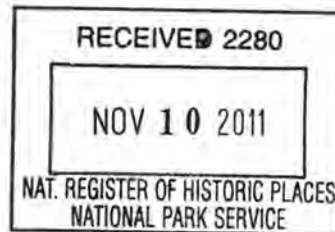


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



949

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1824 Marshall Avenue

N/A

not for publication

city or town St. Paul

N/A

vicinity

state Minnesota code MN county Ramsey code 123 zip code 55104

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national X statewide local

Britta L. Bloomberg 11/2/11
Signature of certifying official/Title Britta L. Bloomberg, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Minnesota Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain)

John Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

12.22.11

Date of Action

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Name of Property

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/clubhouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/clubhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:

Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Built in 1916, Charles Thompson Memorial Hall (Thompson Hall) is located at 1824 Marshall Avenue at the southwest corner of the intersection of Fairview and Marshall avenues. The Classical Revival building stands three stories tall on a raised basement with a concrete foundation (Photos 1 through 3). It is generally rectangular in plan, measuring approximately 46 feet wide on Marshall Avenue and 58 feet deep on Fairview Avenue. A one-story porch projects over the center bays of the primary (north) façade. The walls are constructed of tapestry brick with stone trim on all four elevations. Extensive natural lighting and interior sight lines make this building particularly suited to its purpose as a clubhouse for deaf people. The building has undergone few significant alterations and it retains a high degree of integrity in both the exterior and interior.

Narrative Description

Exterior

Thompson Hall is set on lots 1 and 2, block 1 of Merriam Park 2nd Addition, Saint Paul in the residential neighborhood of Merriam Park. The building is sited on its parcel with similar setbacks to the neighboring residences. A paved parking lot wraps the south and west sides of the building, and lawns complete the landscaping on the north and east sides. At the time of its construction, Marshall Avenue served a streetcar line offering convenient access to the club members in both St. Paul and nearby Minneapolis.

The walls are constructed of brown tapestry brick and a large metal cornice with dentil molding and modillions is placed on the stepped brick parapet wall. The flat roof is covered with asphalt. A square, brick chimney pierces the roof at the south parapet wall. It has been reduced in height since it was first constructed.

The brick basement wall is decorated with beltcourses to give a rusticated appearance and is separated from the first story by a stone water table capped with metal coping. Basement windows generally align vertically with the upper window bays and are evenly spaced below the water table. The one-over-one double hung sash are placed within rusticated jack arch openings. Basement doorways are located on the south end of the building on the south and west elevations, where the ground slopes slightly to expose the full basement. Window openings under the porch have been enclosed with brick and wood panels.

The north façade has a symmetrical five-bay arrangement. A one-story, flat-roofed porch projects over the first-floor center bays (Photo 1). The fenestration comprises fixed sash with an upper transom on the first story and one-over-one double hung sash on the second and third stories. First and second story window openings have jack arch lintels. The westernmost bay of the first floor has no window and the center bay of the second story offers double French doors with access to the porch roof. The year "1916" is engraved into the water table near the east end.

The porch covers the main entrance to the building. It stands on brick piers and its roof is supported by square brick columns. It is approached by a wide, concrete staircase flanked by brick pedestals, which are surmounted by metal light standards and lanterns (replacing the original glass globes). The double-leaf central doorway is made of wood with divided light glass windows and has a projecting stone surround with dentils running across the top. Within the entablature are the words "CHARLES THOMPSON HALL." Originally, the porch was supported by Doric columns, with a wood balustrade on the porch and balcony above. The upper balustrade has been removed, and the wood elements on the lower porch have been replaced with metal railings and brick posts.

The east elevation is divided into five bays (Photo 2). The center three bays are recessed and separated by brick pilasters with terra cotta Corinthian capitals. Each of these bays contains triple window units on the first story for the social

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hall/dining room. The single-hung windows are designed to slide up into the transom. Large double-hung windows with bottom-hinged transoms are found in the two-story assembly hall on the second story. The south bay has single, double-hung windows on each of the three stories, while the north bay has paired, double-hung windows on the second and third stories. The north bay of the first story features a bow window bay finished with dentil moldings at its cornice. The bay is comprised of five window and transom units. The blind balustrade atop the bow bay has been removed.

The west elevation design is similar to the east elevation, although this elevation lacks the bow window, and the windows in the north bay alternate levels, indicating the presence of the interior stairwell (Photo 3).

The south (rear) elevation is simple in design, with service windows on the first story and an entrance at the basement. A raised, brick panel extends across the upper level, providing visual interest to the solid brick wall. An internal brick chimney extends beyond the parapet on the south elevation (Photo 3).

The site also includes a non-contributing stucco, hipped roof garage structure at the southwest corner of the surface parking lot behind the main structure. This building was added sometime after 1951 (Photo 4).

Interior

The interior design is of simple, but high quality detail with features that subtly indicate its intended purpose as a clubhouse for deaf people who use visual communication. These features include extensive natural lighting, good sightlines, and strategically located light switches. Still used for its original purpose, the interior retains excellent historic integrity. On the first floor, the large, divided light windows in the entry doors offer an initial visual link between visitors and those located within the Lobby and Dining Room. The green-and-white hexagon tiled floor in the vestibule reads "Welcome," emphasizing the club's ethos of inclusivity. The main lobby has wide openings leading to the Ladies Parlor and the Dining Room/Social Hall. The lobby space is trimmed with quarter-sawn oak with simple butt joints, as are most other significant public rooms. A bronze plaque in a marble frame on the south wall reads, "In loving memory of Charles Thompson, who found pleasure in contributing to the happiness of others. Born 1864, Died 1915." The main stairwell is off of the front lobby in the northwest corner (Photo 5). The stairwell, with simple square newels and balusters, is wide with an open well design that facilitates visual communication between floors. The Ladies Parlor features a banquette in the east bow window. The parlor is finished with fir molding with mitered joints and maple flooring. Charles Thompson's elaborate billiard table, originally placed in the lower level billiard room, now sits in this room (Photo 6). The Dining Room is lit by windows and transoms on the east elevation, and at the south end is a Serving Pantry with a pass-through counter to the dining room, used not only for serving food but also for visual communication (Photo 7). Broad double-door openings offer good sight-lines from the Dining Room through the foyer to front door, where visitors can be seen through the plate glass windows (Photo 8). The caretaker's two-room apartment occupies the west side of this level. Service stairs in the southwest corner of the building lead to the second floor and basement.

The second floor is dominated by the two-story Assembly Hall with a raised stage on the south end (Photo 9). The hall is finished with oak window, door, baseboard and chair rail trim and maple flooring. A decorated center oculus in the ceiling provided ventilation (now closed). Large windows on the east and west elevations allow natural side lighting without backlighting the speaker or the audience. The small stage projects into the hall with an undulating curve and can be approached from the hall by wood steps on each side. The proscenium is framed with painted plaster trim with rounded corners. The stage area includes fly space, a skylight and a fire curtain with a richly decorated scene of streams and birch trees. A narrow staircase rises from each backstage wing to small dressing rooms on the third floor. Lighting controls are placed on the proscenium and are accessible by the speaker to attract the audience's attention to begin an event. Artificial lighting is introduced to the stage by an overhead bank, as well as footlights placed on the corners of the stage (since removed). The Assembly Hall is now lit by fluorescent lighting. On the north wall of the Assembly Hall, operable interior window sash can be raised into the wall, forming visual connections from the lobby and a designated "Children's Room" (Photo 10). Several projector openings are placed high on the north wall, which are accessed through the third floor projection room (Photo 11).

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Outside the assembly hall is the Children's Room and Check Room, where numbered, wood cubby holes for hats and coat hooks are extant. From the second floor lobby, French doors offer access to the balcony on the porch roof. A Printing Office, a "Moving Picture Operating Room," and a Guest Room are on the north end of the third floor.

The raised basement is illuminated by large windows. A banquette is placed in the bow window of what was the Billiard Room, and now serves as a bar at the north end. A long hallway indicates the location of the former Bowling Alley, removed in 1920. Other rooms located on this floor are the men's and women's restrooms with original marble partitions, a Reading Room, a Committee Room, and the Boiler Room. What was the Bowlers Room under the front porch, has been refitted as a snack bar. The concrete floors are laid with asbestos tile in a checkerboard pattern. Walls are trimmed with fir.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1916-1961

Significant Dates

1916

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Hanson, Olof

Period of Significance (justification)

Constructed in 1916, Thompson Hall holds a unique place in the state as the only clubhouse ever designed and built specifically for the deaf. The period of significance is from 1916 through 1961, reflecting the period of its continued influence on the Minnesota deaf community. Since its establishment, Thompson Hall served as a central forum for deaf social interaction and advocacy, leading to a vibrant statewide deaf community. These functions were especially important before the advent of communications technology for the deaf and the enactment of policies to protect people with disabilities against employment and other types of discrimination in the 1970s.

