

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JAN 30 1984  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Fire Station <sup>No. 4</sup> ~~#4~~

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 1329 W. Dayton Street \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Madison \_\_\_ vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Dane code 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name City of Madison, c/o Mr. Warren Kenney, Real Estate Development Unit, DPD

street & number 215 Monona Avenue

city, town Madison \_\_\_ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53710

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dane County Courthouse

street & number 209 Monona Avenue

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53709

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes  no

date 1973 \_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Fire Station #4 is a two-story building with 14" brick load-bearing walls and original concrete floors. The 42' x 83' structure was built during the winter of 1904-1905 on a 56' x 85' corner lot in a developing residential area near the rapidly expanding western and southern suburbs. Today, University of Wisconsin buildings are encroaching into the residential neighborhood and most area housing is rented to students.

Exterior walls of Fire Station #4 are cream brick. Every sixth brick row on the first floor is indented to create a horizontally striped pattern. A slightly projecting row of headers separates the first and second stories. A beltcourse of molded bricks encircles the building at the level of the springing of the arches on the second floor windows. The asphalt shingled roof is a bell-cast hip with similar roofs over the original small, clapboard sided dormers on the main (north) and east facades. Originally the roof projected farther over the walls to create eaves, but the eaves were removed sometime in the distant past. The high, slightly battered basement walls are of concrete.

The main (Dayton Street) facade is symmetrical. Two large fire engine doorways under flat arches have ca. 1920 mechanically operated bifold doors of panelled wood with tall, narrow, ten-light windows in each of the eight sections. The original swing-out double doors were similar in appearance but had smaller windows at the tops of the doors only.

The Randall Street facade on the west is basically symmetrical also. A large projecting central pavilion has a square tower at each end. The north tower rises just a foot or so above the roofline of the fire house. Its roof is now flat, but was originally capped by a semicircular parapet on each side. The south (hose) tower rises several feet to be capped by a watch platform. Originally this tower was corbelled at the top and was capped by a cupola with a witch's-cap roof. Each tower has a passage door at the bottom and a flat-arched double hung window with a transom at the second story level. The north tower is trimmed at the top by a brick-filled bull's-eye, whereas the south tower has a double-arched window on each side which has been filled in with brick. In the center of the pavilion a double window under a segmental arch lights the stairway. Two small double-hung windows light the first floor and basement.

To the north of the pavilion, a small, one-story brick watch room with a slightly sloping shed roof was added ca. 1962. The top of an old, segmentally arched opening that originally contained three double hung windows remains just above the roof of the addition. Above there is a set of two round-arched double hung windows. To the south of the central pavilion, an original opening to the hawmow at the second story level was replaced by a small window and the old entrance to the stable was replaced by a modern overhead garage door. The roof above this rear stable section rises to a secondary hip, crowned by a small wooden cupola.

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The east side of the building is pierced by double, double-hung windows under segmental arches on the first level, and round-arched double-hung windows above. A plain, attached chimney rises to a few feet above the ridgeline of the roof.

The interior is plain and functional. On the first floor, the painted brick walls of the rear stable area are exposed above wainscotting. The walls are plastered above the wainscotting in the front apparatus room. Floors are concrete with a grid pattern for drainage in the rear where the horses used to be kept. A line of four supporting metal posts runs down the middle of the building. A small toilet room with wood partitions was added at a later date near the hose tower. The original vertically sliding wood door to the hose tower remains. The dropped ceiling is made of acoustical tiles.

The upstairs sleeping quarters have been altered many times and now have linoleum tile floors, plaster walls and acoustical tile ceilings. The old hay mow over the stable was converted into a bedroom for the station commander and a day room. Three brass poles allow for instant access to the first floor and the stairway is in the center of the west side.

The partial basement is located under the north half of the apparatus room.

As of this writing, four developers have offered to purchase Fire Station #4 to convert it to housing. All four developers wish to receive the tax benefits for rehabilitating historic buildings and all four developers plan to remove the ca. 1962 watch house and restore the original window behind it. In addition, the rear garage door will be replaced by a door similar to the existing or original front doors, the hose tower roof will be replaced, and the bricked-in windows will be restored.

Although the original interior features that remain are interesting, none are significant to the essential historic character of the building.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400-1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500-1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600-1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/
___ 1700-1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ humanitarian
___ 1800-1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	___ communications	___ industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1904-1905<sup>1</sup>      **Builder/Architect** Lew F. Porter, Architect<sup>2</sup>

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Period of historical significance: 1905-1934<sup>3</sup>

Fire Station #4 is historically significant on a local level as a representative example of a type of building that technology has rendered obsolete: the combination fire engine house and stable. Built in the winter of 1904-1905, it is the only fire station remaining in Madison from the days when horses pulled the fire rigs. In addition, it is the oldest intact fire station remaining in Madison and is a visual landmark in its near west side neighborhood.

