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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Waverly Village Hall

other names/site number Waverly Ballroom

2. Location

street & number 4th Street North between Atlantic & Elm Ave not for publication

city or town Waverly vicinity

state Minnesota code MN county Wright code 171 zip code 55390

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Ian R. Stewart 4/17/02
Signature of certifying official/Title Ian R. Stewart Date 4/17/02
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State of Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

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

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

6/6/02
Date of Action

Waverly Village Hall
Name of Property

Wright County, MN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
		Total
		1

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium
SOCIAL/meeting hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium
SOCIAL/meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Moderne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof

other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1939-1952

Significant Dates

1939, 1940

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Walter R. Dennis

WPA

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

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National Park Service

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Description

The Waverly Village Hall is located on Fourth Street North, between Atlantic and Elm Avenues, in the city of Waverly. This small community is located in south central Minnesota, approximately 30 miles west of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The Waverly Village Hall is a large rectangular building with overall dimensions of 97' by 77'. The structure is defined by a projecting two story entrance bay, a taller central section containing the auditorium, and a rear section containing the stage and secondary entrances. Reinforced concrete walls are covered with a concrete coating that has been scored to form rectangular panels. The building is constructed on a defined base, over a raised basement.

A broad set of seven steps, flanked by low concrete pylons, rise to the building's primary entrance. There are three recessed entries that are separated by concrete piers. Originally, the three entrances featured paired steel doors, but these have been replaced with single metal doors. A narrow, horizontal band with a fluted, geometric design is positioned above each entrance. Moderne style lights originally flanked the entry, although these have been replaced by newer fixtures. A bronze WPA plaque is positioned just below the light located on the north side. The plaque contains a stylized eagle, and the words "Works Projects Administration" and the year "1939" all in raised lettering.

Single window openings, each within a recessed panel, are positioned above each of the entrance doors. A concrete panel with exposed aggregate is located below each window's projecting concrete sill. Each window is flanked with a narrow, vertical concrete panel with a zigzag pattern. The words "Village Hall" are positioned above the windows. The lettering is metal and is attached to two horizontal metal bars. The cornice of the entrance bay features a low pediment. Just below the cornice, and wrapping around the corners, are decorative fins. In addition, the corners are rounded from below the fins to the building's base.

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The taller, central portion of the building is visible to each side of the entrance bay. Each side features a tall window opening which originally contained a steel sash. A concrete panel with exposed aggregate is positioned below each window's projecting concrete sill. Other details are identical to the entrance bay such as corner fins and rounded corners.

The north and south side walls of the central section of the building are identical. Three tall window openings are centered on each facade. The openings are separated by double pilasters that share a common base. Other details are consistent with the remainder of the building such as concrete panels with exposed aggregate below each window and corner fins.

The rear portion of the building steps out from the central portion in two stages. These sections are lower than the central section and reflect the position of the stage as well as secondary entrances on each side. A concrete chimney is also attached to the rear facade. This rear portion of the building is very close to the property line.

The foyer of the building contains a central ticket booth. Paired doors to each side of the booth lead to the main auditorium. At the south end of the foyer, a stairway leads to either the lower level or to a single room on the second floor that is positioned over the entrance. The auditorium is a large space, 57' by 77', with a maple floor. The stage, which is 43' by 17', is centered on the west wall. The proscenium features a stepped opening. Small dressing rooms located to each side of the stage are accessed by short stairways. Hallways to each side of the stage lead from the auditorium to rest rooms, the rear entrances, the lower level, and also provide access to the stage. The ceiling of the auditorium is covered with acoustical tile that appears to be original. A wainscot simulating stone encircles a portion of the room and was added after construction. Many of the light fixtures appear to have been replaced.

The lower level contains a dining hall, 77' x 42', two coat rooms, a kitchen with pine and birch cabinets, a locker room, a janitor's closet, the furnace room, and fuel and ash rooms.

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The Waverly Village Hall was built in 1939-40 by the WPA. Its main purpose was to provide a facility for the social and recreational activities of the community. Primary governmental facilities such as the village council chambers, the fire department, and the jail were located in another building that had been acquired after the former village hall was destroyed by fire.

Very few changes have been made to the building, with the exception of the replacement of the windows and the infill of a portion of the openings, and the replacement of the exterior doors. Some windows have been completely infilled. Long bars in both the auditorium and the dining hall used for serving beverages appear to have been installed after construction. There have been no additions, or other significant alterations, and the village hall retains high integrity. The building continues to be used for community events and activities although on a more limited scale compared to the historic period.

