New Delhi Embassy building (Figure 13), and from Minoru Yamasaki's 1955 Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium at Wayne State University in Michigan. (Figure 14)<sup>xxiii</sup> Architectural Historian Marcus Whiffen defines New Formalism as, "typically self-contained, free-standing blocks, with strictly symmetrical elevations that tend to admire and reflect past classical styles." He identifies Philip Johnson's Kneses Tilfereth Israel Synagogue at Port Chester, New York (1956) (Figure 15) and the Sheldon Museum of Art, Lancaster County, NE (1963) as representative examples of New Formalism.<sup>xxiv</sup>

<sup>xvii</sup> "U.S.A. Abroad," Architectural Forum 107 (December 1957 pg. 122.

<sup>xviii</sup> Ibid. Stone, Hicks

<sup>xix</sup> Stone, Edward Durrell. "Recent and Future Architecture. Horizon Press. New York. 1968.

<sup>xx</sup> Fricker, Jonathan and Donna. Louisiana Architecture 1945-1965: Modernism Triumphant- Commercial and Institutional Buildings," Louisiana Department of culture, Recreation, and Tourism Office of Cultural Development, Division of Historic Preservation, baton Rouge, Louisiana, 2010.

<sup>xxi</sup> Ibid.Fricker.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid. Fricker.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Higgins, Alan. "Architectural Movements of the Recent Past," PDF. <http://alan-higgins.com/>

<sup>xxiv</sup> Whiffen,Marcus. American Architecture since 1780, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 1992, 261.

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**Kneses Tilfereth Isreal Synagogue, Port Chester NY**



**Sheldon Museum of Art, Lancaster Co., Nebraska**

Criticized highly by both Modernist and traditionalist peers but loved by clients, the design principles were popularized fully by the 1960s becoming what is now known as New Formalism. The characteristic features of New Formalism combine decorative components and established design concepts of Classicism with the new materials and technologies. Common defining features of the style as noted by Fullerton Heritage<sup>xxv</sup> and Alan Higgins<sup>xxvi</sup> include:

- Lines and geometric shapes dominate elevations
- Buildings are usually set on podium
- Smooth wall surfaces
- Column supports common along all elevations
- Often defined at top by heavy, flat projecting slab to achieve monumentality
- Embraces Classical precedents such as arches, colonnades, classical columns and entablatures
- Formal landscapes; use of pools, fountains, sculpture within a central plaza

A summary completed in 2000 by the U.S. General Services Administration on Architecture of the Great Society 1960s-1970s, outlines the broad spectrum of public buildings constructed by the Federal Government and their significant contribution to this era. Pioneering commissions of the 1950s, set the stage for a broader policy that emerged in 1962 when President Kennedy's Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space promulgated "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture.: The mandate stated, "facilities shall be in architectural style and form which is distinguished and which will reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor and stability of the American National Government. Major emphasis should be placed on the choice of design that embodies the finest contemporary American architectural thought." This mandate laid the framework for buildings such as the John F. Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts and civic and institutional buildings throughout the nation.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Edward Durell Stone sought to create a culmination of the characteristics he deemed relevant to basic principles of planning but also attributes he considered necessary amenities such as symmetry, columned porticos, connecting plazas, gardens and water features. He was determined to correct past transgressions that had occurred to our physical environment through his designs and that a beautiful environment can elevate the

<sup>xxv</sup> :Architectural Styles in Fullerton: New Formalis".fullertonheritage.org

<sup>xxvi</sup> Ibid. Higgins.

<sup>xxvii</sup> GSA. Architecture of the Great Society. Decomeber 5, 2000.

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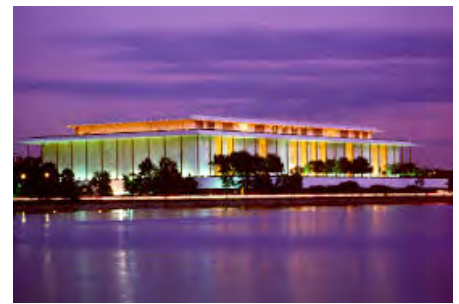
image of a business and is in direct ratio a reflection to the clients' and his vision. His incorporation of new materials in his designs, such as stone and concrete, arose from his perception that architecture should convey an assurance of permanence. To Stone, glass, aluminum and the curtain wall of the day have an inescapable association to the automobile. His designs of the 1960s rather small or prevalent, demonstrate his evolved mindset and principles. Although for each commission, he felt that a careful examination of all circumstances unique to each project should result in the creation of an original building and hopefully, a work of art. Stone applied these principles to each commission from the high profile civic and institutional buildings including the Los Angeles Music Center, the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City and Edward Durrell Stone's Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. to the less famed projects such as, the Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer in Grand Island, NE (Figure 16) and the Paducah City Hall building.



**Los Angeles Music Center**



**Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts**



**Kennedy Center**

### **New Formalism Architecture in Paducah's Downtown Landscape**

The Paducah City Hall building was Edward Durrell Stone's first opportunity to design a commission in the state of Kentucky. The use of the New Formalism design was limited within the city of Paducah. The building is one in a prolific collection of civic and institutional buildings designed during a period in Stone's career when he had been questioning the purity and simplicity of the Modernist Movements--International and Streamline Moderne—but also expanding a federal mandate on government buildings to his regional commissions.

By the 1920s, the bulk of the commercial area had already been built in the City, employing revival designs and growth expanded westward to the Midtown section of town (Broadway core to 28<sup>th</sup> Street) after the 1937 flood. A survey of the architectural landscape was conducted to help establish stylistic context within which the Paducah City Hall building fits. For commercial buildings in Paducah, there was one additional building identified that incorporated the New Formalism Design during this period. (Figure #17) It is located at 2626 Broadway and was designed by Lee Potter Smith, the associate architect for the City Hall building. Clearly Stone's influences are evident in this design.

Edward Durell Stone received several additional notable commissions in the State of Kentucky which should be surveyed within their own context for possible historic listings:

**The University of Kentucky-Kirwan Blanding Dormitory Complex, Lexington, KY- 1963-1967** (Figures 23,25,25,26, and 27) The Undergraduate Housing Complex was planned as the nucleus of a "grouping" of residential, recreational and other related facilities supportive to the "academic core" of the University's campus. It was to provide a passage for all pedestrian and vehicular movement within the area while establishing an environment that would provide a natural atmosphere for occupants. Design features include

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low-rise residence halls and a central facility around two towers creating three major and eight minor courtyard areas and pedestrian malls.<sup>xxviii</sup> The complex was funded under the Housing Act of 1950- HHFA College Housing Loan Program and was part of a larger urban planning initiative within the “central city and consists of approximately 200 acres of development. It follows the clients’ desire to have a contiguous complex in which Stone utilizes many of his classic design elements to achieve this plan- connectors of geometric shaped exposed aggregate and concrete walkways around the pedestrian malls and courtyards –columned colonnades and the incorporation of trees, shrubs and sitting areas throughout to provide a natural aesthetic and more personal human scale.<sup>xxix</sup>

**Civic Center Arena Project, Frankfort, KY – 1965 (Figure #x 21, 22, 23 and 24) and State Office Building, Frankfort, KY- 1965 (Figure 20)** The 25-acre site was part of a local urban renewal project in downtown Frankfort. It includes a 26-story state office building with a vast expansive pedestrian plaza with geometrically laid out aggregate and concrete walkways surrounding a swimming pool. The pool is landscaped with concrete planters and greenery and columned porticos leading into the surrounding buildings and parking garages.

**The Lake Barkley State Park Lodge, Barkley Lake, Trigg County, KY- 1967** (Figure #s 28,29, 30 and 31) is the single largest building in the Kentucky State park system. It was constructed 1967-1970. The total park encompasses 3200 acres of wooded rolling hills. The lodge complex is situated on a small peninsula overlooking the water. The project fits into Stone’s philosophy of taking into consideration the structure’s environment, climate and intended use when creating ultimately a piece of architectural art. This building’s design presents a contrast to his New Formalism creations, exhibiting the vivid influence of Frank Lloyd Wright. The extensive use of wood, post-and-beam construction, and red cedar shiplap siding, keep it in harmony with nature. The sense of connection with environment is enhanced by the height of the ceiling in the main atrium, which leads down to each level, skylights throughout create an open-air naturalistic experience for visitors.<sup>xxx</sup>

### **A Tale of a City and its New City Hall**

Construction of the City Hall marks the culmination of a cultural shift in Paducah that began shortly after World War II, with the adoption of large-scale, public projects that sought to empower government to remake the American city landscape. These efforts had their genesis in the Great Depression, and came about through a belief that city, county, and state bureaucracies could make effective and efficient decisions to relieve socioeconomic problems that were too large for individuals, corporations, or charitable organizations to solve alone. The significance of the Paducah City Hall structure locally to its citizens has a lengthy and politically charged story ending in a significant architectural contribution to the city and to Stone, “a piece of art”. The history of the battle to achieve this goal also lends to the realization that the citizens not only wanted an urban

<sup>xxviii</sup> Coleman, Lawrence. University of Kentucky Undergraduate Housing Complex 1968 HUD Awards for Design Excellence. Lexington, KY, September 1967.

<sup>xxix</sup> Ibid. Coleman.

<sup>xxx</sup> Daniel Vivian, "Lake Barkely Lodge," in *SAH Archipedia*, Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012-), <http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/KY-01-221-0043> (accessed 8-26-2016).

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renewal program for the future but wanted the heritage of their historic downtown to continue to play a role in its economic growth.

The federal government passed the Housing Act of 1934, a New Deal program that established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), and attempted to relieve the two-fold problem of poverty and inadequate housing that plagued many cities. Once the Second World War ended, the acute nature of the American housing crisis became recognizable.

Several expansions of the Housing Act of 1934 were passed, with Title 1 of the Housing Act of 1949 authorizing publicly initiated, locally planned, and locally managed slum clearance programs that aggressively displaced impoverished people from their meager housing. The Act authorized \$1,000,000,000 in loans to cities over a 5-year period for acquisition of land, clearance of blight, and the preparation of the land for new uses—often governmental centers or low-income housing projects. The act also authorized \$500,000,000 in Federal Capital grants.<sup>xxxix</sup> Title I of the 1949 Act also required cities to develop a planning agency, from which the city's proposals to FHA would originate. Those proposals would need to be forwarded in accordance with a master plan for the community, which would indicate the future use of each portion of the area, whether to be used for public or private purposes.<sup>xxxix</sup>

Paducah conformed to these mandates in November 1951, with the approval of its long range public works program. Earlier that year, the City had hired a full time director to aid in coordinating resources for sewer, water and street services. A planning consultant was hired to initiate a study in August of 1951, resulting in the first Paducah Area-McCracken County Interim General Plan adopted by the city commission on April 8, 1952.<sup>xxxix</sup> The general plan gave direction to the Planning and Zoning Commission, to help avoid chaotic development within the city and county. Land use was identified by type of use, such as residential, business, subdivision development, annexations, subdivision rules, and infrastructure requirements. Recommendations were developed for transportation, public facilities and capital improvements, to achieve the most efficient and orderly manner of planned growth. These ordinances demonstrated a faith in the power of the government to direct an organized use of the City's land, preserving the town from the abuses of individual interest resulting from a less-regulated approach to land use.

One centerpiece in the remaking of Paducah would be a new city hall, though debate occurred over the ideal location for such a site. Many citizens, especially downtown merchants who would benefit from a traditional location, wished to keep City Hall downtown. Other political forces campaigned for the new site in locations away from the center of the city, which would trigger new growth in an undeveloped area of town. This debate continued through the early 1950s, through four city administrations and the tenure of three mayors. Regardless of which side dominated the debate at any time, the new City Hall signaled to many in the community that the political process was an effective way of getting things done, expressed the will of the people, and was a testament to the public servants who played their parts in finally finding and carrying out the public wish.<sup>xxxix</sup>

Robert C. Cherry, who served as Paducah's as Mayor for three terms (1952-1956, 1959-1962, and 1968-1972) laid the beginnings for a path to a New City Hall. Cherry was perceived as an activist in civic affairs, serving as

<sup>xxxix</sup> Housing Act of 1949, Document No. 99, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, June 2, 1949.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Ashley A. Foard & Hilbert Fefferman, Federal Urban Renewal Legislation, 25 Law and Contemporary Problems 635-684 (Fall 1960)

<sup>xxxix</sup> The Paducah Area-McCracken County Interim General Plan, Kenneth L. Schellie, February, 1952.

