

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

JUN 27 1988

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

1. Name

historic Jensen, J.L., House

and or common Jensen-Maher House

2. Location

street & number 1100 Brawley Street N/A not for publication

city, town Stevens Point N/A vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Portage code 097

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Bonita and William Maher

street & number 1100 Brawley street

city, town Stevens Point N/A vicinity of state Wisconsin 54481

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Portage County Register of Deeds

street & number 1516 Church Street

city, town Stevens Point, state Wisconsin 54481

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located within a few blocks south of the original settlement of Stevens Point and one block east of the Wisconsin River, on the corner of Elk and Brawley Street, the J.L. Jensen House, built in 1901, is a large, all-wood, 2½ story, teal blue with white and charcoal trim Queen Anne residence consisting of over 2,900 sq. feet of living area. The interestingly complicated Victorian eclectic cedar shingle roof, important to its architecture, features a gable-on-hip with a capped window flanked by shingle-work; Tuscan columns and a fan shaped sunburst pattern in the wood; a small turret with a copper spire; copper finials; and mullion windows in a diamond pattern. A projecting gable with charcoal fish-scale shingles frames a Roman mullioned window with a basinlike feature beneath, and brackets in threes under the gable ends. Adding to its complexity and architectural sophistication are two large hip-roofed bays on both the northeast and southwest sides of the house. The house features three stair-step windows on the southwest side containing leaded glass. Much leaded glass is found also on the southwest and northeast sides of the house, including two completely leaded side-light windows on the northeast bay in the large double parlor. An 18 inch stone foundation supports the building.

The 32 window openings are rectangular with double hung sash. The stationary front parlor window and vestibule window accentuate beautiful leaded glass panes. The Roman window in the third story is double hung with a segmented upper sash. The windows on both bays face the four points of the compass. The building has entrance porches on all four facades and a second story balcony on the southeast facade of the house. The house stands on an irregularly shaped lot whose dimensions are 120' x 197' x 155' x 90' (Appendix A) and comprise more than three city lots. The site includes a two-stall rusticated concrete cement block garage measuring 25' x 21'. The front of the garage features one overhead door, one pair of swinging carriage doors and a false windowed door, giving the appearance that the front of the garage is all windowed carriage doors. The garage also has two smaller doors on the rear and side, and two double hung windows in the rear. The garage is located about 10 feet to the northeast of the house. From a signature and date painted on a beam, we know the garage was already in existence in 1906. To the north of the garage is an all-wood frame playhouse, 19' x 12', built in the Victorian style and containing three double hung segmented windows, 1 stationary segmented window and one entrance. Allegedly, it was built around 1901, and evidence shows that at one time the playhouse as well as the garage contained stoves by which they were heated. The chimney still exists on the garage. These buildings too are significant in that they complement the design of the house. The southeast side as well as half of the southwest side of the property is surrounded by stone and mortar rip rap, separating the land the house is built on from the sidewalks and boulevards. The grounds of the J.L. Jensen House include mostly original plantings--borders of lilacs, honeysuckle, grapevines, iris, lily of the valley, huge walnut trees, elms, maples, and pines. The white picket fence which separates the formal and informal gardens has been restored. In the northeast corner of the formal garden stands a large stone barbecue pit which had been added later.

The two chimneys on the house are of a typical Queen Anne style, with corbelled caps and have been rebuilt according to a 1901 photo. The original window frames and doors are intact, functional, and in excellent condition.

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The southwest porch facing Elk Street has been rebuilt, using the design as seen in the 1901 photo. It uses the original Tuscan columns and rails with a reproduction of the pilaster style stairway with pediment in roof. The porch is supported by its original brick columns and is surrounded by wood lattice. The east porch is actually a sunroom with 10 double hung windows and an outside entrance. It also contains two other entrances--one angling on the northeast bay from the parlor and the other from the dining room. The northwest wall of the sunporch contains a large double hung window on the dining room wall. This porch is supported by original brick columns surrounded by wood lattice. The southeast porch (front of the house) was enclosed around 1950 and is now a vestibule. Its pillars and rails have been removed but a leaded glass window that at one time was on the northwest wall of the vestibule has been utilized on the vestibule's southwest wall. A window bench of golden oak was added below the window. Above this vestibule is a second story railed balcony. A fourth porch with stoop is located on the northwest side of the house and is enclosed with one stairway leading to the kitchen and another enclosed stairway serves as an additional entrance to the basement.

