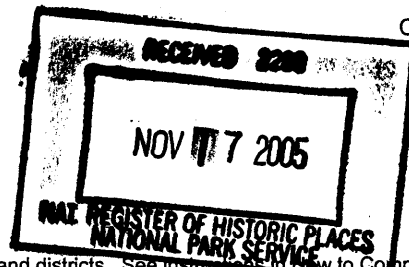


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1485

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions on 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 any 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 Passaic Elks Club

other names/site number The Garden Building

2. Location

street & number 29-31 Howe Avenue not for publication

city or town Passaic vicinity N/A

state New Jersey code NJ county Passaic County code 031

zip code 07055-4001

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

[Signature] 9/12/05

Signature of certifying official

Date

John S. Watson, Jr., Assistant Commissioner, Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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): _____

Signature of Keeper

[Signature: Eason W. Beall]

Date of Action

12/29/05

Passaic Elks Club
name of property

Passaic County, NJ
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
 private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)
 building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
SOCIAL ; meeting hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/Italian Renaissance

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation granite
roof synthetic
walls brick
limestone
other terra cotta

Narrative Description

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

See Attached.

Passaic Elks Club
name of property

Passaic County, NJ
County and State

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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

ARCHITECTURE
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1924-1934

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kelly, John F.

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.)

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

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Passaic Public Library

Passaic Elks Club
name of property

Passaic County, NJ
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property < 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 <u>18</u> Zone	<u>573510</u> Easting (6)	<u>4523680</u> Northing (7)	2 _____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing
3 _____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing	4 _____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing ____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sheryl Jaslow

organization Powers & Co., Inc. date 4/27/2005

street & number 211 N. 13th Street, 5th Floor telephone 215-636-0192

city or town Philadelphia state PA zip code 19107

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name James Robbins/ The Robbins Consulting Group

street & number 659 Eagle Rock Avenue, Suite 7 telephone (973) 324-9633

city or town West Orange state NJ zip code 07052

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

The Passaic Elks Club, a six-story building standing at 29-31 Howe Avenue, is a representative example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style (Photos #1-6). Constructed in 1924 by Passaic Elks Lodge #387 as a gathering place and social hall for Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks activities, this block-like building is a steel-frame structure with a veneer of buff brick and a base of limestone. Terra cotta was employed to look like stone for the accents and cornice. The building has a flat roof and an irregular trapezoidal-shaped footprint as it follows the angles of Howe Avenue and Garden Street.

The north and west elevations are formal in appearance and ornamented accordingly (Photos #1-4); the south and east elevations are utilitarian in character (Photos #5-6). The west and north elevations follow a base-shaft-cap format. The base section of the north and west elevations consists of a granite base, a smooth watertable of limestone ashlar blocks surmounted by a field of rusticated stone and topped by a smooth ashlar cap of limestone. The north and west elevations have a buff brick shaft section. The capital of the building on the west and north elevations is separated from the rest of the elevation by a terra cotta belt course at the 6th story sill height. The building is crowned by a broad embellished projecting cornice of terra cotta supported by scrolled modillions and a terra cotta dentil course below. On the exterior, the 2nd and 3rd story windows are paired, as are 4th and 5th story windows, indicating the double-height volumes on the interior.

The north elevation, facing Howe Avenue, is three bays in width and contains the main entrance to the building (Photos #1-3). The entrance, centered in the elevation, is distinguished by a broken pediment surround of limestone that is supported by paired limestone Corinthian pilasters. The entrance opening is round-arched, with a carved fleur-de-lis motif architrave. The entrance is further embellished with roundels, a keystone and a carved shield in the center of the broken pediment. The date stone located at the west end of the north elevation states: "B.P.O.E. 387 1922", identifying the building as the Benevolent Order of the Elks, Lodge #387, and 1922 indicating the stone was laid. The rest of the north elevation is dominated by a centered four-story round-arched opening filled with ornamental terra cotta blocks that continue the Italian Renaissance Revival theme. Turned terra cotta pilasters reminiscent of Jacobean furniture legs stand between the tripartite windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors and the 4th and 5th floors. In keeping with the Renaissance theme, a wrought iron balconette adorns the 4th story. The window sills throughout are limestone, as are the keystone and end blocks located at the 5th story opening in the center bay. The brickwork on the north elevation further emphasizes the grouping of the middle floors, with bands of soldier brickwork framing the end bay windows at the 2nd and 3rd stories and the 4th and 5th stories. Recessed brick spandrels fill the gap between the 3rd and 4th stories at the end bays.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

The fenestration on the north elevation varies from floor to floor and is organized symmetrically, with the end bays containing identical window openings and a center tripartite grouping of identical windows (Photos #1, 3). The window openings are rectangular in shape, with the exception of the tripartite arched window openings on the 5th story windows that repeat the arched theme of the entrance and center bay. The large 1st story windows and sub-level basement level windows are presently boarded. The window sizes alternate in height from the 2nd to the 5th floors. The windows at the end bays of the north elevation are largely replacement wood windows (awning and double-hung) except for one original 4-light wood casement window on the 3rd floor at the north end and one 6-light wood casement window on the 4th story.¹ A replacement 6/6 window is located on the 5th floor at the west end. The original center tripartite windows are intact, with 4-light wood casement windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors, and double-hung 2/2 wood windows on the 4th floor and 1/1 wood windows on the 5th floor. The 6th floor retains the original 6/1 wood windows.

The west elevation (Photos # 3-5), seven bays in width, continues many of the architectural themes presented in the north elevation, including an arcade of large arched windows that are embellished with wrought iron balconettes at the 4th floor level. Like the north elevation, the 5th story windows are ornamented with limestone keystones and end blocks. The 1st floor of the west elevation is comprised of a series of large openings, five of which are boarded window openings and two at the east end presently covered with full-light metal roll-down security doors. Like the north elevation, the end window bays are different in character than the central five bays, indicating a different use. The end bays on the 2nd through 5th stories are comprised of paired 6-light wood casement windows on the 2nd and 4th stories and paired 4-light wood windows on the 3rd and 5th stories. Corresponding to a ballroom on the interior, the 2nd/3rd story windows in the center portion of the elevation contain paired double-hung windows with fixed transoms. The 4th/5th story Palladian style windows, corresponding to a two-story meeting room inside, consist of a large 15/1 window with a multi-light arched transom flanked by 5-light sidelights. Paneled wood pilasters and wood moldings serve as the window trim. Instead of a transom window, stuccoed arched panels infill the area above the Palladian windows. Stuccoed roundels adorn the spaces between the arched window openings at the 5th story. The 6th story 6/1 wood windows are identical to those on the north elevation.

The south elevation (Photo #5), four bays in width, is constructed of red brick and is utilitarian in appearance. The buff brick from the west elevation wraps around the corner and terminates a few feet from the southwest corner of the building. The south elevation abuts a two-story garage building to the south. The windows above the

¹ Historic postcards of the Elks Club from c. 1925 show that end bays on the 2nd through the 5th floor were all casement windows.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

adjacent garage building are modest 1/1 wood windows. Two small brick penthouses are visible at the roof level.

The east elevation (Photos #1, 6) is modest in appearance above the adjacent two-story garage building to the east. The wall angles back slightly to allow for more light to the 6th story windows. The series of singular window openings on this elevation, confined to the 6th floor, are 6/1 double-hung wood windows. A terra cotta coping is located along the roofline. A small brick penthouse is visible at the north end of the east elevation.

The interior of the Passaic Elks Club retains much of the architectural fabric associated with the original construction completed in 1924 (Photos #7-22). Although six stories in height in appearance on the exterior, the interior is laid out in four levels, with two-story height spaces on the 2nd and 3rd floors, and 2nd and 3rd floor mezzanine levels. Every level has its own elevator lobby access. The building contains one elevator bank and two staircases: one at the northeast corner and another at the southwest corner of the building (Photos #18, 19). The main vestibule outside of the entrance doors on Howe Avenue contains pinkish gray marble wainscoting and the remnants of raised wood panel moldings on the upper walls and ceiling. Marble steps lead to the main elevator lobby where the walls are finished with pinkish gray marble wainscot and plaster above (Photos #7, 8). A raised plaster frieze, highlighted with gold paint and topped with a molded plaster cornice, adorns the upper wall. The floor has been stripped to its concrete sub floor.

The elevator lobby contains two bays (Photo #8); one of the doors retains the original pressed metal elevator door; the other door is a flush metal door. Both elevator doors have been painted with a gold paint. The original half-round decorative elevator indicator meter is found above the north elevator door.

A doorway on the north wall of the elevator lobby leads to the northeast stair. From the 1st to the 2nd floors, the southwest staircase is finished with marble treads and paneled metal risers and marble wainscoting (Photo #9). A metal handrail is attached to the wall; the newel post, railing and oval-shaped balusters are painted metal. The landings feature terrazzo flooring. On the upper floors, the southwest staircase is more modest, with slate treads and metal risers, a modest paneled metal newel post and square metal balusters and handrail.

The elevator lobby leads to a wide north-south corridor with several rooms off to the east and west. The east wall of the corridor contains entrances to a suite of connecting reception/lounge rooms. The northernmost room positioned at the front of the building contains paneled wood wainscot, a fireplace with a paneled wood surround and mantle (Photos #10, 11). A plaster cornice supported by narrow scrolled modillions embellishes walls. The adjoining reception rooms connected to the front room are finished with raised wood panel moldings that were typical of the classical revival styles in the 1920s,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

a chair rail and base molding and the same plaster cornice and widely spaced modillions. The floors in this suite of rooms have also been stripped down to the concrete sub floor. The rooms to the east of the main wide corridor on the 1st floor contain modern restrooms and a modest office-type space. The ceilings throughout the 1st floor are full height. At the end of the main corridor is a small foyer that leads to a large open space that most recently functioned as a bar/nightclub. This space has independent access through doors located at the southeast corner of the building. The finishes in this space are modern, with dropped ceilings and carpeting.