<sup>xxxix</sup> "New City Hall-A Shrine to Democracy". Sun-Democrat February 26, 1965. Pg. 1.

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President of the Jr. Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club and elected as Paducah's Outstanding Young Man in 1951. He also purchased a floral business in which he opened in 1955 with branch locations in Metropolis, Illinois and Benton, Kentucky. Newly elected to office in 1952, Cherry and his administration had to deal with unprecedented growth in the city coming from the Atomic Energy Commission's Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The influx of workers and demands on infrastructure, schools, housing and public facilities resulted in the City realizing that a focused comprehensive plan dealing with those elements of municipal responsibility and physical development was needed.

Also identified within this plan was a need for new public and semi-public buildings to serve the community, including a new city hall, Y.M.C.A., and municipal auditorium. The plan also proposed a Civic Center to include the two blocks extending to the west across 7<sup>th</sup> Street from the Court House, as the site, at a location convenient to all parts of the city. Such Civic Center sites were appearing across the country, creating a highly designed space at the city center, symbolizing the belief in the benevolent power of local government.

During the early 1950s, communities undertook Urban Renewal projects on the premise of redevelopment, accomplishing the removal of blighted areas of town ostensibly to promote new growth. A Presidential Advisory Committee on Government Housing Policies advocated several reforms to Title I of the Housing Act, which were written into the Housing Acts of 1954 and 1956, shifting from the bulldozer approach in the Housing Act of 1949, to one couched in the term "urban redevelopment." The Housing Act of 1954 instituted a "workable program" requirement under which localities had to submit a plan for redevelopment. This was the first example of comprehensive planning being required for federal funding.<sup>xxxv</sup> Paducah submitted its first application, to accomplish slum clearance, on March 2, 1954.

After the Interim General Plan was approved, Cherry set his sights on securing a new City Hall building for Paducah as identified in the plan. On September 22, 1953 an ordinance was approved by the Board of Commissioners calling for an election to be held for a \$400,000 bond issue, to finance construction of a new city hall. It was soundly defeated in November, 2,366 to 1,059. Disappointed and frustrated, Cherry did not run in the next Mayoral race. Instead, George G. Jacobs ran unopposed and took office from 1955-1959. In February of 1956, shortly after taking office, Jacobs took up the fight for a new city hall, announcing an offer to buy the Illinois Central Railroad Hospital building at 1500 Broadway. The ICRR officials promptly turned down the offer, and Jacobs then sought to secure land at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Kentucky Avenue, which included six tracts purchased at \$17,000.00.<sup>xxxvi</sup> This attempt to secure land for the new City Hall soon met tough resistance led by future Mayor Tom Wilson and downtown merchants, who took up the fight to locate a new building in the heart of the business district. This pressure from the local merchants put a temporary halt on Jacob's plans.

In November of 1960, Robert Cherry was elected mayor for the second time. The City had experienced loss of industry and the atomic plant boom was fading quickly. In the midst of this economic downfall, the Cherry administration quickly ordered a study by the Fantus Company of Chicago to guide them through recovery from this recession. For the second time in less than a decade, a planning study concluded that a new city hall needed to be constructed. The consultants from Fantus recommended that the City Hall be designed by a famous architect. Prior to his reelection, Cherry announced that three sites were being considered for the new city hall, but the majority of the board was leaning toward a site between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at Kentucky. However in an unexpected vote, the commission passed another ordinance on August 4, 1960, to attempt to move forward with

<sup>xxxv</sup> Freeman, Richard, U.S. Housing Police, Volume 23, Number 50, December 13, 1996. Pgs. 27-33.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Ibid. Walker.

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the purchase of the old ICRR Hospital again. This action triggered the beginning of some of the most complicated political maneuvering in the City of Paducah. Wilson and the downtown merchants' determination were fueled by this action and he stepped into the political arena to fight it. Another road block to Jacob's idea was a lawsuit filed in the Court of Appeals by ICRR employees, claiming a "proprietary interest" to the ICRR building which had been sold to Katter, Inc. This caused final action on the building to be delayed. In the meantime, Wilson led a campaign to have the people of Paducah force a public vote on the ordinance by circulating a petition. His group attended every commission meeting, crying out against this action. On January 11, 1962 the City Commission passed another almost identical ordinance to the first one, in an apparent attempt to skirt the petition requiring a set number of signatures required to place on ballot. But by the time the final vote on the second ordinance was taken January 23<sup>rd</sup>, a petition containing more than 4,000 names—almost twice the number needed to force the commission either to rescind the ordinance or put it on the ballot—had been produced. The commission held off on action of any sort. In April of 1961, Katter Inc., with George Katterjohn as the principal stockholder, filed suit to force the city to go through with the purchase of the ICRR Hospital building. This was overruled by McCracken Circuit Judge C. Warren Eaton on June 12, 1961, due to the petition being valid. The Court of Appeals also upheld the same decision. The ordinance was put to the vote in November of 1961 and was defeated 4,964 to 2,408.

Another player in the Paducah story was Robert Overstreet, the Executive Director for the local Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency. Cherry and Overstreet had implemented Paducah's own "Workable Program" under Housing Act of 1954 and his agency oversaw the first two city urban renewal programs and served as coordinator for community improvement. Overstreet played an instrumental role in securing two rounds of funding, for Kentucky Project R-15 and later for Kentucky Project R-30. The first, known as Tyler Park Industrial Area, consisted of 62.5 acres in the southeast corner of Paducah lying, between the Beltline Highway and the river to the east city limits. On Feb 2, 1960, after nearly two years of study and planning, the federal government approved this area for Urban Renewal assistance. The project was approved for execution two years later after the formation of the Greater Paducah Industrial Development Association, Inc., which agreed to underwrite the program. The area contained 154 structures which included 141 dwelling units. Kentucky Project R-15 helped establish the credentials of the local Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency and Robert Overstreet.

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After the defeat of 1961, Cherry asked Overstreet to initiate a program which might involve a downtown city hall. Mayor Cherry, Overstreet and Noble Clark, chairman of the Urban Renewal and Community Development Board, went to the agency's regional office in Atlanta to try and strategize a new plan and obtain funds. The Kentucky-Tennessee district area coordinator, George Papageorge, came up with a solution for the City of Paducah to still receive the original amount of \$891,755 set aside early in the program by the federal government. Over \$400,000 worth of approved federal-help projects were exchanged for funds to help build the new city hall. Arrangements were made through the Community Facilities Administration under the Accelerated Public Works program.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The federal government put up \$579,500 of the building costs and Urban Renewal would continue play an important role in the creation of a Downtown Civic Center. Robert Overstreet announced November of 1961 that acquisition of land would begin in the spring of 1962, the project was \$1.9 million including a five block improvement to be completed by 1970 (See Map from original application-Figure 8). A reservation of a federal grant of \$1,609,000 had been made, the city paid \$299,000. Included in the project was a new \$240,000 fire station at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Washington and free parking space. On February 27, 1962, the Board of Commissioners of the City of Paducah adopted a resolution approving the undertaking of an urban

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Paducah Board of Commissioners Minutes, October 20, 1962

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renewal project “the Downtown Civic Center Project”, known as Project Kentucky R-30, made possible early land acquisition of the property on which the current City Hall is constructed.<sup>xxxviii</sup> On May 22, 1962, the City of Paducah received a letter from the Housing and Home Finance agency certifying the availability of capital grant funds in the amount of \$891,755.00.<sup>xxxix</sup>

Elected November 1964, Mayor Tom Wilson was a devoted downtown business merchant who owned Wilson’s Office Supplies until 1986 and served on the City Commission prior to being elected mayor. Mr. Bob Johnston remembers Wilson as someone who liked to research thoroughly any decision pertaining to the City of Paducah.<sup>xl</sup> Guided by the Fantus Company recommendations, Wilson sought out to find the best architect for Paducah’s City Hall. He contacted *The American City* magazine to obtain a list of cities building “modern” city halls. He took a delegation from Paducah to over fifty places interviewing mayors, commissioners, and city managers. Wilson then began his search to obtain an architect of international reputation. After deep investigation, the City of Paducah was able to obtain Edward Durell Stone. Upon opening Wilson stated, “We believe that we in Paducah are making progress in creating an interesting as well as charming city. When visitors come here, we can show them many features that will please them. One of these is our city hall. With our new city hall, we have added an architectural jewel. It forms part of the work we plan to do as part of the Downtown Civic Center Zone<sup>xli</sup> (See Figures 9 & 10). Other features and buildings that became part of the Downtown Civic Center Zone are the McCracken County Library formerly Paducah Public Library (1969) located at 555 Washington Street, Dolly McNutt Plaza (1970), McCracken County Courthouse (1940) and the United States Post Office (1970) located at 300 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street).

### **Evaluation of the Paducah City Hall Building within the Context, New Formalism Architecture in Paducah, Kentucky 1963-1965**

Paducah has always been a city finding ways to prosper, adapting to economic factors, evolving to be relevant within the continually changing transportation modes and changes in population and industry. The political story of building a Modern City Hall shows the power of the will of the people on influencing the City’s built environment and the creative methods used by three separate administrations to achieve these goals. The Paducah City Hall epitomizes the New Formalism design in the city of Paducah and plays a part in the story of a world famous architect, Edward Durell Stone, who was continuing to defy the methods of traditional Modernism and its principles. As Mary Anne Hunting stated, “Stone deserves credit for this shift, she says: “he extended the definition of modern architecture to include historical references, regional influences, natural elements, and of course, decoration, in order to fulfill the demands of mass consumption.”<sup>xlii</sup> The construction of the new civic building was an opportunity for both the City and the architect to make a statement with the design by making it a symbol of Paducah’s economic resurgence and downtown’s renewal.

### **Evaluation of the Integrity of the Paducah City Hall Building**

With the exception of the concrete work on the top of the podium level and required ADA ramp, the exterior of the building remains completely unchanged from the original vision of the architect. The interior of the building retains the original open floor plan, interior upper and lower court with fountain intact (though not

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Paducah Board of Commissioners Minutes, February, 23, 1960.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Paducah Board of Commissioners Minutes, July 17, 1962.

<sup>xl</sup> Verbal interview with Bob Johnston, City Commissioner 1965-1969.

<sup>xli</sup> “City Hall Should Be a Show Place”. Tom Wilson. *The American City*. May 1965. Page. 106-107.

<sup>xlii</sup> The “New Romanticism” — *Edward Durell Stone: Modernism's Populist Architect* by Mary Anne Hunting



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currently operating), original exposed aggregate, and white polished concrete and terrazzo flooring with maple wall panels. Compared to photos from a 1965 edition of *American City* magazine, it remains unchanged.

The Paducah City Hall meets National Register Criterion C for its significant architectural design following the tenets of New Formalism. It stands as the finest example of New Formalism architecture in the city of Paducah and the only example in a Civic function designed by an internationally famed architect. A nominated structure will have an integrity between its architectural significance and current physical form if it possesses these integrity factors: design, materials, and workmanship. If it possesses those integrity factors, it will be said to possess integrity of feeling, which would make it eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

The Paducah City Hall possesses integrity of both **Location and Setting** in that the structure has not moved and its historic setting remains intact. More important than its positional stability, this structure's location represents the commitment to continual growth for the City and Downtown by its citizens and administrations. It possesses integrity of setting because the relationship remains the same: setbacks, traffic flow, and landscape architecture etc.

A building within Paducah will possess integrity of **Design** if it relates the majority of its exterior features that form the style. Because the features have changed so little since its 1963 construction and the building exemplifies all of the characteristic design elements of its New Formalism style, the Paducah City Hall retains integrity of design.

