



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Kevin Garcia, Planner II

DATE: November 26, 2014

SUBJECT: 1404 S. Lincoln Avenue (Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House): Historic Landmark Application, Case No. HP 2014-L-01

Introduction

Historic Preservation Case No. HP 2014-L-01 is an application submitted on October 13, 2014 by Robert Nemeth to designate the Greek house at 1404 South Lincoln Avenue (referred to as the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House) as a local historic landmark. Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity is the property owner.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance requires that the Commission hold a public hearing on the application within 60 days of receiving a complete application. At the public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) should take comments from the nominator, the owner, and any other parties who wish to be heard on the application. In addition, the HPC should consider all written comments received prior to or during the hearing. It is the responsibility of the nominator to provide evidence of suitability for historic landmark status as well as documentation of such evidence. The owner of the property may request a continuation of the public hearing until the next regularly scheduled HPC meeting. Staff received a request from the property owner's legal counsel on October 31, 2014 to continue the public hearing of this case until the December 3, 2014 HPC meeting.

Following the public hearing, the HPC should review all information presented to it that is pertinent to the nomination. If the property owner consents in writing to landmark designation and the HPC finds that the property conforms to one or more criteria set forth in Section XII-5.C.1, the HPC may make the final determination to designate the property as a historic landmark. Lacking written owner consent, the HPC shall recommend either approval or denial of the application to the Urbana City Council. The City Council will then determine whether or not to designate the property by enacting an ordinance to do so.

Should the application be approved, the owner would be required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission for future exterior changes to the property, including any proposed demolition.

Background

The Zeta Tau Alpha (ZTA) Sorority House was designed by Royer, Danely, and Smith, the firm of local architect Joseph W. Royer. Royer was the most prestigious architect in Urbana between the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. He lived in Urbana his entire life and studied architecture under the instruction of the esteemed architect Nathan Ricker. Royer designed many distinguished buildings in Urbana, including the Urbana Free Library, the Champaign County Courthouse, the Urbana Landmark Hotel (originally called the Urbana-Lincoln Hotel), the Champaign County Almshouse on East Main Street, and many downtown buildings including Tiernan's Block/Masonic Temple, the Cohen Building, Canaan Baptist Church, and the Unitarian Universalist Church. Royer's partner, Hubert Smith, was a notable architect in his own right. Smith's significant work in Urbana includes the Princess Theater remodeling, Leal School (collaborating with Royer), Urbana High School additions, and Health Services building additions to McKinley Hospital. Other significant works by Hubert Smith include Lafayette Elementary School, Franklin Elementary School, the MacMurray College Library, and Kathryn Hall at MacMurray College, all in Jacksonville, Illinois. In 2013, the ZTA Sorority House was nominated for local landmark designation. During the course of the nomination process, a newspaper article from the *Daily Illini* was uncovered that seemed to indicate that Hubert Smith designed the house. Whether or not the newspaper account is accurate may be questionable; what is not questionable is that the house was designed by the firm Royer, Danely, and Smith.

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House was constructed in 1928 in the French Eclectic architectural style. It was built for the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority as their chapter house. The collegiate Greek community has had a significant impact on American collegiate life and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has, since the 1930s, had the most Greek Letter Society chapters in the country. In 1989, the National Register of Historic Places listed six local fraternity and sorority houses on the National Register as a multiple property listing, with more Greek Houses added later. The subject house is not listed on the National Register, but it is mentioned in the Multiple Property Documentation Form as being a possibility for listing in the future. To see a copy of the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, see <http://urbanaininois.us/residents/historic-urbana/100-most-significant-buildings/buildings/greek-houses> or <http://urbanaininois.us/sites/default/files/attachments/greekhouses-nominationform.pdf> (direct link).

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House has been vacant since 2009 and has been registered on the City's Vacant Structure Registry since that time. Prior to that, it was rented to a fraternity who left it in a state of disrepair. The City has worked since that time to encourage the sorority to re-tenant the building as leaving it vacant has made it vulnerable to not only damage from exposure to heat/humidity and cold temperatures, but also to damage from vandalism and trespassers. The first floor windows were initially boarded up on the interior to prevent intruders and vandalism. Since that time numerous windows have been broken and boarded with plywood. On several occasions persons have broken windows or doors and entered the building. The Urbana Police Department has been called to check the property on numerous occasions to remove intruders. False fire alarms are reported frequently by the Urbana Fire Department. In the past year, the Fire Department has responded to eight incidents at the house, most caused by a malfunctioning fire alarm system. The Fire Department noted the presence of mold in the basement of the structure, as well as signs of illegal trespass and forced entry. The Building Safety Division receives regular complaints from the neighborhood with regards to open and/or broken windows, illegal parking, and grass and landscaping not being mowed and trimmed. The exterior trim,

windows, and doors continue to deteriorate without proper maintenance or adequate surface protection. The sorority has a property management company looking after the property, but has not attracted a tenant to occupy the building. However, in October 2014 Zeta Tau Alpha staff informed the City of Urbana that there was a potential buyer for the property. Inquiries by staff to find out more about the potential buyer have not been responded to. Zeta Tau Alpha has not informed staff as to whether the potential buyer is in favor of or opposed to the landmark nomination.

Discussion

The application states that the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House:

- Has significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political or social heritage of the nation, state, or community;
- Is representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials, while retaining a high degree of integrity;
- Is a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an area; and
- Is identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.

The action necessary at the December 3rd Historic Preservation Commission meeting is to continue the public hearing on the designation, determine its qualifications, and recommend approval or denial of the application to the City Council.

Criteria

Under Section XII-5.C of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, the proposed landmark must meet one or more of the following criteria for designation. Following each criterion (*provided in italics*) is an analysis offered by City staff.

- a) *Significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political or social heritage of the nation, state, or community.*

According to the application, the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House has significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political or social heritage of the nation, state, or community. The building was designed to house the University of Illinois chapter of the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority. Sororities and Fraternities, also known as Greek Letter Societies or Greek Houses, have had a profound impact on American collegiate life as they were the predominant form of organized student housing. When the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House was built in 1928, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign had the largest concentration of Greek Letter Societies in the United States. In 1989, a number of fraternity and sorority houses in Urbana-Champaign were listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a multiple property listing due to the importance both nationally

and locally of these Greek Houses. Although the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is not currently included in the National Register of Historic Places multiple property listing for Greek Houses, in City staff's opinion it qualifies for inclusion.

Zeta Tau Alpha (ZTA) was founded in 1898 at the State Female Normal School in Farmville, Virginia. The University of Illinois chapter of ZTA opened in 1921 with 17 founding members. They were originally housed at 1115 W Illinois Street in Urbana but moved to another house in 1924 at 112 E John Street in Champaign. In 1926, the sorority purchased a lot on Vermont Street in Urbana and according to ZTA historian Shirley Kresan Krieg built "a palatial home that stands as a monument". More information on the history of Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority can be found on pages 6-10 of the application form. An excellent history of the sorority is also available online, at <http://archives.library.illinois.edu/archon/?p=digitallibrary/digitalcontent&id=7411>.

City staff recommends a finding that the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House has significant value as part of the architectural, cultural, educational, and social heritage of the community as an outstanding example of the role that Greek life has historically played on the University of Illinois campus, which is recognized as having the largest university Greek system of any American university.

b) Associated with an important person or event in national, state or local history.

The property does not qualify under criterion b).

c) Representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity.

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House, built in 1928, was designed by Royer, Danely, and Smith in the French Eclectic architectural style. Identifying features of the French Eclectic style present in the sorority house include a tall steeply pitched hip roof, stucco wall cladding with decorative brick and half-timbering, and the presence of a prominent round tower with a high, conical roof containing the main entrance to the building. The sorority house has previously been recognized as being architecturally significant. In 2011, the sorority house was included in Urbana's 100 Most Significant Buildings, a list created by the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission to honor some of Urbana's most architecturally significant buildings. In July 1989, the sorority house was included on a National Register of Historic Places multiple property documentation form for Greek Letter Societies (Fraternalities and Sororities) at the University of Illinois and is noted for potential future listing on the National Register. The sorority house was also identified in a 1974 architectural survey of Urbana-Champaign as being "exceptionally significant and... proposed to receive local landmark status if and when a landmark program for the cities is begun" (*The Architectural Survey of Champaign-Urbana*, Frank Heitzman 1974).

The second part of this criterion requires the building to have a "high degree of integrity"—the ability of the house to convey its significance. The ZTA Sorority House appears to have a high degree of integrity, with the original building form and massing remaining as well as its original windows and

doors, wrought iron balcony, dormers, and prominent chimneys. The 1963 addition on the west side of the house does not compromise the house's architectural integrity as it matches the original materials and is compatible with the original structure in terms of massing and scale. The sunroom addition on the southeast corner of the building, built in the 1980s, was originally designed as an outdoor patio. Although it conceals parts of the building that are meant to be exterior, the addition is compatible in terms of materials, massing, and scale and therefore does not compromise the house's architectural integrity. Although the 1963 addition to the building is dominant, substantially alters the façade, and changes how the original building addresses the streets, the addition is over 50 years old this year, is in keeping with the original architectural style, and evidences the evolution of the building over time. It does not inhibit the public's ability to perceive the historic character of the overall building, its design, and its setting.

