

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Oriental Lodge Number 500

Other names/site number: Prince Hall Masonic Temple

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 2201 Central

Avenue

City or town: Indianapolis State: IN County: Marion

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

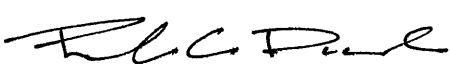
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B X C D

	<u>1.22.2016</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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Masonic Temple
Name of Property

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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/>	<hr/>
Signature of commenting official:	Date
<hr/>	<hr/>
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
-

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Site

Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:

Exotic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK

STONE: limestone

TERRA COTTA

roof: ASPHALT

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Oriental Lodge Number 500 is a fraternal lodge building representative of neighborhood Masonic lodge designs in Indianapolis and elsewhere in the United States during the first three decades of the 20th century. The four-story, rectangular building is constructed with a reinforced concrete structure reinforced by a system of steel columns and beams. The exterior walls are constructed of brick with terra cotta decorative details enframing the entrance, third story windows, the cornice, and fourth story corners. The decorative elements are interpretations of Islamic architecture of the Middle East, North Africa, and Spain and are representative of a

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larger movement in American architecture at the time, Exotic Revival. Inside there is a two-story lodge room in the third and fourth floors, a social and lounge room on the second floor, dining room on the first (ground) floor, and lodge preparation rooms on the third floor mezzanine (fourth floor). The lodge building stands on a 65 foot by 177-foot lot at the corner of 22nd Street and Central Avenue, in the midst of a neighborhood that was developed at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century for upper middle class and well-to-do families. After extensive deterioration and demolition, the neighborhood has been redeveloped as the Fall Creek Place area, with mostly new houses occupying lots to the north of the lodge. Generally, the building retains most of its exterior and interior integrity, with the exception of windows bricked in on the first and second floor levels and some minor changes to room configurations on the first floor and third floor mezzanine levels. Overall, the condition of the building appears to be good.

Narrative Description

Building Site:

The Oriental Lodge Number 500 building site consists of a 65-foot by 177-foot lot located on the northeast corner of Central Avenue and 22nd Street in what is now the Fall Creek Place Neighborhood of Indianapolis. The building proper, roughly rectangular, occupies a footprint measuring 101 feet, 1 inch by 48 feet, 10 ½ inches, centered in the western two-thirds of the lot.¹

The lot line enclosing the property owned first by the Oriental Lodge Number 500 and later by the Prince Hall Masonic Temple Association, Inc. runs along the western perimeter of a grassy terrace on the west side of the property and along the south edge of a lawn area extending 8 ½ feet from the lodge building along the south side. The lot line continues east to the edge of the first alley east of Central Avenue. From the southeast corner of the lot, the line runs north along the alley 65 feet and then west to the edge of the concrete sidewalk running along the west edge of the property. The north lot line runs 177 feet from the west sidewalk to the alley. The sidewalks and curbs running along the west and south sides of the lot are not part of the lodge property. Originally, planting strips ran 11 feet 6 inches south of the south sidewalk to the curb and 3 feet, 6 inches west of the west sidewalk. Those strips were removed as Central Avenue and 22nd Street were widened.²

When the Oriental Lodge building was completed in 1916, there were no shrubs or trees planted. A 1925 photograph of the Oriental Lodge shows small shrubs lining the building along the west elevation, and a sapling tree planted to the right of the entrance stairway. The shrubs and tree no longer exist. To the east of the building, from the east elevation to the alley, a lawn was removed some time after construction and replaced with a brick pavement, presumably for automobile parking. To the north of the lodge lot, the Oriental Lodge, probably after World

¹ "Plot Plan," Masonic Temple for the Oriental Lodge. Central Avenue at 22nd Street, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Herbert L. Bass, Herbert Foltz, and Rubush and Hunter, Associated Architects, Sheet No. 1, March 30, 1915.

Oriental Lodge Drawings, Rubush and Hunter Collection, William Henry Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society

² Ibid.

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War II, purchased two lots originally containing residences and created a parking lot paved with asphalt for its members. Within the past 10 years, the City of Indianapolis has created a polygonal shaped plot just to the south of the southwest corner of the lodge lot and installed a brick and concrete neighborhood marker for Fall Creek place, surrounded by flowers. There is also a “cobra” style streetlight installed sometime after 1960 in the plot. A curvilinear “bump-out” has been added to the west of the west sidewalk. About half way between Central Avenue and the alley to the east is a rusted steel pole, linked by a cable to an electrical pole across 22nd Street, stands in the south sidewalk, outside the lodge property. At the east edge of the south side sidewalk just before it intersects with the alley, is a reproduction light pole resembling those installed in the city during the 1920s.

An original concrete sidewalk and two flights of concrete stairs lead from the west sidewalk to the west entrance. At the center of the sidewalk and stairs is a steel handrail installed probably before 1983 by the Oriental Lodge. On the west terrace to the south of the entrance there is an aluminum flag pole installed by the Prince Hall Masonic Temple since 1983. Along the west edge of the parking lot north of the original lodge property, there is a black chain-link fence that continues east approximately along the lot line immediately north of the lodge building to the northwest corner of the building. The fence also runs along the original north lot line from the northeast corner of the building east to the alley and along the east edge of the parking lot.

Building Exterior

General

The exterior of Oriental Lodge Number 500 (Photo 0001) is constructed of high texture brick. The brick walls range in thickness from 1 foot, 6 inches to 1 foot, 9 inches and appear to be self-supporting. They do not carry the load of the interior structure of the building. Except for several panels with special decorative treatments, the brick courses of the exterior are laid in running bond. The façade of the rectangular, four-story building fronts west on Central Avenue, with the long south elevation forming a secondary major façade facing 22nd Street. The decorative program of the design is concentrated on the west, south, and east elevations. The theme of decorative elements on the exterior is an interpretation of Islamic architecture of the Middle East, North Africa, and Spain, with geometric patterns of varied design adorning the entrance enframements, the belt course below the fourth story, the corners of the fourth story, and the frieze of the cornice. The windows of the third story, with their horseshoe arches and cusped treatment of the arches, suggest the architecture of Islamic Spain or North Africa. Unadorned rectangular windows line the centers of the fourth story in the west, north and south elevations. The rectangular window openings for the basement (first floor) and second floor on all elevations were covered by buff-colored brick infill probably in the 1960s or 1970s. All but one of the original wooden, double-hung sashes of the windows on the first and second floors are extant and visible from the interior.

Panels covering the second and third stories on the three main elevations form a polychromatic decorative field for the Islamic elements. Each field consists of a diaper pattern consisting of

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inter-connected diamonds, each centered on a cross. The brick of the exterior is a “high texture” variety, generally pearl-gray in color, with the diamond shapes and parts of the borders around the diamond fields colored deep brown and crosses within the diamonds colored reddish brown for contrast. On the fourth stories of the three main elevations, brick, basket-weave panels consisting of alternating blocks of vertical and horizontal stretchers configured in varied patterns enframe the fenestration and the terra cotta decorative panels at the building corners. A motif used in many Masonic temples of the period is employed for the walls of the basement story: six bands, each consisting of four courses, project a half-inch from the façade. Between each band, a single course is recessed to the plane of the rest of the facade. The basement story is exposed on the south and east elevations, and limestone slabs cover the foundation of the west and eastern sections in the south elevation. The center of the north elevation is devoid of the decorative treatment of the other elevations and the segment above the cornice has been rebuilt with buff brick, probably since World War II.

The roof is flat and covered with asphalt sheets coated with tar. There is a four foot parapet capped with terra cotta coping.

West Elevation (Façade)

The façade of the Oriental Lodge Number 500—Prince Hall Masonic Temple (Photo 0001) is a symmetrical composition in which the central elements are the rectangular enframement of the entrance, the Islamic-inspired trio of windows in the third story, and the simple rectangular triad of windows in the fourth story. Originally there were rectangular openings for multi-light wooden sash windows in the first and second stories on either side of the entrance; those have been covered with buff brick.³ The enframement for the entrance and the three story window treatments may have been inspired by the 1912-13 design of Chicago architects Huehl and Schmid for the Medinah Temple in Chicago. In that design, which drew on details of Islamic architecture in the Middle East, North Africa, and Spain, the architects employed a brick façade enriched with terra cotta enframements for the two corner entrances and for the three horse shoe-arched windows above each entrance.⁴ In both the Medinah Temple and Oriental Lodge entrances, a rectangular enframement encloses the entrance proper and a transom above. In both, terra cotta friezes composed of geometric figures further enframe the entrance and transoms, and in both *in antis* terra cotta columns flank the entrance.

Like the Medinah Temple columns, those of the Oriental Lodge feature capitals with convex shapes adorned with foliated details. The Oriental Lodge capitals have an S-curve shape and the details consist of an S and reverse-S volutes at center enclosing a stylized flower (Photo 0002). Outside the volutes are concave leaves that appear to support the outer corners of a rectangular abacus. Below an echinus with convex profile, the column shafts consists of what appear to be

³ See Historical Photographs 1 and 2, Section 11 of the nomination.

⁴ See J.E. Murphy, “Eastern Architecture in the West: Medinah Temple in Chicago, Huehl and Schmid, Architects,” *The Architectural Record*, Vol. XXXIII, No. IV (April, 1913), pp. 339-49. See also Historical Photographs 3-5, Section 11 of the nomination.

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vegetative bands stacked on top of each other and bound together by a “mesh” of diamond-shaped components. The two columns terminate in Classical bases with torus moldings.

There are three friezes of different designs within the rectangular enframements enclosing the entrance and transom (Photo 0002). The inspiration for these friezes and for the belt course between the third and fourth stories may have been Islamic architecture of the medieval period, in which inter-connected geometric figures were often used to form a multiplicity of varied and intricate decorative designs. The primary frieze in the Oriental Lodge enframements, approximately nineteen inches wide, is located immediately within the outer, plain border: it consists of ten clusters of moldings configured as squares and polygons, all inter-connected. The clusters in turn are linked to each other by extensions of their polygons. Some of the polygonal figures are not closed. Mid-way between each cluster is a small, molded flower blossom.

A second frieze, approximately eight inches wide, appears within the primary frieze. It consists of a series of elongated pentagonal moldings, all inter-connected, running vertically and horizontally to the sides of the entrance and above the transom. At the corners of the frieze, there is a molding consisting of four small squares interconnected. The final frieze in the enframement appears as a lintel above the entrance. Like the second frieze, there are elongated pentagonal moldings inter-connected, and in this case some of the inter-connections form squares.

The current transom consists of a fixed-sash window on which has been stenciled “Prince Hall Masonic Temple,” with the Masonic symbol at center. Originally, in front of the window there was an elaborate wrought iron grille consisting of rows of circles super-imposed on X’s with stars at center. In *Art Nouveau*-style lettering, the name “Oriental Lodge” appeared at the center of the grille.⁵ The grille was removed at an unknown date.

The current double doors were installed by the Oriental Lodge some time before 1983, possibly in the 1960s. The current doors are wooden, painted red, and have three rectangular glass windows set on diagonal angles in the upper portion of each door.

The original doors, as indicated by the architectural drawings, were wooden with three square glass panels on each door. The panels were divided by wooden mutins into three, inter-connected geometric figures: a square, pentagon, and an X. Lining the outside the central panels were bronze heads shaped as crosses. The current bronze door plates on both doors contain the Masonic symbol and foliated figures on the plates above the handles. The concrete steps and side enframements leading to the entrance from the west terrace appear to be original.

⁵ “Miscellaneous Exterior Details,” Masonic Temple for the Oriental Lodge. Central Avenue at 22nd Street, Indianapolis, Indiana. Herbert L. Bass, Herbert Foltz, and Rubush and Hunter, Associated Architects, Sheet No. 13, March 30, 1915. Oriental Lodge Drawings, Rubush and Hunter Collection, William Henry Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society

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Above the main entrance hangs a rectangular plastic sign added after 1983 with the words “Prince Hall Masonic Temple F&AM OES.”

On the first story (basement) of the façade, on either side of the entrance, six bands, each consisting of four courses, project ½ inch from the façade. Between each band, a single course is recessed ½ inch to the plane of the rest of the façade (Photo 0003). This banded rustication treatment was used widely in Masonic temples of the period.⁶ There is a limestone veneer, about five inches wide, which is applied to the brick foundation of the façade and is visible just below grade at the southwest corner of the building.

The trio of windows at the center of the third story in the façade (Photo 0004) resemble those of the Medinah Temple in several respects: in both, there are three, linked openings consisting of horseshoe-shaped arches above and rectangular shapes below. In both, the horseshoe arches enclosure transom windows, while below, rectangular openings enclose rectangular doors (Medinah Temple) and windows (Oriental Lodge).⁷ Finally, in both, the inner edges of the horseshoe arches are defined by cusps, i.e., linked, half circles with edges lining an opening. Horseshoe arches and cusped edges appear extensively in Islamic architecture, especially in Islamic Spain and North Africa.⁸

The trio of Islamic-influenced windows of the west elevation of the Oriental Lodge, which are repeated as a single opening in the south and north elevations, diverge from the Medinah Temple design in several details. Unlike the Chicago building, the Oriental Lodge cusps are not open half circles. The half circles are treated as bold moldings on a field of terra cotta in which low-relief segmental curves and angles appear below the cusps. There are also concave half circles within each cusp, along the edge of the arch. Also unlike the Medinah Temple, in which the supports of the arches are styled as engaged columns similar to those flanking the entrance below, the arches of the Oriental Temple are supported by brick pilasters and terra cotta capitals with abacuses given similar treatment to the capitals flanking the Oriental entry. The transom windows are all fixed and clear glass. The rectangular windows below are casement and contain leaded glass. The latter sheets consist of rectilinear patterns of cames with diamond-shaped accents composed of amber-colored glass at the intersections of the cames. The horseshoe arches are outlined by projecting moldings with convex profiles, and there are terra cotta sills below the lower windows.

The second and third stories of the façade are enlivened by a polychromatic design in brick forming a field within which the upper portion of the entrance enframements, the trio of third story windows, and the covered second story windows all appear. The design consists of a

⁶ In Indianapolis, the Broad Ripple Masonic Temple (c. 1910) and the Prather Masonic Temple (1921) have this treatment to the brick exteriors of their first stories.

⁷ See Historical Photograph 4, Section 11 of the nomination.

⁸ See the interior of the Great Mosque of Qairawan in North Africa; the arcades in the Mosque of Ibn Tulun, in Cairo, and the horseshoe arches and cusped arches in the Great Mosque of Cordoba, Spain, all depicted in John D. Hoag, *Western Islamic Architecture* (New York: George Braziller, 1963), plates 30, 42, 43, 45, and 47. See also Historical Photograph 6, Section 11 of the nomination.

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diaper pattern of inter-connected diamonds with simple crosses within each diamond (Photos 0001 and 0004). The diamond pattern bricks are a deep brown color, while the crosses, consisting of a header above and below a stretcher, are a reddish-brown. The bricks forming the field for the patterns are a pearl-gray. The field on the façade is outlined by bricks with the same color as the diamonds, as are the second floor window openings.⁹ The diaper pattern using diamonds has several possible origins. A version of such a pattern can be found in the plaster spandrels of arches in the Islamic palaces of Granada, in Spain.¹⁰ In American Colonial architecture, the Dutch used a diamond-shaped diaper pattern composed of upraised bricks for facades of their houses in 17th century New York.¹¹ Diamond patterns using bricks can also be found in American architectural periodicals of the 1913-14 period, including for the exterior of the top story in the 1913-14 Masonic Temple in Salem, Oregon.¹²

The composition of the fourth story of the façade consists of four decorative features. Three of the four features are made of terra cotta and act as an enframements for the fourth, a brick decorative field (Photos 0001 and 0005). The first of the terra cotta features is a belt course, approximately fourteen inches wide, between the third and fourth stories. Like the friezes within the entrance enframements, the belt course adornment consists of molded geometric figures projecting from a recessed flat panel. The figures, slightly different from those below, involve elongated pentagons intersecting with each other and with squares. There is another molding forming a horizontal line through each pentagon.

The second terra cotta feature involves four panels: two at the north end of the fourth story and two at the south end. These panels are unlike any known American or Islamic antecedents and each consists of a large pentagonal molding set within a square and a secondary pentagon at the center of each panel. The two pentagons in each panel are linked by intersecting moldings that form polygonal shapes and resemble “spokes” in a wheel. Between and above and below the pentagonal panels are narrow horizontal panels rectangular in shape, with circular moldings at center.

The third terra cotta feature is composed of the building entablature, consisting of a frieze and a cornice. The entablature appears above the decorative brick field of the fourth story. The horizontal frieze consists of square, recessed panels. The cornice projects approximately twelve inches from the frieze. The lower portion consists of triangular moldings, the ridges of which

⁹ According to notes on the architectural drawings, the colors for the bricks forming the diamond patterns were “dark seal brown and gyn metal evenly mixed.” The crosses at the center of the diamond were “dark seal brown chinchillas [pearl gray].” The color for bricks forming the field for the patterns was described as “pearl-gray chinchilla.” “Miscellaneous Ext. Details,” Masonic Temple for the Oriental Lodge. Central Avenue at 22nd Street, Indianapolis, Indiana. Herbert L. Bass, Herbert Foltz, and Rubush and Hunter, Associated Architects, Sheet No. 13, March 30, 1915. Oriental Lodge Drawings, Rubush and Hunter Collection, William Henry Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society.