A building within Paducah will possess integrity of **Materials** if it retains the majority of its exterior surface materials that indicate the style's hallmarks. On both the inside and outside of Paducah City Hall building, little material change has occurred since its construction. For this reason, the Paducah City Hall building retains its integrity of materials.

The building retains integrity of **Workmanship** more evidently in the geometric motifs, the design of flow and function and the inclusion of natural elements to provide an internal atmosphere. The features of the building call attention to the architect's philosophy and principles, incorporating both classical elements and new materials. Therefore Paducah City Hall retains its integrity of workmanship.

A building within Paducah possesses integrity of **Feeling** by retaining integrity of Materials, Design, and Workmanship. The Paducah City Hall, then, possesses the integrity factors which make the property eligible.

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Name of Property

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## Maps



Paducah City Hall  
 Name of Property

McCracken, Kentucky  
 County and State

organization City of Paducah date 8-26-2016  
 street & number 300 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street telephone 270-444-8690  
 city or town Paducah state KY zip code 42001  
 e-mail [mwinchester@paducahky.gov](mailto:mwinchester@paducahky.gov)

**Photographs:**

**Name of Property:** Paducah City Hall  
**City or Vicinity:** Paducah  
**County:** McCracken  
**State:** Kentucky  
**Photographer:** Melinda Winchester  
**Date Photographed:** August 10, 2016

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

The following photographs are keyed to the Photo ID sketch map by Photo ID#, numbered within a circle and showing camera direction. These are the **Official Image files** on the image disc.

PHOTO #	DESCRIPTION	CAMERA DIRECTION
0001	Façade	Facing east
0002	Dolly McNutt Plaza	Facing west
0003	Parking Lot	Facing south
0004	Post office	Facing east
0005	North elevation view	Facing north
0006	Façade Entry	Facing east
0007	Basement Parking Garage Entry	Facing north
0008	Medallion	Facing east
0009	Exterior window profile	Facing east
0010	Fascia	Facing north
0011	Podium	Facing north
0012	Exterior Planters	Facing south
0013	Lower Court Atrium	Facing south
0014	Upper Court Lantern	Facing northeast
0015	Mezzanine	Facing east
0016	Mezzanine	Facing south
0017	Lower Court floor	Facing east
0018	First Floor Restroom	Facing north
0019	Lower Court Interior	Facing southeast
0020	City Commission Chamber	Facing south
0021	Mayor & City Manager Offices	Facing east
0022	City Clerk and Vault	Facing southeast

Paducah City Hall  
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0023	Parking Garage basement	Facing north
0024	Basement jail area	Facing north
0025	Basement hallway	Facing south
0026	Basement training room	Facing southeast
0027	Basement elevator lobby	Facing northeast
0028	Matching view of 1965 photograph	Facing southeast
0029	Matching view of 1965 photograph	Facing south
0030	Podium pattern	Looking downward from 2 <sup>nd</sup> level
0031	Handicap ramp	Looking south

**Property Owner:**

name City of Paducah  
street & number 300 S.5<sup>th</sup> Street telephone 270-444-8506  
city or town Paducah state KY zip code 42001

Paducah City Hall  
Name of Property

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Paducah City Hall  
Name of Property

McCracken, Kentucky  
County and State



The boundary is indicated by the blue line, which encompasses two city blocks.



HALL









2 HOUR PARKING  
9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM





CITY HALL



AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY























STAIRS  
WOMEN  
RESTROOM

















General  
Government

EXIT















National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Paducah City Hall

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: KENTUCKY, McCracken

Date Received: 6/23/2017      Date of Pending List: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 16th Day: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 45th Day: 8/7/2017      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100000742

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

X Accept       Return       Reject      7/13/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Locally significant example of new formalist design, with a building and plaza designed by Edward Durell Stone.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept / C

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.





MATTHEW G. BEVIN  
GOVERNOR

**TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET  
KENTUCKY HERITAGE COUNCIL**

DON PARKINSON  
SECRETARY

THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
300 WASHINGTON STREET  
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601  
PHONE (502) 564-7005  
FAX (502) 564-5820  
[www.heritage.ky.gov](http://www.heritage.ky.gov)  
January 13, 2017

CRAIG A. POTTS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER



J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW 8th Floor  
Washington DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed are the nominations approved by the Review Board at their December 12, 2016 meeting. We submit these forms so the properties can be listed in the National Register:

- **Columbia Commercial District**, Adair County, Kentucky
- **Bold House**, Bracken County, Kentucky
- **Doyle Country Club**, Campbell County, Kentucky
- **Bush Warehouse**, Clark County, Kentucky
- **Haury Motor Company and Garage**, Jefferson County, Kentucky
- **Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church**, Jefferson County, Kentucky
- **Paducah City Hall**, McCracken County, Kentucky
- **Scearce-Roush House**, Shelby County, Kentucky
- **Dodson House**, Warren County, Kentucky (James Ingram Houses MPS)
- **Old Taylor Distillery**, Woodford County, Kentucky

We enclose documentation for three previously listed properties:

- new information for the **Downtowner**, one property within the **Whiskey Row Historic District**, Jefferson County KY (NRIS 89000305). The form documents the Downtowner's role in Louisville's LGBTQ past.
- **Waveland (Boundary Increase and Name Change)**, Jessamine County. This property was listed under the name Craig Ashurst House (NRIS 84001587). The new area recognizes a resource called a Woodland Pasture.
- **Rowan County Courthouse (Boundary Increase)**, Rowan County, Kentucky. This new nomination adds historic context and acreage on the courthouse square omitted from the first listing (NRIS 83002862).

Finally, we enclose revised versions of two returned nominations: **Maysville Downtown Historic District**, Mason County KY (16000502) and **Peasenburg Historic District**, Kenton County, KY (16000501).

We thank you for your assistance in listing these properties.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Potts  
Executive Director and  
State Historic Preservation Officer

A RESOLUTION CONSTITUTING THE FINAL REPORT OF THE PADUCAH HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION ON THE PROPOSED NOMINATION OF THE PADUCAH CITY HALL LOCATED AT 300 SOUTH 5<sup>TH</sup> STREET TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES.

WHEREAS, this Commission, at a public hearing held on November 14, 2016, reviewed the nomination to place the Paducah City Hall on the National Register of Historic Places; and

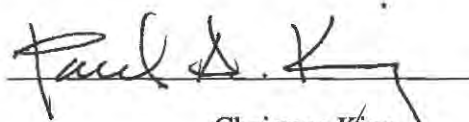
WHEREAS, this Commission has duly considered said proposal and has heard and considered the objections and suggestions of all interested parties who appeared at said hearing.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PADUCAH HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION:

SECTION 1. That this Commission gives its final approval for the nomination of the Paducah City Hall to the National Register of Historic Places.

SECTION 2. That this Resolution shall be treated as, and is, the final report of the Paducah Historical and Architectural Review Commission respecting the matters appearing herein.

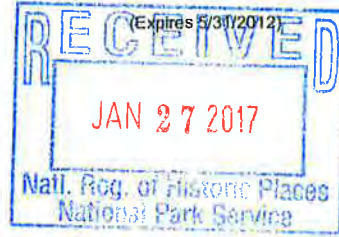
SECTION 3. That if any section, paragraph or provision of this Resolution shall be found to be inoperative, ineffective or invalid for any cause, the deficiency or invalidity of such section, paragraph or provision shall not affect any other section, paragraph or provision hereof, it being the purpose and intent of this Resolution to make each and every section, paragraph, an provision hereof separable from all other sections, paragraphs and provisions.



Chairman King

Adopted by the Paducah Historical and Architectural Review Commission on November 14, 2016

56-742



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Paducah City Hall  
other names/site number McNP-56  
Related Multiple Property NA

### 2. Location

street & number 300 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street

NA	not for publication
NA	vicinity

  
city or town Paducah  
state Kentucky code KY county McCracken Code 145 zip code 42003

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  
A B X C D

*[Signature]* 1-13-17  
Signature of certifying official/Title Craig Potts/SHPO Date

**Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office**  
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): \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

Paducah City Hall  
Name of Property

McCracken, Kentucky  
County and State

**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	0	buildings
		district
1		site
		structure
		object
2	0	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

NA

0

**6. Function or Use**

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

Government: City Hall

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

Government: City Hall

**7. Description**

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

MODERN MOVEMENT: New Formalism

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

foundation: Concrete

walls: Concrete

roof: Concrete

other: \_\_\_\_\_

Paducah City Hall  
Name of Property

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**Narrative Description**

**Summary Paragraph**

The Paducah City Hall (McN-P-56) is located at 300 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, in Paducah, McCracken County, Kentucky. The building measures 120 feet square, including a thirty-foot concrete columned portico surrounding the two-story municipal building. Entrances are centered on the east and west elevations with concrete ramps on the north and south elevations that lead into the basement which houses parking and storage. The structure was built as part of the original Downtown Civic Center Zone under the local Urban Renewal initiative. City Hall faces the Dolly McNutt Plaza, a civic space with a landscape design encompassing an entire city block. Designed in 1963 by internationally known architect Edward Durell Stone of New York, and local consultant architect Lee Potter Smith, the complex is described by former Mayor Tom Wilson as the city's architectural jewel. Completed in 1965, the Paducah City Hall is part of a unique and prolific collection of Stone's New Formalist designs, the first of his works to be erected in the State of Kentucky and the finest example of New Formalism architecture in Paducah. The building is in need of structural and maintenance repairs but continues to retain integrity. The City Plaza was part of Stone's original design concept and proposal to the City administration for the Paducah City Hall project in 1963. Due to financial constraints, its construction was delayed until 1968, with completion in 1970. The area proposed for listing is less than one acre, and includes one contributing building, City Hall and one contributing site, the City Plaza, later renamed to honor Mayor Dolly McNutt.



**Ownership and Use of the Site**

Local history holds that the land on which the City Hall currently sits was the original Old Paducah City Cemetery, which was relocated in 1847 to accommodate growth of the city.<sup>i</sup> However, no solid evidence was

<sup>i</sup> Research was conducted at Paducah City Hall, City Commission record books #2- 24, 1836 to 1963.

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found to support this claim, as no internments were uncovered during the extensive construction of the City Hall building.<sup>ii</sup> Deed research, historic Sanborn Maps and Paducah 1889 Birds Eye view Map (Figure 1 and 2) show the blocks which the current City Hall building and Downtown Civic Center zone occupy as fully developed private residences as early as 1879.<sup>iii iv</sup>



1889 Bird's Eye View of Paducah

1889 Sanborn map of block taken for City Hall

On May 22, 1962, Paducah's Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency received a letter from the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency that federal capital grant funds in the amount of \$891,755.00 had been allocated for Project No. KY R-30, Paducah Downtown Civic Center Project. On July 17, 1962 a resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Paducah authorized the Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency to acquire certain property in the downtown civic center at a fair and reasonable price for the purpose of constructing a new City Hall. This property took all of Block 20 and was bounded on the north by Washington Street, on the east by Fourth Street, on the south by Clark Street, and the west by Fifth Street.

The cost-sharing project required that the City of Paducah contribute a portion of the project funds. On February 27<sup>th</sup> 1962 the City Commission approved to have funds available for early land acquisitions, demolition, relocation and administration to the URCDA in the amount of \$213,820.00.<sup>v</sup> In addition, an agreement between the City of Paducah and the URCDA was approved which outlined the proposed plan for the "Downtown Civic Center Urban Renewal Area." In it, the City agreed to provide certain grants-in-aid, estimated at \$464,479.00 under Title I financial assistance. The City agreed to convey the following areas over to URCDA for public use: Block 1, parcel 3 (the old city Hall and No. 1 Fire Station) and Block 1, Parcel 10 (Police Change Building and Parking Lot), and for a market value of \$171,000.<sup>vi</sup> These funds were deposited into a Local contribution Account to be transferred as necessary to the appropriate accounts of Project KY R-30.

<sup>ii</sup> Deed research was conducted at McCracken County Courthouse from 1847 to 1965.

<sup>iii</sup> *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: Paducah, Kentucky* Sanborn Map Company, 1886, 1891, 1896, 1901.

<sup>iv</sup> City Directories, 1876, 1879, 1884.