City staff recommends a finding that the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is representative of the distinguishing characteristics of the French Eclectic Architectural Style and is inherently valuable for the study of that style, as well as for its craftsmanship, and that additionally the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House retains a high degree of integrity.

d) Notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an area.

The application states that the Zeta Tau Alpha House was “designed by Urbana’s renowned architect Joseph Royer” and that the building’s architectural details are “representative of Royer’s signature architectural style”. The application includes an example of the title block from the building’s blueprints which simply states “Royer, Danely & Smith Architects, Urbana, Illinois”. On this point, the application cites Brian Adams’ 2011 book *Joseph William Royer: Urbana’s Architect*. Adams’ book (p. 106) notes that “Royer’s firm” prepared plans for the Zeta Tau Alpha House without attributing the plans to a specific architect within the firm.

At the June 5, 2013 public hearing, the property owner’s attorney submitted a copy of the March 18, 1928 edition of the *Daily Illini*, which indicated that “Mr. Smith of Royer and Danely designed the house to be of a northern French style of architecture and to provide studying accommodations [sic] for 36 girls.” Hubert A. Smith was then one of three partners in the firm Royer, Danely, and Smith. The 1928 Urbana City Directory listed J. W. Royer, H.A. Smith, Paul Danely, and Elvin Kratz all as architects employed by the firm. Aside from the article in the *Daily Illini*, no other evidence has been found to indicate that Hubert A. Smith was the lead designer of the ZTA Sorority House. What is clear is that the house is the work of the Royer, Danely, and Smith firm. By 1928, the firm was experienced in designing Greek houses in Champaign-Urbana. In the previous decade they had designed four other Greek houses, including the architecturally similar Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity House at 1108 S First Street in Champaign (listed on the National Register of Historic Places). The design of the ZTA Sorority House is consistent with the Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity House in Champaign, designed by Royer. Overall, the work is correctly attributed to the firm and as such, contributes to our understanding of the outstanding body of work created by the Royer, Danely, Smith firm, and usually to Royer himself.

City staff believes that the property meets Criteria d) in that the Zeta Tau Alpha House, designed by the firm Royer, Danely, and Smith, is a notable work of a master designer or architect whose genius has

influenced an area.

City staff therefore recommends a finding that the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is a notable work of Royer, Danely, and Smith, master architects whose genius has influenced Urbana and Central Illinois.

e) Identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.

The physical characteristics on the main façade – primarily the tall steeply pitched hip roof, the stucco wall cladding with decorative brick and half-timbering, and the prominent round tower with a high, conical roof which contains the main entrance to the building – are dramatic and unique. These characteristics are indicative of the French Eclectic Architectural Style, which is representative of the revival styles that Joseph Royer and his firms tended to use in their designs. Given these unique physical characteristics, the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is certainly identifiable as an established and familiar feature in the community.

In terms of “unique location”, this criterion refers to a property being recognizable due to unique placement, such as on a hill. Being located on a street corner, the home’s visual character is prominent but should not be considered as identifiable based specifically on a unique location. However, as the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is located on Lincoln Avenue, which serves as the eastern entrance to the University of Illinois campus, it can be considered identifiable based on a unique location.

City staff recommends a finding that the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its uniquely prominent and picturesque roofline, rich use of materials and architectural details indicative of the French Eclectic Architectural Style, and visibility from Lincoln Avenue, an arterial roadway which defines the eastern edge of campus.

f) Character as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure, including, but not limited to, farmhouses, gas stations or other commercial structures with a high level or integrity or architectural significance.

According to the application, the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House does not qualify under criterion f). The house is not a utilitarian structure.

g) Located in an area that has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

According to the application, the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House does not qualify under criterion g). City staff and the applicant are not aware of any archaeological significance of the area.

Summary of Findings

Recommended statements of findings based on the application and Staff analysis are below. The Commission may revise these findings based on the review and consideration of the case.

1. Article XII. of the *Urbana Zoning Ordinance* provides the City of Urbana the authority to designate local landmarks and historic districts with the stated purpose to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the community.
2. The City of Urbana on October 13, 2014 received a landmark application to designate the property located at 1404 South Lincoln Avenue as a local landmark.
3. The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission opened a public hearing on November 5th, 2014, which was continued to December 3, 2014 to consider the landmark designation of the subject property.
4. The designation of the subject property will further promote the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the community.
5. The property located at 1404 South Lincoln Avenue and known as the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House was constructed in 1928.
6. The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House has significant value as part of the architectural, cultural, educational, and social heritage of the community as an outstanding example of the role that Greek life has historically played on the University of Illinois campus, which is recognized as having the largest university Greek system of any American university.
7. The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is representative of the distinguishing characteristics of the French Eclectic Architectural Style and is inherently valuable for the study of that style, as well as for its craftsmanship, and that additionally the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House retains a high degree of integrity.
8. The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is a notable work of master architects Royer, Danely, and Smith, whose genius has influenced Urbana and Central Illinois.
9. The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its uniquely prominent and picturesque roofline, rich use of materials and architectural details indicative of the French Eclectic Architectural Style, and visibility from Lincoln Avenue, an arterial roadway which defines the eastern edge of campus.

Options

In Case No. HP 2014-L-01, the Historic Preservation Commission shall find whether or not the nomination meets one or more of the criteria for designation as a local landmark and:

- 1) Recommend that the Urbana City Council approve said application to designate the property as a local landmark; or
- 2) Deny said application to designate the property as a local landmark.

In either case, the Historic Preservation Commission should include Findings of Fact in their motion. The Findings of Fact should summarize the Commission's justification for finding that the nomination either does or does not meet the criteria. The vote required is a majority vote of those members present and voting but with not less than three affirmative votes.

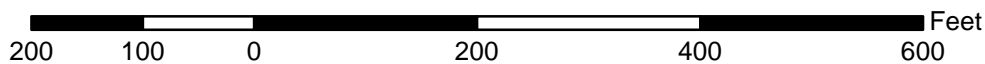
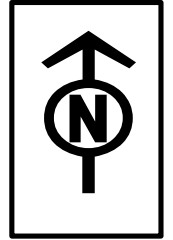
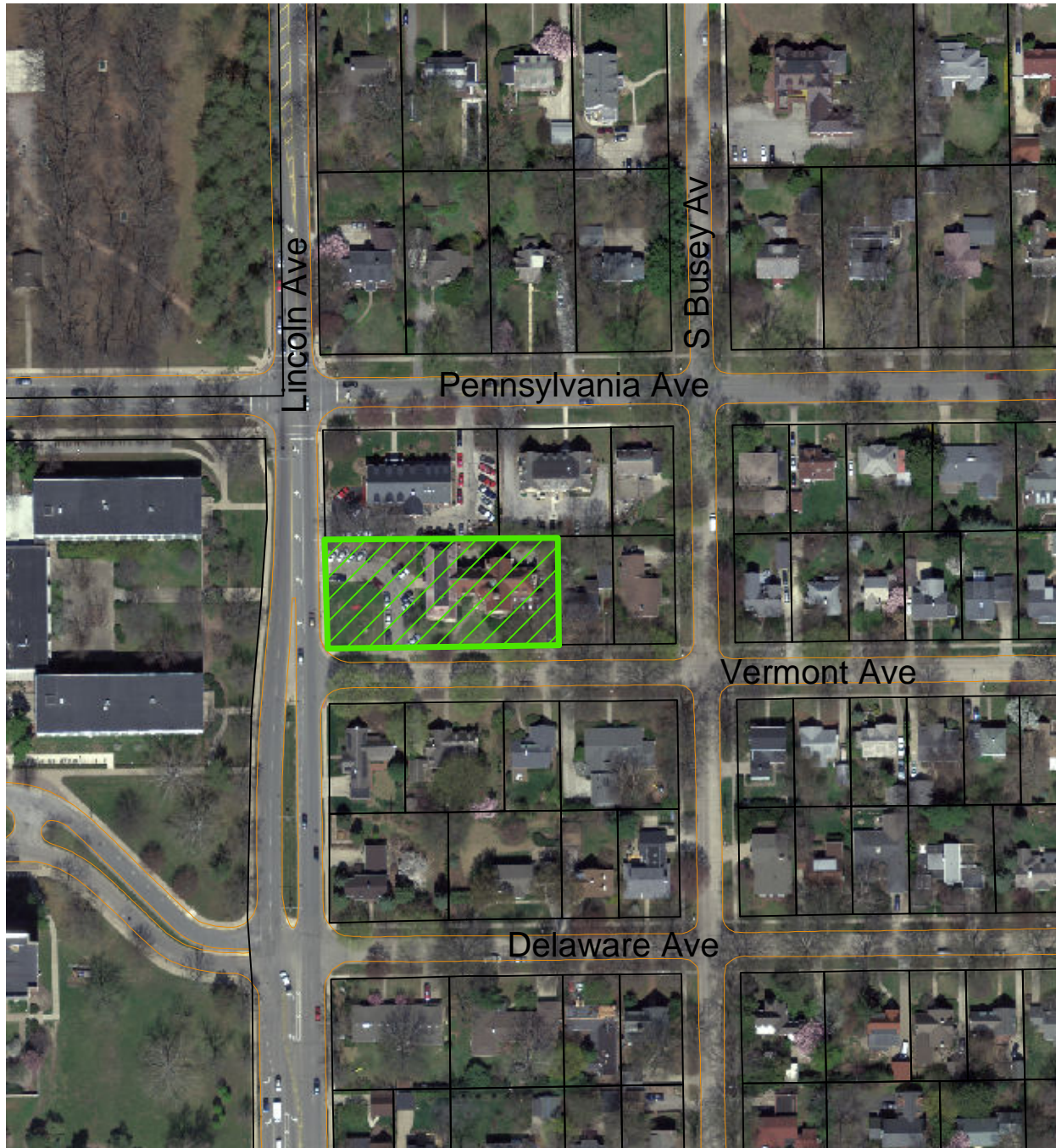
Staff Recommendation

