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United State Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register form (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property

historic name Wisconsin Consistory Building

other names/site number Scottish Rite Masonic Center

2. Location

street & number 790 North Van Buren Street N/A not for publication
city, town Milwaukee N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Milwaukee code 079 zip code 53202

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u>0</u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing: <u>N/A</u>		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total
		No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>0</u>	

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Handwritten Signature]

8/16/94

Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Division-WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet

[Handwritten Signature: Edwin H. Beall]

9.26.94

 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet

 determined not eligible for the National Register.

 removed from the National Register.

 other, (explain):

Entered in the
National Register

[Handwritten Signature]

Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

SOCIAL/meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Materials

(enter categories from instructions)

foundation	Limestone
walls	Limestone
	Brick
roof	Slate
other	Limestone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Wisconsin Consistory Building (Scottish Rite Masonic Center) is a large two-and-a-half-story, smooth limestone-clad, Art Deco fraternal meeting hall with a rectangular plan and a dormered mansard roof set behind a parapet. The interior is spacious with offices, meeting rooms, lounges, kitchen and dining facilities, and a large auditorium. The most prominent rooms of the building are decorated with impressive plaster work, including decorative plaster ceilings, formed plaster beams, and carved plaster Masonic symbols. There are also some outstanding pictorial stained glass windows that decorate three lounges and the second floor chapel/classroom. Other decoration in the interior of the building is executed in a simple classical motif.

The Consistory Building takes up its entire lot at the southeast corner of Wells and Van Buren Streets at the eastern edge of the Central Business District of Milwaukee, the largest city in Wisconsin. The area around the Consistory is one of mixed residential and commercial uses consisting of older homes, low and high rise apartment complexes, and high-rise office buildings. The building abuts a large parking structure to the south, and there is a small alley running along the east wall. A small lawn separates the building from the sidewalks along the north and west walls; which are the principal elevations. Landscaping consists of medium-sized trees in the terrace next to the street and some small bushes at the northwest corner of the building. Wells and Van Buren Streets are wide downtown urban thoroughfares that allow for parking on both sides of the street. Large street lights sit atop tall metal light poles that are typically seen in large cities.

The Consistory Building's current appearance dates from a 1936 remodeling that used the structure of the 1889 Plymouth Congregational Church that was already on the site. The Richardsonian Romanesque church building had brick walls, a massive corner tower, and large square windows under massive round arches of rough-finished limestone. When the Scottish Rite Masons acquired the building in 1912, they had a small addition made to the south end of the building, and matched it exactly to the original structure. In 1936, prominent architect Herbert Tullgren supervised a remodeling effort that included another addition to the south and a new roof. The existing foundation and exterior walls were used to support a new veneer of smooth Bedford limestone on the north and west walls, which were decorated with Art Deco details. The interior of the building was also completely remodeled and redecorated. Because the building has not been remodeled since that time, its appearance reflects the 1936 remodeling effort today.

x See continuation sheet

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The Scottish Rite Cathedral sits on the rough-finished limestone foundation of the 1889 Plymouth Church building. The north and west walls above the foundation are covered in smooth-finished Bedford limestone that was applied over the brick walls of the 1889 church. The east and south walls of the building are the original brick walls of the church. They are now painted and are punctuated with some of the original church window and door openings, all of which have been filled. The building's roof is a mansard shape covered with polychromatic Vermont slate, and it sits behind a parapet that has a molded coping. Hip-roofed dormers project from both the north and west rooflines and feature paired twelve-light openings. The massive southeast corner tower rises slightly above the roofline and has a conical slate roof.

The north and west walls of the building are decorated with Masonic symbols in an Art Deco manner. The walls are dominated by broad vertically-grooved, very shallow pilaster strips that separate window openings. The openings have twelve-light steel sash windows (some with pictorial stained glass) and there are carved, foliated spandrel panels between the first and second stories. Above each of the second story windows (and above the third story on the tower) is a band of high relief limestone carvings of medieval figures that symbolize some of the teachings of the degrees of Scottish Rite Masonry. On the tower, in between the figures, are low relief, highly stylized double-headed eagles, the symbol of Scottish Rite Masonry.

The main entrance is in the 1936-constructed addition to the building, which faces Van Buren Street and is defined by a three-story entry pavilion. This pavilion extends upward to form a stepped gable parapet. The elevated main entrance is recessed within a compound Tudor arch portal that features molded archivolt. The arch is decorated with a stylized keystone that features the double-headed eagle. The keystone is flanked by crosses in panels of vertically grooved limestone. The entrance is reached by a wide flight of stairs with a thin iron railing. The paired entrance doors are constructed of squares of leaded glass that sit in an oak frame. Similar glazing fills sidelights and five tall panels that make up a large Tudor-arched transom.

The smaller elevated entrance openings on the north-facing Wells Street elevation of the building are similar to the main entrance, but they have no sidelights, and a smaller transom. The keystones of the side entrances are also different from the main entrance. They feature a more traditional carving of the Scottish Rite double eagle. All three entrances are lit by octagonal metal brackets. All of the entrances are flanked by metal octagonal light fixtures attached to the walls.

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The main entrance of the building leads to the first floor of the Scottish Rite Cathedral, which houses offices, lounges, and the main auditorium (see Figure 1). Upon entering the first set of doors, there is a small foyer that gives access to the reception desk and the office of the main administrator or Secretary of the Scottish Rite Bodies, Valley of Milwaukee. Through another set of leaded glass doors with sidelights and transom panels is the main lobby. The lobby has plain plastered walls, a large chandelier, a plaster rinceau cornice molding, wood paneled wainscotting, and a terrazzo floor. A double staircase that leads up to the second floor and down to the basement, sits at the south end of the lobby. The staircases have decorative iron balustrades. To the east of the lobby is a large wardrobe or cloak room with an adjoining large bathroom (originally a men's room). A smaller bathroom (originally a women's room) sits just southwest of the lobby.

To the north of the lobby is the main hallway or gallery, as it is called in the 1936 floor plans. The gallery has plastered walls, the same wood-paneled wainscotting seen in the lobby, a vaulted ceiling decorated with the rinceau cornice molding also seen in the lobby, and hanging light fixtures. At the north end of the Gallery is one of the finest rooms in the Cathedral, the first floor lounge. This long, rectangular room ends in the circle of the tower and features a decorative carved plaster ceiling and four pictorial stained glass windows. The plaster ceiling is decorated in a ribbon pattern that makes individual designs and connects or frames rosettes and Masonic symbols. Several multi-light chandeliers hang from the ceiling and provide light for the room. The stained glass windows are colorful and intricate depictions of Masonic figures and symbols. They also include Masonic mottos and many have been sponsored by individuals, families, or groups. The lounge also holds much of the Scottish Rite Body's impressive art collection.

Two wood-paneled doors with plain oak moldings lead from the lounge into the ambulatory, a U-shaped hallway running around three sides of the auditorium. The ambulatory has a slightly arched plastered ceiling with Art Deco ceiling lights, papered walls, a carpeted floor, and a rinceau cornice molding of rosettes, doves, and leaves. At the north end of the ambulatory is an office, a lounge that is also the lobby for the northeast entrance to the building, and a lobby for the northwest entrance to the building. The northeast entrance lobby has a carpeted floor, plastered walls, chandeliers, and three pictorial stained glass windows with Masonic symbols and mottos. The northwest lobby is a smaller version of the main lobby, with a terrazzo floor and a staircase with a decorative iron balustrade.