<sup>v</sup> Minutes of Paducah Board of Commissioners, Book 24, July 17, 1962, pg. 411.

<sup>vi</sup> Minutes of Paducah Board of Commissioners, Book 25, July 17, 1962, pg. 329.

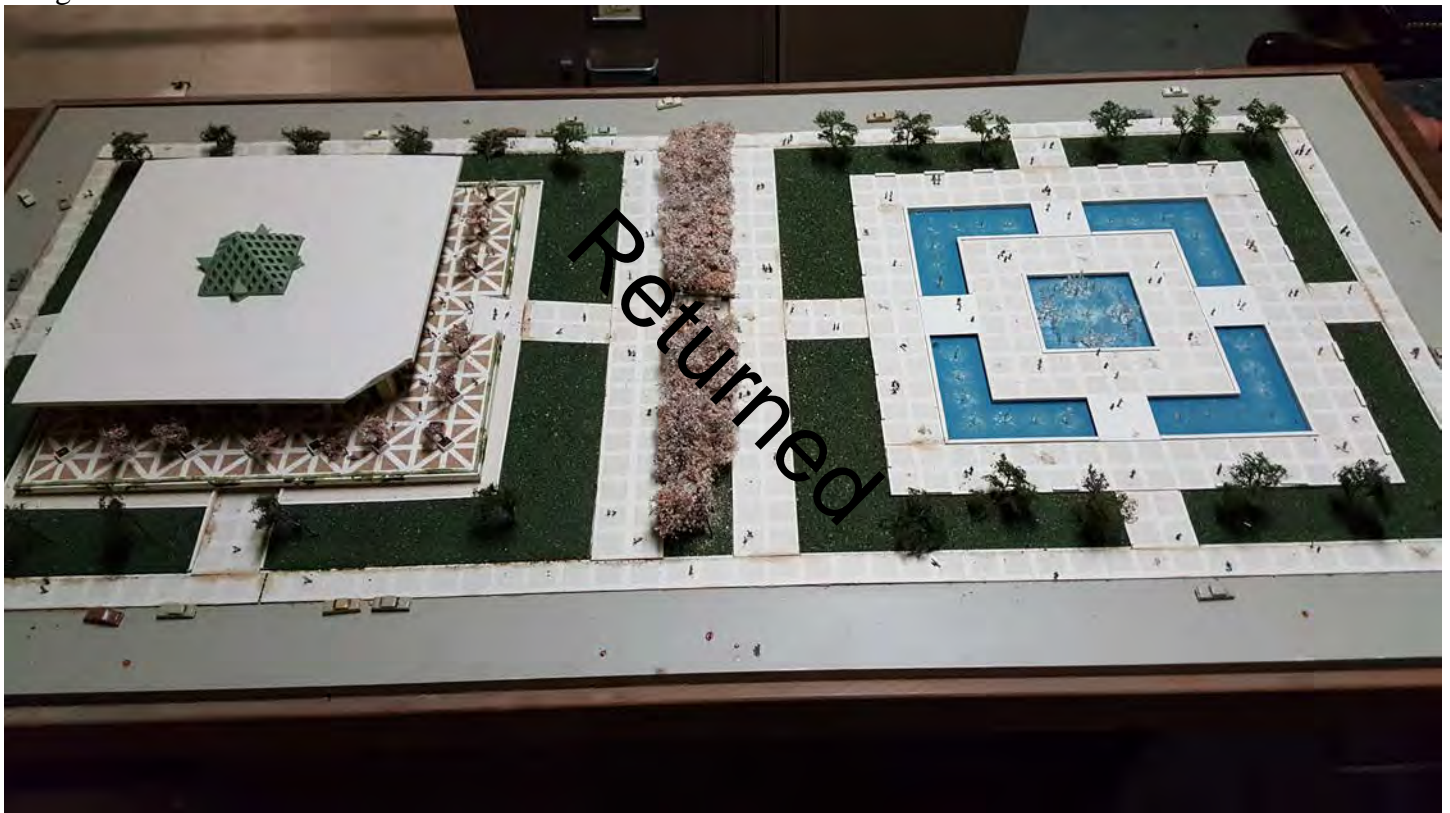
Paducah City Hall  
Name of Property

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In addition, funds from a bond issue and sale of the Riverside hospital helped cover the total costs of the new City Hall project, estimated at \$1,900,000.00.

### **Character of Site and Area**

Located on the west side of the Downtown Civic Center zone and three blocks southwest of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers, the building sits centered on its lot surrounded by mature willow and oak trees and a vast green space. The lot is bordered by concrete sidewalks. It is flanked on the south by a public parking lot, a post office to the west, and commercial buildings to the north (Photos 3, 4 and 5). The building faces the Dolly McNutt Plaza to the east, which features a fountain and memorials for veterans who served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War (Photo 2). The plaza was part of Stone's original vision for the civic center zone. It is being incorporated into the boundary because the City Hall building and the Plaza reinforce each other's design.



### **Stone's original model for the City Hall and Plaza (completed 1963; photographed 2016)**

The symmetry and use of geometric joint pattern in smooth concrete identical to the City Hall site creates a continual flow and continuity with the plaza clearly defining their connection as one design and the architect's intent.

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Photo 3



Photo 5



Photo of Plaza from City Hall

### Exterior Description

Constructed at the height of a local urban renewal, the Paducah City Hall presents one of Stone's New Formalism designs of the 1960s. The illusion of monumentality, given by the structure's overall form and materials, was a common theme in Stone's municipal designs of this era. Stone's design exhibits classical influences with its symmetry in form while incorporating geometric dimensions in every aspect of its details.



Photo 1

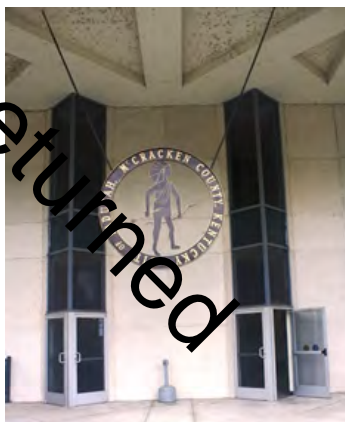


Photo 8



Photo 9

Centered above the primary entrance, on the west façade, hangs a six-foot round bronze medallion denoting the City of Paducah logo (Photo 8). To create an illusion of floating, Stone designed the upper two levels to sit on a textured podium cantilevered over what was originally designed to be a moat with a perimeter band of landscaping. Each elevation consists of eight window bays projecting outwardly in a "V" shape with narrow plate glass aluminum windows. The exterior walls are formed by white precast concrete square panels with an exterior finish of exposed aggregate, adding another textural element (Photo 9). Square fluted concrete columns support a thirty-foot portico that wraps the entire building. Each column is centered within a geometric concrete pattern on the underside of the overhang, with an interlocking diamond pattern within the fascia (Photos 10 & 11).



Paducah City Hall  
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McCracken, Kentucky  
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Photo 10



Photo 11

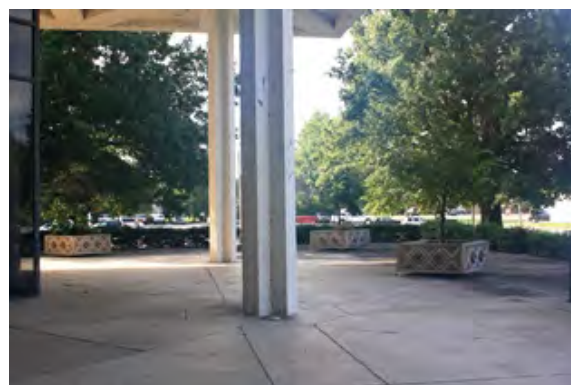
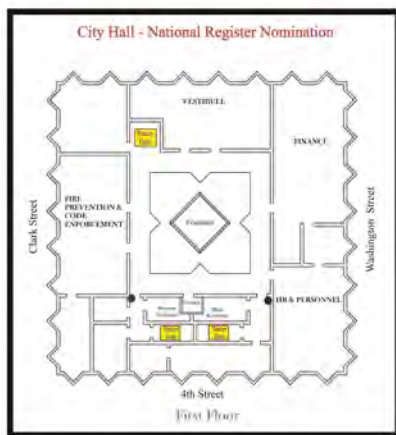


Photo 12

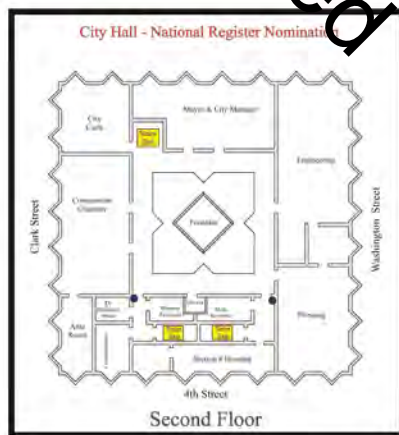
Stone thoughtfully incorporated his geometric motif into the landscaping architecture of the site as well, utilizing the same geometric patterns found on the structure as part of the concrete podium at the base of the columns: this pattern continued out the front to the sidewalks. To add to the visual aspect, decorative textured concrete planters, featuring diamond motifs, are placed around the portico and at the primary entrances (Photo #12). To increase the verticality of the building, Stone topped it with a pyramidal lantern measuring 50' square at the base and containing 118 diamond shaped skylights emitting facets of light into the atrium below.

### Interior Description

Hallmark characteristics of Stone's municipal commissions during this era integrate grandeur and natural elements into the interior form and design. The interior focal point of Paducah's City Hall is a prodigious two-story 60-foot tall atrium with an interior sunken courtyard. Stone denotes these levels distinctly on his drawings as the "Upper Court" and the "Lower Court".



First floor plan



Second floor plan



Basement plan

The pyramidal lantern extrudes twenty feet above the roofline over the atrium, utilizing natural light to fill the space. The skylights are enhanced with a framed walnut grid, creating a vast contrast between the white ceiling texture, light and wood (Photos 13 & 14). A geometrically designed mezzanine balcony overlooks the "lower court" with an open white terrazzo stair located in the southeast corner. The interior walls of the open courtyard, second level mezzanine and commission chambers are adorned in rich walnut paneling (Photos 15 & 16). The first level floors are a combination of white smooth concrete and textured aggregate designed in the same exterior geometric pattern that flows from the vestibule into the first level public space to create a sense of one level plane (Photo 17). Originally, this pattern was carried out the front door to the sidewalk. An elevator is located in the center of the north wall and restroom facilities are

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located in the northeast corners of both the first and second floors (Photo 18). The sunken courtyard is adorned with triangular concrete planters with diamond-shape motifs and contains a 10-foot bronze and copper floral motif fountain. The fountain was an initiative of the Paducah City Beautification Board, who commissioned regional artist James L. Garner from Cape Girardeau in 1970<sup>vii</sup> (Photo 19).



Photo 13



Photo 15



Photo 17



Photo 18

The City Hall floor plan exhibits symmetry with an organized sense of space. Its offices on the first and second floors along the perimeter face toward the atrium area. The council chambers and offices of city manager, mayor, engineering and planning are located on the second floor ( Photos 20, 21, & 22). The basement level is dissected by the underground drive and parking area (Photo 23). This concept is one Stone began to use beginning with his 1954 design of the New Delhi Embassy (See Figures 3, 4, and 5). Stone felt “that the idea of a monumental building rising from a sea of multi-colored, tail finned automobiles just revolting.”<sup>viii</sup> The basement originally housed the police department, jail and courtroom but currently is used for training, employee break room and storage. An aluminum and glass enclosed elevator lobby is located in the center of the basement parking garage (Photos 24,25,26 & 27).



Photo 20



Photo 23

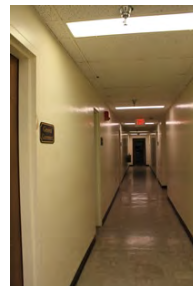


Photo 25

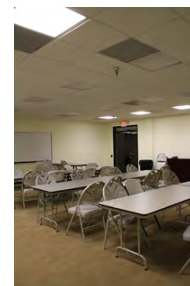


Photo 26

### Description of the Dolly McNutt Plaza

Construction began on the City Plaza in 1968; it was dedicated on November 9,1970. Utilizing Stone’s original design concept and maintaining his original intent for the Civic Center Zone Complex, landscape architects Scruggs and Hammond from Lexington, KY and Edward T. Hannan and Associates, Engineers from Paducah,

<sup>vii</sup> *Garden Clubs begin Drive for City Fountain Fund.* Sun-Democrat, Wednesday, January 28, 1970.