The 2nd floor elevator lobby is a large space with carpeted floors, wallpapered walls, and an exposed beamed ceiling (Photo #12). The original half-round elevator indicator fixture remains in place above the northern elevator bay. A restroom is located to the east of the lobby; a large lounge with long bar occupies the northwestern end of the building to the south of the elevator lobby.

The ballroom, a grand two-story space, is located to the south of the elevator lobby and occupies most of the 2nd floor and 2nd floor mezzanine levels (Photos #13-15). The ballroom retains its original wood flooring and the original decorative coffered ceiling embellished with gold-painted stylized triglyphs and floral metopes. Pilasters with Corinthian capitals support the beamed ceiling at regular intervals along the perimeter of the ballroom. The east and north walls of the ballroom feature small projecting balconies with curved overhangs that are ornamented with black and gold ceramic tiles (Photos #12, 13). Ornate metal staircases with scrolled bronze balusters flank the main entrance to the ballroom and lead to balcony rooms and lounges on the 3rd floor (Photos #14, 15). The small ornamental balcony on the north end of the ballroom is accessible from a doorway on the north end of the room. A small room off of the ballroom on the 2nd floor at the south end of the building shows several remodeling schemes, with modern paneling on some walls, painted plaster and a carpeted floor. The windows and doors generally retain painted wood trim and moldings.

The opposing wall of the ballroom contains three single-leaf entrance openings that lead to the commercial kitchen spaces. The kitchens are utilitarian in character and retain a few pieces of equipment, including the freezers. The floors in the kitchen are gray terrazzo; the walls are painted plaster and the ceilings are plaster with exposed ductwork for the kitchen equipment.

The 2nd floor mezzanine elevator lobby has a dropped acoustical tile ceiling and its walls are clad in wood paneling dating to the 1970s. The floors throughout this level are covered in carpet. The original bronze elevator indicator is positioned between the elevator doors. To the north of the elevator lobby facing Howe Avenue is a toilet room with its original black and white mosaic tile flooring and its wood toilet partitions intact. A washroom adjoins this toilet room and also retains the black and white tile flooring and ceramic tile walls. A lounge with 1970s style paneled walls is located at the southwest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

corner of the 2nd floor mezzanine and abuts the restroom. A series of three interconnected balcony rooms are accessible via the two staircases in the ballroom and the 2nd floor mezzanine elevator lobby. The three balcony rooms retain the original chair rail, baseboard and cove moldings. A few of the walls have been covered in modern paneling, and the original opening in the center overlooking the ballroom is boarded with paneling.

The 3rd floor and 3rd floor mezzanine level contain the other 2-story space in the building, the former meeting hall for the Passaic Elks. Like the 2nd floor mezzanine elevator lobby, the 3rd floor lobby shows several remodeling campaigns. The floor is clad with black and white composition tiles and the remnants of a dropped ceiling are in place. A small lounge room is located adjacent to a restroom at the west end of the building overlooking Howe Avenue. The toilet room contains ceramic tile flooring dating to the 1950s and ceramic tile walls. The lounge room retains some chair rail and baseboard. The windows have the original wood trim.

The Elks formal meeting room on the 3rd floor also shows evidence of later remodeling campaigns, but some of the original materials are still extant (Photos #16, 17). The room resembles the ballroom downstairs, but it is not as ornate. The original wood floor remains intact, as does the decorative coffered ceiling above a dropped acoustical tile ceiling in disrepair. At the south end of the meeting hall is a raised stage (Photo #17) with paneled wood wainscot, plaster cove moldings and a decorative supporting beam above the stage with "BPOE" adorning a scroll in the center of the flat arch. An antechamber to the meeting hall at the north end contains a straight staircase with a decorative bronze railing that leads to a small balcony room. This balcony room is fully finished with wood floors, baseboard moldings and cove moldings. The coffered ceiling extends into this part of the room.

The 3rd floor mezzanine level, modest in character, is limited to one large room confined to the northwest corner of the building. The floors are the original wood. The baseboard, window trim and door trim are all painted wood. Some of the walls are covered with paneling dating to the 1970s. A paneled column is located in the center of the room.

The 4th floor retains the original hotel rooms and steam room. The elevator lobby retains the original half-round elevator indicator above the westernmost cab (Photo #20). The hotel floor retains the original wood door and window trim, wood baseboard and wood floor throughout. The walls and ceilings are plaster in poor condition. A double-loaded L-shaped corridor extends off of the elevator lobby (Photo #21). The hallway is relatively modest, with two recessed steel and glass skylights. The hotel rooms are all interconnecting via paneled wood doors. The rooms are modest; each room contains its own bathroom with black and white mosaic tiled floor, ceramic tiled wainscot, cast iron tub, porcelain pedestal sink and toilet (Photo #22). Two rooms off of the corridor at the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

south end were likely used as a steam room/bathing facility. These rooms contain black and white mosaic tiled floors and concrete patched areas where benches were likely placed.

In conclusion, the Passaic Elks Club retains a significant amount of original detail and materials, with alterations limited to the addition of dropped ceilings on the 1st floor rear space, the 2nd floor mezzanine level, the 3rd floor meeting hall and other secondary spaces.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

The Passaic Elks Club, a 6-story Italian Renaissance Revival style commercial building, stands prominently 29-31 Howe Street, at the corner of Garden Street and Howe Avenue in downtown Passaic, NJ. Constructed in 1924, this grand building served as an important meeting place and headquarters for the local fraternal group, the Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks (B.P.O.E) Lodge #387 for more than a decade, and then was sporadically used for other purposes throughout the mid- to late-20th century. The building is significant for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Social History as a noteworthy example of a social building that positively influenced social structure and history of the city of Passaic, NJ. The Passaic Elks Lodge is also significant under Criterion C as an outstanding local example of the Renaissance Revival style by prolific local architect John F. Kelly. The period of significance spans from 1924 when the building was completed through 1934 when the Elks declared bankruptcy and vacated the building.

Summary History of the Building

In the early 1920s, the Passaic Elks Lodge #387 began planning their new club building. The cornerstone on the building at 29-31 Howe Street was laid in 1922 and construction was completed in 1924. The building was largely used by the Passaic Elks from 1924 until the mid-1930s. According to Bob Hare, the current Deputy Mayor of Passaic and long-time resident of the city, the first floor of the Elks Club functioned as a branch investment office for stock traders of the Passaic National Bank during the late 1920s. The Elks vacated the building sometime between 1934, when they declared bankruptcy, and 1936.

The Howe Street building was occupied sporadically by various agencies after the Elks left. In 1937, the Passaic Criss-Cross Directory lists only the Oxford Bowling Arcade as the occupant of the building.¹ The 1950 Passaic Criss-Cross Directory lists the U.S. Employment Services as the occupant of the building that year. By 1954, the building was vacant according to the city directory. In the late 1950s, the Garden Club, a dancing hall and reception room, opened in the former Elks Lodge. The ballroom on the 2nd floor became known as the Sapphire Room for receptions and the 3rd floor former B.P.O.E. meeting hall was renamed the Grand Ballroom for ballroom dancing.²

The building was largely vacant from the 1960s through the early 21st century. In 1966, the building was listed as the Garden Building in the Passaic City Directory, with various professional tenants in the building, including a tavern on the 1st floor. For a few years, from 1982 to the mid-1980s, the Passaic Police Department DARE program utilized the large meeting room on the 3rd floor for instructional programs. The City of Passaic

¹ Passaic Criss-Cross Directory, provided by reference department of the Passaic Public Library.

² Historic postcards of the Garden Club dating to the late 1950s show both rooms. Images provided in November 2004 by Mark S. Auerbach, Passaic City Historian.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

acquired the building in 1982 as a result of unpaid property taxes on the building.³ The building is presently vacant and awaiting rehabilitation into affordable senior housing.

Criterion A, Significance in Social History

For just over a decade, from 1924 to 1936, the Passaic Elks Club on Howe Street provided an important location for Elks social club activities that included the fundraising for local disadvantaged and crippled children. The building also served as a centrally located gathering place for the Passaic Elks, many of which were local businessmen and important members of Passaic society.

The city of Passaic, NJ, located on the Passaic River about nine miles north of Newark and ten miles northwest of New York City, was settled by Dutch traders in the late 1600s as a fur-trading post. The city continued to flourish with the development of industry, particularly textile and clothing manufacture, and the creation of a dam on the Passaic River in the 1850s. The city of Passaic was incorporated in 1873. From the last half of the 19th century and well into the 20th century, the city continued to flourish with its many textile mills and factories, attracting many European immigrants to work for minimal wages. Other immigrant groups opened successful mom-and-pop stores in downtown Passaic. During this time, the population grew over ten fold and peaked in the 70,000's during the decade after World War I.⁴

Brief History of the Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks

Fraternal orders, also known as fraternal societies or benefit associations, are defined by law as "voluntary, nonprofit associations established for the mutual aid and sociability of their members." Many fraternal organizations of the United States were patterned after European benevolent secret societies modeled on the order established by the Freemasons. These prototypes included such organizations as the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Ancient Order of Druids, and the Ancient Order of Foresters, which were introduced into the United States in 1819, c. 1830 and 1832, respectively.⁵ From these and similar associations, fraternal orders throughout the country derived their lodge system of organization, their democratic form of self-government, their confidential business meetings, and their ritualism and social characteristics. The first fraternal order of American origin was the Improved Order of Red Men, which was established in 1833 and included in its ritual many Native American customs.

