OMB No. 10024-0018
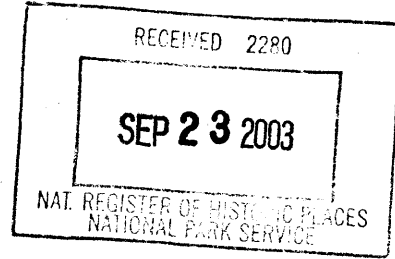
**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

RECEIVED 2280

SEP 2 3 2003

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *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 an 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_Hilton House Hotel
other names Hotel Hilton

2. Location

street & number 434 East Grand Avenue   N/A not for publication
city or town Beloit   N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Rock   code 105 zip code 53511

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 __ nationally __ statewide _x locally. (__ See continuation for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title   September 17, 2003
                                                          Date

State or Federal agency and bureau   Date

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

Signature of certifying official/Title   Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Hilton House Hotel
Name of Property

Rock County, Wisconsin
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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.
___ See continuation sheet.
___ removed from the National Register.
___ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper   Date of Action

Edson Beall   _11/7/03_

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)

_x_ private
___ public-local
___ public-state
___ public-federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

_x_ building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include listed resources within 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)

DOMESTIC: Hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple dwelling
COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty store

7. Description

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

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation CONCRETE
walls BRICK
       CONCRETE
roof   ASPHALT
other STONE

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on continuation sheet(s).)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section _7_ Page _1_

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

DESCRIPTION: INTRODUCTION

The Hilton House Hotel is situated on the southwest corner of East Grand Avenue and Pleasant Street in the city of Beloit (see photo 1). The three-story, Neo-Classical Revival building was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of (Charles Sumner) Frost and (Alfred Hoyt) Granger and erected in 1904.[1] The Hilton House is of concrete, brick, and steel construction and is set on a raised basement. The exterior is finished with brick and trimmed with white stone. A parapet hides the flat, built-up roof.

In 2001, the Hilton House Hotel was rehabilitated through the federal historic preservation tax credit program.[2] At that time, an underground parking structure was built on a parcel behind the Hilton House. Although this parcel is now associated with the Hilton House in its use as a commercial/apartment building, it was not a part of the Hilton House Hotel historically, and so is not included in this nomination.

PRESENT APPEARANCE

The Hilton House Hotel anchors a prominent corner in Beloit's central business district, and occupies almost all of its parcel. Commercial buildings dating from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries appear in the blocks that surround the Hilton House. To the south (rear) of the Hilton House, is the underground parking structure, which has the appearance of a surface lot, similar to the surface lot that was on this site for many years. The parking structure's siting makes it unobtrusive.

The Hilton House is U-shaped in plan and wraps around a small courtyard (see attached site plan). The footprint of the Hilton House measures 108 feet along East Grand Avenue (the

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[1] *Beloit Daily News*, 20 March 1903; and *Beloit City Directory for 1904*, (Beloit: Daily News Press, 1904).
[2] Arlan Kay, AIA, personal communication, 8 March 2002.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

front-facing façade), 118 feet along the Pleasant Street (the east-facing façade), and 100 feet along the south-facing (rear) façade. On the south-facing façade, a narrow opening between the Hilton House and the building just west provides access into the courtyard.

The street (north- and east-facing) facades are finished with orange face brick in running stretcher bond. A broad entablature appears above each of the first and third stories on both street facades. These facades are further elaborated with stone belt-courses, which form continuous sills for the second and third story windows. The rear (south-facing) façade and the interior of the courtyard are finished with a coarser grade of brick; the rear façade has been painted.

On the East Grand Avenue (front) façade, four brick pilasters divide the front into three parts (see photo 2). The pilasters feature capitals enriched with an egg-and-dart molding. The central pair of pilasters terminates in a closed pediment, inset with a raking cornice and decorative brickwork. The principal entrance, which opened into the hotel lobby, is found at the east end of this façade. It is composed of a pair of steel-and-glass doors surmounted by a single-pane transom and recessed within a broad surround of glazed, pink terra cotta (see photo 3). The surround is enlivened with compound moldings, tiles with an abstract floral motif, and a molding made up of small squares. A flat canopy, suspended on chains and supported by a pair of ornate metal brackets, shelters the entrance. The brackets possess an Art Deco flair, and incorporate an incandescent light. The canopy is clad with pressed metal, its sides ornamented with alternating floral and egg-and-dart designs. A display window with a base of glazed, pink terra cotta appears on either side of the entrance. This configuration was constructed sometime between 1926 and 1939, and looks like it dates from c. 1930.[3] The original entrance consisted of a pair of wooden doors with a two-light transom, framed with wooden pilasters and sidelights. A one-story, flat-roofed portico with

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[3] *Map of Beloit, Wisconsin* (Pelham, New York: Sanborn Publishing Company, 1926 and 1939).

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section __7__ Page __3__

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

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multiple Doric columns and a second-story balustrade sheltered this entrance. The flanking display windows were the same size as the existing ones, but had brick bases.[4]

West of the entrance on East Grand Avenue are four storefronts (see photo 2). Each storefront exhibits metal display windows, installed as part of the 2001 rehabilitation and recreating much of the original appearance, except that only one storefront has an entrance. When the Hilton House Hotel was completed in 1904, each storefront had an off-center door, a large display window and a four-light transom.[5] Sometime prior to 1964, the storefronts were reduced with simulated masonry and vertical board siding.[6] At the second and third stories on the East Grand Avenue facade, a series of wood, 1/1 windows replicate the original windows and were installed in 2001.

