

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Propertyhistoric name Plainfield Masonic Temple

other names/site number _____

2. Locationstreet & number 105 East 7th Street☐ not for publicationcity or town Plainfield☐ vicinitystate New Jerseycode NJCounty Unionzip code 07060**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Deputy SHPO Assistant Commissioner of Community Investment & Economic Revitalization

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.☐ removed from the National
Register.☐ other, (explain:) _____

Plainfield Masonic Temple
Name of Property

Union County, New Jersey
County and State

8 Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1927-1929

Significant Dates

1927, 1929

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

F.B. & A. Ware

Primary location of additional data

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

Name of repository:

Plainfield Masonic Temple
Name of Property

Union County, New Jersey
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.486 acres

Latitude / Longitude Coordinates

(Note to Preparers: NJ HPO will complete this portion of the Registration Form for all Preparers, based on the coordinates derived from the Site Map or District Map that HPO produces.)

(NJ HPO will place additional coordinates, if needed, on a continuation sheet for Section 10.)

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet for Section 10.)

Boundary Justification Statement

(Explain, on the section sheet following the Verbal Boundary Description, how the chosen boundaries meet the requirements for boundary selection and are the most appropriate boundaries for the nominated property or district.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Beth A. Bjorklund and Margaret M. Hickey, Historic Preservation Specialists
organization Connolly & Hickey Historical Architects date August 10, 2023
street & number P.O. Box 1726 telephone 973-746-4911
city or town Cranford state NJ zip code 07016

Additional Documentation

(Submit the additional items with the completed form that are outlined in the "Standard Order of Presentation" that NJ HPO provides. Each page must contain the name of the nominated property or district, and the State and the county in which the property or district is located. Consult with NJ HPO if you have questions.)

Property Owner

(Either provide the name and address of the property owner here or provide the information separately to NJ HPO. Check with NJ HPO for other requirements. All owners' names and addresses must be provided, including public and non-profit owners, but their presence on the form, itself, is not required).

name Jerusalem Lodge No. 26 F & AM
street & number 105 East 7th Street telephone 908-561-1800
city or town Plainfield state NJ zip code 07060

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. The proper completion of this form and the related requirements is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Direct questions regarding the proper completion of this form or questions about related matters to the Registration Section, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Mail code 501-04B, PO Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625-0420.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 1

Summary Paragraph

The Plainfield Masonic Temple is a four-story, pale brick and cast stone, two-part corner block commercial building and Masonic Temple designed in the Neoclassical Revival style with a structural terra-cotta tile, concrete, and steel structure. (Photograph 0001) Located at an intersection, the building is five bays deep along East 7th Street (south elevation) and seven bays wide along Park Avenue (west elevation). The first-floor level at these street-facing elevations features original cast iron storefront surrounds topped with anthemion detailing. At the east end of the East 7th Street elevation is the Masonic lodge entrance, which has an ornate granite surround featuring the words "Masonic Temple." A secondary entrance, which leads to a stair tower, is located at the north end of the Park Avenue elevation and features a simpler granite surround. Each bay at the second floor on the street-facing elevations contains a grouping of either two or three original one-over-one hung steel windows. A cast stone band course separates the second and third floor levels, and double-height, cast stone Ionic pilasters delineate the bays at the third and fourth floors. Some bays contain tripled multi-lite steel casement windows at the third and fourth floor levels; cast iron mullions divide the sashes, and decorative cast iron panels with a central rosette separate the windows between levels, giving the impression of double-height windows. Above the pilasters is a frieze with alternating cast stone rosettes and marble panels, plus a central square and compasses symbol of Freemasonry adorned with cast stone festoons, and a classical cornice topped with a parapet detailed with anthemion. The east and north elevations are unadorned brick and retain their original multi-lite steel hung windows. The low-slope roof is finished with a thermoplastic low-slope roof system. The interior consists of a lounge, dining hall, and kitchen in the basement; storefronts at the first-floor level; offices and a large assembly room at the second floor; and double-height Lodge rooms with various support spaces at the third and fourth floors; all designed with a hierarchy of finishes and detailing.

Narrative Description

Setting

The Jerusalem Lodge No. 26 is located at 105 East 7th Street, at the north corner of the intersection of East 7th Street and Park Avenue, Plainfield's main shopping and commercial thoroughfare. The building is situated among commercial buildings. Its primary elevations face south/southeast toward East 7th Street and west/southwest toward Park Avenue, and both of these elevations sit at the sidewalk. Its north/northwest elevation abuts a neighboring commercial building, and to the east/northeast is a parking lot. There are three small trees set near the curb along the Park Avenue elevation.

Exterior

Elevations

South Elevation (Photograph 0002)

The south elevation faces East 7th Street and is five bays wide. The entrance to the Masonic Temple is located one bay in from the east and features a granite surround with an entablature featuring the words "Masonic Temple" flanked by rosettes, and topped by a projecting molded cornice and low, unadorned pediment. (Photograph 0003) The entrance is a pair of replacement aluminum doors with a large one-light transom. Original bronze sconces flank the entrance. The east bay contains a one-over-one steel sash window with a decorative bronze grate with anthemion detail centered at the head. The west bay

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 2

contains a corner storefront with a decorative cast iron surround detailed with anthemion at the top. The corner storefront is recessed, and a brick pier supports the corner. The entrance to the store is a one-light aluminum door, and the flanking display windows are multi-light aluminum. Between the storefront and the Masonic entrance originally were two additional bays of the corner store with matching cast iron, anthemion-topped surrounds; these were removed and the openings infilled with pale brick in the mid-to-late-20th century.

Each bay at the second floor contains two original one-over-one steel hung windows with a cast stone sill. The second-floor level is unadorned. A cast stone band course with a lower band of floriated molding separates the second and third floor levels. Double-height, cast stone Ionic pilasters delineate the bays at the third and fourth floors. (Photograph 0004) Each bay contains tripled multi-lite steel casement windows with crisscrossed muntins at both the third and fourth floor levels; cast iron mullions divide the sashes, and decorative cast iron panels with a central rosette separate the windows between levels, giving the impression of double-height windows. Above the pilasters is a frieze with alternating cast stone rosettes and marble panels, plus a central square and compasses symbol of Freemasonry adorned with cast stone festoons. (Photograph 0005) A denticulated cast stone cornice with a parapet detailed with anthemion tops the elevation.

West Elevation (Photograph 0006)

The west elevation faces Park Avenue and is eight bays wide. The main seven-bay block is similarly detailed to the south elevation, while the northernmost bay consists of a secondary entrance to a stair tower. The first floor contains seven storefronts (Photograph 0007), all with matching cast iron surrounds with anthemion detailing at the top. (Photograph 0008) The configurations of the storefronts themselves have all been modified and now feature aluminum doors and display windows, typically with a recessed entrance. The northernmost bay is slightly set back from the main elevation and contains a secondary entrance to the Masonic Temple, which accesses the recessed stair tower; this bay is only slightly recessed at the first and second floors, but the upper levels of the stair tower are recessed significantly. The entrance retains an original one-panel Kalamein bronze door with egg-and-dart detailing around the panel and a decorative cast bronze grille at the transom above. The door surround is granite with a foliated outer band of molding and is topped by a band of egg-and-dart molding and a simple cornice. (Photograph 0009)

Each bay at the second floor contains three original one-over-one steel sash windows with a cast stone sill, the exception being at the northernmost bay, which contains a single window. The second-floor level is unadorned. The third and fourth-floor levels match the south elevation in their layout, materials, and decorative elements; however, there are only windows at the two southernmost bays while the other bays lack fenestration. These windows match those found at the south elevation.

North Elevation (Photograph 0010)

The north elevation lacks a regular fenestration pattern and abuts a neighboring one-story commercial building at its west (streetside) end only at the stair tower. The stair tower projects from the western third of the elevation, narrowing at the two upper stories, and lacks fenestration. The first and second-

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 3

floor levels each contain four irregularly-spaced bays, with a six-lite over one-panel steel door with four-light transom at the east end of the first floor and a single six-over-six steel hung window with cast stone sill at all other bays. The first-floor door and windows are covered with exterior steel security bars. A straight run of steel stairs with steel pipe railings descend down to a concrete areaway with two basement-level access doors matching the one at the first floor. Set off-center at the third-floor level is a small steel balcony that connects to the east side of the stair tower. Two six-light over one-panel steel doors provide emergency egress from the lodge rooms to a matching door at the stair tower. A pale brick chimney rises from the northeast corner and has a cast stone chimney cap.

East Elevation (Photograph 0011)

The east elevation lacks a regular fenestration pattern. At the southernmost bay, set between floor levels, three in total, is a single six-over-six steel hung window with a cast stone sill corresponding with the landings at staircase 1. The first floor consists of three entrances interspersed with original six-over-six and four-over-four steel hung windows with exterior steel security bars and cast stone sills. The doors have been replaced or entrances enlarged during the 20th century, including with a small brick vestibule towards the south end and an aluminum storefront entrance towards the north end. Approximately centered at the second floor are three tripartite steel windows consisting of a nine-over-nine hung window with flanking, narrow, six-over-six hung windows divided by wide mullions with cast stone sills. Below each of these windows is a small steel vent with a cast stone sill. The fenestration at the third and fourth-floor levels consists of a variety of different-sized multi-light steel hung windows with cast stone sills towards the north end of both levels, and three small one-light, fixed steel windows with cast stone sills regularly spaced across the remainder of the fourth-floor level. There are three small steel vents with cast stone sills placed across the bottom of the third-floor level.

Roof

The low-slope roof is finished with a thermoplastic low-slope roof system with a built-in roof drainage system. Both public staircases extend from the basement to the roof, culminating at a pale brick rooftop stair enclosure with a typical six-light over one-panel steel door. The southeast enclosure at staircase 1 is larger, as it also includes the top of the elevator shaft.

Interior

Basement

The basement contains a large lounge, dining hall, commercial kitchen, restrooms, mechanical rooms, and other support spaces. The public hall with a stair and an elevator is located in the southeast corner of the building. The public hall features terrazzo flooring, marble base and marble wainscot on plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling with a molded plaster cornice. The public stair is located at the southeast corner of the hall and is a half-landing staircase that provides access to all floor levels and the roof. The stair is cast iron with travertine treads. The cast iron newel posts are mismatched, with a square, fluted post on the south side and a round, fluted post with Freemason iconography and a simple finial on the north side. The balustrade features a geometric pattern with rosettes, and the handrail is wood with molded sides and a slightly curved top edge. An elevator and motor room are located immediately north of the stairs. A coatroom is located beneath the stairs to the south, and a men's restroom is located north

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 4

off the hall. The men's restroom features ceramic tile floors, base, and wainscot with plaster walls and a dropped acoustical tile ceiling. West off the hall is an unfinished storage room at the south end and a large lounge space. The storage room has exposed structural terra-cotta tiles at the walls and a concrete floor. (Photograph 0012) The lounge has a combination of carpet and laminate wood flooring, plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling; the north wall is a partition added when the basement was finished soon after original construction. (Photograph 0013) A small partitioned, partially-finished space is located in the southwest corner of the lounge and was added in the late-20th or early-21st century.

A corridor extends north from the public hall. (Photograph 0014) To its east is the women's restroom, which has finishes matching those of the men's restroom; a partially-finished janitor's room, which features a small restroom and separate shower; and an unfinished former coal storage room, which is accessed via the unfinished boiler room located at the north end of the corridor. West off the corridor is a large dining hall, which has a scored concrete floor, plaster walls, and a dropped acoustical tile ceiling; the south partition wall was added when the basement was finished. North of the dining hall is a large commercial kitchen with finished concrete floors and walls, and a plaster ceiling. West of the kitchen is a storage room containing the fire suppression system for the basement. North off the kitchen are adjacent corridors with stairs. The stair to the east, which is also accessible from the boiler room, is steel and concrete and provides access up to the exterior at ground level. Staircase 2 to the west provides access to all floors and the roof and is a straight-run cast iron stair with concrete treads that switches to a half-landing stair at the upper levels; there are plain, square newel posts; narrow, square balusters; and a wood handrail with molded sides and a slightly curved top edge.

First Floor

The first floor contains six stores that run the full depth of the building from their entrance on Park Avenue, except for the southwest corner store, which is two-storefronts wide and shallower due to the public stair hall located in the southeast corner of the building. The public hall is accessible from the Masonic Temple entrance at East 7th Street and provides stair and elevator access to all levels of the building. The entry vestibule and public hall feature travertine floors, marble base and full-height marble wainscot, and plaster ceilings with a plaster entablature detailed with small, fluted pilasters at the frieze and a denticulated cornice. (Photographs 0015 and 0016) The public stair continues the same design as described at the basement level but with only a round, fluted newel post; this design and configuration continues up at each floor level.

A secondary entrance with stair tower is located at the northwest corner of the building and is accessible through a door at the far north end on the Park Avenue elevation. Within this entrance, the stair hall has terrazzo flooring, plaster walls with marble base, and plaster ceilings. The straight-run cast iron stair continues from the basement and has marble treads at this level.

Second Floor

The second floor contains offices, a large assembly room with a stage, and support spaces. Finishes vary by space depending on use, and interior doors are typically one-panel wood. The southeast public stair continues from the lower levels to a public hall. (Photograph 0017) The public hall at this level has

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 5

terrazzo flooring, marble base and marble wainscot on plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling with a molded plaster cornice. (Photograph 0018)

North off the public hall is a large assembly room with a stage at its north end. (Photograph 0019) The assembly room has narrow strip wood flooring, molded wood base and wainscot with molded panels, plaster walls with an elaborate molded plaster cornice, and plaster ceiling. Regularly-spaced structural beams span the ceiling running east-west and are clad with plaster and detailed with a cornice matching the walls; paired pilasters supporting the beams are detailed with simplified, foliated Egyptian capitals. Matching pilasters flank the stage opening at the north end of the room. All of the doors into the space are paneled wood and have an elaborate surround with narrow pilasters topped by consoles that support a row of dentils below a molded cornice. (Photograph 0020) An opening in the floor near the northeast corner contains a steel staircase with steel railing that provides access to one of the first-floor stores; this is a late-20th-century modification. Located next to and behind the stage are dressing rooms, a serving room, restrooms, and storage space.