<sup>viii</sup> Stone, Edward Durrell. *The Evolution of an Architect.* 1962. Pg. 138.

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Kentucky completed drawings for the plaza. The City Plaza occupies one square city block, measuring 318' x 332', with perimeter concrete sidewalks landscaped with mature trees and two levels of design—the Upper Plaza, which incorporates terraced stairs and lawns, and the Lower Plaza, which features a 44' x34' oblong pool with center fountain. This concept varies slightly from Stone's original model for the City Plaza which included a smaller center pool and outlying smaller pools at each corner. In 1986, the City Plaza was renamed the Dolly McNutt Plaza in honor of Alice "Dolly" McNutt, who, in 1971, became the first woman mayor of a second-class city in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. McNutt also served as State Legislator and Paducah City Commissioner. During her tenure in office, the city received many federal funds to improve the City's infrastructure.

### Changes to the Property since the Period of Significance

The original design and flow of the Paducah City Hall building remains unchanged since its completion in 1965. The majority of the interior fabric within the public spaces remains consistent with the original design (compare Photos 28 and 29 with Figures 6 & 7). Some necessary upgrades to HVAC, sprinkler systems, electrical and general interior remodeling within the office spaces has occurred over the years. Some of the unique structural design features there have been water leakage issues over the years, particularly into the basement level of the building. In 1988, the City attempted to fix these problems by applying a waterproofed concrete topping to the top of the exterior podium and to waterproof the surrounding planter boxes. Even though the original exposed aggregate topping was covered, workers took care in maintaining the original form of Stone's geometric design (See Photo 30). At the same time, the front exterior stairs were replaced and a handicap ramp was constructed to meet ADA requirements. The design of the required ramp carefully placed it out of street view by installing it behind the planter. A new black wrought iron railing was also installed down the front steps, along the new handicap ramp and along the podium edge (Photo 31).



Photo 28



Photo 30



Photo 30

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**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.)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1963-1965

1970

**Significant Dates**

1963-1965 Dates of Design and Construction of City Hall

1970- Date of Completion of Dolly McNutt Plaza

**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.

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Stone, Edward Durell (Architect)

Smith, Lee Potter (Associate Architect)

Edward T. Hannan & Associates (Engineer)

**Period of Significance (justification)**

This nomination follows the National Register convention for a property meeting Criterion C: the Period of Significance, 1963-1965 indicates when the architectural design was conceived and constructed. This Period of Significance recognizes the architectural significance of the building.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A**

Returned

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## Statement of Significance

### Summary Paragraph

The Paducah City Hall (McNP-56), at 300 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Paducah, Kentucky, is locally significant under National Register Criterion C for its significance in local Architecture. Referred to as a “shrine to Democracy” the building symbolizes the prevailing will of the citizens of Paducah and three administrations committed to renewal and economic resurgence of the City. The building and adjacent plaza became the face and new image of the city and a symbol of progress under Paducah’s Local Urban Renewal Program and the Federal Capital Grant Program for Urban Renewal under Title I. With the design of an internationally known architect, and the most prominent representation of New Formalism design in the city of Paducah, the property is architecturally significant, evaluated within the historic context of *“New Formalism Architecture in Paducah, Kentucky 1960-1965.”* The building resulted from the City collaborating with a prominent architect to express its distinct identity through a landmark Civic building. The building’s striking design—employing the classical symmetry, colonnaded portico and geometric elements—displays Paducah’s most accomplished instance of New Formalist design. The Period of Significance begins in 1963, the original construction date and runs until 1970, when the Dolly McNutt Plaza’s construction was complete. The property’s significant period continues to contribute to the architectural environment of the City of Paducah as an unprecedented local architectural monument and a symbol of a mid-century progressive movement within local government into the present.

### Historic Context: New Formalism Architecture in Paducah, Kentucky 1963-1965

### Research Sources

A general understanding of New Formalism Architecture in Paducah and architect, Edward Durell Stone- a primary source came from his autobiography, *The Evolution of an Architect*, which provided direct insight into plans, thoughts and desires for outcomes. The book written by his son, Hicks Stone, *A Son’s Untold Story of a Legendary Architect* also was used to help build this context and Edward Durell Stone’s book from 1968, *Recent and Future Works*. Sources from the Kentucky Heritage Council: Kentucky Historic Resource Inventory: DAOB-10; DAOB-12; DAOB-39; DAOB-47; DAOB-48; and JFEI-76. Rachel Kennedy, Historic Survey Program Coordinator with Kentucky Heritage Council, Daniel Vivian, Assistant Professor and Director of Public History, University of Louisville. Mark Gelertner, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in their Cultural and Technological Context* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), and an architectural building survey of the City of Paducah.

### Architect Edward Durell Stone (1902-1978)

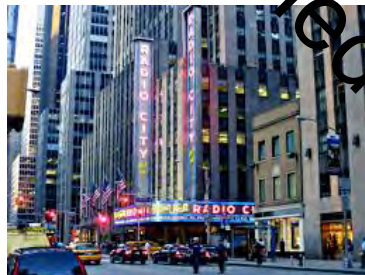
Edward Durell Stone was born in Fayetteville Arkansas in 1902 to one of the founding families of the state. He began attending the University of Arkansas at age sixteen, shortly after his mother died. An art teacher took an interest in him and saw his talent for drawing. She informed his older brother, James Hicks Stone, who was an architect in Boston, that he should be encouraged to embrace this talent. James was fourteen years his senior and took a fatherly interest in Edward, asking him to join him in Boston. That summer was filled with James introducing Edward to the arts and architecture all over Boston, New York and Washington. His moment of inspiration to become an architect came when he saw Paul Cret’s Pan American Building, with its lush court garden, tropical vegetation, birds, fountains and brilliant colored tile. When he returned to Boston he began to work toward his goal of becoming an architect, but in an unusual fashion. He studied French, freehand drawing,

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and mechanical drawing and took a job as an office assistant at the Alexander Francis Law Firm. In the evenings, he went to the Boston Architectural Club to study architecture. Some of the professors from M.I.T. and Harvard contributed their time to the club and that is how Stone developed a relationship with Henry R. Shepley. Seeing Stone's potential, Shepley asked him to come to his office as a draftsman. In Stone's opinion, Shepley was one of the first architects, trained in the Beaux Arts tradition, to recognize the merit of new ideas in modern design and to encourage young architects in those methods. A larger influence to Stone was his brother Hicks, who instilled two philosophical attitudes upon him 1) a singleness of purpose and 2) an open mind. Hicks felt that the first came with an average amount of energy and ambition but keeping an open mind was much harder and the only way to solve all the possible solutions to any problem. Stone carried this philosophy through his career as a governing rule for the conduct of his life and in judging both architecture and people.<sup>ix</sup>

In 1927, Stone won a design competition for the prestigious Rotch Travelling Fellowship which took him throughout Europe and North Africa for two years. Looking back, Stone describes his winning design as completely idyllic and modern in spirit by incorporating an office in a suburb surrounded by gardens. During this period, stylistic movements under the umbrella of Modernist Architecture were beginning to develop across Europe. The theme of this movement was associated with an analytical approach to the function of buildings, a strictly rational use of materials, an openness to structural innovation and the elimination of ornament. Stone's first exposure to the Cubist and International styles occurred while in Europe perhaps influencing his designs and opening him up to new ideas early in his career. He was impressed by these "modernist" structures and the use of glass, concrete and open courts. He also mentions in this autobiography viewing the Barcelona Pavilion of Mies van der Rohe, describing how its simple rectangular platform and roof, with walls continuing out from the interior to form quadrangles and courts was in Frank Lloyd Wright's opinion "the breakdown of the rectangular box and a significant modern monument."<sup>x</sup>



**Barcelona Pavilion, van der Rohe**

**Radio City Music Hall**

**Richard Mandel House**

While in Europe, Stone received devastating news that his brother Hicks had died, which broke all of his personal ties to Boston, and leaving him open to new opportunities. While in Stockholm, he met Leonard Schultze, the senior partner of Schultze and Weaver, who offered Stone a position in New York with his firm where he worked primarily on the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel project. His career continued with the offices of Reinhardt, Hoffmeister, Hood & Fouilhoux, who were among the architects associated on the Rockefeller Center project. Stone was the principal designer on the Radio City Music Hall and the Roxy Theater (later called the Center Theater), and he worked in conjunction with interior designers Donald Deskey and Eugene Schoen. In 1933, Stone was introduced by Donald Deskey to Richard Mandel who asked him to design a "Modern" home. Eager to explore his new ideas from abroad, he developed a very large and expensive home with an open plan constructed of concrete and steel in a design with International and Moderne influences. It

<sup>ix</sup> Ibid. Stone.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid. Stone.

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was touted by many as “the coming of a new era” yet others felt it was a “shock to sensibility.” Although Stone never fully accepted the metaphor by Le Corbusier, “houses are a machine for living” he used the characteristic industrial materials of reinforced concrete, glass and stucco in an enamored fashion throughout the 1930s. In contrast, Stone’s affinity for gardens and courtyards were incorporated strategically into many of the residential designs such as the Charles Liebman House constructed in 1937, the Albert C. Koch House in 1936 and the Henry Luce Mepkin Plantation in 1936. Even though Stone’s work was highly recognized and he received great acclaim for the Mandel House, residential projects began to wane due to the Great Depression; commercial construction projects came to a halt. While at work on the R.C.A. Building in Rockefeller Center, Stone first met Nelson Rockefeller. That association ultimately led to his renowned commission for the Museum of Modern Art in 1939.<sup>xi</sup>

In his autobiography, Stone mentions pivotal points that altered his mindset and design, one of which occurred in 1940 after a cross-country tour of the U.S. Prior to this trip, Stone had primarily been oriented toward European ideas regarding architecture not encountering the indigenous architecture and materials stateside. He states that, “this 1940 trip awakened me to the architecture we created but also led to my aversion of the international style and reality of unplanned land usage.”<sup>xii</sup> He applauds the well-ordered design of Yellowstone Park and its arrangement of rustic architecture sympathetic to its setting. In stark contrast, he deems Lake Tahoe in Nevada a devastation lacking a considered plan. He also mentions the majestic redwood forest as a living testimony to the durability of material and the San Francisco Bay Area’s informal architecture, conveying a sense of ease and cultivation. En route, he also stopped at Taliesin, Frank Lloyd Wright’s home in Wisconsin, touring for the first time one of Wright’s residential buildings. He was awestruck by its beauty, natural indigenous materials and the inclusion of the outside beauty in the total design. The influence of their friendship is evident in many of Stone’s commissions. In fact, Stone states that he considered Wright one of the greatest architects in history.<sup>xiii</sup> This friendship transformed Stone’s approach, and he believed that “if an architect conscientiously takes into account the circumstances which are unique to each building, the program of the client and his objectives, the climate, the setting—the combination of these circumstances if carefully analyzed should result in an original architectural solution.”<sup>xiv</sup> This experience led to a period of residential design during Stone’s career where he showed a new respect for natural materials. Stone called this his “Hair Shirt Phase” after the coarse shirts that monastic orders would wear to induce discomfort for repentance, cultivating spiritual growth. It referred to the rough texture of the materials and the rustic appearance of the structures he used in construction. Stone’s ex-wife Orlean observed that it was a result of his rural Arkansas upbringing and recreation of his childhood woodworking.<sup>xv</sup> His later residential commissions took on a more characteristic Wrightian roof form, with deeply cantilevered eaves and a strongly exaggerated horizontality. Stone attempted to incorporate fountains into his residential designs if his client would allow. In this same period, he began to find ways to eliminate the corridor as a device for circulation. His aversion to the corridor championed his aversion to the intruding automobile in his civic designs. Stone was known for saying, “Corridors are the curse of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and immediately establish an institutional dullness. You do not find them in classical architecture. The houses of Pompeii have no corridors.”