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The main entrance into the auditorium is through a large elliptically arched opening in the center of the southwest wall of the ambulatory. This entrance leads to the main floor, or arena of the auditorium. Rising very steeply from the arena are the rows of theatre-style seating behind a wood-paneled railing. The vaulted ceiling of the auditorium is supported by five massive plaster beams. Between these beams is a grid that consists of horizontal purlins and smaller, thinner rafters. The plaster beams have been painted in a wood-grain motif to resemble wooden beams. At the base of the largest, horizontal plaster beams are large plaster gargoyle-decorated brackets that are attached to a wide frieze that is decorated with classically-inspired moldings, including dentils, a leaf molding, and a foliated rinceau panel. Masonic symbols are placed along the frieze on both sides of the auditorium. Large chandeliers of globe lights hang from the ceiling, as well.

The stage is flanked by identical carved wood pulpits decorated with elaborate Gothic motifs. Above the stage is a large carved plaster panel that is elaborately decorated with Gothic and Masonic details. It is also painted in the wood grain motif used in the other plasterwork of the room. At the back of the stage are a group of fine painted backdrops that are used in Masonic theatrical activities. Behind the stage is a prop room and a "green room," used for those waiting to enter the stage area.

The staircase off of the main lobby on the first floor leads to the second floor, which houses offices, the library, a lounge and chapel, the upper level of the auditorium, and dressing rooms (see Figure 2). At the top of the main staircase is a small lobby with plain plastered walls and a terrazzo floor. To the north of this lobby is the second floor gallery, which is a hallway with an arched ceiling, carpeting, and plain plastered walls. Off of the gallery are doors that open into the library and stack room on the west and a cloak room on the east. The doors and the wood trim in this area of the second floor are typical of doors and trim throughout the building. Plain wood trim surrounds the high-quality but simple paneled wood doors. Similar wood trim is used in the baseboards throughout the building.

The library consists of two connected rooms. The reading room features wood-paneled wainscotting and numerous built-in wood bookcases. Through a small connecting hall is the stack room, which is filled with floor-to-ceiling wood bookcases that are both freestanding and built into the walls. The bookcases house the fine book collection acquired by the Scottish Rite Masons over the years.

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At the north end of the second floor gallery is a lounge that leads into the chapel or classroom. This lounge has a ceiling that is decorated with horizontal and vertical plaster beams in a pattern that is similar to the auditorium ceiling. At the end of the large beams are plaster brackets that are decorated with double headed eagles. Like the first floor lounge, this lounge has a set of three pictorial stained glass windows depicting figures important in the teaching of Scottish Rite Masonic principles. This room also has plaster walls, carpeting, and small chandeliers hanging from the ceiling.

The chapel or classroom, as it is known today, has the same grid of formed plaster beams as the auditorium ceiling. The decorative brackets are the same as those in the nearby lounge. Globe chandeliers that are smaller versions of the ones seen in the auditorium hang from the classroom ceiling. There are nine more pictorial stained glass windows in this room that depict important Masonic figures and mottos. The chapel or classroom is filled with wooden pews that face the north end, or circular tower section, of the building. In this end are chairs and other furniture used for the teachers who instruct classes of men seeking the higher degrees of Scottish Rite Masonry.

To the east of the tower end of the classroom is a small hallway with a staircase that leads down to the northwest entrance of the building, and up to the third floor. This hallway or lobby, as it is depicted on the original plans, is simply decorated with plain plastered walls, a terrazzo floor, and a decorative ironwork balustrade on the staircases. To the east of this lobby is a vault and several offices.

Behind the upper level of the auditorium stage (on the second floor) are rooms that are associated with the Masonic theatrical activities held in the auditorium. Behind the stage is a large dressing room that is attached to a large costume room and a small, well-equipped, make-up room. There is also a large bathroom in this part of the second floor.

The third floor of the building houses small offices, lounges, and a large lodge room (see Figure 3). At the south end of the floor is a large lodge room, which has a small stage, several rows of elevated seating, and large pilasters. Some smaller rooms, used for storage, cloaks, or gathering, sit in front of the lodge room. A corridor circles the lodge room and provides access to the long locker room that runs along the east wall of the building. There is a large attic above the auditorium on this floor.

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A large square lounge that has a beamed ceiling is located off of the the third floor gallery or main hallway that runs along the west side of the building. This grid of plaster beams and brackets replicates the pattern of the auditorium ceiling and the ceilings in the second floor lounge and classroom. The plaster brackets are decorated with the Scottish Rite double-headed eagle. Like the other plaster beams in the building, these beams and brackets are painted in a wood grain motif to resemble wood. To the north of this lounge, opening off of the gallery, is a group of offices. The gallery ends at the circular tower area of the third floor. This circular room is a lounge that is simply decorated with plain moldings, a plaster ceiling, and plaster walls. To the east of this lounge, and running along north edge of the attic, is a narrow hallway or passageway that leads to the elevator, cloak room, and billiard room.

The Consistory Building has a fully finished basement with kitchens, dining rooms, recreational rooms, and physical plant facilities (see Figure 4). The main staircase on the first floor leads down to a small lobby and the main corridor of the basement. Off of the corridor and running along the west wall of the building is another billiard room, an old card room, a small kitchen and a small dining room. At the northwest corner of the basement are small offices. Running along the north wall of the basement is the lobby for the northwest entrance of the building and two storage rooms. At the center of the basement is the large banquet room and the main kitchen. On either side of the banquet room are raised loggias. To the south of the banquet room is a fully-equipped kitchen with facilities to cater meals for large groups of people. Behind the kitchen are the shop areas of the building. The basement is sparsely decorated with plaster walls and primarily terrazzo floors, and the banquet room has been slightly redecorated with wood paneled walls and an acoustical tile ceiling.

What is striking about the general exterior and interior appearance of the Consistory Building is that it has been so little altered since its major reconstruction in 1936. The interior spaces are so intact that architect Herbert Tullgren's 1936 plans can still be used as a guide to the building. What is also impressive is the high level of maintenance of the building, especially considering the small staff employed for this task. It is evident that during the last 55 years, the Scottish Rite Masons have been good caretakers of their fine building.

The planned renovation of the building will do little to radically alter the exterior or interior of the building. Most of the renovation is planned for the physical plant; updating plumbing, heating, and electrical systems. The most significant change will be replacement seating in the auditorium. This is, however, a needed

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change that will enhance the safety and comfort of both the Masons who use the building now and also the general public that may use the auditorium for non-Masonic events in the future. The redecorating will also help attract public functions that would bring in needed revenue for the building's upkeep in the future. The proposed renovations, along with a continuation of the fine maintenance the Scottish Rite Masons have given this building, should help to assure its preservation for future generations. The upgraded physical plant, as well as the opening up of the building for more public activities, will make the Wisconsin Consistory Building, now known as the Scottish Rite Masonic Center, a first-class historic public building that can serve both traditional Masonic activities, as well as new public activities, well into the 21st Century.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally statewide x locally

Applicable National Register Criteria x A B x C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>Architecture</u>	<u>1936(1)</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Social History</u>	<u>1936-44</u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Mix, Edward T. (2)
Tullgren, Herbert W. (3)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Wisconsin Consistory Building is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A, and is historically significant at the local level for its association with the Scottish Rite Masons, one of the most prominent of the historic fraternal groups in Milwaukee. While the building was originally built in 1889 for the Plymouth Congregational Church, the remodeling in 1936 altered the building's physical appearance so much that its significance today lies solely with its associations with the Scottish Rite Masons, one of the most prominent fraternal groups in Milwaukee during the twentieth century. Fraternal groups like the Masons are important in the social history of the United States because they helped define society in the country and made important contributions to their communities throughout their history. Many prominent men in Milwaukee have belonged to, and continue to belong to fraternal groups, with the Masons being one of the most significant. Consequently, the period of significance for Social History spans the years between the date of the remodeling and 1994, the NPS 50 year cut-off date.