Fraternal organizations flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries throughout the country in both small towns and large cities. In smaller towns that offered

³ "Sorkin Renews Bid for Sale of Building," *North Jersey Herald News*, 29 August 1985.

⁴ Mark Auerbach, "An Overview of the History of Passaic," from the World Wide Web, December 8, 2004, <http://www.tccweb.org/passaic.htm#An%20Overview>.

⁵ "Fraternal Orders," *Encarta 96*. Funk & Wagnalls Corporation/Microsoft Corporation, 1995.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

limited social opportunities, lodges were often the center of social activity. The role of the lodges in larger cities encompassed providing for a social core, as well as serving to integrate immigrants into the general population, thereby providing valuable connections to improve their socio-economic status. A reflection of the powerful influence of fraternal organizations in the larger culture was the adoption of the lodge form of organization by a number of trade unions in the twentieth century.

The Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks was established in the United States by English immigrant Charles Vivian, a successful comic singer and dancer.⁶ After his arrival to New York City in 1867 at the age of 25, he organized a group of entertainers known as the Jolly Corks who met on Sundays when the theaters and the bars were closed. The group recognized the need to provide help to those in need after a member died and left his family without any means.⁷ The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was formally established on February 16, 1868 with Vivian as its leader. The elk was chosen in name and symbol for its peaceful, stately qualities and for its American origins. The popularity of the Elks spread, prompting the Elks to request the New York State legislature for a charter to establish a Grand Lodge to authorize the creation of local Lodges throughout the United States. New York Lodge No. 1 received its status as the first Elks chapter in 1871.⁸ After that date, the numbers for the Elks Lodges were assigned sequentially by the Grand Lodge of the B.P.O.E.

Throughout the history of this benevolent association, the Elks have focused on helping fellow members in crises, raising money for children with disabilities, raising money for college scholarships, youth projects and providing recreational programs for veteran hospital patients. The lodge building served many functions for the Elks: foremost as the location for regular Elks meetings, but also an impressive backdrop for Elks-hosted social activities and benefit performances, a place for dining, meeting lounges and reception areas. Some of the more affluent Elks chapter lodges included libraries, gymnasiums, spas, locker rooms and pools.

By the late 19th century, the Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks was one of the nation's most important fraternal organizations and played an important role in "shaping of middle America."⁹ In the early 20th century, Elks lodges typically attracted members based on their contribution to the world of the law, business and politics, not based on

⁶ Mike Jones, Salisbury Elks Lodge #699, "The Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, How It All Began," retrieved November 22, 2004 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.salisburyelks.org/Elks%20history/index.html>.

⁷ "The Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, How It All Began," retrieved November 22, 2004 from the World Wide Web: www.elks2477.com/History/History%20%20Elks.htm.

⁸ "The Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, How It All Began," retrieved November 22, 2004 from the World Wide Web: www.elks2477.com/History/History%20%20Elks.htm.

⁹ National Register Nomination for The Elk's Lodge BPOE #2 (Philadelphia) (demolished), 8/1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

heredity.¹⁰ Following World War I, the early 1920s was a period of growth for fraternal organizations nationwide as its politically-connected members prospered. This prosperity prompted the construction of many Elks clubhouses nationwide that offered a broad range of social activities.

The Passaic Elks Club, Lodge #387

The Passaic Elks were assigned number #387 by the Grand Lodge for their chapter on October 8, 1897.¹¹ The Passaic Elks first occupied a large Queen Anne style residential scale building at the corner of Sherman and Lexington Streets in Passaic at the turn of the 20th century and remained there for more than two decades.

Following the national trend, the Passaic Elks Lodge #387 would have included prominent businessmen, mill owners and other upwardly mobile middle class members of society. According to Bob Rosenthal, published author of Passaic history, the upper middle class members of Passaic society in the 1920s were predominantly Jewish merchants who owned many of the department stores and upscale shops in downtown Passaic.¹² Not coincidentally, the B.P.O. Elks organization was one of the few major fraternal organizations in the nation that did not discriminate against Jews for membership into their group.¹³ One prominent member of Lodge #387 is George N. Seger, mayor of Passaic from 1911 to 1919 and New Jersey Representative from 1923 until his death in 1940.¹⁴

In the early 1920s, the Passaic Elks used the resources generated by their membership to construct a grand new clubhouse at 29-31 Howe Avenue in the style of an Italian palazzo. The construction of an extravagant new club by the Passaic Elks, instead of renting hall space, is an important indicator of both the affluence and influence of the Passaic Elks in the early 1920s. In addition, the new Passaic Elks Lodge was positioned in the heart of the Passaic business district on Main Street: convenient location for its members to visit during and after work hours.

The Howe Avenue building program, still physically intact in the Passaic Elks Club, provided the necessary spaces that served the primary Elks club functions: a suite of reception rooms on the 1st floor, a formal ballroom for social activities and benefits on the 2nd floor, a chapter meeting room on the 3rd floor with a stage and adjoining lounges and reception rooms. In addition to the formal entertainment spaces like the ballroom, the 6-

¹⁰ National Register Nomination for The Elk's Lodge BPOE #2 (Philadelphia) (demolished), 8/1.

¹¹ Telephone conversation on November 22, 2004 with the publication department at Elks Grand Lodge Headquarters in Chicago, IL.

¹² Telephone interview with Passaic author Bob Rosenthal on December 3, 2004.

¹³ National Register Nomination for The Elk's Lodge BPOE #2 (Philadelphia) (demolished), 8/3.

¹⁴ "Political Graveyard, Members Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks in New Jersey," from the World Wide Web on December 13, 2004, <http://politicalgraveyard.com/geo/NJ/elks.html>.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

story Passaic Elks Club building also provided a series of comfortable guest quarters on the top floor, each with its own bathroom, to accommodate Elks visiting from elsewhere in the country. Hotel rooms were often incorporated into large Elks buildings across the country at this time, and it provided an alternative to staying at a hotel. Architect John Kelly planned for further expansion of the Passaic Elks building, according to his obituary in *The Herald-News*, by planning a floor on the top of the building under the existing roof that could be exposed and used as the floor for a new story if needed at some point.¹⁵

In 1934, the *New York Times* noted that the Passaic Elks Lodge #387 formally declared bankruptcy.¹⁶ At the time, their real estate assets were valued at \$282,736, presumably the Howe Avenue building. By 1937, according to the Passaic Criss-Cross Directory, the Elks had left the building, and it was occupied instead by the Oxford Bowling Arcade. The Passaic Elks then relocated a few blocks away to a small late 19th century building at 191 Washington Place near the corner of Hoover Avenue across from the former Knights of Columbus Hall (and later a YMYWHA Community Center, now demolished), where they remained until Passaic Lodge #387 was formally disbanded in 1984.¹⁷

The lavish Philadelphia Elk's Lodge (National Register 1984, now demolished) represents the Elks clubhouse program on a much grander scale. The Philadelphia Elk's Lodge was constructed as a clubhouse at N. Broad and Wood Streets in Philadelphia about the same time as the Passaic Elks Club, in 1925. The Philadelphia Elks Lodge #2 membership was dominated by a powerful group of influential businessmen and included a large number of Jewish merchants. The resulting 12-story building included a swimming pool, gymnasium, a two-story barrel vaulted chapter meeting room, a library, lounges, a ballroom/auditorium with seating for 2,500 and a large stage, and seven floors of guest rooms.¹⁸ The Philadelphia Elk's Lodge also experienced financial difficulties soon after their new building was constructed. Within a decade, the upper seven levels of the building were leased as an independent hotel; the Philadelphia Elks vacated their palatial clubhouse in 1934 in favor of a smaller, manageable rented facility in the heart of the city.¹⁹

The Camden Elks #293 (chapter is no longer in existence) clubhouse is an example of a contemporary Elks club on a smaller scale. On April 1, 1925 ground was broken by the Camden Lodge of Elks for its new home at 807 Cooper Streets and finished in May of

¹⁵ "John Kelly, Architect, Succumbs," *The Herald-News*, 23 October 1940, p. 8.

¹⁶ *New York Times*, 18 January 1934. Newspaper clipping provided by ProQuest internet research program for the historical *New York Times*, available from the Philadelphia Free Library.

¹⁷ Telephone conversation on November 22, 2004 with the publication department at Elks Grand Lodge Headquarters in Chicago, IL.

¹⁸ National Register Nomination for The Elk's Lodge BPOE #2 (Philadelphia) (demolished), 8/3.

¹⁹ The building later became the Philadelphia Athletic Club and was demolished in the 1980s.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

1926. The resulting Classical Revival style Elks building was three stories in height, with double-height windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors indicating social spaces such as ballrooms and meeting spaces. The new location also served the downtown membership.

The end of the period of significance for the Passaic Elks Club corresponds with the departure of the Elks from this location, in 1936. This occurred in the midst of the Depression when many civic associations felt the effects of the national crises. Like the Passaic Elks, the Perez Council #262 Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal order on Washington Place, was also displaced from their hall at the corner of Hoover Avenue and Washington Place during the Depression.

In summary, the Elks Club represents a significant example of an established social club that contributed to the local society at large from this building from the mid-1920s through the mid-1930s.

Criterion C, Significance in Architecture

The Italian Renaissance Revival Style

The brick and limestone Passaic Elks Club is an important local example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style applied to a commercial building. The building's form, materials and ornamentation are all consistent with the characteristics of this eclectic style that was often employed for commercial and institutional buildings in major cities.

