

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received NOV 2 1983

date entered DEC - 1 1983

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Fox Hall

and/or common Fox House

2. Location

street & number 5183 County ^{Hwy.} Highway M not for publication

city, town Fitchburg ^{Vic.} vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Dane code 025

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Philip Fox (see continuation sheet for additional owners)

street & number 5183 County Highway M

city, town Oregon vicinity of state Wisconsin 53575

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dane County Register of Deeds/City-County Building

street & number 210 Monona Avenue

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53703

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1977 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Fox house is a rectangular, two-story-plus-attic and basement sandstone residence located in a rural setting in the City of Fitchburg approximately three miles northwest of the village of Oregon. This well-maintained building lies 150 yards from the county highway at the end of a circular gravel driveway in a picturesque setting of burr oak, hickory, and butternut trees. While the features of the Fox house are not highly stylized, the influence of both the Greek Revival and Italianate styles are evident. Sitting on a two-foot thick sandstone foundation, the building is highlighted by front and rear porches with symmetrical architectural details throughout the house. Also included on the 5.3 acre site, but not significant to the nomination, are a hollow tile and stucco ice house (built 1915) sitting just southwest of the house, and a concrete block garage (built c. 1920), sitting northwest of the house. Because the integrity of the property in the relationship of house to site has been retained, the nomination includes the total 5.3 acres (of the former 315 acres owned by the family).

The walls and foundation of the Fox house utilized locally quarried, light brown sandstone, and the rear and end walls were laid in an irregular coursed pattern. The front wall was laid with faced sandstone blocks in a regular coursed pattern, giving the front facade a "finished" appearance. Two prominent, centrally located, interior brick chimneys highlight the peak of the low-pitched gable roof. A single attic dormer projects to the rear of the house between the chimneys. The overhanging eaves are supported by large, individual brackets, except where they have been removed for the rear porch/room addition. The brackets are attached to a smooth-stucco-like frieze, and the upper portion of the second story windows are set in this frieze, giving the appearance of attic windows. The upper floor front casement windows are original, as are all the openings of this house. Two tall narrow French doors flank the front entrance and open to the front porch. End wall windows are the original four over four light sash type placed closely together in twos, giving the appearance of large, single windows. The window mullions are unusually fine and slender. There is one sash window in the rear facade, and three basement windows are set in the foundation on each of the end walls. Stone lintels appear over the main and upper floor windows and doors of the house. The front entrance consists of a two-inch solid wooden door highlighted with recessed panels. The front entrance also has a wooden screen door and is decorated with sidelights, a transom, and wood trim. The rear entrance consists of a simple, non-decorated wooden door. The wooden front porch spans almost the entire front facade and sits on a sandstone foundation with four square wooden columns supporting the roof. The rear porch and room addition, constructed in 1935, includes clusters of small, square wooden columns supporting the upper section. Similar wooden columns support one side of the upper story porch with a stick-work railing surrounding the open section. The upper story room addition is a wood-frame structure sided with clapboards and includes a door to the upper porch and small sash window facing the rear of the house.

The interior plan of the Fox house is symmetrical with both a lower and upper floor central hallway. The original 1856 plan featured the kitchen, pantry, and dining room in the basement of the house. However, in 1868, these rooms were moved upstairs and this plan has remained intact to the present time. (The large living room was divided for a brief time, but the divider has been removed, making the living room the original size.) The living room spans the north side of the lower floor and features an Italian marble mantelpiece which replaced the original mantelpiece. The replacement mantelpiece (1871) came from the Fox home in the City of Madison (28 W. Wilson St., now demolished).

(continued)

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Anna Fox
5183 Highway M
Oregon, WI 53575

Katharine Fox Purcell
4710 Regent St. #82B
Madison, WI 53705

Elizabeth Fox Kaeser
3214 Bluff St.
Madison, WI 53705

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The south end of the lower floor includes the dining room, which spans about three-fourths of the area, and the kitchen, to the west of the dining room. The dining room is highlighted by the original wooden-manteled fireplace. Both the living room and dining room have French doors leading to the front porch. All rooms in the Fox house retain the original wide-profiled wood moldings around windows and doors. The living room woodwork is the most impressive, made of 18-inch wide moldings. The original pine flooring on the lower floor was covered with oak flooring, due to wear, in 1935. The staircase leading to the second story is constructed with a black walnut bannister, and the decorative carvings at the stair ends were made by the family itself. Four bedrooms, two on either side of the hallway, make up most of the second story. Each bedroom has a closet and their appearance has not been altered since the house was built. Even the original pine floors remain, along with the original woodwork around all the doors and windows. At the west end of the second story hall is the small bathroom addition (1935), with a door to the upper porch included. The attic, reached by a narrow staircase from the second floor, covers the entire length of the house with the south end of the attic plastered, as it was sometimes used as servant quarters. The basement still retains the rooms once used as kitchen, pantry, and dining room. Other areas of the basement were and are used for storage and utilities.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| ___ prehistoric | ___ archeology-prehistoric | ___ community planning | ___ landscape architecture |
| ___ 1400–1499 | ___ archeology-historic | ___ conservation | ___ law |
| ___ 1500–1599 | ___ agriculture | ___ economics | ___ literature |
| ___ 1600–1699 | X architecture | ___ education | ___ military |
| ___ 1700–1799 | ___ art | ___ engineering | ___ music |
| X 1800–1899 | ___ commerce | ___ exploration/settlement | ___ philosophy |
| ___ 1900– | ___ communications | ___ industry | ___ politics/government |
| | | ___ invention | ___ other (specify) |