The Wisconsin Consistory Building is also being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C, and is architecturally significant at the local level because it is a fine and unusual interpretation of the Art Deco style that also uses elements of the Tudor Revival style. The current appearance of the building is also the work of a locally-significant master architect, Herbert W. Tullgren, who designed and supervised the 1936 remodeling effort. The Art Deco style was often used on large urban buildings like the Consistory Building. Herbert Tullgren was the foremost Milwaukee architect practicing in the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles of the early twentieth century. Of the many buildings he designed in these modern styles, this building was one of his most unusual commissions.

 x See continuation sheet

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Historical Background

The history of the Wisconsin Consistory Building began with one of Milwaukee's most prominent nineteenth century churches, the Plymouth Congregational Church. In 1912, the Scottish Rite Masonic Bodies purchased the 1889 church building as their new home for their fraternal group. They extensively remodeled it into its current appearance in 1936. Regardless of the fact that there is little in the Scottish Rite Cathedral today that represents the original building, the history of the Plymouth Congregational Church is of interest. (4)

The Plymouth Congregational Church began in 1841 when 24 men and women organized the First Congregational Church. They met in downtown Milwaukee buildings until they constructed a church building at Wisconsin Avenue and Second Street in 1843-44. Some church members left the First Congregational Church in 1847 to form the Free Congregational Church. In 1851, the new Free Congregational Church was dedicated and the members renamed their congregation the Plymouth Congregational Church. (5)

The impressive Greek Revival style Plymouth Congregational Church building was the site of the most rapid growth of the congregation, and by 1861, Plymouth Congregational was the largest and one of the wealthiest churches in the state. Its members were prominent in the city's business and professional community, including noted Milwaukee architect Edward Townsend Mix. In 1876, Mix oversaw the remodeling of the Greek Revival church building. (6)

Progressivism, which was so strong in Wisconsin, came to Plymouth Church with Pastor Judson Titsworth. Titsworth believed that the church should reach out to those who were not likely to attend typical Sunday services. He believed in a "people's church" that would minister to the community at large in unconventional ways. He convinced his elite congregation to open its doors to the less wealthy and to establish a number of social programs. In the late nineteenth century, Plymouth Church helped establish the Milwaukee Protestant Home, the Third Ward Mission, a boy's club, a lecture series, adult education classes, a day school and summer camp, a reading room, and the Milwaukee Rescue Mission, which is still operating today. (7)

These activities and a growing congregation prompted the Plymouth Church to build a new, large church building. The congregation acquired the lot at the corner of Van Buren and Wells Street in 1888, and Reverend Titsworth consulted with architect E. T. Mix on a new building design. The church was completed in 1889, and its unusual design reflected the expanded focus of the congregation. The building had a 1200-seat auditorium, reading rooms, a lecture hall, a parlor, classrooms, a gymnasium,

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and full kitchen and dining facilities. The three-story exterior was also unusual. Instead of a Gothic or Romanesque Revival church building with picturesque towers and spires, as was the fashion at the time, the new Plymouth Church had a massive Richardsonian Romanesque appearance with a large corner tower and windows placed in large, arched, rough-finished limestone openings. The church building resembled a public or institutional building of the era, and was roundly criticized. (8)

The construction of their unusual church building occurred at the height of Plymouth Church's social influence in Milwaukee. After the turn of the century, the shift of the majority of the congregation from downtown residences to Milwaukee's north shore hurt church membership. And, the social programs of the church, like the boy's club and the rescue missions, were so successful that they moved to bigger quarters and came under independent management. By 1912, the Plymouth Church congregation decided to relocate closer to the north shore (near the present-day campus of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee). A new church, designed by architect A. C. Eschweiler, was constructed, and in 1912, the Plymouth Church congregation sold their old building to the Scottish Rite Masons. (9)

The unusual church building was perfect for the Masons. The auditorium, classrooms, and kitchen and dining facilities were all well suited for a fraternal group. The Masons hired the architectural firm of Leenhouts and Guthrie to make some interior modifications and design an addition to the south end of the building to house a stage for the auditorium and another meeting room. They matched this addition exactly to Mix's original design and materials for the building. (10)

But the Masons soon found that their building was too small and in need of upgrading with modern facilities. They also desired a new showplace similar to Scottish Rite buildings in other cities and they began a fund-raising drive for a million-dollar cathedral. A lot was acquired near the lakefront, but by the beginning of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the money could not be acquired. The Masons proposed building a smaller cathedral, but the plans were still too costly. By the mid-1930s, the Masons had decided to use the money already raised to remodel their existing building. Herbert Tullgren, a Scottish Rite Mason and prominent Milwaukee architect, prepared the plans for the renovation using the Art Deco style he was designing in at the time, with the Tudor and Gothic Revival mannerisms the Scottish Rite Masons desired. A new roof was constructed for the building, but the load-bearing walls of the old building were retained and covered with Bedford limestone on the two street-facing walls. The old window openings were also reused, to save money on the project. The result was a unique building with a new look both inside and out. (11)

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After the Scottish Rite Masons acquired this building in 1912, it was known as the "Consistory Building," because the activities of the Wisconsin Consistory, the Scottish Rite Body that conferred the highest Masonic degrees, were emphasized at the time. As time went on, though, all four of the bodies of Scottish Rite Masonry began using the building equally, and it eventually became commonly known as the Scottish Rite Cathedral. Today, the building is known as the Scottish Rite Masonic Center, and it houses the administrative offices for all Scottish Rite Masonic Bodies, plus facilities for Scottish Rite Masonic activities such as the study and practice of the Scottish Rite degrees of Masonry. (12)

In the past, private Scottish Rite Masonic activities filled the building to capacity. But, today, due to changes in membership and the financial concerns of maintaining a large, historic building, the Trustees of the Scottish Rite Bodies have had to seriously examine the fate of their building. Since the most recent remodeling is now over 55 years old, the physical plant is in need of major upgrading. For a time, the building was slated to be demolished as part of the next-door parking structure operated by the building's neighbor, the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company. This created some controversy, as local preservationists wished to preserve the building. In early 1992, the Trustees of the Scottish Rite Bodies came up with a plan to continue to occupy their building, and to provide the financial support needed for physical plant renovations and to maintain the building in the future. (13)

The Trustees of the Scottish Rite Bodies hired the Milwaukee architectural firm of Engberg Anderson to study the building and make a proposal for its renovation. In March of 1992, the architects' report suggested that renovation should address the upgrading of the building's physical plant, add to the building's accessibility, and update the building's interior decoration. Specifically, the report suggested a plan to provide handicapped accessibility to the building by making changes to two entrances. On the interior, the architects suggested that the auditorium's seating, audio system, and lighting should be updated and that the building's electrical and plumbing systems be renovated along with the installation of a sprinkler system. They also suggested other repairs to bring the building up to code and that the interior be redecorated with new carpeting, drapes, and furniture. (14)

To provide for these renovations and for the future maintenance of the building, the Trustees of the Scottish Rite Masonic Bodies are proposing to turn over the ownership of the building to a charitable and educational foundation. This foundation, the Wisconsin Scottish Rite Foundation, Inc., would raise funds and would open up the building for public, non-Masonic activities. In light of this new

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focus for the building, the Trustees have recently renamed the building the Scottish Rite Masonic Center. (15)

The renovation plans and the new focus for the Scottish Rite Masonic Center have, in part, resulted in a recognition of the building's historical and architectural significance; hence the desire for National Register listing. The Scottish Rite Masons are making a new commitment to their historic building when they could have offered it for demolition and relocated to modern quarters elsewhere. If the new plans for the building are successful, the result will be a first-class private club facility for the Scottish Rite Masons, as well as a first-class historic public building that can serve the larger Milwaukee community well into the 21st century.