The Italian Renaissance Revival Style was one of many eclectic European-inspired architectural styles fashionable in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Architects using this style were influenced by the palaces, fortresses, and public buildings of the Italian Renaissance, such as the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence and other various Venetian landmarks. The style was a dramatic contrast to the irregularity of the Victorian period styles. The Italian Renaissance Revival style, popular through the 1920s, was typically employed for landmark buildings in major cities, but declined in attractiveness in the 1930s and 1940s in favor of the more progressive Art Deco and Art Moderne styles. Physically modeled after Italian palazzos, the style organized buildings into three distinctive parts usually separated by belt courses: a base, a shaft section and a prominent capital. Wide projecting cornices or balustrades typically adorned the top of the buildings. The Italian Renaissance Revival style often combined arched openings and straight-headed or pedimented openings on the same elevation.

The imposing Italian Renaissance style chosen for the new building by the Passaic Elks Lodge #387 was befitting the Elks status in Passaic society at the time, while at the same time it was suggestive of grandeur, permanence and history. The Italian Renaissance elements of the Passaic Elks Club building include: its formal, symmetrical

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

presentation, the block-like form reminiscent of an Italian palazzo, the rusticated limestone base, pedimented front entrance and the wide projecting terra cotta cornice supported by large modillions. The repetition of arched windows on the front and secondary elevations with their iron balconettes and the small attic story windows at the 6th story are also typical features of the style. The roundels that ornament the south elevation are another nod to the Italian Renaissance Revival style.

Passaic Architect John F. Kelly

The Passaic Elks Club was designed by a significant, prolific local architect, John Francis Kelly.²⁰ During his career, he served a broad client base in Passaic that included commissions for schools, manufacturing plants, residences, commercial buildings and public buildings.

Kelly (1875-1940) was born in New York City and moved to Passaic in 1889 for his high school education. Kelly apprenticed with local Passaic architects George Palliser, and Henry Wynne and F.K. Irving before going to Pratt Institute in Brooklyn in 1894 for formal training in architecture.²¹ After he received a degree in 1896 from Pratt, he attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for a degree in architecture, which he completed in 1898.²² Kelly returned to New York City to open his own architecture firm in 1899, but after a few years he opened an office in Passaic in 1905.²³ One of Kelly's first local projects was the French Gothic style St. Mary's Church at 63 Monroe Street (1902) in Passaic, NJ.²⁴

Working in Passaic for many years, Kelly designed many other buildings in town, including the Knights of Columbus Building on Hoover Avenue, the Passaic Daily Herald Building (1906)²⁵, the Passaic Police Headquarters (1923) at the northeast corner of William and Passaic Streets,²⁶ and the Classical Revival style Passaic National Bank and Trust Company (1922) in conjunction with New York architect Harry Leslie Walker.²⁷ Kelly developed a long-lasting relationship with the Passaic Board of Education as the

²⁰ "John Kelly, Architect, Succumbs," *The Herald-News*, 23 October 1940, p. 8.

²¹ City of Passaic Cultural Resources Survey (1984), 64.

²² "John Kelly, Architect, Succumbs," *The Herald-News*, 23 October 1940, p. 1.

²³ "John Kelly, Architect, Succumbs," *The Herald-News*, 23 October 1940, p. 8.

²⁴ The Carpathian Connection website, "St. Mary's Assumption, Roman Catholic Slovak Church History," World Wide Web, December 20, 2004,

<http://www.tccweb.org/passaichouses.htm#St.%20Mary's%20Assumption>.

²⁵ City of Passaic Cultural Resources Survey (1984), 65.

²⁶ Mark S. Auerbach, "THE CITY OF PASSAIC" from "The Castle Genie," Newsletter of The Passaic County Historical Society Genealogy Club, Vol. 8, No. 4, as seen on the World Wide Web, http://www.rootsworld.com/~njpchsgc/pce/passaic_cityof.htm.

²⁷ Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Database, listing for Passaic National Bank, World Wide Web, http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/pj_display_allarchitects.cfm/733321.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

business manager beginning in 1911. He received many commissions to design public schools as Passaic School District's chief architect, including: McKinley School #8 at Fifth and South Streets (1901, 3rd floor added in 1910);²⁸ Roosevelt School #10 at Harrison Street and Parker Avenue (1908, 3rd floor added in 1918);²⁹ the main building at Lincoln Middle School (1910) at 291 Lafayette Avenue; the Collegiate Gothic style Memorial School #11 (1922) at 330 Gregory Avenue; and the Colonial Revival style Jefferson School #1 (1927), at the corner of Broadway and Van Houten Avenue. Kelly also designed several parochial schools as well during his career.

As for his industrial projects, Kelly acted as the chief architect for the New Jersey Worsted Spinning Company, the Gera Mills, the Manhattan Robber Manufacturing Division of Raybestos-Manhattan Inc. and the Hygeia Brewery.³⁰

Kelly was also a member of both the Knights of Columbus and the Passaic Elks Lodge.³¹

Comparable Buildings

According to an architectural survey of Passaic by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Office of New Jersey Heritage completed in May, 1984, the Passaic Elks Club is the only one of its kind in Passaic, rendering it a building of major importance, according to this study.³² The building retains much of the original ceremonial and social meeting spaces on the interior that undoubtedly gave it recognition when it opened.

Although stylistically unique to Passaic, several public buildings in the nearby industrial town of Paterson, NJ are comparable examples of the Italian Renaissance Revival style, including the three-story Hamilton Club (1897) at 32 Church Street, owned by Paterson's most prestigious private social organization, and the three-story old Police Department Headquarters Building on Ellison Street. Both buildings exhibit the Renaissance Revival style in its earlier phase with more lavish detailing and ornamentation.

Another Elks club that resembles the Passaic Elks Club nearly identically is the Elks Lodge No. 1353 in Casper, WY, constructed in 1922 (National Register, 1997). Two stories in height, this buff brick building shares many of the stylistic details, including a

²⁸ World Wide Web on December 20, 2004 for Passaic School District, <http://www.passaic-city.k12.nj.us/num8.htm>.

²⁹ World Wide Web on December 20, 2004 for Passaic School District, <http://www.passaic-city.k12.nj.us/num10.htm>.

³⁰ City of Passaic Cultural Resources Survey, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Office of New Jersey Heritage (May 1984), 66.

³¹ "John Kelly, Architect, Succumbs," *The Herald-News*, 23 October 1940, p. 8.

³² Inventory No. 226, 29-31 Howe Avenue, City of Passaic Cultural Resources Survey, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Office of New Jersey Heritage (May 1984).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

series of arched windows with roundels above, terra cotta belt courses and a wide overhanging eave. Designed by the prominent local architecture firm of Garbutt, Weidner and Sweeney, the similarities in style between Elks Lodge #1353 and the Passaic Elks Club indicate that the physical image of wealth, security and strength in the community achieved by the Italian Renaissance Revival style and other European eclectic styles was sought by Elks Lodges throughout the nation.

During the 1920s, social buildings serving various groups, including those belonging to the Elks, typically assumed a variety of revival architectural styles. The Passaic Elks Club is by no means unique in its grandeur on a regional scale. In nearby Paterson, NJ, the Elks Lodge #60 built a formal limestone in the eclectic Beaux Arts style building at 149-151 Ellison Street in 1908.

In conclusion, the Passaic Elks Club exhibits significant features of the Italian Renaissance Revival style and stands out in the city of Passaic as a unique example of this style and an important work of prominent local architect John F. Kelly.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

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"The Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, How It All Began." Retrieved November 22, 2004 from the World Wide Web: www.elks2477.com/History/History%20%20Elks.htm.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1 The Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

Verbal Boundary Description

Description of the property known as tax map Lot 1 in Block 2154, City of Passaic, Passaic County, NJ.

Beginning at the point at the intersection formed by the southerly line of Howe Avenue and the easterly line of Garden Street, and from the said point of beginning, thence running along the southerly line of Howe Avenue, S.76deg53'00"E., a distance of 44.77 feet to a point, thence S. 13deg35'00"W, a distance of 125.00 feet to a point, thence, N.71deg40'00"W, a distance of 88.13 feet to a point, thence along the easterly line of Garden Street, N.33deg44'05"E, a distance of 124.99 feet to the point and place of beginning, commonly known as 29-31 Howe Avenue, City of Passaic, Passaic County, NJ

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Passaic Elks Club.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