A secondary entrance into the former hotel lobby appears toward the north end of the Pleasant Street (east-facing) façade (see photo 4). It consists of a glass-and-metal door surmounted by a single-pane transom, offset beneath a flat canopy. The canopy also shelters a small, 1/1 window, just north of the door. The canopy is suspended on chains, displays the same pressed metal decoration as the one on the front façade and likely dates from the same time, c.1930. The original canopy was longer, hip-roofed and possessed a simple cornice.[7] Above the canopy, a group of three windows in a Palladian motif is set between the first and second floors. On the first floor, a two-pane display window appears at the north end of the façade, and a tall, single-pane window is found between the display window and the entrance. South of the entrance, pairs of tall, single-pane windows appear. These recreate the appearance of the original

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[4] *Beloit in 1911* (Beloit: Beloit Daily News, 1911), p. 27; and c. 1910 photograph of Hilton House Hotel, on file, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.
[5] *Map of Beloit, Wisconsin* (Pelham, New York: Sanborn Publishing Company, 1908).
[6] Photograph, *Beloit City Directory* (St. Paul, Minnesota: R. L. Polk & Co., 1964), p. xvii.
[7] *Beloit in 1911*, p. 27.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section __7__ Page __4__

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

windows, which were replaced with fixed, three-light, aluminum windows sometime prior to 1993.[8] The second and third stories display wood, 1/1 windows.

The south-facing (rear) façade exhibits a series of segmental-arched openings at each story (see photo 5). Most hold a wood, 1/1 window, but several are blind. Near the center of this façade, a bowed canopy protects two glass-and-metal doors, separated by a 1/1 window. This entrance is new and provides direct access to the second- and third-floor apartments. Just west of the entrance is a small, one-story, flat-roofed brick loading dock, added in 2001. It displays blind, segmental-arched openings and is compatible with the Hilton House in scale, materials and details. At each of the second and third floors, two metal balconies appear. A door with a single-pane transom opens onto each balcony. These segmental-arched openings were cut as part of the 2001 rehabilitation of the Hilton House. They are in character with the historic appearance of the building.

The courtyard was originally a large light well, with no amenities, and its current appearance dates predominantly from the 2001 rehabilitation (see photo 6). The facades that overlook the courtyard retain their original series of segmental-arched openings, with lintels composed of two courses of rowlocks, and stone sills. Most hold wood, 1/1 windows, although six have been made into doors (one on each of the north, south and east walls). Each door opens onto a metal balcony. At ground level, a pair of doors appears in the west wall of the courtyard. On the north wall, a brick arcade has been added, providing a covered area where residents and visitors may sit. Several brick planters arranged on a patio of concrete and brick pavers complete the courtyard's present appearance.

On the interior, the first floor plan currently consists of a lobby in the northeast corner, with a large, open commercial space west and south of the lobby (see attached floor plan). At

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[8] Photographs, Elizabeth L. Miller, "Hilton House Hotel," Determination of Eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, prepared September 1993.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 5

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

the west end of the west section are offices and restrooms. Originally, a wall separated the lobby from the commercial section to the west, which was divided into four storefronts.[9] To the south, the lobby opened into a large dining room, which may have also served as a ballroom. Both the storefront section and the dining room had been partitioned prior to 1993. The southwest section of the plan, originally occupied by the kitchen, now houses shipping and receiving for the commercial tenant, as well as an enclosed stair hall with a concrete dogleg staircase and an elevator, added in 2001.

On the second and third floors, the original plan was composed of a central, double-loaded corridor with rooms opening off of it. The current plan is quite similar, except that what were groups of individual rooms have been unified to create six, two-bedroom apartments on each floor. The basement plan consists of a series of rooms used predominantly for storage; it is substantially unchanged.

Inside the East Grand Avenue entrance, a short flight of marble stairs rises to the lobby (see photo 7). The lobby features flooring of brightly-colored tiles, marble baseboards, Doric columns on marble plinths, and a coffered ceiling (see photo 8). These flourishes, all original, are carried through the former dining room (see photo 9). At the east end of the lobby, a wooden, dogleg staircase with a paneled stringcourse and paneled newel-post rises (see photo 8, on the left). The balustrade and newel-post date from 1991.[10] At the landing, there is a built-in, wooden window seat. This staircase originally continued to the second floor, but was closed off in 2001. The original dogleg staircase that connects the second and third floors is still in place. Through most of the building, the walls and ceilings are plastered, except in the former storefront section, which has an acoustical tile ceiling inset with fluorescent lights. The storefront section retains its original, wood-paneled posts, enriched with classical moldings (see photo 10). The second and third floor apartments have carpet and tile flooring.

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[9] *Map of Beloit, Wisconsin*, (1908).
[10] Miller, 7:4.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section __7__ Page __6__   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

ALTERATIONS

On the exterior, the storefronts on the East Grand Avenue façade of the Hilton House Hotel had been reduced and covered over prior to 1964, and incompatible replacement windows had been installed on the first floor of the Pleasant Street façade before 1993. Metal replacement windows also had been placed in most of the second- and third-story openings. The first floor plan had been partitioned, and walls between a number of the individual rooms on the second and third floors had been removed prior to 1993. The 2001 rehabilitation, designed by Arlan Kay, AIA, and carried out through the federal historic preservation tax credit program, returned the Hilton House to much of its original appearance. The c.1930 East Grand Avenue entrance and Pleasant Street façade canopy are not original, but are compatible with the historic character of the building. The small addition, the few altered openings and the courtyard amenities are confined either to the rear façade or to an area not visible from the street, minimizing their impact. Further, these alterations are compatible, in scale, materials and details, with the historic character of the Hilton House. The Hilton House retains excellent integrity overall.