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Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, constructed in 1916, possesses statewide significance under Criteria A and C in the areas of Social History and Architecture within the statewide context of Urban Centers (1870-1940). Margaret Brooks Thompson donated the building and supporting endowment to the deaf community of Minnesota for use as a free and inclusive space to gather for social purposes. The building was given as a memorial to Margaret's husband, Charles, both of whom were deaf. Since then, the building has served as the principal social hub for deaf people in the Twin Cities and throughout the state. Through its stable presence, Thompson Hall has played an important part in the growth of Minnesota's vibrant deaf community. Minnesota is home to dozens of deaf-supportive organizations and social groups and is regarded among the nation's most inviting places for deaf people. The thriving deaf community can be attributed, in part, to Thompson Hall's role in providing a central forum for deaf social activity and organizing. The building was designed by architect Olof Hanson, widely regarded as the nation's first deaf architect. Hanson joined his skills as an architect with his reputation as an advocate for the deaf in the design of Thompson Hall. His design techniques accounted for good natural lighting and sightlines to enhance communication through visual sign language. It was the first clubhouse for the deaf built for this purpose in the United States and remains the only one ever constructed in Minnesota. As Hanson remarked at the building's dedication, the hall itself stands "as a credit to the deaf." The period of significance begins in 1916 and concludes in 1961, reflecting the continued influence of the building on Minnesota's deaf community.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Deaf Social Associations in America

Deaf Americans began to formally organize into self-supporting leagues beginning in the mid nineteenth century. Most grew from the self-perceived needs of their members for association with individuals who shared similar communication methods, cultural values and experiences. Such organizations were formed of, rather than for, deaf people, a notion unique to the American experience. While deaf people have traditionally banded together, the first organization to formally emerge was the New England Gallaudet Association of Deaf-Mutes in 1854. Dozens more were to follow throughout the nation over the next century. Among the more prominent were the National Association of the Deaf, state associations of the deaf, alumni associations of the residential schools for the deaf, the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, the American Athletic Association of the Deaf, the National Congress of the Jewish Deaf, and the American Professional Society of the Deaf.¹

While a number of groups organized to serve a statewide constituency, local organizations were more popular in cities with a sufficient population to support them. Deaf documentarians John Vickrey Van Cleve and Barry A. Crouch liken the deaf experience to that of the immigrants pouring into the United States in the late nineteenth century who formed "ethnic ghettos" to achieve a sense of belonging and comradeship. Being deaf added a further twist: "Deaf persons in

¹ John Van Cleve and Barry A. Crouch, *A Place of Their Own: Creating the Deaf Community in America* (Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press, 1989).

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America's cities often were separated from their hearing neighbors and coworkers, they sought each other out for social interaction, to find potential spouses, to engage in athletic and intellectual pursuits, and to unite in common philanthropic or religious endeavors".² In larger cities, deaf clubs could organize around specialized topics, such as literary, religious or athletic activities. One example was the Deaf-Mutes Union League in New York City. This membership-only club was comprised of alumni from the Lexington Avenue School, a purely oral school that did not use sign language or finger-spelling in its classrooms. The group of men (only) began meeting in 1886 in members' homes initially, and then in rented rooms or entire floors of various buildings, usually centered on a pool table. The League developed activities to enrich the intellectual and social lives of its members by arranging readings and discussions at its regular meetings, holding fundraising balls for deaf-related charities, and participation in national and international deaf organizations. The secret of their success was typical of other deaf clubs: they satisfied deaf people's needs to associate with each other and work toward common interests.³

By the 1910s, clubs had been established in many large and medium-sized American cities, including the Ampola in Los Angeles, Sphinx in San Francisco, Puget Sound in Seattle, Pas-a-Pas in Chicago, Anderson in Cincinnati, the Goodyear Silent Athletic Club in Akron and others.⁴ Deaf clubs often stemmed from the deaf schools, where the unique deaf social patterns and culture were nurtured. The social club was a way to extend the acculturation process. Older members would teach younger ones, explicitly or implicitly, about deaf values, customs, knowledge, language, stories, jokes and history. Members could find out about events in the world and community, and about employment and friends. It was also a safe place for relaxation, easy conversation and entertainment. Many members regarded the deaf club as their second home.⁵

Like the rest of the nation, deaf clubs also emerged in Minnesota. The Minnesota Association of the Deaf was the first to be established in 1885. Its work focused on the civic and social welfare of the state's deaf citizens, and would become the Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens. During the early years of the twentieth century, other local clubs formed, including the Improvement Club of the Minneapolis League for the Hard of Hearing, the St. Paul League for the Hard of Hearing, and the Lip Readers Guild of St. Paul. While these groups emphasized educational development, social activities were important aspects of their purpose and mission, and several also maintained their own clubrooms.⁶

"Conditions are here reversed" - A Clubhouse by and for the Deaf of Minnesota

While deaf social clubs proliferated around the nation and were present in Minnesota, most were established using exclusive club membership standards and few had specialized accommodations, or even a permanent home. It was rare for a deaf club to have its own building, as most used rented or donated quarters.⁷ Through the generosity and vision of Margaret Thompson, the deaf community of Minnesota was given a unique gift. Offered as a memorial to her husband, Charles Thompson Memorial Hall was established as a welcoming place for all deaf persons, without exclusive membership rolls or dues. With the design talents of Olof Hanson (1862-1931), the club house would meet the unique needs of the specific community for whom it was built and continues to serve.

Born in Stonehouse, Scotland, Margaret Brooks Thompson (1870-1929) arrived in Minnesota with her family as a young girl. Deaf, she attended the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD), in Faribault, and later graduated from the Colorado College for the Deaf after her family moved there. While attending a Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens meeting in Faribault, she met Charles Thompson, whom she would marry in 1896. Charles Thompson (1864-1915) was the son of one of St. Paul's wealthiest and most influential families. His father, Horace Thompson, was involved in real

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Silent Athletic Club of Chicago, "When Dreams Come True," *Silent Worker* 31, no. 8 (May 1919): 1.

⁵ Harlan Lane, Robert Hoffmeister and Ben Bahan, *A Journey into the Deaf-World* (San Diego: DawnSignPress, 1996).

⁶ Kristin Mapel Bloomberg and Leah S. McLaughlin, "'Part and Parcel of a Great Cause': The St. Paul Society for the Hard of Hearing," *Ramsey County History* 44, no. 4 (2010): 10.

⁷ Douglas D. Bahl, "Comparative Studies on Deaf Clubs All Over the World," paper presented at the World Federation of the Deaf Congress, Brisbane, Australia, 1999.

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estate and helped to found the Bank of Minnesota, later First National Bank of St. Paul. Deaf from birth, Charles Thompson attended MSAD and graduated in 1883. As a wealthy young man, Thompson was able to indulge in his interests as a gentleman farmer. He was given an 850-acre stock farm near Windom, Minnesota as a graduation gift from his family. Thompson spent considerable time and money developing the property into a showplace admired by many. Game hunting was another attraction that took him around the country and awarded him trophies. Thompson eventually moved from the farm, and returned to St. Paul where his home became a social gathering place for his deaf friends.⁸

As a gift to his bride, Charles asked his architect friend and MSAD classmate, Olof Hanson, to design a double-house for them at 653 Dayton Avenue in St. Paul. This home, their summer home on Lake Darling near Alexandria, Minnesota, and later a house on Lincoln Avenue in St. Paul, became the center of deaf social activities. Returning from a trip at their Pasadena winter residence in 1915, Charles Thompson died from a heart condition on the train near Laramie, Wyoming.

As a memorial, Margaret Thompson chose to use a portion of her inheritance to erect a clubhouse for the use and benefit of all deaf Minnesotans, although any deaf person, regardless of race, religion or politics, from any location would be made welcome. Thompson's gift paid the \$30,000 for the construction of a finely built structure, as well as an additional \$45,000 for an endowment to fund its operations and maintenance.⁹ Upon its dedication on November 5, 1916, the clubhouse built especially for deaf people was declared to be "the only building of its kind in the world, owned exclusively by the deaf and planned and built solely for their benefit."¹⁰

The site for the new clubhouse, at the intersection of Marshall and Fairview avenues in St. Paul, was chosen to be easily and affordably accessible by streetcar from both Minneapolis and St. Paul. To design the facility, Margaret Thompson called upon her husband's friend and fellow deaf person, Olof Hanson, who was practicing architecture in Seattle at the time. At the dedication ceremony, Hanson let the building speak for itself, but offered these brief remarks on the instruction he had been given, revealing his didactic motivations as a deaf advocate among his reasons for accepting the commission.

When Mrs. Thompson asked me to make plans for a memorial building to Mr. Charles Thompson it gave me great pleasure, not only because of the opportunity to honor a good and genial friend, but also because of the opportunity to do work that would be a credit to the deaf. Mrs. Thompson gave me clear and definite instructions as to what she desired. She wanted a hall to seat two hundred people, a dining room to seat one hundred, a ladies parlor, billiard room, bowling alleys, caretaker's rooms, etc. She wanted a good building well built, but plainly finished. She wanted this building to be for the use of the deaf alone, a place where they could go and feel at home and feel that it is their own. In so doing she sought to do what her husband would have done had he been consulted.... When we meet here let us think of our genial friend, the large-hearted Charles Thompson.¹¹

The social aspects of the club were important to Minnesota's deaf community, and offered them a means to greater self empowerment and a tool for public education about the deaf in general. The role that Thompson Hall would play in the lives of deaf Minnesotans was made clear at the building's dedication ceremony. Jay C. Howard, president of the

⁸ Douglas D. Bahl, "Charles Thompson Memorial Hall." In "75th Anniversary of Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," 1991, history available at Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

⁹ Wesley Lauritsen, "50th Anniversary Celebration of Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," *The Companion*. Vol. 92. (December-January 1966); City of St. Paul Building Permit 67850, 20 April 1916, on file at the Ramsey County Historical Society, St. Paul.

