United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

80

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

1. Name

historic Taylor County Courthouse

and/or common

Location 2.

street & number	courthouse sa	uare (224 South Seco		not for publication
city, town	Medford	vicinity of	congressional district	Seventh
state	Wisconsin co	ode 55 county	Taylor	code 119
3. Clas	sification			
Category district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered	Status occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment X government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Prope	erty		
name Count	w of Taylor Att	n: Roger Emmerich C	number Claule	
		n: Roger Emmerich, Co	ounty Clerk	
street & number	224 South Second	Street		
street & number city, town Medfo	224 South Second	Street vicinity of	state	Wisconsin 54451
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city, town Madison

Wisconsin 53706 state

7. Description

Condition

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fair	unexposed

riorated <u>unaltered</u> s <u>X</u> altered sposed Check one X original site moved date

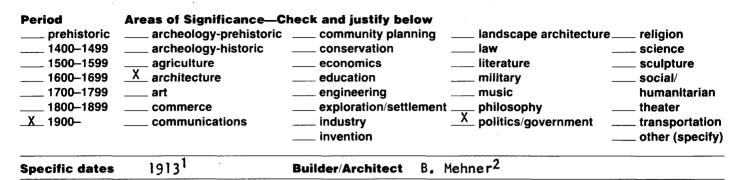
Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Taylor County Courthouse occupies an elevated site of just over three and one-half acres in the city of Medford. The domed, rectangular building rises a full three stories with basement below and a full, closed balustrade encircling the roof. Four lonic pilasters adornthe projecting portico on the front (west) facade, alternating with five rectangular windows in the recessions between. Other neoclassical elements include a high concrete ground story with projecting water table, and a concrete entablature and modillioned cornice at the roofline. Alternating concrete and brick voussoirs compose the flat arches topping each rectangular double-hung window in the interim brick stories. Round-arched openings in the concrete ground story correspond to the flat ones above, and keystones accent the arches over the entrances on each facade. The principal entrance on the west is marked by double plate glass doors (recent replacements) framed by continuous sidelights and overlight. A large brass lantern hangs on each side of the entry. The brick drum of the eight-sided dome is lighted by triple, round-arched windows on each face. Four clocks which chime on the hour and half-hour are set into alternating sections of the dome itself. A lantern marks the peak. The formality and regularity of the rectangular mass, as well as its Renaissance-style dome, mark the design as a civic structure conceived in the grand neoclassical style associated with government buildings and given further impetus by the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.

Interior renovation in 1948 included installation of accoustical tile ceilings. Walls in the halls and offices have marble and wood wainscotings respectively, with plaster surfaces above. Ornate wood mouldings underscore the hall ceilings. Decorative metal posts and railings with wood banisters line the stairways.

Additional features of the courthouse square are a cannon south of the west end of the courthouse and a World War I memorial statue north of the building. The immediate vicinity of the square itself is residential in character.

8. Significance



Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Taylor County Courthouse is a dignified architectural response of the county to the needs of its government and administration. In addition, the building, sited on a hill overlooking Medford, is an imposing visual landmark, testifying to its importance as a symbol of civic pride and identity.

<u>Architecture</u>

With its symbolic pilastered portico and dome, and overall regularity, the courthouse was designed in the imposing neoclassical tradition of government architecture. Designed by architect B. Mehner in 1913, the building was constructed by the Hutler Construction Company of Fond du Lac at a cost of \$60,000.³ Both as a descendant of the revival of the grand neoclassical style of the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, and as a product of improved building technology of the new century, the courthouse stands as a well-designed and pleasing example of civic architecture of the early twentieth century. The well-proportioned distribution of openings and building elements, and the restrained constrast of brick and concrete distinguish the courthouse design.

The size and formal manner of the courthouse suggest an increased complexity in the operation of county government. Imposing in itself and in its setting in the community of Medford, the building serves as an important focus of regional identity in the American system of self-government. The traditional aspect of its design strengthens the sense of association with other seats of government throughout the state and nation..

- 1. Plaque in hallway of Courthouse
- 2. Emmerich, p. 4
- 3. Idem.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Emmerich, Roger, Taylor County: The Log Cabin Country, Taylor Co. Archives, 1977 Record of Proceedings, Volume C, Taylor County Board of Supervisors Wausau Daily Herald, October 12, 1979

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10. Geograph			
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