8. Statement of Significance

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

_x_ 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.

_x_ 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 grave.

___ D a cemetery.

___ E a reconstructed resource.

___ F a commemorative property.

___ G less than 50 years of age achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)
Architecture
Commerce
_____
_____
_____
_____

Period of Significance

1904-1953
_____

Significant Dates

1904
_____

_____
_____

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Foster, Charles S. and
Granger, Alfred H.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References
(Cite the sources used in preparing this form on continuation sheet(s).)

1NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section __8__ Page __1__   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: SUMMARY

The Hilton House Hotel is locally significant under *Criteria
A* and *C*. It is a good and intact example of Neo-Classical Revival
design, and is the only commercial example of the style in
Beloit. It is also significant in the area of commerce as the
largest and most important hotel in the city of Beloit for many
years. The period of significance begins with the date of
construction, 1904, and extends to the end of the 50 year period
in 1953.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The city of Beloit is located at the junction of the Rock
River and Turtle Creek. Archaeological remains, including several
effigy mounds, suggest that the area was continuously inhabited
by Indians from the prehistoric era. In the early 1820s, a Ho-
Chunk community with about 600 residents sat on the bluff
overlooking Turtle Creek. This community was called Turtle
Village.[11]

French-Canadian trader Joseph Thibault was the first Euro-
American to settle in the area. In the early 1830s, he built a
cabin in what is currently downtown Beloit. In 1833, the Ho-Chunk
ceded much of their traditional lands and Thibault unofficially
laid claim to over 6,000 acres, including all of present-day
Beloit.[12]

In 1836, Vermont native Caleb Blodgett bought Thibault's
claim, and he and his extended family became the first permanent
residents of European descent in Beloit, which they called New
Albany. Blodgett sold one-third of his property to Charles
Goodhue in the fall of 1836, and the two immediately built a dam,
a sawmill and a race on Turtle Creek. The sawmill was in
operation by the following spring. About the same time that
Goodhue arrived, Dr. Horace White also passed through. Dr. White

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[11] *Book of Beloit*, (Beloit: Beloit Daily News Publishing Company, 1936), p. 5.
[12] *Book of Beloit II: 1836-1986*, (Beloit: Beloit Daily News, 1986), p. 4.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section __8__ Page __2__   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

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had been delegated to select and buy property for the New England
Emigrating Company (hereafter, NEEC).[13]

The NEEC was an organization of fourteen men from Colebrook,
New Hampshire, including Dr. White, who had pooled their savings
in order to buy land in the west for a farming community. In
1837, Dr. White acquired one-third of Blodgett's claim on behalf
of the NEEC. NEEC members and their families began arriving
shortly thereafter, settling east of the Rock River and north of
Turtle Creek. The unofficial Kelsou Survey of this section,
delineating a grid street pattern and a New England style public
commons (now Horace White Park), was commissioned the same year.
When the Original Plat of Beloit was recorded in 1840, it
incorporated most of the Kelsou Survey. Beloit's central business
district subsequently developed in the area that was the Kelsou
Survey.[14]

In the fall of 1838, following much discussion, a committee
selected "Beloit" as the community's permanent name. Apparently
an invention, the name was favored because it sounded French.[15]
Beloit quickly grew into a prosperous community. The first bridge
across the Rock River, built in 1840, opened the west bank for
development. By 1844, the N. B. Gaston Scale Company, probably
Beloit's first factory, was established on the west side in the
area that would become the heart of Beloit's industrial
section.[16]

In 1846, Beloit incorporated as a village. By that time, it
was well established as an agricultural support community for
southern Rock County, with its two sawmills, two gristmills and
two wagon makers. The presence of two foundries, Gaston's scale
factory, and a fanning mill factory foreshadowed Beloit's future
as an industrial city. The population in 1846 was 1,100. Most

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[13] Ibid.

[14] *Handbook of Beloit* (Beloit: Ingersoll, Clark and Dunlap, 1893), p. ix.

[15] *History of Rock County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879), p. 612.

[16] *Handbook of Beloit*, p. ix; and William Fiske Brown, editor, *Rock County Wisconsin: A New History*, (Chicago: C. F. Cooper and Company, 1908), p. 150.

3NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section __8__ Page __3__   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

were natives of Vermont, New Hampshire, New York or Wisconsin, although Norwegians and French had also settled in the community. Yankee values, which placed a premium on hard work and education, shaped the community and led to the establishment of Beloit College in 1846. The oldest college in the state, it was patterned after Yale University in Connecticut.[17]

By 1850, the population of Beloit had reached 2,753, about one-third of whom were foreign born. At that time, there were five hotels, four banks, three flour mills, two foundries, two planning mills, one steam engine factory, one scale factory, one woolen factory, one paper mill, and nearly 600 dwellings.[18] With the arrival of the precursor to the Chicago and NorthWestern Railroad in 1850, and to the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad in 1856, the community boomed. Beloit incorporated as a city in 1856. By that year, another paper mill and factories manufacturing grain cradles, barrels, and reapers had joined the city's expanding industrial base.[19]