Floorplan

The first floor of the house is of a circular design in that all rooms have more than one entrance, allowing a person to enter a room from one door and exit through another. The second floor can be reached by way of either the maid's stairwell which has entrances off the kitchen or the first floor bath, or by way of the more formal stairway in the front foyer. The first floor from southeast (front) entrance contains a vestibule leading to a foyer with an original golden oak spindled staircase, storage bench and closet with an all-wood panel ceiling starting above the closet door and extending beneath the stairway. The wall above the storage bench consists of panels of golden oak in a geometric design. The wall separating the storage bench and closet is also of panels of golden oak and encases a bevelled glass mirror with wood beaded trim around it. The front hall leads to a double parlor containing leaded glass windows, bay, and a golden oak carved fireplace with a brass carved insert. The fireplace is situated on an angle in the west corner of the double parlor. The oak picture rail surrounding the room one and one-half feet below the ceiling has been restored. Double pocket doors from the parlor lead to the den. It contains a windowed bay, picture rail, a closet built under the front stairway, and an entrance to the bathroom. At one time this room contained a servant's bell. Another set of double pocket doors from the parlor lead to the formal dining room. Its features include picture rail, an original Knapp doorbell, a bell under the table to ring for servants, two entrances to the kitchen, and one entrance to the sunporch. Also from the parlor is an entrance to the sunporch through the north wall of the bay. All two and one-half inch thick golden oak doors contain the original brass hardware. The kitchen has two entrances from the dining room, two outside entrances, an entrance to the basement, and an entrance leading to the first floor bathroom as well as to the maid's stairway. The entire first floor, with the exception of the kitchen, bathroom and maid's stairway, is trimmed with golden oak woodwork with much beading and crown molding above doors, windows, and fireplace. Nearly all of the wide curved baseboards still grace the entire first and second floors. The first floor baseboards are two piece of varnished golden oak, while the second floor are one piece of painted pine and basswood. All the woodwork of the second floor had been painted originally.

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Changes The changes on the first floor appear to be the removal of a wall and a third set of pocket doors separating the parlors, and the enclosing of an entrance to the front parlor from the foyer. The northwest wall of the dining room was moved in three feet to enlarge the kitchen which at one time consisted of a very narrow butler's pantry and a very small kitchen work area. In short, the number of rooms in the house changed from 12 to 10. Evidence of the changes can be seen in the parlor where maple floors had to be filled with matching boards to fill the space the wall had occupied. A wide arch now separates the front and main parlors.

Bedrooms The second floor consists of five bedrooms. Bedroom one on the southeast (front of the house) contains side by side double hung windows facing the front of the house and one wider window facing northeast. This room also contains a parlor leading to the balcony and a small walk-in closet. Bedroom two (master bedroom) features two windows angled on the northeast bay and a large walk-in closet with window. Bedroom three (guest room) has two windows angled on the southwest bay, a large closet which is not original, and a very small L-shaped closet which shares its space with a chimney and is original. The large "toilet room" with entrances from bedroom three and the hall contains a sizeable closet, built in drawers and shelves, toilet and original sink. Bedroom four has two windows facing northeast and a closet alcove which contains a window and radiator to heat this bedroom. Bedroom five is in the maid's quarters and contains a small closet and two windows. One window overlooks the southwest porch and the other overlooks the northwest porch. There is evidence that at one time a separate stove was used to heat the maid's quarters, which can be closed off from the family sleeping area. With the exception of the bathrooms and kitchen, all floors are of hardwood maple. The hardwood floor in the maid's bedroom, which had been covered with linoleum but is now refinished, is unusual in that it is recessed about a half-inch below the hallway floor and the other second floor rooms.

Attic The attic floor is unfinished with beams showing and rough sawn wide boards on the floor, accentuating the dimensions and spectacular angles of the gables, hipped bays, turret and hip style roof. There is a 14 foot rise from floor to ridgepole. It's an open area which certainly would have lent itself to be finished as a ballroom.

Basement The basement once housed a cooking area where meals were prepared and brought up to be served to the family. The basement contains a large boiler which heats the water going into the radiators that still heat the home. The boiler was originally hand-fired, then oil-fired, and is now gas-fired. All but four of the radiators are freestanding and are of impressive molded cast iron design. The four which are not freestanding are of the 1950 vintage baseboard style.

Number of Resources within Property

The J. L. Jensen property is comprised of three contributing resources and no non-contributing resources.