¹⁰ Minnesota School for the Deaf, "Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," *The Companion* (November 15, 1916): 8. Perhaps the second deaf club to obtain its own building was the Silent Athletic Club of Chicago, which acquired the former Ridgeway Club in 1919. Upon the club's opening, the May 1919 issue of the *Silent Worker* noted it to be among the finest deaf clubs in the nation, challenged only by Thompson Hall. The Chicago club however, was located within an existing clubhouse not designed especially for deaf use, and is no longer extant.

¹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 6-7.

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Minnesota Association of the Deaf,¹² delivered a speech at the dedication ceremonies describing the new age that Thompson Hall would help to usher in:

For a hundred years the deaf people of America have been the objects of much teaching and preaching, by both of which they have undoubtedly profited. The time has come when it is perfectly safe to provide them with a little pleasure; and it has been left to one of their number to make such provision. . . . So conspicuous an architectural mark can not but excite interest and inquiry. This will help to educate hearing people in regard to their deaf brothers and sisters... Usually the teaching and the preaching are the portion of the deaf, and pleasure the exclusive property of the hearing. Conditions are here reversed. While we are enjoying ourselves by means of the facilities offered by this beautiful club house, our hearing friends may absorb a little information concerning us, and learn that we are just like other folks, only that we cannot hear.¹³

The fact that the building came about through the finances and talent of the deaf community was not lost on Howard:

As you inspect this fine Memorial Hall, erected to the memory of our friend, Charles Thompson, who was deaf, provided by his widow, who is deaf, planned by a thoroughly competent deaf architect, and under the care and direction of a house committee, all of who are deaf, it is hoped you will come to feel that the deaf are not the helpless, inefficient and afflicted people they are often supposed to be.¹⁴

The building itself embodied the accomplishments and the capabilities of deaf people, and demonstrated that the deaf need not be "subjects for charity or for maudlin tear," as Howard phrased it.

Because of Margaret Thompson's generous endowment, Thompson Hall does not need to rely on dues or charity to sustain itself. As a result, the community views the hall as communal property, open to any deaf group that fits within the guidelines of its bylaws (religious and political meetings were strictly forbidden).¹⁵ With no formal membership rolls, the division of financial stewardship of the endowment and the operations of the hall were and are strictly divided. In a system set up at its inception, Thompson Hall continues to be organized by two groups: the Board of Trustees and the House Committee. A Board of Trustees is responsible for the executive management of the building and the fund, while the day-to-day operations are handled by a group known as the House Committee. The original Trustees, who are elected to lifetime positions, were dominated by members of the Thompson family, all of whom were hearing, with only one deaf member.¹⁶ Since 1951, when the last of the Thompson family left the board, it has been governed entirely by deaf Trustees, an important symbol of this community's ability to self govern. The House Committee is responsible for the operations of the building and coordinating social events and use of the hall by other organizations. Membership to the committee is elected annually at "mass meetings," the first of which was held in 1917. The mass meetings are a tradition that persists to this day. In addition to the election, attendees can bring their ideas, interests and concerns to the House Committee through this forum.

"A Credit to the Deaf" - the Design of Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

For the design of Thompson Hall, Margaret Thompson selected not just a family friend, but one of the few deaf architects practicing at the time and a well-respected advocate of deaf Americans. By the time Olof Hanson designed the clubhouse, he had already established a reputation and specialty in institutional buildings designed especially for the

¹² Howard was a deaf banker in Duluth for whom Olof Hanson had designed a home.

¹³ Minnesota School for the Deaf, "Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," p. 4.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 5.

¹⁵ Gordon L. Allen, "Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," in "Charles Thompson Memorial Hall 50th Anniversary: November 5, 1916, 1966," history available at the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul: 18.

¹⁶ Douglas D. Bahl, "Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," in "75th Anniversary of Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," 1991, history available at the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

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deaf. His work included buildings for the schools for the deaf in Minnesota, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Montana, Illinois, Washington, D.C., and Washington state.¹⁷

Stylistically, Hanson used an architectural vocabulary familiar to many of the architects of his era, and was adept at adapting to the desires of his clients. His residential examples, for instance, included such styles as Queen Anne, Shingle, Classical Revival and Colonial Revival.¹⁸ His institutions have a similar diversity. His proposed designs for the North Dakota School for the Deaf in Devil's Lake (1891) and Montana School for the Deaf (c.1896), for example, include asymmetrical towers and turrets applied to a hipped roof massing with dormers and prominent chimneys. The Mississippi School for the Deaf design proposal (1899), on the other hand, evoked a Jeffersonian Classicism, with a symmetrical domed center temple linked to outer pavilions by long corridors, all executed in red brick. His *alma mater* in Faribault (1898; razed) combined simple classicism with engaged turrets in the Queen Anne style.¹⁹

Beyond stylistic ability, Hanson brought his unique perspective as both an architect and as a deaf advocate to the design of buildings for the deaf. Recognizing the need for adequate lighting and good sight-lines to communicate through sign language, Hanson adapted his buildings to provide both in abundance. Open spaces and wide stairwells made visual communication possible. Numerous and expansive windows – placed to the side of the speaker's platform in formal assembly halls – made seeing sign language and facial grammar easier in an era when electrical lighting could not sufficiently illuminate. The three-story boys' dormitory building, Kendall Green (now Dawes House), that Hanson designed for Gallaudet University in 1895 has a total of 78 windows.²⁰ A writer for the *Silent Worker* remarked that the building "is the most perfectly adapted to its purpose of any similar building, belonging to any institution for the deaf" that he had ever seen. The writer cited Hanson's deafness was a distinct advantage in winning competitions over other architects of greater experience and reputation, just as "the man who wears the shoe has over another man in finding where it pinches."²¹

The design of Thompson Hall met the requirements laid out by Margaret Thompson, creating rooms and spaces that would accommodate the various social purposes and activities. The basement floor included a Billiard Room, Reading Room, and restrooms, in addition to the single bowling lane down a central passage extending nearly the length of the building (complaints by the women users that the alley blocked the way to the ladies washroom led to its removal in 1920).²² On the first floor, a Ladies Parlor, with a broad bowed window and banquette, was situated off the main lobby, as was a large Social Hall and Dining Room. The caretaker's quarters were also found on this floor. The second floor was dominated by the two-story Assembly Hall with a raised stage and proscenium at the south end. The Assembly Hall was complimented by an adjacent Children's Room and a Check Room. The third floor offered additional space for a printing office and a movie projection room, as well as small dressing rooms above the stage wings.²³ Hanson's design, however, enhanced these otherwise standard clubhouse facilities to make the building work particularly well for deaf users.

To provide optimal natural lighting to all floors of Thompson Hall, Hanson raised the basement and designed for large windows emitting light into traditionally dark spaces. The first floor features windows along its east elevation, providing light into the parlor and the dining room (Photo 7). Most significantly, the assembly hall offered large windows on the

¹⁷ Wesley Lauritsen, *History of the Minnesota School for the Deaf* (Faribault, Minnesota: Minnesota School for the Deaf, 1963).

¹⁸ Thomas Zahn, "Architecture of Olof Hanson, 1895-1901," 1988, Multiple Property Documentation Form, available at State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

¹⁹ Although the Hanson-designed building is no longer extant, Hanson is memorialized on the MSAD campus by its address – 615 Olof Hanson Drive.

²⁰ Tabitha Jacques, "Olof Hanson: Conspicuous Leader, 1862-1933: Exhibit and Exhibition Guide," 2009, produced by Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.

²¹ "The Deaf in Business," *Silent Worker* XI, no. 9 (1899): 129-130.

²² Thompson Memorial Hall, "Chronology of Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," in "Charles Thompson Memorial Hall 75th Anniversary," 1991, history available at the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

²³ The bowling pavilion and tennis courts planned for the grounds were never constructed.

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sides, which gave illumination with a minimum of back lighting (Photo 9). The stage was naturally lit with a skylight from above, in addition to a bank of artificial overhead lights and foot lights. The latter were placed to the side and set flush with the floor so as not to impair the speaker's view of the audience. Since meetings and performances would be called to order visually, instead of aurally, the light switches for the hall were placed on the proscenium, so the speaker could get the audience's attention with the flick of a light.

In public spaces of the building, sightlines were carefully considered. The Assembly Hall featured a Children's Room to the rear, where disruptive children could be taken. Internal sliding windows offered views to the stage for parents to partake in the program from this room or from the upper lobby (Photo 10). The commodious scale of the public passages and doorways not only eased the flow of large numbers of people, but also made seeing from room to room easier. The stairwell is broad and open so visual communication is possible with two persons walking side-by-side or communicating from top to bottom (Photo 5). From the dining room, occupants can see visitors arrive on the front porch through the lobby's double-leaf doors, and the large, plate-glass entry doors (Photo 8). These thoughtful and subtle design techniques serve to make Thompson Hall particularly well suited to its purpose.