¹⁰ See the diaper, diamond-shaped patterns above the arcade in the Court of Lions, in the Alhambra, in Hoag, Plate 67.

¹¹ See Hugh Morrison, *Early American Architecture from the First Colonial Settlements to the National Period* (New York: Dover Publications, 1987), p. 104.

¹² See “Masonic Temple, Salem, Ore.,” *The American Architect*, Vol. CV, No. 2008 (June 17, 1914).

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form the lower portions of triangular arches lining the upper section of the cornice. Although strictly geometric in character and without individual variation, the cornice design resembles the *muqarnas* plaster adornments along the cornices of rooms and below domes in some Islamic architecture, such as at the Alhambra, in Granada, Spain.¹³ Above these triangular arches project a convex molding that terminates the cornice. In a contiguous row above the convex molding are pointed terra cotta panels resembling antefixae in Classical architecture, but without adornment.

The fourth decorative feature in the fourth story involves two fields of alternating blocks of vertical and horizontal brick stretchers, creating a basket weave pattern. The two fields flank the trio of rectangular windows at the center of the fourth story. Around the perimeter of the two fields and above and below the windows are a border composed of stretcher bricks laid vertically above and below and horizontally on the sides. Three stretchers at each of the four corners match the reddish brown of the crosses at the center of the diamond pattern in the field below the fourth story. The bricks of the two decorative fields are pearl gray in color. The three windows of the fourth story are double-hung wooden sash, with leaded glass panes matching the pattern in the trio of third story windows below.

Above the fourth story cornice is a brick parapet that rises about four feet above the flat roof. The edge of the parapet is capped with terra cotta coping and rises two courses from the north and south ends to a flat culminating section of terra cotta coping.

South Elevation

The composition of the south elevation consists of three symmetrical sections: a 68 1/2-foot long central section flanked to the west and east by mirror-image pavilions that project forward slightly from the central section (Photo 0005). The terrace that covers the lower portion of the basement (first) story on the west and north sides of the building does not continue along the south elevation, revealing most of the story and allowing for entrances to that level from 22nd Street.

The central section of the south elevation corresponds roughly to the dining room, social hall, and lodge room in the first, second, and third floors, respectively. On the first floor level, limestone slabs cover the brick foundation below grade along the central segment of the first floor between the two entrances.

The entrances, symmetrically placed, are enframed with identical terra cotta features. In both, a single, 6-inch frieze within two outer borders consists of intersecting diamond-shaped and triangular moldings. At the center of the innermost diamonds are stylized flowers. Above both friezes of the two entry enframements is a cornice and frieze similar to the building cornice, but different in several specifics. The cornice frieze consists of a series of recessed, rounded arches. The projecting cornice resembles Islamic *muquarnas* more closely than that of the building, with

¹³ See Historical Photograph 7 in Section 11 of this nomination.

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upper, outer faces of the entrance cornices forming a second series of regular, rounded arches. Above the entry cornices are rounded “antefixae” without detailing resembling those of the building cornice, but spaced about four inches apart. The current doors in both entrances were replaced probably at the same time as those in the west entrance. The two doors in the western entry are identical to those in the entrance of the facade, although the plates with handles are plain, without decorative detail. The east doors are plain, without windows and have newer steel handle plates. The doors are replacements for the originals, which were wooden with 18 lights in each door.

The central section of the south elevation is marked at either end by slight projection of the west and east pavilions. On the first floor level, the brick treatment of recessing every fifth brick course continues across the entire south elevation. At the center of the first story of the center section, three window openings, each measuring 6 feet, 2 ¼ inches by 8 ½ feet, have been covered by the same buff brick infills as on the west elevation. The second story level of the central section is constructed of pearl gray brick without adornment acting as a field for five window openings matching the dimensions of the first floor window openings. The second floor openings are also covered by buff brick panels. The terra cotta sills remain from all of the sealed windows. In the third story of the central section, a long rectangular field matching that of the diamonds and crosses on the west elevation covers the area between the west and east pavilions.¹⁴ In the fourth story of the central section, five banks of rectangular windows matching the trio in the fourth story of the west elevation appear at regular intervals and give light to the lodge room within. Between the third and fourth stories is a continuation of the same terra cotta belt course that appears on the west elevation. This course runs across the whole south elevation. Above the belt course at center are more of the decorative brick panels consisting of alternating horizontal and vertical stretchers. These panels occur between each bank of three windows. The cornice and parapet above the fourth story of the entire south elevation are identical to those of the west elevation.

In both the west and east pavilions of the south elevation, the focal point of the composition is a single Islamic-style window opening centered in the third story, identical to one of the trio of window openings on the west elevation. The transom window in the west opening is leaded glass matching the pattern of the two casement panels below. The transom of the east opening is covered by what appears to be a plexi-glass panel. In both pavilions, a vertical, rectangular field of diamonds and crosses covers most of the second and third stories. In both pavilions, the same decorative treatment given the fourth story and parapet in the west elevation is followed and continues across the rest of the south elevation. Also in both pavilions, two terra cotta panels with pentagonal figures identical to those on the west elevation flank a central field made up of the alternating vertical and horizontal stretchers. In the east pavilion, on the first story, there is a double window opening measuring 2 ½ feet by 4 ½ feet, located to the east of the east entrance. The opening has been covered with hard, opaque, fabric sheets.

¹⁴ Two small rectangular sections of buff brick have replaced the centers of two diamond patterns, probably in the 1960s or 1970s.

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The limestone foundation veneers rises approximately four feet to the west and east of the two entrances to form a kind of water-table along the west and east pavilions of the south elevation.

East Elevation

In the east elevation (Photo 0006), the water-table continues approximately five inches past the southeast corner of the building and stops. The treatment of projecting bands of brick courses along the first story continues from the south corner of the elevation 12.8 feet and ceases. It continues from the north corner about 7 1/8 feet and stops. Originally there were four windows of varying sizes and two entrances along the first story. At the south end of the first floor, a small horizontal window corresponding to the custodian's bedroom, a window and doorway corresponding to the custodian's office and bathroom, and a window corresponding to the kitchen have all been covered with buff brick infill. A sunken entrance further to the north continues to offer access to the kitchen, but the transom window overhead has been covered with brick. The original kitchen door has been replaced since the 1950s with a solid red-painted wooden door. At the north end of the first story is located the limestone cornerstone for the Oriental Lodge building, with the date "May 26, 1915" engraved.

The second and third stories of the east elevation are treated as a single composition, with the decorative brick field involving diamonds and crosses covering most of both stories. A pearl gray brick border appears below and at the sides. Set into the lower edge of the diamond field are windows of varying sizes corresponding to the east alcove of the social room in the second floor at center and to the restroom and secretary's office at the north and south ends, respectively.

At the top of the east elevation, a brick panel matching the alternating vertical and horizontal stretcher pattern of the west and south elevations is bounded by a continuation of the terra cotta belt course of the other elevations below and by two pentagonal panels at its north and south ends. Above, the building cornice design of the other two elevations continues, along with a parapet treatment matching that of the west elevation. Above the parapet, approximately five feet from its north end, a pearl gray brick chimney rises 7 1/2 feet above the parapet, with a limestone cap.

North Elevation

The north elevation (Photo 0007), originally not intended to be seen from the street, is given a simplified treatment. The composition is similar to that of the south elevation: a central section corresponding to the principal rooms within and slightly projecting east and west pavilions. The central section is constructed entirely with pearl gray brick laid in running bond, with the exception of the section above the fourth floor banks of windows and the parapet, both of which have been reconstructed since World War II with buff-colored brick. The first floor and second stories of the north elevation originally had five rectangular windows. Those in the first floor corresponded to the dining room, and those on the second floor to the social room. All these windows have been covered with buff brick infill. The terra cotta sills on the second floor

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remain. The north two windows on the first floor have exhaust vent openings that have been fashioned from the bricked-in panels.

The west pavilion of the north elevation is a mirror image of the west pavilion of the south elevation, with the exception of a small rectangular window opening inserted at the second story level, at the base of the field of diamond pattern bricks. That opening, corresponding to the northwest restroom on the second floor, has been bricked over with buff brick. Another difference is that the casement windows in the third story horseshoe arched window opening, which originally contained leaded glass, now contain clear glass. The transom retains its leaded glass light. All windows are covered by plexi-glass panels.

The east pavilion of the north elevation (Photo 0008) contains the same treatment for its fourth story as the east pavilion of the south elevation, with the exception that the brick panel within the terra cotta enrichments is pearl gray brick laid in running bond. The first story is also given the treatment of projecting bands of four brick courses, as in the south elevation. The second and third stories are not given the diamond-pattern field of the other elevations. Instead, there are two rectangular fire escape doorways and a steel external firescape stairway bolted to the exterior wall and offering egress to the third and second floors to the ground. The firescape is original to the building and consists of two fixed flights and one that can be pulled down. The escape structure is supported by brackets to the wall, and the flights have rails supported with X-shaped bracing.

Oriental Lodge Number 500, Interior

General Description

There are three full floors, a “mezzanine floor,” and a partial sub-basement inside the Oriental Lodge. The first floor (basement) contains the dining room, foyer, kitchen, custodian’s apartment, ladies’ lounge, and former check room. The second floor contains the lounge and social room, a check room, restrooms, and an office. The third floor contains a two-story lodge room, foyer, locker room, examination rooms, Tyler’s room, and storage rooms. The “third floor mezzanine,” a fourth floor located above the west third of the third floor, contains a locker room, a preparation room, pipe organ room, and storage rooms. The sub-basement is located below the southeast corner of the first floor and consists of the former coal room and a furnace room.

Vertical circulation in the building occurs primarily through the main stair hall located in the southwest corner. It offers access to the dining room on the first floor, the social room on the second floor, and to the foyer for the third floor. At the north end of the third floor, there is a spiral stairway leading up to the third floor mezzanine. Access to the mezzanine is also available via two stairways located at the west end of the lodge room. To reach the sub-basement, there is a stairway located on the south side of the kitchen. Access to the roof is through a ladder on the south wall of the third floor mezzanine preparation room.

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There are four current entrances to the building: the main entrance at the center of the west elevation, which leads through the vestibule stairway up to the social room; the southwest entrance, which leads via a vestibule down into the dining room; a southeast entrance, which leads into the former living room of the custodian in the first floor; and a sunken entrance to the kitchen, located in the east elevation.

The building structure is a combination of reinforced concrete, a steel frame, and fireproof construction. The latter involves embedded hollow clay tiles within the concrete floor slabs. The exterior walls are constructed of self-supporting brick. The interior walls are nearly all plaster. Floors are both wooden and finished cement. Most of the original wooden trim, doors, baseboards, chair rails, picture moldings, restroom stalls, and restroom mirror frames have been retained and have their original finish.

First Floor (Basement)

The 1915 architectural drawings call the ground level the first floor. The first floor is actually approximately four feet below grade. The two entrances from 22nd street are at grade, but visitors must descend four steps to reach the dining room level. The dining room is the focal point of the first floor (Photos 0009 and 0010), extending 42 feet by 44 1/2 feet in the center two-thirds of the floor. Walls are plaster, and the floor is wood. There are picture moldings and chair rails along the walls and on the columns in the dining room and foyer. At both the west and east ends of the dining room are three square structural columns. At the west end, they serve to mark the division of the dining room from the foyer; at the east end, the east wall of the dining room runs along the east side of the columns. At the center of the dining room, is a single column offering additional support for the social room above. It has been encased since the 1960s with a rounded, plastic encasing. Along the south side of the dining room is a wooden dais containing a wooden banquet table, which serves as the head table for formal dinners. The dais and table were installed after construction, probably before World War II.

There are three window openings along the south and three along the north sides of the dining room. Each of these openings contains three double-hung wood sash windows. The central window in each opening is wider than those flanking it, with six over six panes in the sash. The flanking windows in each opening have four over four panes. The exteriors of all but one set of windows have been covered with brick on the outside. The current lights are florescent, probably installed since 1983.

The foyer, located immediately west of the dining room, is not divided by walls from the dining area (Photo 0011). The 1915 drawings indicated plaster partitions between the two rooms and a smoking room at the north end of the foyer. There is no evidence that partitions were installed between the foyer and the dining room or to create a smoking room. The foyer is accessed from the exterior via a vestibule at its south end and from the second floor through the stair hall located to its southwest. The rectangular vestibule has a white marble mosaic floor with a black fret pattern along its borders. The original double wooden doors lead from the vestibule down four concrete steps to the foyer. Each door has fifteen glass lights divided by mutins.

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Along the west wall of the foyer, there is a storage room (originally a check room for lodge members), a ladies' lounge, and men's restroom. The ladies' lounge appears to have its original configuration and finishes, with wooden hat shelf and coat hooks, and ceramic drinking fountain. There is a small ladies' restroom at the northwest corner of the lounge. The men's restroom is accessed from the foyer.

At the east end of the first floor are the kitchen and former custodian's apartment. The kitchen, occupying the northeast corner of the first floor and roughly rectangular in plan, has been remodeled and upgraded since the 1960s (Photo 0012). A square structural column stands at center, surrounded by a rectangular food preparation island or apron added probably since 1983. A steel stove with fume hood stands against the north wall and appears to have been added since 1970. Overhead, a suspended ceiling with florescent light panels has been installed since about 1970. The cement floor has been covered since c. 1960 with purple linoleum squares. Stainless steel pots and pan sinks have been installed along the south wall near the southeast corner of the room.

There is a trio of double-hung wood sash windows in the north wall, near the northwest corner. The central window was originally six over six double hung, but the upper sash has been replaced with a metal panel containing a ventilator. The other two windows on either side are four over four double-hung. The glass panes in all the sashes have been painted white. There is also a six-light transom over the east entrance to the kitchen and immediate to the south of the entrance, a six over six, double-hung sash window. The transom and window panes have also been painted white. The east door is wood and appears to be original, but the window panes in its upper portion have been covered with a sheet of painted wood.

Original features in the kitchen include a built-in wooden cabinet in the east wall, next to the northeast corner; a wooden cabinet with shelf and upper and lower storage sections installed on the west side of the furnace chimney stack; a wooden china, silverware, and linen cabinet standing along the west wall, just south of the northwest corner; and another, similar wooden china, silverware, and linen cabinet standing along the east wall of the former storage room located south of the kitchen.¹⁵

The 1915 drawings show the room now extending the kitchen to the south, along its west wall, as a storage room closed off from the kitchen and accessed from the dining room through its own door. It appears that some time after construction, the wall between the storage room and kitchen was removed. The storage room door remains.

¹⁵The 1915 architectural drawings show an elevation for a china cabinet matching the design of the cabinet along the west wall of the kitchen. See "Elevation of Kitchen Cabinets," Masonic Temple for the Oriental Lodge. Central Avenue at 22nd Street, Indianapolis, Indiana. Herbert L. Bass, Herbert Foltz, and Rubush and Hunter, Associated Architects, Sheet No. 9, March 30, 1915. Oriental Lodge Drawings, Rubush and Hunter Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library.

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The center of the south wall of the kitchen projects forward about 1 ½ feet and contains access doorways to the custodian's apartment and sub-basement. The access to the apartment involves climbing 5 concrete steps through a wood-trimmed doorway to a short corridor leading to a door communicating with the northeast room of the former custodian's apartment. On the north side of the corridor is a wooden door leading to a small toilet room, probably originally for use of kitchen staff. The other doorway at the center of the south wall of the kitchen leads down to the sub-basement and retains its original wood door.

The southeast section of the first floor is occupied by the former custodian's apartment, now used for storage by the Prince Hall Masonic Temple. The apartment rooms are at grade and therefore must be accessed from the dining room level by climbing five steps, either from the east end of the dining room, just north of its south wall, or from the east side of the kitchen. The 1915 drawings show no access from the dining room to the apartment; the custodian had a private entrance from 22nd Street, as well as an entrance from the alley through the northeast room and from the kitchen via the corridor described above. Sometime after construction, probably before World War II, the Oriental Lodge cut an entrance to the apartment from the dining room and added a single-flight wooden staircase in the dining room. The current door appears to be post-World War II. It's possible that the change was made when the apartment was converted to office and storage use.

The 1915 drawings show a four-room apartment: a living room in the southwest portion, a "chamber" (bedroom) in the southeast portion, a kitchen north of the bedroom, and a bathroom north of the kitchen, adjacent to the east wall. To what extent the suite was ever used as an apartment is not clear. There is no evidence in the northeast room of it ever having been used as a kitchen. The living room and bedroom have plaster walls and a varnished wooden crown molding. There are closets in the north wall of the living room and in the east wall of the bedroom. The northeast room lacks a crown molding, but has a six-foot high wooden cabinet against its west wall with glass doors above, and drawers below that may be original to the building. There is a wooden exterior door and a double-hung sash window in the east wall of the northeast room. Both are covered with brick on the exterior. The bathroom adjacent to the northeast room retains its cast iron tub with white enamel covering. In the east wall of the bathroom is a double-hung wood sash window with four over four lights. It is covered by brick on the outside.

In the bedroom, there is a double window with sashes in the south wall that has been covered by translucent panels on the exterior. The original wooden doors with their original finishes are in place in all interior doorways of the apartment except the door leading to the kitchen.

Southwest Stair Hall

Returning to the southwest corner of the first floor, access to the stair hall is through double wooden doors that are original and each have fifteen-lights with gridded, frosted glass panes.

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At the base of the stair hall, there is a walk-in safe in the space below the second flight of stairs running along the south wall (Photo 0013). The safe (“vault”) is shown in the first floor plan of the 1915 drawings. The steel safe door and enframement are in place and are original. The enframements is styled as Corinthian pilasters with dados supporting an entablature with pyramidal dentils. At the center of the entablature is a sculpted lion’s head, above which are an anthemion and flanking foliated details. On the frieze below the dentils is painted the name of the original lodge: “Oriental Lodge No. 500 F. & A.M.” The safe door contains a combination lock at center and a steel handle at the left. There is an orange painted stripe along the perimeter and orange pin-stripe decorative line within the perimeter stripe. The name of the manufacturer appears at the top of the door: “The Mosler Safe Co.” in orange letters. At the bottom of the door is “Hamilton O”, which may refer to Hamilton, Ohio and the base of the company. The safe door and enframements are painted black, with exception of a reddish accent color on the fluting of the pilasters and orange highlights on the dentils and one of the moldings of the entablature.

The stair hall rises from the first floor to the third floor. The landings of the stairways on each floor are constructed of reinforced concrete with hollow tile infill for fire-proofing (Photo 0014). The treads are concrete, and the risers cast-iron. The stairways between each floor consist of four flights and three landings, all self-supporting and tied to the walls of the stairwell. Cast-iron beams form the string next to the steps, risers, and landings and provide additional structural support. The balustrade consists of simple cast iron newel posts, iron rails supported by simple steel bars. Above the iron rails are wooden rails, painted orange sometime after construction. There are also steel or cast-iron rails along the walls of the stairway. The concrete steps and risers have been painted gray, and all of the walls of the stair hall were covered with wooden panels sometime in the 1960s or 1970s. Originally the walls were plaster. The double window opening visible on the exterior to the south of the main entrance on the second floor level has been covered on the stair hall side with wood paneling matching the rest applied in the hall.

In the south wall at the top of the stair hall is the window opening corresponding to the opening with the Islamic-inspired horseshoe arch at the west end of the south elevation of the building. Inside can be seen the two, single-light leaded glass windows and the fixed pane, horseshoe-shaped leaded glass transom, all original. Within the stairwell, the varnished wooden trim for the double doors at the first and second floors has an “eared” shape along the top of the door that was popular in Classically-inspired buildings of the early 20th century.

Second Floor

At the center of the west end of the second floor is the vestibule leading from the main entrance up to the social room. The rectangular space contains an 8-step stairway at center with a landing inside the entry and a second landing at the top of the stairs, which extends as a U-shaped apron along the sides of the stairway. A pink-colored marble is employed for the steps, and the risers and the walls of the apron on either side of the stairs are covered with very small gray tile squares. The north and south side walls are mirror images of each other’s decorative schemes: in each, polychromatic tile squares of the same type as on the risers and side walls of the apron

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are used to create decorative motifs (Photo 0015). On each wall, there are three major vertical panels in which small orange and gold diamonds within blue squares appear in a grid pattern. Light green tile squares extend diagonally from each diamond and square motif. All is on a field of white tile squares. A rectilinear decorative border lines the three vertical panels on the north and south walls, consisting of two parallel rows of dark brown tile squares, flanking at center a row of double tile squares featuring blue and green triangles, white squares, and gold diamond motifs. The dark brown row and inner row are linked at regular intervals by gold-colored squares. Between each of the borders for the three major vertical panels is a contrasting vertical motif made up of intersecting blue and light blue diamonds. Below the three major vertical panels and their borders is a horizontal decorative tile square panel. It consists of inverted pyramidal figures outlined with green and dark brown tile squares. At the center of each pyramid are two orange tiles. The pyramids are linked at their upper edges by a row of green tiles. Between the inverted apexes of each pyramid appears two gold tile squares. All of these details appear in a white tile field.

At the top center of the central vertical panel on the north vestibule walls is a circular decorative motif made of terra cotta (Photo 0015). Within the motif are contained two Masonic symbols: the capital letter "G" in gold within a brown-colored triangular-shaped compass, super-imposed on the L-shaped square. The symbols appear on a dark blue field, and the whole is circumscribed by a dark green molded border. Opposite, at the top center of the south central vertical panel, a complementary circular motif composed of terra cotta appears. In it, a four-sided figure with a curved upper side contains two concentric dark brown circles. In the two-inch space between the two circles, the letters S, H, T, W, S, S, T, and K appear, also in brown. The field within the four-sided figure is white. On either side of the four sided figure are two symbols: on the left what appears to be a baton and on the right what appears to be a chalice. The left figure is white, and the one of the right is gold. These symbols appear on a blue field, which is circumscribed by the same green molded border as on the north wall.

Above the tile panels along the north and south walls are three courses of decorative low-relief sculpted details in green terra cotta. The courses are comprised of vertical terra cotta moldings fitted together. The lowest course is a bead and reel molding. The larger square central course consists of a series of identical flowers flanked by elaborate foliage. The top course is made up by identical *fleurs-de-lis* appearing within inverted horseshoe moldings. Above the green terra cotta courses, the rest of the north and south walls and the top of the east and west walls are covered with plaster. A crown plaster molding with concave shape covers the transition to the ceiling.

The west interior wall of the vestibule consists of the double door entry, with post-World War II replacement doors; a horizontal rectangular wooden panel without decorative detail consisting of squares inscribed in circles; and a fixed glass transom window painted a mustard color, with the name "Prince Hall Masonic Temple" and the Masonic symbols stenciled in the paint. The original varnished wood trim and jambs remain outside the doors and the original trim for the transom. On either side and above the entrance trim, the same decorative scheme in tile from the north and side walls continues.

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The east interior wall of the vestibule consists of the original double doors at center, of wood with 15-light panes and wooden mutins. The original wood trim remains, and to the sides of the doorway and above it, the decorative program in tile of the other three walls of the vestibule continue.

To the south of the vestibule is the southwest stair hall. To its north is a rectangular check room for events on the second floor. The room is accessed from the social room through double wooden doors containing with fifteen lights. Inside, the room retains its original plaster on the walls and ceiling. There is chair-level wooden rail with frieze and projecting shelf above that runs around the whole room. Along the south wall is a wooden rack for coats affixed to the wall above the chair rail shelf. At the north end of the west wall is a double window opening in which the original double-hung wood sash with six over six panes remains; it is covered with brick on the exterior. At the center of the north wall of the check room is an opening about 5 and a half feet wide with doors that lead into a rectangular storage room against the north wall of the second floor. There is an original wooden toilet stall at the east end of the storage room. The trim of the opening leading into the storage room and of the entrance to the check room is of the same “eared” architrave design as seen elsewhere in the building when double interior doorways are involved.

The social room, which the 1915 drawings called the “Club and Assembly Room,” measures 70 feet by 44.5 feet and occupies nearly three-fourths of the floor (Photos 0016 and 0017). It is accessed from the vestibule and the southwest stair hall and has served as a lounge for both the Oriental Lodge and Prince Hall Masons since its completion. During the Oriental Lodge’s tenure, it was also used for dances or balls.¹⁶ The room contains five window bays in both its north and south walls. Each bay contains the same arrangement of windows as in the dining room below. All but one of the windows in the social room retain their original double-hung wood window sashes, lights, and mutins. The central opening in the north wall has been covered from the inside by a bulletin board. The exterior of all the windows has been covered with buff brick infills. The floor of the social room is wooden and retains its original finish. There is a continuation of the elaborated wooden chair rail from the west check room along the north and south walls; the shelf of the rail also serves as the sill for the windows. Along the west end of the social room, a yellowed linoleum, dating possibly to the 1940s or 1950s, has been laid over the wood.

Crossing the ceiling of the social room are six north/south ornamental beams, 20 inches wide, which conceal structural steel I-beams encased in reinforced concrete. The exterior veneer of the beams is white plaster. Each side of the beams consist of a flat plaster surface, with six slight step moldings shifting the face of the surface outward from the lowest edge to the cornice. At the top of each beam, a horizontal plaster cornice extends out from the beam approximately three inches along the ceiling and terminates with a final two-step molding (Photo 0017).

¹⁶ *Historical Sketch of Oriental Lodge No. 500, F & A. M., 1875-1925. Compiled by Oriental Lodge as part of its Semi-Centennial Celebration held on May 26 and 27, 1925* (Indianapolis, 1925), p.79; Phone conversation with Ed Board, member of Evergreen-Oriental Lodge, February, 14, 2014.

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Along the west wall of the social room are five doorway bays (Photo 0017). The three at center are actual doorways leading (as seen from the east) to the southwest stair hall, the vestibule, and the west checkroom. At the north and south ends of the west wall are two doorway openings with identical wooden trim to the double doors in between. The trim in the outer openings is purely a veneer inside which are continuations of the plaster wall on which notices and a portrait of Prince Hall are hung currently.

Flanking the three active doorways of the west wall are four engaged columns that appear below the westernmost plaster cross beam of the social room. Each column (Photo 0018) consists of three parts: a partial, projecting plaster shaft with six flat, faceted surfaces, a capital, and a continuation of the shaft above the capital up to the underside of the plaster beam. Each capital has a white plaster surface in turn consisting of three parts. At center there is a large elaborate section with an S-curve shape, in which a bas relief sculpted panel is repeated five times. At the center of each panel, which adjoins its neighbors without interruption of flow or shape, is a flower. Above each flower are graceful, curved leaves of foliage. Enframing each flower on either side is what appears to be peas in an open pod and what may be an unshucked ear of corn. Below the central, convex sculpted surface of each capital is a simple flat, rectilinear molding with upraised plaster diamonds. Above the convex surface of each is a five-side, rectilinear molding with each face containing recessed panels in which upraised moldings form interconnected builder's squares and motifs with zigzag edges and flat tops. Inside each column, a structural steel column supports the westernmost of the north-south cross beams of the social room.

The wooden chair rail and shelf along the north and south walls of the room continue across the wall and column shafts of the west wall.

At the east end of the social room (Photo 0016), there is a rectangular alcove at center, extending to the east wall of the building. The alcove, measuring approximately 29 feet by 14 feet, currently is used as an area for playing pool and billiards. There are two window openings in the east wall of the alcove. Each opening contains four over four, double-hung wood sash windows, which are covered with brick from the exterior. The white plaster treatment given the eastern most north-south beam in the social room is continued around the cornice of the alcove. At the south end of the alcove is located a ladies restroom, consisting of a small lounge and a toilet. In the lounge, there are flat varnished boards mounted on the upper walls that may have been intended as surfaces for hanging pictures. At the north end of the alcove is a small office, originally possibly a dressing room, with the original wooden door with a single plate glass light.

At the north and south outer corners of the alcove are two engaged columns matching the design of the four along the west wall of the social room. According to a circa 1925 photograph,¹⁷ originally the capitals were painted a dark color; they are now all white. To the north and south

¹⁷ See Historical Photograph 8, Section 11 of this nomination.

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of the alcove, the east wall of the social room continues its plaster surface and the wooden chair rail and shelf, which also continues along the walls of the alcove.

Originally, the social room was lighted by single electric lights encased in translucent glass coverings. These have been replaced possibly since 1983 by the current flat florescent lights on the ceiling between the beams.

Third Floor

The third floor is accessed from the top landing of the southwest stair hall. Double wooden doors with 15-lights each lead to the north into a rectangular foyer (Photo 0019) located against the west wall of the building. At the center of the west wall of the room are the trio of windows that appear above the main entrance on the exterior. The windows, each consisting of a fixed pane transom above and two casement lights below, retain their leaded glass. The horseshoe-shaped transom panes feature clear glass set in cames, with a row of four amber-colored diamond insets arranged at center. Each of the rectangular casement lights consists also of clear glass set in cames, with three amber diamond insets arranged in a vertical line at center. There is a ladies' restroom located on the north side of the foyer. On the east side of the foyer, at center is a passage leading east to a north-south corridor. Flanking the passage are two storage rooms, accessed by doors on the east side of the foyer. A suspended ceiling has been installed in the foyer, probably since 1970. The original upper plaster wall and ceiling is visible above the east passage. A wooden picture molding runs around the perimeter of the foyer, just below the suspended ceiling. All doors and trim in the room retain their original finish.

Solid wooden double doors lead from the foyer into the north-south corridor, which communicates to the south with the former Tyler's room and to the north with the stairway leading up to the third floor mezzanine, the preparation room, and north anteroom for the lodge room. The corridor has smooth plastered walls and a rough texture plaster on the ceiling. Opposite the double doors from the foyer, there is a wooden hat shelf and coat rack, which appears original.

The 1915 architectural drawings designated the room at the sound end of the corridor for the lodge Tyler, a doorman offering access to ceremonies in the lodge room to the east. The rectangular room is located at the south end of the building and is entered through a rectangular opening with wood trim but no doors. It is now used to display historical memorabilia of the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge and to offer access to the three examination rooms along its west side and to the lodge room on its east side. In the small examination rooms, candidates for membership in the lodges of the Prince Hall Masonic Temple are questioned as part of their admission. In the southeast corner of the room is a bulkhead containing a ventilation duct. On the walls of the duct are two wooden squares containing cast-iron levers for opening and closing the duct. On the east wall, near the duct, is a control device for "the Johnson System of Heat Regulation," manufactured by the Johnson Service Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The device also has a cast-iron lever that can be moved from "Open" to "Closed."

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In the north wall of the Tyler's room is a doorway leading to the stage behind the west platform of the lodge room. The shallow stage, 7 feet, 3 inches deep, is now used for storage. On the east side of the Tyler's room, near its northeast corner, are double wooden doors, with solid panels, leading into the lodge room. The Tyler's room has smooth plastered walls and ceiling. All doors retain their original finish and all are solid with a single vertical panel at center.

At the north end of the north-south corridor is a door leading to a spiral stairway to the third floor mezzanine level. The stairway hall is rectangular and two stories. On its north wall, opposite the mezzanine doorway, are two rectangular windows, each with double-hung wood sash and containing the original leaded glass with its grid of came and four diamond-shaped insets. The staircase itself (Photo 0020) is constructed around a central cast-iron column and curves 45 degrees to the right, then straightens as it continues up to the mezzanine level, then finally curves to the right to reach the platform of the mezzanine level. The steps are concrete, the risers and structural plates supporting the steps are cast-iron. There are cast-iron newel posts and supporting steel bars matching those of the southwest stair hall. The rails are wooden.

To the west of the spiral stair hall on the third floor, with access via a door located immediately to the west of the stair hall door, is a former locker-room for lodge members to store costumes for ceremonies. The rectangular room is now used for storage. On its north wall, near its northwest corner, is a single window grouping consisting of the horseshoe-shaped transom and two rectangular lights below. The transom retains its original leaded glass panel, but the two lights below have clear glass, with the left plate broken. The walls and ceiling are smooth plaster, and the floor has an exposed, finished concrete surface. At the northwest corner of the room is a door in the west wall leading into a restroom. In the south wall, near the door into the room, is a door leading to a small closet.

Returning to the north-south corridor, opposite the former locker room are double wooden doors leading into an ante-room for the lodge room. The ante-room is rectangular. At its north end is a small rectangular room that the 1915 drawings designated a "vault," but there is no evidence it was ever used as such. Today is used for storage. To its east is a ventilation duct, and on the outside of the duct is another wooden plate with a cast-iron lever for opening and closing ventilation. On the west side of the ante-room is a doorway leading into the spiral stairway hall.

One can enter the lodge room from the west portion of the third floor through either the northwest anteroom or through the southwest Tyler's room. In both cases, solid wooden double doors lead into the two-story lodge room, the most impressive space in the building (Photos 0021 and 0022). The lodge room measures approximately 45 by 59 feet and occupies nearly two-thirds of the third and fourth stories of the building. The plan is typical of Masonic lodges of the earlier 20th century: At the east and west ends, at center, there are platforms for the seats of the officers of the lodge. Along the long, north and south sides of the room, there are two-level platforms containing seats for lodge members. At the center of the south platforms is space for the chair of the Junior Warden of the lodge.

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At the east end of the lodge room, a rectangular alcove provides space for the elevated dais and chairs of the Worshipful Master, Treasurer, and Secretary (Photo 0023). Four wooden steps lead up to the dais. At the center of the front of the dais is a varnished wooden rostrum or table that may be original to the building. To the rear of the rostrum are three ornate, high-backed wooden chairs that appear to date to the late 19th century, but are not original to the lodge room. On the wall behind the central chair is an oil painting of Prince Hall, the founder of the Prince Hall Masonic Order in the United States.

Flanking the dais are two Greek Doric columns standing *in antis*. Each column (Photo 0023) is plaster and consists of the following parts: from the top, an abacus, echinus with slightly convex shape, fluted shaft, and smooth base section. The lower edge of the echinus is lined with two parallel curved moldings, while the top of the fluted shaft is upraised slightly from the rest of the shaft. The smooth base, approximately four feet tall, is without precedent in Greek architecture. On it are painted a decorative scheme in bold colors. Three stylized flowers with red and orange petals and a green center are repeated around the shaft, and each floral grouping is enframed by two sharply pointed forms composed of an outer green zone and inner red core. Between the two zones is a narrow orange line. At the center of each red zone is a circular motif with blue center, outlined in orange. The flowers and pointed forms appear on what was probably a black field originally, now cracked and faded. At the top of each smooth column section, there is a painted frieze consisting of a continuous blue “wave” motif with an orange or yellow field. The frieze is outline above and below in red. The fluted shafts are painted white. The abacuses and echinuses are painted gold.

On either side of the east alcove opening are two vertical sections in the main east wall styled as pilasters. At the top of each pilaster is a rectilinear capital, of cast-plaster, painted gold. The capitals appear based more on Classical building entablatures than column capitals. There is a flat frieze, succeeded above by a bead and reel astragal, cyma reversa molding styled as acanthus leaves, ovolo molding, a concave molding, fascia divided into rectangles with square motifs at center, and a crowning projecting molding consisting of foliated motifs. The two-foot wide shafts of the two pilasters are covered with smooth plaster, which is painted in its lower three foot, six inches portion black with a continuation of the blue “wave” motif seen on the Doric columns.

At both the south and north ends of the east alcove in the lodge room are doors leading to storage rooms. The north storage room also leads to the third floor firescape. Both rooms contain ventilation ducts.

The walls of the lodge room are divided into five vertical zones (Photo 0024). The lowest zone is the black dado with wave motif already described for the columns and pilasters (Photo 0023). Next is a nine foot, three inches high section, covered with what the 1915 drawings called “Caen stone plaster.”¹⁸ The plaster is scored with lines to resemble blocks of stone masonry. Above

¹⁸ “Longitudinal Section,” Masonic Temple for the Oriental Lodge. Central Avenue at 22nd Street, Indianapolis, Indiana. Herbert L. Bass, Herbert Foltz, and Rubush and Hunter, Associated Architects, Sheet No. 8, March 30, 1915. Oriental Lodge Drawings, Rubush and Hunter Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library.

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this is a stenciled frieze (Photo 0025), about one foot, three inches wide, in which an original fret pattern continues around the whole room. The fret pattern involves inter-connected geometric forms drawn in perspective, with unconnected squares with free-standing sticks at center occurring at regular intervals. All of the forms in the frieze have gold-colored surfaces, while some have green sides and others gold. The unconnected squares have red sides. The frieze is interrupted periodically by plaster medallions, circular in shape and slightly convex in profile. The medallions occur below vertical stenciled panels in the next vertical zone and above the Doric columns and pilasters along the east wall (Photo 0023). Each medallion is painted with a flower with six red and gold petals and dark center, surrounded by six symmetrically arranged green leaves with rounded shapes. A gold convex molding borders each medallion. One section of the fret frieze has been painted over between the two Doric columns along the east wall.

The fourth vertical zone in the lodge room is four feet, seven inches wide. At regular intervals along the north, south, and east walls, there are vertical stenciled panels (Photo 0025). In the north and south walls, these appear between the upper white wooden moldings bordering the frieze already described and the lower surfaces of the four, north-south beams supporting the ceiling. In the east wall, the vertical panels appear above the Doric columns and pilasters with entablatures. Each panel has a cracked plaster surface, much darkened with age. Still visible are painted motifs: (a) a vertical, golden pole with a sun-burst feature at center and leaves and sinuous tendrils curling out above and below the center and (b) five green wreathes, possibly intended to be laurel, over which the golden pole device is super-imposed. As background, there is a black field, and around the perimeter of each panel is a golden border.

Also in the fourth zone, at the center of the horizontal plaster panel above the eastern alcove platform is a circular glass medallion set in a rounded plaster molding (Photo 0021). The letter "G," symbolizing God, is stenciled on the glass surface with black paint outlining the letter. The "G" is back-lit by an electric light. In the fourth zone of the east wall, above the northeast and southeast sections, are two ventilation grilles, both made of wood (Photo 0021). Each grille consists of open-work squares in which Xs are super-imposed on crosses. At the lower edge of each grille, there is a ventilation register connected with a duct leading up originally to a ventilator on the roof.

The fifth vertical zone is a final plaster surface between the top of the vertical stenciled panels and the ceiling. Set in both the fourth and fifth zones of the north and south walls are trios of windows (Photo 0024). Each set is located between two of the north-south beams in the lodge room; there are a total of nine windows in the north wall and nine in the south wall. All of the windows have double-hung wooden sashes, and all sashes contain the original leaden glass lights. The glass sheet in each sash contains a grid of nine clear glass panes set in comes, with nine, amber-colored diamond-shaped motifs at the intersections of the grid. Around the border of the central grid in each sash are narrow, rectangular panes.

There are four rectilinear beams that run north-south at regular intervals across the ceiling of the lodge room (Photo 0026). The plaster exterior conceals steel I-beams encased in reinforced

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concrete, which support the load of the roof. The east and west sides of each beam are covered with a repetition of stenciled Classical motifs: alternating palmettes and anthemias. Both figures are gold, with the palmettes set in a red field outlined with a palm shape, and the anthemias in a blue field. On the lower surface of the beams (Photo 0025), a different stenciled scheme unfolds: five sunburst motifs (possibly sunflowers) appear at regular intervals, and on either side of each sunburst are stenciled green palm branches. The sunburst motifs consist of sixteen petals or rays radiating out from a dark center, all circumscribed in a broken black border. The petals or rays are outlined in a lavender field. The sunburst motifs and palm branches themselves are set in a gold-painted field, originally outlined in turn by a blue border (now faded).

The ceiling itself is covered by a grid of square acoustical panels with perforated holes that may be original to the building. There are five elaborate chandeliers hanging from the ceiling of the lodge room (Photo 0027). Originally there were six smaller chandeliers with molded glass coverings. The original chandeliers were replaced sometime after 1925. The elaborateness of the current chandeliers and their finely crafted traditional motifs suggest a date before World War II. There are two hanging within the second and four bays created by the cross beams, and a single chandelier hanging at the center of the third bay. Each chandelier is styled as lantern, with a rounded, glass-enclosed cylinder providing light. Below each cylinder hang two sets of brass, perforated plates with rounded edges. The lower row of plates serves to focus the electric light down, as well as horizontally. Inverted, molded palmettes are set between each plate. At the top of each cylinder, stylized brass brackets with fan-shaped ends with palmette details support a crown composed of horizontal sheets lined with more curved plates with perforated surfaces. Right-sided molded palmettes cover the intersections between the plates. Above this is a smaller ring of perforated sheets and palmettes. The cylinder and its adornments are supported by five brass poles that are adorned near their tops by molded acanthus leaves and additional palmettes. Chains support each of the chandelier ensembles from the ceilings.

The 1915 architectural drawings specified a “cement floor” for the central floor in the lodge room, with a “carpet strip” around the perimeter of the central area. Photographs taken about 1925 of the room show a patterned carpet covering the main floor.¹⁹ Currently, there is a blue carpet that covers the central space and the two levels of seating to the north and south. Originally, there were cushioned, wooden, bench seats for members on the platforms along the north and south sides of the room. Those were replaced sometime after 1925, probably before 1950, with the current cast-iron theater-style seats. The end seats in each row have decorative plates with upraised moldings forming volutes and foliated motifs (Photo 0021).

At the center of the south wall is a space for the Junior Warden’s chair, which now is an ornate late 19th century wooden seat. In front is a varnished wooden pedestal with two rows of dentils below the top surface. At the center of the lodge room is the altar (Photo 0021), which is now a rectangular wooden piece with free-standing, turned posts at each corner supporting the top surface, covered with a blue cushion. A cushioned apron surrounds the altar, and on its sides

¹⁹ See Historical Photographs 9 and 10, Section 11 of this nomination.

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appear Masonic symbols. The original altar used by the Oriental Lodge before 1925 was of a different design, and it is possible that the current altar, the ornate 19th century officer chairs and possibly the pedestals and rostrums in use now in the lodge room were brought to the building by the Prince Hall Masons when they purchased the building in 1983.

Addressing the west wall of the lodge room, the focal point is the west platform and stage at the center of the main floor (Photo 0028). There are two wooden steps leading from the main floor up to the platform. At center is another ornate wooden chair with a Masonic symbol on its back for the Senior Warden and a wooden pedestal or rostrum. The latter appears to be original to the Oriental Lodge period. There is a U-shaped opening enframing the stage, and the opening is lined with a frieze consisting of an upraised fret pattern. The pattern is composed of interlocking, rectilinear geometric forms that periodically enclose a square motif involving a red berry and leaves. The fretwork has a gold surface and is against a blue field. Bordering the frieze is white wooden trim. On either side of the stage and frieze are double wooden doors with solid panels leading to the Tyler's room on the south and to the lodge room anteroom on the north.

At both the north and south corners of the west wall, three flights of stairs lead up to the organ and musician's balcony overlooking the lodge room on the third floor mezzanine level. The stairways are self-supporting and have a cast-iron structure similar to those in the southwest stair hall and spiral stairway at the north end of the third floor. There are concrete steps, cast-iron risers, and cast-iron plates supporting the underside of each flight and the string of the stairway. There are cast-iron rails, surmounted by wooden rails, and cast-iron newel posts at the beginning of each flight. The balusters each consist of three parallel bars that terminate at their tops with spherical pointed moldings flanking a central motif made up of plain palmettes and a central floral motif, possibly a lotus bud. The newel posts and balustrade are painted gold. The undersides and string appear to have been plastered, and are now painted blue, to match the color of the main vertical zone in the lodge room. The stairway balustrade continues uninterrupted along the musician's balcony, which is approximately fourteen feet wide (Photo 0029). In front of the organ, between the two double-door openings located on the balcony, the balustrade bows out slightly in a crescent shape.

There are two portable columns standing at the base of the north stairway. These are used for Prince Hall Masonic ceremonies and were acquired sometime after 1925. The original Oriental Lodge columns were of a slightly different design. The present columns are of identical design and each consists of a fluted Corinthian column proper standing on a plinth styled as a pilaster and supporting globes with actual maps of the world in color, although faded. The two columns with globes are wooden and painted gold.

At the center of the musician's balcony, on the west wall, is a wooden pipe organ console with plates identifying it as a "Felgemaker Organ Opus 1221," manufactured by the A.B. Felgemaker Organ Company of Erie, Pennsylvania (Photo 0029). The organ console, with its two-rank key boards, stops, and pedals, appears to be completely original, although not playable currently. The wooden casing and seat are original and retain their original finish. The pipes for the organ

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are located in a chamber to the west of the balcony on the third floor mezzanine. A large, rectangular wooden grille covers the wall above the organ and provides ventilation for the pipes beyond. The grille is of an openwork design consisting of Xs superimposed on crosses, with medallions covering the intersections.

A final note about the lodge room: pre-1925 black and white photographs indicate that the plaster surfaces in the second and fourth, and fifth vertical zones described above were painted solid colors originally. The second zone was painted a light color, and the fourth zone a dark color. The fifth and final vertical zone was given the same stenciled treatment as the sides of the four columns crossing the room, with alternating palmettes and anthemias. The current dark blue color for the second zone and red for the fourth zone are probably different from the original, but preserve the contrasting color scheme intended. The fifth zone around the perimeter of the room has been painted over with a blue color matching that of the second zone.

Third Floor Mezzanine

The third floor mezzanine, a partial fourth floor, can be accessed either through the sets of two double wooden doors flanking the organ on the musician's balcony or via the spiral stairway already described at the north end of the third floor north-south corridor. There are two short corridors leading from the two sets of double doors into what was originally a single open room comprising the southern five-sixths of the west end of the mezzanine level. The 1915 drawings called this room the "Inner Lodge," apparently intended to be used for smaller lodge meetings. Sometime after 1960 the western two-thirds of this space was subdivided with dry wall partitions to create five storage rooms. The storage rooms are accessed through four doors in an east-west corridor that was created to run from the open east end of the original inner lodge space west to two of the trio of windows that are centered on the fourth story of the west façade. The third window is found just inside the southwest storage rooms. All three of these windows are of matching design to those in the upper levels of the lodge room: double-hung wooden sash with the standard pattern of leaded glass and amber-colored diamond motifs in each sash. The fifth storage room door is located on the west side of the east corridor of the mezzanine.

At the south end of the eastern corridor formed by the partitioning of the inner lodge, there are another set of the three rectangular windows with leaded glass sashes matching the others on the fourth story level. Along the east and north walls of the corridor are metal lockers installed sometime before 1983 by the Oriental Lodge and now used by members of the Prince Hall Central Lodge Number 1 to store their costumes. Additional lockers are stored against leaded glass windows at the south end of the east corridor and at the west end of the east-west corridor.

In the southeast corner of the east corridor is an original storage room, called a "property room" in the 1915 drawings. It also contains a continuation of the ventilation ducts from the Tyler's room below up to the south ventilator on the roof. There are three original light fixtures hanging from the ceiling of the east corridor, consisting of molded, smooth glass bowls over electric fixtures. A wooden picture molding runs around the perimeter of the east corridor and on the exterior walls of the storage rooms.

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In the two short corridors leading east to the musician's balcony, there are wooden doors with an open grille pattern at center that matches that of the grille over the organ on the balcony. The two doors offer access to the rectangular room containing the organ pipes. On the north side of the northern east-west corridor leading to the balcony, there is a small rectangular storage room, called a "lantern room" by the 1915 drawings.

Immediately south of the storage room is the doorway leading to the top landing of the spiral stairway communicating with the third floor. West of the spiral stairway and accessed through a door on the top landing of the stairway is the former "preparation room" of the Oriental Lodge. There were originally three open wooden booths along the north wall in which lodge members could change costumes for ceremonies. Two of the paneled partitions remain. At the southwest corner of the preparation room is a small toilet room. To the north of the toilet room is an original, built-in wooden cabinet with two doors containing storage shelves and drawers. The north, east, and part of the west walls of the preparation room have been covered with the same wooden paneling installed in the 1960s or 1970s in the southwest stair hall. The south wall and part of the west wall retain their plaster surfaces. Also on the west wall is a wooden ladder leading up to an access hole to the roof.

Roof

The roof of the building is flat and is covered with strips of asphalt given a black-top coating (Photo 0030). The strips run up the inner sides of the four-foot parapets to the terra cotta coping. Originally there were two ventilators on the roof, located at the north and south edges, above the shafts running up through the Tyler's room and "vault" room on the third floor and the property room, and "lantern room" of the third floor mezzanine. The north ventilator has been removed and is capped. The south ventilator survives, consisting of sheet metal circular base supporting a megaphone-shaped "mouth" at top. At the east end of the roof, close to the north parapet is the brick chimney for the building furnace. The outer faces of the chimney are constructed of pearl-gray brick, while the inner side has been re-built with buff brick. There is a limestone cap.

Sub-Basement

The sub-basement, called "basement" by the 1915 drawings, is only excavated below the southeast corner of the building. It is a story and a half in height and its walls are exposed reinforced concrete. Access to the sub-basement is from the south wall of the kitchen, down a single-flight, cast-iron stairway. At the base of the stairway is a small square room containing a metal device that could not be identified. The boiler, or furnace room, occupies the northern two-thirds of the sub-basement and according to the 1915 drawings was intended to house two boilers located near at its north side. The ducts originally and currently ran from the boilers and the current single furnace to an opening in the north wall near the east wall and then north to the chimney, which runs along the east side of the building up to the roof. The current furnace, fueled by gas, generates steam, which is forced via pipes to original steel radiators located throughout the building along the walls of every room. To the east of the boiler room via a door

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is a narrow rectangular room with reinforced concrete walls that rises approximately a story and a half to a rusted iron ceiling. This may have been a coal chute originally, although the 1915 drawings designate the room south of the boiler room as the “fuel room,” with a coal chute indicated on the latter’s east wall. The south room is rectangular and now vacant. On the east wall is a modern electrical system of panels and circuit breakers. The doorway between the fuel room and boiler rooms can be sealed by a steel fire door on rollers located on the south wall of the boiler room.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery

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- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

1916-1964

Significant Dates

1916

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Herbert L. Bass and Company,
Herbert Foltz, and
Rubush and Hunter

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1916, the year in which the Oriental Lodge Number 500 Building was completed and continues to 1964, which marks the 50-year benchmark for evaluating significance. The building has been continuously used for Masonic meetings and ceremonies from 1916 to the present day.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Oriental Lodge Number 500 is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its association with Indianapolis social history as home first for one of the most important neighborhood Masonic lodges in the city during the early 20th century, the Oriental Lodge. The Oriental Lodge is also the only pre-1945 neighborhood Masonic lodge building of the pre-1970 City of Indianapolis that has been continuously used for Masonic purposes since its construction. Due to the high degree of interior integrity, the Oriental Lodge illustrates clearly the settings for Masonic ceremonies and social activities in a neighborhood lodge building. The Oriental Lodge is eligible under Criterion C an excellent Indianapolis example of Exotic Revival, specifically, Islamic architectural ideas being worked into the decorative program for a modern building in the early 20th century. It has a high degree of integrity overall, with minor alterations.

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

Social History

The Oriental Lodge Number 500 was organized in 1874 by a group of men who lived on the near-north side of Indianapolis, north and northeast of the original Mile Square area of settlement. As a neighborhood “blue lodge,” the Masonic body received its charter from the white Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Indiana the same year and occupied rental quarters in the Buschmann Block at 970 Fort Wayne Avenue.²⁰ After 20 years of slow growth and occasional financial obstacles, the Oriental Lodge began to grow steadily in membership and moved east in 1895 to a new Buschmann Building at 11th Street and College Avenue. To

²⁰ Blue lodges were the basic units that new Masons joined. After members had moved through the various degrees of Masonry, they eventually could also become Scottish Rite Masons and members of the various Shrine chapters. As noted later, from an early point, there were separate white and African American Masonic orders.

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accommodate the lodge, August W. Buschmann added a third story with a lodge room especially designed for their needs. Located in the midst of an increasingly affluent neighborhood, with what is now the Old Northside located to the north of the lodge quarters, the Oriental Lodge attracted prominent businessmen and professional men—lawyers, doctors, and architects. By 1902, the lodge membership at risen to 300, a number which was to double in ten years. In 1904, the downtown blue lodges, the female Eastern Star chapters, the York Rite Masonic chapters, and the Grand Lodge of Indiana decided to build a larger Masonic temple at North and Illinois Streets, to replace the temple at Capitol Avenue and Washington Street. The Oriental Lodge was invited in 1904 and again in 1906 to join in the Masonic Temple Association organized to construct the new temple, but the Oriental membership twice declined the invitation. Instead, they decided to remain a neighborhood lodge and pursue construction of an eventual building of their own, to be located at a site convenient to its north side membership.²¹

In 1907, the lodge authorized purchase of a building site north of 10th Street, south of Fall Creek, east of Illinois, and west of College, the neighborhood in which most members lived. The building committee purchased a lot on the southeast corner of 17th and Alabama the same year. For the next five years, the building project proceeded slowly, although membership continued to increase rapidly, reaching 600 in 1912. That same year, a new building committee was appointed, consisting of Samuel T. Conkling, John J. Twiname, Ralph K. Smith, Charles L. Buschmann, and Frank E. Floyd as chairman. In 1913 the building committee decided that the lot purchased in 1907 was not desirable and began to search for another. In November, 1914, the building committee purchased the 65 x 177 foot lot on the northeast corner of 22nd Street and Central Avenue.²²

Early in 1915, the Oriental Lodge decided to form a holding company for the property, the Oriental Lodge Realty Company. Preferred stock in the company was sold to J.F. Wild and Company, an Indianapolis bank, and the proceeds from the sale went into the building fund, making construction possible. The bank obtained a mortgage on the property for the amount of its stock purchase. The cornerstone was laid on May 26, 1915, and construction proceeded through the rest of 1915. Dedication of the new Oriental Lodge Number 500 Temple occurred on February 7, 1916.²³

Additional stock was sold to complete the furnishing of the building, and final cost was approximately \$100,000. A newspaper article from February 4 stated that the new building was “one of the finest and most pretentious blue lodge and chapter Masonic homes in the state.” The article also reported that the completed lodge building included in its first floor a cloak room, banquet hall, kitchen, and “the attendant’s residence quarters.” On the second were a large social room, or ballroom; a place for a stage; retiring, cloak, and dressing rooms; and a place for billiards. The lodge room took up most of the third and fourth floors. At the front of the building, the regular third floor contained a general reception room, rooms “for examination of

²¹ *Historical Sketch of Oriental Lodge No. 500, F & A. M., 1875-1925. Compiled by Oriental Lodge as part of its Semi-Centennial Celebration held on May 26 and 27, 1925* (Indianapolis, 1925), pp. 7-48.

²² *Ibid*, pp. 46-53.

²³ *Ibid*, pp. 54-57.

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visitors wishing to attend the lodge,” and the outer precinct candidates for Masonry degrees enter before proceeding to the lodge room. On the partial fourth floor, there were dressing rooms for those assisting the candidates, a room for “the craft,” and a small lodge room accommodating fifty or sixty people. The article praised the furnishing for the building, citing the mahogany altar at the center of the lodge room, the mahogany officer chairs and benches for members, and the pipe organ on the “fourth floor gallery.”²⁴

Probably aided by the appeal of its new building, the Oriental Lodge continued to attract new members rapidly, with membership increasing from 600 in 1912 to 900 in 1919. During World War I, 91 younger members of the lodge volunteered for the Armed Forces, and the dining room was loaned to the Red Cross Auxiliary as a sewing room for making hospital supplies. In 1919 returning veterans swelled the numbers of applications for membership in the lodge, and in 1920, the numbers reached 1000. In 1921 the lodge assisted in the organization of the eastside Brookside Lodge and established a DeMolay Commandery chapter, the Masonic organization for boys. Membership continued to climb in the 1920s. In 1925, when the Oriental Lodge celebrated its 50th anniversary, membership stood at 1100. The enthusiasm of the members for the lodge activities was demonstrated when the lodge paid off its substantial mortgage twelve years early in 1925.²⁵

The Oriental Lodge was one of the largest neighborhood Masonic lodges in Indianapolis between 1900 and 1941. Its members were described repeatedly as including “some of the best known men in the city and the state,” and it appears that it was considered prestigious by many prominent business and professional men to join the lodge. For example, in 1904, soon after being elected Vice President of the United States, Charles W. Fairbanks petitioned the Oriental Lodge for initiation in the first three degrees of Masonry and was admitted as a Master Mason. In 1921 former U.S. Senator Albert J. Beveridge, a leader of the Progressive Party in Indiana and a distinguished biographer, received the third degree of Master Mason in the Oriental Lodge.²⁶

The obvious appeal of membership in a Masonic lodge, or of any other of the sizeable numbers of fraternal orders in early 20th century United States was social—an opportunity to meet regularly with other men with similar backgrounds and interests. The first three degrees of Masonry—Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason—were administered by blue lodges such as the Oriental, and the instruction, examinations, and rituals associated with initiation into each degree were the central focus of membership and required attendance at least once a week. Social activities by the 1920s entailed special dinners to mark anniversaries or special seasons of

²⁴ Ibid, p. 57; “Masonic Temple, Built by the Oriental Lodge, Will Be Dedicated Monday Night,” *Indianapolis News*, February 4, 1916, p. 3, c. 2.

²⁵ “Historical Sketch,” pp. 61-74; “Oriental Lodge of Masons to Celebrate Fiftieth Anniversary of Its Founding,” *Indianapolis Star*, May 23, 1925, p. 9, c.3.

²⁶ “Historical Sketch,” pp. 41, 74.

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the year, dances in the second floor ballroom, and billiard games. The emphasis of Masonry on moral character and conduct undoubtedly also appealed to members and potential members.²⁷

Although by 1940 there were fourteen neighborhood Masonic lodge buildings in the city of Indianapolis, the Oriental Lodge possessed the largest of the neighborhood structures and at least to that point had probably the largest membership of the neighborhood lodges. After World War II, there was a steady decline in the numbers of members in all of the white Masonic lodges in the city, as members moved to new post-war suburbs, and some new lodges were organized outside the city limits. In addition, the near-northside neighborhood, an affluent white residential area in the early 20th century, changed in its economic and demographic characteristics, as white residents left, large houses were converted to multiple low rent apartments to respond to an under-supply of affordable housing, and African-American residents moved into the area after forcible segregation ended in the 1960s. As the economic character of the neighborhood declined, houses were condemned and demolished. In 1983, the Oriental Lodge sold their building to the Prince Hall Masonic Temple Association, Inc., which was looking for a Masonic facility located near the homes of many of the members of its lodges and chapters. Eventually, the Oriental Lodge constructed a new building on W. 46th Street in Indianapolis and merged with a Westside lodge, the Evergreen Lodge.²⁸

The Oriental Lodge Number 500 is significant under Criterion A and in the area of Social History because it housed between the period of significance one of the most important neighborhood Masonic lodges in Indianapolis. It is also significant because out of six Masonic neighborhood lodge buildings in use in the city of Indianapolis in 1916 and out of fourteen such lodge buildings in use in the city in 1940, it is the only one to have continuously served Masonic organizations since its construction.²⁹ It enjoys a high degree of interior integrity, so that the Masonic ceremonies and social activities of the period of significance can be easily visualized. All of the others within the pre-1970 city limits have either been demolished or adapted to new uses. Moreover, of all the neighborhood lodges operated in Indianapolis by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and the Knights of Pythias, the two chief other fraternal orders in the early 20th century, none continue to house fraternal lodges.³⁰

²⁷ Ibid, pp. 5-6, 37,41, 48, 55, 67,70, 76-79; "Masonic Temple, Built by the Oriental Lodge"; phone conversation with Ed Board, member of the Evergreen-Oriental Masonic Lodge, February 14, 1914; "Opening the Doors," brochure produced by Grand Lodge of Indiana Committee on Masonic Education, c. 2004.

²⁸ "Societies—Benevolent and Fraternal," *Polk's Indianapolis City Directory 1940*, Vo. LXXXVI (Indianapolis: R.L. Polk and Co., 1940), pp. 2181-2182; Trustee's Deed Number 83-66073, wherein is conveyed by the Trustees of the Oriental Lodge No. 500 to the Prince Hall Masonic Temple Association, Inc. Lot 10 in Bruce Place Addition to the City of Indianapolis and Lots 9 and 10 in Levi Sohl's Subdivision of Lots 11 to 16 inclusive in Bruce Place Addition, September 9, 1983, Marion County Recorder's Office; phone conversation with Ed Board, February 14, 2014.

²⁹ "Secret and Benevolent Organizations," *R.L. Polk and Co.'s Indianapolis City Directory 1916* (Indianapolis: R.L. Polk and Co., 1916), p. 57; "Societies—Benevolent and Fraternal," *Polk's Indianapolis City Directory 1940*, p. 2182.

³⁰ See listings of Odd Fellow and Knights of Pythias lodges in "Secret and Benevolent Organizations," *R.L. Polk and Co.'s Indianapolis City Directory 1916* (Indianapolis: R.L. Polk and Co., 1916), pp. 58-59; "Societies—Benevolent and Fraternal," *Polk's Indianapolis City Directory 1940*, p. 2181.

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Architecture

The design development of the Oriental Lodge building began in 1902, when Joseph Nethery, a member of the Oriental Lodge, began planning for a new lodge building by visiting more than fifty lodge rooms elsewhere and studying their plans. Sometime between 1902 and 1905, a building committee was appointed. In April, 1905 Nethery presented sketches for a new building that he had prepared to a special meeting of the lodge, which approved them.³¹

In 1913 or early 1914, three architectural firms were selected to design the new lodge building. The Indianapolis firms of Herbert L. Bass and Company, Herbert W. Foltz, and Rubush and Hunter were chosen as “associated architects.” The principals of all three—Herbert Bass, Herbert Foltz, and Preston C. Rubush, were members of the Oriental Lodge. The architects prepared tentative plans, based on Nethery’s earlier sketches, for a building at the 17th and Alabama site purchased in 1907. Those plans were submitted to the lodge membership in March, 1914 and were approved except for minor details. The design called for a rectangular four-story brick building, with the façade on the long side, facing 17th Street. There would be a dining room and kitchen on the first floor, clubrooms and ballroom on the second, a two-story lodge room without windows on the third and fourth floors, and an “inner lodge” on presumably part of the fourth floor. The façade design was Prairie Style in several respects, with horizontal emphasis in the organization of elements in the composition, brick construction, spare ornamentation, rectangular block around the central entrance, fenestration concentrated on the first floor, and a ribbon of small rectangular windows in the fourth story.³²

Between March, 1914 and March, 1915, a decision was made to change the elevation designs from the Prairie style composition to the one executed. The façade was placed on the narrow elevation facing Central, and Islamic-influenced decorative detailing was used for the entrance, some windows, building corners, belt course, upper corners, and cornice; and a diamond shaped brick pattern used for decorative effect on three elevations. The interior plans remained largely the same.³³

A February, 1916 newspaper article described the exterior as “oriental in type” and noted the brick patterns “worked out in different shades of art brick.” Despite the reference to “oriental,” it appears that there was no connection between the choice of Islamic-inspired decorative designs and the lodge’s traditions or ceremonies.³⁴

³¹ “Historical Sketch,” pp. 38-42.

³² Ibid, pp. 42, 53; “Oriental Lodge of Masons to Build New Home,” *Indianapolis News*, March 11, 1914, p. 3, c. 4.

³³ See “West and East Elevations,” Masonic Temple for the Oriental Lodge. Central Avenue at 22nd Street, Indianapolis, Indiana. Herbert L. Bass, Herbert Foltz, and Rubush and Hunter, Associated Architects, Sheet No. 10, March 30, 1915. Oriental Lodge Drawings, Rubush and Hunter Collection, William Henry Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society.

³⁴ Phone conversation with Ed Board, February 14, 2014.

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It is not known to what degree each of the three architectural firms contributed to the final design of the Oriental Lodge building. A 1914 newspaper account states that the three firms “collaborated in making the plans.” It is possible that Rubush and Hunter played the dominant role. They were the only one of the three firms to have previously designed fraternal buildings. Of greatest import undoubtedly was their design for the 1906-7 Indianapolis Masonic Temple, a monumental building housing seven blue lodges like the Oriental Lodge, the Knights Templar and other chapters of York Rite Masonry; two chapters of the Eastern Star, and the Grand Lodge of Indiana. Rubush and Hunter were therefore very experienced in the requirements of Masonic lodge lay outs and symbolism in design and in designing for a multi-purpose Masonic building. They also had designed two lodge buildings for the Knights of Pythias in Indianapolis along E. Ohio Street in 1905-1906. Moreover, they had designed the lodge room for the Grand Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in an office building at Pennsylvania and Washington Street in 1907.³⁵

The most distinctive and significant facet of the architectural design for the Oriental Lodge under Criterion C is the original interpretation of Islamic architectural themes in the exterior design. There had been one previous building design in Indianapolis that had evoked Islamic architecture: the 1909 Murat Temple at 510 N. New Jersey Street, designed by the Indianapolis firm of D.A. Bohlen and Son. The Murat design, with its alternating stripes of yellow and brown brick on the exterior, monumental minaret at the corner, high profile dome, and terra cotta moldings and friezes employing inter-locking geometric figures, is based on such Middle Eastern Islamic buildings as the Madrassa and Tomb of Sultan Qayt Bay in Cairo (1472-74 A.D.).³⁶

Almost none of the treatment used in the Murat Temple exterior is similar to that used for the Oriental Lodge, except for the principle of inter-locking geometric figures. A more likely source of inspiration was the 1912 design of Huehl and Schmid of Chicago for the Medinah Temple in the same city. Like the Medinah Temple, the Oriental Lodge design uses an adaptation of the rectangular entrance block found in the facades of mausoleums and mosques in the Middle East, North Africa, and Spain. In both, there are friezes along the edges of the entries based on inter-locking geometric figures. Of particular interest, the Medinah entries at the main corner employ similar *in antis* engaged columns. Above the entries are very similar trios of windows in the Medinah design to that of the Oriental Lodge: horseshoe arches with terra cotta edges defined by cusps derived from Islamic architecture in southern Spain and North Africa. In both buildings, there are also similar moldings outlining the horseshoe arches, similar impost blocks below each arch, and similar column capitals (or pilasters in the case of Oriental

³⁵ “Oriental Lodge of Masons to Build New Home”; Patricia J. Casler, “The Architecture of Rubush and Hunter,” (New York: Columbia University Master’s Thesis, 1985), pp. 19-24; “Series 1: Rubush and Hunter Buildings, 1902-1941,” Collection P0174, Catalog, Indiana Historical Society Library; *R.L. Polk and Co.’s Indianapolis City Directory 1916*, p. 57. Another suggestive piece of evidence pointing to Rubush and Hunter’s heavy involvement in the Oriental Lodge design lies in the discovery of a complete set of original drawings for the Oriental Lodge in the Rubush and Hunter Collection of architectural drawings at the Indiana Historical Society Library.

³⁶ See Hoag, Plates 90 and 92. Also see Leigh Darbee, “Murat Temple,” in David J. Bodenhamer and Robert G. Barrows, *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 1026.

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Lodge). Likewise, in both there are two rectangular casement windows below each horseshoe arch. In addition, both buildings are constructed of brick.³⁷

The Oriental Lodge architects may have gained inspiration for some features from the Medinah Temple, but overall they handled the Islamic-derived motifs in an original manner. All of the following elements suggest Islamic decorative motifs, but are original in their details: (a) the three types of inter-locking geometric figures in the friezes found in the enframements around the main entrance; (b) the engaged columns flanking the entrance, with their shafts composed by vegetative bands stacked on each other and bound together by a “mesh” of diamond-shaped components; (c) a fourth pattern of inter-locking geometric figures in the frieze on the belt course between the third and fourth stories; (4) the sixteen sets of terra cotta panels on the fourth story composed of two pentagonal moldings set within each other and linked by “spokes;” and (5) the cornice composed of projecting triangular moldings and triangular arches resembling muqarnas adornments in Islamic architecture. Even the third floor windows, with their arches and cusped edges resembling those of the Medinah Temple, are given a different treatment around the lower casement windows. The quality and originality of the architects’ interpretation of Islamic architectural motifs make the Oriental Lodge significant under Criterion C and in the Architecture area of significance. The design is one of only two Islamic-influenced designs for a public building in Indianapolis of the early 20th century and is one of the best surviving examples in the state. The other Indianapolis example, the Murat Temple, uses different Islamic precedents and interpretations of details.

Integrity

The Oriental Lodge retains a high degree of exterior and interior integrity. The only obvious exterior alteration was the covering of window openings in the 1960s or 1970s with brick courses matching the texture and detailing of the adjacent walls, although not shade of color. In most cases, the original wooden sashes and glass lights were left in place on the interior. The coverings are therefore mostly reversible. Inside, only very minor alterations have been made. One was the application of wooden veneer paneling in the 1960s or 1970s on the walls of the southwest stair hall and in the preparation room in the northwest corner of the third floor mezzanine. Also, in the lodge room, the portion of the stenciled fret frieze over the east platform in the lodge room and the stenciled band of palmettes and anthemias at the top of the east and west walls of the lodge room have been painted over. In a couple of auxiliary rooms, suspended ceilings have been installed, such as the foyer of the third floor and in the kitchen of the basement.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

The white Masonic Grand Lodge of Indiana was organized in 1818 in Southern Indiana with nine lodges. In 1823, the first Indianapolis blue lodge was established, Centre Lodge Number

³⁷ See J.E. Murphy, “Eastern Architecture in the West: Medinah Temple in Chicago,” pp. 339-49.

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23. It was joined in 1846 by the Marion Lodge Number 35, followed in 1864 by the Capital City Lodge Number 312 and the Ancient Landmarks Lodge Number 319. In 1868, the Mystic Tie Lodge Number 398 was organized, followed by the Oriental Lodge Number 500 in 1874, the Pentalpha Lodge Number 564 in 1881, the Logan Lodge Number 575 in 1887, and the Veritas Lodge in 1896. Of these, all but the Oriental and Veritas Lodges were at-large city lodges, which met in the downtown Masonic Temples. The first of the latter was constructed in 1848-50, succeeded in 1875 by a larger building. The Oriental and Veritas Lodges were organized as neighborhood lodges—the Oriental for the near-northside area north and northeast of the Mile Square, and the Veritas for the railroad suburb of Brightwood northeast of Indianapolis. Both rented quarters in their neighborhoods during their early years. Other neighborhood blue lodges followed in the first four decades of the 20th century: Broad Ripple, Indianapolis Lodge in the industrial suburb of West Indianapolis, Irvington Lodge in the former eastside town of Irvington, and North Park in the industrial suburb of North Indianapolis, northwest of Indianapolis.³⁸

The late 19th and early 20th century marked the zenith of fraternal orders as social organizations for men and women. The Masons were the largest fraternal organization for the white population of Indianapolis, but they were closely followed in popularity by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Knights of Pythias, and the Independent Order of Red Men. Most had female associated organizations—the Order of the Eastern Star for the Masons, the Rebekahs for the Odd Fellows, and the Pythian Sisters for the Knights of Pythias. Like the Masons, the Odd Fellows and Pythians encouraged the establishment of neighborhood lodges in the city. By 1916, the Odd Fellows had eighteen lodges, and the Pythians had fourteen.³⁹

By 1940, there were fourteen white Masonic neighborhood lodges in the city of Indianapolis, all but two with their own lodge buildings, constructed by their members. After World War II, all of the fraternal lodges in the older neighborhoods of Indianapolis experienced a decline in membership, as members moved out of the city, and the neighborhoods experienced economic dis-investment and deterioration. Today, none of the white Masonic lodges that occupied lodge buildings in the city of 1940 continue to occupy those structures. Several of the buildings have been demolished. Others like the former Broad Ripple and Veritas lodge buildings, have been adapted to new uses. In a like manner, none of the surviving neighborhood lodge buildings of the Odd Fellows or Knights of Pythias from the early 20th century continue to house fraternal lodges.⁴⁰

The Prince Hall Masons in the United States began with a charter issued by the Grand Masonic Lodge of London in 1784. From the beginning, they have operated separately from the white Masonic organizations in the United States. For much of American history, the white Masons refused to recognize the African-American Prince Hall Masons as part of the Masonic

³⁸ Dunn, pp. 371, 375-76; *R.L. Polk and Co's Indianapolis City Directory 1916*, p. 57

³⁹ Dunn, pp. 377-82; *Polk's 1916 Indianapolis Directory*, pp. 58-59.

⁴⁰ *Polk's 1940 Indianapolis Directory*, pp. 2181-2182.

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fraternity.⁴¹ The two branches of Masonry operated in parallel fashion, both using much of the same degrees and rituals originally derived from English Free Masons.⁴²

The first Indiana Prince Hall lodge was organized at Indianapolis in 1847, under the authority of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ohio. In 1874, the original lodge became Central Lodge Number 1, after merging with another early lodge. By 1910, there were five blue lodges in Indianapolis with about 500 members; a commandery of 186 Knights Templar; a chapter of Royal Arch Masons, a consistory of Princes of Jerusalem, a council of Knights of Kadosh, a chapter of Rose Croix, a Grand Lodge of Perfection, a Temple of the Mystic Shrine, and two Eastern Star (female) chapters.⁴³

The Prince Hall Masons of Indianapolis during most of its history did not own a building, but rented quarters.⁴⁴ In 1916, they rented a hall at 30 ½ N. Delaware Street for all of their lodges and chapters. By 1940, all the Prince Hall Masonic organizations had located in a building at 351 Indiana Avenue, in the heart of the historically African American commercial district. By the 1960s, the Prince Hall Masons had taken ownership of the former Phyllis Wheatley Young Women's Christian Association building at 653 N. West Street, across from the Madame Walker Building. When West Street was being widened by the City of Indianapolis in the early 1980s, the Prince Hall Masonic Temple Association sold their building to the city and in 1983 purchased the former Oriental Lodge. For the Prince Hall Masons, their new home offered several advantages. It was a spacious structure designed for use by a Masonic lodge and offered large dining and social facilities besides the lodge space. As such, it was the first building that the Prince Hall Masons had owned or used that was designed for Masonic use. It also was located in a more central location for Prince Hall Masons to reach after the membership had moved to a variety of locations after the end of segregation.⁴⁵

Unlike the Oriental Lodge, the Prince Hall Masonic Temple Association has used the building at 22nd and Central for a variety of lodges and chapters. It is therefore the central focus in the city for the practice of Prince Hall Masonic rituals and a repository for African American traditions in Masonry.

⁴¹ See Daniel McDonald, *A History of Freemasonry in Indiana from 1808 to 1898* (Indianapolis: Grand Lodge of Indiana, 1898), pp. 231-235.

⁴² Dunn, p. 377.

⁴³ Jacob Piatt Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1910), Vol. I, p. 377; letter to the author from Joann R. Kendrick, Secretary, Prince Hall Masonic Temple Association, Inc., January 24, 2014.

⁴⁴ Dunn, p. 377.

⁴⁵ "Secret and Benevolent Organizations," *R.L. Polk and Co.'s Indianapolis City Directory 1916* (Indianapolis: R.L. Polk and Co., 1916), pp. 57-58; "Societies—Benevolent and Fraternal," *Polk's Indianapolis City Directory 1940*, p. 2182; Reginald Bishop, "Landers of Prince Hall," *Indianapolis News*, August 23, 1978, p. 7, c. 2; Etta Russel, "Phyllis Wheatley YWCA," *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, p. 1115; Conversation with Herman Jiles, Jr., President, Prince Hall Masonic Temple Association, Inc., January 24, 2014.

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Today, all of the Prince Hall Lodges and Chapters except for the Persian Temple occupy the building and use it for their ceremonies, meetings, and social events.⁴⁶ The following is a list of the current organizations:

- Union Chapter #1, Order of the Eastern Star
- Central Lodge # 1
- Trinity Lodge # 18
- Sumner A. Furniss Lodge #61
- Constantine Consistory #25
- Waterford Lodge #13
- Sumner A. Furniss Assembly #32, Order of the Golden Circle
- John C. Dawson #22, Royal Select Masters
- Cyrus Chapter #1, Royal Arch Masons
- Knights Templar
- Deborah Council
- Gethsemane Commandry #37

Of these, Central, Trinity, Sumner Furniss, and Waterford are all blue lodges, awarding the first three degrees of Masonry. Union Chapter #1 and the Deborah Council are chapters of the women's Order of the Eastern Star. The Constantine Consistory, the Cyrus Chapter, Gethsemane Commandry, and the Knights Templar are all part of the York Rite of Masonry. The rest are related to other Masonic rites.⁴⁷

In the Prince Hall Masonic Temple today are memorabilia related to the history of Prince Hall Masonry in Indianapolis, including several portraits of Prince Hall, photographs of past distinguished Worshipful Masters, and circuit photographs of early 20th century gatherings of Prince Hall lodges and bands.

The use of Islamic-inspired compositions for the overall design or decoration of Masonic or fraternal buildings in Indianapolis goes back to the 1855 design of architect Francis Costigan for the Grand Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows at Pennsylvania and Washington. The design was exotic and thought of as Oriental in design, although much of the design was more Romanesque than Islamic. A later dome designed by D.A. Bohlen had more of an Islamic profile. The next major fraternal building inspired by Islamic architecture was the 1909 Murat Temple at 510 N. New Jersey Street, designed by D.A. Bohlen and Son for the Indianapolis temple of the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, a branch of Masonry. The Shriners based their ceremonies and historical references on Arabic antecedents and therefore a building that bespoke the Middle East was desirable. The Bohlen firm based its design on such Middle Eastern Islamic buildings as the Madrassa and Tomb of Sultan Qayt Bay

⁴⁶ Ibid; Phone conversation with Ed Board, February 14, 2014; Etta Russel, "Phyllis Wheatley YWCA," *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, p. 1115; conversation with Herman Jiles, January 24, 2014.

⁴⁷ Conversation with Herman Jiles; letter to author from Joann R. Kendrick, January 24, 2014.

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in Cairo (1472-74 A.D.), known for its slender minaret with multiple stages, high profile dome, striped brick masonry, and geometric decorative motifs.⁴⁸

The Oriental Lodge was the next and last Masonic building in Indianapolis to have an exterior design based on Islamic architectural and decorative ideas.

There are no Islamic influences within the Oriental Lodge building, but some original decorative treatments can be noted in the stencils, painted motifs, and plaster friezes used for the lodge room. The overall decorative theme of the room is Greek Classicism, with the two Doric columns, stenciled palmettes and anthemias on sides of the beams across the ceiling, stenciled fretwork in a frieze along the walls, vertical painted panels with gold rods and laurel wreaths in the upper walls, and plaster frieze composed of a different fret pattern around the west stage. These details are based on precedents in Greek art and architecture, but many of the details are original, as is the stylized flowers and pointed forms painted on the lower shafts of the Doric columns.

⁴⁸ Dunn, p. 378; Darbee, "Murat Temple," *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, pp. 1026-27; Hoag, plates 90 and 92.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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"Oriental Lodge, 1916," Bass Photo #46914F, W. H. Bass Photo Co. Collection Number P 0130, William Henry Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society.

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“Oriental Lodge of Masons to Build New Home.” *Indianapolis News*, March 11, 1914, p. 3, c. 4.

“Oriental Lodge of Masons to Celebrate Fiftieth Anniversary of Its Founding.” *Indianapolis Star*, May 23, 1925, p. 9, c. 3.

“Oriental Masonic Temple, 1925,” Bass Photo #91114F, W. H. Bass Photo Co. Collection Number P 0130, William Henry Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society.

Secret and Benevolent Organizations.” *R.L. Polk’s Indianapolis City Directory 1916*. Indianapolis: R.L. Polk and Co., 1916. Pp. 57-59.

“Societies—Benevolent and Fraternal.” *Polk’s Indianapolis City Directory 1940*. Indianapolis: R.L. Polk and Co., 1940. Vol. LXXXVI, pp. 2181-2182.

Trustee’s Deed Number 83-66073, wherein is conveyed by the Trustees of the Oriental Lodge No. 500 to the Prince Hall Masonic Temple Association, Inc. Lot 10 in Bruce Place Addition to the City of Indianapolis and Lots 9 and 10 in Levi Sohl’s Subdivision of Lots 11 to 16 inclusive in Bruce Place Addition, September 9, 1983, Marion County Recorder’s Office.

Secondary Sources

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Prince Hall Masonic Temple, Indiana State Library, and William Henry Smith Library of the Indiana Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 098-296-0657

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than an acre

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- 1. Zone: 16 Easting: 572840 Northing: 4405658
- 2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

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3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

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

The boundary is to follow the limits of Lot 10 in the Bruce Place Addition to the City of Indianapolis. A description of that lot is as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the west line of the first alley east of Central Avenue on 22nd Street with the north edge of the sidewalk along the north side of 22nd Street, proceed west 177 feet in a straight line along the north edge of that sidewalk to the east edge of the sidewalk running along the east side of Central Avenue. From there, continue north 65 feet along the east edge of the sidewalk, then turn east and continue 177 feet in a straight line to the west edge of the first alley east of Central, and finally continue south to the point of origin.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary follows limits of the lot purchased for construction of the Oriental Lodge Number 500 in 1914 and includes all contributing features of the current Prince Hall Masonic Lodge property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: James A. Glass, Ph.D.,

Principal

organization: Historic Preservation and Heritage Consulting,

LLC

street & number: 730 N. Bancroft

Street

city or town: Indianapolis state: IN _____ zip

code: 46201

e-mail jglass@hphconsulting.com

telephone: (317) 356-7980

date: June 18, 2014

Preparation of this nomination was supported through a grant from Indiana Landmarks Partners in Preservation Program.

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Oriental Lodge Number 500

City or Vicinity: Indianapolis

County: Marion

State: IN

Photographer: James A. Glass

Date Photographed: July 31, 2013, January 24, 2014, March 10, 2014, March 30, 2014, and April 16, 2014.

Descriptions of Photographs and Numbers, including description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 30: March 30, 2014 oblique view—west and south elevations (Photographer facing northeast)

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2 of 30: July 31, 2013--entrance enframingent, Oriental Lodge Number 500 (Photographer facing southeast)

3 of 30: March 30, 2014—southeast corner of first floor (Photographer facing northeast)

4 of 30: March 30, 2014—Trio of windows, third floor of west elevation (Photographer facing east)

5 of 30: March 30, 2014—south elevation (Photographer facing northeast)

6 of 30: March 10, 2014—east elevation (Photographer facing west)

7 of 30: July 31, 2013—north elevation (Photographer facing southeast)

8 of 30: March 10, 2014—first, second, and third stories, east pavilion, north elevation (Photographer facing southwest)

9 of 30: March 10, 2014—dining room seen from southwest corner, first floor (Photographer facing northeast)

10 of 30: March 10, 2014—dining room seen from southeast corner, first floor (Photographer facing northwest)

11 of 30: March 10, 2014—foyer for dining room, seen from vestibule of southwest entrance (Photographer facing north)

12 of 30: March 10, 2014—kitchen, seen from east end (Photographer facing west)

13 of 30: March 10, 2014—Mosler Safe on south wall of base of southwest stair hall (Photographer facing southeast)

14 of 30: March 10, 2014—southwest stair hall, seen from second landing up from first floor (Photographer facing northeast)

15 of 30: April 16, 2014—north wall of west entrance vestibule (Photographer facing northeast)

16 of 30: March 10, 2014—social room seen from northwest, second floor (Photographer facing southeast)

17 of 30: July 31, 2013—social room seen from southeast (Photographer facing northwest)

18 of 30: January 24, 2014—detail of engaged column capital, west wall of social room (Photographer facing northwest)

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19 of 30: March 10, 2014—north end of foyer, third floor, seen from south (Photographer facing north)

20 of 30: March 10, 2014—Beginning of spiral stairway seen from south on third floor (Photographer facing north)

21 of 30: March 10, 2014—east and part of south walls of lodge room (Photographer facing southeast)

22 of 30: July 31, 2013—west end and part of north wall of lodge room (Photographer facing northwest)

23 of 30: March 10, 2014—alcove at east end of lodge room (Photographer facing east)

24 of 30: July 31, 2013—north wall of lodge room (Photographer facing northeast)

25 of 30: March 10, 2014—detail of stenciled frieze, painted medallion, and vertical stenciled panel, upper portion of north wall, lodge room (Photographer facing north)

26 of 30: March 10, 2014—stenciled palmettes and anthemias on sides of north-south beams of lodge room, seen from west (Photographer facing east)

27 of 30: March 10, 2014—detail of a chandelier in the lodge room (Photographer facing southeast)

28 of 30: March 10, 2014—western platform and mezzanine balcony, lodge room (Photographer facing northwest)

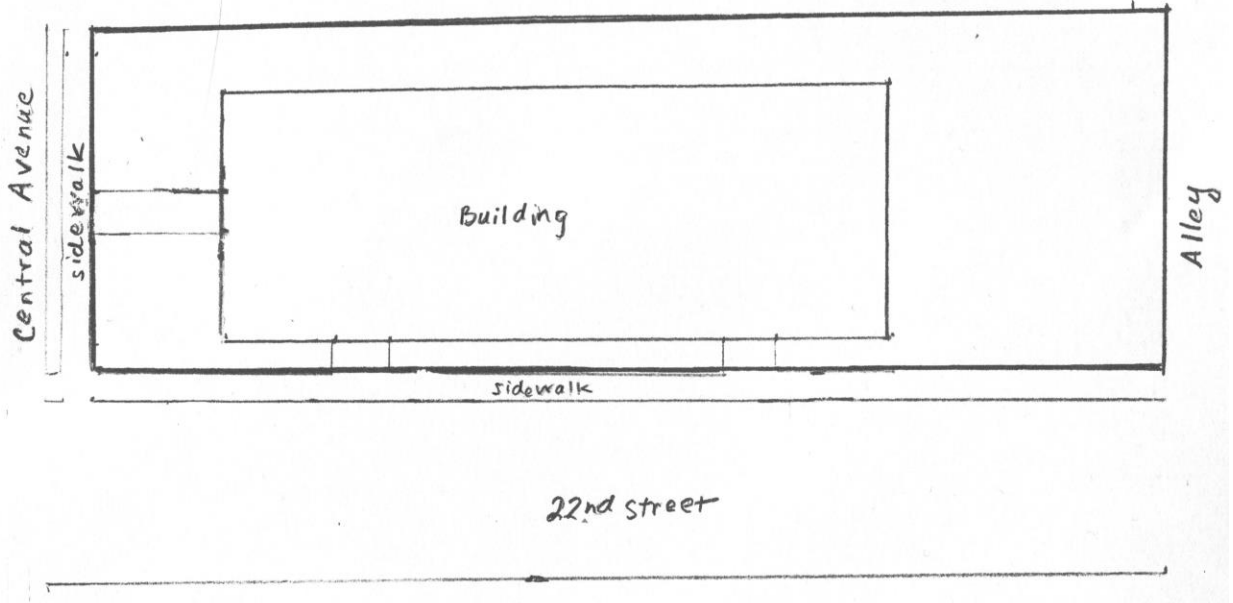
29 of 30: July 31, 2013---Felgemaker organ console and mezzanine balcony seen from north (Photographer facing south)

30 of 30: March 10, 2014—roof seen from southwest corner (Photographer facing northeast)

Oriental Lodge Number 500—Prince Hall
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Site Plans & Floor Plans with Photo Locations



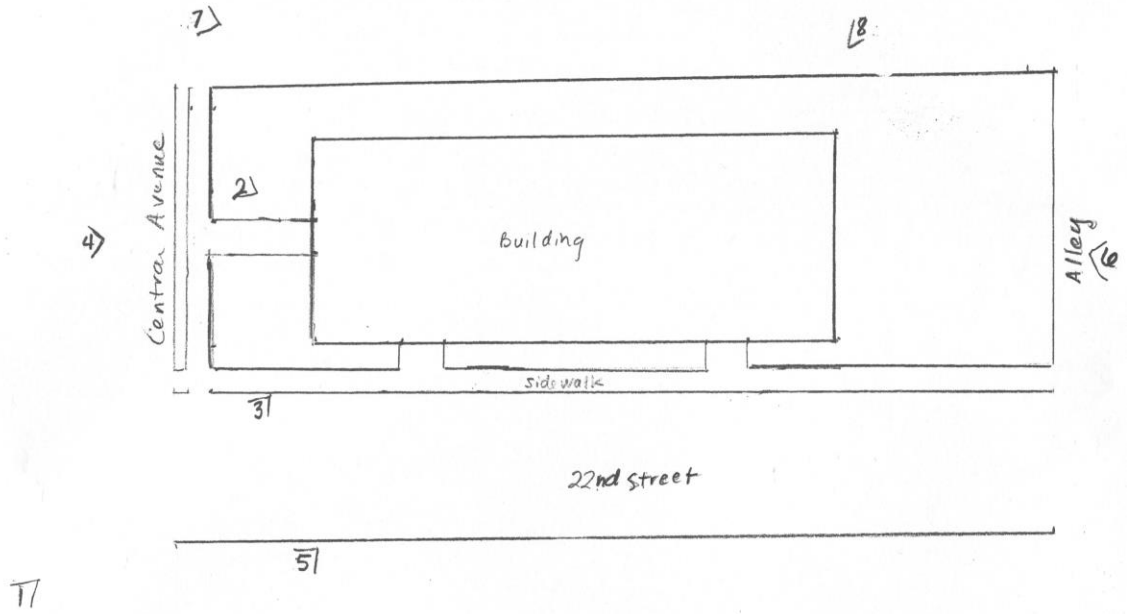
ORIENTAL LODGE NUMBER 500
201 CENTRAL AVENUE
INDIANAPOLIS, MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

Boundary for National Register Listing ———
(Not to Scale)



Oriental Lodge Number 500—Prince Hall
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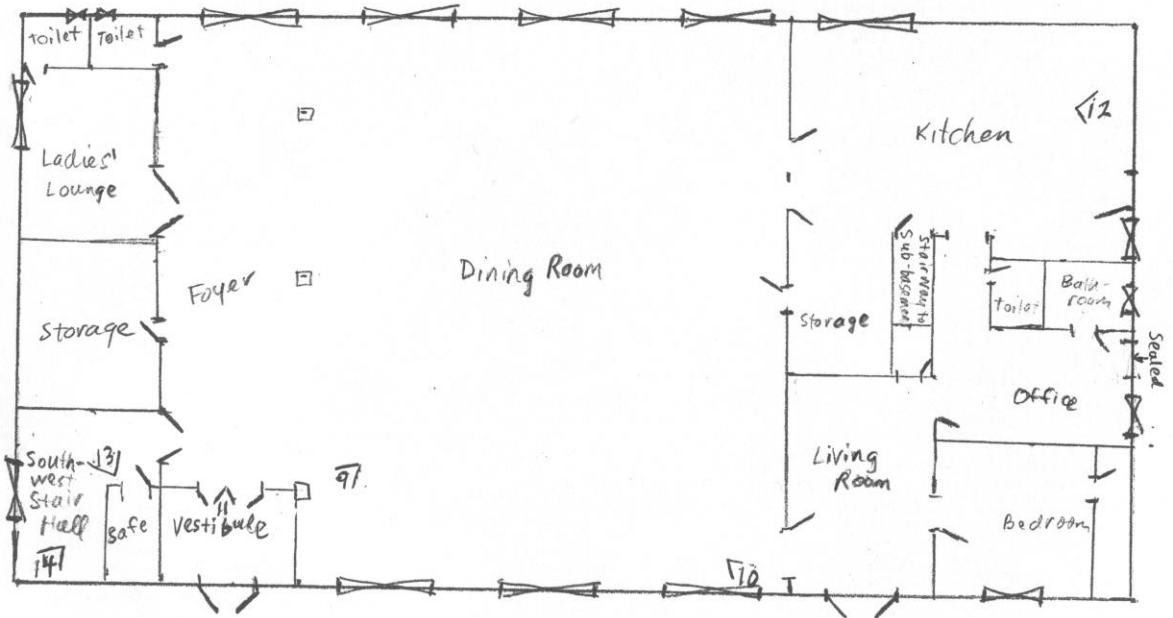
ORIENTAL LODGE NUMBER 500
2001 CENTRAL AVENUE
INDIANAPOLIS, MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

Photo Locations for Exterior and Site Plan
(Not to Scale)



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ORIENTAL LODGE NUMBER 500
 2001 CENTRAL AVENUE
 INDIANAPOLIS, MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

Photo Locations—First Floor

(Not to Scale)

Key to Symbols:

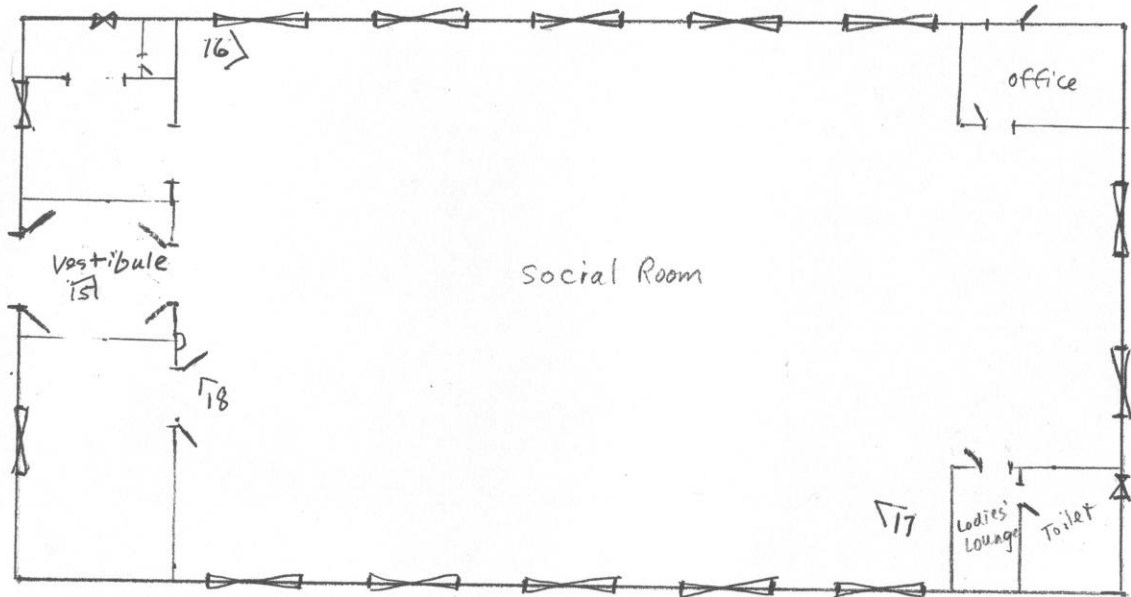
△ = windows

∠ = doors for doorways



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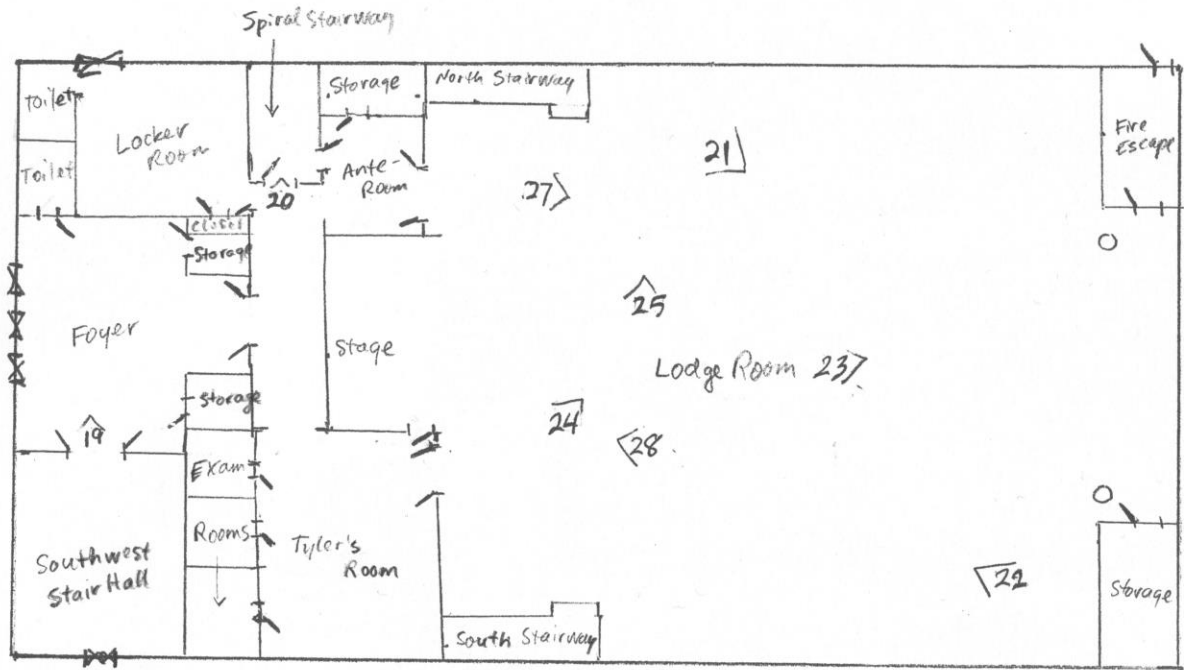
ORIENTAL LODGE NUMBER 500
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INDIANAPOLIS, MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

Photo Locations—Second Floor
(Not to Scale)
Key to Symbols:
⌘ = windows
┌ = doors for doorways



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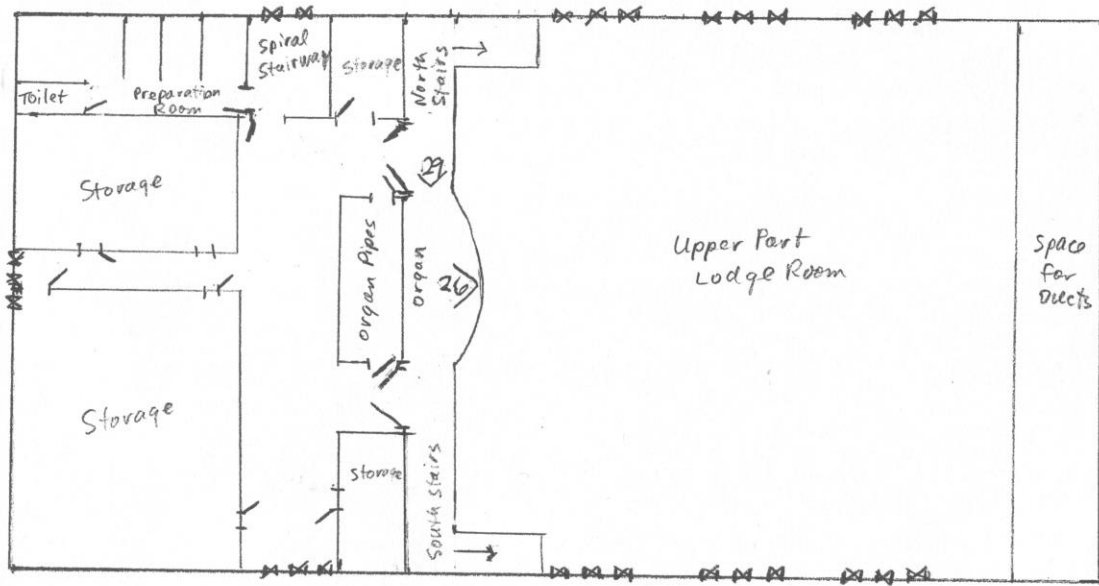
Photo Locations—Third Floor
(Not to Scale)

Key to Symbols:
⊗ = windows
┌ = doors for doorways



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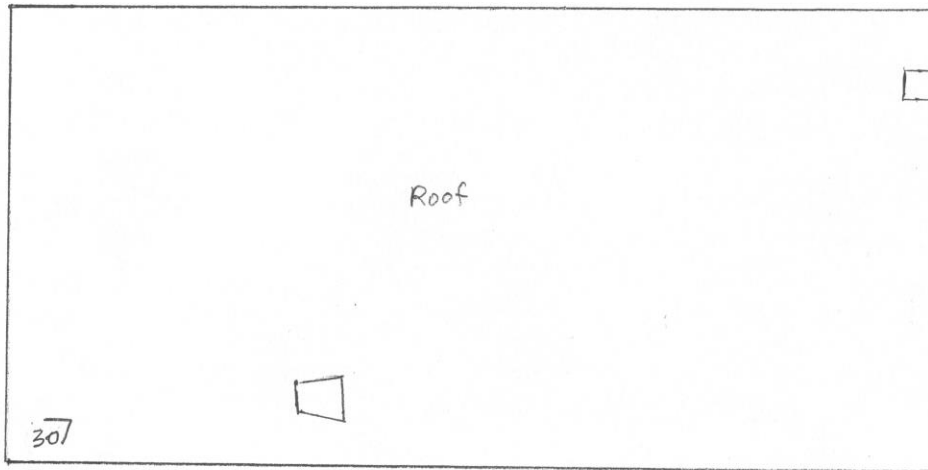
Photo Locations—Third Floor Mezzanine (Fourth Floor)
(Not to Scale)

Key to Symbols:
☒ = windows
| | = doors for doorways



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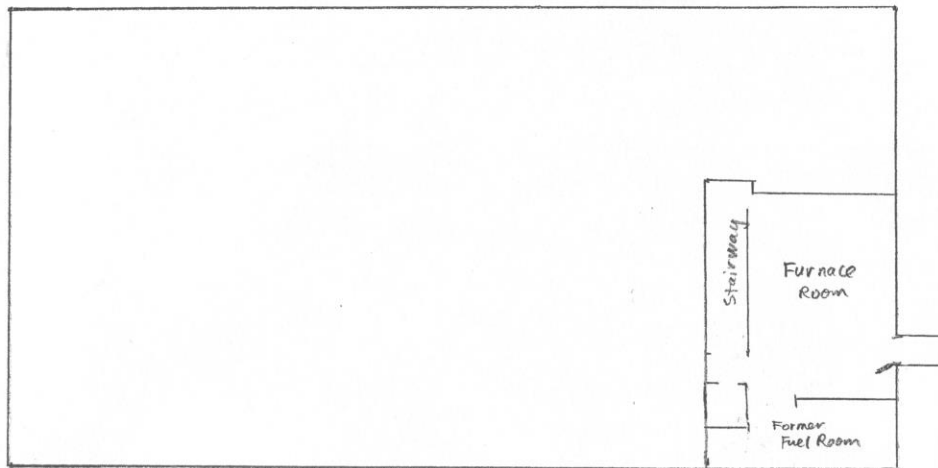
Marion County, Indiana
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ORIENTAL LODGE NUMBER 500
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Photo Locations—Roof
(Not to Scale)



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Plan—Sub-Basement
(Not to Scale)
Key to Symbols:
┌ = doors for doorways

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Historical Photographs



Historical Photograph 1--1916 photograph of Oriental Lodge Number 500 by W.H. Bass Photo Company—West and south elevations (Photographer facing northeast)

Oriental Lodge Number 500—Prince Hall
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Name of Property

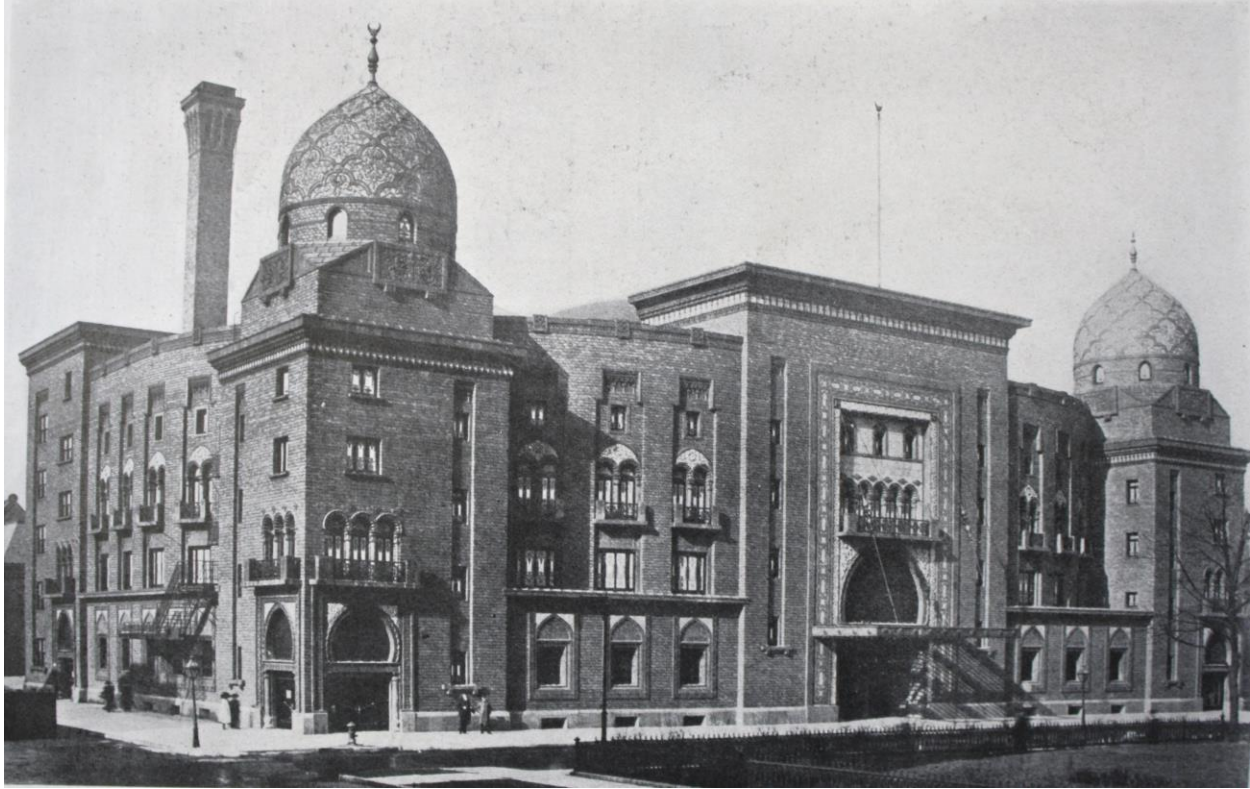
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Historical Photograph 2--c. 1925 photograph of Oriental Lodge by W.H. Bass Photo Company—
West and south elevations (Photographer facing northeast)

Oriental Lodge Number 500—Prince Hall
Masonic Temple
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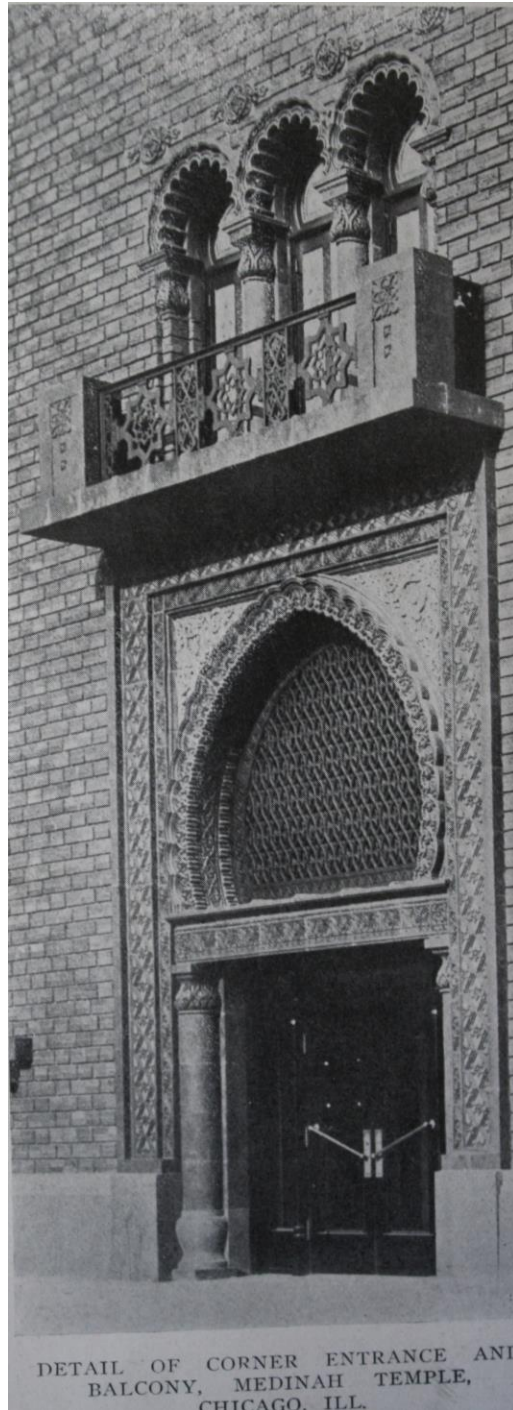
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Historical Photograph 3--1913 photograph of façades of Medinah Temple, Chicago, from *The Architectural Record*, Vol. XXXIII, No. IV (April, 1913), p. 340.

Oriental Lodge Number 500—Prince Hall
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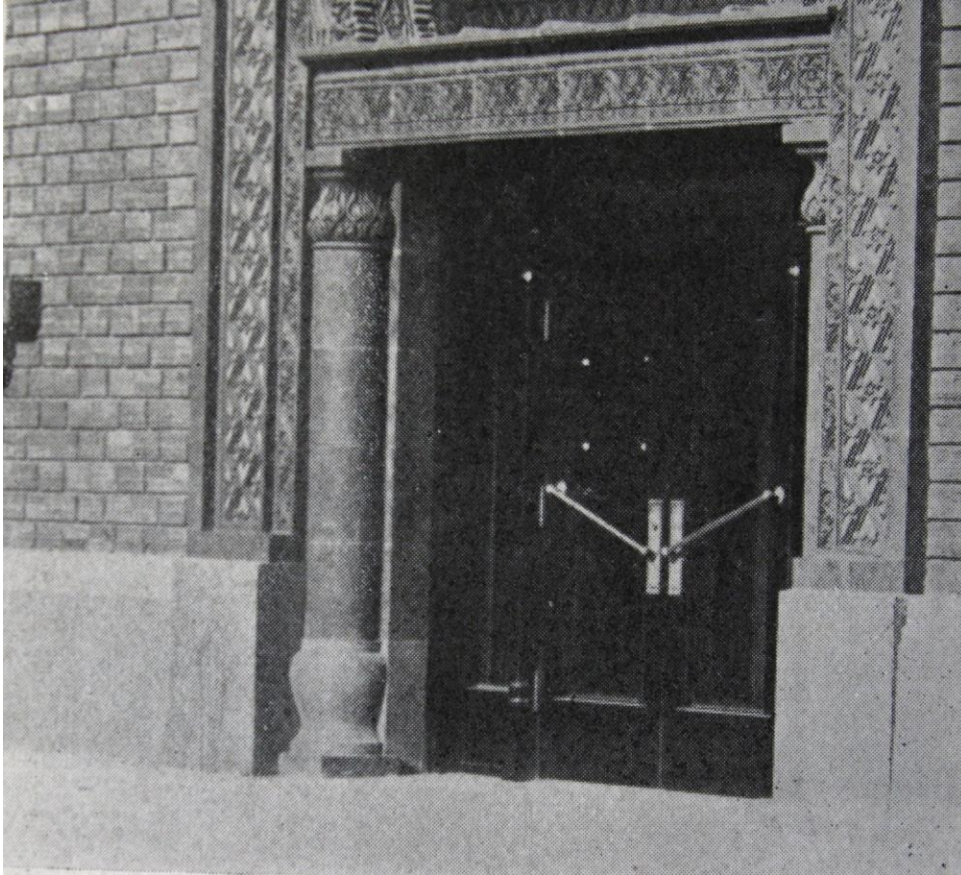
Marion County, Indiana
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Historical Photograph 4--1913 photograph of corner entrance, transom, and trio of windows above, Medinah Temple, Chicago, from *The Architectural Record*, Vol. XXXIII, No. IV (April, 1913), p. 341.

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Historical Photograph 5--1913 photograph, detail of corner entrance, Medinah Temple, Chicago, from *The Architectural Record*, Vol. XXXIII, No. IV (April, 1913), p. 341.

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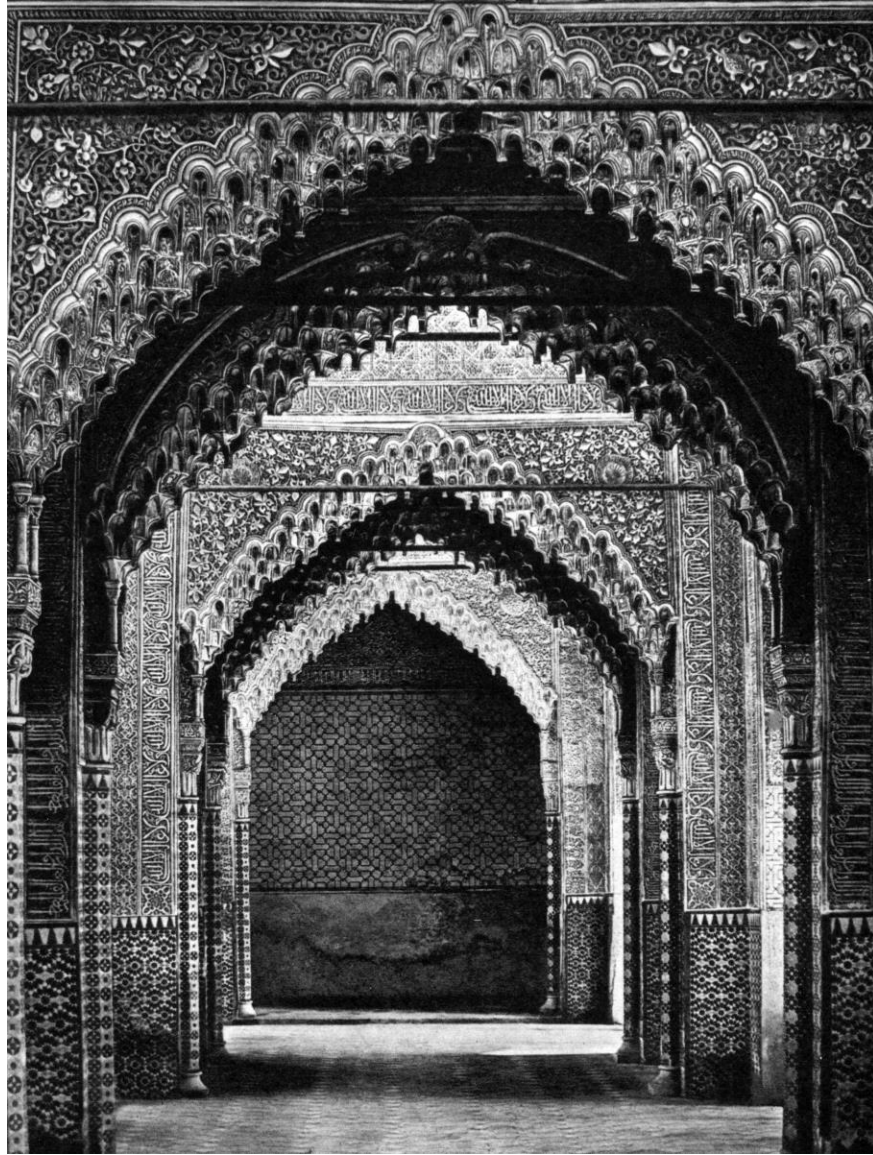
Marion County, Indiana
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Historical Photograph 6--1963 photograph of cusped arches in Great Mosque of Cordoba, 10th century A.D., from John D. Hoag, *Western Islamic Architecture*, plate 48.

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Historical Photograph 7--1963 photograph of *muqarnas* plaster adornments, Hall of Justice, the Alhambra, Granada, Spain, 14th century A.D., from John D. Hoag, *Western Islamic Architecture*, plate 69.

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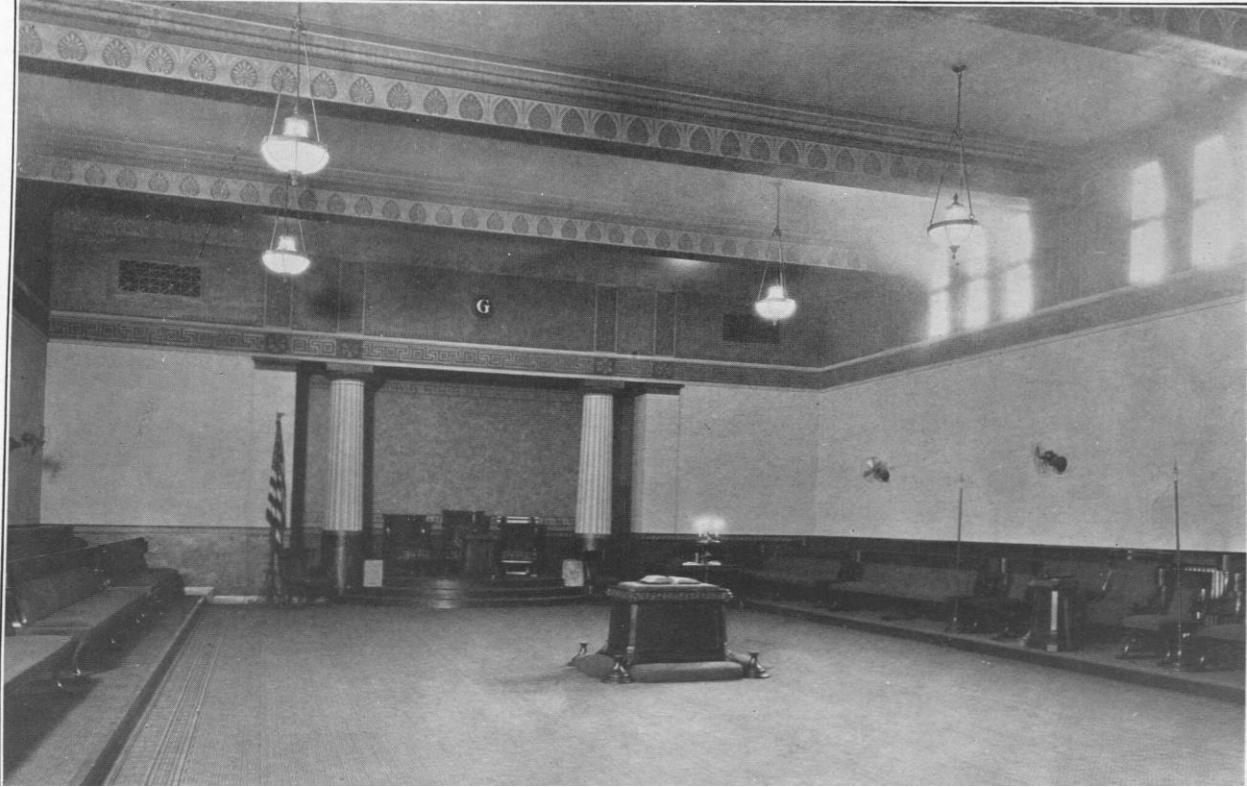
Marion County, Indiana
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Historical Photograph 8--Circa 1925 photograph of Oriental Lodge social room, seen from northwest corner, from *Historical Sketch of Oriental Lodge No. 500, F. & A. M., 1875-1925*, p. 72.

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Historical Photograph 9--c. 1925 photograph of east and south walls of lodge room from northwest corner, from *Historical Sketch of Oriental Lodge No. 500, F. & A. M., 1875-1925*, p. 58.

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Historical Photograph 10--c. 1925 photograph of south and west walls of lodge room from northeast corner, from *Historical Sketch of Oriental Lodge No. 500, F. & A. M., 1875-1925*, p. 60.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.