8. Significance

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

Period of Significance: 1901-1906

Specific dates: 1901-1906—construction² Builder/Architect: Jeffers, J.L.¹

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The J.L. Jensen House is being nominated under criterion C for its local significance as one of the best examples of the Queen Anne style in Stevens Point. This exuberant and ornamental Queen Anne design was the commission of the Stevens Point area architect, J.H. Jeffers, who over a period of about a decade produced notable works in Stevens Point, Wausau, and Antigo. Architect-designed houses are a rarity in Stevens Point where most houses were built by "masons and carpenters by the day."³ The Jensen House is virtually unsurpassed in Stevens Point in terms of its stylistic sophistication, size and scale. The high level of historic integrity is to a large degree due to the fact that the house remained in the same family for three generations. Wendell Nelson in his architectural guidebook to Stevens Point notes that the Jensen house is "remarkable for its fine condition; the only exterior changes in the (87) years since its construction seem to have been the removal of a Neo-Classical Revival front porch, and different color schemes."⁴ Thus it is that the J.L. Jensen House is a superb local example of the Queen Anne style and a notable example of the work of J.H. Jeffers.

ARCHITECTURE

At the time it was built, the J.L. Jensen House was described as "a modern one with all improvements and will cost \$3,000 or \$4,000."⁵ A later article stated that the Jensen house was "a two story, pretentious frame structure of the Queen Anne style with basements under all. It contains 12 rooms, besides closets, with bath room on first floor and toilet room above. The rooms are pleasant and nicely arranged, and the building covers a space of 26 x 54 at the narrowest point and 28 x 54 feet at the widest. The first floor is handsomely finished in oak, while the second floor is of pine and basswood. the plans were drawn up by J.H. Jeffers, now of Wausau, and P.H. Maine did the carpenter work throughout. Frank Molski did the plastering, Gilbert Norby the mason work, and Chamberlain Bros. the painting."⁶

The architect, J.H. Jeffers, practised in Stevens Point for a brief period of time before moving his practise to Wausau in 1901. The majority of his known work was in Wausau and Stevens Point, and dates from the years 1900-1902.⁷ Another extant house in Stevens Point which was designed by Jeffers, is the Green House at 1501 Main Street which was built in 1903 (Appendix B). The house is a more conventional interpretation of the Queen Anne style, and features ornamental gables, a detailed pediment over the porch, Tuscan columns, and a typical projecting corner tower. Its ornamentation is much simpler and less profuse, than the Jensen House. Other known designs by Jeffers include a Neo-Classical Revival home at 802 Fulton Street, Wausau; the Philosopher Press log cabin at 802 E. McClellan, Wausau; and the Wausau Club at 309 McClellan, Wausau;

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a house at 502 McIndoe Street, Wausau (no longer extant); and the Antigo Opera House (listed on the National Register in 1984).⁸ Perhaps his most notable design was for the Wisconsin Building at the St. Louis World's Fair (Louisiana Purchase Exposition) in 1903. Jeffers was an accomplished and versatile architect, and like many of his peers, designed in a wide range of styles ranging from Queen Anne to the emerging Classical Revival. The J.L. Jensen House stands as a symbol of Jeffer's accomplishment and skill in the Queen Anne style.

The J.L. Jensen House is a fine and well-preserved example of the late Queen Anne style in Stevens Point. It is distinguished by its stylistic sophistication and a number of unusual features not seen on other Queen Anne style houses in the community, which contains a number of other more modest and typical examples of the style.

At the time of its construction in 1901, the Queen Anne style was nearing the end of its period of greatest popularity and beginning to show a strong Classical Revival influence. According to Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, the late Queen Anne was generally less exuberant and more symmetrical than its earlier period, and exhibited more classically-derived ornamentation. The J.L. Jensen House is typical of this pattern. Its detail is more restrained than the typical "high-style" early Queen Anne house, although its bays and projecting front gable still create an asymmetrical and irregular plan characteristic of the style. Other characteristic touches include the shingle-clad gable, sunburst motif in the attic hip-on-gable dormer, flared clapboard skirt on the second story, and bell-cast roof of the attic dormer. The arched window in the front gable with its basin-like feature and the tuscan porch columns, pedimented porch detail, and leaded glass, diamond pane windows all demonstrate the influence of the emerging Colonial and Classical Revival styles.⁹ It is the unusual and dramatic use of these details and the large size and scale of the Jensen house which make it stand out from others in Stevens Point.