Thompson Hall was the first clubhouse for deaf people in the nation designed for its specific purpose, and remains the only Minnesota example of the type. It is among the most significant of Hanson's Minnesota commissions.²⁴

Olof Hanson: Architect, Leader

Olof Hanson was born in Fjälkinge, Sweden in 1862 and immigrated with his family to Willmar, Minnesota in 1875. Becoming completely deaf at the age of 10, Hanson attended MSAD, where he was challenged with not only learning sign language, but also English, as his native language was Swedish. He succeeded in just three years, graduating in 1881. That fall, he enrolled in the National Deaf-Mute College, now known as Gallaudet University, in Washington, D.C. Hanson flourished in college, participating in the school's first football team, the debate team, and the bicycle squad. He graduated as class valedictorian in 1886.²⁵ While at college, Hanson contemplated his career options, and expressed interest in three professions: engineering, surveying and architecture. The student received letters of introduction to professionals in each of the fields. The only positive response was from an architect, who told him "the sky is the limit."²⁶

Steered toward architecture, Hanson obtained work during his summer breaks as a draftsman for the Minneapolis architecture firms of Hodgson and Son and E. Townsend Mix. Hanson returned to college, and received a Master of Arts degree from the National Deaf-Mute College in 1889. Hanson continued his education for the next ten months by traveling throughout Europe, attending L'École des Beaux Arts,²⁷ and visiting schools for deaf children. The combination of architectural studies and deaf education foreshadowed the accomplishments of his later career.²⁸

Upon his return, Hanson contributed to his first work in designing buildings for the deaf with Wilson Brothers & Co. Architects, who were developing plans for the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf in Mount Airy. After that was completed, Hanson returned to Minnesota and worked as a draftsman in Duluth and Minneapolis. By 1893, he was unable to get employment as an architect due to the economic depression, so he took a position at his *alma mater* teaching deaf children in Faribault. In 1894, he established his own architectural practice in that city.²⁹ In 1899, he married Agatha Tiegel, a teacher at the Faribault deaf school and the first woman graduate of the National Deaf-Mute

²⁴ Hanson's other work in Minnesota include a building at MSAD (razed), as well as numerous domestic and commercial buildings. The Elizabeth H. and Jonathan L. Noyes House and the Elizabeth and Frank A. Berry House in Faribault are listed on the National Register.

²⁵ Tabitha Jacques, "Olof Hanson: Conspicuous Leader."

²⁶ Olof Hanson, "Olof Hanson: An Autobiography," *The Companion*, (May 5, 1932): 3.

²⁷ Hanson is one of just seven architects to work in Minnesota who was educated at L'École des Beaux Arts.

²⁸ Olof Hanson, "Olof Hanson: An Autobiography."

²⁹ *Ibid.*

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College. The newlywed couple attended the National Association of the Deaf Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota just weeks after their wedding.³⁰

Hanson's architectural career eventually flourished in Minnesota, where he designed 24 residences, 18 stores and hotels, two churches, and 10 school and institutional buildings. In 1901, Hanson joined forces with architect, Frank Thayer and they opened an office in Mankato. The following year, after the partnership received a commission for the United States Courthouse in Juneau, Alaska, the duo moved with their families to Seattle, Washington, where they believed there were greater opportunities for architects in the rapidly growing area.³¹ Hanson spent the rest of his career in Washington State. Although he designed dozens of buildings while in Washington, near the end of his life, Hanson reflected "I have often felt that from a financial standpoint I would have done better to remain in Minnesota, either in Mankato or in Faribault."³² Hanson is generally believed to be the first recorded deaf architect in the nation.³³

Outside of his profession, Hanson was a committed advocate for deaf people. He played active roles in the Puget Sound Association of the Deaf, the Washington State Association, the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, and the National Association of the Deaf.³⁴ In 1908, Hanson wrote a persuasive letter to President Theodore Roosevelt, requesting him to remove the recently instituted ruling by the U.S. Civil Service Commission that "deafness" and "loss of speech" were among the disqualifying "defects" for civil service employment. In his letter he wrote, "I myself am deaf. My greatest obstacle is not my deafness, but to overcome the prejudice and ignorance of those who do not understand what the deaf can do." Less than two weeks later, the President issued an order rescinding the ruling.³⁵

From 1910 to 1913, Hanson served as the eighth president of the National Association of the Deaf. During this period, he entered into the debate stirring through the deaf community as to whether sign language versus lip reading was the preferred method of communication to be taught to the deaf. Hanson advocated for the standard used today, sign language (then known as the combined system). In a 1912 letter to Mr. Carroll G. Pearce, President of the National Education Association, he wrote, "a deaf person, educated exclusively by the oral method, can never understand a sermon, or enjoy a lecture, or participate in a debate. A lecture like yours for instance can never be understood through lip-reading. But by means of the sign language it can be interpreted so that the deaf can understand it as fully as people who hear. And the sign language is the only means by which this can be done."³⁶

Hanson also became actively involved in the Episcopal Church, where he saw the need for services for the deaf. In 1909 he started a bible class for deaf people in Seattle, served as a lay leader, and conducted services in sign language. He was ordained a deacon in 1924, and made a priest five years later. He continued his architecture practice, but committed to leading services for the deaf at various locations in the Pacific Northwest.³⁷ He died in Seattle in 1933.

Social Influence of Thompson Hall

Since its establishment, Thompson Hall has served as a forum for Minnesota's deaf community to gather in a welcoming environment. Although the mission of Thompson Hall is purely social, the significance of this purpose cannot be understated. Through this social environment, the organization offered an important opportunity for deaf persons to grow and perpetuate deaf culture. The inviting space, available to any deaf person regardless of means, has given rise to

³⁰ Tabitha Jacques, "Olof Hanson: Conspicuous Leader."

³¹ Olof Hanson, "Olof Hanson: An Autobiography."

³² Ibid.

³³ Many sources on Hanson's life cite him as being the first deaf professional architect in the United States. One of the earliest citations was in a May 1899 edition of *Silent Worker*, a popular national periodical among the deaf. In an article about Hanson, the author writes "Mr. Olof Hanson . . . was, we believe, the first deaf gentleman to take up the profession of architecture . . ." Thomas S. Marr, another deaf architect of Hanson's generation, graduated from Gallaudet University three years after Hanson, and presumably began his career later.

³⁴ Wesley Lauritsen, *History of the Minnesota School for the Deaf*.

³⁵ Tabitha Jacques, "Olof Hanson: Conspicuous Leader."

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Olof Hanson, "Olof Hanson: An Autobiography."

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numerous social and advocacy groups. By offering a stable home to a wide range of deaf interest groups, the clubhouse has played an important role in making Minnesota a deaf-friendly place.

Thompson Hall has contributed to deaf advancement in many of the ways that were anticipated at its 1916 dedication and has had a galvanizing effect on Minnesota's deaf community. It has fulfilled the role of many typical social halls, such as hosting banquets, performances, and a wide range of social and recreational activities. The hall played a particular role for deaf Minnesotans, for whom it was difficult to communicate with the broader world and who often subsisted on limited means due to restricted job offerings. The movie projection room and projector in the second floor assembly hall showed silent films in the 1920s. Admission was priced at 75 cents less than the downtown theaters, making the entertainment form more affordable to deaf citizens.³⁸ Later when "talkies" became popular, Thompson Hall screened specially captioned films, which were otherwise unavailable. Regular social events, such as plays, dinners, card games, and other programming formed strong friendships and cohesion within the diverse community. These social bonds would have a powerful role in creating a community to effectively advocate for deaf issues. At a time when employment discrimination against deaf persons was common, the job postings board and networking functions that Thompson Hall offered were vital to enhance the limited economic opportunities of deaf people.

Thompson Hall has hosted nearly every type of event of interest to deaf Minnesotans. The Minnesota Association of the Deaf (now known as Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens) held its biennial convention at Thompson Hall eight times between 1917 and 1976. The assembly hall provided a platform for distinguished speakers, such as Gallaudet University presidents (Percival Hall spoke in 1932), leaders of the National Association of the Deaf and the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, and prominent deaf authors. Live performances, such as vaudeville shows, provided the community with entertainment directed to their method of communication. In times of national crisis during the World Wars, Thompson Hall was used as a place to contribute to the greater cause through blood drives and the preparation of surgical materials. With the leadership experience gained by participation on the House Committee or the Board of Trustees, members active in Thompson Hall have gone on to serve in statewide and national positions with the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, the Gallaudet University Alumni Association, the National Association of the Deaf, and the American Athletic Association of the Deaf (now called United States of America Deaf Sports Federation).³⁹

With Thompson Hall at the center of Twin Cities' deaf social life, the community was better able to support itself and respond to a variety of needs and interests. Dozens of organizations have arisen from within the hall's inviting social structure, and regularly used the clubhouse for meetings and activities. The MinnePaul Athletic Club was established in 1931 to offer social athletic opportunities for the deaf and hearing impaired. Thompson Hall offered itself as a home base for its meetings and offices for many years. Now, MinnePaul is a self-supporting, non-profit organization. In the 1920s, American Sign Language classes, such as those taught by Petra F. Howard, a counselor for the Labor Bureau for the Deaf (now known as the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation), were taught at Thompson Hall long before such classes were offered in other local institutions.

In the 1950s, the growing popularity of television in the hearing world led to further alienation of those in the deaf world, who had no way to fully participate in this pastime. As a result, the role of Thompson Hall would continue to be important in forming social relationships among the deaf. In 1957, with an increasing array of activities at Thompson Hall and movement of many participants to the suburbs, leaders saw the need to publish a regular newsletter. The monthly publication reported on the social news of individuals in the community, as well as the schedule of programs at Thompson Hall and other organizations.

³⁸ Douglas D. Bahl, "Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," in "75th Anniversary of Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," 1991, history available at the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

³⁹ Doug Bahl, an active Thompson Hall leader and unofficial historian, shared the numerous persons involved in Thompson Hall who have also been national leaders in the deaf community; Herman Fuechtmann, Thompson Hall house committee member, personal communication, May 18, 2011.