With the occurrence at Pearl Harbor, Stone took a break from his career and joined the Army during WWII, from 1942 to 1945, stationed in Washington DC where he was the Chief of the Planning and Design Section

<sup>xi</sup> Ibid. Stone.

<sup>xii</sup> Ibid. Stone

<sup>xiii</sup> Stone, Hicks. A sons’s untold story of a legendary architect. Rizzoli, New York, 2011by Charles Rossi.

<sup>xiv</sup> Ibid. Stone.

<sup>xv</sup> Ibid. Stone, Hicks .

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responsible for the over-all planning of multiple Army and Air Force bases. This short-term experience would factor into other more prominent government commissions for him down the road. When returning to New York City in late 1945, he reopened his office and resumed his residential work, along with commissions of commercial and institutional designs such as the El Panama Hotel project, Alabama State Office Building, Vanderbilt University and the Fine Arts Center at University of Arkansas.

In 1953, Stone says his life took another highly significant turn when he met his second wife, Maria Elena Torchio, an American-born daughter of a Florentine architect and a Barcelona mother. Stone stated that, “he was first married to architecture and needed a strong woman to organize, motivate, bolster, manage his finances and control his alcoholic urges,” Maria began to change his image, having him begin using his full name, Edward Durell Stone, and emphasizing other aspects of his public persona (See Figure 11- Photo With Frank Lloyd Wright and Maria Elena Torchio). Stone also credits Maria for bringing order to his existence. This newfound personal order or classical influence can also be seen within his emerging designs that followed shortly after their marriage.

In 1954, with Maria by his side, Stone began his commission for the Embassy in New Delhi. The project was guided by a new directive from the state department which he took very seriously: “to the sensitive and imaginative designer it will be an invitation to give serious study to local conditions of climate and site, to understand and sympathize with local customs and people, yet he will not fear using new techniques or new materials should these constitute real advances in architectural thinking.” Taking this opportunity with freedom of design, Stone created a concept that utilized many of his evolving design preferences, keeping an open mind for creative solutions while respecting the culture through its landscape. The building was raised on a podium, in the fashion of Greek and Roman temples, and housed parking beneath the building. Stone had an aversion to the automobile and strongly felt that the automobile and pedestrian should not be mixed and could be lethal unless controlled. In addition, he elected to place offices on two stories surrounding a center water garden to create a cooling affect. The entire building was shaded by a rectangular canopy supported by full height columns adorned with gold leaf to add a note of oriental opulence. Stone also implemented an ancient principle used in tropical climates by using terrazzo grilles for the exterior walls. He considered the end product a solution to the environmental conditions ultimately resulting in a temple.<sup>xvi</sup>



**New Delhi Embassy**



**Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium, Wayne State University**

The New Delhi Embassy building and its creator began to acquire a considerable amount of press with stories in Architectural Forum in 1955 and multiple times in 1957. The magazine commented that “Architect Edward

<sup>xvi</sup> Ibid. Stone.



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Durell Stone's already famed embassy office building has the most incredible serenity and grace of its façade fulfilled within by the magical shadowed water garden at the building's core.<sup>xvii</sup> The Embassy received an award from the American Institute of Architects, a display in the Museum of Modern Art, and praise from Eero Saarinen. Elements from this design become a part of Stone's next era of architectural endeavors, falling into the category of "New Formalism." Stone's designs were intended to reflect what he considered more universal values rather than what he called the "transient enthusiasms" of Modernism.<sup>xviii</sup> He considered Architecture complex by nature involving a great deal of time in the realization of each building and the architect needs to be its creator while considering its surroundings, function and the occupant.<sup>xix</sup> *Time* magazine proclaimed, "Edward Durell Stone was a pioneer modernist, undoubtedly the profession's freest spirit and by general consensus the most versatile designer of his generation" (See Figure 12- *Time* magazine cover).

### The Modern Movement- New Formalism

In the years following World War II, Modernism in America coincided with America's emergence as a world power. The movement in general claimed not to be a "style" but rather a cultured and compelling move towards rationality and purposefulness in architecture. It arose out of art, and reform efforts in Europe in the years after World War I with the Bauhaus school of design which sought to teach all artists, artisan and architects to work together in common, to drive toward "the building of the future."<sup>xx</sup> By 1958, the mainstream thought as noted by *Look* magazines' architectural editor John Peter claimed, "There is now a general body of theory and practice that constitutes a Modern style which rapidly is becoming as clearly defined as the Greek style or Gothic style, in almost every type of building- office, factory, bridge, dam, schools, hospital-modern architecture works. Only in private family dwellings, where human needs are scaled to modesty, does it lag".<sup>xxi</sup> The style soon represented the power of American Corporations and became a prominent design for government. Architectural historian, Alan Gowans stated, "strict Modernism was a natural government is power. The style served to "create visual metaphors to confirm the power of those who held it."<sup>xxii</sup>

As the Modernist era progressed, the commitment of some of the most recognized Modernist architects began to waiver as they began to pull away from the accepted philosophy and its analytical approach to the function of buildings and elimination of ornament. The earliest designs associated with New Formalism were from Edward Durell Stone's 1953 New Delhi Embassy building (Figure 13), and from Minoru Yamasaki's 1955 Helen L. DeRoy Auditorium at Wayne State University in Michigan. (Figure 14)<sup>xxiii</sup> Architectural Historian Marcus Whiffen defines New Formalism as, "typically self-contained, free-standing blocks, with strictly symmetrical elevations that tend to admire and reflect past classical styles." He identifies Philip Johnson's Kneses Tilfereth Israel Synagogue at Port Chester, New York (1956) (Figure 15) and the Sheldon Museum of Art, Lancaster County, NE (1963) as representative examples of New Formalism.<sup>xxiv</sup>

<sup>xvii</sup> "U.S.A. Abroad," Architectural Forum 107 (December 1957 pg. 122.

<sup>xviii</sup> Ibid. Stone, Hicks

<sup>xix</sup> Stone, Edward Durrell. "Recent and Future Architecture. Horizon Press. New York. 1968.

<sup>xx</sup> Fricker, Jonathan and Donna. Louisiana Architecture 1945-1965: Modernism Triumphant- Commercial and Institutional Buildings," Louisiana Department of culture, Recreation, and Tourism Office of Cultural Development, Division of Historic Preservation, baton Rouge, Louisiana, 2010.

<sup>xxi</sup> Ibid. Fricker.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid. Fricker.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Higgins, Alan. "Architectural Movements of the Recent Past," PDF. <http://alan-higgins.com/>

<sup>xxiv</sup> Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture since 1780, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 1992, 261.

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**Kneses Tilfereth Isreal Synagogue, Port Chester NY**

**Sheldon Museum of Art, Lancaster Co., Nebraska**

Criticized highly by both Modernist and traditionalist peers but loved by clients, the design principles were popularized fully by the 1960s becoming what is now known as New Formalism. The characteristic features of New Formalism combine decorative components and established design concepts of Classicism with the new materials and technologies. Common defining features of the style as noted by Fullerton Heritage<sup>xxv</sup> and Alan Higgins<sup>xxvi</sup> include:

- Lines and geometric shapes dominate elevations
- Buildings are usually set on podium
- Smooth wall surfaces
- Column supports common along all elevations
- Often defined at top by heavy, flat projecting slab to achieve monumentality
- Embraces Classical precedents such as arches, colonnades, classical columns and entablatures
- Formal landscapes; use of pools, fountains, sculpture within a central plaza

A summary completed in 2000 by the U.S. General Services Administration on Architecture of the Great Society 1960s-1970s, outlines the broad spectrum of public buildings constructed by the Federal Government and their significant contribution to this era. Pioneering commissions of the 1950s, set the stage for a broader policy that emerged in 1962 when President Kennedy's Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space promulgated "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture.: The mandate stated, "facilities shall be in architectural style and form which is distinguished and which will reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor and stability of the American National Government. Major emphasis should be placed on the choice of design that embodies the finest contemporary American architectural thought." This mandate laid the framework for buildings such as the John F. Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts and civic and institutional buildings throughout the nation.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Edward Durell Stone sought to create a culmination of the characteristics he deemed relevant to basic principles of planning but also attributes he considered necessary amenities such as symmetry, columned porticos, connecting plazas, gardens and water features. He was determined to correct past transgressions that had occurred to our physical environment through his designs and that a beautiful environment can elevate the

<sup>xxv</sup> :Architectural Styles in Fullerton: New Formalis".fullertonheritage.org

<sup>xxvi</sup> Ibid. Higgins.

<sup>xxvii</sup> GSA. Architecture of the Great Society. Decomeber 5, 2000.

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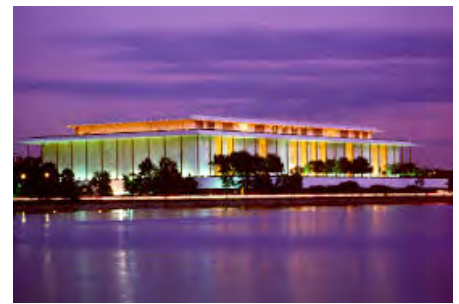
image of a business and is in direct ratio a reflection to the clients' and his vision. His incorporation of new materials in his designs, such as stone and concrete, arose from his perception that architecture should convey an assurance of permanence. To Stone, glass, aluminum and the curtain wall of the day have an inescapable association to the automobile. His designs of the 1960s rather small or prevalent, demonstrate his evolved mindset and principles. Although for each commission, he felt that a careful examination of all circumstances unique to each project should result in the creation of an original building and hopefully, a work of art. Stone applied these principles to each commission from the high profile civic and institutional buildings including the Los Angeles Music Center, the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City and Edward Durrell Stone's Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. to the less famed projects such as, the Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer in Grand Island, NE (Figure 16) and the Paducah City Hall building.



Los Angeles Music Center



Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts



Kennedy Center

### **New Formalism Architecture in Paducah's Downtown Landscape**

The Paducah City Hall building was Edward Durrell Stone's first opportunity to design a commission in the state of Kentucky. The use of the New Formalism design was limited within the city of Paducah. The building is one in a prolific collection of civic and institutional buildings designed during a period in Stone's career when he had been questioning the purity and simplicity of the Modernist Movements--International and Streamline Moderne—but also expanding a federal mandate on government buildings to his regional commissions.

By the 1920s, the bulk of the commercial area had already been built in the City, employing revival designs and growth expanded westward to the Midtown section of town (Broadway core to 28<sup>th</sup> Street) after the 1937 flood. A survey of the architectural landscape was conducted to help establish stylistic context within which the Paducah City Hall building fits. For commercial buildings in Paducah, there was one additional building identified that incorporated the New Formalism Design during this period. (Figure #17) It is located at 2626 Broadway and was designed by Lee Potter Smith, the associate architect for the City Hall building. Clearly Stone's influences are evident in this design.

Edward Durrell Stone received several additional notable commissions in the State of Kentucky which should be surveyed within their own context for possible historic listings:

**The University of Kentucky-Kirwan Blanding Dormitory Complex, Lexington, KY- 1963-1967** (Figures 23,25,25,26, and 27) The Undergraduate Housing Complex was planned as the nucleus of a "grouping" of residential, recreational and other related facilities supportive to the "academic core" of the University's campus. It was to provide a passage for all pedestrian and vehicular movement within the area while establishing an environment that would provide a natural atmosphere for occupants. Design features include

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low-rise residence halls and a central facility around two towers creating three major and eight minor courtyard areas and pedestrian malls.<sup>xxviii</sup> The complex was funded under the Housing Act of 1950- HHFA College Housing Loan Program and was part of a larger urban planning initiative within the “central city and consists of approximately 200 acres of development. It follows the clients’ desire to have a contiguous complex in which Stone utilizes many of his classic design elements to achieve this plan- connectors of geometric shaped exposed aggregate and concrete walkways around the pedestrian malls and courtyards –columned colonnades and the incorporation of trees, shrubs and sitting areas throughout to provide a natural aesthetic and more personal human scale.<sup>xxix</sup>

**Civic Center Arena Project, Frankfort, KY – 1965 (Figure #x 21, 22, 23 and 24) and State Office Building, Frankfort, KY- 1965 (Figure 20)** The 25-acre site was part of a local urban renewal project in downtown Frankfort. It includes a 26-story state office building with a vast expansive pedestrian plaza with geometrically laid out aggregate and concrete walkways surrounding a swimming pool. The pool is landscaped with concrete planters and greenery and columned porticos leading into the surrounding buildings and parking garages.

