

OMR NO. 1001-010  
EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received **NOV 21** 1984  
date entered **DEC 20** 1984

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

**1. Name**

historic Madison Hotel

and/or common Madison House

**2. Location**

street & number 123 S. Illinois Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Atlantic City vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state New Jersey code 034 county Atlantic code 001

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Madison House Limited Partnership

street & number 123 S. Illinois Avenue

city, town Atlantic City vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state New Jersey

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clerk of Records, Clerk's Office

street & number Atlantic County Courthouse, Main Street,

city, town Mays Landing New Jersey state 08330

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title NA has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

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

depository for survey records \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

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

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

The Madison Hotel is an imposing twelve-story neo-Adam tower that stands half a block from the ocean on Illinois Avenue in Atlantic City. Though it follows the norms of beachfront hotels in spatial organization with a shaft of guest chambers on top of a base containing public function rooms, it differs from the norm in its siting. Where most major Atlantic City hotels run north-south, perpendicular to the ocean, the Madison runs east-west, across its block and parallel to the oceanfront. In so doing it marks the greater exploitation of land near the ocean that typified the second generation of Atlantic City hotels. On the other hand, the hotel remained a part of the tradition of gracious design and highly memorable architectural form that had characterized the competitive commercial world of the middle class seashore resorts. This is apparent both in the amount of space given over to the lobbies, parlors and dining rooms, and in the elaborate roof deck and Palladian window-ornamented penthouse, derived from the east elevation of Philadelphia's Old Christ Church, that gives the Madison instant identity.

The first two stories of the hotel occupy essentially the entire site, and contain not only the customary public facilities, but also the kitchens and mechanical systems that usually occupy the basements of a grand hostelry. In Atlantic City, with its elevated ground water levels, basements proved impractical, in this case causing the rear half of the first story and the side of the second floor away from the ocean to be used as "servant spaces": kitchens, sculleries, pantries, management spaces and the like. They are indicated by small windows. The public spaces on the other hand are lighted by larger, small-paned sash (15 over 15) that repeat the late eighteenth century theme. The ground floor windows are of the simple square-headed type, with a keystone in the center of its gauged brick jack arches, which are repeated in pairs and on a smaller scale on the guest room floors. The exchange floor windows, though of the same sash size and shape, were given additional architectural interest by blind recessed lunettes framed by radially-laid brick arches that stand on limestone impost, and are centered on keystones. Those same windows reappear on the top story. A limestone belt course separates the exchange floor from the T-shaped guest room tower which steps back from the site boundaries to ensure that light and air would not be blocked by development of the adjacent sites. At the tenth floor another belt course sets off the top two stories, which are in turn crowned by a shallow cornice and a balustrade that surrounds the sun deck. The penthouse with its giant Palladian opening, cornice, and gabled roof flanked by consoles, grows out of that balustrade and caps the facade.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1929-30      **Builder/Architect** Price and Walton Architects

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Atlantic City became the playground of an America freed by industrial prowess to play, and goaded by advertising and commerce to spend not wisely but conspicuously. Atlantic City became the focus of the mass spectacles of the enlarged middle class with bathing beauty pageants (Miss America) and individual success (the Easter Parade) housed in grand hotels that lined its boardwalk. Those hotels have entered into the lost past of American architecture, with the Marlborough, Blenheim and the Traymore (Price and McLanahan), the Shelbourne (Warren and Wetmore), and others all placed on the National Register - and now demolished. Others, including the Chalfonte-Haddon Hall (Rankin and Kellogg) and the Claridge (McIlvain and Roberts) survive as exteriors alone, with interiors remodelled to serve the casino boom-inspired reshaping of Atlantic City. With those changes, the Madison Hotel is now the principal surviving hotel that still describes the lifestyle and the charm of the pre-Depression resort. Fortunately, the hotel is a handsome Georgian Revival building of the sort that characterized the 1920s: looking to Philadelphia for architectural style, and to the past for detail. Moreover, it is the work of the firm of Price and Walton which carried on the values and ideas of Price and McLanahan, the dominant architectural firm working in Atlantic City of the early twentieth century until World War I. Finally, the hotel was built for successful local hotel men Fetter and Hollinger, and is thus linked to the development history of the resort. It thus meets the principal criteria of National Register status, as it represents the character and lifestyle of the resort at its principal era, and as it memorializes important architects and members of the community.