Based on the application and analysis herein, staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission find that the landmark nomination for 1404 South Lincoln Avenue conforms with criteria a), c), d), and e) in Section XII-5.C of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance and recommend **APPROVAL** of the application with the Summary of Findings recommended in this memorandum.

cc: Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity, 3450 Founders Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46268
Robert Nemeth, 105 E Second St, Sadorus, IL 61872
Matt Deering, Meyer Chapel, 306 W Church St, P.O. Box 6750, Champaign, IL 61826-6750

Attachments: Exhibit A: Location Map & Aerial Photo
Exhibit B: Application & Photos

Exhibit A: Location Map



Case: HP-2014-L-01
Subject: Landmark Application
Location: 1404 S. Lincoln Ave, Urbana
Petitioner: Robert Nemeth

 Subject Property



Application for Historic Landmark Designation

Historic Preservation Commission

APPLICATION AND REVIEW FEE – NO CHARGE

Although there is no fee to file an application for Historic Landmark Designation, the Applicants are responsible for paying the cost of legal publication fees. The fees usually run from \$75.00 to \$125.00. The applicant will be billed separately by the News-Gazette.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE - FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Application Filed _____ Case No. _____

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

1. APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Applicant(s): **ROBERT NEMETH** Phone: **217-598-2497**

Address (street/city/state/zip code): **105 E. Second St., Sadorus, IL 61872**

Email Address: **RNEMETH57@GMAIL.COM**

Property interest of Applicant(s) (Owner, Contract Buyer, etc.): **HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ADVOCATE**

2. OWNER INFORMATION

Name of Owner(s): **ZETA TAU ALPHA FRATERNITY** Phone:

Address (street/city/state/zip code): **3450 FOUNDERS RD. INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46268-0000**

Email Address:

3. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Location of Subject Site: **1404 S. Lincoln Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801**

PIN # of Location: **93-21-17-352-005**

Lot Size: **115FEET BY 245 FEET (4 LOTS COMBINED 63-66)**

Current Zoning Designation: **RESIDENTIAL**

Current Land Use (vacant, residence, grocery, factory, etc): **Vacant Fraternity**

Present Comprehensive Plan Designation:

Legal Description: _____

Date of Construction of Structure: **1928**

Attach a map showing the boundaries and location of the property proposed for nomination.

Attach photographs showing the important structures or features of the property or structure

Indicate which of the following criteria apply to the property or structure (**check all that apply**). Additionally, attach a statement that describes the proposed landmark and its historic significance; list reasons why it is eligible for nomination; and show how the proposed landmark conforms to the criteria for designation (*see attached Suggested Format*).

- Significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political, or social heritage of the nation, state or community;
- Associated with an important person or event in national state or local history;
- Representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity;
- Notable work of a master builder, designers, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an area;
- Identifiable as an established and familiar visual location or physical characteristics;
- Character is a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure, including, but not limited to, farmhouses, gas stations or other commercial structures with a high level of integrity or architectural significance;
- Yields, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory

NOTE: *If additional space is needed to accurately answer any question, please attach extra pages to the application.*

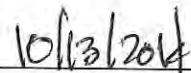
By submitting this application, you are granting permission for City staff to post on the property a temporary yard sign announcing the public hearing to be held for your request.

CERTIFICATION BY THE APPLICANT

I certify all the information contained in this application form or any attachment(s), document(s) or plan(s) submitted herewith are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.



Applicant's Signature



Date

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM ONCE COMPLETED TO:

City of Urbana
Community Development Department Services
Planning Division
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

Phone: (217) 384-2440

Fax: (217) 384-2367

URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Suggested Format for Content and Organization of “Statements”

For Property Located in a Proposed Historic Landmark

Summary Paragraph

- Criteria which apply to subject property
- Introductory or background statement about significance of subject property
- Statement of integrity

Property Description

- Architectural style
- Date of construction; date of major modifications
- Name of architect and builder, as available
- Construction materials (foundation, walls, roof shape/material)
- Description of building elements: number of stories, window type and shape, porches, entrances, etc.
- Description of unique architectural elements
- Alterations or additions to building
- Missing or removed architectural features
- Outbuildings and important landscape or streetscape features

History

- Brief community background (downtown development, neighborhood development, etc.)
- Discussion of property as it relates to the development of the community
- Important people associated with the property
- Important events associated with the property

For Architectural Significance

- Background of the style and/or architect
- Why/how the building reflects the style and/or architect’s work
- Other works in the community/elsewhere by same architect; discuss briefly

Context

- Placement or location of property within the city/community
- Relationship to other properties of similar architectural style and date/era of construction

ZETA TAU ALPHA SORORITY HOUSE NOMINATION

Introduction

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House, located at 1404 S. Lincoln Avenue, is being nominated as an Urbana Landmark for the following criteria:

- having significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political, or social heritage of the nation, state or community;
- being representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity;
- being a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an area;
- and being identifiable as an established and familiar visual location or physical characteristics.

The Zeta Tau Alpha house was designed by Urbana's prominent local architect Joseph William Royer as part of his firm Royer, Danely, & Smith Architects in 1928, and is representative of the French Eclectic architectural style. The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is also part of a larger context of Greek letter society houses at the University of Illinois. Located on the northeast corner of South Lincoln Avenue and West Vermont Avenue, the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House marks a unique transition between the University campus and the single family residential neighborhood of West Urbana. The integrity of the original 1928 house remains, however, the three-story west wing of the house along Lincoln Avenue was an addition added in 1963 and the one-story sun room on the southeast corner of the house was added after 1963. Although modifications have occurred over time to the house, many of these changes are historic and have since gained significance. The 1928 section of the house retains the majority of its original windows and exterior wall and roof materials.

Architectural Significance

The Zeta Tau Alpha house is being nominated as an Urbana Landmark for being representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity.

The Zeta Tau Alpha house is an outstanding example of the French Eclectic architectural style, which was used in the United States from around 1915 to 1945. This wave of French Eclectic style architecture came as one of two romanticized, informal categories of French Revival architecture reminiscent of the farmhouses and small manors in Normandy, France. After World War I, small numbers of these French Eclectic style houses sprung up all across the United States, mainly in suburban areas of large Eastern and Midwestern cities. French Eclectic houses are known for their charming, picturesque, and evocative designs which are freely interpreted from French farmhouses. These houses are commonly constructed of masonry and have steeply

pitched hipped roofs, mansard roofs, and even steeply pitched gable roofs. Round or polygonal towers with conical roofs usually mark the entrance to these houses.¹ French Eclectic style houses commonly have arched doors and windows, wrought-iron balconies, conical roof towers, and steeply pitched cat slide roofs that distinguish it from other styles. Additional features commonly found on French Eclectic style houses are ogee arch mouldings; basket handle arches; brick shutters; quoins at the corners of windows, walls, and doors; "half-timber" detailing; massive chimneys; mixed combinations of exterior materials; multi-paned casement windows; and brick foundations. French Eclectic style houses are commonly two to three stories tall. Other revival styles such as Georgian and Spanish revivals were contemporaneous with the French Revival style and eventually outnumbered it during the 1940s.²

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is two and a half stories and has an informal, asymmetrical composition. The house has a round tower with a high conical roof tucked into the corner of the south facade which marks the entrance of the house. The tower is entirely decorated with brick and has an elaborate doorway outlined with stone. A basket handle arched window decorated with a stone ogee arch moulding and a wrought iron railing sits above the main doorway on the tower. The original section of the house has two asymmetrical side wings that flank the tower. The house has steeply pitched gable roofs constructed of tile that dominate the north and south facades and hip roofs that accentuate the east and west side wings.

The identifiable features of the French Eclectic Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House include: the round tower with a high conical roof tucked into the corner of the south facade which marks the entrance of the house; the skintled brick detailing, which is a noteworthy type of brick laying that originated in Chicago; the basket handle arched window decorated with a stone ogee arch moulding and a wrought iron railing that sits above the main doorway on the tower; the steeply pitched gable roofs constructed of orange tile that dominate the north and south facades and hip roofs that accentuate the east and west side wings; the asymmetrical composition; and the use of a variety of exterior facade materials including brick, stucco, and "half-timber" detailing.