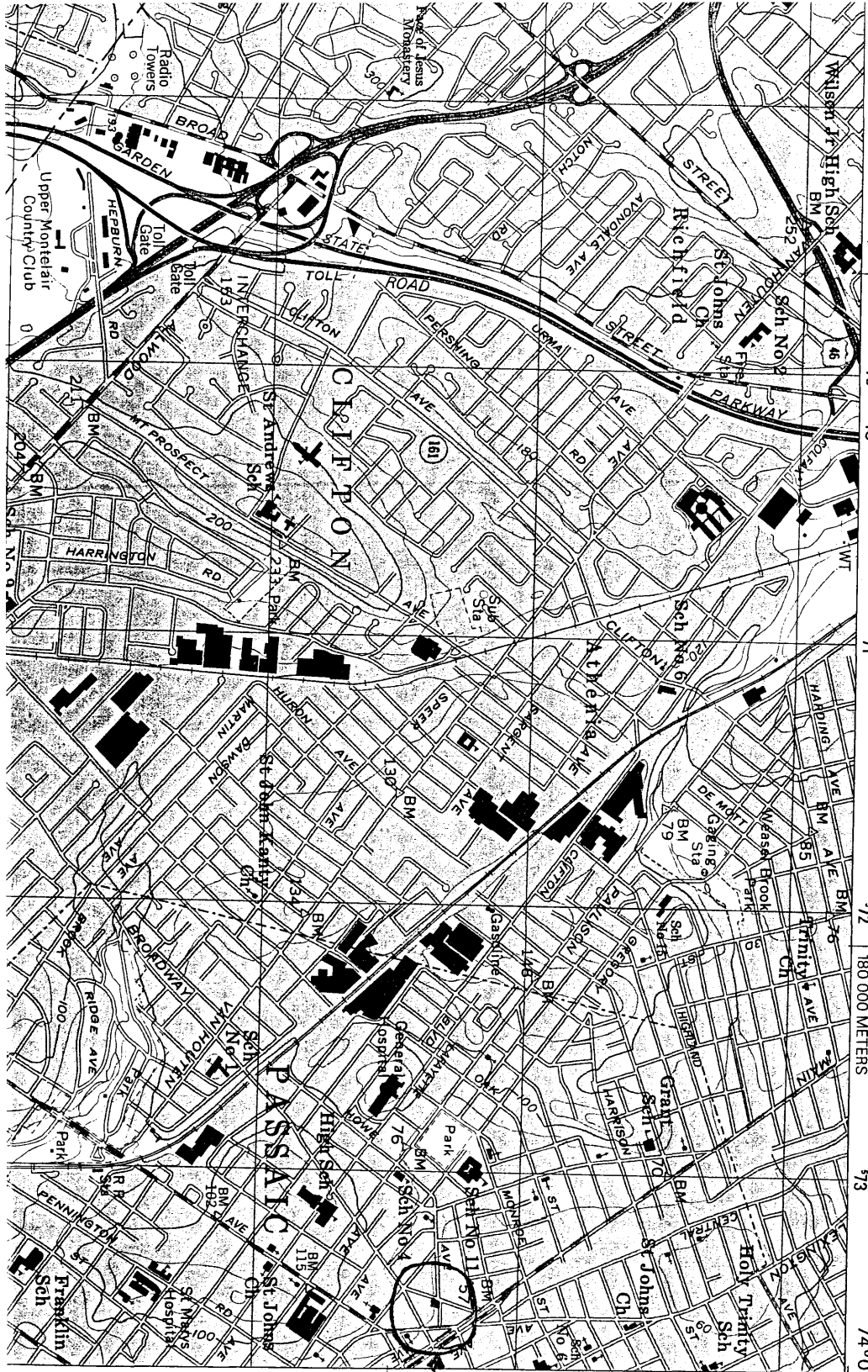
Section number Photos Page 1 Passaic Elks Club, Passaic County, NJ

PHOTOGRAPH LIST

The following information pertains to all of the photographs:

Passaic Elks Club
Passaic County, NJ
Robert Powers
December 2004
Powers & Company, Inc.

Photo #	Description
1.	North and east elevations, looking SW
2.	Detail of entrance on north elevation, looking S
3.	North and west elevations, looking SE
4.	West elevation, looking NE
5.	West and south elevations, looking NE
6.	East and north elevations, looking SW
7.	Entrance vestibule, looking S
8.	1 st floor elevator lobby, view E
9.	1 st floor, northeast staircase, view N
10.	1 st floor, front reception room, view NE
11.	1 st floor, front reception room, view SW
12.	2 nd floor elevator lobby, view N
13.	2 nd floor ballroom, view S
14.	2 nd floor ballroom, view N
15.	2 nd floor ballroom, detail of balcony, looking NE
16.	3 rd floor meeting hall, looking S
17.	3 rd floor meeting hall, detail of stage, looking SE
18.	Northeast staircase between 3 rd floor mezzanine and 4 th floor, view NW
19.	Northeast staircase at 4th floor, view SW
20.	4th floor elevator lobby, view E
21.	4th floor corridor, view S
22.	4th floor, typical hotel room, view NE



ORANGE QUADRANGLE
 NEW JERSEY
 7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

180 000 METERS

73

74°07'30"

69
70
71
72
73
74°07'30"

Passaic Elks Club
 29-31 Home Ave
 Passaic County, NJ
 18 573510 4523680

225 000 METERS

923

924

925

Howe Avenue

Garden Street

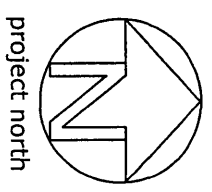
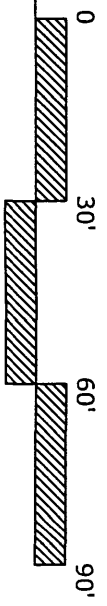
**Passaic
Elks Club**

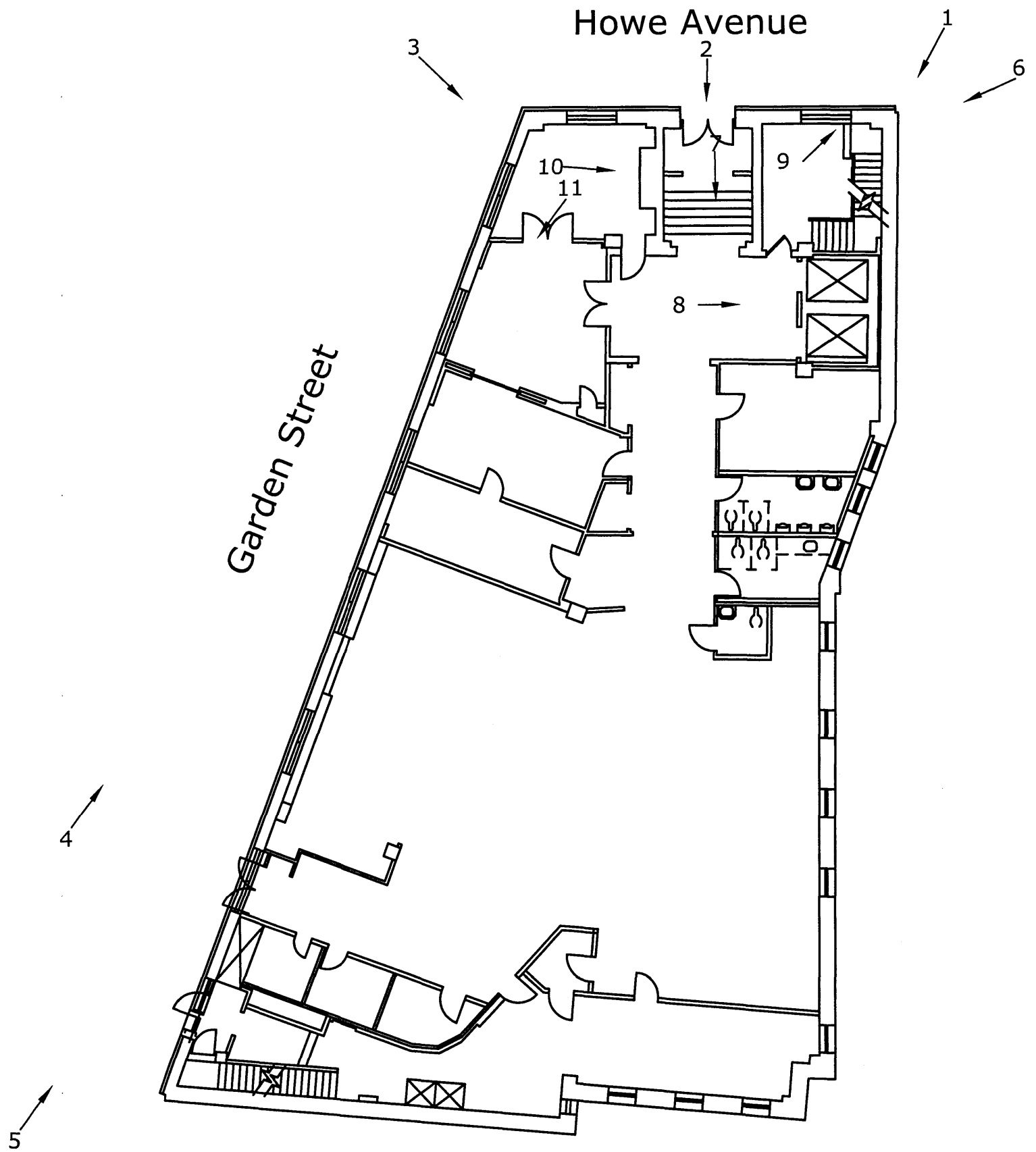
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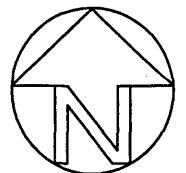
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Passaic County, NJ