Architecture

The Scottish Rite Masonic Center is locally significant for architecture as a fine and unusual example of the Art Deco style of architecture using details from the Tudor Revival style. The current appearance of the building was designed by Herbert Tullgren, one of Milwaukee's important twentieth-century architects, who shows in this design that he was a master of the Art Deco style. Tullgren expertly intertwines stylized Tudor details, and Masonic emblems, and typical Art Deco details to make a distinctive building that is modern, yet suggests its traditional and historic purpose as the home of the Scottish Rite Masons.

According to Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan, the Art Deco style was popular in Wisconsin between 1925 and 1945. Unlike the popular period revival styles of the era, the Art Deco style incorporated futuristic or highly stylized historical details in its designs. Art Deco buildings have hard edges that suggest machine precision in details that include low-relief geometrical ornamentation such as shallow fluted columns, chevrons, stylized sunbursts, and muted polychromy. The verticality of large buildings is stressed and is often achieved by the use of stepped setbacks. In Milwaukee, the Wisconsin Gas Company Office Building is often cited as one of the best examples of the style in the state. (16) Never-the-less, the Art Deco style is still fundamentally classical in inspiration and typically features abstracted and stylized classical elements. Thus, the style is both modern, and at the same time, evolutionary.

The Wisconsin Consistory Building is a fine example of the Art Deco style as described above because the exterior design of the building uses many of the common elements of the style in a design that is expertly crafted and executed. As stated above, the Art Deco style often features historic architectural details that are used in a modern manner. On this building, the Tudor arches, the slate roof, and the parapets are all historic style elements, but they are presented here in an abstracted or modern manner typical of the Art Deco style.

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Besides using historic details in a modern way, the architect used more typical Art Deco details, such as the tall, vertically-grooved piers of the building that suggest shallow fluted columns. These piers help give the building the vertical emphasis that is a hallmark of the style. The foliated spandrel panels are also typically seen on Art Deco buildings. What is particularly interesting is how Masonic symbols are used in a stylized and vertically-emphasized manner in order to blend these traditional elements into the modern Art Deco style. The high-relief carvings of masonic figures that run along the parapet are harmonious with the other Gothic details of the building, and add to the historical nature of the design. But they also add a vertical emphasis to the building by their tall, narrow form and by rising slightly above the parapet. The highly stylized Scottish Rite double headed eagle is another example of how a traditional symbol could be made futuristic on an Art Deco building.

Because architect Herbert Tullgren had to work with the existing shape and size of the building, he could not use multiple stories with setbacks to stress the verticality of the Art Deco style. So, he used details like the grooved piers, tall Masonic figures, and stylized details to stress height on what was a fairly boxy building. He also gave the building design elements that expressed the purpose of the building and the prominence of the owners. By using the Masonic symbols, he gave the building an exterior sense of purpose, and by using a lot of details, particularly Gothic-derived details, he gave the building a Cathedral-like appearance that was fitting for its occupants.

The interior of the building carries on the architect's design plan from the exterior. The interior details are primarily modern and streamlined. But, like the exterior, there are also Gothic details and Masonic symbols throughout the building. For example, most of the interior is modern with plain plastered walls, simple wood moldings, multi-paneled wood doors with simple hardware, and Art Deco-influenced light fixtures. The lobby areas and staircases are particularly modern, with little decoration except for the terrazzo floors and the painted iron balustrades.

But, the most important rooms of the building are decorated with an abundance of unusual plasterwork, using Gothic details or Masonic symbols. For example, in the first floor lounge, the elaborately carved plaster ceiling is filled with Masonic symbols. The auditorium is more elaborately decorated using Gothic-inspired details such as the large carved plaster panel over the stage that features Gothic tracery and Masonic symbols, all done in wood-grain to resemble elaborate wood carving. The decorated ceiling of wood-grained plaster beams, the large gargoyles, and other trim in the auditorium, give the room a grand, almost medieval, church-like appearance.

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The unusual plaster beams are also used in the second floor classroom, another church-like room with wooden pews; and in the second and third floor lounges. These beams, along with plaster brackets with the Scottish Rite double eagle symbol, give these rooms a traditional "lodge room" appearance. The integration of the Masonic symbols, Gothic details, and modern features gives the interior of the building the same effect as the exterior. That is, the interior of the Consistory Building has both a modern and a traditional appearance, and the interior design expresses not only the sense of purpose of the rooms, but also the sense of importance of the people and activities that occupy them.

Not only is the overall design of this building impressive, but the high quality of workmanship and materials is evident throughout. The highly sculpted exterior illustrates the craftsmanship of the stone masons who executed these details. In particular, the sculptures of the Masonic figures are outstanding, and have well withstood over 55 years of an urban environment. The interior of the building is also 55 years old, and while some redecorating and improvements to the physical plant are necessary after so many years, the overall good condition of most of the interior details suggests that high quality materials and craftsmanship were used in the building. Of particular note is the abundant use of elaborate and unusual plaster work in the building, that adds to the distinctiveness of the interior.

But perhaps the most impressive detail of the interior of the building are the pictorial stained glass windows. These windows, some installed when the building was remodeled, and some added since that time, are intricate, colorful, and symbolic of Scottish Rite Masonry. Not only are they works of art in and of themselves, they add to the religious atmosphere of the building, and are constant reminders of the teachings of Scottish Rite Masonry.

The architect of the 1936 renovation that gave the building its current appearance was Herbert W. Tullgren. He was born in Chicago in 1889 to a Swedish immigrant father, Martin Tullgren, who established an architectural practice in Chicago in 1881. At the turn of the century, after working in western mines, Martin Tullgren became a partner with Archibald Hood, and in 1902, the firm established an office in Milwaukee. In 1905, the Tullgrens settled permanently in Milwaukee. Herbert Tullgren was a draftsman in his father's firm between 1905 and 1908, and became a partner in that firm, along with his brother Minard, in 1909. (17)

The firm Martin Tullgren and Sons specialized in large projects like hotels, commercial buildings, and apartment houses. In 1922, Martin Tullgren died and his sons continued the firm until 1928, when Minard died. Herbert Tullgren continued to

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practice under the name Martin Tullgren and Sons until 1936, when he changed it to Herbert Tullgren, Architect. Herbert Tullgren designed in the popular historical period revival styles during the 1910s and 1920s. But after 1928, he designed almost exclusively in the modern Art Deco and Art Moderne styles. (18)