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Statement of Significance

The Waverly Village Hall is associated with the context of Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota and is historically significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Politics and Government as an example of the modern municipal facilities made possible by the Federal relief programs of the New Deal. Its construction by the Works Projects Administration (WPA) allowed Waverly to replace its earlier village hall, which had been destroyed by fire, and build a prominent municipal facility that would enhance the quality of life in the community. Without the funding and manpower offered by the New Deal, it is likely that the construction of such a substantial building would have been delayed until at least the post-war era. The locally significant building is also important in the area of Entertainment and Recreation by providing the necessary space and facilities for a variety of community events and activities. In fact, the building became the social focal point of the community.

The Waverly Village Hall is also architecturally significant under National Register Criterion C as an example of the Moderne style. The building is characterized by a formal and symmetrical design with smooth, flat surfaces organized into rectangular panels, and includes a number of typical Moderne style details such as engaged piers, fluted bands, zigzag panels, and corner fins. The construction methods and building materials are also notable because they were selected to help meet many of the goals of a Federal relief project. The reinforced concrete construction reduced the need for skilled labor, allowed the employment of unskilled workers, and reduced the cost of materials for the project sponsor. To this day, the Waverly Village Hall remains the town's most prominent civic building.

The Construction of the Waverly Village Hall

Waverly's original village hall was built in 1893 on the corner of Third Street and Elm Avenue. The two story brick and stone building was designed in the Romanesque style and featured a corner tower. Village offices, the jail, and the fire department were located on the first floor. The second floor was used for

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dances, performances, and other public events. The building was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1938.¹ The *Wright County Journal-Press* reported that, "With no city hall of their own, Waverly people have been making some use of the village hall at Montrose."

On November 5, 1938 the village paid \$1.00 to James and Sadie McDonald for an option to buy a parcel of land for a new village hall. The site was located on Fourth Street North between Atlantic and Elm Avenues, a prominent corner in Waverly. The parcel was later purchased for \$1,300.

Minneapolis Architect Walter R. Dennis submitted plans for a "monolithic concrete" village hall that included a rendering of the principal elevation and two floor plans. The plans are undated but a stamp on the rendering indicates that they were received by the WPA on December 19, 1938. Apparently, the plans were submitted for a preliminary review before a formal project application was submitted.

A "Project Proposal" dated January 9, 1939 was then prepared and submitted to the WPA district office, which received the proposal on January 23, 1939. The district office submitted the proposal to the WPA Division of Operations, located in the Minnesota Building in St. Paul, where it was received on February 3, 1939. Finally, the proposal was submitted to Washington D.C. on February 8, 1939.

The proposal consisted of a seven page application completed on WPA Form 301. The application is notable for its detail and complexity. Section five of the application, described as "Purpose and description of work," was completed as follows:

Construct Municipal Building including demolition of present buildings; alter and improve Fire Hall; improve grounds of the Municipal Building, Fire Hall and present Village Hall which was burned; and perform other appurtenant and miscellaneous work.

¹Reardon, Bernadette. 1869-1969, Waverly Centennial. 1969. pp. 28-29.

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In section 28, described as "Justification and remarks," it was noted that:

Village Hall burned down last summer. This project will provide the people of Waverly with a new and modern Municipal Building. A new location has been purchased for this building and as this building will not house the fire equipment another old building has been purchased and must be remodeled. There are buildings on the new site purchased [sic] and these will be demolished. The site of the old Village Hall must be cleaned up and graded so as to look presentable.

Much of the application consists of an itemization and description of all construction costs. In addition, it was necessary to determine whether an expense would be paid from Federal funds or by the sponsor, or if the expense would be apportioned between the two. Section six contains the following summary of the estimated project costs based on the sources of funds:

	Federal Funds	Sponsor's Funds
Labor:		
1. Unskilled	9,680.00	--
2. Intermediate	8,148.00	--
3. Skilled	11,786.00	--
Superintendence:	3,000.00	--
Equipment, material, & other nonlabor costs:		
1. Equipment	960.00	410.00
2. Material and supplies	3,640.00	14,417.00
3. Other nonlabor costs	800.00	2,000.00
Total Cost of Project:	38,014.00	16,827.00
Total Cost Apportioned:	69.32%	30.68%

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The total project cost was estimated at \$54,841.00. The Project Proposal also itemized all materials and their associated costs, as well as the various types of workers that would be employed and their associated costs. The Federal government typically paid for the labor, while the local sponsor paid for the materials.

On March 9, 1939 the *Howard Lake Herald* reported that,

Word was received here from Washington this week stating that the WPA grant for the new Waverly town hall project had been granted and is being held for President Roosevelt's return for his signature. We also have been informed that just as soon as the grant is received here, work of tearing down the buildings on the lots where the new hall will be erected will be started, and by spring the work of digging the basement will be under way. The grant also includes money to repair the building recently purchased by the village for a fire hall.

A hand written memorandum signed by Mayor Frederick Martin stated a meeting had been held on March 11, 1939 and that the "Council voted to accept (architectural) plans as submitted with above changes." The most significant change was the orientation of the building. Dennis had sited the building on Elm Avenue, with the principal facade facing north. However, the Village Council requested that the building face east on Fourth Street North. Dennis had also designed a curving rear wall for the stage, but the Village Council wanted the wall squared. In addition, changes were requested to the entrance stairs and the kitchen.

A typed memorandum dated March 20, 1939 on stationery from the "Recorder's Office Village of Waverly," stated:

We, the Village Council of Waverly, Minnesota, will complete the Municipal Building which is to be started in the near future by the Works Progress Administration if the Works Progress Administration or some other form of work relief does not continue after June 30, 1939.

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We also agree to carry Public Liability and Property Damage Insurance to protect the public during the demolition of the present buildings located on the site and during the construction of the new building.

The statement was signed by Fred Martin, Mayor, and J.H. Kugler, Clerk. This statement was required by the WPA since, "The sponsors of all projects also agreed to complete the project or a useful unit of the project if for any reason the project could not be completed by the WPA."²

The final plans prepared by Walter R. Dennis were dated April 15, 1939. The overall scale and massing of the building remained the same as depicted in the preliminary drawings, but the Moderne style details were modified to include elements such as the zigzag panels and corner fins.

In early May 1939, the village advertised for bids on all the materials needed to construct the building. The notice to bidders stated:

Sealed bids will be received by the Village Council of Waverly, Minnesota, until 2:00 p.m. on the 18th day of May 1939, for the necessary materials.....for the construction of the Village Hall in accordance with plans and specifications as prepared by W.R. Dennis, Architect, 1028 Andrus Building, Minneapolis.

Plans may be seen at the Architect's office, Minneapolis Builders' Exchange, the City Clerk's office at Waverly, the district WPA office at St. Cloud.

The bids for the different materials shall include all of the materials required for the building completed, and shall so state in the proposals submitted. The bids submitted shall be on the following items: structural steel and iron work, reinforcing steel, steel sash,

²United States Federal Works Agency. Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-1943. U.S. Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C., 1947. p. 9.

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glass, millwork, dimension lumber as per list, sand (325 cubic yards), gravel (500 cubic yards), cement (3800 sacks, plaster, heating equipment, plumbing (pipe, fittings, and fixtures complete), electrical (cabinets, wire, conduit, fixtures, etc., complete), roofing, insulation, paint, varnish, tile, finished hardware, maple flooring.

This proposal must be accompanied by a certified check payable to J.H. Kugler, Waverly, Minnesota in the amount equal to 5% of the amount of the bid as a guarantee that the bidder if awarded the contract, will execute the same and furnish bond if required.

Bids were then awarded and construction began later in 1939. The subcontractors, who were generally from Minneapolis, submitted various architectural plans as well. The Cowin Company prepared plans related to the structural steel; the Hustad Company provided details of the steel windows that were manufactured by the Truscon Steel Products Company of Youngstown, Ohio; the Lighting Services Section of the Northern States Power Company provided a lighting scheme; options were shown for installing Nu-Wood acoustical ceiling tile using ashlar, herringbone, and twin rectangle patterns; and the Carr-Cullen Company provided details for the kitchen cabinets.

The building was finally completed in August 1940.³ A banner headline in the *Wright County Journal-Press* dated August 29, 1940 announced the upcoming dedication of the Waverly Village Hall which was to take place on September 1-2. The front page consisted of three articles that discussed the building and its construction, the details concerning the celebration, and references to the the 1893 village hall. An image of the new building was included as well as a photograph of the old building

³The City of Waverly retains extensive documentation concerning the construction of the village hall. These records include an unusually complete set of architectural plans, an original copy of the application for WPA assistance, copies of city council motions pertaining to the village hall, copies of correspondence with the architect, a ledger itemizing all city expenses associated with the construction of the building, and separate files on each subcontractor.

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after it had been destroyed by fire. Portions of these articles are summarized below:

Waverly is to reach another milestone in its history next Sunday and Monday, Sept. 1 and 2, when it plans to have one of the biggest celebrations in years to dedicate the new village hall. Streamlined and modern in every detail, the new structure is one of the most beautiful small-town municipal buildings in Minnesota.

The celebration to mark the opening of the new hall will be fitting indeed and will consist of many sports and novelty events, aside from the impressive dedication service.

Waverly's new village hall.....is 90 x 100 feet [sic] and stands on the most prominent corner in town, facing three streets. It is one story with full-basement and was constructed of monolithic concrete, the exterior finish being washed white concrete. It was built at a cost of \$70,000, funds being appropriated through bond issue and WPA labor from the Federal government.

The main auditorium is 70 x 85 feet [sic], with painted walls and wood work. The ceiling is of nu-wood [sic]. The dancing floor spreads over 6,000 square feet and is made of select grade hard maple. The stage is 16 x 28 feet [sic]. There are two dressing rooms. Lighting arrangements are modern and of the indirect fluorescent type for dancing, with 12 500-watt louvered lamps for the main auditorium. On the stage there are three separate circuits of colored lights for border and foot-lights comprising 300 separate bulbs. The lighting effects are indeed beautiful.

The basement has both utility and charm. The floor space covers 50 x 70 feet. There are paneled plaster walls, nu-wood [sic] ceilings, with indirect lighting. The basement is equipped with a kitchen which is provided with a natural gas stove with cooking utensils.

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Service to accommodate 300 persons. The locker rooms are complete with 24 steel lockers and six shower heads.

The building will be used for community events and is equipped with several hundred folding seats. There will be an ideal dancing floor for parties and complete equipment for serving dinners in the basement.

The progressive village-council of Waverly is entitled to the thanks of the community for carrying out the planning to a successful conclusion. From the time the old hall was destroyed by fire, the council has been busy looking after details of the new task. First, there was the bond election and the contacts with the Federal officials regarding WPA labor; then there was the matter of securing a desirable location; then came the problem of deciding on the type of structure and of financing. These tasks were all preliminary to construction work. But when the crew started digging the basement and setting the forms, all this required supervision from officials. Now that the village is to have its new hall which will be a great community center for all home activities, we must not forget to give credit where credit is due, for the council has been working for the best interests of Waverly, financially and in other ways.

An additional article described the various bands that would be providing the entertainment for the dedication. In addition, the paper contained two pages of congratulatory ads placed by the building's contractors, local businesses, and individuals.

Following the dedication, on September 5, 1940 the *Wright County Journal-Press* described the grand opening:

Waverly played host to thousands of people during the two-day dedication celebration held Sunday and Labor Day. Those attending were treated to a fine entertainment program.....

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Numbered among the crowd were hundreds of former residents who had returned to make the day one of homecoming as well as to help Waverly mark another step in its progress.

The article went on to report that the festivities began at 1:00 p.m. Sunday with a band concert by the Minneapolis Police Band which was followed by a parade. Ball games were played, carnival rides were provided for children, and the village hall was open for tours. "In the evening, scores of couples enjoyed dancing in the new ballroom and the crowd was even larger than during the day."

Monday was the official dedication day with the program starting at 2:00 p.m. The dedication address was given by Senator Thomas P. Welch of Buffalo. Other speakers were Harry Phinney of St. Cloud and S.L. Stolte, state director of the WPA. A program similar to that of Sunday was carried out with the 50 piece Waconia band furnishing the music.

Waverly citizens are mighty proud of their new hall, and they have every reason to be.....the large 90 x 110 foot [sic] structure, facing three streets on the most prominent corner in town, has beauty as well as utility.....

The building will be used for community events and is equipped to accommodate very large crowds. For the dancing pleasure of folks in this vicinity, leading dance bands have been booked and many good times are in store for all in Waverly's grand new hall.

According to the *Wright County Journal-Press*, the final cost of the building was \$70,000, somewhat higher than the \$54,841.00 that had been estimated. The estimate also indicated that Waverly's share would total \$16,827.00. According to village records, the total cost ultimately paid by Waverly was \$22,375.94.