Off the public hall to the west are a coatroom and a non-functioning women's restroom flanking a short corridor, which leads to a long corridor that runs north along the west side of the assembly room. The corridors have terrazzo flooring, plaster walls with a marble base, and plaster ceilings. The long corridor leads to stair 2 at the northwest corner, and lining the west side of the corridor is a series of six offices that front Park Avenue. The partition wall separating the offices from the corridor features interior windows, and the office doors all have transoms, allowing for borrowed light into the corridor. (Photograph 0021) The offices vary in finishes and configuration, with some interior partitions having been added over the course of the 20th century to accommodate different tenants.

Third Floor

The third floor contains two large double-height lodge rooms with support spaces, lobbies, a reception room, and office space. Finishes vary by space depending on use, and interior doors are typically one-panel wood. The southeast public stair continues from the lower levels to a public hall. The public hall at this level has terrazzo flooring, marble base and marble wainscot on plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling with a molded plaster cornice. (Photograph 0022) West off the public hall are the lobby and support spaces for the Ionic Room, the larger of the two lodge rooms; the lobby runs the full depth to the Park Avenue elevation, with support rooms to its north and south. Finishes in these spaces typically include linoleum tiled floors; plaster walls with a concrete base; molded wood chair rail and/or picture molding; and plaster ceilings with a plaster cornice in some spaces. Incorporated throughout the design is the square and compasses symbol of Freemasonry on door knobs, escutcheons, door knockers, and side panels at rows of seating. (Photographs 0023, 0024, 0025)

The Ionic Room is a large, double-height space that occupies the northwest portion of the third and fourth-floor levels. (Photograph 0026) There is a large dais centered at the north end of the room and a smaller dais at the south wall, set below a balcony. The room features linoleum tile flooring in a diamond pattern with symbols of Freemasonry incorporated (Photograph 0027), a marble base and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 6

decorative scagliola wainscot meant to mimic caen stone¹ on plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling with a tall, molded plaster entablature. Fluted pilasters delineate the bays and corners at the plaster walls above the wainscot and support the entablature, which consists of a tall frieze and denticulated cornice; the frieze at the north wall above the dais features Masonic iconography separated by triglyphs. Large, clad beams span the ceiling east-west, aligning with the bays, and are detailed with molding matching that of the cornice. (Photograph 0028) Large, fluted Ionic columns flank the dais, which is set three steps up from the main floor. There are three rows of built-in tiered seating along the east and west walls, and there are original brass wall sconces and decorative hanging brass fixtures.

North off the public hall are the lobby and support spaces for the Gothic Room, the smaller of the two lodge rooms. Finishes in these spaces typically include linoleum tiled floors; plaster walls with a concrete base and molded wood chair rail and/or picture molding; and plaster ceilings with a plaster cornice in some spaces. (Photograph 0029) Again, the square and compasses symbol of Freemasonry is incorporated throughout the design. The Gothic Room is a smaller, double-height space that occupies the northeast portion of the third and fourth-floor levels. (Photograph 0030) There is a dais at the north end with a Gothic-arched opening, and at the south end is a balcony with a Gothic-arched opening. The room features linoleum tile flooring in a basket-weave pattern, a wood base and paneled wood wainscot with Gothic-arched tops at panels on textured plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling with decorative wood beams running north-south and a paint scheme of trefoils at the plaster. Larger, structural beams span the ceiling east-west and rest on large plaster brackets detailed with Masonic iconography. (Photograph 0031) All doors that lead into the space have Gothic-arched heads. There is built-in, tiered seating along the east and west walls. Gothic style lanterns hang from the ceiling, and there are Gothic sconces on the walls.

Fourth Floor

The majority of the fourth floor is occupied by the upper levels of the two lodge rooms at the north portion of the space. Finishes vary by space depending on use, and interior doors are typically one-panel wood. The public hall and stair are located in the southeast corner, with offices and various support spaces to the north and west. The southeast public stair continues from the lower levels to a public hall. The public hall at this level has terrazzo flooring, marble base and marble wainscot on plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling with a molded plaster cornice. West off the public hall is a long corridor with access to offices to its south and storage rooms to its north. The corridor continues the terrazzo flooring from the public hall, but the walls are much simpler, with a concrete base on textured plaster walls and a plaster ceiling. Similar to the second floor, the wood doors to the offices have glass panels and transoms, and the partition wall features interior windows with textured glass for shared light. (Photograph 0032) The offices retain most of their original finishes including linoleum flooring, plaster walls with concrete base and molded wood chair rail, and plaster ceilings with molded wood cornice. (Photograph 0033)

North of the corridor and the three small storage rooms are support rooms for the Ionic Lodge Room, including what historically was a smoking room, choir loft, restroom, and organ chamber; however, these spaces are only accessible via a small staircase at the east end from the Lodge Room below. The

¹ Caen stone is a light creamy-yellow Jurassic limestone quarried in north-western France near the city of Caen.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 7

smoking room/lounge has a concrete floor; concrete base, chair rail, and picture molding on plaster walls; and a plaster ceiling. The finishes in the choir loft generally match those of the Ionic Room but with less ornament: linoleum tile flooring, marble base on plaster walls meant to mimic caen stone, and plaster ceiling with plaster cornice. The choir loft overlooks the upper level of the Ionic Room.

Similarly, north and northwest off the public hall are support rooms for the Gothic Lodge Room, including what historically were a smoking room and commandry, choir loft, restroom, organ chamber (Photograph 0034), and blower room for the organ. The commandry is accessible from the public hall, while the other spaces are accessible via a small staircase at the east end from the Lodge Room below. The commandry and smoking room/lounge have a concrete floor; concrete base, chair rail, and picture molding on plaster walls; and a plaster ceiling. The finishes in the choir loft generally match those of the Gothic Room but with less ornament: linoleum tile flooring, wood base on plaster walls, and plaster ceiling with wood cornice. The choir loft overlooks the upper level of the Gothic Room.

Integrity

The exterior and interior of the Plainfield Masonic Temple retain a high degree of architectural integrity, having undergone minimal changes since construction, all of which are reversible. The building appears much as it did when constructed and retains the integrity of its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

At the exterior, two of the cast iron opening surrounds were removed on East 7th Street at the corner store in the mid-to-late-20th century; ghosting remains where the former openings have been infilled with brick. The original pair of decorative bronze doors at the Masonic Lodge entrance on East 7th Street have been replaced with plain aluminum doors. All of the original cast iron storefront surrounds detailed with anthemion remain at Park Avenue, but the configuration of the entrances and windows has been modified at all of the stores. Much of the brick at the rear elevation was replaced in-kind in 2014 due to weakness of the structural attachments of the brick to the terra-cotta back-up walls. Additionally, the original first-floor entrances at the rear elevation have been modified to reflect the current store configurations, and one has been removed.

At the interior, the basement lounge spaces and kitchen were not fully finished when the building was originally constructed but are believed to have been partitioned and finished by the mid-20th century; the floor finishes in the basement lounge were installed in the 21st century. In the second-floor offices, some of the finishes have been altered and interior partitions added. Finally, in the second-floor assembly room, the stair to the first floor commercial was added in the late-20th-century.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 1

Summary Statement of Significance

The Plainfield Masonic Temple is significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a fine example of the Neoclassical Revival style as applied to an early-20th-century mixed-use Masonic Temple and commercial building. The exterior of the building exhibits key characteristics of the Neoclassical Revival style, including its grand scale; use of two-story Ionic pilasters; use of classical detailing such as various classical moldings, rosettes, festoons, and anthemias; a repetition of elements; and overall symmetry of its massing and proportions. The interior of the building features terrazzo flooring, marble wainscot, classical moldings, and decorative cast iron staircases at the public spaces, and, at the private spaces, a higher degree of plaster and wainscot finishes with built-in furnishings to match the wainscot to reflect the use during meetings and ceremonies. Integrated throughout the exterior and interior design elements are symbols of Freemasonry. The building today retains a high degree of architectural integrity at its exterior and interior, appearing much as it did when constructed, with minimal and reversible changes. The period of significance is 1927-1929 the time during which it was constructed.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Evolution of Masonic Meeting Spaces and Temples in New Jersey²

Freemasonry had early roots in New Jersey. The first known Freemason in the American colonies was John Skene, who immigrated to New Jersey from Scotland in the late-17th century. By the time of the American Revolution, Freemasonry was “a visible component of colonial life,” and by the end of the 18th century, twelve of the thirteen original colonies had established a Grand Lodge, with New Jersey formally establishing theirs in 1787.

Early Masonic lodges typically met in rented spaces such as taverns and inns, private homes, churches, etc. Following the establishment of the Grand Lodge in 1787 and growth during the Early Republic period, some lodges established small, humble buildings. The first purpose-built Masonic temple in the state is the Old Masonic Temple in Trenton, constructed in 1793. The need to display Masonic symbols did not exist in this period, as mass-produced goods were not yet available. Following the Civil War, increased American prosperity coincided with commercial firms beginning to produce Masonic paraphernalia available via mail order; this resulted in new, elaborate lodge rooms with furniture sets, decorations, and symbols of Masonic ritual. A concurrent increase in membership resulted in more lodges being able to purchase and maintain their own buildings, or at a minimum, rent space in commercial buildings rather than taverns.

The earliest Masonic temples were typically multi-story mixed-use structures with commercial space on the first floor to generate income and Masonic functions on the upper floors; often multiple lodges and/or other fraternal organizations shared this space. These were typically unassuming buildings in town centers with uses such as retail, post office, bank, or city offices on the first floor, with offices and Masonic spaces above.

² This information regarding the history and evolution of Masonic temples is largely adapted from Erich Morgan Huhn, *Images of America: New Jersey's Masonic Lodges* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2019).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 2

By the turn of the 20th century, increasing membership had resulted in a building boom that continued until the Great Depression, coinciding with the Golden Age of Fraternalism. During this period, lodges across the country built elaborate temples, often with a single purpose rather than mixed-use, as had been common. These buildings were centered around the lodge room at the upper level and typically also included support spaces such as a library, parlor, and changing rooms. These temples continued to be located in town centers and became Masonic social centers, featuring grand architecture at the exterior and elaborate decorations at the interior.

While mixed-use designs for Masonic buildings were less common by the turn of the 20th century, several of this kind were built. While the functions remained the same, with retail at the first floor and Masonic functions at the upper levels, the buildings' exteriors became less reserved and unassuming. They used styles of architecture considered to be grander in order to show off the success and influence of the Masons. The single-purpose and mixed-use temples of the early-20th century would also reference classical architecture (columns, pilasters, pediments, cornices, etc.) as "temples" like those symbolized in Masonic rituals, an attempt to link the fraternity with the ancient past referenced in Masonic origin myths. This coincided with the increasing popular use of Classical and Colonial Revival styles in architecture at the time. It is this category of Masonic buildings that the Plainfield Masonic Temple fits into as an early-20th-century mixed-use building with a high-style Neoclassical exterior and highly-decorated interior incorporating a hierarchy of finishes.

A second building boom in Masonic temples began following World War II, considered the Golden Age of Freemasonry; however, these buildings were smaller and more economical. With a decrease in membership since the late-20th century, many lodges have struggled to maintain underused buildings, some adaptively reused for new purposes but many remaining unoccupied.

Neoclassical Revival Architecture

The Plainfield Masonic Temple is a fine example of the Neoclassical Revival style as applied to an early-20th-century mixed-use Masonic and commercial building. The Neoclassical Revival style emerged in reaction against the ornate embellishment of late-Victorian architecture,³ instead offering a refined, monumental style emerging from the Beaux Arts tradition while hearkening back to ancient temples. The 1893 Chicago World's Fair featured Neoclassical architecture inspired by Europe: white stone buildings with columned facades. Also in 1893, the passage of the Tarsney Act, though not implemented right away, opened up the design of federal buildings to architectural competitions, and in 1903, supervising architect James Knox Taylor declared, "we will construct buildings of the classic style of architecture, as the old Greeks and Romans did."⁴ The Neoclassical Revival style then became popular for not just federal buildings but all types of public buildings, such as banks, city halls, courthouses, and libraries, as well as for large private residences.⁵ The Neoclassical Revival style was

³ Susanne C. Hand, *New Jersey Architecture* (Trenton, NJ: NJ Historical Commission, 1995), 77.

⁴ John C. Poppeliers and S. Allen Chambers, Jr., *What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003), 98.

⁵ Hand, 78.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 3

grander than earlier classical styles by featuring two-story columns or pilasters; geometric forms; symmetry; blank wall spaces; classical detailing often of the Greek or Roman motif; and an imposing scale.

In New Jersey, prominent examples of the Neoclassical Revival style include the Paterson Free Public Library (a.k.a. Danforth Memorial Library), constructed in 1905; the National State Bank of Camden, constructed in 1913; the American Insurance Company Building in Newark, constructed in 1930; the Jewish Museum of New Jersey at Ahavas Sholom in Newark, constructed in 1923; and the Cooper Library in Johnson Park in Camden, constructed in 1916. In Plainfield, other examples of Neoclassical Revival architecture include the Plainfield Trust Company at 202 Park Avenue, constructed in 1905 and expanded in 1926 (Figure 13); the State Trust Company Building at 221 Park Avenue, constructed in 1916 (Figure 14); the Plainfield National Bank at 111 East Front Street, constructed circa 1895; the Plainfield Post Office at 201 Watchung Avenue, constructed in 1916 (Figure 15); and Former Plainfield Lodge, No. 885 of the B.P.O. Elks located at 116 Watchung Avenue constructed in 1912-13 (Figure 16). Examples of other extant Neoclassical Revival style Masonic Temples in New Jersey include the Copestone Temple, a mixed-use building constructed in 1916 at 225 Kearny Avenue in Kearny; the Trenton Masonic Temple at 100 Barrack Street, constructed in 1926; and the Masonic Temple of Atlantic City at 3515 Ventnor Avenue, constructed in 1927.