Herbert Tullgren was responsible for many prominent Milwaukee buildings and was the best designer in the modern Art Deco and Art Moderne styles in the city. Some of these outstanding designs include the First Wisconsin Bank Garage (740 N. Water St., 1929), the Armory Courts Building (4001-4015 N. Oakland Ave., 1930-31), the Sherman Theater (4632 W. Burleigh St., 1935), and the Milwaukee Western Fuel Company (2150 N. Prospect Ave., 1937). While these and other buildings show how well Tullgren designed in the modern styles of the early twentieth century, three of his apartment building designs also made important contributions to the development of twentieth century apartment house construction. The Hathaway Tower (1830 E. Kane Pl.), finished in 1931, was the first "tower" apartment building on Milwaukee's east side. The Viking Apartments (1705-1717 E. Kane Pl., 1931) and the apartment building at 1260 N. Prospect Ave. (1937) were apartment towers of two-story apartments, an innovation in apartment house construction at the time. (19)

The Wisconsin Consistory Building is unusual among Tullgren's designs because it is the only building of its type attributed to the architect. It was probably because Tullgren was a Scottish Rite Mason that he agreed to design the 1936 alterations. The modern emphasis of the building is related to his strong association with the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles at the time, and his talent in combining both modern elements with historic elements and Masonic symbols is evident in the appearance of the building. The combination of an outstanding and unusual design by one of Milwaukee's best twentieth century architects and the high quality of materials and workmanship, plus the high level of preservation of the building, makes the Wisconsin Consistory Building an architectural landmark in the city.

Social History

The Wisconsin Consistory Building is locally significant for social history because it was the home of one of the most important fraternal organizations in the city. It is one of only a few extant fraternal clubhouses in Milwaukee, as well. The size, scale, and design of the building suggests that its members were men of prominence and social standing in the community, and a glance through their membership confirms that men important in government, business, and industry have been associated with the Scottish Rite Masons. Because the Scottish Rite Bodies of

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the Valley of Milwaukee also serve southeastern Wisconsin, prominent men of other communities have also been associated with this organization.

According to Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan, fraternal groups identify one type of social order in American society and perform many important social and charitable activities in American communities. There are two types of fraternal groups. The first is the social club that emphasizes fellowship and secrecy. The second is the benevolent or insurance-providing society, emphasizing financial planning or insurance for their members. The Masons are the oldest of the social fraternal groups in Wisconsin. Their first lodge was established at Green Bay in 1823, and by 1843, there were three more lodges at Platteville, Mineral Point, and Milwaukee. By 1856, there were about 150 Masonic lodges in the state. Other fraternal groups popular in Wisconsin include the Odd Fellows, Good Templars, Shriners, Eagles, and Elks. (20)

Fraternal activity peaked in Wisconsin between 1866 and the 1950s. Many lodges were formed within each of the popular fraternal groups during this time, and women's auxiliaries were also established; the most well-known being the Order of the Eastern Star, the Masonic auxiliary. After the 1950s, fraternal groups ended their rapid growth, and the social changes of the mid to late twentieth century have diminished the importance of lodges. But, most communities in the state still have at least one or two active fraternal groups, and larger cities, like Milwaukee, have larger, more numerous, and more active groups. (21)

The origins of Masonry date back to medieval stone masons who formed craft guilds to protect and pass on the secrets of their trade. In the 1600s, in England, these guilds began to accept honorary masons who were prominent men in the community, but not actual stone masons. Known as "accepted masons," they eventually formed their own society known as Freemasonry. Freemasons believe in a strong family life, religion, community service, moral values, and patriotism toward democratic government. Of the five million Masons worldwide, at least three and one-half million live in the United States. (22)

Masonic lodge organization is complex and based on 32 degrees of achievement within the society. The first three degrees are known as Symbolic or Blue Lodge Masonry. A Third Degree Mason is also known as a Master Mason, and this level is considered in Masonry to be the highest Masonic degree. But, after achieving Master Mason status, a Mason may then join one of two other branches of Masonry to attain the fourth through the thirty-second degrees that enhance the member's understanding of Masonic principles, and the thirty-third degree that is awarded for personal

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achievement. One branch of the higher degrees of Masonry is the York Rite, which consists of Royal Arch Masons, Royal and Select Masters, and Knights Templar. The other branch is the Scottish Rite, which will be described below. The individual lodges within each branch are hierarchical and represent a member's study and achievement in the principles of the higher degrees of Masonry. (23)

The Scottish Rite has four bodies; the Lodge of Perfection for the fourth through the fourteenth degrees, the Council of Princes of Jerusalem for the fifteenth and sixteenth degrees; the Chapter of the Rose Croix for the seventeenth and eighteenth degrees, and the Consistory for the nineteenth through the thirty-second degrees. The thirty-third degree is awarded to individual Masons for their outstanding contributions in Freemasonry, in the community, and/or for having exemplary character. Each degree of Scottish Rite Masonry is instructive in Masonic principles dealing with faith in God, moral values, patriotism and good citizenship, and establishing and maintaining good character in one's personal life and dealings with others. (24)

In 1732, Scottish and English Masons organized the first Scottish Rite Lodge in Bordeaux, France, one of the centers of European Masonry. In the years that followed, the advanced degrees of the Rite were formed and by the 1760s, all 33 degrees of the Rite had been developed. In 1767, the first Scottish Rite Body in the United States, a Lodge of Perfection, was organized in Albany, New York. Other bodies were soon established in the Colonies. In 1801, the first Supreme Council of Scottish Rite Masons was established in Charleston, South Carolina to unite Scottish Rite bodies in the new United States. The process of unification was slow, though, and not completed until 1867. (25)

Today there are two Supreme Councils for Scottish Rite Masonry in the United States, the Northern Jurisdiction and the Southern Jurisdiction. The Northern Masonic Jurisdiction oversees bodies in 15 states east of the Mississippi River and north of the Mason-Dixon Line and the Ohio River. The Southern Masonic Jurisdiction covers the remaining 35 states, the District of Columbia, and United States territories and possessions. The Scottish Rite Masons, Valley of Milwaukee, are part of the Northern Jurisdiction, and there are almost one-half million Scottish Rite Masons in this region. There are Scottish Rite Valleys in 110 cities in the Northern Jurisdiction. (26)

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The first Masonic lodge in Milwaukee was formed in early 1843 and was named Milwaukee Lodge No. 3. It was shortly after changed to the Kilbourn Lodge in honor of early member Byron Kilbourn. Other Masonic lodges followed; the Tracy Lodge (later Wisconsin Lodge #13) in 1847, the Aurora Lodge #30 in 1850, the Independence Lodge #80 in 1856, the Excelsior Lodge in 1869, and the Harmony Lodge #142 in 1863, the city's first exclusively Jewish lodge. The higher degrees of Masonry also established lodges in Milwaukee during the mid-nineteenth century. The Royal Arch Masons were formed in 1844, the Commanderies in 1850, and the Wisconsin Consistory of the Scottish Rite was formed in 1863. (27)

In the nineteenth century, Masonic lodges shared meeting halls, usually on the upper floors of downtown commercial buildings. Two early meeting places were the Masonic Temple in the 700 block of Plankinton Avenue (not extant), and the Masonic Hall in the historic Iron Block (205 E. Wisconsin Ave., extant). By the late nineteenth century, the Masons who occupied the Iron Block organized a Masonic Union for the purpose of establishing a new headquarters. Their plans for a new building were never achieved, but they did move to new quarters in the old Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Building at the corner of Broadway and Wisconsin Avenue (not extant). The Masons still desired a new building, and 1896, they hired the noted architectural firm of Ferry and Clas to erect a new building at the corner of Jefferson and Wells Streets (not extant). This building was used until 1923. (28)

The Scottish Rite Masons shared quarters in the Masonic Building erected in 1896, but only until 1912, when they acquired this building. And, while the Scottish Rite Bodies had hoped to build their own showplace cathedral, the Great Depression of the 1930s interrupted these plans, and the 1936 remodeling of this building was the result. The Scottish Rite Bodies have occupied their building since 1912, and a new plan for its renovation and financial security should ensure the continued existence of the building well into the future.