Beloit's growth slowed between 1860 and 1880, rising from 4,098 to 4,790. The primary industries of this time period were agricultural implements manufacturing, and paper milling. Beginning in the 1880s, Beloit experienced a rapid rise in manufacturing, accompanied by a dramatic increase in population as many immigrants were drawn to Beloit to work in the factories. Tool and machine manufacturing, and shoe and clothing production, became important components of Beloit's industrial sector during the late nineteenth century. From 1880 until 1920, Beloit's population increased by one-third each decade, reaching 21,284 in 1920. After the turn of the century, immigrants from southern and eastern Europe settled in Beloit, most notably Italians, Greeks and Lithuanians. African-Americans migrating from the southern U.S. also settled in the city.[20]

Beloit's thriving industrial sector, led by Fairbanks, Morse

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[17] *History of Rock County, Wisconsin*, p. 617.
[18] Ibid., p. 618.
[19] *Handbook of Beloit*, p. ix.
[20] *Book of Beloit II: 1836-1986*, p. 8.

4NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section __8__ Page __4__   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

and Company, drove the city's economy and kept the community growing into the 1960s. In 1970, Beloit counted 35,729 residents.[21] Although manufacturing has declined, Beloit's population has remained steady since that time.

HISTORY OF THE HILTON HOUSE HOTEL

In 1902, a group of business and professional men in Beloit decided the city needed a new, modern hotel. Led by C. B. Salmon, they formed the Beloit Hotel Association and, financed through stock subscriptions, purchased the site on the southwest corner of East Grand Avenue and Pleasant Street from C. W. Allen.[22] The large, frame house that stood on the property was razed and the Board of Directors of the Beloit Hotel Association commissioned the prominent Chicago architectural firm of (Charles S.) Frost and (Alfred H.) Granger to design a hotel. In March 1903, the *Beloit Daily News* reported that the Schneiberg Brothers, a local contracting firm, would build the hotel. It was anticipated that the hotel would cost $58,500 to erect. The Beloit Savings Bank underwrote the project. General Charles C. Hilton was hired as manager.[23]

Charles C. Hilton (1841-1905) was a prominent hotelier. Following service in the Civil War, Hilton settled in Chicago. He was associated with various hotels there for forty years. Hilton also served as Adjutant General of Illinois before relocating to Beloit in 1904. The Hilton House Hotel was named in his honor. Hilton's son George was assistant manager. Together the two managed another hotel in Waukesha while managing the Hilton House. The Hiltons lived in the Hilton House Hotel until the General's death.[24]

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[21] Robert C. Nesbit, *Wisconsin: A History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973), pp. 334-35, and 549.
[22] City of Beloit Tax Rolls, 1901-1903.
[23] "A Hotel At Last," *Beloit Daily News*, 20 March 1903; and "Hilton House Hotel" research file, Beloit Historical Society, Beloit, Wisconsin.
[24] "General C. C. Hilton Dies Suddenly," *Beloit Daily Free Press*, 29 June 1905. The Hiltons do not appear to have been related to Conrad Hilton, noted hotelier of the mid-twentieth century.

5NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section __8__ Page __5__

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

The grand opening of the Hilton House Hotel took place on 27 July 1904. The Hilton House was a state-of-the-art hotel for its time, with 80 rooms (20 with private baths), a large dining room and adjacent kitchen, and a saloon in the storefront just west of the lobby. The Hilton House had an elevator and was the only hotel in the state, outside Milwaukee, that was of fire-proof construction. A reception for the stockholders and dignitaries was held in the dining room. Nationally-prominent lawyer and politician William Jennings Bryan was the guest of honor, and was the first to be served dinner in the new hotel.[25] For the next 60 years, the hotel would be the focal point for business and civic meetings in Beloit, as well as the city's social center.

When the Hilton House opened, there were four other hotels in Beloit, most located adjacent to the railroad passenger depot on the southeast corner of St. Paul and State streets. The Branigan Hotel (demolished) was a three-story, Queen Anne, frame building with brick veneer, located at 207-11 State Street, on the northeast corner with St. Paul Street. Erected in the 1890s, it included a dining room and a saloon. The Central Hotel (demolished) stood next door at 215-19 State Street, and was a two-story brick edifice that predated 1902. It represented an earlier type of hotel, with unrelated commercial uses on the ground floor, and hotel rooms on the second floor. The Goodwin Hotel (demolished) was a four-story, brick block at the northeast corner of State Street and East Grand Avenue. The American Hotel (demolished), situated on the southwest corner of Broad and Pleasant streets, was a three-story, frame structure with a large, wrap-around veranda, and was erected before 1884.[26]

In 1907, the Beloit Hotel Association either reorganized as, or sold the Hilton House to, the Beloit Hotel Company. At the same time, the name was changed to the Hilton Hotel. By 1908, the Goodwin Hotel had been converted to office use, the Central Hotel was no longer in hotel use, and the name of the American Hotel

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[25] *Beloit Daily Free Press*, 27 July 1904; and *Beloit in 1911*, p. 27.
[26] *Map of Beloit, Wisconsin*, (Pelham, New York: Sanborn Publishing Company, 1894 and 1902).