Though the Madison Hotel is now of principal interest by virtue of surviving with a high degree of integrity from the 1920s heyday of Atlantic City, it was important in that era as a part of the transition of the resort towards a more metropolitan, convention center focussed as much on the new Convention Hall as on the beach. Resort architecture of the period was more conservative than it had been before World War I, with most of the new hotels, whether Walter Smedley's Francois Ier Dennis, Warren and Wetmore's Georgian Shelbourne, Horace Trumbauer's Regency Ritz, or Price and Walton's Neo-Adam Madison Hotel following the lead established by Rankin and Kellogg's Haddon Hall. As such, the Madison is part of a wave of hotel building that marked the maturing of the resort in the years before the Depression. Like those hotels, the Madison drew on the historical styles which had seen the same type of abstraction and stylization that the Art Deco architects preferred. The Neo-Adam/Regency styles met the criteria of being slick but historical, elegant but also traditional. That style was

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see attached.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1/3

Quadrangle name Atlantic City Quad.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000  
7.5 minute

### UMT References

A 

1	8	5	4	9	0	8	0	4	3	5	6	4	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning at a point 245' south east from the intersection of S. Illinois Avenue and Pacific Avenue, on the east side of Illinois Avenue, extending south east 96', then extending perpendicular to Illinois Avenue, 144' to a point then 96' northwest then 144' southwest to the original point being Block 116, lot 26 in the COURT HOUSE RECORDS.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title George E. Thomas, Ph.D.

organization Clio Group, Inc. date July 25, 1984

street & number 3961 Baltimore Avenue telephone (215) 386-6276

city or town Philadelphia state PA

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

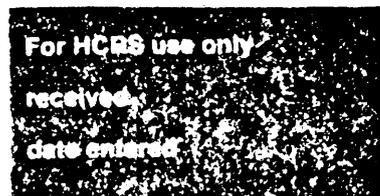
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Russell W. Myers

title Director, Division of Parks & Forestry date 1 November 1984

For NPS use only  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
Adlene Byrum  
Keeper of the National Register  
Entered in the National Register date 12-20-84  
Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief of Registration

# National Register of Historic Place Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Madison Hotel, Atlantic City, Item number 7  
Atlantic County, NJ

Page 2

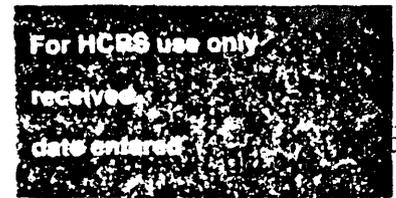
Despite the rigors of the coastal environment, that facade has survived generally intact with no significant alterations to the masonry envelope. During the previous ownership, most of the guest room windows were replaced with one over one sash, and the fan lights of the penthouse level windows were covered. During the current rehabilitation, the original sash of the upper levels have been restored, as have the sash of the exchange level.

The original entrance occurred through three large arched openings into a handsome groin-vaulted vestibule. Brick piers, and the massive pedimented Tuscan frontispiece framing the main door make it clear that this was once an exterior space. Within two or three years (indicated by no additional paint seriations on wood trim), the outer openings of the entrance were infilled with large fixed panes above a short brick wall, and the central opening was infilled with a door (presumably to improve the weather seal, and make the building more comfortable in the harsh ocean environment).

Beyond the vestibule, the entrance lobby extended across the full width of the hotel, with elevators directly ahead of the entrance, a sitting room on the right, and an elegant pink Georgian marble stair to the main exchange lobby on the left. The lobby follows the eighteenth-century stylistic conventions by treating the principal piers as wood panelled surfaces, while the lower portions of the walls of the sitting room are wainscotted. The greater formality of the stair area is indicated by an elegant niche framed by a broken pediment carried on pilasters, containing the drinking fountain, and by full-height wood raised panel wainscott. Floors were originally pink and cream marble. Alterations to piping have removed portions of the floor edge, but the area around the main stair will be restored. Ceilings are of plaster, with decorative moldings applied to the structural beams to fit into the classical mode of design. A coffee shop to the rear of the lobby retains its original handhewn mantle and generous fireplace opening.

The stair leads to a landing lighted by a generously-scaled Palladian window, and then returns to the main exchange lobby. That lobby, like the ground floor lobby, extended across the front of the hotel, and was interrupted at the front of the building by a raised band platform, surrounded by a delicate wood balustrade similar to that of the main stair. Beneath it is the raised vault of the entrance vestibule, making a virtue of a necessity, and underlying the architects' efforts to gain the maximum interior space at the minimum price. The exchange was named the James Madison Room, and received the same sort of detail of the lower lobby with raised panel wainscott to window level, small-paned wood sash, classically

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Madison Hotel, Atlantic City Item number 7

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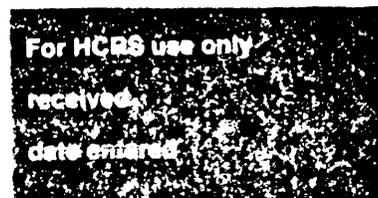
Atlantic County, NJ

molded beams subdividing plaster ceilings, and trim accented by Federal ceiling medallions. A smaller Federal detailed women's parlor called the Dolly Madison Room is accented by a fireplace with wood mantle, a decorative frieze and plaster cornice, and handsome ornamented ceiling. With the exception that the north end of the Madison Room was separated from the remainder of the room by a fire wall to enclose the stair, the spaces remain intact. The decorative scheme is also readily reconstructed from photographs and newspaper accounts which make it clear that period furniture was used, including Hepplewhite Revival furniture - "Madison Chairs", valanced curtains, and copies of Gilbert Stuart's portraits of James and Dolly Madison (Atlantic City Press, 12 January 1930).