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With the revitalized activity in the 1950s, new organizations arose from Thompson Hall in the next decades. The Minnesota Association of the Hearing Impaired, a state organization for the hearing handicapped and deaf children, was organized at Thompson Hall in December of 1963 and held its first convention there the following spring. The Minnesota Association of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children began their organization at Thompson Hall in 1971. Thompson Hall has hosted the Miss Deaf Minnesota pageant, established in 1976, several times.⁴⁰ Other organizations that have been supported by Thompson Hall's generous availability of meeting space include the Minnesota Chapter of the National Black Deaf Advocates, the Vikings Club, Deaf Senior Citizens, the Minnesota American Sign Language Teachers Association, the Deaf Snowmobile Club, and the local chapter of the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf.

By the 1970s, changes in policy and technology resulted in a diminished reliance on deaf clubs for social interaction and entertainment. Federal laws, such as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, removed many of the barriers to fuller participation in the work force by prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in federally assisted programs. The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act opened doors for employment even further and required greater accessibility for those with disabilities. The policy changes lifted many of the constraints on employment, and therefore the economic limitations that previous generations of deaf people faced. Gathering at restaurants and entertaining at home became more popular because it was increasingly affordable. Technical advances also made different forms of communications and entertainment possible. In the 1960s, the introduction of teletypewriter (TTY) systems meant that deaf people could call each other on the telephone for the first time. Experiments in closed captioning of television programs began in the 1970s and the system was fully implemented by 1980. The new technology offered deaf people the same access to television entertainment as their hearing counterparts. These alternative entertainment options and means of communication influenced the way deaf people socialized with each other and reduced the traditional need for deaf social clubs, such as Thompson Hall. Membership in deaf social clubs by younger generations is reported to be declining throughout the nation.⁴¹

Despite changing demographics and programming, Thompson Hall continues to play a central role in Minnesota's deaf community. The building remains in use largely as it was originally intended. The club house also serves as an *ad hoc* gathering place for events affecting the lives of deaf Minnesotans. For example, when closed captioned television programming was threatened, deaf Minnesotans informally and intuitively gathered at Thompson Hall to discuss the issue and form an organized response. Many deaf-related organizations use the space for meetings, parties, fundraisers and events. Socials are held every Friday and Saturday, attracting 75 to 100 people. Thompson Hall is the only place in the Twin Cities where deaf strangers congregate and socialize, and it remains the only free club for the deaf in the United States.⁴² In a recent study, Minneapolis (presumed to include the greater Twin Cities area) was ranked among the top 20 deaf friendly cities in the nation.⁴³ Along with other institutions that attract deaf people, Thompson Hall played an important role in facilitating the region's growth and development of organizations by and of deaf people to support the issues that affect this community.

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⁴⁰ Various issues of the *Thompson Hall Newsletter*, on file at the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

⁴¹ Lane, Hoffmeister and Bahan, *A Journey Into the Deaf-World*, 135.

⁴² Douglas D. Bahl, "90 Years - Charles Thompson Memorial Hall," in Charles Thompson Memorial Hall 90th Anniversary, 2006, history available at Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, St. Paul.

⁴³ Deaf411, Inc., *Deaf Friendly Cities in the U.S.* 2009, accessed May 12, 2011, <http://www.deaf411online.com/reports/index.php>.

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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 # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☒ University
☒ Other
Name of repository: **Minnesota Historical Society**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): RA-SPC-4487

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.46 acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

St. Paul West, Minn
1967, Revised 1993

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	15	486000	4977194	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Lots 1 and 2 of Block 1 of Merriam Park 2nd Addition, Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary conforms to the historical and current legal description of the parcel.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Stark, Principal
organization Stark Preservation Planning LLC date May 30, 2011
street & number 2840 43rd Avenue South telephone 651-353-2628
city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55406
e-mail will@starkpreservation.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

Charles Thompson Memorial Hall
Name of Property

Ramsey Co., Minnesota
County and State

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Charles Thompson Memorial Hall
City or Vicinity: Saint Paul
County: Ramsey County
State: MN
Name of Photographer: Daniel R. Pratt/ARCH3, LLC
Date of Photographs: April 2011
Location of Original Digital Files: Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul, MN

1 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0001)

North façade, camera facing south.

2 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0002)

East and north elevations, camera facing southwest.

3 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0003)

West and south elevations, camera facing northeast.

4 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0004)

Automobile garage, southwest of Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, camera facing northwest.

5 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0005)

Staircase in Lobby, camera facing northwest.

6 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0006)

Former Ladies Parlor, camera facing southwest.

7 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0007)

Social Hall and Dining Room, camera facing southeast.

8 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0008)

View of Lobby door from community room, camera facing north.

9 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0009)

Assembly Hall, camera facing south.

10 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0010)

Children's Room, camera facing southwest.

11 of 11 (MN_Ramsey County_Charles Thompson Hall_0011)

Assembly Hall, camera facing north.

Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

Name of Property

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Property Owner:

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

name Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

street & number 1824 Marshall Avenue

telephone 651-644-3455

city or town St. Paul

state MN

zip code 55104

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 1

Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

Name of Property

Ramsey County, Minnesota

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

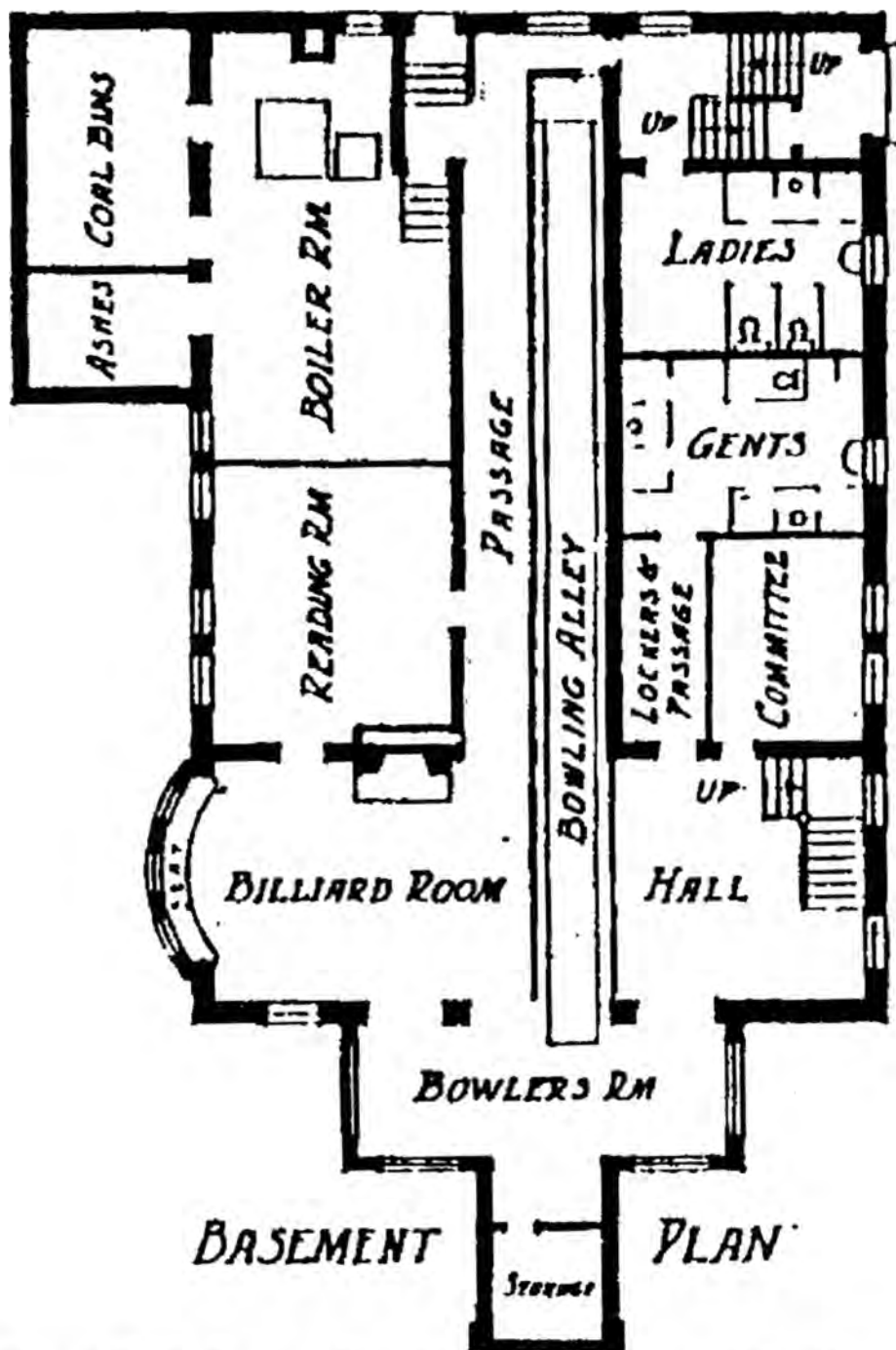


Figure 1. Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, Original Basement Floor Plans.