The Wisconsin Consistory Building is significant because it is one of the most prominent locations of masonic fraternal activity in Milwaukee. While the Scottish Rite emphasizes that their degrees are not superior to a Master Mason, the higher degrees are prestigious, nevertheless. And that prestige carries over to the building where these activities take place. Not only are Scottish Rite Masons significant within Masonry itself, Scottish Rite Masonry is significant historically because of the importance of their membership. The members of the Scottish Rite Bodies have been some of the most important business and government leaders in Milwaukee and the region the Valley of Milwaukee serves. This membership of important local and regional leaders makes Scottish Rite Masonry significant.

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Scottish Rite Masons are also very active in many charitable and civic activities. At the local level, Scottish Rite Masons participate in many local charitable activities such as the Special Olympics and fund-raising for the Children's Hospital. At the national level, Scottish Rite Masons support the Scottish Rite Museum of Our National Heritage, college scholarships, and the Scottish Rite Schizophrenia Research Program. In particular, Scottish Rite grant money has helped researchers make a number of breakthroughs in the cause and cure of schizophrenia, one of the most serious of mental illnesses.

Because the Scottish Rite Masons are a prominent and long-time social fraternal group in Milwaukee, and because they have made both tangible and intangible contributions to the growth and development of society in Milwaukee and Wisconsin, and because the charitable activities of Scottish Rite Bodies make important contributions to society, the Wisconsin Consistory Building, the home of Scottish Rite Masons, is significant for social history. As one of the few historic fraternal buildings still extant in the city, the building is also a significant local landmark in the social history of the city of Milwaukee.

The period of significance for architecture was the year the building gained its current appearance. The social history period of significance reflects its historic usage as a fraternal hall from 1936 to the 50 year cut-off date"

Notes to Section 8:

1. Historic Designation Study Report for the Scottish Rite Cathedral, prepared for the City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission, on file in the Historic Preservation Commission's staff office, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, p. 1.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 2.
5. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., pp. 3-4; H. Russell Zimmermann, "Untraditional Church is Now a Cathedral," The Milwaukee Journal, 18 August 1985, "Home" Section, p. 1.
8. Historic Designation Study Report, pp. 3-4; Zimmermann, p. 5.
9. Historic Designation Study Report, p. 4.
10. Zimmermann, p. 6.
11. Historic Designation Study Report, p. 7; Zimmermann, p. 5.
12. "New Building Name: Scottish Rite Masonic Center," Messenger 48, no. 8 (1992), pp. 1, 6.

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13. "Trustees Consider Major Building Renovation," Messenger 48, no. 8 (1992), pp. 1-2.
14. Ibid.
15. "New Building Name," p. 6; "Trustees Consider Major Building Renovation," pp. 1-2.
16. Barbara Wyatt, ed., Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Vol. II, Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Architecture, p. 2-34.
17. Historic Designation Study Report, pp. 7-8
18. Ibid., p. 8.
19. Ibid., Brian Wishne, "The Progressive Ideals of Herbert W. Tullgren," Wisconsin Architect, July/August 1992, p. 25.
20. Barbara Wyatt, ed., Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Vol. III, Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Social and Political Movements, pp. 5-1--5-6.
21. Ibid.
22. Information from Masonic literature, on file at the Scottish Rite Cathedral, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
23. Ibid.
24. "What is the Scottish Rite?" pamphlet, Lexington, Massachusetts: Supreme Council Scottish Rite, Northern Jurisdiction, 1989, n.p.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Historic Designation Study Report, p. 5.
28. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

9. Major Bibliographical References

x See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:
 x State Historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/2/6/5/1/0</u>	<u>4/7/6/5/5/8/0</u>	B	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	D	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>

 See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the intersection of the south curblineline of E. Wells and the east curblineline of N. Van Buren Sts., then east along the south curblineline of E. Wells to the east lot line of 790 N. Van Buren St., then south along this line to the south lot line of 790 N. Van Buren St., then west along this line to the east curblineline of N. Van Buren St., then north along this line to the point of beginning.

 See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Wisconsin Consistory Building.

 See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title	<u>Carol Lohry Cartwright, Consultant</u>	date	<u>November 1, 1992</u>
organization	<u>for the Scottish Rite Bodies</u>	telephone	<u>(414) 473-6820</u>
street & number	<u>W7646 Hackett Rd.</u>	state	<u>WI</u>
city or town	<u>Whitewater</u>	zip code	<u>53190</u>

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- "New Building Name: Scottish Rite Masonic Center." Messenger 48, no. 8 (1992).
- "Trustees Consider Major Building Renovation." Messenger 48, no. 8 (1992).
- "What is the Scottish Rite?" Pamphlet. Lexington, Massachusetts: Supreme Council, Scottish Rite, Northern Jurisdiction, 1989.
- Wishne, Brian. "The Progressive Ideals of Herbert W. Tullgren." Wisconsin Architect, July/August 1992.
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- Zimmermann, H. Russell. "Untraditional Church is Now a Cathedral." The Milwaukee Journal, 18 August 1985, "Home" Section.

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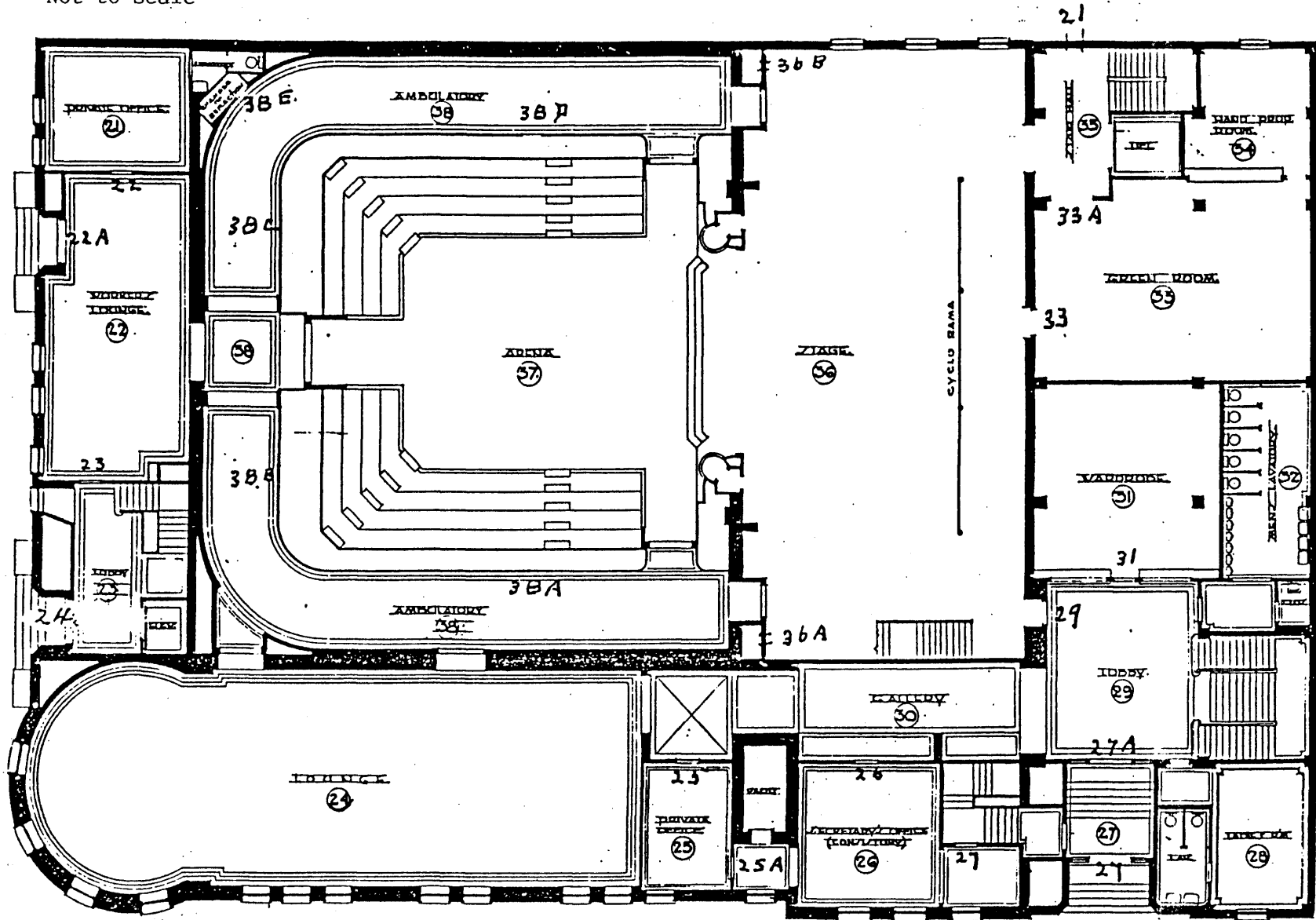
Section number photos Page 1 Wisconsin Consistory Building, Milwaukee
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WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING, 790 N. Van Buren St., Milwaukee, Milwaukee County,
Wisconsin. Photos by C. Cartwright, November, 1992. Negatives on file at the State
Historical Society of Wisconsin. Views:

- 1 of 11: Site view, from the northwest.
- 2 of 11: West wall, from the west.
- 3 of 11: North wall, from the north.
- 4 of 11: Interior, lobby view.
- 5 of 11: Interior, first floor lounge, view of pictorial stained glass windows.
- 6 of 11: Interior, auditorium, stage view.
- 7 of 11: Interior, auditorium, seating view.
- 8 of 11: Interior, auditorium, view of ceiling.
- 9 of 11: Interior, second floor classroom.
- 10 of 11: Interior, third floor lounge.
- 11 of 11: Interior, basement hallway.

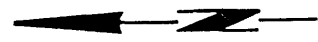
FIGURE 1 Scottish Rite Cathedral, First Floor Plan
Not to scale

Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin



WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING

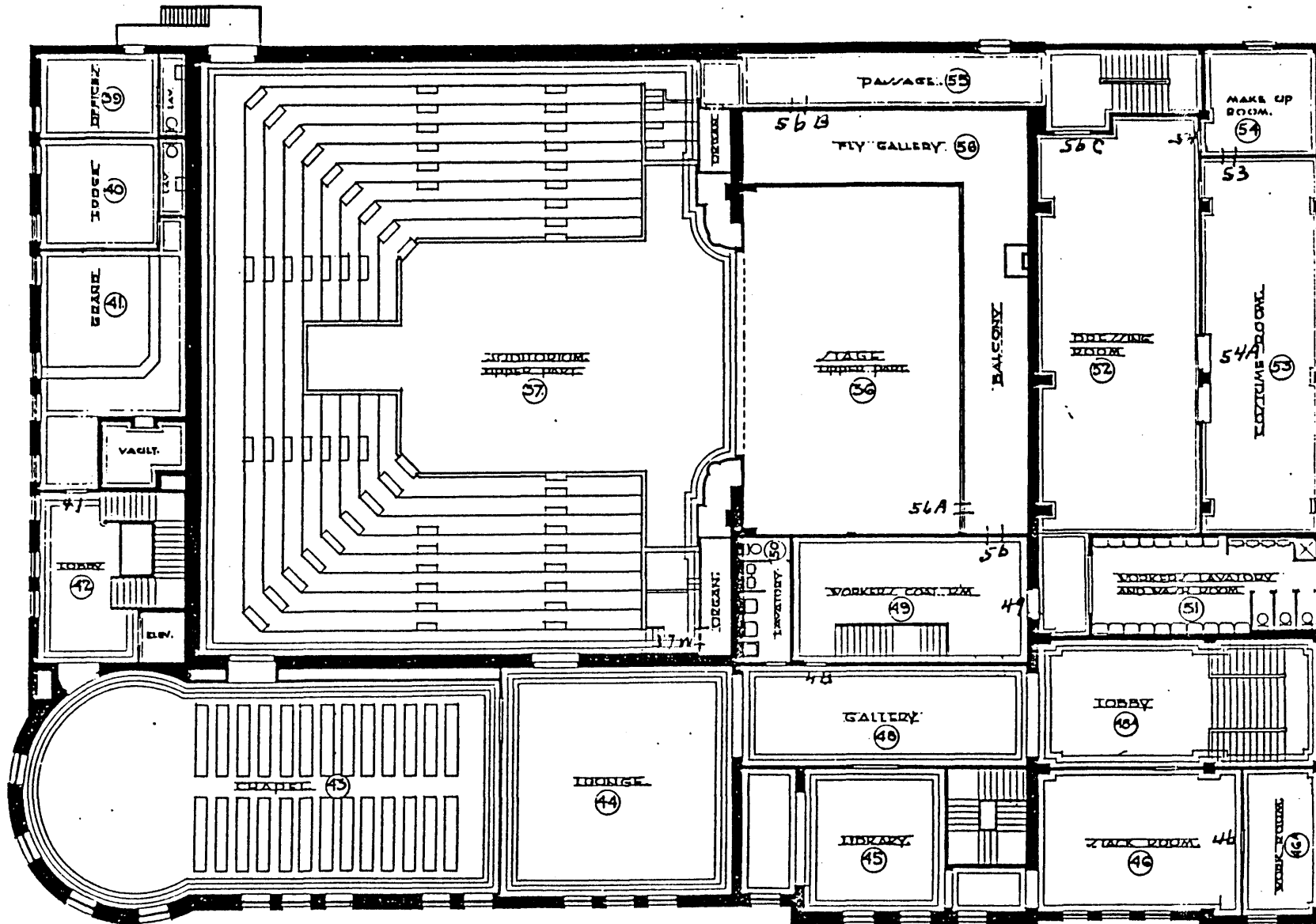
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING
DESIGNED BY ARCHITECT

FIGURE 2 Scottish Rite Cathedral, Second Floor Plan
Not to scale

Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin



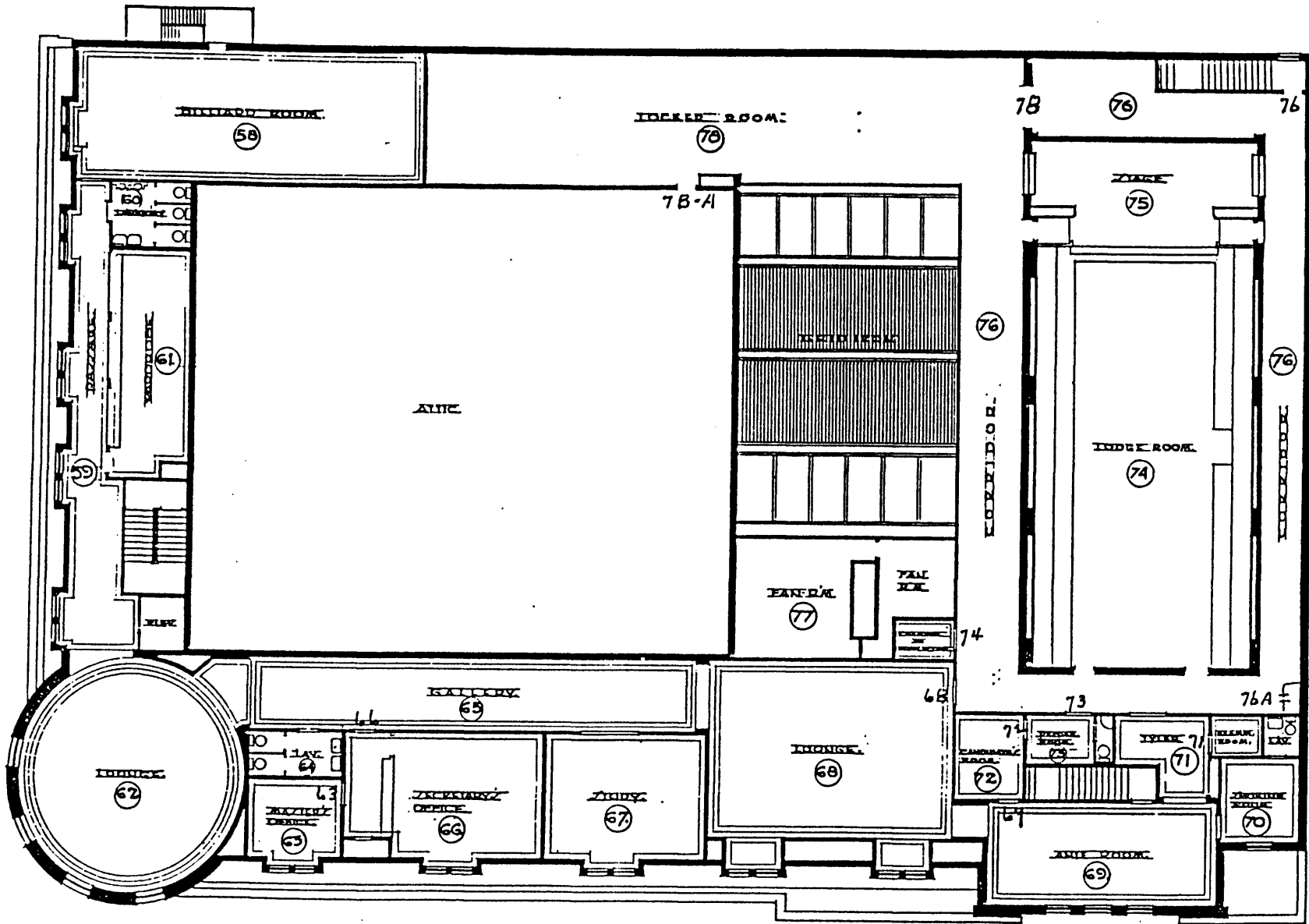
WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
ARCHITECT: [illegible]

FIGURE 3 Scottish Rite Cathedral, Third Floor Plan
 Not to scale

Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin



WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING

THIRD FLOOR PLAN

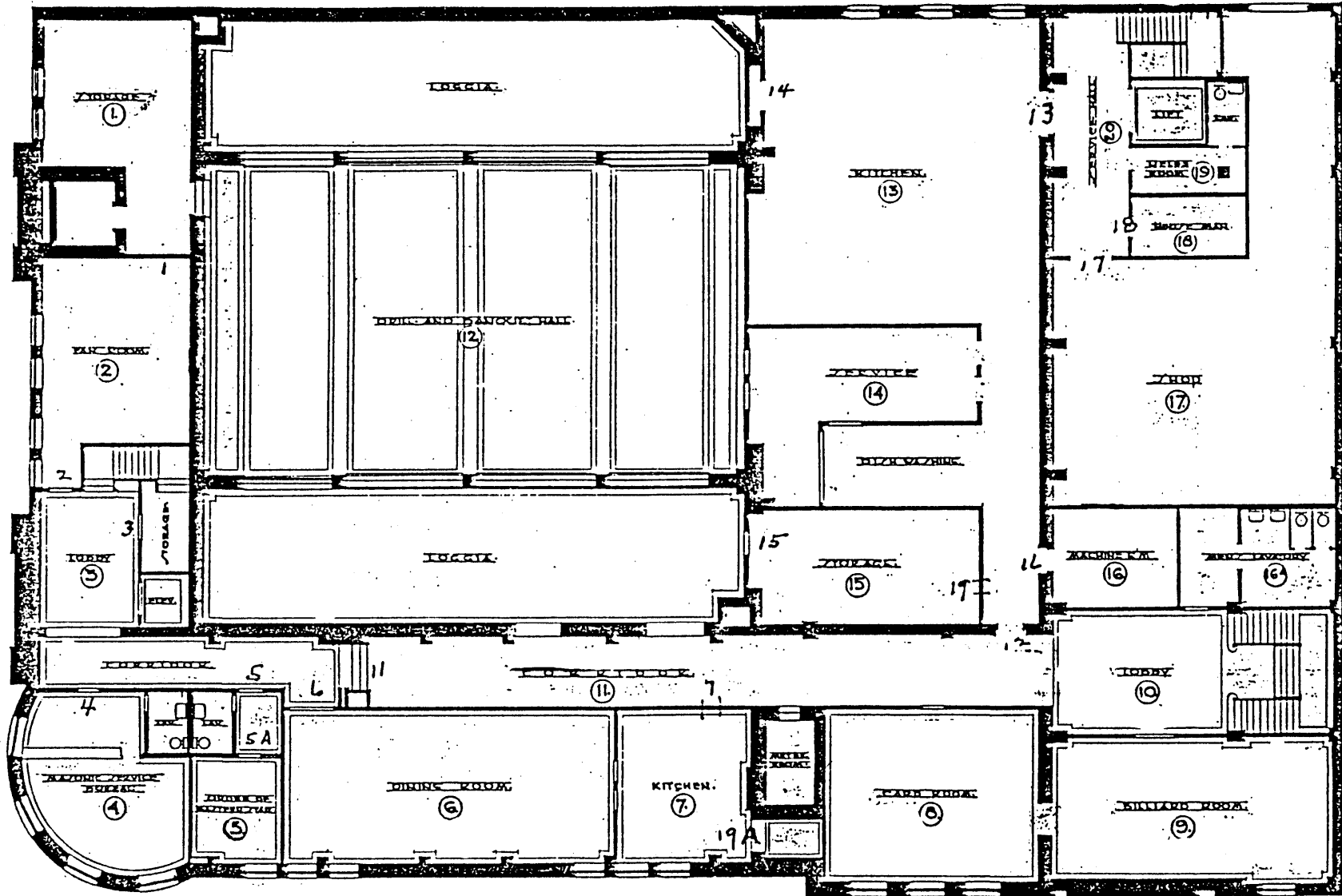
WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING
 MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
 ARCHITECT: J. H. HARRIS

FIGURE 4 Scottish Rite Cathedral, Basement Plan

Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Not to scale

WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING



BASEMENT PLAN

WISCONSIN CONSISTORY BUILDING
DESIGNED BY
BERNARD V. JULLGREN ARCHT.