Stevens Point has a large number of Victorian period houses within the city limits. A good deal of the more sizable houses in the city reflect more vernacular interpretations of the most popular Victorian styles, although together they represent a fairly complete development of Victorian styles in the community. Most of the Queen Anne houses in Stevens Point feature a basically square plan with the asymmetry of the style evoked through projecting gables, elaborate porches and decorative woodwork. The A. G. Green House at 1501 Main Street also designed by Jeffers is a fine example of the style and retains a high degree of integrity, but is a most typical and conventional example and lacks the exuberant and create details of the Jensen house such as the hip-on-gable roof form, brackets, unusual belcast dormer with copper finial and recessed attic porch with its tuscan columns. The C.E. Van Hecke house at 1101 Brawley Street shares a similar size and scale but is basically a more typical cross-gabled vernacular design with decorative details such as shingled gable ends and turned porch posts. The W. A. Holbrook House at 2032 Main Street is more comparable in terms of size, scale, exuberance of ornamentation and stylistic sophistication, but lacks the high degree of historic integrity having suffered a ca. 1960 remodelling which

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included a stone skirting around the porches, modern "bay" window, wrought-iron porch posts and porch enclosures. The J.L. Jensen House, although not without peer in Stevens Point, is distinguished by virtue of its eclectic and rather creative mix of Queen Anne and Classical details and its high level of historic integrity. With the exception of the removal of the Classical Revival style front porch, the Jensen House stands almost exactly as it was built in 1901.

Because the garage building and playhouse date very closely to the construction of the house and in terms of material and design were obviously meant to complement the design of the main house, they are included as contributing resources and the period of significance (1901-1906) was designated to include the construction dates of all three of these resources.

Historical Background

Times were good for Stevens Point. The city founded in 1858 had grown into a very successful lumbering town. Many lumber mills (Abraham Brawley for whom Brawley St. is named, owned one such mill), cabinet making shops, and sash factories arose. In conjunction came blacksmith shops, shoemakers, grocery and dry good stores, clothiers banks, harness makers, bakeries along the smooth Wisconsin River. The city and its people prospered. In 1871 the railroad came to Stevens Point--another boost for the area's economy. More lumber and goods could be shipped to other parts of the world. In 1900, one year before the J.L. Jensen House was built, the Stevens Point community was shocked by the transfer of the Wisconsin Central Railroad to Fond du Lac and Abbotsford, and its economy adversely affected. The money spent by the city and county to build shops and make Stevens Point a rich trading center were disregarded. The city's lumber supply was exhausted and so ended the volume of lumbering trade for Stevens Point. The city turned to paper making, utilizing the saw mills along the river. Hence many other business' developed; fly tying factories, potato growing, furniture making, publishing, insurance.¹⁰ It was in the midst of the city's change from a lumber town to the city we know today that J.L. Jensen built such an elegant home. The J.L. Jensen house surpasses the simpler Victorian style of most of Stevens Point's homes built at this time. It still maintains the turrets, gables, porches, chimneys and other exterior features that classify it as a late Victorian Queen Anne. The house's interior supports the formal living by which the Jensen's according to numerous newspaper articles, were known to abide. Double parlors, formal dining room, servant's quarters, beautiful gardens surrounding the property--all attest to the gracious lifestyle a home of this stature would allow in 1901 as it still does today.

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It was in 1886 that J.L. Jensen purchased the property on which the J.L. Jensen House now stands from Mrs. S.H. Marshall for \$2,000 so he could build "one of the most pleasant homes in the city."¹¹ J.L. Jensen lived in an existing home on an adjoining property on Elk Street before building his home at 200 Brawley Street (renumbered to 1100 Brawley Street) on the corner of Elk and Brawley.¹² The house remained in the same family for three generations, from 1901 until 1987, when it was sold to William and Bonita Maher. The first owners were J.L. Jensen (1852-1932) and his wife, Mary Lind Jensen (1857-1936). J.L. Jensen beginning in 1881¹³ owned a grocery store business in downtown Stevens Point and was a member of the vestry of the Church of the Intercession.¹⁴ Mary Lind Jensen, who owned the house after J.L.'s death, was a member of an early Portage County pioneer family who settled in the Stockton area.¹⁵ Gareld Jensen (1887-1956), son of J.L. and Mary, was the third to own the J.L. Jensen House. Gareld was a dentist who was reported to give "ball point pens...to all men leaving for military service from here (Stevens Point)."¹⁶ The fourth owner was Gareld's son, Charles (1920-1984), a lawyer and three-term alderman on Stevens Point's Common Council in the 1960's.¹⁷ Charles lived in the house with his wife and children while taking care of his father. When Charles died in 1984, his wife, Janet owned the house until 1987 when it was sold to William and Bonita Maher.

Some of Stevens Point's well known community members have lived in the J.L. Jensen House as a stopping off place while establishing a permanent residence in Stevens Point. One such person was John Sims, president of the Normal School (now University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point).¹⁸ Others were Dan E. Frost, a prominent attorney, and Paul Maher, founder of a local water conditioning business. Ironically, Paul Maher's business has been and continues to be run from the home built by President John Sims in 1911 at 2117 Main Street. Paul Maher is the father of William Maher, owner of the J.L. Jensen House, who now owns his father's water conditioning business which continues to be run from the Sims House.