North



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 2

Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

Name of Property

Ramsey County, Minnesota

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

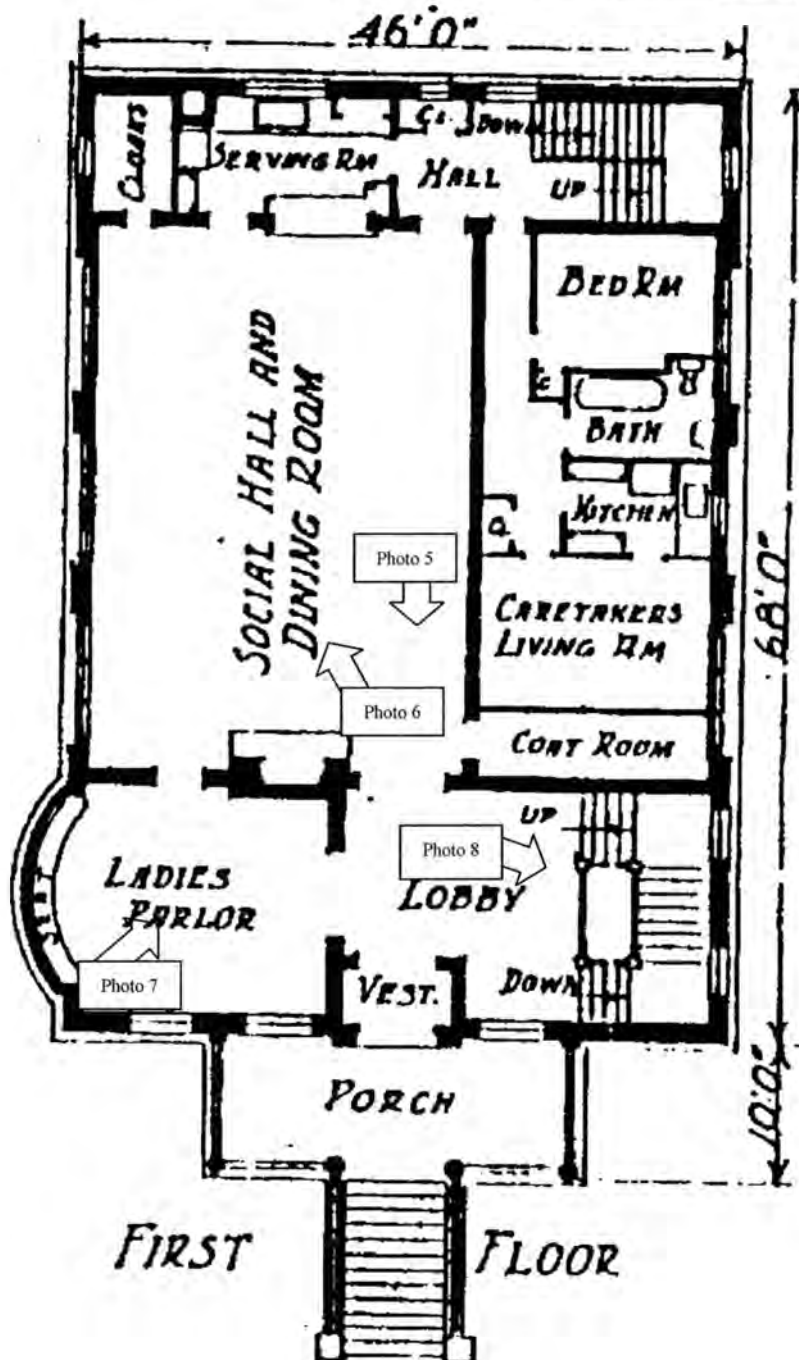


Figure 2. Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, Original First Floor Plans.

North

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 3

Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

Name of Property

Ramsey County, Minnesota

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

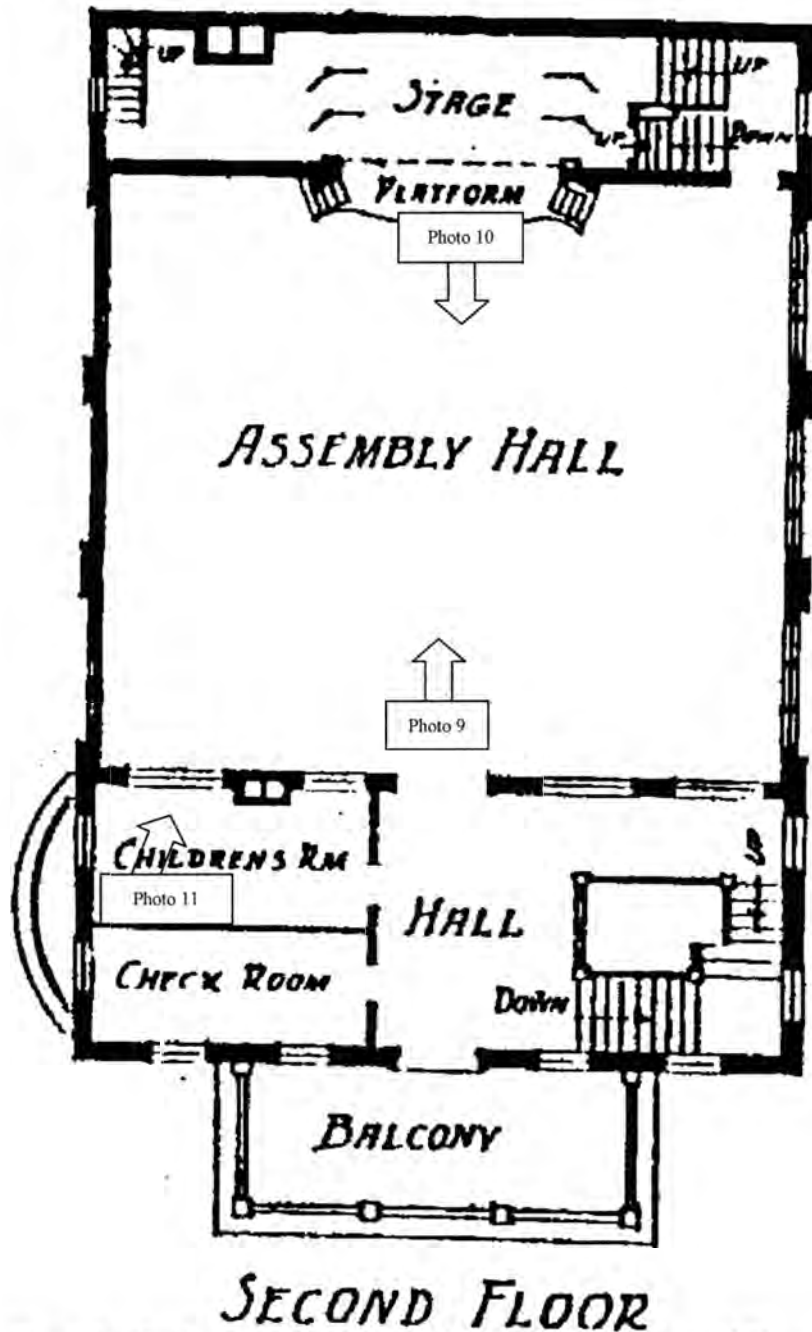


Figure 3. Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, Original Second Floor Plans.

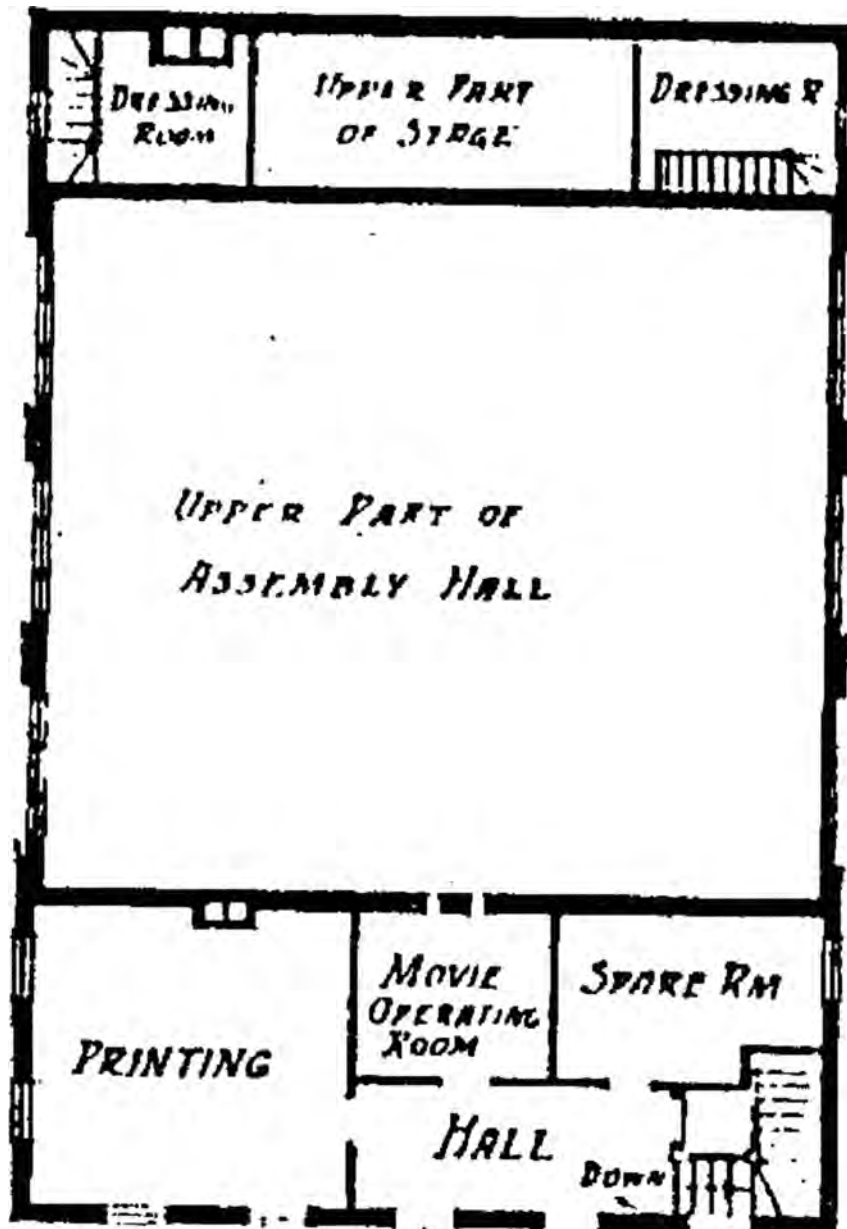
North

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

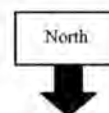
Additional Documentation Page 4

Charles Thompson Memorial Hall
Name of Property
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



THIRD FLOOR

Figure 4. Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, Original Third Floor Plans.