Architecture of the Plainfield Masonic Temple

The Plainfield Masonic Temple is a four-story, two-part corner block commercial building designed in the Neoclassical Revival style. The two-part commercial block is the most common form of small and moderate-sized commercial buildings. The form has roots dating back to Roman antiquity but emerged as a building type in the United States in the early-19th century and was prevalent from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century.⁶ The lower level contains a public use with storefronts, while the upper floors have a more private use such as offices, meeting hall, etc., and the architectural detailing and layout distinguish between the different uses. In the case of the Plainfield Masonic Temple, there is an architectural distinction between the first-floor retail spaces, the private second-floor offices, and the even more private third and fourth-floor Masonic rooms, making it a variation of the two-part commercial block.

The Temple was designed as a pale glazed brick and cast stone Neoclassical Revival commercial building detailed with marble and granite trim and with structural terra-cotta tile, concrete, and steel structure. The exterior reflects Neoclassical elements such as various classical moldings, rosettes, festoons, and anthemias; the use of Ionic pilasters; a repetition of elements; and overall symmetry of its massing and proportions; as well as Freemason iconography, with the square and compasses symbol displayed prominently at the center of the frieze on the Park Avenue elevation. In the book *Images of America: New Jersey's Masonic Lodges*, historian Erich Morgan Huhn states, "The Masonic Temple on Park Avenue and Seventh Street in Plainfield represents one of the more imposing implementations of

⁶ Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*, Updated Edition (New York: AltaMira Press, 2000), 24.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 4

Masonic historicist design.”⁷ While the Neoclassical Revival style was prevalent during the early-20th century for all forms of public and commercial architecture, it was particularly popular for Masonic buildings meant to link the fraternity to temples and the ancient past referenced in Masonic origin myths and rituals.

The interior of the Plainfield Masonic Temple is highly decorated, with a hierarchy of finishes depending on the use of the space. The interior features a lounge and dining hall in the basement, storefronts at the first-floor level, offices and a large assembly room at the second floor, and double-height Lodge rooms with various support spaces at the third and fourth floors; all designed with a hierarchy of finishes and detailing. The public hall, stairs, corridors, and restrooms feature terrazzo or travertine flooring, marble base and wainscot, classical plaster moldings, and decorative cast iron staircases. The Gothic and Ionic Masonic lodge rooms feature a higher degree of plaster and wainscot finishes, built-in furnishings to match the wainscot, daises, and decorative light fixtures, all reflecting their use during meetings and ceremonies. Integrated throughout the interior in both the public and private spaces is Freemason iconography, with the square and compasses featured on newel posts, door knobs, escutcheons, door knockers, side panels at rows of built-in seats, and on various elements in the lodge rooms.

Origins of Jerusalem Lodge No. 26 F. & A.M.

The Plainfield Masonic Temple is the current home of Jerusalem Lodge No. 26 F. & A.M., which has roots dating back to the early-19th century. In November 1817, a petition was made to the Grand Lodge of New Jersey to form the Union Lodge in Westfield Township,⁸ which then included present-day Plainfield. As a Union Lodge already existed, the new lodge was named Jerusalem Lodge No. 40. Their first meeting occurred in December 1817 in the upper story of a frame building at the corner of Front and Somerset Streets, which is where they continued to meet until 1835. The Lodge suspended operations for a time beginning around 1835, which was presumably due to anti-Masonic sentiment in the 1820s and 1830s, during which time many lodges ceased meeting. In 1853, a group of local area Masons met to discuss reviving the Lodge, and they held the first official meeting just ten days later.⁹ A new warrant was issued, and the lodge number was changed from 40 to 26. In the following 75 years, the Lodge met in several locations in Plainfield, including the upstairs rooms of the Odd Fellows in the Kirkpatrick Building at 105 East Front Street,¹⁰ the third floor of 111 East Front Street,¹¹ and the upper floor rooms of the Jeremiah Van Deventer building at 116 East Front Street.¹² Jerusalem Lodge No. 26 was involved in the laying of the cornerstones of many local buildings and structures, including the monument at Washington Rock Park in 1867, Muhlenberg Hospital in 1880, and the Plainfield Post Office in 1915.

⁷ Huhn, no page.

⁸ William M. Thompson, “Jerusalem Lodge F. & A. M., Plainfield, New Jersey,” 45.

⁹ Thompson, 54.

¹⁰ Thompson, 56.

¹¹ Thompson, 57.

¹² Thompson, 57.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 5

In 1890, Jerusalem Lodge No. 26 joined with Anchor Lodge, Jerusalem Chapter, and Trinity Commandery in forming the Masonic Hall Association with the goal of procuring one joint meeting space for all the Masonic organizations in Plainfield.¹³ In 1895, the Association secured specially-designed lodge rooms, parlors, and banquet hall at the upper floor of the new Babcock building at the corner of West Front Street and Madison Avenue; these spaces were used until 1902, when the building was destroyed by fire and Jerusalem Lodge lost nearly all of its records. The Babcock Estate was quickly rebuilt, and included in their plans were dedicated rooms for the Masonic Hall Association. The new building was completed in October 1903, and Jerusalem Lodge remained there until the construction of the Plainfield Masonic Temple nearly three decades later.

Building the Plainfield Masonic Temple

In 1921, a group formed the Plainfield Masonic Realty Association in order to construct a new building solely for Masonic purposes. The Association members consisted of representatives of various local Masonic organizations, including Jerusalem Lodge No. 26, Anchor Lodge No. 149, Emanuel Lodge No. 264, and Sojourners, and Jerusalem Chapter – Trinity Commandery.¹⁴ The Association purchased the Dr. Norman H. Probasco property at the corner of Park Avenue and East 7th Street, a prominent intersection in Plainfield. The group presented a financing plan for building a new temple in a 1927 pamphlet called “Masonic Temple. Build It!” The financial plan was to raise \$375,875 in order to build and furnish the temple based on issuing a four percent Masonic Temple Building Bond in amounts of \$250 and up.¹⁵ The pamphlet featured architect’s renderings of the proposed temple, including the exterior and the main interior spaces, such as the two lodge rooms and the auditorium (see Figures 1-5). The pamphlet notes:

Plainfield’s Masonic Temple will be a structure worthy of the name of the Craft which it bears, and will be a combination of comfort and utility. Space will be available for commercial purposes in order that revenue may be derived to lighten the burden of the Craft at large in maintaining the premises in a proper manner.¹⁶

The fundraising campaign was a quick success; the cornerstone was laid for the new building on December 17, 1927. The ceremony was open to the public, and a newspaper article discussing the cornerstone laying the day before the ceremony described the importance of the building for the entire Plainfield community:

To citizens at large the ceremonies of the occasion are no less significant. The completion of the Temple next summer will mean the establishment of a new and important business, professional and social center on Park avenue. [sic] The building, monumental in design and strikingly attractive in the severity of its classical architecture, will be the largest and best equipped of any structure in Plainfield.

The public auditorium, designed and fitted especially for conventions, banquets, lectures,

¹³ Thompson, 60.

¹⁴ “Masonic Temple. Build It!” (Plainfield, NJ: Boise Printing Co., 1927), no page numbers.

¹⁵ “Masonic Temple. Build It!”

¹⁶ “Masonic Temple. Build It!”

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 6

musicales and general public functions, will be the finest assembly hall in the city. Stores and offices on the first and second floors of the building facing Park avenue [sic] will attract the highest class of tenants. Two separate banquet rooms, each with complete kitchen and refrigerating equipment, are features of the interior. The heating, ventilating, lighting and plumbing are well in accord with the latest requirements. The building will be fireproof throughout.¹⁷

A parade was held prior to the cornerstone-laying ceremony, with every Mason in Plainfield expected to participate. The laying of the cornerstone followed Masonic ceremonial traditions, and the metal box deposited in the cornerstone contained an American flag, a Bible, a complete list of subscribers to the Temple bonds, current United States coins, the official program of the ceremonial, a copy of the day's Courier-News, and various Masonic articles.¹⁸

The new Masonic lodge was designed by architects F. B. & A. Ware of New York City, the firm of brothers Franklin B. and Arthur Ware. The brothers were part of the firm James E. Ware & Sons with their father and then formed a partnership after his death in 1918. Franklin B. Ware was the New York State Architect from 1907 to 1912. Other buildings the firm also designed in Plainfield include the Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church; the Y. W. C. A.; the Louis K. Hyde residence; and the Howard C. Foster residence. Other prominent buildings outside Plainfield include the Jersey City W. Y. C. A.; the Cincinnati Y. W. C. A.; Grace Church and the Baggs Park Museum in Utica, New York; the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in Manhattan; Huntington Gymnasium at Colgate College in Hamilton, New York; the Post Office Building in Ossining, New York; and buildings at Marymount College in Tarrytown, New York.

The Temple was built by Wigton-Abbott Corporation, Engineers and Contractors, headed by C. Benson Wigton. Other examples of their work in Plainfield include the Professional Building opposite the Temple on Seventh Street, apartments at 165 Crescent Avenue, an addition to the Park Hotel, the Somerset Street wing of the Tepper Brothers' building, the George Romond Garage on East Second Street, and the Goodwin Motor Corporation Building on Park Avenue.¹⁹ A. V. Searing were the electrical contractors, Van Zandt & Doeringer the plumbers, F. W. Nellis Company were the heating and ventilating system contractors,²⁰ and R. B. Van Arsdale did the tiling.²¹

The new Plainfield Masonic Temple was completed in February 1929. On February 22nd, the Temple held a public open house from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. with informal programming including musical performances by an orchestra and organ recitals. As noted in a newspaper at the time, "The idea of a

¹⁷ "Cornerstone of Plainfield's Masonic Temple To Be Laid Tomorrow By Grand Lodge Officers Following Street Parade By Local Fraternity," *The Courier-News* (December 16, 1927), 1.

¹⁸ "Cornerstone of Plainfield's Masonic Temple To Be Laid Tomorrow By Grand Lodge Officers Following Street Parade By Local Fraternity."

¹⁹ "Cornerstone of Plainfield's Masonic Temple to be Laid Tomorrow by Grand Lodge Officers Following Street Parade by Local Fraternity," 14.

²⁰ "Cornerstone of Plainfield's Masonic Temple to be Laid Tomorrow by Grand Lodge Officers Following Street Parade by Local Fraternity," 14.

²¹ Advertisement, *The Courier News* (February 21, 1929), 36.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 7

public opening day is to let the citizens of Plainfield and vicinity who are interested, go through the building and see for themselves what an addition to the city the new structure is.”²² The Temple was designed as a pale glazed brick and cast-stone Neoclassical Revival mixed-use commercial building detailed with marble and granite. The interior featured space for a future Masonic club in the basement, storefronts at the first-floor level, offices and an assembly room at the second floor, and double-height Lodge rooms with various support spaces at the third and fourth floors; all designed with a hierarchy of finishes and detailing. The building today is little changed in its material fabric and its use.

Supplemental Information: Brief Overview of Plainfield's Development

The development of Plainfield since the early-18th century has been influenced by its proximity to the Green Brook, the Watchung Mountains, and the major port and business centers found not only in New York City but also Newark, Elizabeth and Perth Amboy, as well as advances in transportation. Settlement began in the late-17th century but was sparse until the early-18th century with farming and related mills as the main industry. Plainfield's development in industry and business during the Early National Period was gradual. Plainfield's growth, which had been consistent since the end of the 18th century due in part to its location along the Old York Road, was further spurred by the introduction of the Camden and Amboy Railroad in 1838. While much of Union County remained decidedly rural in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, Plainfield's population expanded increasingly in both the number of businesses and commercial enterprises as well as in residential construction, as the area initially attracted New York businessmen as a summer retreat in the mid-19th century. In 1869, Plainfield was incorporated as a city, with a population reaching just under 5,000 inhabitants. Progressive improvements made to the railroad throughout the mid-19th century created a railroad system that was increasingly more efficient and providing more convenient access to New York City. As a result, the City had become increasingly attractive to New York City businessmen and their families as a place to build their permanent residences. Large houses reflecting the tastes of the owners and the styles of the period proliferated transformed Plainfield into a suburban enclave with a strong and vibrant commercial center, that and continued the City's growth into the early-20th century. It was during this period of growth and prosperity that the Plainfield Masonic Temple was constructed.

Comparative Analysis: Neoclassical Revival Architecture²³

As previously stated, the Neoclassical Revival style emerged in reaction against the ornate embellishment of late-Victorian architecture, instead offering a refined, monumental style emerging from the Beaux Arts tradition while hearkening back to ancient temples. The style was popular for all types of public buildings, such as banks, city halls, courthouses, and libraries, as well as for large private residences. The closest comparable examples to the Plainfield Masonic Temple, which also feature classically inspired design elements typical of early-20th century commercial and institutional

²² “Public Invited to Inspect Masonic Temple Tomorrow: Formal Opening Takes Place; Programs of Music Will Feature Norman Nairn to Give Four Organ Recitals in Afternoon and Evenings in Lodge Rooms – Orchestra to Play – All Are Invited,” *The Courier News* (February 21, 1929), 25.

²³ This information regarding the architectural history of the discussed buildings is largely adapted from Lyn Rupp, *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form: North Avenue Commercial Historic District* (Plainfield, NJ: Plainfield Business Men's Association, 1984).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 8

architecture, are located in the North Avenue Commercial Historic District. These buildings include: The State Trust Company Building at 221 Park Avenue; The Plainfield Trust Company at 202 Park Avenue; The Stirling at 212-216 Park Avenue; and the Plainfield Post Office at 201 Watchung Avenue.

The State Trust Company Building (210 Park Avenue): The State Trust Co. was constructed in 1916 at the north corner of Park and North Avenues. Originally used as a bank, it now houses various offices. Like the Masonic Temple, it was designed in the Neoclassical style, with ornamentation on only the street-facing elevations. Additionally, they both feature a recessed entrance on both sides with simple entablatures, one of which has words engraved into it. Although similar in size and form, the Masonic Temple is larger, constructed of brick and cast stone with cast iron details, and has retained its original mixed-use of commercial businesses on the ground floor and the Masonic Temple on the upper floor. By contrast, the State Trust Co. is constructed of limestone and marble, and while it originally had offices located above the ground floor bank, today it is entirely offices.

