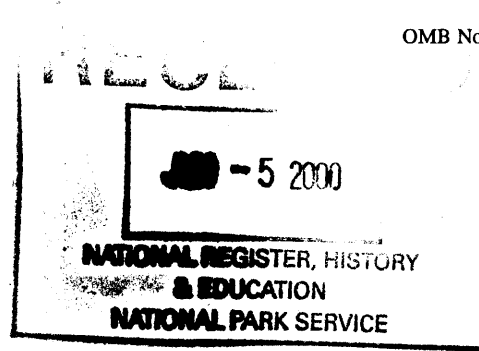


United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



779

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

1. Name of Property

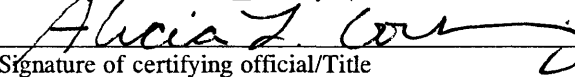
historic name Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number	11333 North Cedarburg Road	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Mequon	N/A	vicinity
state	Wisconsin	code WI	county Ozaukee
		code 89	zip code 53092

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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


Signature of certifying official/Title
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

5/22/00
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Name of Property

Ozaukee
County and State

Wisconsin

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Beth Boland

7/18/00

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

- private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
 district
 structure
 site
 object

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

contributing	noncontributing
<u>2</u>	<u>buildings</u>
	<u>sites</u>
	<u>1 structures</u>
	<u>objects</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>1 total</u>

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

N/A

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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/City Hall

GOVERNMENT/Fire Station

RECREATION/Sports Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/City Hall

RECREATION/Sports Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Narrative Description

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

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1 Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

DESCRIPTION

The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station, commonly known as the Mequon City Hall, is a one-story, Art-Deco influenced building that is part of a complex of public buildings that occupies a large site in the City of Mequon, a rural-suburban community just north of the City of Milwaukee in southeastern Wisconsin. Next to the city hall, and included in the nomination, is a matching pool house and swimming pool that were built at the same time as the city hall. Other public buildings on the site include the city library and old fire station (now a community and historical center), but they are not included in this nomination.

Until about 20 years ago, the City of Mequon was largely rural, with some modern residential subdivisions dotting the countryside and individual suburban houses sitting along the major thoroughfares of the city. During the past two decades, and especially during the last decade, intensive suburban development has almost completely encompassed the eastern half of the city. The public complex, which includes the city hall, swimming pool, and pool house, sits near the center of the city surrounded by commercial and residential development. To the north is the City of Thiensville, a separate corporate entity surrounded by the City of Mequon.

North Cedarburg Road is a highway with three lanes in front of City Hall. It is a heavily traveled thoroughfare through Mequon and Thiensville, and north toward Cedarburg. The city hall and the nearby pool and pool house have generous set-backs from the roadway, which is improved with concrete curbs, gutters, and a sidewalk. There is also room for parking in front of city hall. Across the road, the highway has a narrow gravel shoulder.

The city hall and pool site is level at the road, but slopes down at the south and west ends of the city hall building. The swimming pool and pool house are on a level part of the site. The setback between the road and the city hall and pool is landscaped with a large lawn dotted with many mature trees and concrete walkways. Closer to city hall, there are beds planted with small shrubs. The lawn wraps around the north side of the building between the city hall and the swimming pool, and on the south and west sides of city hall, there are large parking lots interspersed with landscaped islands. Behind the west elevation of the city hall building, there is another large parking lot and a large athletic field. The field also extends behind the pool house. The pool and pool house are surrounded by concrete pavement and a tall chain-link fence. To the north of the swimming pool is a large parking lot that separates it from the city library.

Because the city hall, pool house, and swimming pool are part of a larger

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**National Register of Historic Places
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Section 7 Page 2 Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

public building complex with large parking lots and open spaces, a boundary was drawn to enclose only the historic city hall, pool house, and swimming pool. Other public buildings, parking lots, and open spaces of the complex were left out of the boundary. The specifics of the boundary are described in section 10 of this nomination, but it includes enough of the surrounding landscape to suggest the buildings' original historic site.

All of the features of the nomination are contributing with the following exceptions. These exceptions are noted on the site map. A large south addition to the city hall building, completed in 1996, is non-contributing, as are two small additions to the north and south ends of the pool house. The swimming pool has been remodeled, so it is a non-contributing structure, but its location and historic association with the other two buildings have not changed, so it was included within the boundaries of the nominated property. The two buildings and the structure being nominated are in excellent condition.

Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station

1937 (contributing)

Architects: Satre and Senescall (1)

Schneider and Schaefer, 1957 alterations (1)

The original Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station building is essentially a one-story building that has a modified Y-plan featuring a main block that consists of a central section flanked by projecting wings and an auditorium wing that projects from the west elevation. The central section is taller than the wings and features a hip roof, while the roofs of the wings are flat. The walls of the original building are constructed of two hues of tan bricks laid in a random pattern. The building's foundation is made of poured. The auditorium wing's basement walls are almost totally exposed due to the slope of the site, and these walls are also clad in brick.

The building is decorated in the Art Deco style. Its most dominant Art Deco feature is the plan of the main block, which includes a two-story central section with projecting one-story wings that extend outward from the central section. Between the central section and the wings are small, shallow, projecting ellipses that are shorter than the main block, but taller than the wings. These elements give the east or main elevation a stepped or set-back Art Deco style facade.