The house is constructed of a variety of exterior materials, including brick detailing such as brick quoins at the corners and brick shutters surrounding the windows, stucco infill on the majority of the wall surface, and some "half-timber" detailing on each facade. The windows are multi-paned casement windows that are paired in groups of two or in even numbers and there are several types of dormer windows along the roof line. On the west wing of the south facade, the two dormer windows are parapet windows and are constructed of brick. On the east wing of the south facade, the two dormer windows have a flat roof and are covered with stucco. The house has a variety of picturesque details, including the massive brick chimneys, brick lintels and sills. The foundation is also constructed of brick.

¹ Massey, James C. and Shirley Maxwell. *House Styles in America*. (1996): 226-229.

² McAllister, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. (1984): 387-395.

The south facade along West Vermont Avenue is historically the main facade of the house. The round tower dominates the south facade and is entirely decorated with multi-colored buff brick. The tower also has an elaborate doorway outlined with stone and a weather vane is perched atop its conical roof. The original 1928 section of the house has two asymmetrical side wings that flank the tower. The skintled brick detailing, where some bricks protrude farther out than other bricks, forming a textural pattern on the facade, used on the majority of the facade gives the building a luxurious appearance. The south facade is also dominated by a three story steeply pitched gable. The upper two stories of the gable wing each have a row of four tall, thin, multi-paned casement windows each divided by thick mullions. A pattern of four diamonds separates the third story from the second story casement windows. The first story of the gable wing on the south facade has a protruding bay window decorated with brick and four sections of paired multi-paned casement windows. A hedgerow was planted in front of the bay window for privacy. The apex of the gable roof has a checkerboard pattern alternating between stucco and brick surface material. A massive brick chimney protrudes out of this gable roof. The bottom corners of this gable wing are battered with brick and occasional stone quoins. "half-timber" detailing appears on the east wing of the south facade just above the one story sun porch that was added to the house after 1963. The casement windows on the south facade of the east wing are surrounded by "half-timber" detailing, whereas the casement windows on the south facade of the west wing are surrounded by brick detailing.

The east facade of the house also is covered with "half-timber" detailing on the second floor and brick detailing on the first floor. A third type of dormer window pierces the roof line on the east facade of the house and there is a second massive brick chimney on this facade.

The 1963 addition on the west side of the house successfully matched the existing materials, the scale, the roof shape, and the window types on the original house. For example, the addition is also clad with stucco and "half-timber" detailing. The addition has a brick foundation and brick detailing around the windows of the first story. The horizontal proportional lines of the original building are matched on the addition. A soldier brick course divides the first story and second story on the west facade at the same height as it does on the original house. The addition is three stories, which slightly contrasts to the original house's two and a half stories. The roof of the addition is a hip roof covered in red tile, which is slightly different from the orange tile on the original building. The roof height of the addition is also slightly higher than the original house. The addition uses multi-paned casement windows that are similar to the original building, but the windows on the addition are at a slightly larger scale and are more squat in comparison to the tall, thin, original casement windows. The main entrance to the house was originally through the tower on the south facade, but the addition shifted the main entrance to the west facade off Lincoln Avenue. A one story gabled entrance portal and a large protruding one story bay window dominate the west facade of the addition. The gabled entrance portal has a checkerboard pattern of alternating brick detailing and stucco squares in the apex of the gable which mimics the detail on the apex of the large gable on the south facade. The large bay window on the addition is completely decorated with brick and also reflects the small bay window on the south facade. The addition, while not original, has since gained significance.

The north facade, or the rear of the house, is also dominated by a steeply pitched gable wing and two side wings with steeply pitched hipped roofs. Four dormer windows with flat roofs adorn the steeply pitched roof. The roof line of the 1963 addition is higher than the roof line of the original building. A third one-story addition appears on the north facade of the house. This addition has very differentiating surface materials and windows. The entire north facade of the original house is covered with stucco and the 1963 addition has brick quoins at the corners and a soldier course dividing the first and second stories. An outdoor terrace surrounded by a wood fence is visible on the north side of the house.

Brian Adams' book *Joseph William Royer: Urbana's Architect* provides a historical description of the interior of the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House. The interior of the house on the first floor has features such as a living room, a solarium, a music room, a gallery, a coat room, and three "conversation alcoves" adjacent to where the telephones were located in the living room. The entry of the house on the first floor which is housed in the tower has a large round reception hall with a wrought iron spiral stairway, a decorative fountain in an alcove, and a specially designed lantern suspended from the ceiling. The dining room, kitchen, boiler room, and chapter room were located in the basement of the house. The second floor of the house has a "town-girl's living room" which was designed specifically for chapter members who lived in town. The town-girl's living room has individual wall cupboards for personal possessions. Other features on the second floor of the house include a three-room chapter suite, nine study rooms, each with two built-in clothes cupboards, a chaperone's room and bathroom, and a shared toilet and shower room. The third floor has two dormitories, one that was heated and one that was not, a laundry and pressing room, eight study rooms, and a shared toilet and shower room. The house has a semi-enclosed fire escape near the rear of the house and there is also a waste paper chute from the third floor to the basement.³

In total, the house was originally constructed in 1928 and had three additions added after its original construction. The largest addition was the three story addition completed in 1963 on the west side of the house. The currently enclosed one-story sun room on the southeast corner of the house was originally designed as an exterior flagstone terrace and was added as an addition after 1963. The third addition is the one-story hall on the northeast corner of the house that does not relate in exterior materials or window sizes to the existing structure. This small addition is on the rear of the house is not visible from the street. The original gravel driveway still exists on the east side of the house off West Vermont Avenue and a new half-circle drive was added to access the addition on the west side of the house off Lincoln Avenue. The land around the half circle drive is an open yard.

Even with several additions, the integrity of the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is still intact. However, after the Alpha Kappa chapter of Zeta Tau Alpha closed in December 1993, the chapter rented the house to the Theta Chi fraternity from 1994 to 2009 and the fraternity residents somewhat vandalized the property. From the exterior, the only noticeable damage to the house from the vandalism was to the windows. Several damaged windows have been boarded up for this reason. The house is currently vacant and despite the vandalism by Theta Chi remains a high degree of integrity. As of April 2013, the original drawings of Royer, Danely, & Smith

³ Adams, Brian. *Joseph William Royer: Urbana's Architect*. (2011).

Architect's 1928 Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House, including floor plans and elevations, are in the University of Illinois Oak Street Library facility's possession to be cleaned and preserved.

Joseph William Royer

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is being nominated as an Urbana Landmark for being a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an area. The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House was designed by Urbana's renowned architect Joseph William Royer. Royer was a master of period revival architectural styles for both public and residential buildings. The architectural details of the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House are representative of Royer's signature architectural style.

In the 1920s, buildings designed by Joseph William Royer could be found all around the city of Urbana, in both the downtown and the residential area. Royer was born in Urbana in 1873 and graduated from Urbana High School. He then attended the University of Illinois from 1890 to 1895 and studied architecture. Royer was a practicing architect between 1897 and 1950 and during that time he designed a substantial amount of public and residential buildings not only in Urbana and Illinois but also in Iowa and Indiana. Royer formed an architecture firm in 1905 which was known as Royer and Brown. The firm has since been known as Royer and Smith; Royer, Danely, and Smith; and Royer and Davis. Royer also worked as Urbana's city engineer from 1898 to 1906⁴.

Some of Royer's notable works in Urbana include the Champaign County Courthouse (101 E. Main Street, Urbana) which was built in 1900 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style and is located in Urbana's downtown; the Urbana Flat Iron Building which was built in 1906 and has since been demolished; the Illinois Traction Building (41 E. University Avenue, Champaign) which was built in 1912 and is located in Champaign's downtown; the Unitarian Universalist Church (309 W. Green Street, Urbana) which was built in 1913 in the Gothic Revival style; the Urbana High School (1002 S. Race, Urban) which was built in 1914 in the Jacobean style; the Masonic Temple (115 W. Main Street, Urbana) which was built in 1914 in the Classical Revival style and is located in Urbana's downtown; the Urbana Free Library (210 W. Green Street, Urbana) which was built in 1918 in the Classical Revival style; the Urbana Lincoln Hotel (210 S. Race Street, Urbana) which was built in 1924; Leal Elementary School (312 W. Oregon Street, Urbana) which was built in 1935 in the Art Deco style; the Knowlton and Bennett Building (135 W. Main Street, Urbana) which was built in 1926 in the Tudor Revival style and is located in Urbana's downtown; and the Cohen Building (136 W. Main Street, Urbana) which was built in 1907 in the Classical Revival style. Royer also designed a variety of single family residential homes in Urbana including his own residence at 801 W. Oregon Street in 1905 in the Mission style; his mother-in-law Ella Danley's residence at 701 S. Busey Avenue in 1923 in the English Domestic style; and the Gus and Alice Freeman house at 504 W. Elm Street in 1902 in the Classical Revival style.⁵

⁴ Adams, Brian. *Joseph William Royer: Urbana's Architect*. (2011).