**The Lake Barkley State Park Lodge, Barkley Lake, Trigg County, KY- 1967** (Figure #s 28,29, 30 and 31) is the single largest building in the Kentucky State park system. It was constructed 1967-1970. The total park encompasses 3200 acres of wooded rolling hills. The lodge complex is situated on a small peninsula overlooking the water. The project fits into Stone’s philosophy of taking into consideration the structure’s environment, climate and intended use when creating ultimately a piece of architectural art. This building’s design presents a contrast to his New Formalism creations, exhibiting the vivid influence of Frank Lloyd Wright. The extensive use of wood, post-and-beam construction, and red cedar shiplap siding, keep it in harmony with nature. The sense of connection with environment is enhanced by the height of the ceiling in the main atrium, which leads down to each level, skylights throughout create an open-air naturalistic experience for visitors.<sup>xxx</sup>

### **A Tale of a City and its New City Hall**

Construction of the City Hall marks the culmination of a cultural shift in Paducah that began shortly after World War II, with the adoption of large-scale, public projects that sought to empower government to remake the American city landscape. These efforts had their genesis in the Great Depression, and came about through a belief that city, county, and state bureaucracies could make effective and efficient decisions to relieve socioeconomic problems that were too large for individuals, corporations, or charitable organizations to solve alone. The significance of the Paducah City Hall structure locally to its citizens has a lengthy and politically charged story ending in a significant architectural contribution to the city and to Stone, “ a piece of art”. The history of the battle to achieve this goal also lends to the realization that the citizens not only wanted an urban

<sup>xxviii</sup> Coleman, Lawrence. University of Kentucky Undergraduate Housing Complex 1968 HUD Awards for Design Excellence. Lexington, KY, September 1967.

<sup>xxix</sup> Ibid. Coleman.

<sup>xxx</sup> Daniel Vivian, "Lake Barkely Lodge," in *SAH Archipedia*, Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012-), <http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/KY-01-221-0043> (accessed 8-26-2016).

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renewal program for the future but wanted the heritage of their historic downtown to continue to play a role in its economic growth.

The federal government passed the Housing Act of 1934, a New Deal program that established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), and attempted to relieve the two-fold problem of poverty and inadequate housing that plagued many cities. Once the Second World War ended, the acute nature of the American housing crisis became recognizable.

Several expansions of the Housing Act of 1934 were passed, with Title 1 of the Housing Act of 1949 authorizing publicly initiated, locally planned, and locally managed slum clearance programs that aggressively displaced impoverished people from their meager housing. The Act authorized \$1,000,000,000 in loans to cities over a 5-year period for acquisition of land, clearance of blight, and the preparation of the land for new uses—often governmental centers or low-income housing projects. The act also authorized \$500,000,000 in Federal Capital grants.<sup>xxxix</sup> Title I of the 1949 Act also required cities to develop a planning agency, from which the city's proposals to FHA would originate. Those proposals would need to be forwarded in accordance with a master plan for the community, which would indicate the future use of each portion of the area, whether to be used for public or private purposes.<sup>xxxix</sup>

Paducah conformed to these mandates in November 1951, with the approval of its long range public works program. Earlier that year, the City had hired a full-time director to aid in coordinating resources for sewer, water and street services. A planning consultant was hired to initiate a study in August of 1951, resulting in the first Paducah Area-McCracken County Interim General Plan adopted by the city commission on April 8, 1952.<sup>xxxix</sup> The general plan gave direction to the Planning and Zoning Commission, to help avoid chaotic development within the city and county. Land use was identified by type of use, such as residential, business, subdivision development, annexations, subdivision rules, and infrastructure requirements. Recommendations were developed for transportation, public facilities and capital improvements, to achieve the most efficient and orderly manner of planned growth. These ordinances demonstrated a faith in the power of the government to direct an organized use of the City's land, preserving the town from the abuses of individual interest resulting from a less-regulated approach to land use.

One centerpiece in the remaking of Paducah would be a new city hall, though debate occurred over the ideal location for such a site. Many citizens, especially downtown merchants who would benefit from a traditional location, wished to keep City Hall downtown. Other political forces campaigned for the new site in locations away from the center of the city, which would trigger new growth in an undeveloped area of town. This debate continued through the early 1950s, through four city administrations and the tenure of three mayors. Regardless of which side dominated the debate at any time, the new City Hall signaled to many in the community that the political process was an effective way of getting things done, expressed the will of the people, and was a testament to the public servants who played their parts in finally finding and carrying out the public wish.<sup>xxxix</sup>

Robert C. Cherry, who served as Paducah's as Mayor for three terms (1952-1956, 1959-1962, and 1968-1972) laid the beginnings for a path to a New City Hall. Cherry was perceived as an activist in civic affairs, serving as

<sup>xxxix</sup> Housing Act of 1949, Document No. 99, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, June 2, 1949.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Ashley A. Foard & Hilbert Fefferman, Federal Urban Renewal Legislation, 25 Law and Contemporary Problems 635-684 (Fall 1960)

<sup>xxxix</sup> The Paducah Area-McCracken County Interim General Plan, Kenneth L. Schellie, February, 1952.

<sup>xxxix</sup> "New City Hall-A Shrine to Democracy". Sun-Democrat February 26, 1965. Pg. 1.

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President of the Jr. Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club and elected as Paducah's Outstanding Young Man in 1951. He also purchased a floral business in which he opened in 1955 with branch locations in Metropolis, Illinois and Benton, Kentucky. Newly elected to office in 1952, Cherry and his administration had to deal with unprecedented growth in the city coming from the Atomic Energy Commission's Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The influx of workers and demands on infrastructure, schools, housing and public facilities resulted in the City realizing that a focused comprehensive plan dealing with those elements of municipal responsibility and physical development was needed.

Also identified within this plan was a need for new public and semi-public buildings to serve the community, including a new city hall, Y.M.C.A., and municipal auditorium. The plan also proposed a Civic Center to include the two blocks extending to the west across 7<sup>th</sup> Street from the Court House, as the site, at a location convenient to all parts of the city. Such Civic Center sites were appearing across the country, creating a highly designed space at the city center, symbolizing the belief in the benevolent power of local government.

During the early 1950s, communities undertook Urban Renewal projects on the premise of redevelopment, accomplishing the removal of blighted areas of town ostensibly to promote new growth. A Presidential Advisory Committee on Government Housing Policies advocated several reforms to Title I of the Housing Act, which were written into the Housing Acts of 1954 and 1956, shifting from the bulldozer approach in the Housing Act of 1949, to one couched in the term "urban redevelopment." The Housing Act of 1954 instituted a "workable program" requirement under which localities had to submit a plan for redevelopment. This was the first example of comprehensive planning being required for federal funding.<sup>xxxv</sup> Paducah submitted its first application, to accomplish slum clearance, on March 2, 1954.

After the Interim General Plan was approved, Cherry set his sights on securing a new City Hall building for Paducah as identified in the plan. On September 22, 1953 an ordinance was approved by the Board of Commissioners calling for an election to be held for a \$400,000 bond issue, to finance construction of a new city hall. It was soundly defeated in November, 2,366 to 1,059. Disappointed and frustrated, Cherry did not run in the next Mayoral race. Instead, George G. Jacobs ran unopposed and took office from 1955-1959. In February of 1956, shortly after taking office, Jacobs took up the fight for a new city hall, announcing an offer to buy the Illinois Central Railroad Hospital building at 1500 Broadway. The ICRR officials promptly turned down the offer, and Jacobs then sought to secure land at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Kentucky Avenue, which included six tracts purchased at \$17,000.00.<sup>xxxvi</sup> This attempt to secure land for the new City Hall soon met tough resistance led by future Mayor Tom Wilson and downtown merchants, who took up the fight to locate a new building in the heart of the business district. This pressure from the local merchants put a temporary halt on Jacob's plans.

In November of 1960, Robert Cherry was elected mayor for the second time. The City had experienced loss of industry and the atomic plant boom was fading quickly. In the midst of this economic downfall, the Cherry administration quickly ordered a study by the Fantus Company of Chicago to guide them through recovery from this recession. For the second time in less than a decade, a planning study concluded that a new city hall needed to be constructed. The consultants from Fantus recommended that the City Hall be designed by a famous architect. Prior to his reelection, Cherry announced that three sites were being considered for the new city hall, but the majority of the board was leaning toward a site between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at Kentucky. However in an unexpected vote, the commission passed another ordinance on August 4, 1960, to attempt to move forward with

<sup>xxxv</sup> Freeman, Richard, U.S. Housing Police, Volume 23, Number 50, December 13, 1996. Pgs. 27-33.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Ibid. Walker.

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the purchase of the old ICRR Hospital again. This action triggered the beginning of some of the most complicated political maneuvering in the City of Paducah. Wilson and the downtown merchants' determination were fueled by this action and he stepped into the political arena to fight it. Another road block to Jacob's idea was a lawsuit filed in the Court of Appeals by ICRR employees, claiming a "proprietary interest" to the ICRR building which had been sold to Katter, Inc. This caused final action on the building to be delayed. In the meantime, Wilson led a campaign to have the people of Paducah force a public vote on the ordinance by circulating a petition. His group attended every commission meeting, crying out against this action. On January 11, 1962 the City Commission passed another almost identical ordinance to the first one, in an apparent attempt to skirt the petition requiring a set number of signatures required to place on ballot. But by the time the final vote on the second ordinance was taken January 23<sup>rd</sup>, a petition containing more than 4,000 names—almost twice the number needed to force the commission either to rescind the ordinance or put it on the ballot—had been produced. The commission held off on action of any sort. In April of 1961, Katter Inc., with George Katterjohn as the principal stockholder, filed suit to force the city to go through with the purchase of the ICRR Hospital building. This was overruled by McCracken Circuit Judge C. Warren Eaton on June 12, 1961, due to the petition being valid. The Court of Appeals also upheld the same decision. The ordinance was put to the vote in November of 1961 and was defeated 4,964 to 2,408.

Another player in the Paducah story was Robert Overstreet, the Executive Director for the local Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency. Cherry and Overstreet had implemented Paducah's own "Workable Program" under Housing Act of 1954 and his agency oversaw the first two city urban renewal programs and served as coordinator for community improvement. Overstreet played an instrumental role in securing two rounds of funding, for Kentucky Project R-15 and later for Kentucky Project R-30. The first, known as Tyler Park Industrial Area, consisted of 62.5 acres in the southeast corner of Paducah lying, between the Beltline Highway and the river to the east city limits. On Feb 2, 1960 after nearly two years of study and planning, the federal government approved this area for Urban Renewal assistance. The project was approved for execution two years later after the formation of the Greater Paducah Industrial Development Association, Inc., which agreed to underwrite the program. The area contained 154 structures which included 141 dwelling units. Kentucky Project R-15 helped establish the credentials of the local Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency and Robert Overstreet.