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FOOTNOTES

- ¹Wendell Nelson, Houses That Grew, n.p., 1983, p. 1.
- ²Portage County Gazette, Nov. 27, 1901.
- ³Wendell Nelson, Houses That Grew, n.p., 1983, p. 1.
- ⁴Ibid.
- ⁵Stevens Point Daily Journal, April 8, 1901.
- ⁶Portage County Gazette, Nov. 27, 1901.
- ⁷Final Report Intensive Historic Survey, Wausau, May, 1984.
- ⁸Architect Files, Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.
- ⁹Barbara Wyatt, ed., Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Architecture study unit, 2-15.
- ¹⁰Stevens Point, Wisconsin...Centennial Publication, n.p., June, 1958.
- ¹¹Portage County Gazette, May 12, 1886.
- ¹²Stevens Point Daily Journal, April 8, 1901.
- ¹³Portage County Gazette, July 27, 1881.
- ¹⁴Stevens Point Daily Journal, July 7, 1932.
- ¹⁵Stevens Point Daily Journal, Oct. 7, 1936.
- ¹⁶Stevens Point Daily Journal, Aug. 8, 1956.
- ¹⁷Stevens Point Daily Journal, July 9, 1984.
- ¹⁸Portage County Gazette, Aug. 29, 1906, p. 1.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Stevens Point Daily Journal, various articles from April, 1901 to July, 1984.
 Portage County Gazette, various articles from 1879 to 1906.
 Edo McCullough, World's Fair Midways, New York: Exposition Press, 1966.
 Wendell Nelson, Houses That Grew, n.p., 1983.
 Stevens Point, Wisconsin...Centennial Publication, n.p., June 1958.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than One Acre

Quadrangle name Stevens Point

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6	2	9	4	9	1	0	4	9	3	2	5	6	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

Lots 43, 44, 45, and NWly 62' of Lot 48. Blk 34 S E O Add. 463/995
 The property nominated includes the entire lot historically associated with the property.

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 Bonita and William Maher

organization _____ date January 15, 1988

street & number 1100 Brawley Street telephone 715-344-2900 (office)
715-341-4525 (home)

city or town Stevens Point state Wisconsin 54481

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 [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer- WI date 4/19/88

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 7-28-88

for [Signature]
Keeper of the National Register

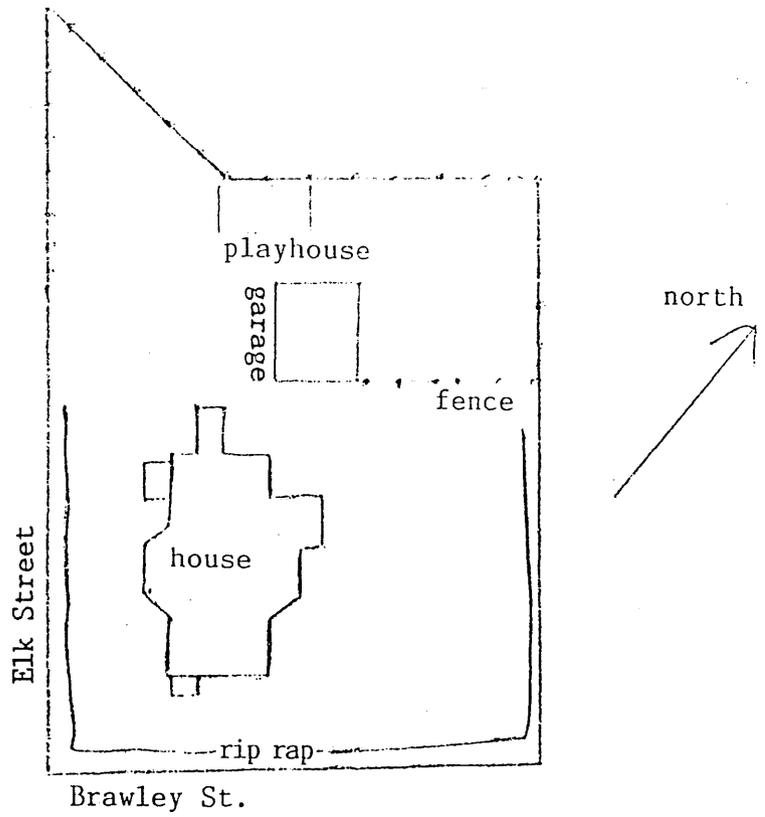
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

Appendix A

Site Plan, J.L. Jensen House, Stevens Point



(not to scale)