Decorating the central east-facing section of the main block are shallow pilaster strips flanking the two main entrances to the building. These pilasters are topped with portions of an encircling fluted frieze and suggest

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Section 7 Page 3 Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

stylized capitals. Above entrance is an octagonal window opening filled with modern glazing. The entrances themselves are decorated with flat stone entablatures that are decorated with scored friezes and curved cornices. Dressed stone belt courses decorate the projecting ells and wings, defining an undecorated frieze. Concrete steps lead to a small terrace in front of the entrances. The terrace is flanked by the brick walls of the main block and its wings, which are topped with stone coping.

Extending to the west of the main block is the auditorium wing. This wing has a hip roof whose ridgeline runs perpendicular to the hip roof of the main block. The auditorium wing has walls decorated with shallow pilaster strips and a stone belt course that defines an undecorated frieze. A stone belt course also defines the walls of the raised basement. The rear wall of the auditorium wing has a tall stepped brick parapet and is also decorated with shallow pilasters.

Most of the windows are large six-over-six-light double-hung sashes. Small, narrow openings in the projecting ells contain multi-light casements. Windows in the side walls of the auditorium wing have larger sashes and there are triple sashes in the rear wall of the auditorium wing. Two doors that are also in the rear wall of the auditorium wing are made of metal and glass.

The original south wing of the city hall building was the fire station. The east wall of this wing had large garage-type doors used for the fire trucks that were housed in this wing. In 1957, the fire station moved to a new building behind city hall and this wing was remodeled for office space. The large doors were replaced by a brick wall and sashes that matched the east elevation of the north wing.

During the late 1960s, the old auditorium was also remodeled into office space for Mequon's city government, and a community room in the basement was used as the city's auditorium. By 1990, Mequon's city hall was extremely overcrowded and in November of 1996, a large wing was added to the south side of the old city hall. With pressure from the local landmarks commission, care was taken to lose as little of the old building's integrity as possible, while the added wing doubled the size of the building.

The new wing was added via a connecting ell that created a separation between the old and new sections of the building. Also, because the site sloped down at the south elevation of the old building, the new wing is lower in height than the old building. It is also set back from the east elevation of the old building. The result is a new addition that is clearly separate from and does not overwhelm the old building.

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

Details of the new addition were executed to harmonize with the old building, while not copying it exactly. Multi-hued tan bricks were used for the walls of the addition and concrete trim was used to make decorative belt courses and a frieze that suggests the capitals of the pilasters on the main block of the old building. Windows of the addition are similar in size and are primarily multi-light casements, along with a decorative octagonal window opening. The raised entry pavilion on the south elevation of the addition suggests the main block of the old building with its decorative hip roof, shallow pilasters, and two entrances. Although the main entrance to city hall is now in the new addition's entry pavilion, the old building's entrances are still functional and used for public meetings.

When the new addition to city hall was completed, the old building was renovated, keeping its historic features intact and returning the auditorium space to its original use. One of the historic spaces in the original building that was renovated was the lobby. The lobby is accessed via the main entrance to the original building. The double doors of the main entrance lead into a small foyer and to another set of entry doors. The interior entry doors are made up of oak stiles and rails and have eight lights. These doors lead into the lobby, which has plaster walls decorated with simple oak baseboards. The floor of the lobby is covered with a decorative terrazzo floor that features a stylized framed sunburst done in the Art Deco style. Also decorating the lobby is a terra cotta frieze carved in a shell and chevron pattern.

From the lobby, the north and south wings of the old building can be accessed, along with the refurbished auditorium. The south end of the lobby has an arched entryway that leads into a small hallway. Off of this hallway are staircases to the basement and the old balcony of the auditorium. At one time, the balcony held projection equipment to show movies. An eight-light oak-framed door that is similar to the interior lobby doors leads into the old fire station wing that is reached via a small set of steps. Once remodeled into small offices, this area is now a large lounge.

At the north end of the lobby is the original office wing of the building which once housed the Town of Mequon offices. The renovation of this space has retained the original wood panel and frosted glass doors of the offices, while using the space in a slightly different manner. The original small offices have been replaced by a large conference room and two restrooms. The original doors are decorated with large transoms and the original woodwork around the doors has been retained. The conference room has been carpeted, but window and wall trims have been retained and restored.

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

The original auditorium was a large gymnasium-type room with a stage. It served as a meeting room, a recreational center, and a social hall. After 1957, the auditorium was divided into offices and a new meeting room was set up in the old banquet room in the basement. In the recent renovation of the building, the auditorium was returned to use as a meeting room by removing the old offices and re-creating a large room that can be used for council and other city committee meetings. The room has been carpeted and modern wall surfaces have been added. It is furnished with a long curved desk for council or committee members and a large group of chairs for public seating.

The basement of the building still has the banquet room that was converted into meeting room space along with the building's original utility and storage rooms. The modern addition to the original building is divided into offices and conference rooms where most of the day-to-day activities of city government take place. However, the old building is used extensively for meetings and is still an important component of Mequon's city government facilities.