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The Waverly Village Hall

The Waverly Village Hall became the focal point for events and activities in the community from the time of its construction. Because the village council chambers, fire department, and jail were located in another building, primary governmental functions did not take place in the village hall. However, throughout the years, a remarkable variety of community functions occurred in the building. On October 10, 1940 the *Wright County Journal-Press* reported that, "Waverly's P.T.A. Association is sponsoring a comedy play entitled "Womanless Wedding" which will be staged in the new town hall.." An article dated January 15, 1942 described the efforts of various communities in the county to raise funds for the American Red Cross for war-time emergencies. An extensive program was held at Waverly that included various speakers, musical performances, plays, and even an acrobat. The location of the event was not stated but it would seem certain that it was held at the village hall. The same day's paper noted that,

The Knights of Columbus at Waverly put on a banquet Wednesday night for past grand knights of the council there, followed by a program in the village hall which was open to the public. The meeting was addressed by District Deputy O'Brien which was interesting and instructive. Although the weather was cold, there was good attendance.

Advertisements and articles from January through June of 1946 confirm the high level of usage that the building was experiencing. On January 3, 4, and 6, the Harmonaires of St. Cloud performed at the village hall; a later ad stated, "Dance to Earl Baker and his Band - Sunday, January 13"; and "Johnny Robertson and his Band" performed on January 20. Throughout the winter and spring, these dance bands continued to perform along with other groups such as "Mac and his Band," "Bennett Gretten and his Band," and "Jerry Dibble and his Band."

Wedding dances were also very popular at the village hall. For example, on January 20, 1946 a wedding dance was held for Janet Schultz and Edwin Krause who were married at the Crawford Church near Buffalo. The Fireman's Annual Stag was held at the village

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hall on February 20, 1946. The event included a stage show, lunch, and other forms of entertainment. On May 28 the Waverly Council of the Knights of Columbus honored all members with 25 years continuous membership with an event at the village hall. An article about the event stated, "A program of entertainment had been arranged, consisting of several novelty acts, music and special speakers. Honorary membership buttons were presented to those forthful knights. Lunch was served after the program to all members and their wives."

By the late 1940s, village hall was also being called the Waverly Ballroom. An article in the *Wright County Journal-Press* dated April 29, 1948 referred to "Waverly's newly decorated and spacious ballroom." It noted that a "Gala Spring Opening Dance" would be held on May 2 with Bruce Dybvig and the All American Orchestra performing. It was also noted that dances would be held every Sunday through July 4. An advertisement dated May 20, 1948 announced dances on May 23 and May 28 as well as a "Decoration Day Dance" on May 30. A "Community Dance" was held on May 28 featuring Spike Haskell's Old Time Orchestra. The entrance fee was 50 cents. A dance sponsored by the Knights of Columbus was held on June 3 with an entrance fee of 75 cents.

An advertisement dated July 15, 1948 announced that a wedding dance would be held at the "Waverly Ballroom" on July 16 and a "Special Dance" sponsored by the Waverly American Legion on July 21. Wedding dances were held on August 10 and 11 as well as one later in the month. An ad on September 23, 1948 announced "Dance Waverly Ballroom" to a "Battle of Music" on September 24 and 26 featuring bands led by Carl Colby and Bennett Gretten.

Katherine Franske, who moved to Waverly in 1936, commented that because no nearby towns had a similar facility, the village hall served the broader community. She recalled that wonderful orchestras performed in the building and that many events took place including church bazaars, bingo parties, and even roller skating. She noted that in later years Hubert Humphrey, who was from Waverly, occasionally spoke at the building.⁴

⁴Interview with Rolf Anderson on December 9, 2001.

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Waverly resident Gerry Smith noted that the village hall was a center of activities. Church dinners and funeral lunches were held at the hall as well as many pancake breakfasts and turkey suppers which served as fundraisers for various organizations.⁵

According to Waverly resident Lorraine Kittock, because the local school lacked adequate facilities, basketball games, proms, plays, and operettas were all held in the village hall beginning in the 1940s. She recalled that one particularly memorable event was a dance held on New Year's Eve following the end of World War II. She commented that life in Waverly, and the surrounding community, revolved around the village hall.⁶

Walter R. Dennis

Walter R. Dennis, the architect of the Waverly Village Hall, was born in 1893. It is known that he attended an International Correspondence School. He was employed as a draftsman by several prominent Minneapolis and St. Paul architectural firms including Reed & Stem, Magney & Tusler, Long & Long, Maine & Downes and by Harold K. Eads. He worked in partnership with Benjamin Knowles from 1919-1925 and with William K. Macomber from 1930-1931. He became a registered architect on December 20, 1933. At the time of the construction of the Waverly Village Hall, his office was located in the Andrus Building in Minneapolis. To date, only one other building has been attributed to Dennis, the Barnard Funeral Home (National Register, 1986), a Mission Revival style design constructed in Fergus Falls in 1929. Dennis died on April 18, 1961 in Sacramento, California.