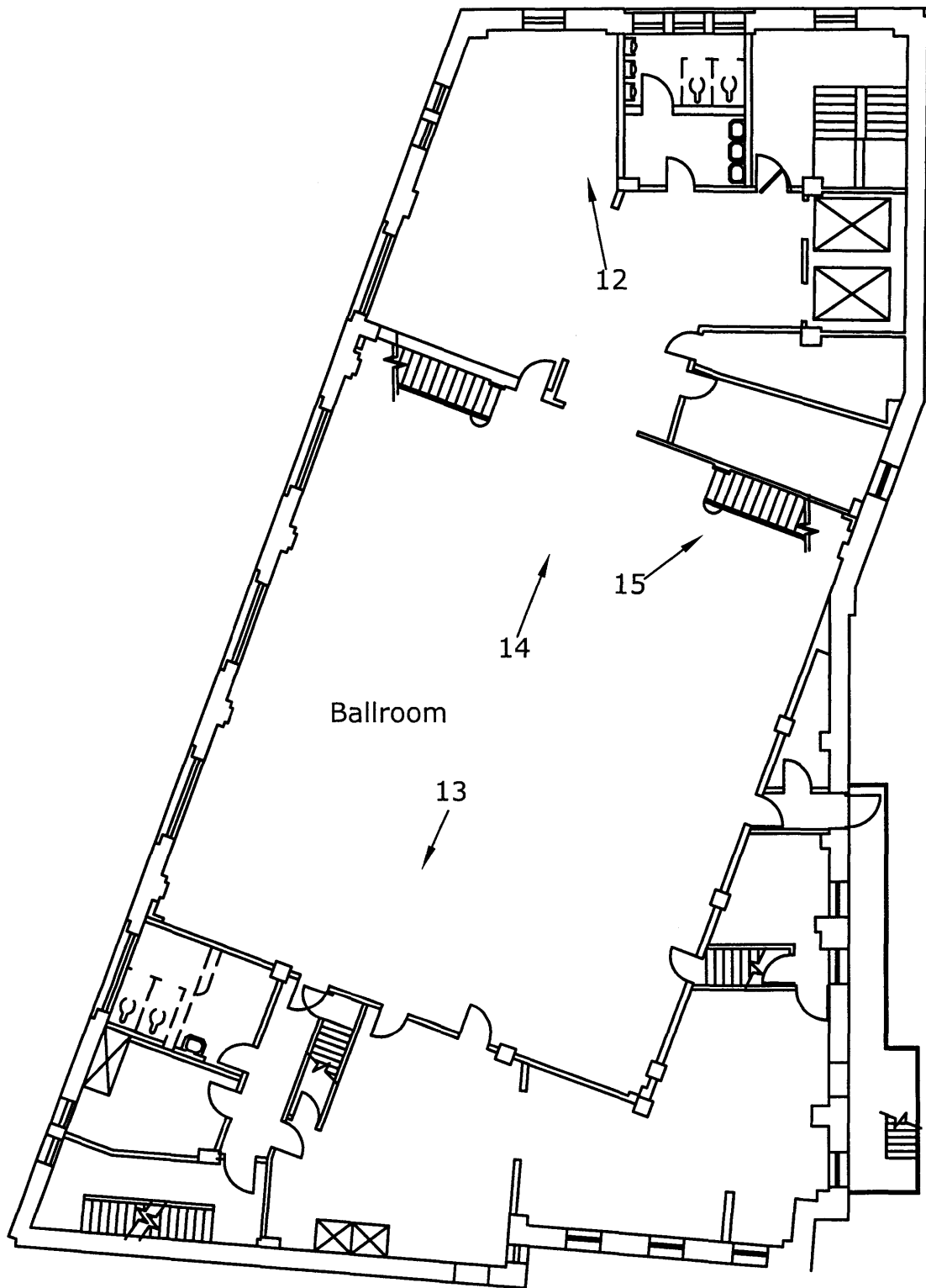
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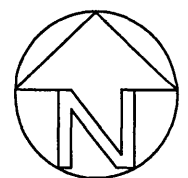


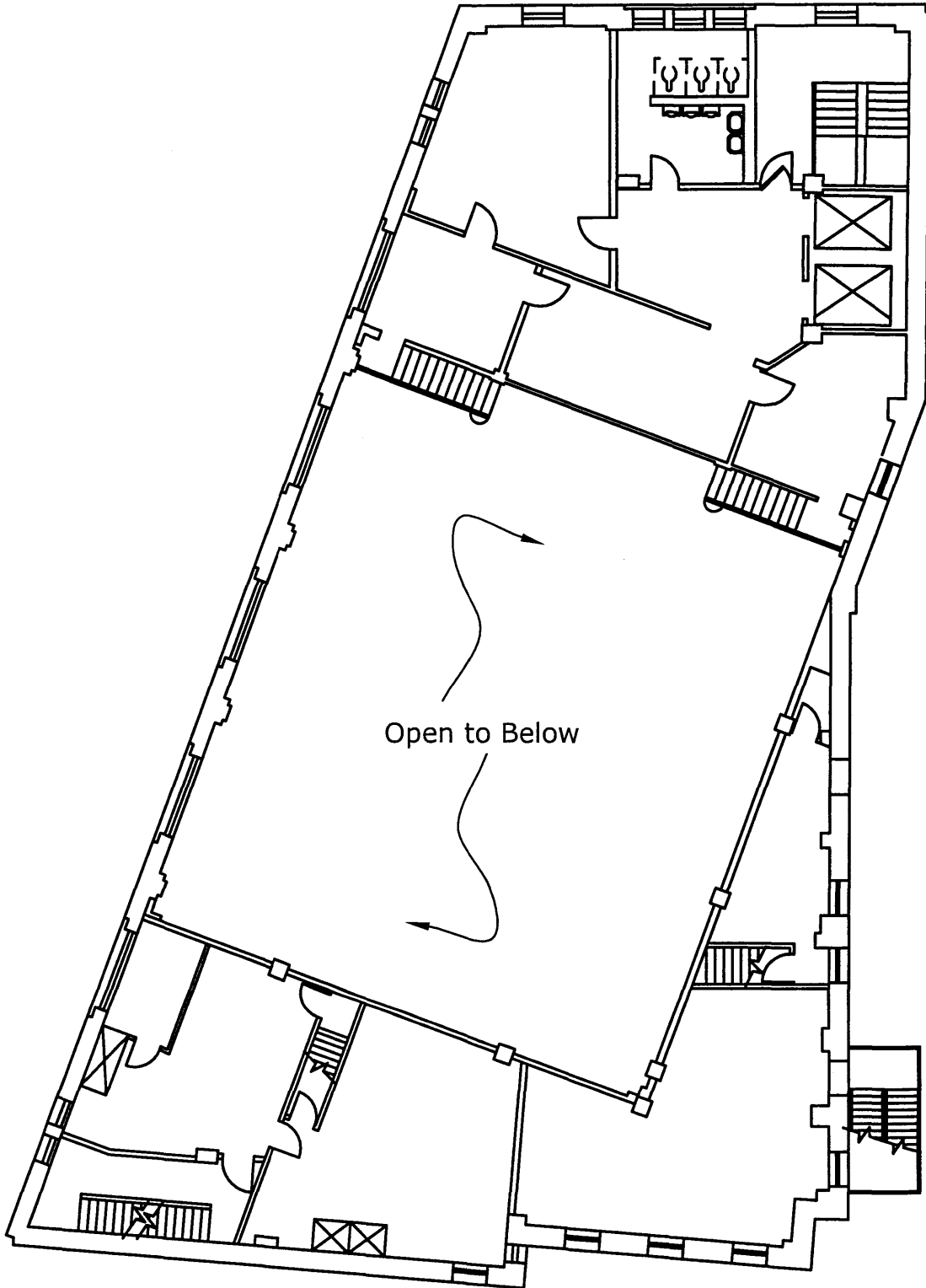
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 Passaic County, NJ
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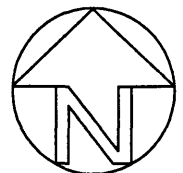
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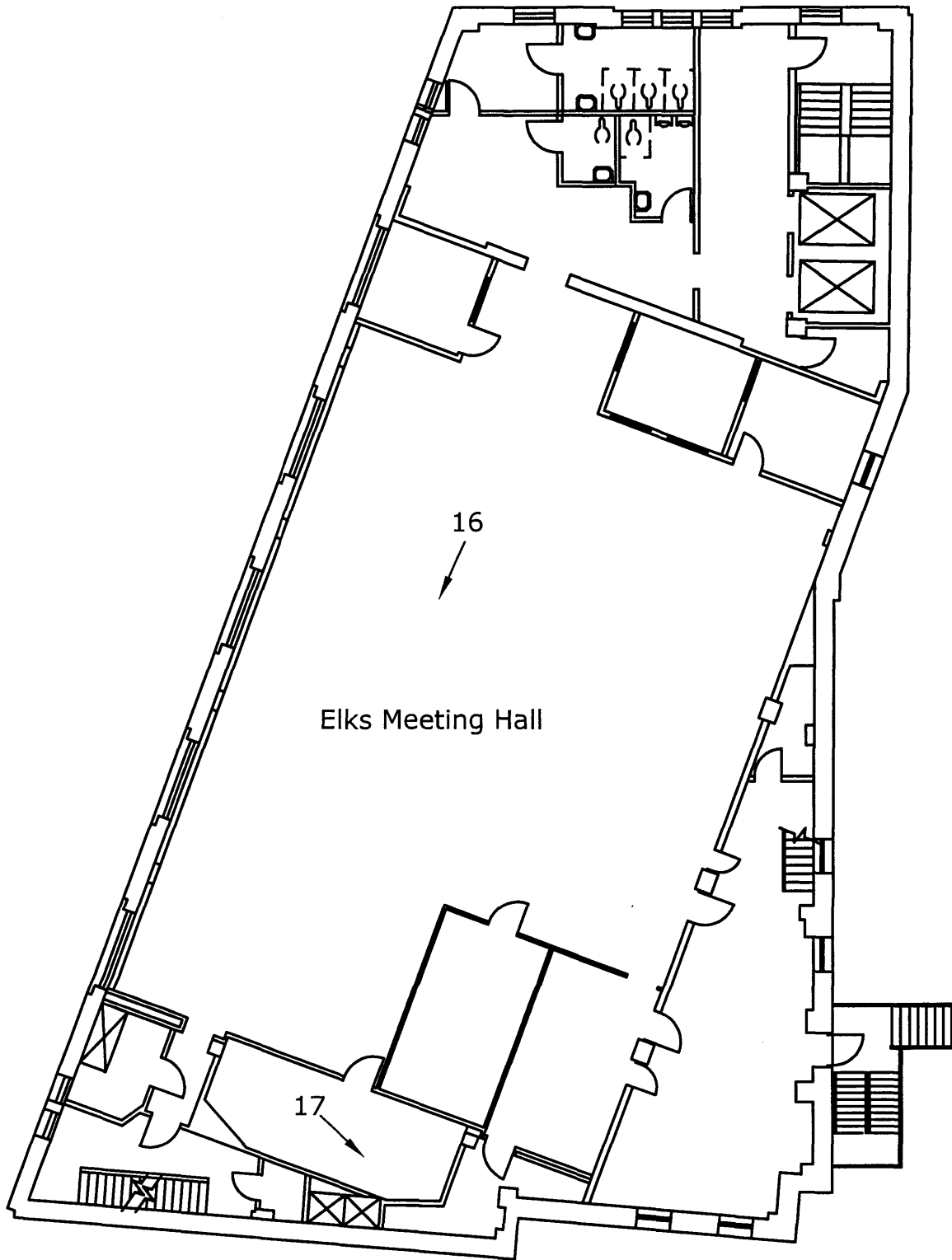