To the rear of the Madison Room, extending along the south side of the hotel, was the principal dining room of the building. That room was treated in the fashion of the other public spaces with raised panel wood wainscott, paneled window jambs, and pilasters carrying the principal beams that span the room. At the far end, their arched openings subdivided the dining room to create a smaller dining room. Kitchens and accessory servant spaces completed the remainder of the floor. Because modern hotels do not require so much public space, and because of the security problems of non-resident guests being admitted to the upper floors of a hotel, the dining room has been subdivided into guest rooms, while some portions have been converted to mechanical spaces to make it possible to air condition the public rooms.

Upper levels are remarkable for maintaining the original guest room layout. The other surviving early twentieth century Atlantic City hotels have been gutted on the upper levels to meet the casino code requirements for larger hotel rooms, but the Madison retains its double-loaded corridor arrangement with moderately-sized rooms and private baths. Paneled doors, Colonial Revival trim and Colonial Revival furniture repeat themes already established on the lower levels, creating a satisfying unity of architectural expression.

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Madison Hotel

Item number 8

Page 2

Atlantic City, Atlantic County, NJ

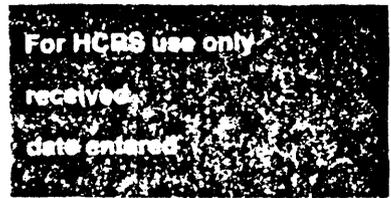
then incorporated into every level of the building, from the exterior to the interior decor, the furniture and the even names of the rooms. In so doing, the architect established an image that in classic advertising form linked the name and the product.

The architects, Price and Walton, were of note in their own right. Walter Price was the brother of William Price of Price and McLanahan, and had worked in the office before leaving in 1903, while Will Walton had been a member of Price and McLanahan's office for a decade, and remained one of the participants in Will Price's utopian Rose Valley community. This office remained closely associated with the Quaker hierarchy of Philadelphia and Atlantic City. For that clientele Walter Price designed suburban houses in Rose Valley, Pennsylvania and on the Main Line, and Quaker meetinghouses in Washington, DC, Swarthmore, PA, and Atlantic City, NJ. That later building, designed a year or two before the Madison Hotel, shows many of the hotel details, including the entrance frontispiece, and the fenestration. It was Price and Walton in the mid-1920s who had designed the elegant seahorse and seashell decorated pavillions of the Dennis Hotel, which contained the notions of Price and McLanahan's sea fauna ornament of the Blenheim Hotel (1905). Thus, the architects were an important continuation of one of the principal architectural practices that helped shape Atlantic City.

Finally the hotel was built for well-known Atlantic City hotel men Eugene Fetter and John Hollinger, who had established the notion of the eighteenth-century revival hotel in the resort. By 1929 when the Madison was under construction, they were already operating the Jefferson and the Monticello and extended the theme with the Madison. Presumably that interest reflected the popularity of the Colonial Revival as a regional style, but also suggested the impact of the recent Sesquicentennial whose principal display had been a recreation of Philadelphia's High Street as it appeared in the eighteenth century. Newspaper accounts and publicity brochures make it clear that Fetter and Hollinger played on the American theme of the building. "Much time and thought was given to the design and interior decorating of the building. Colonial motifs have been used exclusively. Every piece of furniture is a copy of a museum piece. Two Stuart portraits, one of James Madison and one of Dolly Madison have been reproduced and are hung in conspicuous places in the lobby..." It was those choices that would make it a unique hotel in Atlantic City, known not for its lavish, outrageous scale but "...giving to the place a beauty, dignity and simplicity".

In later years, Atlantic City lost popularity. The Madison Hotel was converted to a nursing home, its major rooms were subdivided, and its character was seemingly irretrievably lost. In the past year that hotel has been restored; the many subdivisions of the lobbies have been removed, and the generous lobbies, and stairs, are revealed much as they were designed to be. Though the remainder of Atlantic City has become glitter, the Madison remains to describe the more elegant style of an earlier Atlantic City.