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National Park Service

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Figure 5. Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, looking southwest, Minnesota Historical Society, 1929.

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

Name of Property

Ramsey County, Minnesota

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Additional Documentation Page 6

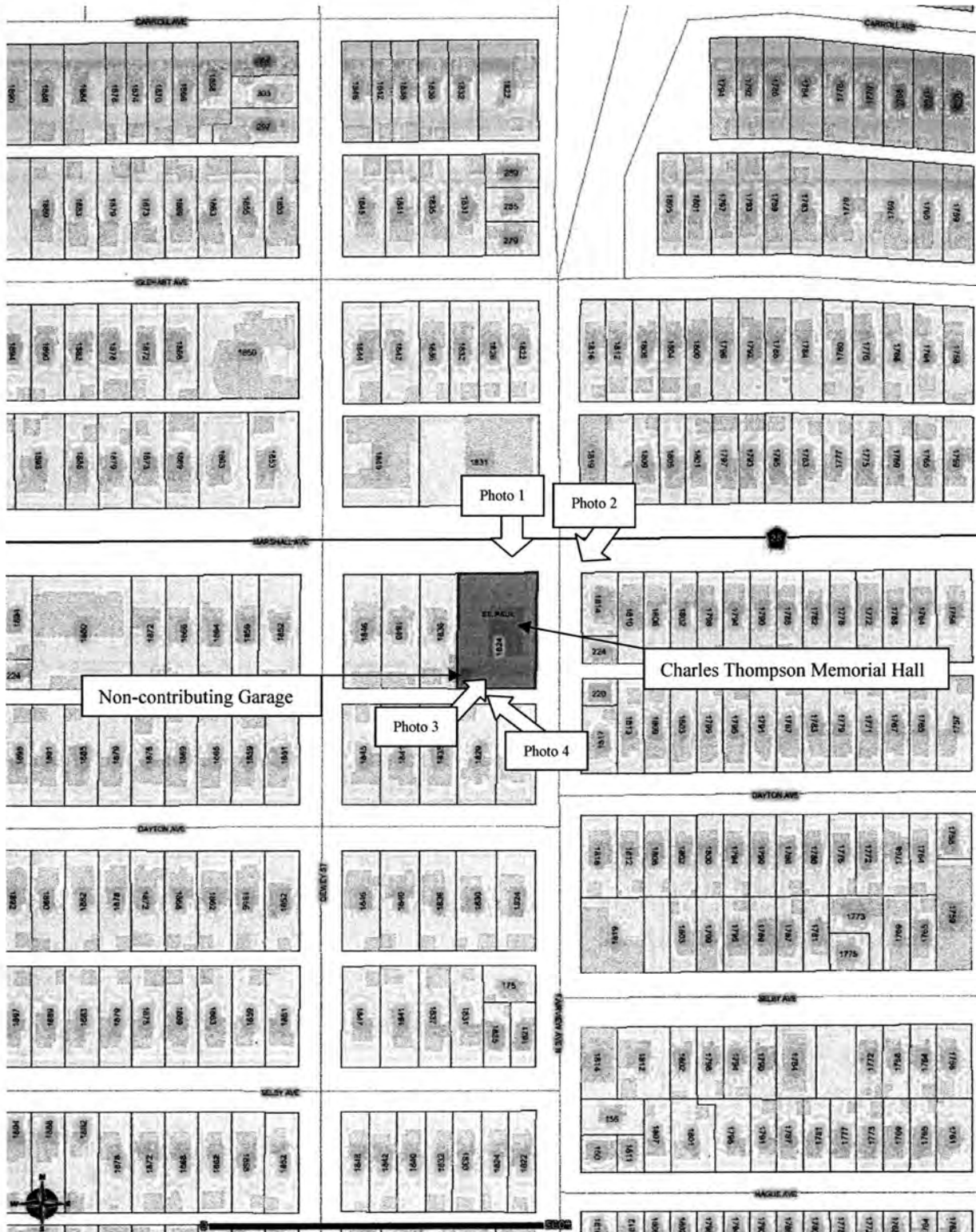


Figure 6. Charles Thompson Memorial Hall. Sketch Map. Google Maps 2011.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Name of Property

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Additional Documentation Page 7

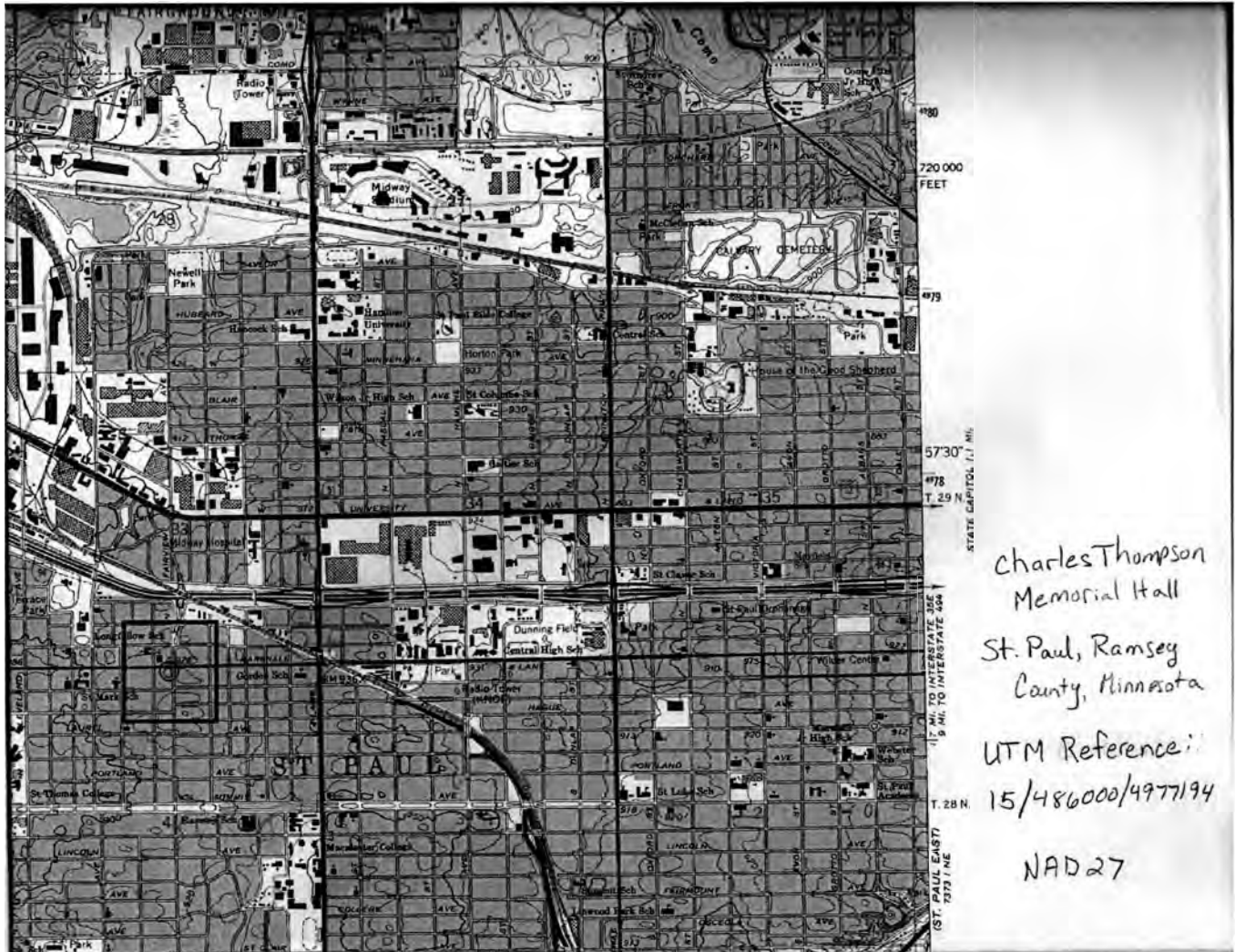


Figure 7. Charles Thompson Memorial Hall. USGS 7.5 Minute Series Topographic Map, St. Paul West, Minnesota Quadrangle. 1967 (1993).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Thompson, Charles, Memorial Hall
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MINNESOTA, Ramsey

DATE RECEIVED: 11/10/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/02/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/19/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/26/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000949

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 12-23-11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