⁵ Adams, Brian. *Joseph William Royer: Urbana's Architect*. (2011) & City of Urbana "100 Most Important Buildings."

Royer truly gave Urbana a lifetime legacy of buildings, of which the Zeta Tau Alpha house plays an important role. Royer also designed several other fraternity and sorority houses at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign including the Kappa Sigma fraternity house (212 E. Daniel Street, Champaign) which was built in 1903 in the eclectic Italian Renaissance style; the Kappa Alpha Psi sorority house (402 E. Armory Ave, Champaign) which was built in 1920 in the Tudor Revival style; the Chi Psi fraternity house (313 E. John) which was built in 1922; the Alpha Rho Chi architecture fraternity house (1108 S. First Street, Champaign) which was built in 1927 in the French Revival style; and the Alpha Xi Delta Sorority house (715 W. Michigan Avenue, Urbana) which was built in 1928 in the Tudor Revival style.⁶ These houses resemble eclectic revival features similar to the Zeta Tau Alpha house, such as asymmetrical compositions, and the picturesque use of a variety of exterior facade materials and textures.

Historical Significance

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is being nominated as an Urbana Landmark for having significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political, or social heritage of the nation, state or community.

The national Zeta Tau Alpha fraternity chapter was founded in 1898 at the State Female Normal School (now Longwood University) in Farmville, Virginia by nine young women who envisioned an organization that would perpetuate their ties of friendship. The beliefs of the national chapter include: "to intensify friendship, to promote happiness among its members, and in every way to create such sentiments, to perform such deeds, and to mould such opinions as will conduce to the building up of a nobler and purer womanhood in the world." Since its founding, the national chapter of Zeta Tau Alpha has initiated over 218,000 women into the sisterhood. Zeta Tau Alpha currently has 162 active collegiate chapters and 239 active alumnae chapters. The Zeta Tau Alpha foundation was established in 1954 with a national philanthropy of breast cancer education and awareness. The Zeta Tau Alpha Housing Corporation was established in 1977 and currently has 105 facilities that are owned or managed by the corporation.⁷

Designed as a "chapter house for the Alpha Kappa Alumnae Association of Zeta Tau Alpha,"⁸ the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House adds to the Greek letter society community at the University of Illinois. The Alpha Kappa chapter of Zeta Tau Alpha was initiated at the University of Illinois in 1921. Early in the formation of the chapter, Zeta Tau Alpha was recognized as a chapter that had a high collective grade point average. The chapter also aimed to participate in many campus activities at the U of I, including sports and hosting social events such as theme parties.⁹

⁶ Adams, Brian. *Joseph William Royer: Urbana's Architect*. (2011) & National Park Service, "Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (1989).

⁷ Zeta Tau Alpha, "History." (2012).

⁸ Royer, Danely, & Smith Architects, A Chapter House for the Alpha Kappa Alumnae Association of Zeta Tau Alpha Blue Prints.

⁹McKinley, Eric. "The Castle in the Sky: The History of Alpha Kappa of Zeta Tau Alpha, 1921-2002." *Greek Chapter Housing History Project* (2012).

The original house of the Zeta Tau Alpha chapter was the Dacia House, located at 1115 West Illinois Street in Urbana. In 1924, the Zeta Tau Alpha chapter moved from the Dacia House into a new house at 112 East John Street in Champaign. Then in 1926 the chapter purchased a lot on Vermont Street, which is where the story of the Royer-designed Zeta Tau Alpha house begins. The chapter members participated in fundraising activities to raise money to build the new house. The original address of the new Royer-designed Zeta Tau Alpha house was 808 West Vermont Street. This new location was pivotal to integrating the sorority into the fabric of campus life because Vermont Street was the central location for new sorority houses in the 1920s. The opening of the new Zeta Tau Alpha house for the Alpha Kappa chapter was noted as one of the proudest moments in the chapter's early history. After its construction, the house was described as "a palatial home that stands as a monument to united interests and loyal co-operation" and "a house which the entire fraternity may be proud of as a chapter."¹⁰

The Alpha Kappa chapter persevered for decades to come on the University of Illinois campus, through wars and changing times, and grew in membership in the 1950's. On October 1, 1961, due to members becoming too crowded in the small Zeta Tau Alpha house, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for an addition to the house on 808 West Vermont Street. Zeta Tau Alpha owned the lot to the west of the house, and so construction was completed in 1963 in order to provide housing for the increasing number of Zetas. The addition added fourteen dorm rooms, a formal living room, an entry foyer, and a three-room director's apartment. A new kitchen was also added which allowed for the transformation of the current basement into a lounge. The 1963 addition was completed by Berger-Kelley and Associates Architects. It was after this addition to the house that the address changed to 1404 South Lincoln Avenue. The addition increased the capacity of the house from forty occupants to sixty-three occupants. An open house was held on February 17, 1963 to celebrate the new addition. Unfortunately though, after the addition was constructed, it became difficult for Zeta Tau Alpha to retain solid membership numbers.¹¹

In the 1980's it became apparent that the chapter membership numbers were severely declining. The membership issues stemmed from financial issues related to increased house bills and demands of regular maintenance of a larger house. After several failed attempts to re-invent and re-stabilize membership numbers, the Alpha Kappa chapter of Zeta Tau Alpha at the University of Illinois closed in 1993 after making the decision to not participate in bid night. The decision was made in order to bring an end to the pained efforts of maintaining membership that had plagued Zetas in previous years. Before its official closing on December 6, 1993, the chapter was viewed as an asset to the University for its philanthropic efforts, despite its low membership. Starting in 1994, the Zeta Tau Alpha house was leased to the Theta Chi fraternity in an attempt to keep the house on an academic schedule with hopes of easing transition back into the house if and when the Alpha Kappa chapter re-emerged at the University of Illinois. Several students expressed their distaste about allowing non-Zetas to use the house. The house was home to Zeta Tau Alpha for 65 years and intimate connections between the members and their house were made. Theta Chi occupied the house from 1994 to 2009. The decision was made in 1997 and again in 2001 to forfeit the attempt to re-open Zeta Tau Alpha on the University of Illinois

¹⁰ McKinley, Eric. "The Castle in the Sky: The History of Alpha Kappa of Zeta Tau Alpha, 1921-2002." *Greek Chapter Housing History Project* (2012): 14.

¹¹ McKinley, Eric. "The Castle in the Sky: The History of Alpha Kappa of Zeta Tau Alpha, 1921-2002." *Greek Chapter Housing History Project* (2012).

campus. At that time, other Greek chapters on the University of Illinois campus were becoming fragile and were also fighting for sustained membership and Zeta Tau Alpha did not want to compete for an entirely new chapter membership.¹² The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is currently vacant.

At the peak of their construction, there were approximately 80 fraternity and sorority houses on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus. These historic houses have played an important role in the cultural and social aspects of the University of Illinois and higher education in America over many years. Many of the Greek Houses are included on a National Register of Historic Places nomination in a multiple property documentation form for their importance. These houses are not individually listed on the National Register, but contribute to the importance of these houses as a unique grouping of properties. The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is listed on this multiple property document. In 1928, the University of Illinois had the largest number of Greek chapters in the nation, a title it still holds today. During this time, Greek letter societies were the predominant form of organized student housing on the campus. The Greek influence reflected America's widespread interest in classical culture, which had been expressed in nineteenth century American architecture, literature, philosophy, and art.¹³

The first Greek letter society that appeared on the University of Illinois campus was the Upsilon Prime chapter of Delta Tau Delta in 1872. Initially, college and university administrators resisted Greek letter societies, seeing them as a challenge to their established authority. Many colleges and universities banned these Greek letter societies. The bans were enacted to stop the formation of these societies; however, quite a few societies persevered at the University of Illinois despite the bans. By 1893, Greek letter societies had become widely accepted and chapter numbers, especially at the University of Illinois, were rapidly increasing. By 1930 there were 107 national Greek letter societies on the U of I campus.¹⁴

Initially, Greek letter societies did not have chapter houses; instead they rented rooms for meetings and events from the University. However, housing at universities was limited. It wasn't until 1916 that the first residence hall was constructed at the University of Illinois. The dormitory was known originally as the Women's Residence Hall, and was the first residence hall that opened in 1919 at the University of Illinois to allow more students to attend college. The Women's Residence Hall was initially constructed as an experiment for the University and its student housing needs. In 1924, a second residence known as the West Residence Hall was constructed adjacent to the Women's Residence Hall. Today, these two buildings are known together as the Busey-Evans dormitory. The two world wars used the Women's Residence Hall for housing needs on the campus as well. Other residence halls on the University of Illinois campus were constructed years later. The Fourth Street Residence Halls, originally known as the Men's Residence Halls, began construction in 1940; the Lincoln Avenue Residence Halls were

¹² McKinley, Eric. "The Castle in the Sky: The History of Alpha Kappa of Zeta Tau Alpha, 1921-2002." *Greek Chapter Housing History Project* (2012).

¹³ National Park Service, "Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (1989). & City of Urbana "100 Most Important Buildings: Greek Houses."

¹⁴ National Park Service, "Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (1989) & City of Urbana "100 Most Important Buildings: Greek Houses."

opened as women's dormitories in 1949; the Peabody Drive and Gregory Drive Residence Halls (known as the Six Pac) were opened in 1958 as men's residence halls; and the Florida and Pennsylvania Avenue Residence Halls were opened in 1962 as the first coeducational undergraduate dormitories on campus, with the rooms split equally between men and women.¹⁵ Greek letter societies began providing room and board for their members before many of the University Residence Halls emerged. The Greek houses served housing needs for students by providing students with increased freedom, responsibility, and opportunities for social interaction. Moreover, the building of individual chapter houses was seen as an opportunity to educate students further by exposing them to the civilizing effects of classical design elements.¹⁶

The first wave of Greek house construction at the University of Illinois was from 1906 to 1917. Many of U of I's Greek houses were designed by local architecture firms such as Rapp & Rapp and Van Doren Shaw in the architectural revival fashions of the time including Tudor Revival, Georgian Revival, Classical Revival, Gothic Revival, Colonial Revival, and the like. The first houses constructed were Sigma Chi in 1909 at 410 East John Street, Kappa Sigma in 1911 at 212 East Daniel Street, Phi Kappa Psi in 1908 at 911 South Fourth Street, and Phi Gamma Delta in 1911 at 401 East John Street. There was a second wave of building after World War I which was driven by housing shortages. This building boom prompted the 1931 publishing of "Designing and Building the Chapter House" a book which was intended to help chapters develop an appropriate design for their houses. In 1929, approximately 35 percent of male and female students lived in Greek Society houses.¹⁷

Many Greek chapter houses have been constructed in a variety of locations, however, a trend occurred in the construction of Greek houses where the majority of fraternities were constructed in Champaign and the majority of sororities were constructed in Urbana. A clustering of fraternities is found today in Champaign between Daniel Street, Fourth Street, Gregory Drive, and First Street around what is known today as Frat Park. A clustering of sororities is found today along Lincoln Avenue in Urbana. The clustering of sororities along Lincoln Avenue actually crept into the residential neighborhood of West Urbana which in turn created a unique neighborhood setting.

Most of the Greek houses on the University of Illinois campus were constructed before 1940. Styles varied widely, but tended to reflect the architectural preferences of the time. Many Greek houses were built by well-known local architects, including the Zeta Tau Alpha house designed by Royer. The large size of the houses provided opportunities for designers to explore and express the dignity and order for which the Greek letter societies symbolized. These Greek organizations became identifiers that were symbolic of the prestige of obtaining a college

¹⁵ Leetaru, Kalev. "University of Illinois: Virtual Campus Tour: Busey-Evans Residence Halls." UI Histories Project.

¹⁶ National Park Service, "Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (1989). & City of Urbana "100 Most Important Buildings: Greek Houses."

¹⁷ National Park Service, "Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (1989). & City of Urbana "100 Most Important Buildings: Greek Houses."

education. Across the nation, the Greek movement had a profound effect on patterns of American collegiate life, which was embodied in the architecture of these organizations.¹⁸

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is no longer occupied by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Alpha Kappa chapter of Zeta Tau Alpha, but the house is still owned by the national chapter. Zeta Tau Alpha has two other chapters with houses in Illinois at Illinois State University and Northwestern University, but the University of Illinois chapter no longer exists after its dissolution in 1993.¹⁹ In 2009, the Alpha Kappa chapter became a member of the Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity Housing Corporation which ensures that upon the chapter's return to the University of Illinois campus, the chapter will have access to the house.

Context

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is being nominated as an Urbana Landmark for being identifiable as an established and familiar visual location or physical characteristics. The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Lincoln and Vermont Avenues. The University of Illinois Florida Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue Residence Halls are directly across the street from the house. The Farmhouse, another U of I fraternity house, is situated to the north of the Zeta Tau Alpha house. There is a high concentration of fraternity and sorority houses along Lincoln Avenue to the north of the Zeta Tau Alpha house. The residential neighborhood of West Urbana surrounds the sorority house to the east and south. The Zeta Tau Alpha house marks a unique transition between the large scale of the University of Illinois campus buildings and the small single family residential buildings in the neighborhood of West Urbana.

Several of the Greek houses located near the Zeta Tau Alpha house include 1002 S. Lincoln Avenue, which is a Colonial Revival style fraternity house; 1004 S. Lincoln Avenue, a Mediterranean style fraternity house built in 1928 that is currently home to the Phi Beta Chi chapter; 1102 S. Lincoln Avenue, a Tudor Revival style sorority house constructed in 1928 that is currently home to the Kappa Kappa Gamma chapter; 1106 S. Lincoln Avenue, a French Chateausque style sorority house built in 1929 that is currently home to the Alpha Gamma Delta chapter; 1204 S. Lincoln Avenue, a Tudor Revival sorority house built in 1924 that is currently home to the Kappa Delta chapter; and many others. The adjacent neighborhood of West Urbana was also being developed in the mid-1920's, around the time the Zeta Tau Alpha house was constructed.²⁰

The Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House compares favorably in the context of architect-designed Greek houses on the University of Illinois campus, yet the house is unique among the many. The house is representative of Royer's signature revival style of design which uses a variety of

¹⁸ National Park Service, "Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (1989).

& City of Urbana "100 Most Important Buildings: Greek Houses."

¹⁹ City of Urbana "100 Most Important Buildings: Greek Houses."

²⁰ City of Urbana "100 Most Important Buildings: Greek Houses."

textures and exterior materials, is noteworthy for its French Eclectic characteristics, and is one of the few French Eclectic style Greek houses in Urbana.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House should be named an Urbana local landmark for having significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political, or social heritage of the Greek community at the University of Illinois; for being representative of the distinguishing characteristics of French Eclectic style houses in America between 1915 and 1945 and retaining a high degree of integrity; for being a notable work of prominent local architect Joseph William Royer who left a legacy of buildings in Urbana; and for being established as an identifiable, unique, and familiar location of development where the large scale of the University of Illinois meshes together with the small residential neighborhood of West Urbana.

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Main Facade (South Facade) of Property Proposed for Nomination, 2013



Southeast corner, 2013



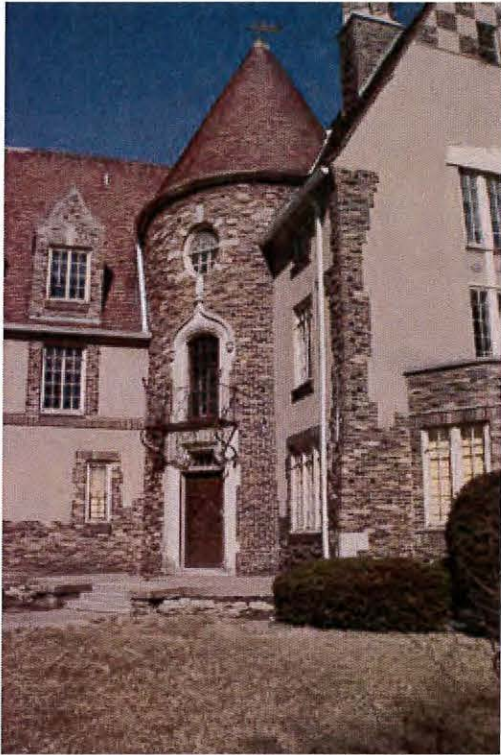
East Facade, 2013



North Facade, 2013



West Facade, 2013



Detail Photos, 2013



Zeta Tau Alpha House, 1990



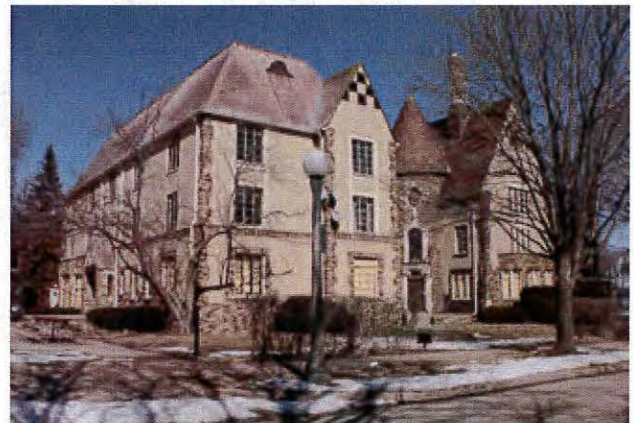
Zeta Tau Alpha House, 1990



Zeta Tau Alpha House Addition Under Construction, 1962



Zeta Tau Alpha House Addition Completion, 1963



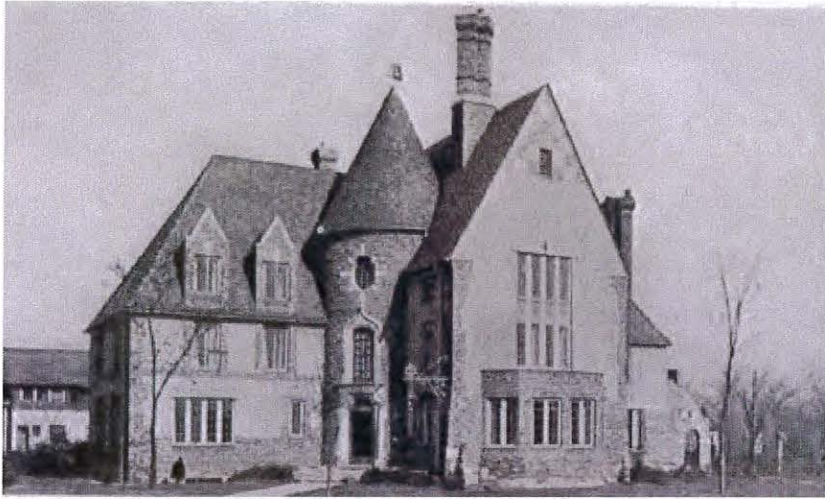
Zeta Tau Alpha House Addition, 2013



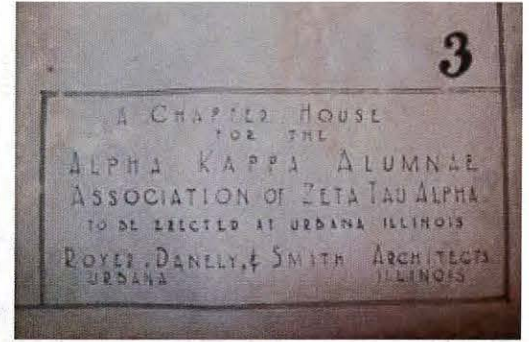
Alpha Kappa Chapter in front of house at 808 W. Vermont, 1931



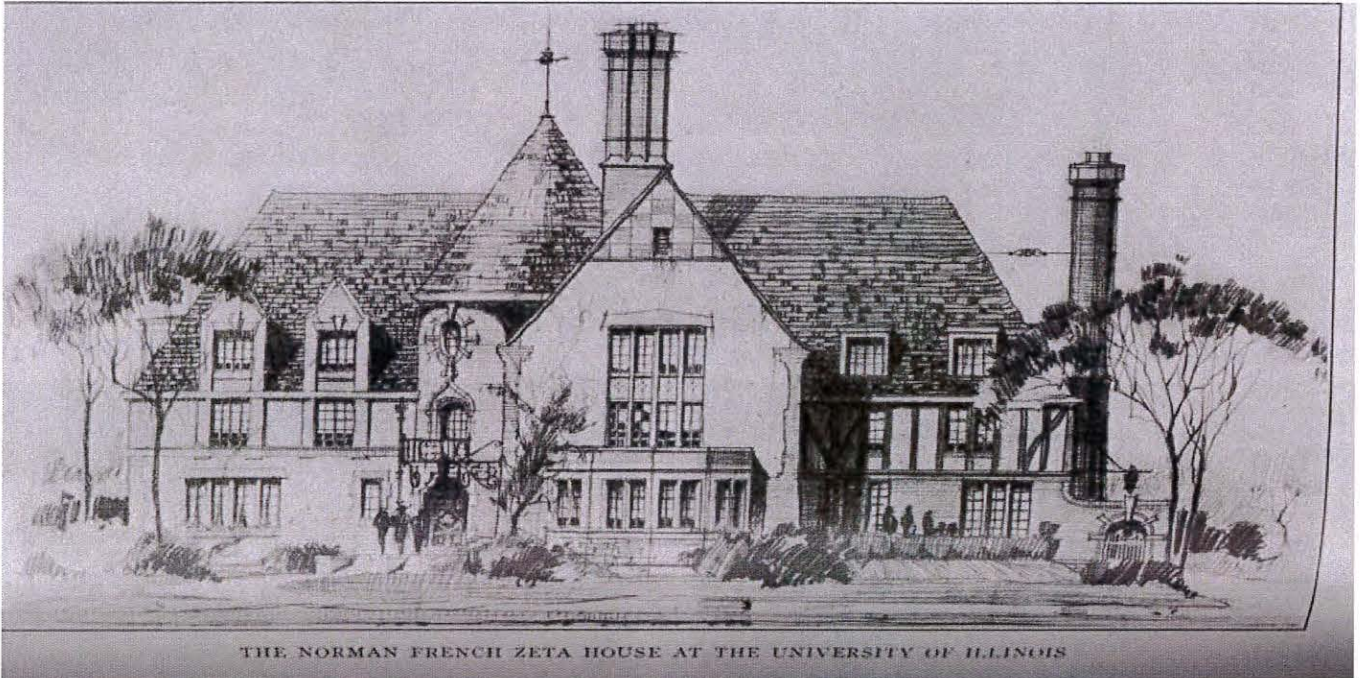
*Second Zeta Tau Alpha House,
112 E. John Street, before 1928*



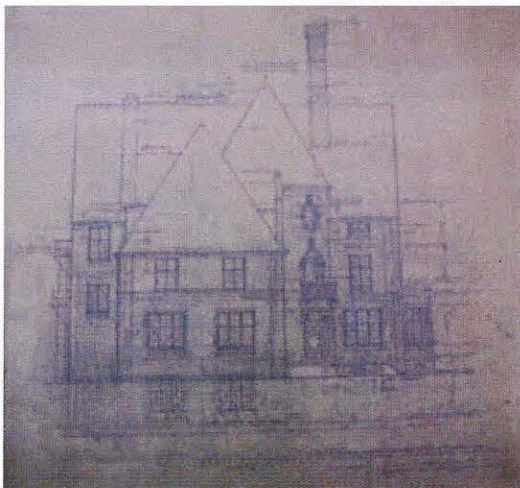
Main Facade (South Facade), 1928



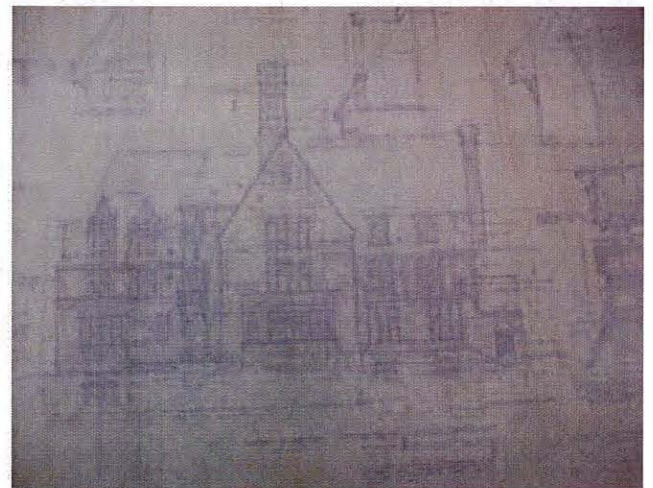
Title Block, Zeta Tau Alpha House Drawings, Royer, Danely & Smith Architects, 1928



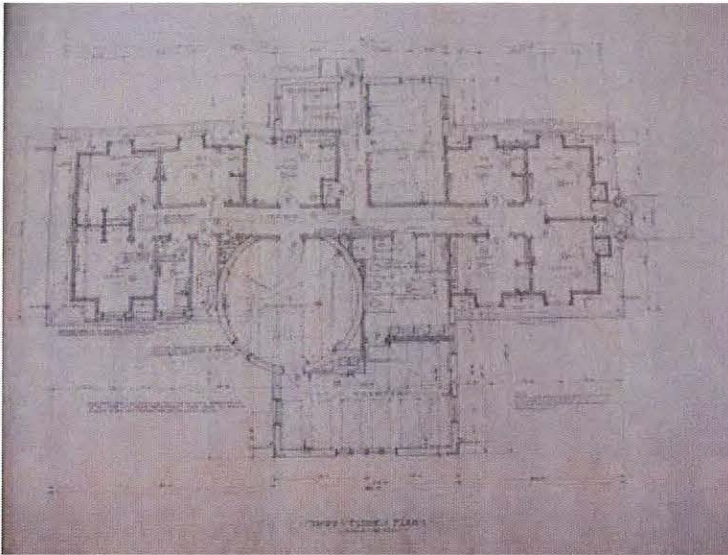
Main Facade (South Facade) Drawing by Royer, Danely & Smith Architects, 1928



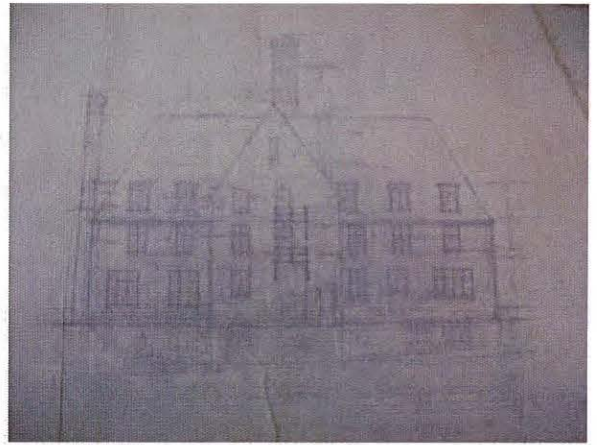
West Elevation - Royer, Danely, & Smith Architects, 1928



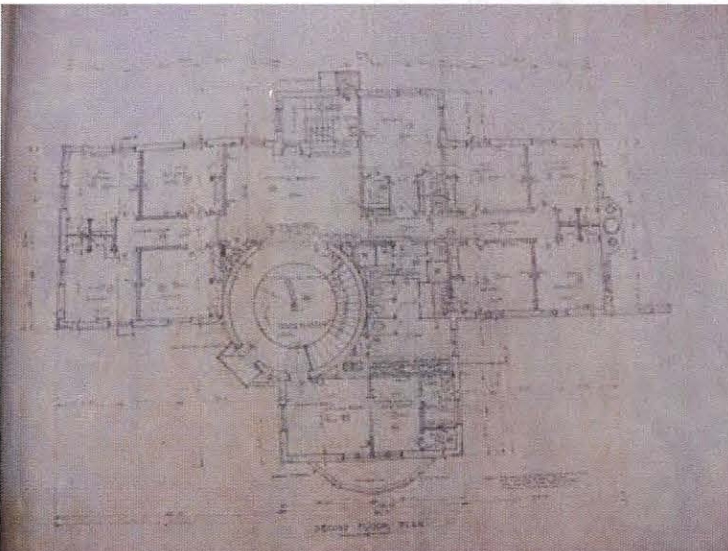
South Elevation - Royer, Danely, & Smith Architects, 1928



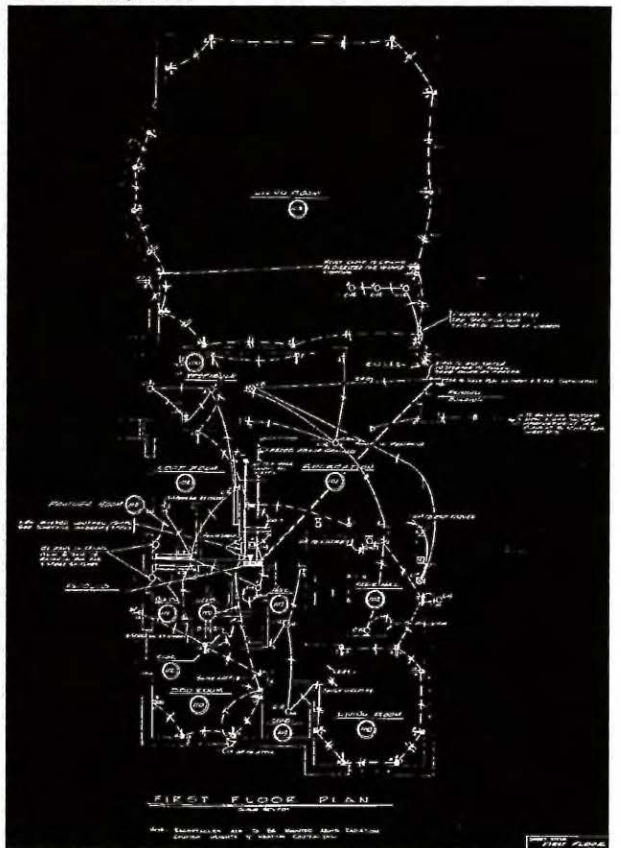
Third Floor Plan - Royer, Danely, & Smith Architects, 1928



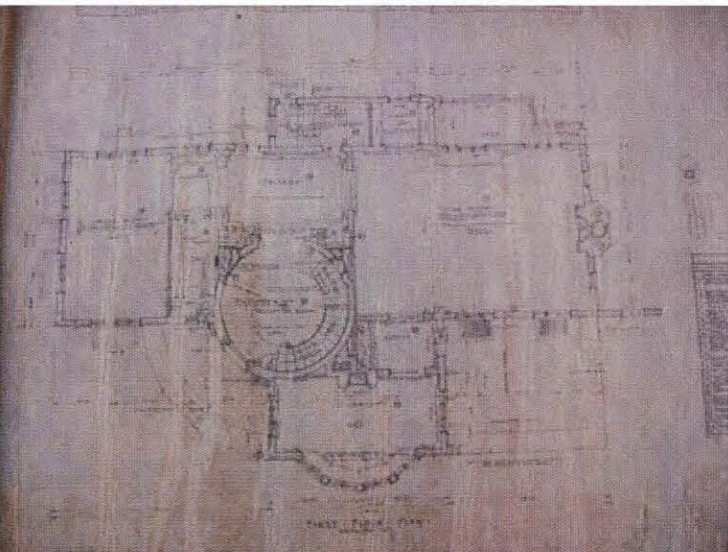
South Elevation - Royer, Danely, & Smith Architects, 1928



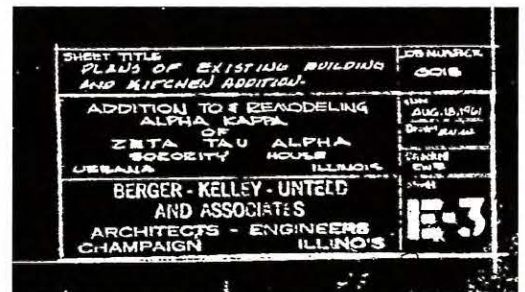
Second Floor Plan - Royer, Danely, & Smith Architects, 1928



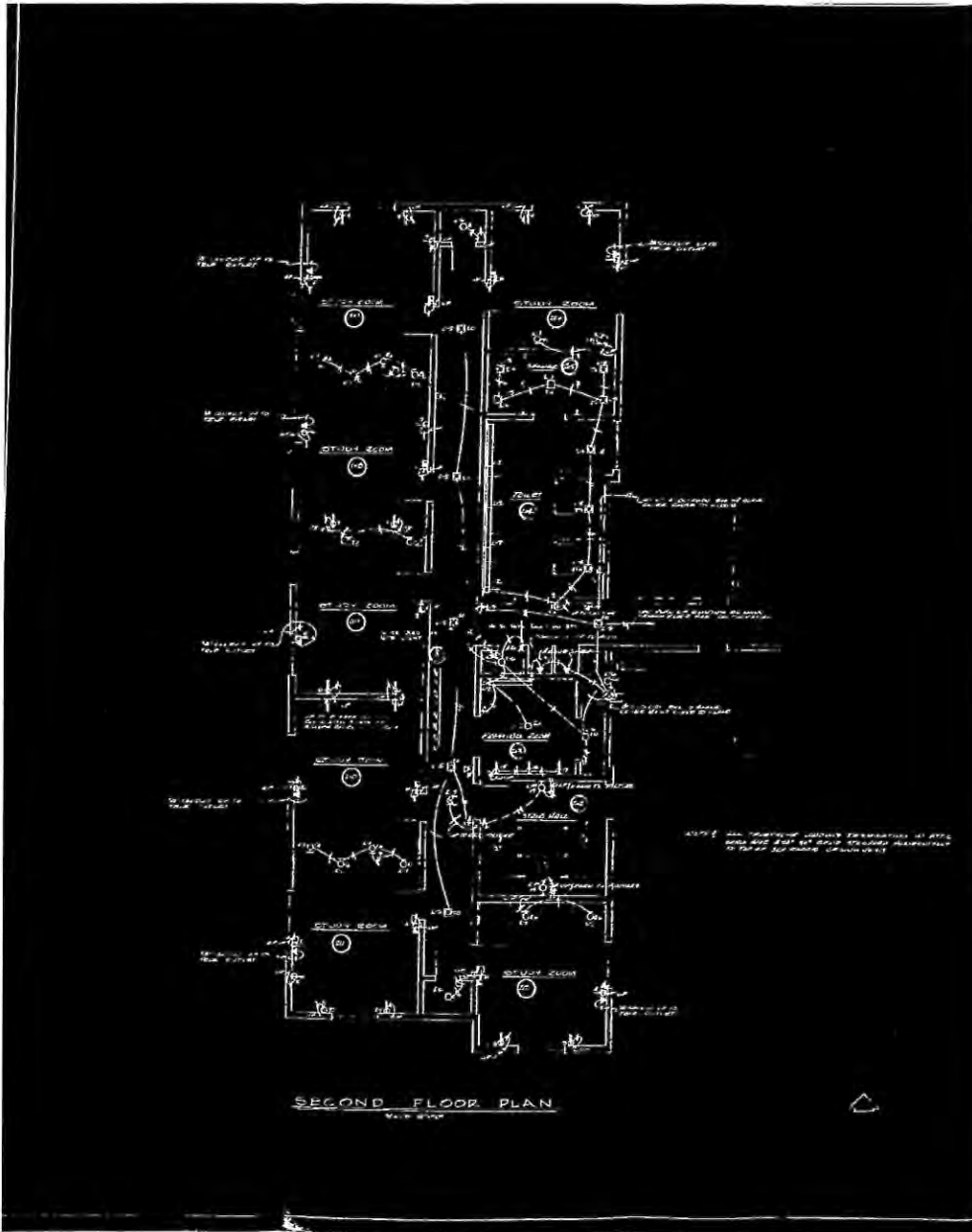
First Floor Plan - Berger-Kelley & Associates, 1961



First Floor Plan - Royer, Danely, & Smith Architects, 1928



Title Block for Zeta Tau Alpha Addition
Drawings by Berger-Kelley & Associates,
1961



Second Floor Plan - Berger-Kelley & Associates, 1961