The Plainfield Trust Company (202 Park Avenue): The Plainfield Trust Co. bank was built in 1905 at the south corner of Park Avenue and West 2nd Street, and expanded upon in 1926. Utilized as a bank for over a century, it was recently converted into an event space and renamed Banq on Parq. Like the Masonic Temple, it was built with cast stone in the Neoclassical style, which features ornamentation on only the street-facing sides. Additionally, where the Masonic Temple has decorative cast iron panels with a central rosette separating the windows between levels to give the impression of double-height windows, the Plainfield Trust Co. has "ornate copper window moulding and decorative covers over three storey [sic] sash openings."²⁴ Furthermore, where the Masonic Temple has Ionic pilasters delineating the bays at the upper floors, the Plainfield Trust Co. has Ionic columns across the front facade and simple Doric pilasters delineating the bays along the side elevation.

The Plainfield Post Office (201 Watchung Avenue): The Post Office was built in 1915 at the east corner of Watchung Avenue and East 2nd Street in the Neoclassical style. It has been expanded upon since it was first built, and the additions are designed in a complementary style with more minimal ornamentation that continues onto the non-street-facing elevations. The Post Office exterior is primarily of cut sandstone. Like the Masonic Temple, the Post Office has a classical cornice with dentils and egg-and-dart-molding. The front façade of original section of the Post Office features ten large Doric columns supporting a projecting portico that serves as the main public entrance to a use-specific building type. The similarities between the Masonic Temple and this building including the pilasters delineating each bay on the secondary façade, ornamental grill work on some, but not all, windows, and holds a prominent position at a major downtown intersection.

Former Plainfield Lodge, No. 885 of the B.P.O. Elks (116 Watchung Avenue): The Elks Club was built in 1912-1913 as a two-part commercial block set mid-block on Watchung Avenue executed in the Beaux Arts style. The first floor contained a restaurant, and the lodge rooms were located on the upper two floors. The building is constructed of limestone at the water table and first floor with a buff brick at the upper levels. The trim detailing and projecting cornice with dentil moldings (removed) are detailed

²⁴ Rupp, 67.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 9

in terra cotta matching the limestone color with glazed terra cotta decorative detailing in select locations including the arched windows openings at the third floor. Since the Elks Lodge incorporates more Beaux Arts detailing, such as the projecting transom detailed with foliated brackets and supporting a slightly projecting solid balcony, balustrade with turned balusters and inset panels at the parapet wall, and the incorporation of herringbone-patterned brick to further highlight the arched third floor openings, it is slightly more ornate than the Masonic Lodge. However, both lodge buildings utilized a formal articulation of their facades and similar divisions of their interiors with the commercial and public spaces at the lower floors and the private lodge rooms at the upper levels.

Comparative Analysis: Masonic Temples

The closest comparable examples to Plainfield Masonic Temple, which are also high-style Neoclassical Masonic Temples, are the Trenton Masonic Lodge, Atlantic City Masonic Temple, and Copestone-Ophir Masonic Lodge in Kearny.

Trenton Masonic Lodge (100 Barrack Street, Trenton): The Trenton Masonic Lodge, also known as the “Grand Lodge of New Jersey” and “New Masonic Temple,” was constructed in 1926 at the southeast corner of Barrack and West Front Streets, and listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places in 1976 as part of the State House District. It was built by Brother James Morris in the Neoclassical style behind the Old Masonic Temple (1793). The west (front), north and south elevations of the building feature limestone and granite, while the rear elevation is brick. Unlike the Plainfield Temple, this building features ornamentation on all elevations, although the rear is more minimal. While the Temple in Plainfield has a flat roof, the one in Trenton has a flat roof intersected by a cross gable, creating a pediment at the front and rear. At the front, this pediment creates a portico, which is supported by six large Doric columns. Like the Plainfield Temple, this building has double-height, cast stone pilasters delineating the bays at the two upper floors, but in the Doric, not Ionic, order. Both buildings also have a classical cornice, and the pediment of the Trenton Lodge features a parapet detailed with anthemion much like the roofline of the Plainfield Temple. Finally, the Trenton Lodge is a single-use building, serving only Masonic purposes.²⁵

Atlantic City Masonic Temple (3515 Ventnor Avenue, Atlantic City): The Atlantic City Masonic Temple was built in 1926-1927 at the north corner of Ventnor and North Hartford Avenues, facing southeast toward O'Donnell Memorial Park. The limestone and granite building was designed by Charles D. Adams and constructed by Phillip G. Hannum.²⁶ Like the Plainfield Temple, this building has a classical cornice topped with a parapet detailed with anthemion; double-height, cast stone Ionic pilasters delineating the bays at the upper two floors (side elevations only); two entrances with classical entablatures; and ornamentation on multiple elevations. Unlike the Plainfield Temple, the front elevation of the Atlantic City Temple features six truncated Ionic columns at the upper floors and alternating segmental arched and triangular pediments above the second-floor windows. Masonic imagery could once be found throughout the interior and exterior of this building, although much has been lost over

²⁵ “History of the Trenton Masonic Temple,” Historic Trenton Masonic Temple, accessed August 14, 2023, <http://www.trentonmasonictemple.com/templehistory.html>.

²⁶ *One Hundredth Anniversary* (Atlantic City: Trinity Lodge No. 79 F. and A.M., 1967).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 10

time. While this building never housed commercial buildings, it was utilized by the Atlantic City Police Department in 1988-1998, after which it was abandoned.²⁷

Copestone-Ophir Masonic Lodge (224 Kearny Street, Kearny): The Copestone-Ophir Masonic Lodge was built in 1916 as the Copestone Temple in the heart of the town's commercial district along Kearny Avenue. Like the Plainfield Temple, this building is constructed in the Neoclassical style, features ornamentation on only the street-facing sides, and has businesses located on the first floor. The entrance is located in the center of the three bays and has a modern storefront appearance, unlike the classical entablature of the Plainfield Temple. Between each bay is a pair of double-height Corinthian pilasters, not unlike the double-height Ionic pilasters that delineate the bays of the upper two floors of the Plainfield Temple. The name of the Copestone Temple can be found at the second floor of the center bay in metal lettering within a decorative stone surround, whereas the Plainfield Temple features the words "Masonic Temple" only within the stone entablature of the entrance. Both buildings feature a classical, denticulated cornice and festoon motifs. While the square and compasses symbol can be found at the top of the center bay in both buildings, the one at the Copestone Temple is located within a pediment, which the Plainfield Temple does not include.

²⁷ Selena Vazquez, "Old ACPD Building, Masonic Temple an Eyesore in the Community," *Press of Atlantic City*, October 25, 2022, https://pressofatlanticcity.com/news/local/old-acpd-building-masonic-temple-an-eyesore-in-the-community/article_c0fd8650-4eff-11ed-a94b-d7b3b3a36a2e.html.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple
Name of Property
Union County, NJ
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Deed between Plainfield Masonic Realty Association and Trustees for the benefit of Jerusalem Lodge No. 26, F. & A.M. January 4, 2012.

Books and Pamphlets

Hand, Susanne C. *New Jersey Architecture*. Trenton, NJ: NJ Historical Commission, 1995.

Huhn, Erich Morgan. *Images of America: New Jersey's Masonic Lodges*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2019.

Longstreth, Richard. *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture, Updated Edition*. New York: AltaMira Press, 2000.

"Masonic Temple. Build It!" Plainfield, NJ: Boise Printing Co., 1927.

One Hundredth Anniversary. Atlantic City: Trinity Lodge No. 79 F. and A.M., 1967.

Poppeliers, John C. and S. Allen Chambers, Jr. *What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003.

Thompson, William M. "Jerusalem Lodge F. & A. M., Plainfield, New Jersey."

Newspaper Articles

Advertisement. *The Courier News*. February 21, 1929.

"Cornerstone of Plainfield's Masonic Temple To Be Laid Tomorrow By Grand Lodge Officers Following Street Parade By Local Fraternity." *The Courier-News*. December 16, 1927.

"Public Invited to Inspect Masonic Temple Tomorrow: Formal Opening Takes Place; Programs of Music Will Feature Norman Nairn to Give Four Organ Recitals in Afternoon and Evenings in Lodge Rooms – Orchestra to Play – All Are Invited." *The Courier News*. February 21, 1929.

Vazquez, Selena. "Old ACPD Building, Masonic Temple an Eyesore in the Community." *Press of Atlantic City*, October 25, 2022. https://pressofatlanticcity.com/news/local/old-acpd-building-masonic-temple-an-eyesore-in-the-community/article_c0fd8650-4eff-11ed-a94b-d7b3b3a36a2e.html.

Other

Historic Trenton Masonic Temple. "History of the Trenton Masonic Temple." Accessed August 14, 2023. <http://www.trentonmasonictemple.com/templehistory.html>.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 9 Page 2

Rupp, Lyn. *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form: North Avenue
Commercial Historic District*. Plainfield, NJ: Plainfield Business Men's Association, 1984.

DRAFT

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries correspond with the legal boundaries of Block 837, Lot 2 in Plainfield owned by the Trustees of Jerusalem Lodge No. 26, F. & A. M.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries align with the original property acquired by the Plainfield Masonic Realty Association in 1921.

DRAFT

United States Department of the Interior
Here
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photo Log Page 1

Photo Log

Name of Property: Plainfield Masonic Temple
City or Vicinity: Plainfield
County: Union State: New Jersey
Photographer: Beth A. Bjorklund
Date Photographed: May 4, 2023
Location of Current Photos: Offices of Connolly & Hickey Historical Architects
1 S. Union Avenue, Cranford, NJ 07016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 0001: Overall view of the Plainfield Masonic Temple showing both the East 7th Street and Park Avenue elevations; camera facing north.

Photo 0002: Overall view of the south elevation facing East 7th Street; camera facing northwest.

Photo 0003: Detail view of the Masonic Temple entrance on East 7th Street; camera facing northwest.

Photo 0004: Detail view of the third and fourth-floor levels showing the Ionic pilasters, steel windows with decorative bronze panel, frieze with rosettes and marble panels, and denticulated cornice, and parapet with anthemion; camera facing northwest.

Photo 0005: Detail view of the square and compasses symbol with festoon centered at the frieze; camera facing northeast.

Photo 0006: Overall view of the west elevation facing Park Avenue; camera facing northeast.

Photo 0007: View of storefronts along Park Avenue showing the original cast iron surrounds that remain; camera facing northeast.

Photo 0008: Detail view of the cast iron anthemion centered atop a storefront; camera facing northeast.

Photo 0009: Detail view of the secondary entrance at the stair tower, which retains its original

United States Department of the Interior
Here
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photo Log Page 2

bronze door and granite surround; camera facing northeast.

Photo 00010: Overall (partial) view of the north elevation; camera facing southeast.

Photo 00011: Overall view of the east elevation; camera facing southwest.

Photo 00012: Detail view showing the structural terra-cotta tile visible in the unfinished storage room in the basement; camera facing southwest.

Photo 00013: Overall view of the lounge in the basement; camera facing northeast.

Photo 00014: View showing the terrazzo floor and marble base and wainscot in the basement-level public hall and corridor; camera facing northwest.

Photo 00015: Overall view of the public hall at the first floor showing the staircase and elevator, travertine flooring, marble walls, and decorative plaster cornice.

Photo 00016: Detail view of the marble walls and plaster cornice in the first-floor public hall; camera facing southwest.

Photo 00017: Detail view of the cast iron stair at the second-floor public hall showing newel post with Freemason iconography and geometric balustrade with rosettes; camera facing north.

Photo 00018: Partial view of the second-floor public hall showing the entrance to the assembly room; camera facing northwest.

Photo 00019: Partial view of the assembly room looking toward the stage; camera facing northwest.

Photo 00020: Detail view of a typical paneled wood door in the assembly room with an elaborate surround.

Photo 00021: View looking down the second-floor corridor with doors and interior windows to the offices; camera facing northeast.

Photo 00022: Partial view of the third-floor public hall showing the entrance to the Ionic lodge room; camera facing southwest.

United States Department of the Interior
Here
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photo Log Page 3

Photo 00023: Detail view of a brass escutcheon with square and compasses symbol of Freemasonry; camera facing northwest.

Photo 00024: View of a brass door knocker featuring the square and compasses symbol; camera facing northwest.

Photo 00025: View of a brass doorknob featuring the square and compasses symbol; camera facing southwest.

Photo 00026: Overall view of the Ionic lodge room looking toward the balcony; camera facing southeast.

Photo 00027: Detail view of the linoleum flooring in the Ionic Room featuring the builder's square, a symbol of Freemasonry; camera facing southeast.

Photo 00028: View of the ornament in the Ionic Room including fluted pilaster, tall molded entablature, and matching molding at the ceiling beam; camera facing northeast.

Photo 00029: View showing the tiler's room outside the Gothic lodge room with typical Gothic-arched door; camera facing northwest.

Photo 00030: Overall view in the Gothic Room looking toward the dais; camera facing northwest.

Photo 00031: View of the ornament in the Gothic Room including trefoil paint scheme at the plaster ceiling, decorative wood beams, large plaster bracket with square and compasses symbol, textured plaster wall finish, and Gothic sconce; camera facing northeast.