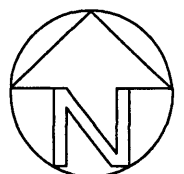
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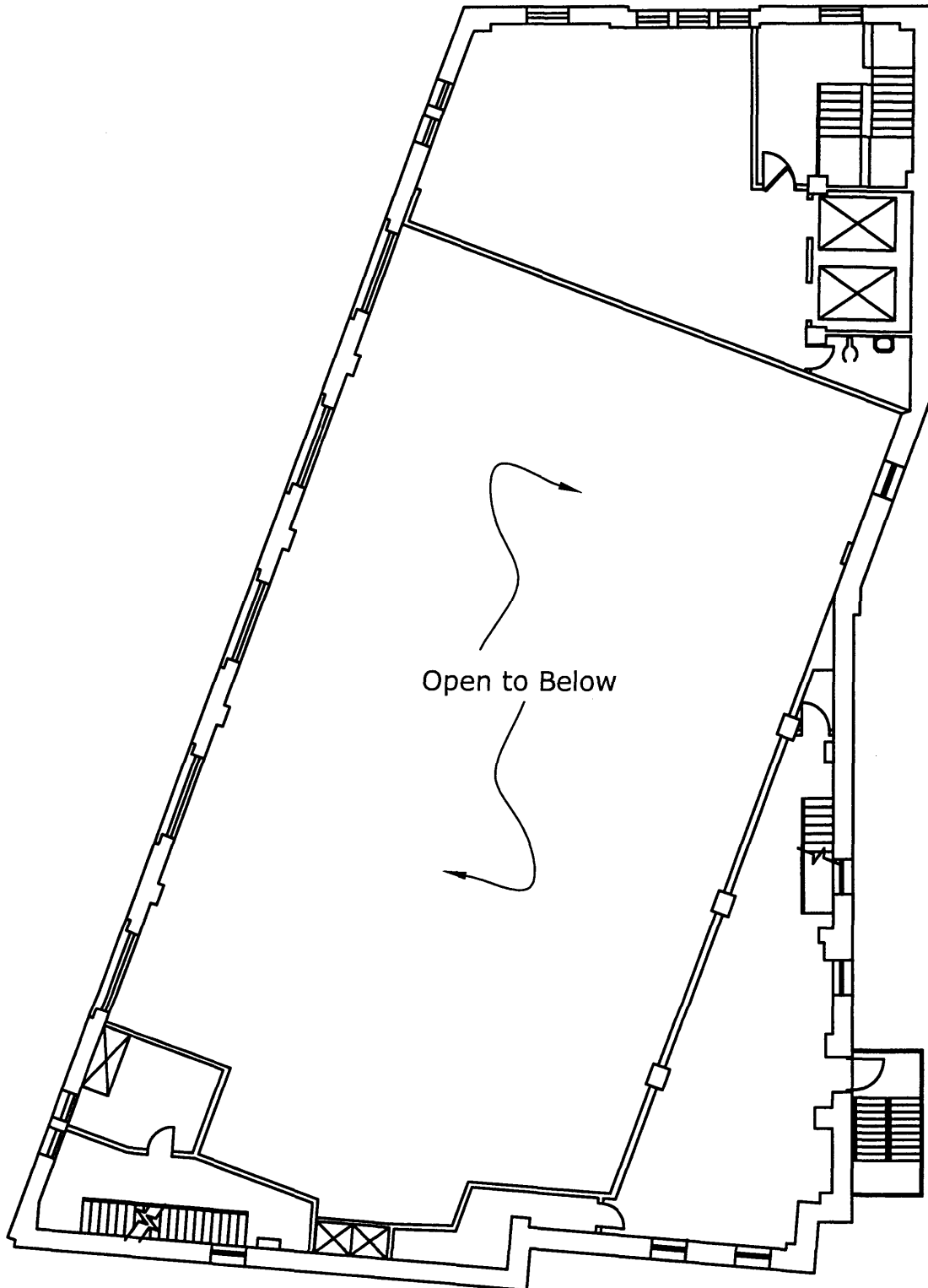
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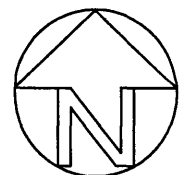
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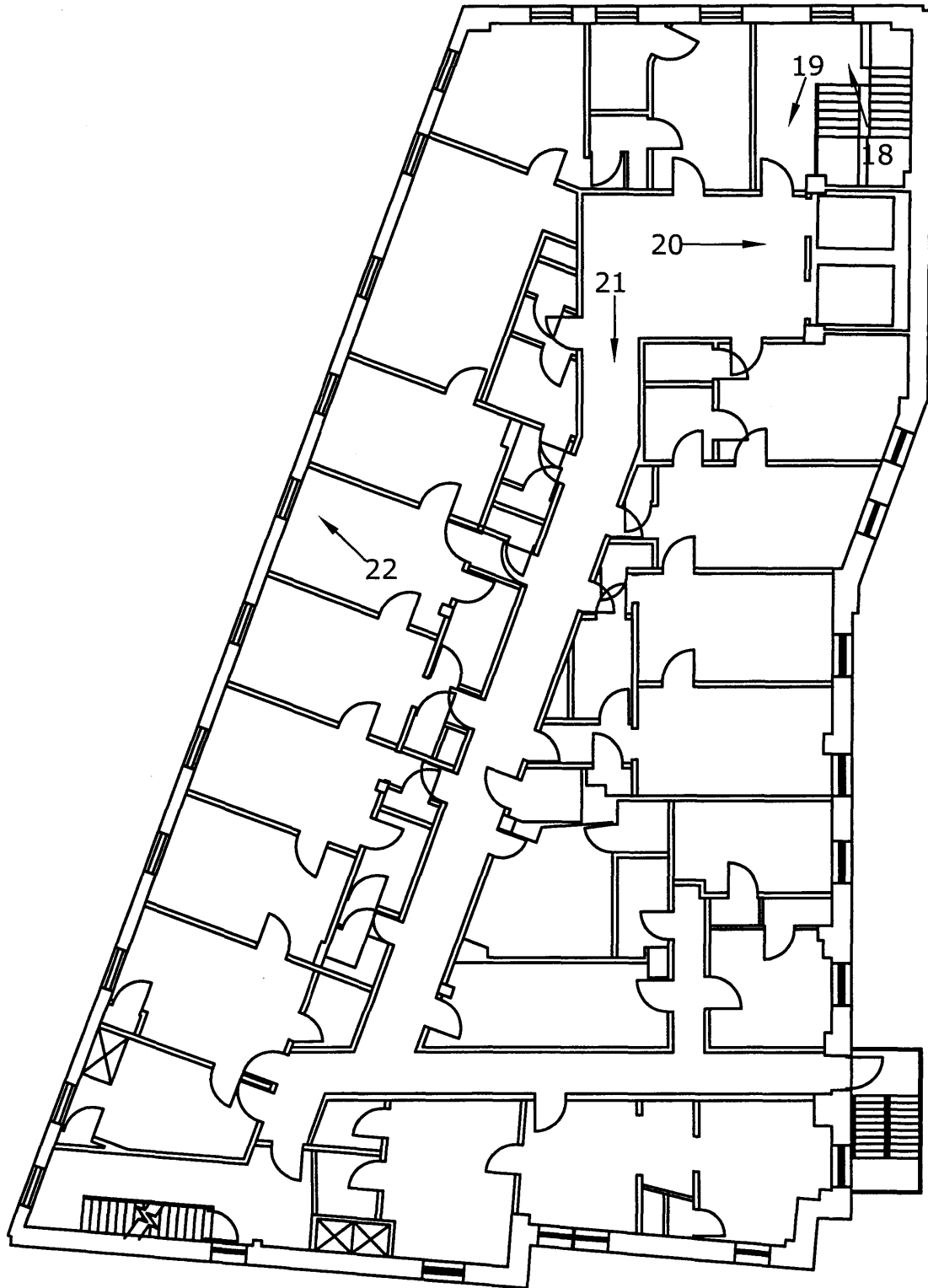




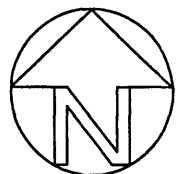
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Existing 3rd floor Mezzanine plan, n.t.s.





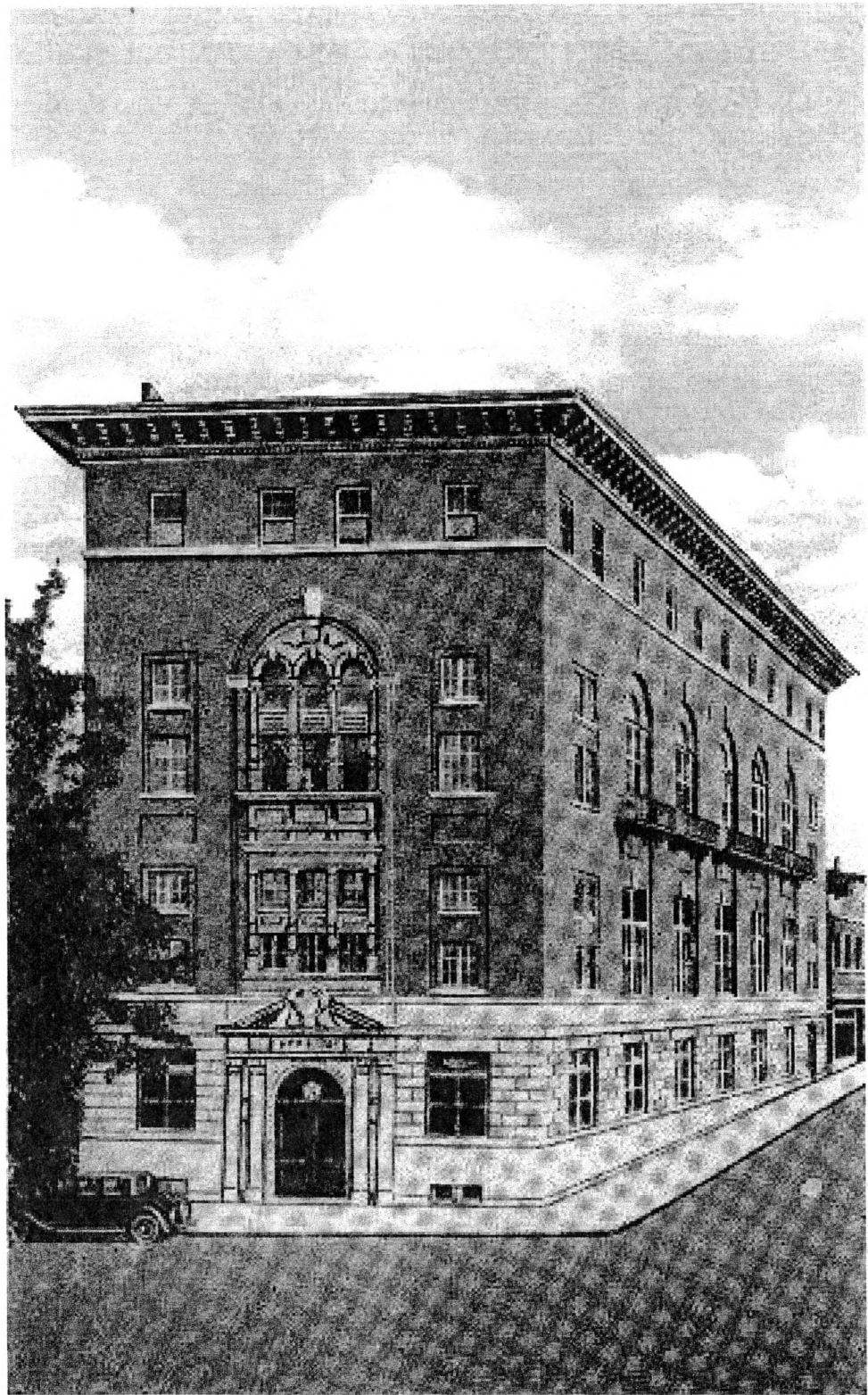
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ELKS CLUB, PASSAIC, N. J.

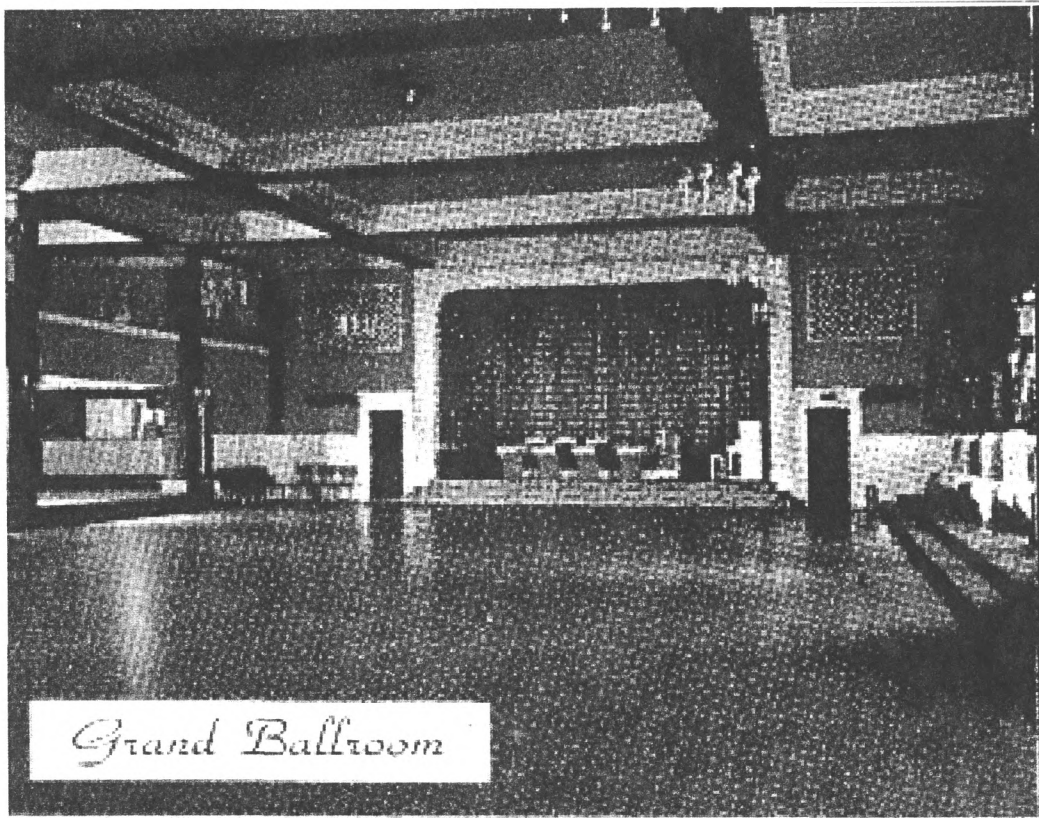


Passaic Elks Club, Passaic, NJ, c.1925

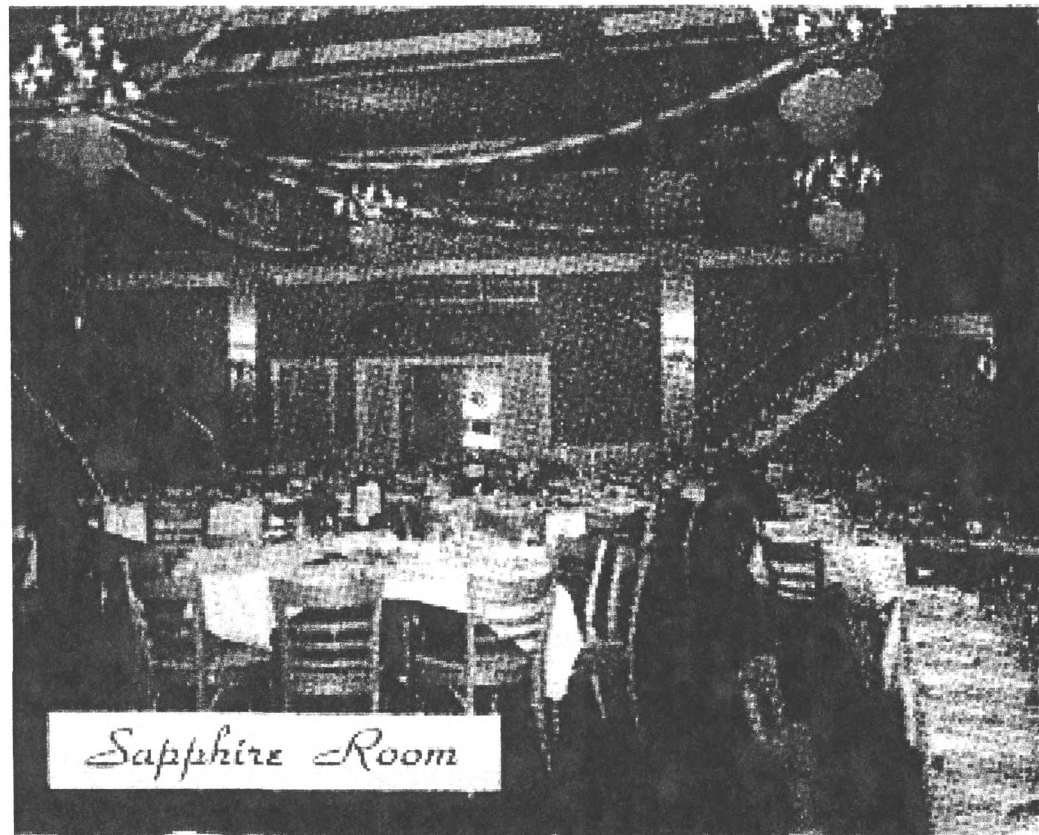


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B.P.O.E. Building, Passaic NJ, historic postcard, c. 1925



Grand Ballroom



Sapphire Room