6NPS Form 10-900-a
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section __8__ Page __6__   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

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had been changed to the Transient. Two new hotels had entered the competition: the Clarke at 148-50 State Street, and the Carlton at 144-46 State Street (both demolished). These were three-story, masonry structures with stone veneer. They were smaller than the Hilton, with approximately 20 rooms apiece (none with private baths), and so were not comparable to the Hilton, although each did have its own small dining room and bar.[27]

The Beloit Hotel Company retained ownership of the Hilton Hotel until 1922, when F. M. Coons acquired it.[28] By this time, the Transient Hotel had been demolished, the Clarke had changed its name to the Grand, and a new, 25-room hotel called the Radway (demolished) had been erected at 500 East Grand Avenue.[29]

The Hilton maintained its position as Beloit's leading hotel through the early 1960s, updating the principal entrance c. 1930, hosting a recreation center for servicemen during World War II, and gradually increasing the number of rooms with private baths to 50 by 1948. In 1953, a new elevator replaced the original. Air-conditioning was installed in 1958, at which time the hotel had 75 rooms, a large dining room with seating for 175, a small dining room that would accommodate 35 persons, and, in the storefront adjacent to the lobby, a coffee shop.[30] During the 1959 presidential campaign, John F. Kennedy stayed at the Hilton.[31]

However, during the 1950s, roadside motels began making inroads into the Beloit market, presaging the end of downtown hotels such as the Hilton. The downtown hotel had developed at a time when most people traveled by train. With the rise of

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[27] *Map of Beloit, Wisconsin*, (1908).
[28] City of Beloit Tax Rolls, 1906-1923.
[29] *Manual and Directory of Wisconsin's Hotels and Tourist Rooming Houses* (Madison: State Board of Health, 1920).
[30] "Hotel Hilton is Community's Central Meeting Place," *News of Beloit Industry and Business*, 30 January 1958.
[31] "Beloit Hotel Gets New Lease on Life," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 18 March 1991; *Manual and Directory of Wisconsin's Hotels and Tourist Rooming Houses*, (Madison: State Board of Health, 1944 and 1948).

7NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section __8__ Page __7__   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

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automobile tourism in the early twentieth century, downtown
hotels had gradually lost customers to roadside accommodations,
especially with the construction of highways that bypassed towns
and cities, beginning in the 1950s. Motels, which were
affordable, visible from the highway, provided ample parking and
often, an on-site restaurant, made it unnecessary to go downtown,
find the hotel, find a place to park, and drag the suitcase and
one's travel-stained self through lobby.[32]

The earliest motel in the Beloit area appears to have been
the Riverside (extant). Erected at 3156 Riverside Drive (USH 51,
toward the north end of town) c.1947, it originally had nine
rooms, all with private baths. By 1956, it had expanded to 24
rooms. Four other motels had been built in the area by 1956.
These were: the Travelers Motel (now Finnegan's Del-Mae) at 1850
Madison Road (STH 213), northwest of Beloit; the Driftwood Motel
(extant) at 1826 Riverside Drive (USH 51), which opened with 10
rooms; Ike's Motel (extant) at 114 Dearborn Street near the
junction of STH 75 and USH 51, with eight rooms; and the ten-room
Hobson Motel at 110 Park Avenue.[33]

In 1964, the first chain hotel was built in the vicinity of
Beloit: the Holiday Inn (extant) at the STH 75/USH 51 exit of
Interstate 90/94. That year, the Hilton, the Clarke (148-50
State Street, then called the Caroline) and the Branigan (207-11
State Street, known as the Marvin) were the last hotels in
downtown Beloit. In 1968, Beloit College bought the Hilton for
use as off-campus student housing, a venture that quickly proved
unsuccessful. By 1969, the Hilton was back in hotel use, complete
with restaurant and coffee shop. The college sold the hotel in
1971. Through the mid-1970s, the Hilton was the meeting place for
local business and professional organizations, including the
Beloit Professional Women's Club, the Lion's Club, the Optimist
Club, the Rotary, the Sierra Club, Toastmasters, and the Watonia

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[32] Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street To Miracle Mile: American Roadside
Architecture* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp.169-
175.
[33] *Manual and Directory of Wisconsin's Hotels and Tourist Rooming Houses*
(Madison: State Board of Health, 1948 and 1956).

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(Rev. 8-86)
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(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section __8__ Page __8__

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

Ladies Club.[34] From the mid-1970s until 1999, a succession of owners operated the property as a residence hotel, predominantly for the elderly, with 62 rooms for rent on a monthly basis. In 1999, the current owner, Wisconsin Management, acquired the property. Wisconsin Management worked with Madison architect Arlan Kay to rehabilitate the building through the federal historic preservation tax credit program.[35] The building opened in 2001 with a large bookstore and coffee shop on the first floor, and six, two-bedroom apartments on each of the second and third floors.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Hilton House Hotel is architecturally significant as a good local example of the Neo-Classical Revival style, with good integrity. Built in Wisconsin between about 1895 and 1935, Neo-Classical Revival was more popular for financial and public institutions (especially libraries and post offices), than it was for commercial and residential buildings. It features a formal, symmetrical composition, with restrained, classical details and 1/1 windows. A masonry finish and a flat roof with a parapet are typical. A monumental portico often appears.[36] The three-story pilasters and closed pediment on the front of the Hilton House Hotel create a formal, symmetrical façade, despite the fact that the principal entrance is off-center. The Hilton House is finished with brick, and a parapet hides the flat roof. The ornamentation is confined to Doric pilasters, and simple, classical moldings and cornices of stone. Windows in 1/1 configuration appear above street level. The Hilton House Hotel did have a one-story portico originally. The existing canopy

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[34] *Beloit City Directory* (St. Paul, Minnesota: R. L. Polk & Co., 1969; 1971; 1973; 1975; and 1976).

[35] "Hotel Hilton Sold," *Beloit Daily News*, 1 May 1973, p. 3; and "Beloit Hotel Gets New Lease on Life."

[36] John J.-G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-194*, (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1977), p. 69; and Barbara L. Wyatt, editor, *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), II:2-18.

9NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section __8__ Page __9__   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

replaced the portico c.1930. The loss of the portico does not impair the integrity of the Hilton House as it is still clearly a Neo-Classical Revival design.

Two other Neo-Classical Revival buildings have been identified in Beloit: the Beloit Post Office and the Beloit College Library. The Beloit Post Office at 409 Pleasant Street, on the northeast corner of the intersection of East Grand Avenue and Pleasant Street opposite the Hilton House, was designed by James Knox Taylor, then Supervising Architect of the U.S. Department of Treasury, in 1910. It is symmetrical, finished with smooth-faced white stone, and features monumental, engaged Ionic columns, a modilioned cornice, and a deep parapet. The integrity of the Post Office has been compromised by the installation of large windows of dark glass between the columns. The building now serves as the Beloit Public Library.

The Beloit College Library is situated on the Beloit College campus and was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Patton and Miller. Erected in 1904, the library's construction was funded through a gift from noted library philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. The Beloit College Library is a small, polygonal building finished with rusticated, smooth-faced stone. It exhibits massive, Corinthian columns, a heavy cornice, and a parapet. The Beloit College Library was remodeled as an office building in 1962, but retains good integrity. Today known as the Pettibone World Affairs Center, it was listed in the National Register in 1983 as part of the Near East Side Historic District.

Both the Beloit Post Office and the Beloit College Library present more elaborate examples of Neo-Classical Revival design than does the Hilton House Hotel, although the integrity of the Post Office is not as good as that of the Hilton House. The Hilton House Hotel remains the only commercial example of Neo-Classical Revival in Beloit. In contrast, most of Beloit's downtown commercial buildings are Commercial Vernacular in form, with Italianate-inspired details.

According to *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, the

10NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section __8__ Page __10__

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

architectural firm of Frost and Granger meet National Register *Criterion C* as master architects. Charles Sumner Frost (1856-1931) studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He then worked for a series of Boston firms, most notably Peabody and Stearns. Frost relocated to Chicago in 1882, forming a partnership with Henry Ives Cobb, which lasted until 1889. Frost worked independently until 1898, when he joined forces with Alfred Hoyt Granger. Granger (1867-1939), also a graduate of MIT, furthered his studies at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. He returned to Boston, working first for the firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, and later with Frank B. Meade. As a firm, Frost and Granger were best known for their many railroad depot designs. Most frequently, Frost and Granger designed in the Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival styles, although they did execute several commissions in the Neo-Classical Revival and Tudor Revival modes. The partnership dissolved in 1910.[37] The Hilton House Hotel is representative of the work of Frost and Granger, but is not among their best works.

COMMERCE SIGNFICANCE

The Hilton House Hotel was one of the premier hotels in Beloit from the time it opened until the 1960s. Of fire-proof construction, it was a state of the art facility when it opened with an elevator, a large dining room, a saloon, and a quarter of its rooms with a private bath. For most of the period of significance, it was the largest hotel in Beloit, hosting many dignitaries and social events.

In conclusion, the Hilton House Hotel is eligible for the National Register as a good and intact local example of Neo-Classical Revival design, and the only commercial example of that

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[37] Henry F. Withey and Elsie R. Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, (Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1970), pp. 244 and 267.

11NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

style in Beloit and as the largest and most important hotel in
the city.

Hilton House Hotel
Name of Property

Rock County, Wisconsin
County and State

Previous Documentation on File (NPS):
 X 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:
 X   State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State Agency
___ Federal Agency
___ Local government
___ University
 X   Other
Name of repository:
    Beloit Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property___less than one___

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/6 3/3/2/8/8/0 4/7/0/7/0/3/0   2 / / / / / / / / / / / /
  Zone Easting   Northing   Zone Easting   Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / / / /   4 / / / / / / / / / / / /
  Zone Easting   Northing   Zone Easting   Northing

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 Elizabeth L. Miller, Historic Preservation Consultant
organization Wisconsin Management _____ date 7-2-2002
street & number 4033 Tokay Blvd _____ telephone 608-233-5942
city or town Madison _____ state WI zip code 53711

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)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

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NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section __9__ Page __2__

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

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NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hilton House Hotel
Section 10 Page 1   Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Hilton House Hotel is located on a parcel in the city of
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin, more particularly described as
follows: Lot 8 and all but the west 28.75 feet of Lot 9, Block
48, Original Plat of Beloit. The area encompassed totals less
than one acre.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the Hilton House Hotel encompass all those
resources historically associated with it and coincide with the
legal boundaries on which the building sits. Although an
underground parking structure was erected on a parcel to the rear
of the Hilton House Hotel in 2001, and recently became associated
with the building, the parking structure parcel was not a part of
the Hilton House Hotel until 2000. Therefore, the historic
boundary excludes the parking structure parcel.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section __photos__ Page __1__

Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin

Photo 1 of 10
Hilton House Hotel
Beloit, Rock County, WI
Photo by Elizabeth L. Miller, May 2002
Negative on file at the Wisconsin Historical Society
View of the East Grand Avenue (front) and Pleasant Street
façades, looking southwest.

Photo 2 of 10
View of the East Grand Avenue (front) facade, looking southeast.

Photo 3 of 10
Close up of the front entrance, looking south.

Photo 4 of 10
View of the Pleasant Street (east-facing) façade, looking
northwest.

Photo 5 of 10
View of the south-facing (rear) façade, looking north.