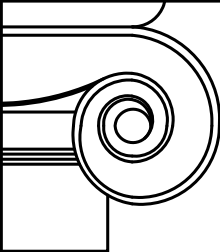
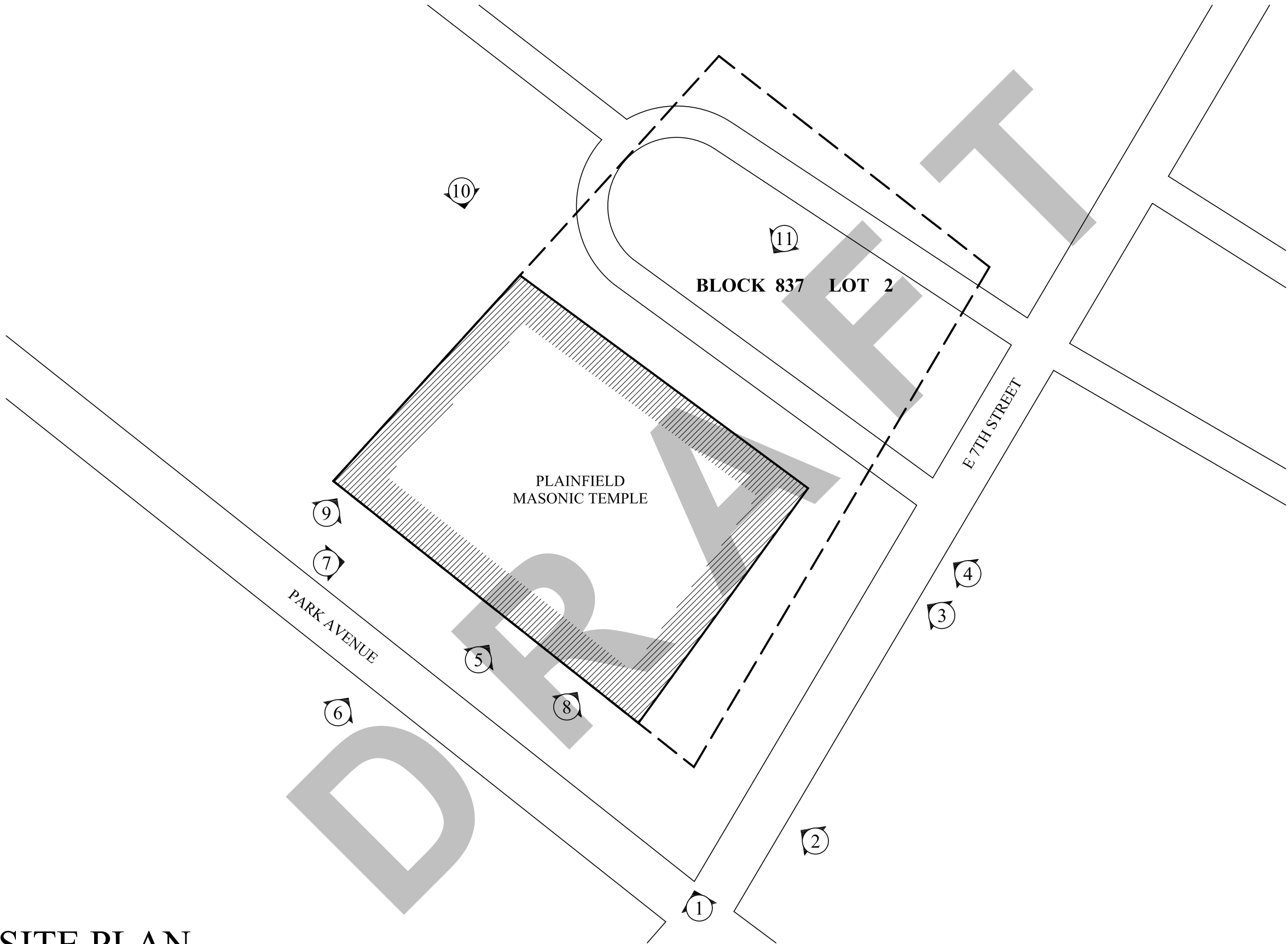
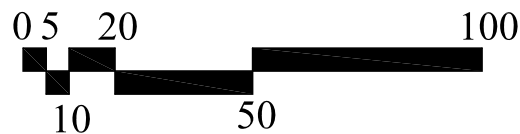
Photo 00032: View showing a transom, door with privacy glass, and interior windows with privacy glass as typically found at the fourth-floor offices; camera facing northeast.

Photo 00033: View showing a fourth-floor office with original finishes and trim; camera facing south.

Photo 00034: View of the organ chamber for the Gothic Room; camera facing northwest.



SITE PLAN



CONNOLLY & HICKEY
HISTORICAL
ARCHITECTS, LLC
P.O. Box 1726
Cranford, N.J. 07016
973 746-4911

THOMAS B. CONNOLLY, AIA
NJ 21A101699200
PA RA403776

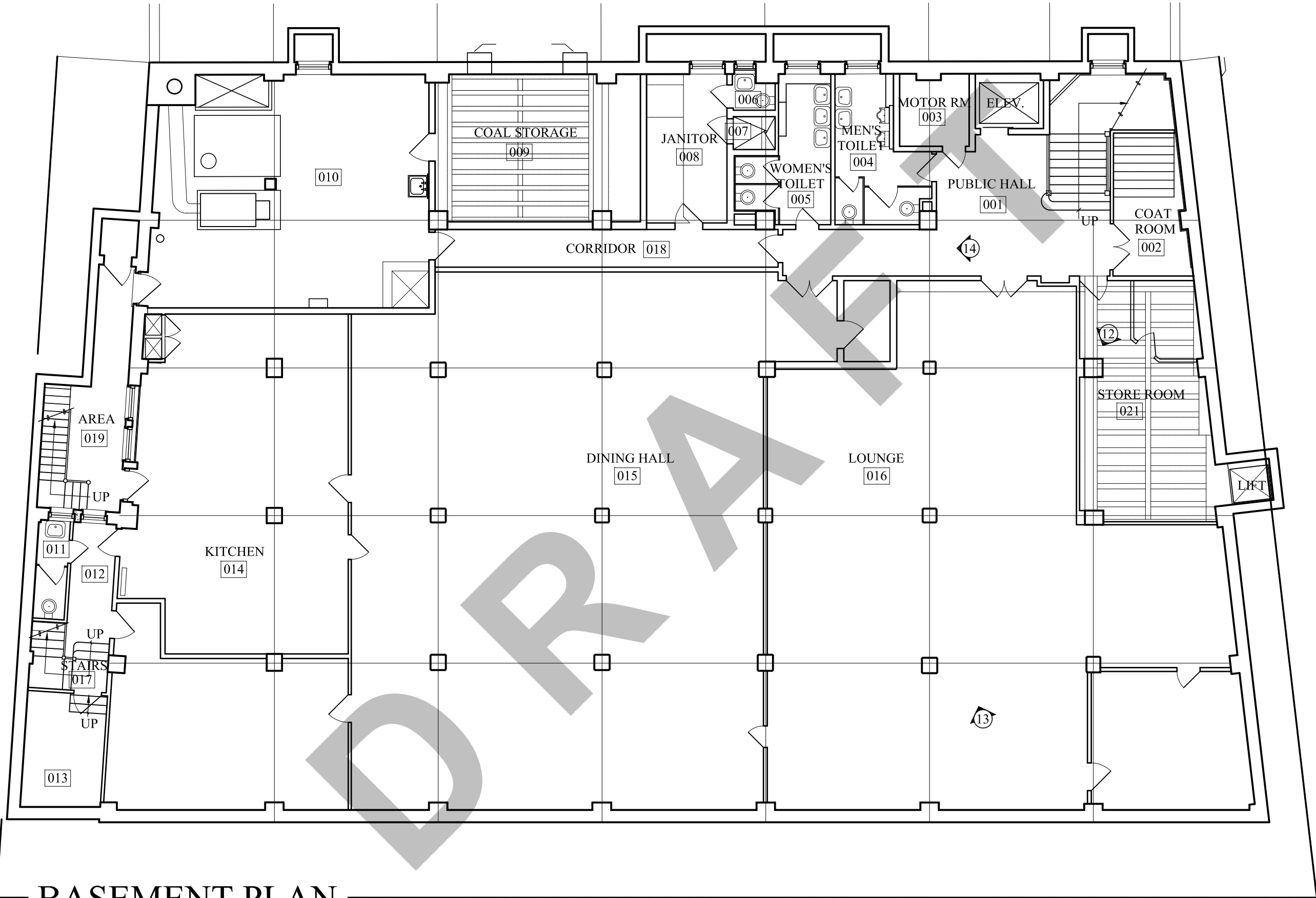
MARGARET M. HICKEY, AIA
NJ 21A1018244500

PROJECT No. 2123C

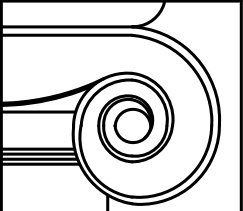
DATE: 8 MAY 2023

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
PLAINFIELD MASONIC TEMPLE
PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY

K1



BASEMENT PLAN



CONNOLLY & HICKEY
HISTORICAL
ARCHITECTS, LLC
P.O. Box 1726
Cranford, N.J. 07016
973 746-4911

THOMAS B. CONNOLLY, AIA
NJ 21A101699200
PA RA403776

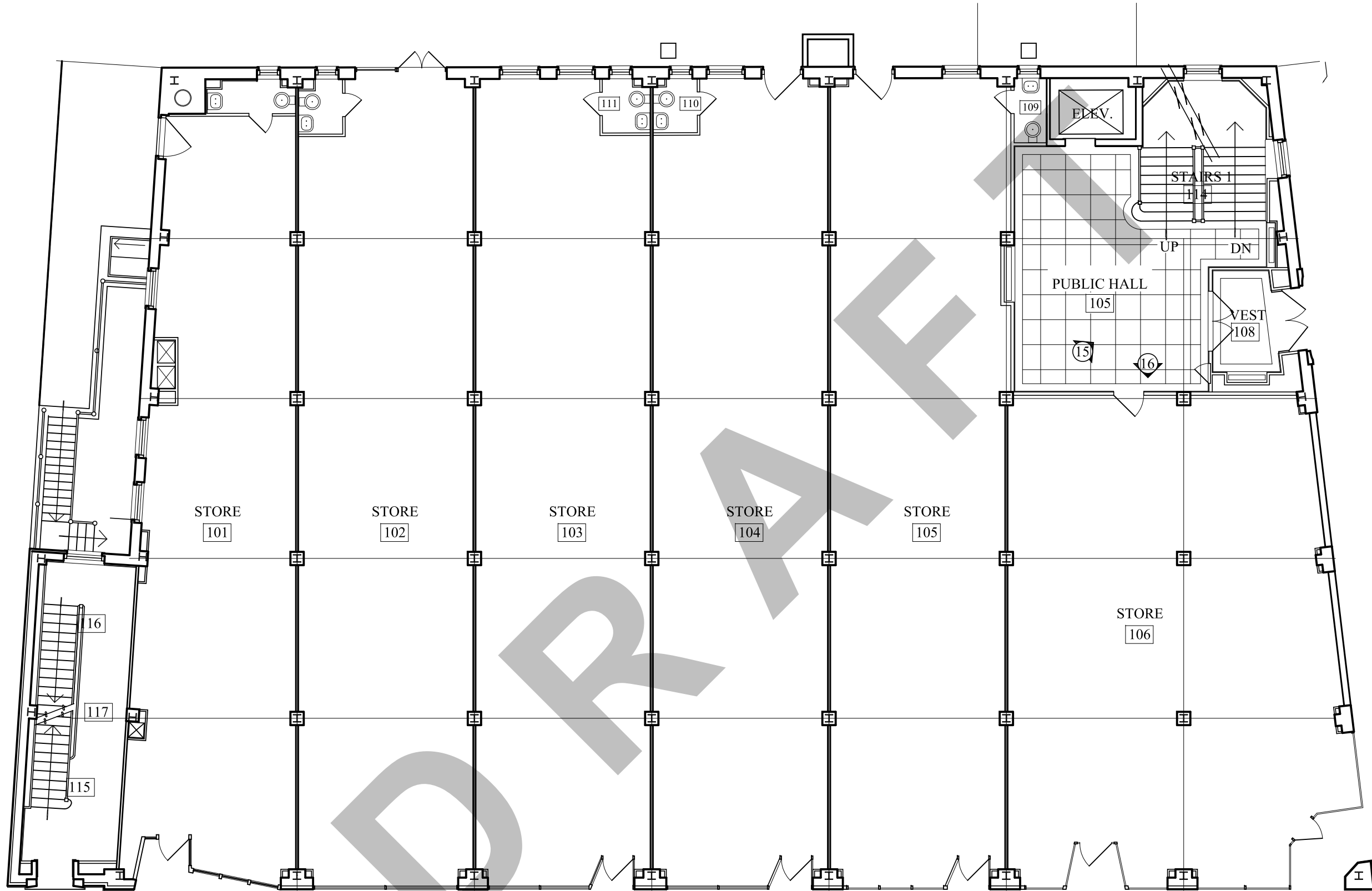
MARGARET M. HICKEY, AIA
NJ 21A1018244500

PROJECT No. 2123C

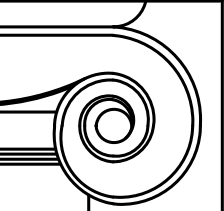
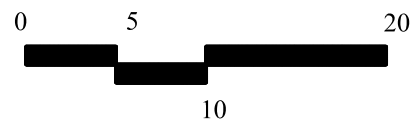
DATE: 8 MAY 2023

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
PLAINFIELD MASONIC TEMPLE
PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY

K2



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



CONNOLLY & HICKEY
HISTORICAL
ARCHITECTS, LLC
P.O. Box 1726
Cranford, N.J. 07016
973 746-4911

THOMAS B. CONNOLLY, AIA
NJ 21A101699200
PA RA403776

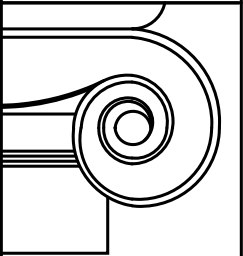
MARGARET M. HICKEY, AIA
NJ 21A1018244500

PROJECT No. 2123C

DATE: 8 MAY 2023

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
PLAINFIELD MASONIC TEMPLE
PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY

K3

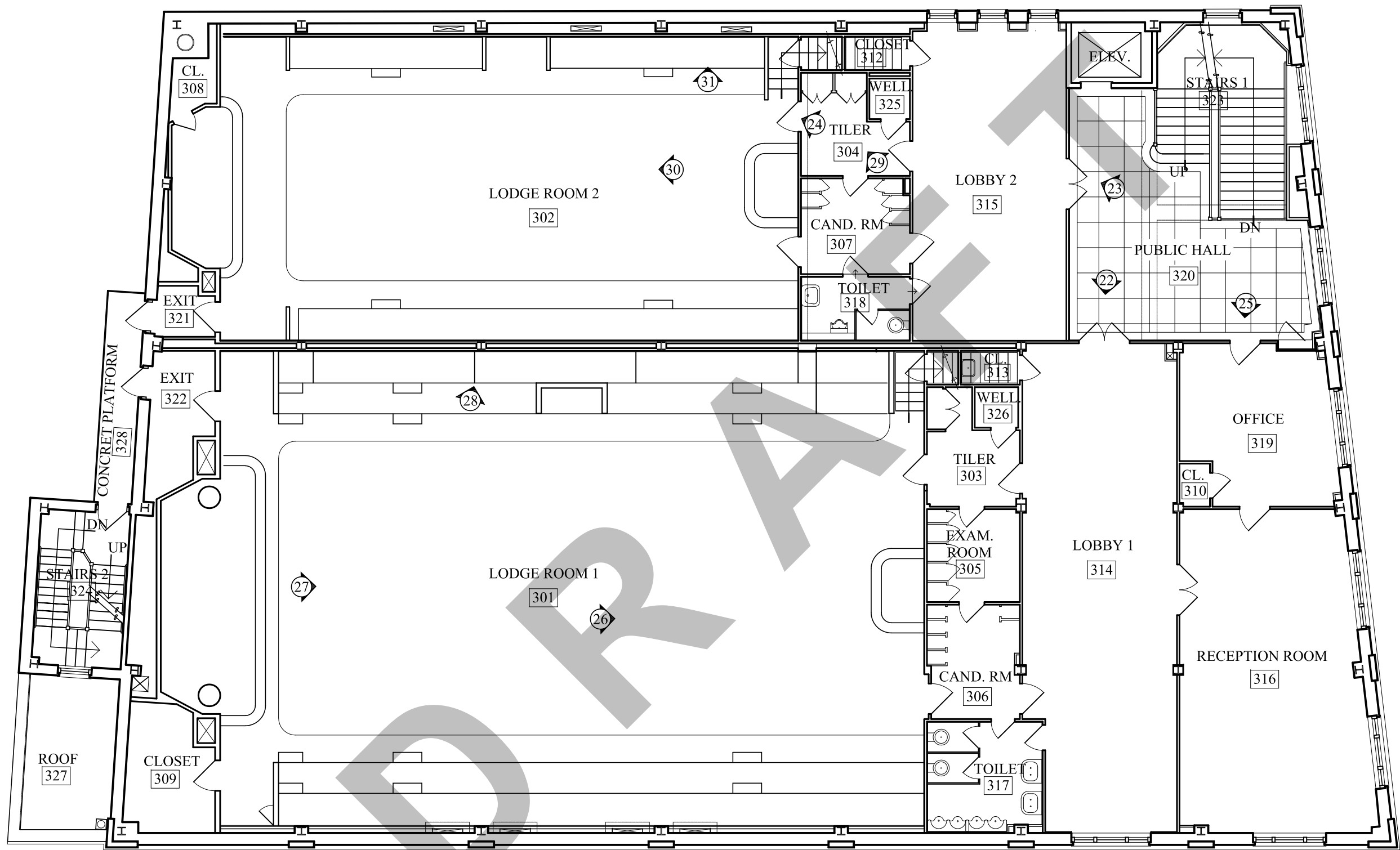


DATE: 8 MAY 2023

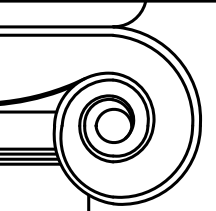
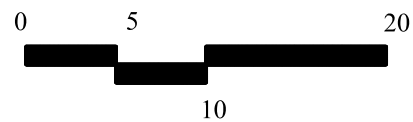
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
PLAINFIELD MASONIC TEMPLE
PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY

K4





THIRD FLOOR PLAN



CONNOLLY & HICKEY
HISTORICAL
ARCHITECTS, LLC
P.O. Box 1726
Cranford, N.J. 07016
973 746-4911

THOMAS B. CONNOLLY, AIA
NJ 21A101699200
PA RA403776

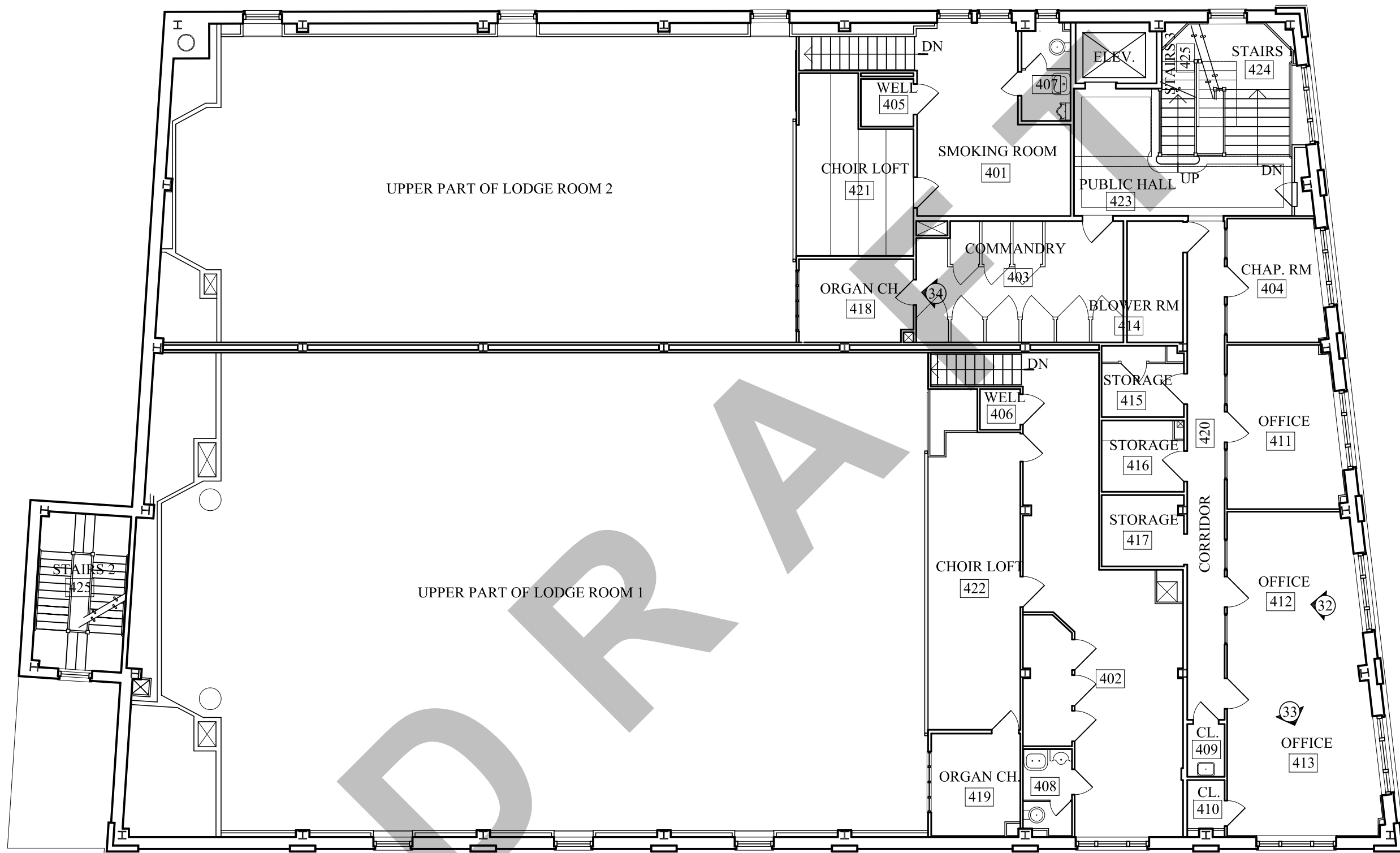
MARGARET M. HICKEY, AIA
NJ 21A1018244500

PROJECT No. 2123C

DATE: 8 MAY 2023

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
PLAINFIELD MASONIC TEMPLE
PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY

K5



CONNOLLY & HICKEY
HISTORICAL
ARCHITECTS, LLC
P.O. Box 1726
Cranford, N.J. 07016
973 746-4911

THOMAS B. CONNOLLY, AIA
NJ 21A101699200
PA RA403776

MARGARET M. HICKEY, AIA
NJ 21A1018244500

PROJECT No. 2123C

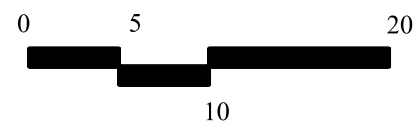
DATE: 8 MAY 2023

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
PLAINFIELD MASONIC TEMPLE
PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY

K6



FOURTH FLOOR PLAN





Plainfield Masonic Temple

New Jersey and National Registers Nomination
Plainfield City,
Union County,
New Jersey

Boundary and tax map

0 10 20 40 60 Feet

Datum: NAD 1983 State Plane New Jersey

Legend

-  SR & NR boundary
-  Coordinates
-  Tax Parcels

0.49 Acres



NJDEP,
Historic Preservation Office
August 2023

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 1

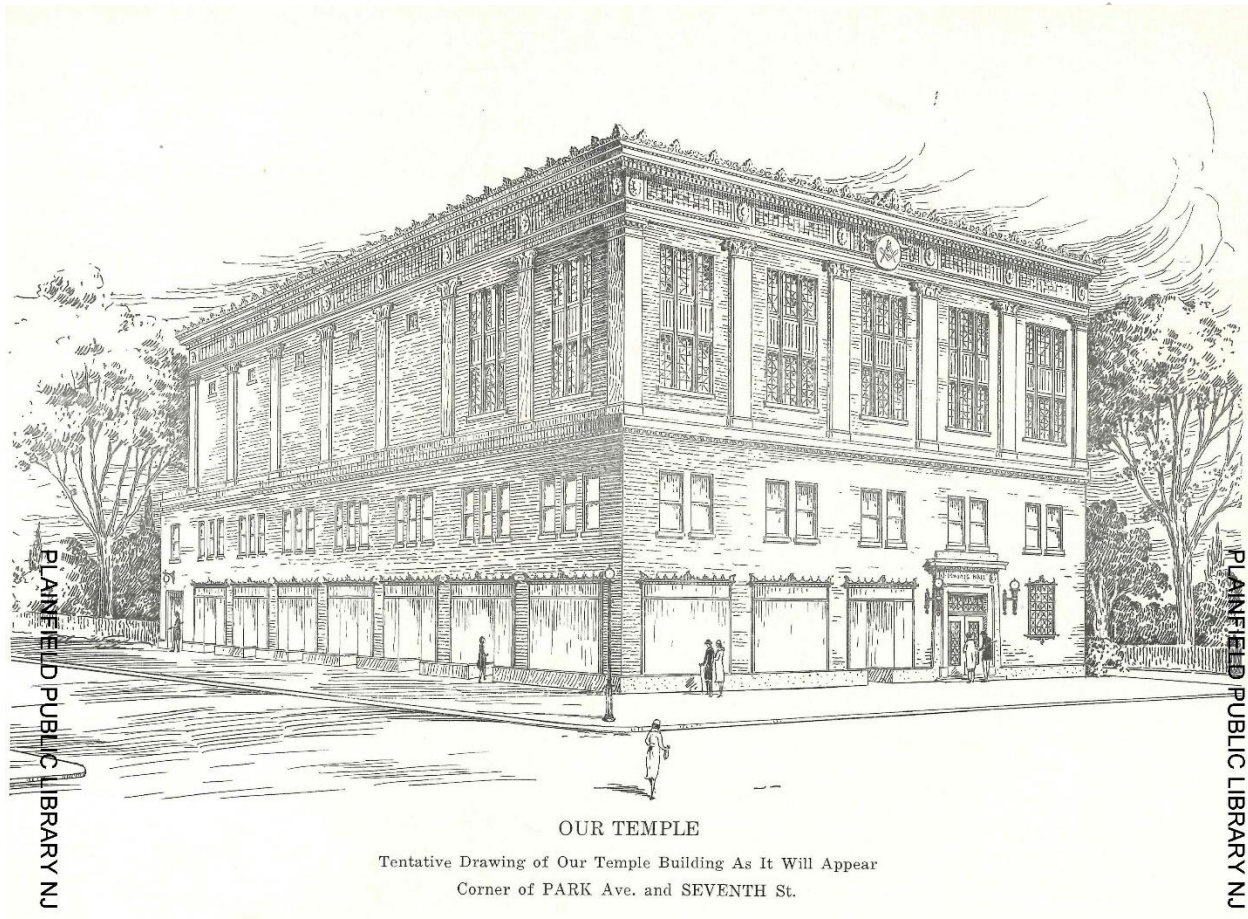


Figure 1. Original architect's rendering of the Plainfield Masonic Temple.¹

¹ "Masonic Temple. Build It!" (Plainfield, NJ: Boise Printing Co., 1927), no page numbers.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

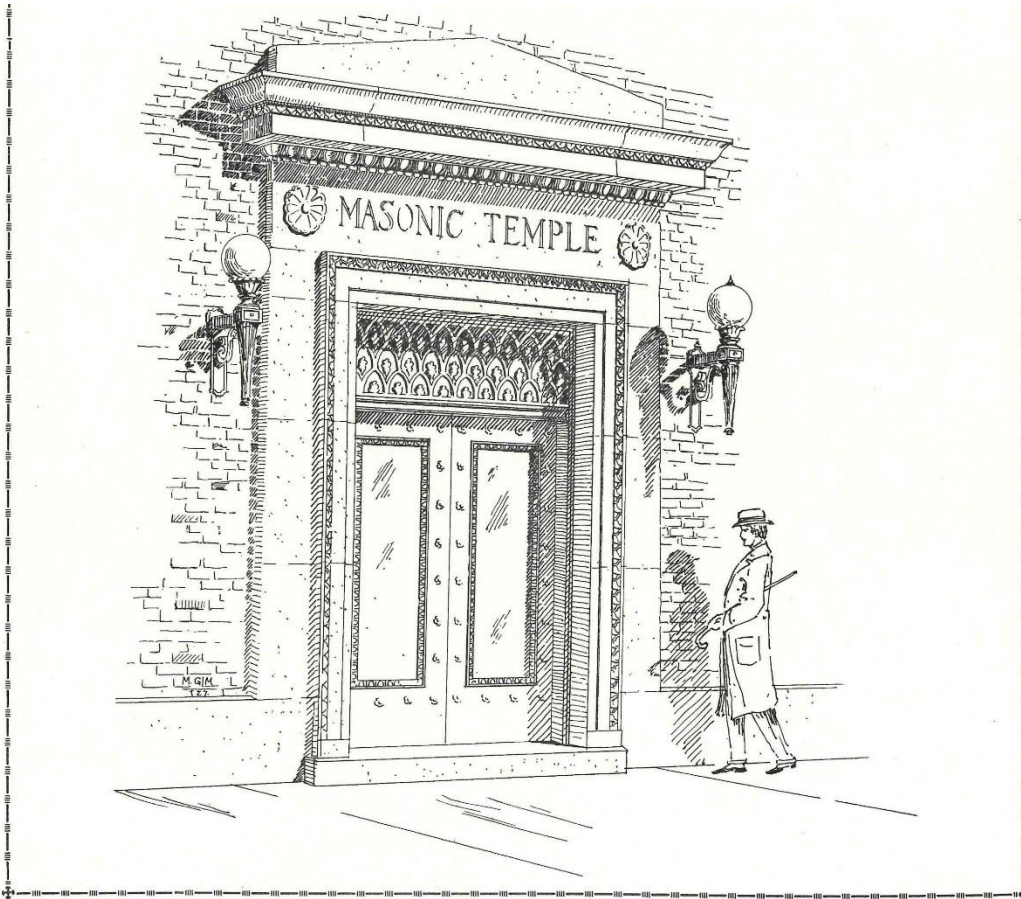
Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 2

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY NJ

Figure 2. Original architect's rendering detail of the Masonic Temple entrance on East 7th Street.²

² "Masonic Temple. Build It!" (Plainfield, NJ: Boise Printing Co., 1927), no page numbers.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

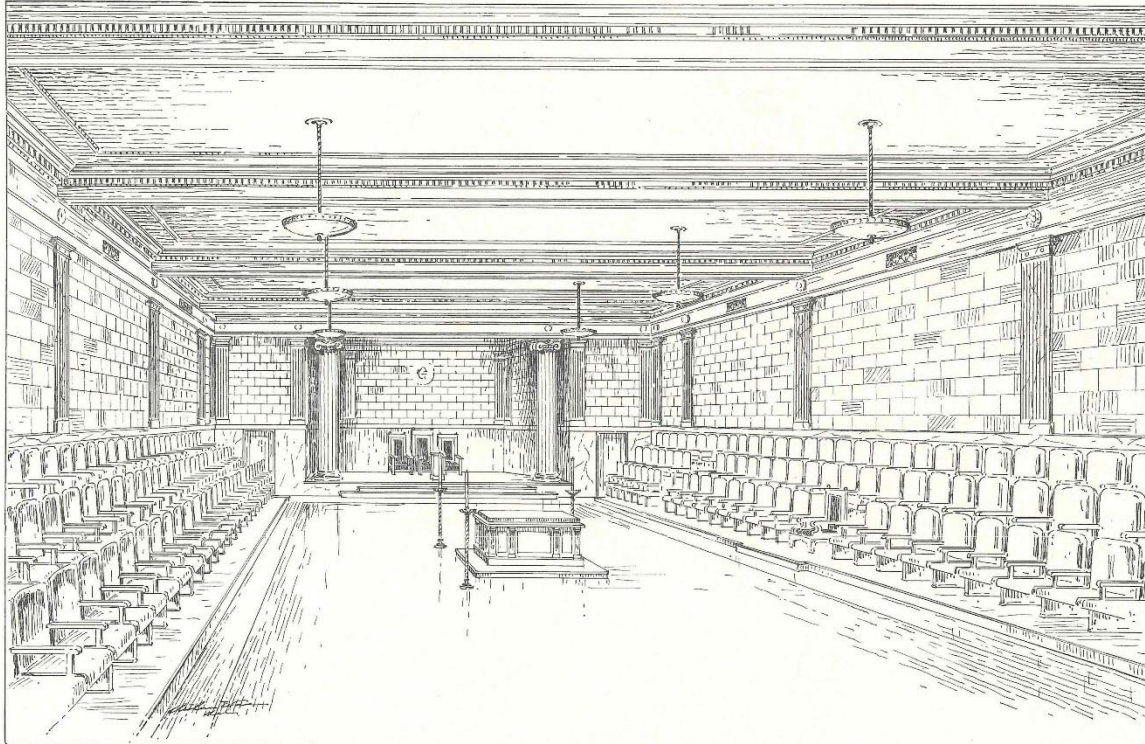
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 3

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY NJ

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY NJ



IONIC ROOM

A large monumental Lodge Room, Treated in
Severe Neo Grec. Architecture.
Seating Capacity 350

Figure 3. Original architect's rendering of the Ionic Room, the larger of the two lodge rooms.³

³ "Masonic Temple. Build It!" (Plainfield, NJ: Boise Printing Co., 1927), no page numbers.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 4

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY NJ

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY NJ



GOTHIC ROOM

Seating Capacity 200

F. B. & A. WARE, ARCHITECTS

Figure 4. Original architect's rendering of the Gothic Room, the smaller of the two lodge rooms.⁴

⁴ "Masonic Temple. Build It!" (Plainfield, NJ: Boise Printing Co., 1927), no page numbers.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

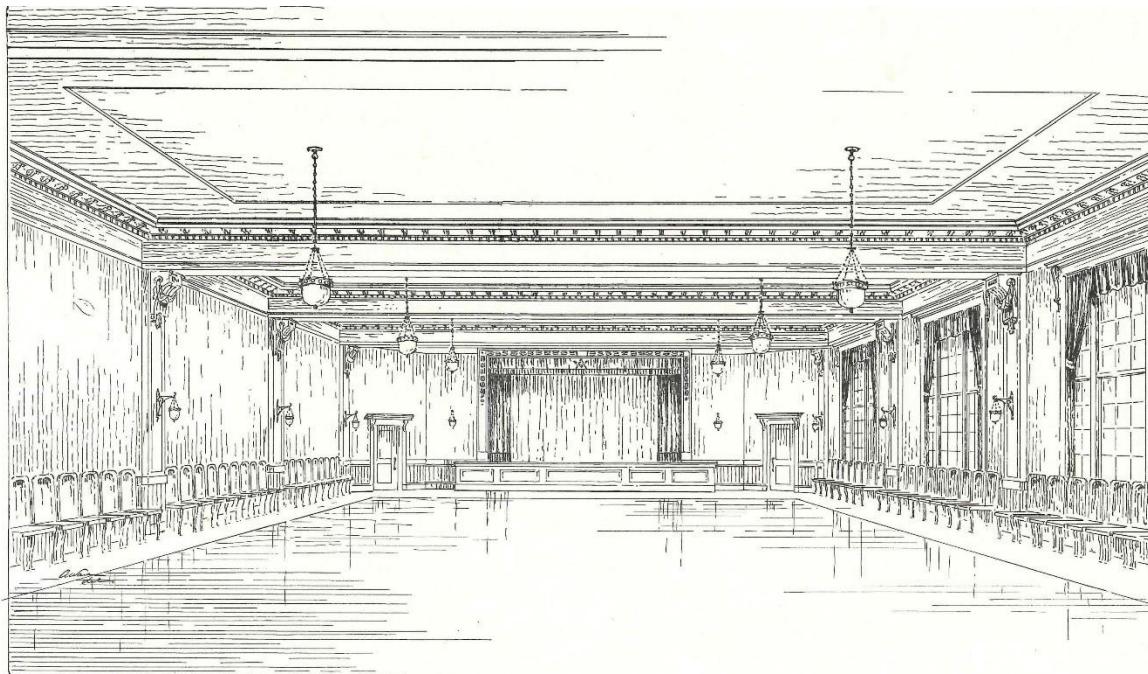
Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 5

THE AUDITORIUM

Seating Capacity 420

No Fixed Chairs

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY NJ

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY NJ

Figure 5. Original architect's rendering of the assembly room on the second floor.⁵

⁵ "Masonic Temple. Build It!" (Plainfield, NJ: Boise Printing Co., 1927), no page numbers.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 6



Courtesy of Plainfield Public Library NJ

Figure 6. October 10, 1927 ground-breaking ceremony for the Plainfield Masonic Temple.⁶

⁶ Courtesy of the Plainfield Public Library Paul R. Collier Photograph Collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 7



Figure 7. 1927 cornerstone-laying ceremony at the Plainfield Masonic Temple.⁷

⁷ Courtesy of the Plainfield Public Library Paul R. Collier Photograph Collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 8



Figure 8. April 18, 1928 image of the Plainfield Masonic Temple under construction.⁸

⁸ Courtesy of the Plainfield Public Library Paul R. Collier Photograph Collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 9

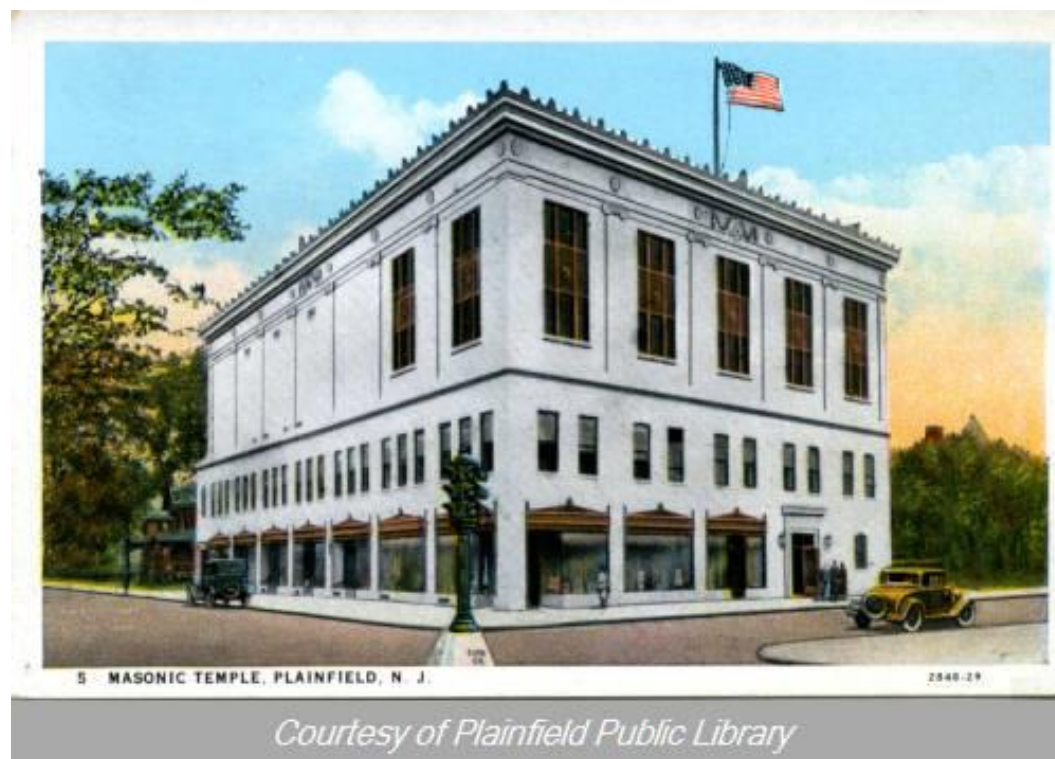


Figure 9. Historic postcard depicting the Plainfield Masonic Temple soon after its construction.⁹

⁹ Courtesy of the Plainfield Public Library Vintage Postcard Collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 10

Telephone Plainfield 8000

PLAINFIELD, N. J., COURIER-NEWS, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1929

PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

Plainfield Masonic Building

Desirable
Offices
For
Rent



Attractive
Stores
For
Rent

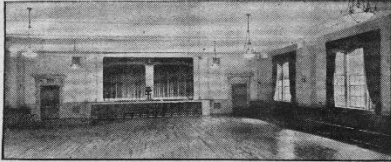
MASONIC BUILDING

Locate Your Business In a Prosperous Neighborhood Which Is Developing Rapidly

There are several desirable stores, most beautifully situated in the Masonic Building, that offer a most attractive location for exclusive shops that will develop with the growth of the neighborhood.

Throughout the offices in the building there are some choice, well-lighted and properly ventilated offices available, which, with the refined surroundings and atmosphere of this delightful building, spells success for the occupant.

Parking facilities are comfortable in the neighborhood of the Masonic Building, which adds to the convenience of shopping in the stores and the visits to the offices of the building. Parking space meets the problem of the autoist.


MASONIC AUDITORIUM

*Perfectly and Charmingly Adapted for Social Events
of Societies, Clubs and Organizations*

SEATING CAPACITY—475
Complete Kitchen and Serving Ovens, Etc.

Open Dates for Dances—Entertainments—Banquets and Lectures

Reasonable Rates—Apply Willard M. Maxim, Masonic Building
8 to 12 Noon—Telephone 9122

Figure 10. 1927 newspaper advertisement for the Plainfield Masonic Temple advertising the first-floor stores, upper-floor offices, and second-floor auditorium for rent.¹⁰

¹⁰ *The Courier News*, February 21, 1929, page 27.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 11



Figure 11. An undated, early image of the Plainfield Masonic Temple.¹¹

¹¹ Courtesy of the Plainfield Public Library Paul R. Collier Photograph Collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 12

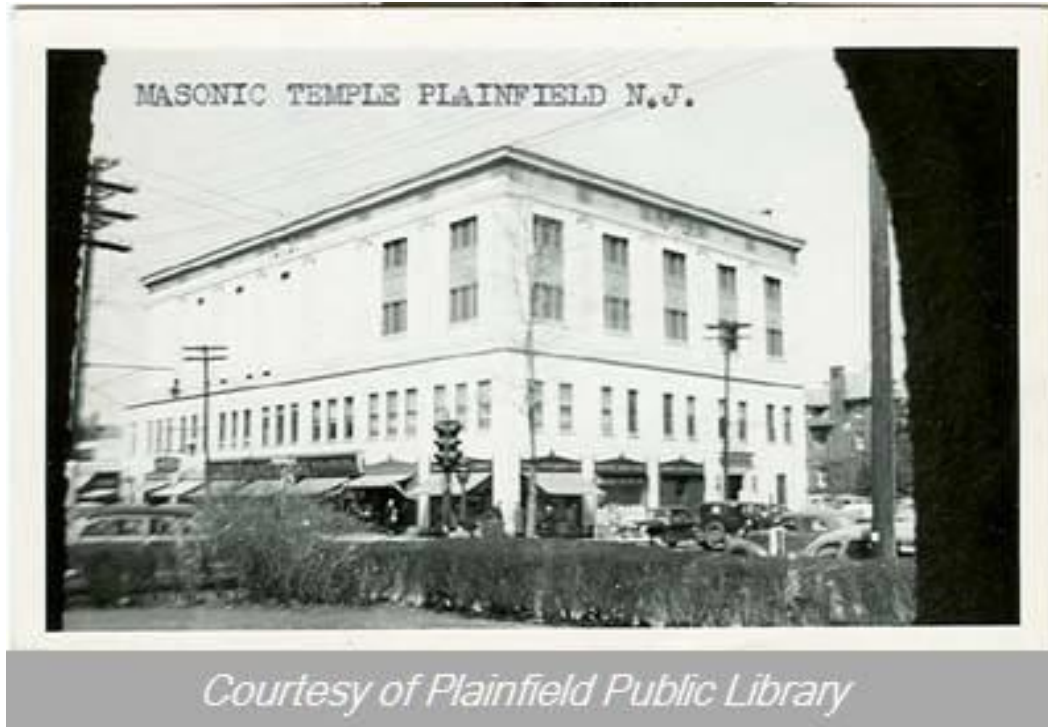


Figure 12. Undated, early postcard of the Plainfield Masonic Temple.¹²

¹² Courtesy of the Plainfield Public Library Vintage Postcard Collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Supplemental Images

Page 1



Supplemental Image 1. The Plainfield Trust Company at 202 Park Avenue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Supplemental Images

Page 2



Supplemental Image 2. The State Trust Company Building at 221 Park Avenue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Supplemental Images

Page 3



Supplemental Image 3. The Plainfield Post Office at 201 Watchung Avenue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 1



Photo 0001: Overall view of the Plainfield Masonic Temple showing both the East 7th Street and Park Avenue elevations; camera facing north.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 2



Photo 0002: Overall view of the south elevation facing East 7th Street; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 3



Photo 0003: Detail view of the Masonic Temple entrance on East 7th Street; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 4



Photo 0004: Detail view of the third and fourth-floor levels showing the Ionic pilasters, steel windows with decorative bronze panel, frieze with rosettes and marble panels, and denticulated cornice, and parapet with anthemion; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 5



Photo 0005: Detail view of the scale and compasses with festoon centered at the frieze; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 6



Photo 0006: Overall view of the west elevation facing Park Avenue; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 7



Photo 0007: View of storefronts along Park Avenue showing the original cast iron surrounds that remain; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 8



Photo 0008: Detail view of the cast iron anthemion centered atop a storefront; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 9

Photo 0009: Detail view of the secondary entrance at the stair tower, which retains its original bronze door and granite surround; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 10



Photo 0010: Overall (partial) view of the north elevation; camera facing southeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 11



Photo 0011: Overall view of the east elevation; camera facing southwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 12



Photo 0012: Detail view showing the structural terra-cotta tile visible in the unfinished storage room in the basement; camera facing southwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 13



Photo 0013: Overall view of the lounge in the basement; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 14



Photo 0014: View showing the terrazzo floor and marble base and wainscot in the basement-level public hall and corridor; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 15



Photo 0015: Overall view of the public hall at the first floor showing the staircase and elevator, travertine flooring, marble walls, and decorative plaster cornice.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 16

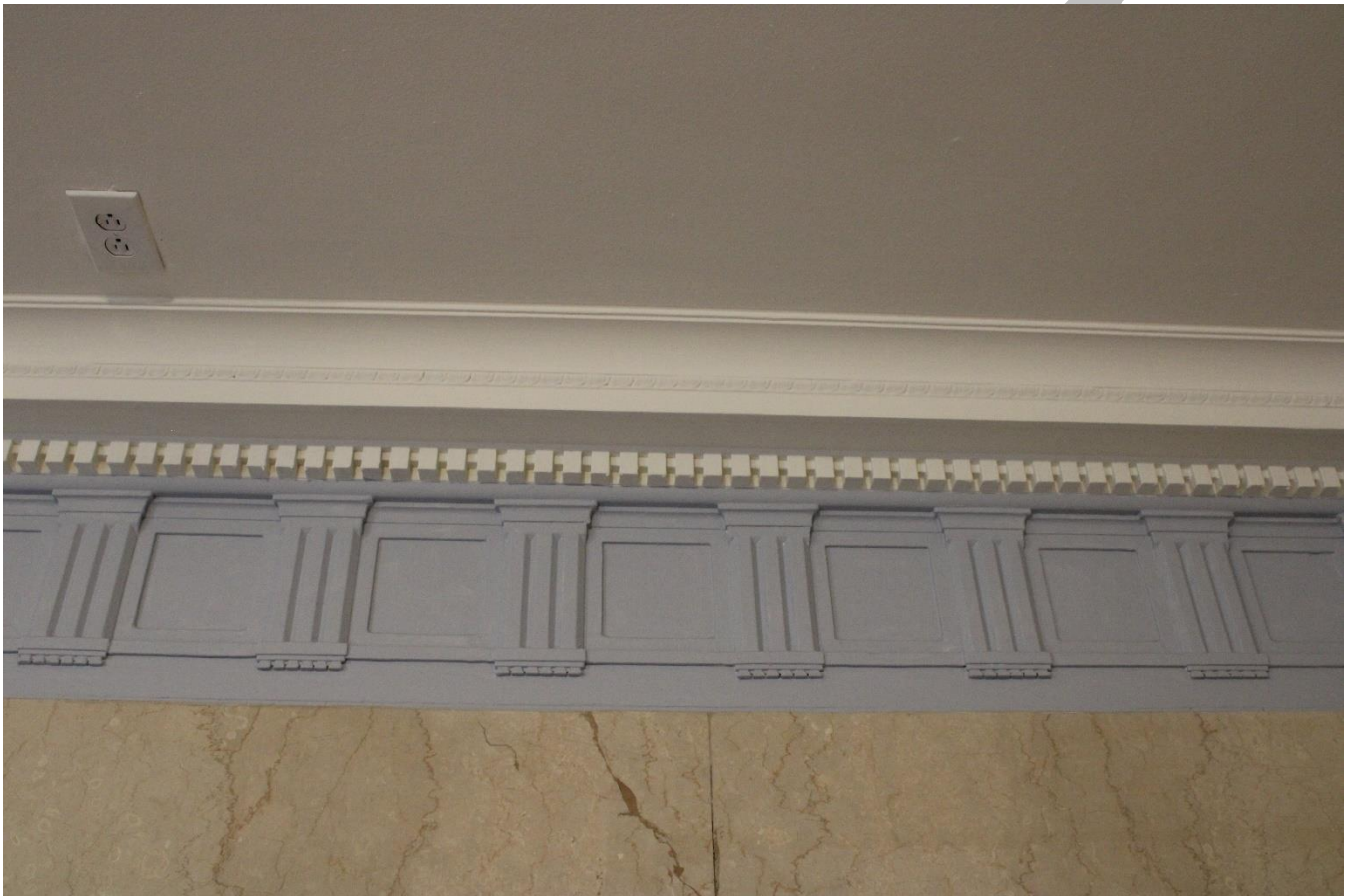


Photo 0016: Detail view of the marble walls and plaster cornice in the first-floor public hall; camera facing southwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 17



Photo 0017: Detail view of the cast iron stair at the second-floor public hall showing newel post with Freemason iconography and geometric balustrade with rosettes; camera facing north.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 18



Photo 0018: Partial view of the second-floor public hall showing the entrance to the Masonic Hall/assembly room; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 19



Photo 0019: Partial view of the assembly room looking toward the stage; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 20



Photo 0020: Detail view of a typical paneled wood door in the assembly room with an elaborate surround.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 21



Photo 0021: View looking down the second-floor corridor with doors and interior windows to the offices; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 22



Photo 0022: Partial view of the third-floor public hall showing the entrance to the Ionic lodge room; camera facing southwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 23



Photo 0023: Detail view of a brass escutcheon with square and compasses symbol of Freemasonry; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 24



Photo 0024: View of a brass door knocker featuring the square and compasses symbol; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 25



Photo 0025: View of a brass doorknob featuring the square and compasses symbol; camera facing southwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 26



Photo 0026: Overall view of the Ionic lodge room looking toward the balcony; camera facing southeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 27



Photo 0027: Detail view of the linoleum flooring in the Ionic Room featuring the builder's square, a symbol of Freemasonry; camera facing southeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 28



Photo 0028: View of the ornament in the Ionic Room including fluted pilaster, tall molded entablature, and matching molding at the ceiling beam; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 29



Photo 0029: View showing the tiler's room outside the Gothic lodge room with typical Gothic-arched door; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 30



Photo 0030: Overall view in the Gothic Room looking toward the dais; camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 31

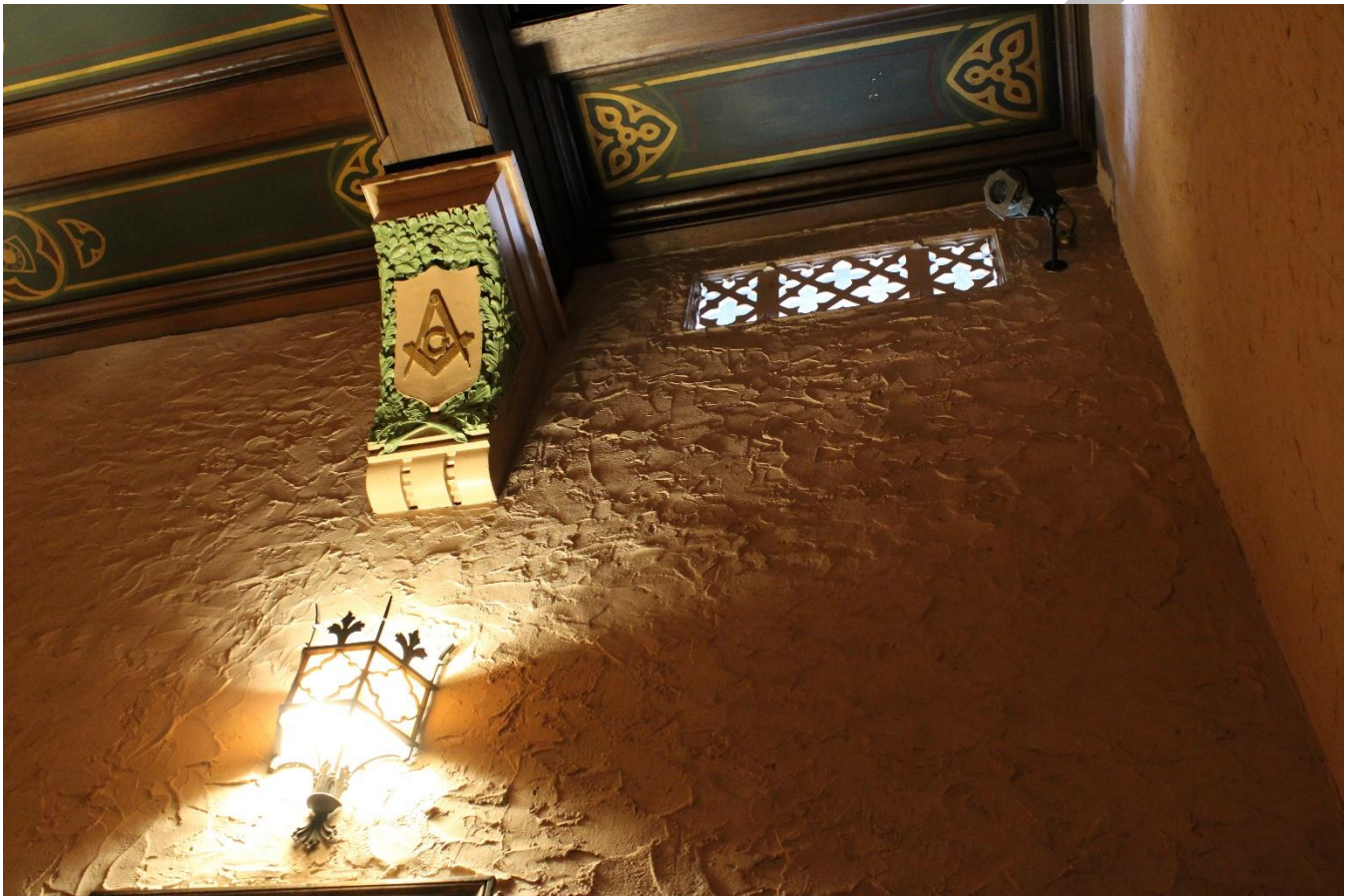


Photo 0031: View of the ornament in the Gothic Room including trefoil paint scheme at the plaster ceiling, decorative wood beams, large plaster bracket with square and compasses symbol, textured plaster wall finish, and Gothic sconce; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 32



Photo 0032: View showing a transom, door with privacy glass, and interior windows with privacy glass as typically found at the fourth-floor offices; camera facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 33



Photo 0033: View showing a fourth-floor office with original finishes and trim; camera facing south.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Plainfield Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Union County, NJ

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 34



Photo 0034: View of the organ chamber for the Gothic Room; camera facing northwest.