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Madison Hotel

Item number 9

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Atlantic City, Atlantic County, NJ

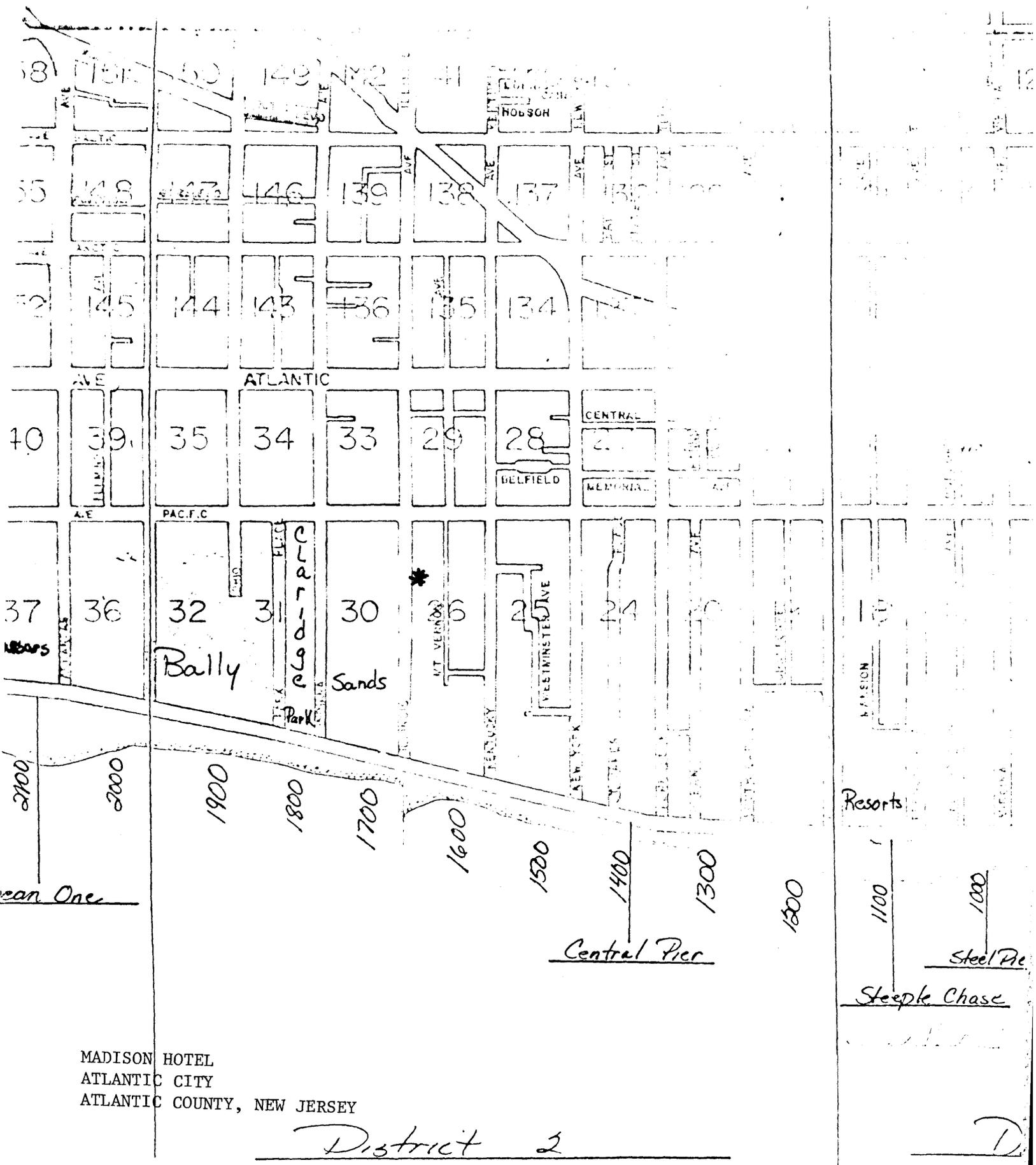
Bibliography

Atlantic City Press, 8 August, 1929; 11 August 1929, "Hotel Madison Begins to Rise"; 12 January 1930, "14 Story Hotel Madison, 210 Rooms, Completed"; 26 January 1930, "Contractor Seeking Leak Finds Banquet Awaiting"; Victor Gondos, obituary, 13 October 1963.

"The Madison, Atlantic City", promotional brochure, Atlantic City Public Library.

Thomas, George E. William L. Price 1861-1916. Builder of Men and of Buildings. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1975.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Architecture of Atlantic City: An Introduction to History, Building and Society along the Strand", in Atlantic City Historic Building Survey. New Jersey Office of Historic Preservation, 1980, pp. 6-33.



MADISON HOTEL  
 ATLANTIC CITY  
 ATLANTIC COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

District 2

D