MN_RAMSEY COUNTY_CHARLES THOMPSON HALL_0001



MN_RAMSEY COUNTY_CHARLES THOMPSON HALL_0002



MN_RAMSEY COUNTY_CHARLES THOMPSON HALL_00013



MN_RAMSEY COUNTY_CHARLES THOMPSON HALL_00 04



MN-RAMSEY COUNTY-CHARLES THOMPSON HALL-00 05



MN_RAMSEY COUNTY_CHARLES THOMPSON HALL_00106



MN_RAMSEY COUNTY_CHARLES THOMPSON HALL_00 07



EXIT

MN_RAMSEY COUNTY_CHARLES THOMPSON HALL_001 08



MN-RAMSEY COUNTY-CHARLES THOMPSON HALL-00 09



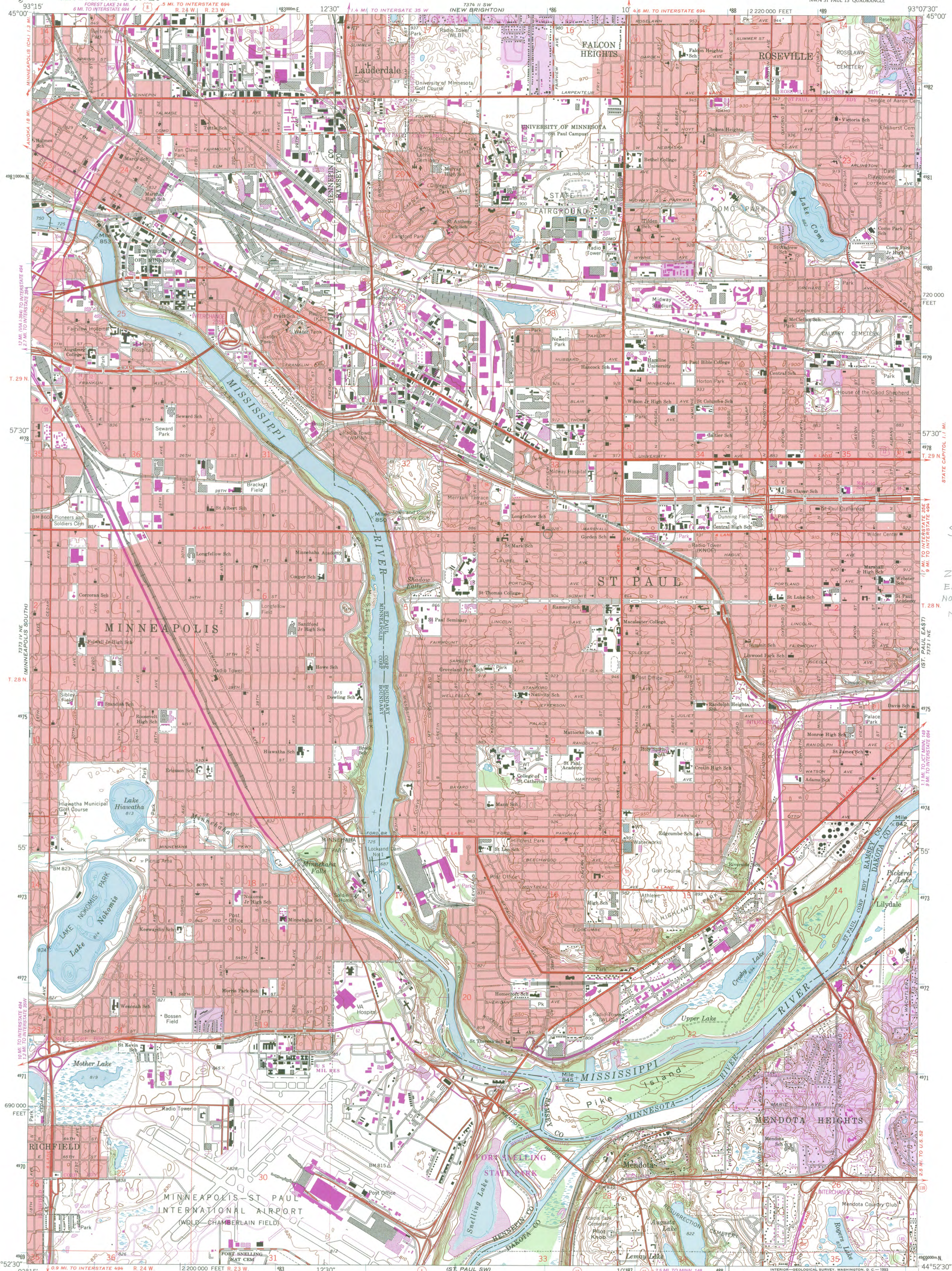
MN- RAMSEY COUNTY- CHARLES THOMPSON HALL - 00 10



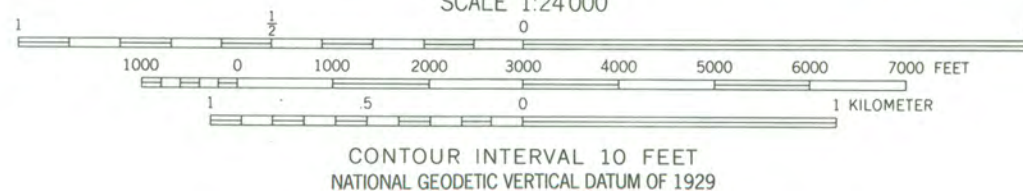
MN. RAMSEY COUNTY - CHARLES THOMPSON HALL - 00 11

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

ST PAUL WEST QUADRANGLE
MINNESOTA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
NW/4 ST PAUL 15' QUADRANGLE



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1947. Field checked 1951. Revised from aerial photographs
taken 1966. Field checked 1967. Map edited 1967
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Minnesota coordinate
system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue
1927 North American Datum (NAD 27)
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute
intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Dotted land lines established by private survey



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route



ST PAUL WEST MINN.
NW/4 ST PAUL 15' QUADRANGLE
44093-H2-TF-024
1967
REVISED 1993
DMA 7373 1 NW - SERIES V872

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with
State of Minnesota agencies from aerial photographs taken 1991
and other sources. Contours not revised. This information
not field checked. Map edited 1993
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

Charles Thompson
Memorial Hall
St. Paul, Ramsey
County, Minnesota
ZONE 15
EASTING: 486000
NORTHING: 4977194
NAD 27





CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

September 16, 2011

Britta Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
345 Kellogg Blvd. W.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Certified Local Government Comment on the nomination of:
Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, 1824 Marshall Avenue, St. Paul, Ramsey County
to the National Register of Historic Places.

Dear Ms. Bloomberg:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Register nomination for the Charles Thompson Memorial Hall. Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commissioners, Renee Hutter, Robert Ferguson and Steve Trimble, meet the Federal Standards for Architecture, Architectural History and History and have reviewed the National Register nomination of the above property.

The Commissioners agree that the property meets Criteria A for association "with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history" and Criteria C for embodying "distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction." The Charles Thompson Memorial Hall is the states only clubhouse designed and built specifically for the deaf. The building was designed by architect Olof Hanson who is widely regarded as the nation's first deaf architect.

The Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) allowed for public comment during their September 15, 2011 joint Public Hearing/Business Meeting. The HPC whole heartedly supports listing the Charles Thompson Memorial Hall to the National Register of Historic Places. The building was designated a Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Site by the Mayor and City Council in 1995.

Sincerely,

Christine Boulware

Christine Boulware
Historic Preservation Planner

cc: Ward 4 Council Member Russ Stark
Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, owner
Will Stark, Stark Preservation Planning LLC
File



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

390 City Hall
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Telephone: 651-266-8510
Facsimile: 651-266-8513

September 21, 2011

Britta Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
345 Kellogg Blvd. W.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Certified Local Government Comment on the nomination of:
Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, 1824 Marshall Avenue, St. Paul, Ramsey County
to the National Register of Historic Places.

Dear Ms. Bloomberg:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Register nomination of the Charles Thompson Memorial Hall. Listing of the Charles Thompson Memorial Hall to the National Register is an excellent way to honor the important role that the Hall has played in the growth of Minnesota's vibrant deaf community and the skills and design of architect Olof Hanson.

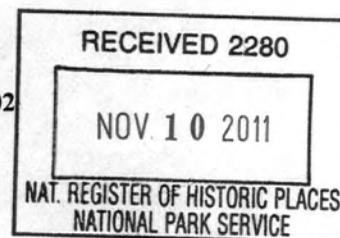
The impact and influence that the Charles Thompson Memorial Hall has had and continues to have as a longtime social club in Saint Paul is praiseworthy. I concur with the findings of the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission and support the nomination of the property.

Sincerely,

Christopher B. Coleman
Mayor

cc: Ward 4 Council Member Russ Stark
Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, owner

Minnesota Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office
345 Kellogg Blvd West, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
651/259-3451



TO: Carol Shull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Susan Roth, National Register Historian

DATE: November 4, 2011

NAME OF PROPERTY: Charles Thompson Memorial Hall

COUNTY AND STATE: Ramsey Co., MN

SUBJECT: National Register:

- ☒ Nomination
- ☐ Multiple Property Documentation Form
- ☐ Request for determination of eligibility
- ☐ Request for removal (Reference No.)
- ☐ Nomination resubmission
- ☐ Boundary increase/decrease (Reference No.)
- ☐ Additional documentation (Reference No.)

DOCUMENTATION:

- ☒ Original National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
 - ☐ Multiple Property Documentation Form
 - ☒ Continuation Sheets
 - ☐ Removal Documentation
 - ☒ Photographs
 - ☒ CD w/ image files
 - ☒ Original USGS Map
 - ☒ Sketch map(s)
 - ☒ Correspondence
 - ☐ Owner Objection
- The enclosed owner objections
Do ☐ Do not ☐ constitute a majority of property owners

STAFF COMMENTS: