City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)

I. Name of Building or Site

| (1) Common | (2) Historic (if applicable) |
|---|---|
| Breese Stevens House | Breese Stevens House |

II. Location

| (1) Street Address | (2) Ward (available @ City Clerk) |
|---|---|
| 401 N. Carrol St. | 4 |

III. Classification

(1) Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.)
Building

| (2) Zoning District | (3) Present Use |
|---|---|
| R - 6 | Office and multiple residence |

IV. Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's office)

(1) Name(s)
Reginald H. Jackson, Jr.

| (2) Street Address | (3) Telephone Number |
|---|---|
| Lake Mendota Dr. | |

V. Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)

| (1) Parcel Number | (2) Legal Description |
|---|---|
| 0709-144-1207 | |

VI. Condition of Property

(1) Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins)
Goood

| (2) Altered or Unaltered? | (3) Moved or Original Site? |
|---|---|
| Very minor repair in rear | Original |

(4) Wall Construction
Brick, with stone lintels and sills

(5) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the present and original physical construction and appearance (limit 500 words).

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

VI.(5) Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance:

The Breese Stevens House is a massive late Victorian brick residence in the Italianate style. Brick corner pillars and molded stone lintels distinguish the two and a half central section. A back wing of two stories with plain stone lintels quietly speaks of its secondary role as a service area and probable servants' quarters. Several bays ornament the central section, including a one story angular bay on the southeast side, an angular two story bay on the northwest side, and a front one story round bay with unusual rounded windows.

A mulitple gable-ended peaked roof tops the central section and a simple peaked roof tops the back wing. Under the substantial eaves are a dental corbel in brick and a dental cornice in wood. The cornices on the different parts of the building are all in proportion to the size of the section that they adorn. The several brick chimneys carry out the decorative motifs of the pillars and corbels.

Distinctive porches contribute one of the outstanding features of the Breese Stevens House. A long one story, rambling porch with classical style round pillars and urn motif panels meanders from the front to the northwest side of the house. A recesssed two story porch on the back wing adds to the detcahment of the back portion. Two other one story porches jut out from the back wing.

The extant outbuildings and ample grounds lend a flavor of the Nineteenth Century to the Brese Stevens House that is unique to the mansions still existing in the area. A square, roofed and latticed well cover approximately ten feet high stands near the service wing of the house. A high door to permit an enclosed horse drawn vehicle entry leads into an ample carriage house. Of the existing carriage houses on mansion hill, the Breese Steven's one has a turntable in the floor for reversing the direction of the vehicle after it has been drawn inside.

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

VII. Significance

| (1) Original Owner | (2) Original Use<br>Residence |
|---|---|
| (3) Architect or Builder | (4) Architectural Style<br>Victorian |
| (5) Date of Construction<br>c. 1877 | (6) Indigenous Materials Used |

(7) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the significance of the nominated property and its conformance to the designation criteria of the Landmarks Commission Ordinance (33.01), limit of 500 words.

VIII. List of Bibliographical References Used


1. History of Dane Co: Biographical and Genealogical (Madison: Western Historical Association, 1906), p. 927.
2. Madison Past and Present, 1852-1902 (Madison: Wiscosnin State Journal, 1902), p. 75.
3. Sandstone and Buffalo Robes (Madison: City Planning Department, 1969), #18.
4. Merle Curti & Vernon Carstensen, The University of Wisconsin: A History, 1848-1925 (Madison; Univwrsity of Wisconsin Press, 1949)
5. PP. 523ff.
6.
7.
8.


IX. Form Prepared By:

(1) Name and Title
P. Richard Wagner

(2) Organization Represented (if any)
Citizens Resource Committee

| (3) Address | (4) Telephone Number |
|---|---|
| 136 E. Gorham St. | 257-5270 |

(5) Date Nomination Form Was Prepared
Dec. 19, 1971

City of Madison Landmarks Commission

LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (4)

VII.(7) Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:

The Breese Steven's House is unique to Madison's Yankee Hill district in that the original building is not crowded by newer structures erected on the original grounds. The building's massiveness allows it to carry the weight of mixed bays and porches that nevertheless blend into a harmonious whole. Except for paint the house is in excellent condition and would require very little work to make it a showpiece.

For over eighty years the house has been home to the Stevens family. As late as 1960 Amelia F. Stevens resided there on North Carroll Street.

Breese Stevens himself was a figure important to the history of Madison. A prominent corporation lawyer he represented national railroads including the Illinois Central, and was involved in land development in the Madison area. Elected mayor of Madison in 1884 as a Democrat, Stevens was alos a curator of the State Historical Society, vestryman of Grace Episcopal Church, and a member of the Reform Clubs of New York and Milwaukee.

A regent of the University of Wisconsin from 1891 to 1904, Breese Stevens helped the school through the crises of the turn of the century. He aided Richard T. Ely's defense of academic freedom and was a member of the board of regents that endorsed "that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found." The credit for preserving the integrity of the University Fund among the state's finances belongs to Stevens also. He was an outstanding regent who contributed to the greatness of Madison's famous institution. Madison should honor his memory.