Mequon Pool and Pool House
1937 (non-contributing, contributing)
Architects: Satre and Senescall (2)

The pool and pool house were built at the same time as the Mequon City Hall. Surrounded by a concrete apron, the pool is a relatively rectangular feature with various levels of water for swimming and diving. The pool was rebuilt a few years ago so that few of the original features are still extant, making it currently a non-contributing resource.

The pool house, though, is a fairly intact resource that reflects the architecture of city hall. It consists of a taller central block that has shallow ells projecting from its east and west elevations. These ells cover most of the east and west facades of the main block and the ends of each ell project slightly on either side of triple paired multi-light entrance doors that are centered on each facade.

The pool house was constructed using the same bricks as the old town hall building. On each elevation of the pool house, the entry features three pairs of metal and glass doors separated by plain pilaster strips. Window openings in the building have been filled with glass blocks, but were probably originally similar to the old town hall sashes. On both the north and south ends of the pool house, small additions have been made to the building. These additions feature concrete walls in a scored pattern and concrete foundations. They are small additions and do not overly detract from the overall integrity

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

of the pool house.

The interior of the pool house consists of a large central room flanked by two changing/toilet rooms. The central room has a concrete floor, a modern acoustical tile and florescent light ceiling, and large pillars. The changing rooms have a tile floor and tile walls. The modern additions house shower rooms. The center of the pool house is used for storage and lifeguard functions. Despite the minor alterations, the interior of the pool house has a high degree of integrity, with most of its historic features intact.

Notes to Section 7:

(1) The original architects for the project were the Sheboygan firm of Satre and Senescall; "Specifications for the Town Hall and Fire Department Building Mequon, Wisconsin for the Town of Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin," unpublished manuscript on file in the Department of Community Development, Mequon City Hall, Mequon, Wisconsin. The remodeling that changed the south wing of the original building from the fire department into city offices was completed by the architectural firm of Schneider and Schaefer; Plans for the Remodeling of City Hall, on file in the Department of Community Development, Mequon City Hall, Mequon, Wisconsin.

(2) *Ibid.*

Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Name of Property

Ozaukee
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1937-1950 (1)

Significant Dates

1937 (2)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Satre and Senescall (3)

Schneider and Schaefer (3)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 1 Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Department (along with the pool house and swimming pool), commonly known as the Mequon City Hall, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C. It is being nominated under criterion A, for local history, because it is both the first and the only building ever erected for town and city government purposes in the history of Mequon. The city hall, along with the pool and pool house, is also historically significant because it was erected with assistance from the WPA, a federal government work project during the Great Depression of the 1930s. WPA projects not only provided much-needed employment for local workers, they also added important public facilities to communities that the communities might not have been able to build on their own. The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Department is also being nominated to the National Register under criterion C, architecture, because it is a fine and locally important example of Art Deco-influenced architecture. The use of this style of architecture in the city hall building and pool house reflected the era in which the buildings were erected. The simple but well-executed design of the city hall illustrates some representative aspects of this modern style.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Land in southern Wisconsin was opened up for formal settlement shortly after the Blackhawk War of 1832, when white militias defeated the last resistance effort of Native Americans to signing over their land rights. Euro-American settlement began in Mequon in 1835 when the federal government allowed the sale of some of the land in southern Wisconsin, including the area in Mequon east of Range Line Road. Land west of Range Line Road was officially sold in 1839, but some of this land was settled as early as 1836 by "squatters" who did not hold official title until the sale in 1839. (4)

Like most of southern Wisconsin, the first settlers in Mequon were Yankees who came to the area to exploit the water power of the Milwaukee River and its tributaries and to farm the fertile soil of the town. Moving settlers through the area was the old Indian Trail which ran north to Green Bay. This old trail ran north from Milwaukee along the Milwaukee River to Saukville, then traveled along the western shore of Lake Michigan to Manitowoc, before moving inland again to Fort Howard at Green Bay. In 1835, the federal government surveyed the trail for use as a military road between Fort Dearborn in Chicago and Fort Howard. The military road followed the trail between Milwaukee and Saukville, but north to Green Bay, the road ran through Sheboygan Falls and Manitowoc Rapids before returning to the old trail to Green Bay. The military importance of this road ceased when the government abandoned the forts at Chicago and Green Bay, but the road became an important transportation route for early settlement in eastern Wisconsin and in Mequon. (5)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2 Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

During the early 1840s, some of the most intensive settlement occurred in Mequon. Joining the Yankee families were many groups of German immigrants and a number of Irish immigrants, as well. The German immigrants, though, made the most significant architectural and cultural contribution to Mequon. The first Germans in Mequon were William Opitz, his father and mother, and his sister and brother-in-law who immigrated in 1839. About a half dozen families from Saxony, led by Andreas Geidel, also came in 1839, creating the Altenburg Settlement along what is now Wauwatosa Road. A larger German immigrant group that came in 1839 became one of the most significant German groups in Mequon.