Photo 6 of 10
View of the courtyard, looking east.

Photo 7 of 10
View of the entrance and the lobby, looking north.

Photo 8 of 10
View of the lobby, looking southwest.

Photo 9 of 10
View into the former dining room, looking south.

Photo 10 of 10
View of Storefront section, looking southwest.

Hilton House Hotel   Rock County, Wisconsin
Name of Property   County and State
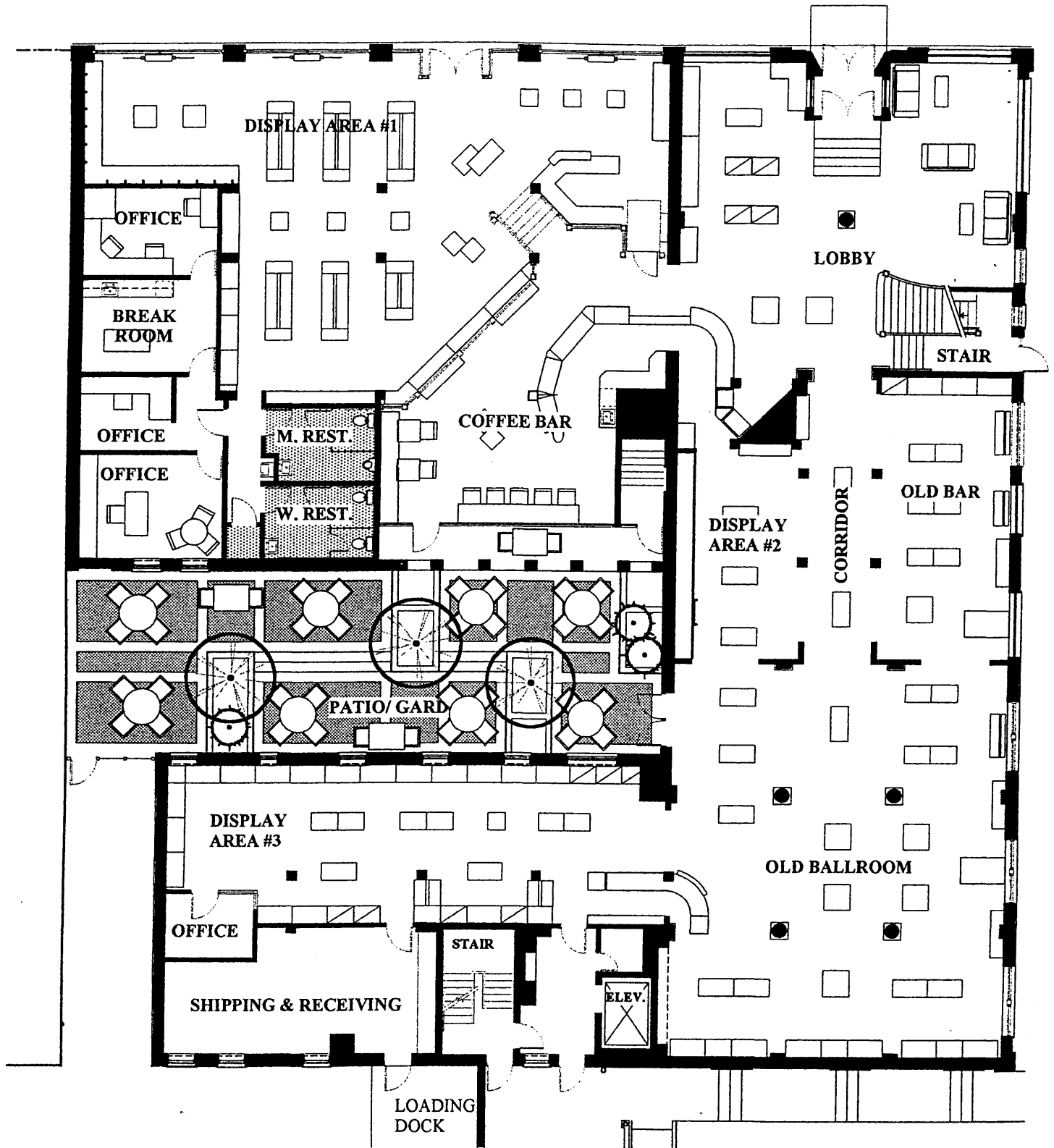
Property Owner
Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.

Name Wisconsin Management (contact: Russell Endres)
street & number 2040 South Park Street telephone 608-258-2080
city or town Madison   state Wisconsin   zip code 53713

444 EAST GRAND

DISPLAY AREA #1

OFFICE

BREAK ROOM

OFFICE

OFFICE

M. REST.

W. REST.

COFFEE BAR

LOBBY

STAIR

OLD BAR

CORRIDOR

DISPLAY AREA #2

PATIO/ GARD

DISPLAY AREA #3

OFFICE

STAIR

ELEV.

OLD BALLROOM

SHIPPING & RECEIVING

LOADING DOCK

architecture network, inc.

116 East Dayton Street
Madison, WI 53703
608-251-7515 Phone
608-251-7566 Fax
ani@mailbag.com

FIRST FLOOR ↑ N
BOOKSTORE / COFFEE SHOP

HILTON HOUSE HOTEL
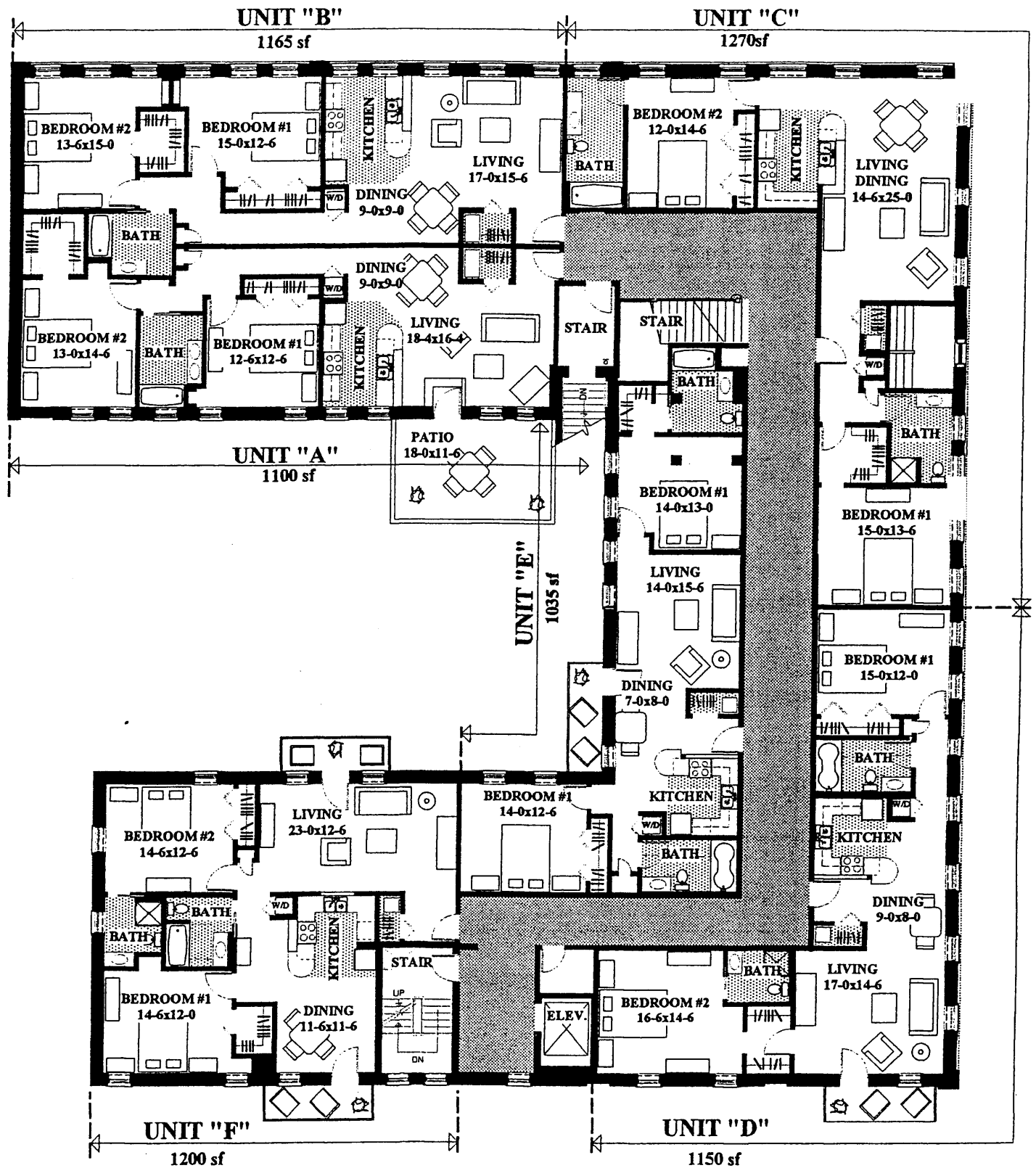BELOIT, ROCK COUNTY, WISCONSIN

WISCONSIN MANAGEMENT
2040 South Park Street - Madison, WI 53713

Office: 608-258-2080
Fax   608-258-2090
Rental Info: 1-800-480-2080

444 EAST GRAND

UNIT "B"
1165 sf

UNIT "C"
1270sf

BEDROOM #2
13-6x15-0

BEDROOM #1
15-0x12-6

KITCHEN

LIVING
17-0x15-6

BEDROOM #2
12-0x14-6

BATH

KITCHEN

LIVING DINING
14-6x25-0

BATH

DINING
9-0x9-0

BEDROOM #2
13-0x14-6

BATH

BEDROOM #1
12-6x12-6

KITCHEN

DINING
9-0x9-0

LIVING
18-4x16-4

STAIR

STAIR

BATH

W/D

BEDROOM #1
15-0x13-6

BATH

UNIT "A"
1100 sf

PATIO
18-0x11-6

BEDROOM #1
14-0x13-0

LIVING
14-0x15-6

UNIT "E"
1035 sf

DINING
7-0x8-0

BEDROOM #1
15-0x12-0

BATH

BEDROOM #2
14-6x12-6

LIVING
23-0x12-6

W/D

KITCHEN

BEDROOM #1
14-0x12-6

KITCHEN

W/D

BATH

KITCHEN

BATH

W/D

KITCHEN

BATH

BATH

DINING
9-0x8-0

BEDROOM #1
14-6x12-0

DINING
11-6x11-6

STAIR

UP

DN

ELEV.

BEDROOM #2
16-6x14-6

BATH

LIVING
17-0x14-6

UNIT "F"
1200 sf

UNIT "D"
1150 sf

SECOND FLOOR
LUXURY APARTMENTS

N

HILTON HOUSE HOTEL
BELOIT, ROCK COUNTY, WISCONSIN

architecture
network, inc.

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