Specific dates: c.1856¹(construction) 1935²(alterations) Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architecture

The Fox house is one of the best-preserved examples of mid-19th century stone farmhouses in Dane County. It is significant because it is a fine example of its method of construction and because it illustrates the transition between the Greek Revival Style and the Italianate Style as manifested in rural farmhouses in Dane County. It is also significant because it retains most of its mid-19th century character, with its almost unaltered interior and only slightly altered exterior.

Dane County is fortunate to have many fine 19th century stone farmhouses. A significant concentration of these houses lie in the northwest part of the county, and there are many fine examples of stone construction in the City of Madison. In south-central Dane County, where the Fox house is located, there are fewer examples of stone farmhouses, but a few significant buildings are located there, as evidenced by their nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. These buildings are the Graves Stone Buildings Thematic Group and the Daniel Pond farmhouse in the Town of Rutland, and the McCoy farmhouse and the Mann House (Quivey's Grove), both located in the City of Fitchburg. Because of its aesthetic character, its quality of construction, its superior level of preservation, and its integrity to period and site, the Fox house is one of the best of the 19th century stone farmhouses in south-central Dane County; and compared to all rural houses of this type in the county, the Fox house also ranks high.

Sitting on its original site, the Fox house has an unaltered exterior except where the rear porch/room addition was constructed. This addition, however, was built in a manner which blends well with the aesthetic quality of the house and allowed the interior to remain largely unaltered when modern facilities became necessary. It is unclear who designed the building, although family oral history indicates a local Irish mason (name unknown) was the primary builder.³ The workmanship was of high quality, as shown by the sturdy foundation, finished front facade, use of seasoned (two years) wood for structure and trim, and the lack of a need for major masonry or structural repairs in over 125 years. Its setting is unchanged except for the moving of the driveway from east to north of the house. Because of the vast amount of state government property surrounding the house, its site is not threatened by modern housing projects typical of this area, given the proximity to a major urban center (Madison, 10 miles to the north). The interior of the house is as intact as the exterior with only the basic heating, plumbing, and electrical modifications, along with the upper story bathroom/porch addition to alter its 1856 design. The bathroom addition does not detract from the original interior plan, as it sits at the end of the upstairs central hallway and is unobtrusive. The overall effect of the interior is one of elegant simplicity and symmetry, reflecting the craftsmanship and taste of the period in which it was built and the people who built it.

Six generations have lived in the Fox house. Its original owner, George Fox, and his parents, lived in the house after George's family had inhabited a small log cabin for 13 years. George Fox and seven of his brothers and sisters, were early settlers (George Fox and his brother William arrived in 1843) of Fitchburg, and the Fox farmsteads were known as the "Fox Settlement."⁴ In 1897, George's son, Dr. Philip Fox,

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

The Capital Times, December 19, 1952; April 28, 1969.

Fox, Anna and Philip. Personal communication, March, 1983.

Fox, Philip. Unpublished family history.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 5.35

Quadrangle name Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1: 24 000

UTM References

A

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Verbal boundary description and justification

NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 35, Town 06, Range 09 East
Certified Survey Map #3340 in Vol. 13 of Certified Surveys, pages 113 & 114 and in Vol. 1257 of records, pages 54 and 55, as Document #1645606 (attached copy).

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

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carol Lohry Cartwright

organization N/A date August 8, 1983

street & number 945 Dane St. telephone (608) 251-4784

city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53713

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Jeff Prew*

title Director, Historic Preservation Division, SHSW date 25 OCT '83

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 12/1/83

Melona Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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a prominent Madison physician and Civil War surgeon, inherited the Fox house, and his family used it as a summer residence. Dr. Fox's close friend, Senator Robert M. La Follette, Sr., often visited the house and, over an extended period, recuperated from an illness there. Dr. Fox's son, Dr. Philip R. Fox and his family, continued to use the house as a summer residence. Following the death of Dr. Philip R. Fox in 1935, Mrs. Fox and her children made the Fox house their permanent residence. Two of these children currently reside in the house. Because the house was used only as a summer residence for such a long period of time, it escaped major renovation and alteration which has resulted in its well-preserved state. The fact that the house has never left the family is significant to its history, as the Fox family sees the house as integral with the family and its role in local history.