This group consisted of about 40 families from Pomerania who settled in western Mequon and established a community known as "Freystatt" (Freistadt). Known as "Old Lutherans," these Germans left Germany rather than join the state church. By 1850, many more German families had settled in Mequon, filling in all the available land of the town (6)

In the center of the old town of Mequon, a village grew up during the 1840s. Named Thiensville for John Thien, who built the first grist mill, the community grew into a thriving village during the nineteenth century. Freistadt was another village that grew up in Mequon during the nineteenth century. Although much smaller than Thiensville, Freistadt was located in the heart of the German immigrant community and by 1880, it had two churches, a general store, a post office, two shops, and about 24 houses. Other concentrations of houses appeared at the crossroads of the town's major arteries, but none developed into villages like Freistadt or Thiensville. (7)

The old town of Mequon was originally a part of the large Old Washington County, established in 1836. Officially the Town of Mequon was established in 1846, and in 1853, Washington County was split into two counties and Mequon became a town in the new Ozaukee County. For most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Mequon was a rural town surrounding the village of Thiensville. Many of the town's farms were large, and some families held several hundred acres of land at a time. The rural character of the town can be seen in its population during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In 1850, Mequon's population was 2,100 and it would stay between 2,500 and 3,000 through the Great Depression of the 1930s. (8)

During the early twentieth century, the beginnings of Mequon's suburbanization could be seen along the major arteries of the town. During the 1910s and 1920s, bungalows were built on large suburban-style lots that were divided off of farm land along Cedarburg, Green Bay, Freistadt, Wauwatosa, and Port Washington roads. Also during this time, especially along the Milwaukee River and the Lake Michigan shoreline, some wealthy families built suburban estates featuring fine period revival style homes. (9)

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Section 8 Page 3 Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

Despite these developments, the rural character of the town so prevailed that the citizens did not even build a formal town hall during most of its history, rather, town officials conducted meetings in private homes. But, by the late 1930s, the necessity for a modern government building was met with the construction of the Mequon Town Hall in 1937. The new town hall housed offices and the fire department. A swimming pool and bath house were also erected next the town hall building. (10)

After World War II, modern subdivisions began to appear in Mequon, which was just a short automobile trip from Milwaukee. During the 1950s and 1960s, Mequon began losing its rural identity in favor of one as a Milwaukee suburb. In fact, between 1940 and 1960, the population of the town more than doubled to 8,543 residents, and most of the growth was due to the new subdivisions and modern houses being built in the town. But even with this growth, the town of Mequon still largely resembled a rural community. (11)

During the 1950s, Mequon's residents became concerned about town property being annexed to either Thiensville, located in the town, itself, or to cities to the north and south of the town. The town citizens' solution was to incorporate, which was completed on May 24, 1957, making Mequon an official city. In 1970, the now city of Mequon's population had grown to over 12,000 residents, and fueled by continued suburban development, the population in Mequon in 1980 was slightly over 16,000. (12)

During the 1980s and 1990s, favorable economic conditions resulted in skyrocketing suburban development in the city of Mequon, and today, almost the entire eastern half of the once-rural town of Mequon is filled with suburban residential development. The city is now considered a suburb of Milwaukee, not a farm community, although many areas in the western half of the city are still filled with fields and farmsteads. But, most of the farmsteads are occupied by non-farmers and it may be only a matter of time before the remaining fields are filled with houses as suburban development moves west. Because of this type of suburban pressure, it has been and continues to be, a challenge to maintain the historic rural features of the city's history.

ARCHITECTURE

The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Department, commonly known as Mequon City Hall, is a fine example of Art Deco-influenced architecture. The Art Deco style was popular between 1925 and 1945 in Wisconsin. As a reaction to the Classical Revival style, Art Deco buildings have a vertical emphasis and incorporate modernistic or highly stylized details characterized by hard edges that suggest machine precision. Low-relief geometrical ornamentation is also

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Section 8 Page 4 Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

characteristic of the style and typically includes shallow fluted columns, chevrons, stylized sunbursts, and muted polychromy. Simple Art Deco buildings often show much of their style in their form via the use of stepped or set-back facades. (13)

The Mequon City Hall building is locally significant for architecture because it is a well-executed example of the Art Deco style that utilizes many of the details described above. Although the building is not an elaborate example of the Art Deco style, both its exterior and interior details are typical of it.

Its exterior Art Deco decoration, however, consists primarily of its form and massing; that is, its use of a stepped facade, which adds both interest and size to what is essentially a one-story building.

Along with the Art Deco form and massing, the architects added some typical Art Deco details to the exterior. For example, the use of multi-hued bricks gives the building a muted polychromy that is a typical element of the style.

The shallow pilaster strips with their stylized, fluted capitals that were used to decorate the main entrance are also Art Deco details that give the main block of the building a modern appearance and a vertical emphasis. In addition, the octagonal windows above the main entrance doors provide geometrical ornamentation, while the flat stone surrounds decorating the main entrances are a stylized interpretation of a classical entablature. These details, although simple, give the building additional Art Deco stylistic elements.

The lobby of the city hall is another area where the architects used Art Deco details. In particular, the original terrazzo floor has a framed, stylized sun design that is an attractive and dynamic decoration typical of the Art Deco style. The terra cotta frieze, with its chevron and shell design, is also a fine Art Deco detail of the lobby. The Art Deco details of both the exterior and interior of the Mequon City Hall give the building an elegance and quality that belies its construction during one of the worst economic periods in the country's history.

Because of the building's fine architectural style and due to the efforts of city staff and the Mequon Landmarks Commission, the building was not abandoned when it became necessary for the city to add space to its government office facilities. Instead, the old building was renovated and a large addition was made to its south end. Because the new addition was well-planned to harmonize with and not overwhelm the old building, the original Mequon City Hall is still largely intact, and in fact, some of its original interior spaces have been restored. The result is a building that meets the needs of modern city government while respecting the history and architecture of the original

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin
building.

The renovation of interior details in the old city hall section of the current building is one of the reasons that it has such a high level of integrity. Much of the original building's high-quality interior doors and architectural trims were retained and restored. The restoration of the original auditorium into a large meeting room and the original fire department quarters into a large lounge returns integrity to the interior plan that had been lost in previous remodeling efforts. Many adaptive reuse renovations of historic interiors change original floor plans to meet new uses. In the case of the Mequon City Hall, the renovations restored some original floor plans to the interior.

Adding to the architectural significance of the nomination is the inclusion of the swimming pool and pool house. Because the swimming pool has had some major alterations, it is now a non-contributing resource, but its location and historical relationship to the city hall and pool house makes its inclusion in the nomination necessary. The pool house, though, does contribute to the nomination because it is a fine example of a utilitarian building constructed to harmonize with the original city hall building by using simple Art Deco details. The Art Deco style of the pool house can be seen primarily in the use of the set-back facades and shallow pilasters. These simple details give the building an attractive period appearance that still exists today, despite some alterations. The pool house is over 60 years old, yet with minor alterations, it still functions well, a testament to its good original design.

The architects of the original Mequon City Hall building and pool house were Harold P. Satre and Lionel C. Senescall of Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Harold P. Satre (1899-?) was born in Sheboygan and was educated at the University of Illinois. From 1923-1925 he worked as a draftsman for Sheboygan architect E. A. Stubenrauch and from 1925-1930 he worked under his own name. In 1930, Satre associated with Lionel C. Senescall (1901-?), a native of Minnesota and a graduate of the Armour Institute in Chicago who worked as a draftsman in Chicago before moving to Sheboygan in 1930. The firm of Satre and Senescall was formed in 1930 and designed numerous buildings in Wisconsin and particularly in the Sheboygan area, including the City Hall in Plymouth, WI in 1938, the Maysteel industrial building in Sheboygan in 1946, the Zion Reformed Church in Sheboygan in 1953, and many others. The firm remained in existence until 1966. (14)

The design for the Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station was executed relatively early (1936) in their partnership and it illustrates that Satre and Senescall was a firm that could produce a fine Art Deco design that was both functional

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

and attractive. In 1958, the Mequon City Hall interior was remodeled. The fire station wing and auditorium were divided up into offices; the original fire station doors were replaced with windows that were identical to those in the office wing; and the basement banquet room was renovated into a meeting room. These renovations were designed by the Milwaukee architectural firm of Schneider and Schaefer. These renovations were well-designed and executed, especially in the replacement of the fire station doors.

Because of the building's good representative design and high level of integrity, the Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station (along with its associated matching pool house) is believed to be of architectural significance as a good representative example of the Art Deco style as it was applied to a small scale municipal building. This significance has been further enhanced by recent renovation activity and the building continues to be an important twentieth century landmark in Mequon.

GOVERNMENT

The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station is historically significant at the local level because it represents the culmination of the growth and development of local government in Mequon. When the town hall, swimming pool, and matching pool house were completed in 1937, they were the first significant public facilities built in the town and they foreshadowed the growth and development of Mequon into a suburban city after World War II. The buildings were erected with the assistance of the federal government's WPA program, one of the most important Depression-era programs of the 1930s.

As stated in the historical background, for much of its history, Mequon was a rural town, with few public facilities other than several one-room schoolhouses dotting the countryside. By the 1930s, though, town residents began seeing a need for a town hall that the entire community could use for a meeting place. In 1935, Carl Wilbert, the Town Clerk and future first city mayor, proposed that the old gravel pit along Highway 57 in the center of the town would be a good location for such a facility. Because it was the middle of the Great Depression of the 1930s, obtaining funding for such a project from the local community would be a difficult task. But, with the assistance of a WPA grant, such a project could be completed. (15)

The WPA grant for \$30,000 was more than matched by a bond issue of \$40,000 that Mequon residents approved in a referendum in April of 1936. And, after acquiring the old gravel pit from Ozaukee County, construction began on the new town hall and fire station. As sort of a "bonus," the new town also received a swimming pool and pool house as part of the WPA project, facilities

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

that would, no doubt, have been unobtainable to Mequon's mostly rural residents without WPA involvement. (16)

Throughout the summer and fall of 1936, the town hall project moved forward and on January 2, 1937, the building was officially dedicated. The new building provided modern offices for town officials, and for the first time, the fire department had space for their equipment and to hold training sessions. But, along with these important governmental activities, the new Mequon Town Hall was also used for many social and recreational purposes. The large auditorium and banquet room in the building could be used for functions of up to 500 people and the hall was used frequently for dances, wedding receptions, concerts, plays, and meetings. The local fire department, which depended upon local fund-raisers to purchase new equipment, held many events in the town hall. The several one-room schools in the Town of Mequon held combined eighth-grade graduation ceremonies in the town hall and local groups, like the Mequon Womans Club, held meetings in the building. (17)

The Mequon City Hall continued to be used as a community building until the late 1960s, when the auditorium was converted into office space for the growing city government. Although public meetings could still be held in the old banquet room of the building, the auditorium was no longer available for the large community events that had been part of the building's original function. Along with the facilities the city hall provided for recreational and social activities, the community made use of the new swimming pool for one of the most popular summer activities, recreational swimming. In fact, the pool and pool house have been used by community residents for over 60 years and these facilities are among the most important in the city's summer recreation program. (18)

Construction of the Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station was the culmination of the growth of town government in Mequon and the new town hall's size and style foreshadowed the growth of Mequon during the post-World War II era, growth that saw a change to a city government. The rural Town of Mequon was able to govern itself with only minimal public facilities. Through the foresight of local officials in the late 1930s, a large and modern town government building was completed, one that, with a few modifications, took Mequon from town government to city government in the late 1950s. Although the auditorium was sacrificed a few years later, the Mequon City Hall continued to be a serviceable site for local government until the 1990s, when the substantial suburban growth of the 1970s and 1980s resulted in expanded city government that finally overwhelmed the building. The building still provides useful service today for meetings and staff uses as an important part of the modern Mequon city hall complex. The matching pool house and swimming pool are also

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still used extensively by the public.

The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station served the residents of Mequon as their most important site for local government for over 60 years. It was not just a city office building, but a true community center, which, along with the swimming pool and pool house, served many social and recreational needs in the community. Because of the important role the building played in the local community, it is historically significant and eligible for the National Register.

The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station is also historically significant because it was built as a WPA project, one of the most important work relief programs of the 1930s. The WPA and other New Deal programs are historically significant because they can be directly linked to the transition from a dominant local government to a strong federal government in twentieth century America.

The Great Depression of the 1930s was a turning point in how Americans perceived the role of government in their lives. Prior to Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, the federal government was involved on a very limited basis in the nation's economic and social life. Local governments had the responsibility of providing for the poor and disadvantaged and business ran the economy. For several years after the stock market crash of 1929, the federal government continued its policy of minimal intervention, assuming that the economy would eventually right itself, as it had in the past, and that local governments could handle poor relief until that time. The enduring nature of the Great Depression and the vast numbers of long-term unemployed people over-taxed local governments and resulted in the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who promised to increase the federal government's role in helping the economy and those who were hurt by its collapse. (19)

Initially, Roosevelt's New Deal programs were aimed at reviving the economy and shoring up local relief efforts. Soon, though, the Roosevelt administration introduced programs that were intended to put people to work for the money they received. These programs included the Civil Works Administration (CWA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Public Works Administration (PWA), and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA).

By far the most successful of the work relief programs of the New Deal was the Works Progress Administration (WPA), established in 1935. (20)

The WPA became the largest of the federal work relief programs and eventually took over administration of the other previously-established programs. The WPA had two main functions: to operate a nationwide program of work projects

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

to employ needy workers, and to coordinate the activities of the other work relief programs. What was particularly unique about the WPA was that it addressed the unemployment of all workers, including professional, technical, and service workers. The WPA also put people to work on useful, rather than make-work, projects. Between 1935 and 1943, the federal government funded over \$10 billion worth of projects that benefited the public (21)

The WPA operated in conjunction with a state or local agency that sponsored a particular project and was responsible for project planning. The sponsor paid for materials and equipment, while the WPA paid the majority of labor costs. WPA projects generally employed local people and the program operated until World War II created full employment. The agency was officially ended in 1943. Over its eight-year-history, the WPA employed 8.5 million people nationwide, meaning that up to 25% of all families in the United States relied on WPA work at some time during the agency's existence. (22)

Between 1935 and 1943, the WPA spent \$254 million in Wisconsin and project sponsors contributed another \$79 million. Of the total \$333 million for all projects, \$264 million was spent on construction projects. Highways and roads constituted the largest percentage of the construction projects, but public buildings, conservation projects, recreational facilities, and water and sewer systems contributed major amounts to this total. In fact, in a 1940 survey of WPA projects, it was determined that more than one-sixth of all streets, highways, and roads in Wisconsin had been improved with WPA projects. WPA workers also developed state and local parks and built fairgrounds, stadiums, grandstands, athletic fields, ball fields, playgrounds, swimming pools, and golf courses. (23)

The New Deal programs of the 1930s ushered in the era of a strong federal government in the United States, a federal government that would increasingly regulate and create programs that would directly affect people's social and economic lives. The federal government's changing role in people's lives was formed largely during the 1930s. Therefore, federal government programs of the 1930s are historically significant, and historic resources related to these programs are significant because they are tangible representatives of this important era in American history.