### History

Fire Station #4 was the first fire station built outside the central city isthmus and as such is a symbol of the suburban expansion of Madison in the beginning years of the 20th century. In 1901 the City purchased a parcel of land on Frances Street, six blocks from the Square, for the erection of a new west side fire station. But within the next three years the boundaries of the western suburbs had expanded dramatically. Not only did many Madisonians in that period elect to relocate from the downtown to the very desirable western suburbs of Wingra Park, University Heights, etc., but a whole new influx of people to Madison in those years contributed to a rapid expansion of the metropolitan area (the population between 1900 and 1905 increased by a brisk 27%).<sup>4</sup>

In 1904, Fire Capt. Bernard believed that a run from Frances Street to a house in the suburbs would overly tax his horses and cause potentially destructive delays. Therefore, he asked the Common Council to sell the Frances Street site and to purchase the current site of Fire Station #4 instead. The following summer, the Common Council adopted Capt. Bernard's recommendation and within the year, a new fire station was built and equipped with two horses and a combination chemical and hose wagon.

The architect, Lew F. Porter, was born in La Salle County, Illinois in 1862. After attending the University of Wisconsin, he began work in 1884 for A. D. Conover on the Dane County Courthouse project. In 1887, Conover and Porter established a partnership, and designed many buildings, especially in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, in Madison and in northern Wisconsin, where they had a branch office. In 1899, the partnership dissolved. Porter practiced alone, with offices in the Ellsworth Block. Little is known of his work as an independent practitioner. Of the eleven buildings known to be designed by him in that period, only three houses and the fire house remain. In 1906, Porter became the supervising architect for the new State

(continued)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one.

Quadrangle name Madison West, Wisconsin

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	3	0	3	9	0	0	4	7	7	1	2	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The north 99 feet of Lot 1, Block 12, Brooks Addition. The lot lines approximate the outside edges of the building.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Katherine H. Rankin, Preservation Planner

organization City of Madison

date August 12, 1983

street & number 215 Monona Avenue

telephone 608-266-6552

city or town Madison

state Wisconsin 53710

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director, Historic Preservation Division, SHSW

date JAN. 25, 1984

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 3/1/84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Capitol, a position which he held until his death in 1918.

The national trend in firehouse design in the early years of the 20th century was to construct expensive monuments to civic pride, an outgrowth of the "City Beautiful" movement that began in the 1890s. Madison never really embraced the "City Beautiful" ethic wholeheartedly because of a long-standing tradition of frugality in the erection of buildings at taxpayers' expense. Between 1900 and 1904, the City erected a new central police station and a new central fire station in high quality designs by the local architectural firm of Claude and Starck (demolished in the 1950s). But even before the downtown fire station was completed, Mayor William D. Curtis chided the Council for spending in excess of \$5000 for its construction, a modest sum even in 1904. The Council decided to limit spending on Fire Station #4 to \$5000, but when Porter's initial design was let out for bids, the lowest bid was \$4000 over budget, forcing Porter to redesign the project.

Despite its low cost, the design of Fire Station #4 exemplifies some of the general characteristics of fire house design of the period. As new suburbs began to flourish around larger cities, architects were faced with a new design challenge: to design a firehouse that would blend in with the suburban landscape. An aerial photo of the neighborhood around Fire Station #4 taken shortly after it was built shows that the massing, scale and general effect of the fire house were compatible with the simple, boxy massing of the large frame and brick residences being constructed near-by. Earlier firehouses located downtown were of a commercial storefront type in keeping with their locality. Fire Station #4, on the other hand, was the first fire house constructed for the suburbs. Its design is a physical embodiment of that fact.

Other pre-1940 firehouses remaining in Madison are:

1. Fire Station #2, built in 1856 at 125 State Street. This brick, load-bearing structure has been drastically altered to house commercial uses. The front was redesigned in 1922 for its occupant, Castle and Doyle. Virtually nothing remains to show that this building was once a fire station.
2. Second Fire Station #2, built in 1921 at 301 N. Broom Street. This cream brick structure was sensitively altered and enlarged to house offices for Urban Land Investments. Of the interior features, only the fire tower remains intact.
3. Fire Station #6, built in 1929 at the corner of Park Street and Parr to the designs of Claude and Starck. This is a simplified Prairie style building still used as a fire station.
4. Fire Station #7, 2410 Monroe Street, built in 1938 to the designs of Philip M. Homer. This red brick Colonial Revival building is now a theater.

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Earlier fire stations that no longer exist:

1. Fire Station #1, Webster Street. The first fire station on this site was built in 1856, of brick with arched windows and doors. An addition was made in 1880, when the City purchased an old plow factory next door. In 1904, this station was replaced by a new one, mentioned in the preceding text.
2. Capitol Hook and Ladder Co. house, Monona Ave. A small building was constructed for \$345.00 for a volunteer company in 1857. In 1877 it was replaced by a brick firehouse. This building was demolished after it was sold in 1891.
3. Fire Station #3, 1217 Williamson Street. Built in 1902, this firehouse was of the storefront design, with a false front constructed of pressed metal. It was replaced by the current Fire Station #3 in 1954.

<sup>1</sup>Common Council Proceedings, Feb. 12, 1904 and Aug. 26, 1904.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>The building was used continuously as a fire station until 1983. 1934 was chosen as the end date for the period of significance because the building was not of exceptional historical importance, as required by NPS rules, during the last 50 years.

<sup>4</sup>David Mollenhoff, Madison: A History of the Formative Years, Du-  
buque: Kendall-Hunt, 1982, p. 260.

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