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After the defeat of 1961, Cherry asked Overstreet to initiate a program which might involve a downtown city hall. Mayor Cherry, Overstreet and Noble Clark, chairman of the Urban Renewal and Community Development Board, went to the agency's regional office in Atlanta to try and strategize a new plan and obtain funds. The Kentucky-Tennessee district area coordinator, George Papageorge, came up with a solution for the City of Paducah to still receive the original amount of \$891,755 set aside early in the program by the federal government. Over \$400,000 worth of approved federal-help projects were exchanged for funds to help build the new city hall. Arrangements were made through the Community Facilities Administration under the Accelerated Public Works program.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The federal government put up \$579,500 of the building costs and Urban Renewal would continue play an important role in the creation of a Downtown Civic Center. Robert Overstreet announced November of 1961 that acquisition of land would begin in the spring of 1962, the project was \$1.9 million including a five block improvement to be completed by 1970 (See Map from original application-Figure 8). A reservation of a federal grant of \$1,609,000 had been made, the city paid \$299,000. Included in the project was a new \$240,000 fire station at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Washington and free parking space. On February 27, 1962, the Board of Commissioners of the City of Paducah adopted a resolution approving the undertaking of an urban

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Paducah Board of Commissioners Minutes, October 20, 1962

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renewal project “the Downtown Civic Center Project”, known as Project Kentucky R-30, made possible early land acquisition of the property on which the current City Hall is constructed.<sup>xxxviii</sup> On May 22, 1962, the City of Paducah received a letter from the Housing and Home Finance agency certifying the availability of capital grant funds in the amount of \$891,755.00.<sup>xxxix</sup>

Elected November 1964, Mayor Tom Wilson was a devoted downtown business merchant who owned Wilson’s Office Supplies until 1986 and served on the City Commission prior to being elected mayor. Mr. Bob Johnston remembers Wilson as someone who liked to research thoroughly any decision pertaining to the City of Paducah.<sup>xl</sup> Guided by the Fantus Company recommendations, Wilson sought out to find the best architect for Paducah’s City Hall. He contacted *The American City* magazine to obtain a list of cities building “modern” city halls. He took a delegation from Paducah to over fifty places interviewing mayors, commissioners, and city managers. Wilson then began his search to obtain an architect of international reputation. After deep investigation, the City of Paducah was able to obtain Edward Durell Stone. Upon opening Wilson stated, “We believe that we in Paducah are making progress in creating an interesting as well as charming city. When visitors come here, we can show them many features that will please them. One of these is our city hall. With our new city hall, we have added an architectural jewel. It forms part of the work we plan to do as part of the Downtown Civic Center Zone<sup>xli</sup> (See Figures 9 & 10). Other features and buildings that became part of the Downtown Civic Center Zone are the McCracken County Library formerly Paducah Public Library (1969) located at 555 Washington Street, Dolly McHugh Plaza (1970), McCracken County Courthouse (1940) and the United States Post Office (1970) located at 300 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street).

### **Evaluation of the Paducah City Hall Building within the Context, New Formalism Architecture in Paducah, Kentucky 1963-1965**

Paducah has always been a city finding ways to prosper, adapting to economic factors, evolving to be relevant within the continually changing transportation modes and changes in population and industry. The political story of building a Modern City Hall shows the power of the will of the people on influencing the City’s built environment and the creative methods used by three separate administrations to achieve these goals. The Paducah City Hall epitomizes the New Formalism design in the city of Paducah and plays a part in the story of a world famous architect, Edward Durell Stone, who was continuing to defy the methods of traditional Modernism and its principles. As Mary Anne Hunting stated, “Stone deserves credit for this shift, she says: “he extended the definition of modern architecture to include historical references, regional influences, natural elements, and of course, decoration, in order to fulfill the demands of mass consumption.”<sup>xlii</sup> The construction of the new civic building was an opportunity for both the City and the architect to make a statement with the design by making it a symbol of Paducah’s economic resurgence and downtown’s renewal.

### **Evaluation of the Integrity of the Paducah City Hall Building**

With the exception of the concrete work on the top of the podium level and required ADA ramp, the exterior of the building remains completely unchanged from the original vision of the architect. The interior of the building retains the original open floor plan, interior upper and lower court with fountain intact (though not

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Paducah Board of Commissioners Minutes, February, 23, 1960.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Paducah Board of Commissioners Minutes, July 17, 1962.

<sup>xl</sup> Verbal interview with Bob Johnston, City Commissioner 1965-1969.

<sup>xli</sup> “City Hall Should Be a Show Place”. Tom Wilson. *The American City*. May 1965. Page. 106-107.

<sup>xlii</sup> The “New Romanticism” — *Edward Durell Stone: Modernism's Populist Architect* by Mary Anne Hunting



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currently operating), original exposed aggregate, and white polished concrete and terrazzo flooring with maple wall panels. Compared to photos from a 1965 edition of *American City* magazine, it remains unchanged.

The Paducah City Hall meets National Register Criterion C for its significant architectural design following the tenets of New Formalism. It stands as the finest example of New Formalism architecture in the city of Paducah and the only example in a Civic function designed by an internationally famed architect. A nominated structure will have an integrity between its architectural significance and current physical form if it possesses these integrity factors: design, materials, and workmanship. If it possesses those integrity factors, it will be said to possess integrity of feeling, which would make it eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

The Paducah City Hall possesses integrity of both **Location and Setting** in that the structure has not moved and its historic setting remains intact. More important than its positional stability, this structure's location represents the commitment to continual growth for the City and Downtown by its citizens and administrations. It possesses integrity of setting because the relationship remains the same: setbacks, traffic flow, and landscape architecture etc.

A building within Paducah will possess integrity of **Design** if it relates the majority of its exterior features that form the style. Because the features have changed so little since its 1963 construction and the building exemplifies all of the characteristic design elements of its New Formalism style, the Paducah City Hall retains integrity of design.

A building within Paducah will possess integrity of **Materials** if it retains the majority of its exterior surface materials that indicate the style's hallmarks. On both the inside and outside of Paducah City Hall building, little material change has occurred since its construction. For this reason, the Paducah City Hall building retains its integrity of materials.

The building retains integrity of **Workmanship** more evidently in the geometric motifs, the design of flow and function and the inclusion of natural elements to provide an internal atmosphere. The features of the building call attention to the architect's philosophy and principles, incorporating both classical elements and new materials. Therefore Paducah City Hall retains its integrity of workmanship.

A building within Paducah possesses integrity of **Feeling** by retaining integrity of Materials, Design, and Workmanship. The Paducah City Hall, then, possesses the integrity factors which make the property eligible.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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## Maps

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Bird's Eyeview of Paducah, Kentucky- 1889

City of Paducah, Engineering Services Plat Maps.

*Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: Paducah, Kentucky* Sanborn Map Company, 1879 1886, 1891, 1896, 1901, 1908, 1916

**Photo Credits**

Rachel Kennedy, Historic Survey Program Coordinator with Kentucky Heritage Council. Photos of Figure #s 23-31.

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): McN-P- 56

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Approximately 7.3 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinate:**

37.084038, -88.597139

**UTM References**

1	<u>16</u>	<u>358031</u>	<u>4105374</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property consists in two adjacent city blocks, Block No. 20 (with City Hall) and Block No 24 (Plaza) of Addition B of the City of Paducah. These blocks were conveyed and recorded in a deed dated April 2, 1963 of record in Deed Book 444, page 292, McCracken County Clerk's Office in Paducah, Kentucky.

**Boundary Justification**

The property being nominated consists of the original parcel on which the Paducah City Hall building and Plaza were constructed. These contributing resources have been associated with this parcel since their construction. No other adjacent land has these associations.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Melinda Winchester, Downtown Development Specialist

Paducah City Hall  
 Name of Property

McCracken, Kentucky  
 County and State

organization City of Paducah date 8-26-2016  
 street & number 300 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street telephone 270-444-8690  
 city or town Paducah state KY zip code 42001  
 e-mail [mwinchester@paducahky.gov](mailto:mwinchester@paducahky.gov)

**Photographs:**

**Name of Property:** Paducah City Hall  
**City or Vicinity:** Paducah  
**County:** McCracken  
**State:** Kentucky  
**Photographer:** Melinda Winchester  
**Date Photographed:** August 10, 2016

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

The following photographs are keyed to the Photo ID sketch map by Photo ID#, numbered within a circle and showing camera direction. These are the **Official Image files** on the image disc.

Returned

PHOTO #	DESCRIPTION	CAMERA DIRECTION
0001	Façade	Facing east
0002	Dolly McNutt Plaza	Facing west
0003	Parking Lot	Facing south
0004	Post office	Facing east
0005	North elevation view	Facing north
0006	Façade Entry	Facing east
0007	Basement Parking Garage Entry	Facing north
0008	Medallion	Facing east
0009	Exterior window profile	Facing east
0010	Fascia	Facing north
0011	Podium	Facing north
0012	Exterior Planters	Facing south
0013	Lower Court Atrium	Facing south
0014	Upper Court Lantern	Facing northeast
0015	Mezzanine	Facing east
0016	Mezzanine	Facing south
0017	Lower Court floor	Facing east
0018	First Floor Restroom	Facing north
0019	Lower Court Interior	Facing southeast
0020	City Commission Chamber	Facing south
0021	Mayor & City Manager Offices	Facing east
0022	City Clerk and Vault	Facing southeast

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0023	Parking Garage basement	Facing north
0024	Basement jail area	Facing north
0025	Basement hallway	Facing south
0026	Basement training room	Facing southeast
0027	Basement elevator lobby	Facing northeast
0028	Matching view of 1965 photograph	Facing southeast
0029	Matching view of 1965 photograph	Facing south
0030	Podium pattern	Looking downward from 2 <sup>nd</sup> level
0031	Handicap ramp	Looking south

**Property Owner:**

name City of Paducah  
street & number 300 S.5<sup>th</sup> Street telephone 270-444-8506  
city or town Paducah state KY zip code 42001

Returned

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Paducah City Hall  
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The boundary is indicated by the blue line, which encompasses two city blocks.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Paducah City Hall

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: KENTUCKY, McCracken

Date Received: 1/27/2017      Date of Pending List: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 16th Day: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 45th Day: 3/13/2017      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100000742

Nominator: State

Reason For Review: \_\_\_\_\_

Accept       Return       Reject      3/13/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Insufficient description

Recommendation/ Criteria: Return - see comments

 3-13-2017

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.





## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240



### The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

#### National Register of Historic Places Return/Evaluation Sheet

Property Name: Paducah City Hall, McCracken County, Kentucky

Reference Number: 100000742

The Paducah City Hall nomination is being returned for revision. The property is eligible and is an excellent example of New Formalist design by one of the country's foremost architects of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The boundaries for the nomination include the City Hall building as well as the City Plaza, a designed landscape produced by Edward Durell Stone as part of his overall design concept. The nomination does not, however, provide more than a cursory description of the City Plaza and only one photograph.

Please provide additional photographs of the plaza, depicting its primary features and relationship to the City Hall. Please provide an expanded description of the Plaza, and relate the design to the design of the accompanying city building. You might also consider adding "Landscape Architecture" as an area of significance. Stone's overall design embraces the building as well as its setting and includes the City Plaza not merely as an adjunct, but as a near equal to the City Hall.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this nomination and hope that you find these comments useful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (202) 354-2275 or email at [James\\_Gabbert@nps.gov](mailto:James_Gabbert@nps.gov).

Sincerely,

Jim Gabbert, Historian  
National Register of Historic Places  
3/13/2017



MATTHEW G. BEVIN  
GOVERNOR

**TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET  
KENTUCKY HERITAGE COUNCIL**

DON PARKINSON  
SECRETARY

THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
300 WASHINGTON STREET  
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601  
PHONE (502) 564-7005  
FAX (502) 564-5820  
[www.heritage.ky.gov](http://www.heritage.ky.gov)



June 16, 2017

J. Paul Loether, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

We enclose the following nominations, approved by the Review Board at their May 17, 2017 meeting, and asking that these Kentucky properties be listed in the National Register:

- Rock Cabin Camp, Barren County**
- Middlesboro Jewish Cemetery, Bell County**
- E.O. Robinson House, Campbell County**
- Montgomery-Sandidge House, Green County**
- Kentucky Home School for Girls, Jefferson County**
- Devou Park, Kenton County**
- Kellog and Company Wholesale Grocery Warehouse, Madison County**
- West Second Street Historic District, Mason County**
- Westminster Presbyterian Church, McCracken County**
- Harrodsburg Downtown Historic District (Boundary Increase), Mercer County**
- Craig-Peak House, Scott County**

We enclose a revised nomination for a returned property, which we have revised according to the return comments:

- Paducah City Hall, McCracken County**

We thank you for your assistance in listing these properties.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Potts  
Executive Director and  
State Historic Preservation Officer