The need for a town hall in Mequon by the 1930s was pressing, but it is doubtful that such an elaborate or large building as the Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station would have been erected without the assistance of the WPA. The \$72,000 cost of the building was funded with only \$42,000 in local money, most of it through a bond issue. And, without the WPA grant as an incentive, it might have been impossible to pass even the \$40,000 bond issue.

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station was typical of the type of project funded by the WPA; that is, it was a public building that served not only the needs of local government, but provided facilities for general public use, as well. The large auditorium was a community social and recreational center and the swimming pool and pool house added to the recreational facilities of the community during the summer months. Rather than just meet one perceived need in a building project, WPA projects gave communities public facilities that significantly added to the residents' quality of life.

The stylish Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station is thus believed to be historically significant both because it is the only building that has been historically associated with the administration of Mequon's local government and because it is also associated with one of the most important federal government work relief programs of the 1930s. It is a good example of how the WPA program assisted not only unemployed residents at the time it was built, but how this program provided facilities that the public still uses and enjoys today.

Notes to Section 8:

(1) The period of significance includes the years during which this building was important as a German ethnic farmstead in Mequon.

(2) "Mequon Town Hall Dedicated," *Mequon Town Talks*, Vol. 1, No. 9, January, 1937, p. 1.

(3) "Specifications for the Town Hall and Fire Department Building Mequon, Wisconsin," on file in the Department of City Development, Mequon City Hall, Mequon, Wisconsin; Blueprints for the remodeling of Mequon City Hall, 1958, on file in the Department of City Development, Mequon City Hall, Mequon, Wisconsin.

(4) Don Silldorff, "Mequon's Early One Room Schools," April 1996, unpublished manuscript on file in the Planning Department, City of Mequon, Mequon City Hall, Mequon, Wisconsin, p. 2; Carol Lohry Cartwright, Donald Silldorff, and Sharon C. Robinson, *City of Mequon Intensive Survey Report*, Mequon: City of Mequon, 1990, p. 8.

(5) *Ibid.*

(6) Silldorff, p. 3.

(7) Cartwright, et. al., pp. 9-10.

(8) *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 12.

(10) *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

(11) *Ibid.*, p. 12.

(12) *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

- (13) Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, Vol. II, Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Architecture, pp. 2-34.
- (14) City Directories for Sheboygan, Wisconsin, on file in the Library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.
- (15) Don Silldorff, "Stories From Mequon No. 2 Town Hall Dedication," Mequon: Mequon Historical Society, 1997.
- (16) *Ibid.*
- (17) *Ibid.*; "Mequon Town Hall Dedicated."
- (18) Silldorff, "Stories From Mequon No. 2."
- (19) Robert Kelley, *The Shaping of the American Past*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978, pp. 643-644.
- (20) *Ibid.*, pp. 624-634.
- (21) United States Work Projects Administration, *Final Report of the WPA Program 1935-43*, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1946, pp. 7-8; Louise M. Dallenbach, "A Brief History of the Works Progress Administration," 1982, paper on file in the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.
- (22) United States Work Projects Administration, iii, 10, 15; Dallenbach, "A Brief History."
- (23) United States Work Projects Administration, pp. 124, 126; P. D. Flanner, Administrator, "Federal Works Agency: Work Projects Administration," 2 April 1940, report on file in the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
 Name of Property

Ozaukee
 County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

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

Primary location of additional data:
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State Agency
 Federal Agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
 Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 3 acres

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

1 <u>1/6</u> <u>4/2/0/0/4/0</u> <u>4/7/8/5/8/9/0</u> Zone Easting Northing	3 _____ Zone Easting Northing
2 _____ Zone Easting Northing	4 _____ Zone Easting Northing <input type="checkbox"/> See Continuation Sheet

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Carol Lohry Cartwright	date	9/15/99
organization	prepared for Mequon Landmarks Commission	telephone	(414) 473-6820
street & number	W7646 Hackett Rd.	zip code	53190
city or town	Whitewater	state	WI

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Blueprints for the remodeling of Mequon City Hall, 1958. On file in the Department of City Development, Mequon City Hall, Mequon, Wisconsin.
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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description

The verbal boundary description of this property is as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the west curb of North Cedarburg Road and a line running 20 feet south of the south elevation of the new addition to the Mequon City Hall, then north along the curb of North Cedarburg Road to a line running 20 feet north of the swimming pool and the pool house fence, then west along the line running 20 feet north of the swimming pool and pool house fence to a line running 20 feet west of the pool house, then south along this line to the line running 20 feet south of the south elevation of the new addition to the Mequon City Hall, then east along this line to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The Mequon Town Hall and Fire Department, Pool House, and Swimming Pool sit on a large lot along with several other city-owned building, recreational fields, and parking lots. The boundary for this nomination was drawn to include the historic setting of the old buildings while drawing out other city-owned properties. The most important landscaped area of the property, the large lawn in front of the city hall and swimming pool, has been retained to keep the historic setting of the resources.

Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station Complex
Name of Property

Ozaukee
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

Property Owner

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

name/title	City of Mequon		
organization	c/o John Censky, Community Development		date
street&number	11333 N. Cedarburg Rd.		telephone (414) 242-3100
city or town	Mequon	state WI	zip code 53092

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

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

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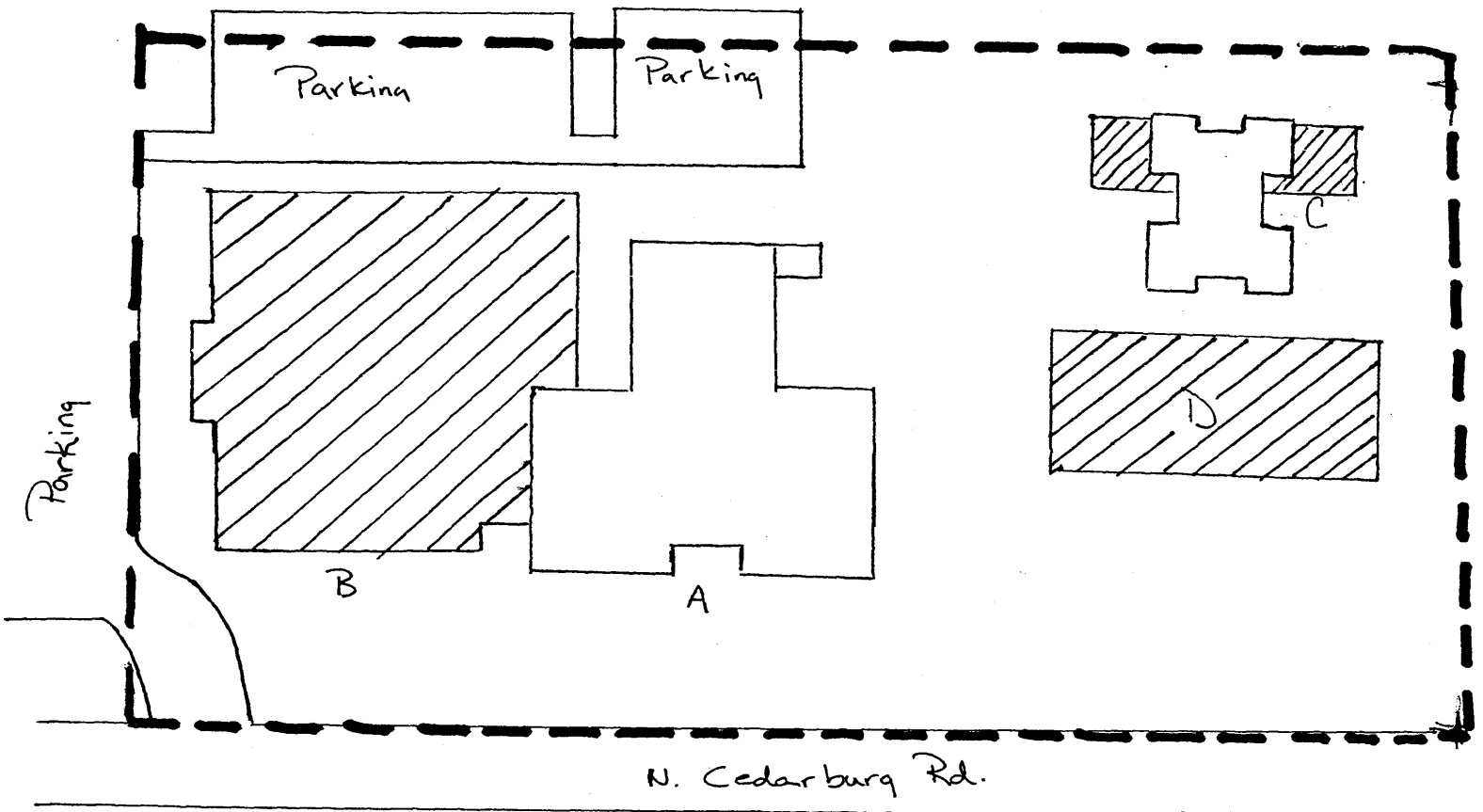
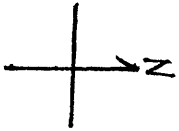
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Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

MEQUON TOWN HALL AND FIRE STATION, Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin.
Photos by Carol Cartwright, August, 1999. Negatives on file in the Historic
Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison,
Wisconsin. Views:

- 1 of 10: Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station, east elevation, view from the northeast.
- 2 of 10: Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station, north elevation, view from the northwest.
- 3 of 10: Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station, west elevation, view from the west.
- 4 of 10: New addition to the Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station, view from the southeast.
- 5 of 10: Interior of Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station, lobby, looking to the north.
- 6 of 10: Interior of Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station, lobby, looking to the south.
- 7 of 10: Interior of Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station, auditorium.
- 8 of 10: Swimming pool and pool house, view from the east.
- 9 of 10: Pool house, west elevation, view from the southwest.
- 10 of 10: Pool house, interior.

MEQUON TOWN HALL AND FIRE STATION
MEQUON, OZAUKEE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

SITE MAP



Key:

A: Mequon Town Hall and Fire Station
C: Pool House

B: New Addition
D: Swimming Pool



Contributing



Non-contributing



Boundary

Not to scale