The New Deal

Many New Deal programs were involved in the construction of municipal facilities. These include the Civil Works Administration (CWA), the State and Federal Emergency Relief Administrations (SERA and FERA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). In fact, these were successive programs. The work and construction programs of the CWA were replaced by the

⁵Interview with Rolf Anderson on December 9, 2001.

⁶Interview with Rolf Anderson on December 8, 2001.

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SERA and FERA, which in turn was superseded by the WPA. Another New Deal program, the Public Works Administration (PWA) was involved in the construction of a number of the larger municipal projects.

A wide variety of municipal facilities were constructed by the New Deal programs based on the needs of particular communities. Some were built only for governmental functions. Others were constructed for social and recreational purposes. Sometimes these functions were combined. These facilities range from small buildings with only enough space for a fire truck and a room for the city council to large scale buildings such as the Bovey Village Hall (National Register, 1991) that was built by the PWA. The latter building includes city council chambers, the fire department, a jail, a library, and an auditorium. In International Falls, a PWA-built municipal building included a library and space for community functions. A building similar to the Waverly Village Hall is the Willmar Auditorium (National Register, 1991). This building was begun by the SERA and finished by the WPA. It includes an auditorium and kitchen, meeting space for various organizations, and a memorial room dedicated to all veterans. Another similar building with a strong recreational and social focus is the Deerwood Auditorium (National Register, 1995) which includes a large auditorium as well as space for various municipal functions. These buildings were particularly important in smaller town where they provided significant improvements in community services. Moreover, their construction would not have been possible without the assistance of the New Deal.

The WPA, which constructed the Waverly Village Hall, was established by Executive Order No. 7034, dated May 6, 1935. This action was taken by the President under the authority of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935, approved April 8, 1935. The nearly \$5 billion authorized by the act was the largest single appropriation in the history of the United States to that time and \$1.4 billion of this funding was allocated to the WPA.⁷ Both the WPA and the new social security system were intended to replace the emergency programs of the Federal Emergency Relief

⁷Olson, James. E. *Historical Dictionary of the New Deal*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985. p. 398.

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Administration with a program which distinguished between unemployment relief and other types of assistance. Direct relief for the aged, handicapped, and other unemployables was to be returned to the state and local governments. As originally designed, the WPA was to have two functions; first, it was to operate a nation-wide program of small useful projects designed to provide employment for needy employable workers, and secondly, it was responsible for coordinating the various activities of the "Works Program" as a whole. Four years later, in the President's Reorganization Act of 1939, and effective July 1, 1939, the Works Progress Administration was incorporated in the Federal Works Agency and was renamed the Work Projects Administration.⁸

Of particular interest are the architectural expressions promoted by the WPA as a result of their programmatic requirements.

As the program proceeded, monolithic concrete construction came into much greater use on WPA construction projects, and in some states it generally prevailed in the design of buildings. This type of construction required the least amount of highly skilled labor. It was also desirable from the standpoint of the sponsor, because the total project costs and the amount necessary as the sponsor's contribution were lower for this than for other types of building construction.....

The WPA followed the newer tendencies toward simplification in architectural style. Simplicity of design was best suited to the limited skills usually available for WPA work. The WPA urged upon sponsors the elimination of ornate architectural features, intricate structural designs, and elaborate trim. Types of design were suggested which would not require highly skilled and specialized workers, where these were not available from the relief rolls. In order to employ the maximum amount of WPA labor, sponsors were encouraged to use methods which would require the least equipment consistent with efficiency.....

⁸Final Report. p. 7.

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Reinforced concrete was used very extensively in new construction work, in designs which fitted the local architectural traditions.....When other structural materials were used, they were generally native to the region, easily accessible, and not expensive.⁹

The use of reinforced concrete construction in the Waverly Village Hall reflects the goal of maximizing the use of unskilled relief labor and also helped make the project more affordable to the village through the use of lower cost materials.

Registration Requirements

The Waverly Village Hall meets the registration requirements for Social and Recreational Facilities as established in the Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled, "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota." The Waverly Village Hall was built by the Works Projects Administration and construction was completed in 1940. The building provided a significant improvement in municipal services to the community and represents a distinctive example of the Moderne style. The Waverly Village Hall served as a focal point for the community and remains its most prominent civic structure.

⁹Final Report. p. 52.

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Waverly Village Hall is defined by
Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, Block 19, Original Plat.

Boundary Justification

The boundary reflects the original property lines for the Waverly
Village Hall.