¹Oral family history indicates 1856 date. Philip Fox, unpublished family history.

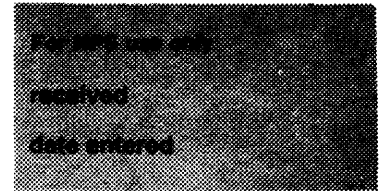
²Blueprints in possession of Fox family, 1935 date.

³Interview with Philip and Anna Fox, March, 1983.

⁴Frederic G. Cassidy. Dane County Place Names. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968, p. 60.

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PROPERTY NAME Fox Hall

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REFERENCE NUMBER

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STATE

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COUNTY CODE

Due to new incorporation, is now located in the City of Fitchburg.

2/13/86

SIGNED, SHPO OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

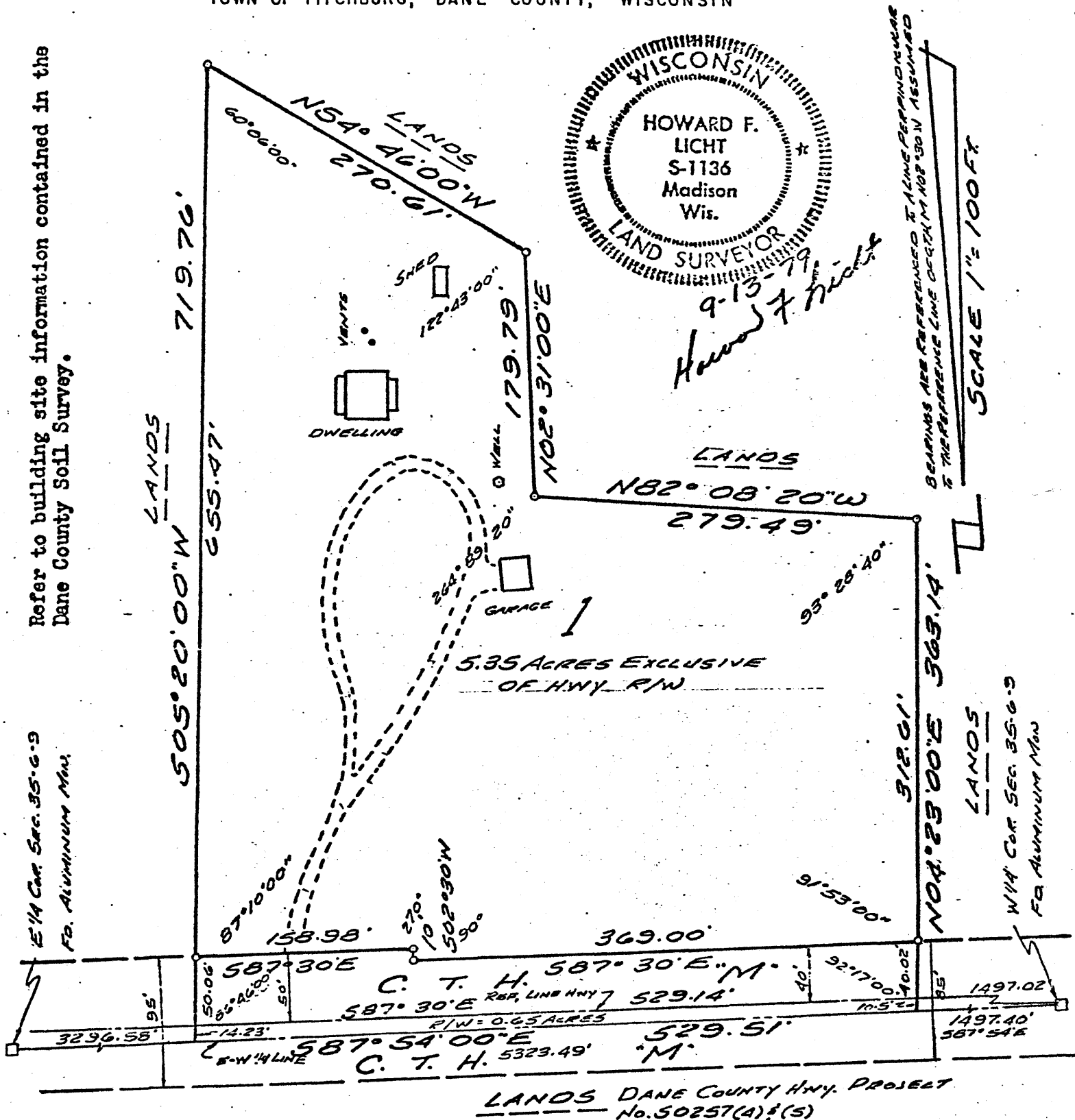
DATE

CERTIFIED SURVEY MAP

PART OF THE NE 1/4 OF THE SW 1/4 SECTION 35-6-9
TOWN OF FITCHBURG, DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Refer to building site information contained in the
Dane County Soil Survey.

E 1/4 Cor. Sec. 35-6-9
FO. ALUMINUM MON.



LANDS DANE COUNTY HWY. PROJECT
No. 50257(4) & (5)

o - Iron stakes placed are
3/4"x24" round iron rods
1.50 lbs/ft.

SURVEYED FOR:

Philip Fox
5183 County Trunk M
Oregon, WI 53575

County Trunk Highway "M" is a controlled
access highway subject to the provisions
of Chapter 30, Dane County Ordinances

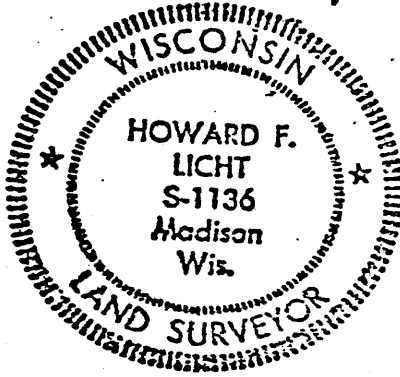
Office Map No. 4-7501
DOCUMENT NO. 1645606
CERTIFIED SURVEY MAP NO. 3340
VOLUME 13 PAGE 113

SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE

I, Howard F. Licht, Registered Land Surveyor, hereby certify that in full compliance with Section 236.34, Wisconsin Statutes, subdivision regulations of Dane County, and according to the instructions and descriptions furnished to me by the owner, Philip Fox, I have made a survey as hereon drawn and that such map correctly represents that survey and is located in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 35, T6N, R9E, Town of Fitchburg, Dane County, Wisconsin, described as follows:

Commencing at the West $\frac{1}{4}$ corner of said Section 35 at an aluminum monument; thence S87°54'00"E along the East-West $\frac{1}{4}$ line of said Section 35, 1497.40 feet to the point of beginning; thence continuing S87°54'00"E along said East-West $\frac{1}{4}$ line 529.51 feet; thence S05°20'00"W, 719.76 feet; thence N54°46'00"W 270.61 feet; thence N02°31'00"E, 179.79 feet; thence N82°08'20"W, 279.49 feet; thence N04°23'00"E, 363.14 feet to the East-West $\frac{1}{4}$ line of said Section 35, said point being the point of beginning. This parcel contains 6.0 acres. Subject to a conveyance of land for highway purposes to Dane County, recorded in Volume 324, page 67.

Dated this 13th day of September, 1979.



Howard F. Licht
Howard F. Licht
Registered Land Surveyor No. S-1136

"Resolved: That this certified survey, including any dedications shown thereon which has been duly filed for approval of the Town Board of the Town of Fitchburg, Dane County, Wisconsin, be and the same is hereby approved as required by Chapter 236, Wisconsin Statutes."

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Fitchburg on this 4th day of October, 1979.

Ed Lynaugh
Ed Lynaugh, Fitchburg Town Clerk

Approved for recording per Dane County Agriculture, Zoning, Planning, and Water Resources Committee action of October 23, 1979

Approved by the Village Board of the Village of Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin this 15 day of October, 1979

M. Smith
Authorized Representative #2572

Jeanette H. Forman
Jeanette H. Forman
Clerk, Village of Oregon

Received for recording this 23 day of Oct, 1979 at 10²⁰ o'clock A.M. and recorded in Volume 13 of Certified Surveys of Dane County at pages 113 414.

Carol R. Mahnke
Carol R. Mahnke, Register of Deeds
By: Carol Mahnke, Deputy
DOCUMENT NO. 1645606

CERTIFIED SURVEY MAP NO. 3340

VOLUME 13 PAGE 114
Office Map No. 4-7501 - Sheet 2 of 2

A-2 to A-1

Part of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 35, T6N, R9E, Town of Fitchburg, Dane County, Wisconsin, described as follows:

Beginning at a point on the West line of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of said Section 35 where the South Right-of-Way line of C.T.H. "M" crosses said line; thence South on said West line 690 feet; thence East 670 feet; thence North 680 feet to the South line of C.T.H. "M"; thence West along said South line to a point where the Right-of-Way line bears North; thence from said point North 10.0 feet; thence West along the South Right-of-Way line of said C.T.H. "M" to the West line of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of said Section 35, said point being the point of beginning.

A-1 to A-2

Lot 1, Certified Survey Map No. 3340, recorded in Volume 13 of Certified Surveys, page 113, document No. 1645666.