

HISTORIC RESOURCE NOMINATION

Please refer to either the Landmark or Historic District Nomination Form Preparation Guide for instructions on completing this form.

If you need an interpreter, translator, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access this form, please call (608) 266-4635

Landmarks Commission

City of Madison Planning Division
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
PO Box 2985
Madison, WI 53701-2985
(608) 266-6552



1.) Identification of Historic Resource

Resource type (choose one): Landmark Historic District

Common Name

Wonder Bar

Historic Name

Garden Lunch; Wonder Bar

Current Use

Building: Restaurant and Tavern (currently closed)

Location of Historic Resource

Street Address

222 East Olin Avenue

Parcel Number(s)

070925208047

Legal Description

SEC 25, T7N, R9E, PRT NW 1/4 SW 1/4 INC ALL VAC SAYLES ST ADJ ON NE DESC AS FOL - COM C/L WINGRA CREEK AND C/L VAC SAYLES ST, TH S 35 DEG 58 MIN 10 SEC E 586.6 FT TO POB, TH N 30 DEG 31 MIN 40 SEC E 58.48 FT TO SWLY R/W RR, TH S 35 DEG 58 MIN 10 SEC E ALG RR R/W 189.60 FT, TH S 00 DEG 25 MIN 47 SEC W 104.90 FT TO PT 100 FT NE OF C/L OF OLIN AVE, TH CONT ALG SD BRG TO PT 50 FT NE OF C/L OF OLIN AVE, TH ON A CUR TO THE LEFT, RAD 1960 FT, LC BRS N 57 DEG 13 MIN 30 SEC W 259.8 FT M/L TO A PT, TH N 30 DEG 31 MIN 40 SEC E TO PT 100 FT NE OF C/L OF OLIN AVE, TH CONT ALG SD BRG 99 FT TO POB. ALSO A PARCEL AS DESC IN DOC 3259688 AS FOL: COM W 1/4 COR SEC 25; TH S 89 DEG 22 MIN 49 SEC E, 251.04 FT TO A POINT ON THE CENTERLINE OF OLIN AVENUE; TH S 70 DEG 37 MIN 37 SEC E, 599.37 FT ALG CNTRLN OF SD ST TO A PT OF CURVE RAD 1,050.00 FT, LG CD BRS S 63 DEG 20 MIN 04 SEC E, 266.56 FT; TH SELY ALG ARC OF CUR 267.28 FT; TH N 33 DEG 57 MIN 26 SEC E, 37.49 FT TO POB, SD PT BEING A PT OF CURVE RAD 1,087.49 FT, LG CH BRS S 51 DEG 38 MIN 48 SEC E, 166.70 FT; TH SLY ALG CUR 166.86 FT; TH S 47 DEG 15 MIN 07 SEC E, 172.88 FT ALG CUR, RAD 262.40 FT, CHD BRS S 59 DEG 40 MIN 32 SEC E, 31.37 FT; TH SELY ALG THE AR OF THE CUR 31.39 FT; TH N 31 DEG 14 MIN 43 SEC E, 140.73 FT; TH N 37 DEG 42 MIN W, 198 FT; TH S 24 MIN 46 SEC W, 167.92 FT TO CUR RAD 1,900.57 FT, LG CHD BRS N 56 DEG 32 MIN 08 SEC W, 268.77 FT; TH NWLY ALG THE ARC 269 FT; TH S 26 DEG 55 MIN 26 SEC W, 18.62 FT TO POB M/L.

Landmark Site Boundary (within the legal parcel)

A Landmark Site Boundary area within lands (hereinafter "Lands") per a Warranty Deed recorded as Document No. 5477719, being located in part of the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 25, T7N, R9E, in the City of Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin, described as follows:

Beginning at the westerly most corner of said Lands; thence N 30°43'49" E, 225.96 feet along the northwesterly side of said Lands; thence southeasterly 85.10 feet along the northeasterly side of said Lands and the arc of a curve to the left having a radius of 5779.15 feet, a central angle of 00°50'37" and

a long chord bearing S 36°23'00" E, 85.10 feet; thence S 33°34'14" W, 199.16 feet; thence northwesterly 70.31 feet along the southwesterly side of said Lands and the arc of a curve to the left having a radius of 1087.56 feet, a central angle of 03°42'15" and a long chord bearing N 54°19'42" W, 70.30 feet to the point of beginning.

See attached map of proposed landmark site boundary.

2.) Form Prepared By

Name and Title

Elizabeth L. Miller, Historic Preservation Consultant

Organization Represented

Alex Saloutos, Henry Doane, Jackie Suska and others – Alex Saloutos 608-345-9009

4033 Tokay Blvd

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Address

Telephone Number

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Email Address

As the preparer of this document, I am signing below to signify that I believe this document is complete and contains true and accurate information.



Elizabeth L. Miller

7/22/21, 7/26/21, 8/12/21,
8/19/21, and 8/23/21

Signature

Printed Name

Date Submitted

3.) General Historical Data

Original owner

Original Use

Edward and Evelyn Touhy/Towey

Roadhouse/bar and restaurant

Architect/Builder/Designer

Architectural Style

Unknown

Vernacular

Date of Construction/Period of Significance

Moved or Original Site?

ca. 1932/ ca. 1932 - 1936

Original site

Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, poor, deteriorated, ruins)

Excellent

4.) Describe Present and Original Character and Features

The Wonder Bar is located at 222 East Olin Avenue, historically designated Highway 12. Erected ca. 1932 for Eddie Touhy and his wife, Evelyn,¹ it is a two-story, masonry vernacular building finished with brick. The Wonder Bar rests on a concrete basement and the flat roof is accented with a deep, asphalt-shingled skirt roof that wraps around three sides of the building. A heavy brick chimney rises through the roof; it is only visible from the rear of the building. Artistically-placed, rock-faced stones set around the front door each window and enhance the eccentric appearance of the Wonder Bar. The windowsills are stone. The Wonder Bar is composed of a front section (south, housing the dining room and the bar) and a smaller, rear wing (north, the kitchen). Paved parking surrounds the building.

The Wonder Bar faces south. The south-facing (front) façade features a slender, round, two-story tower at either corner. Each tower displays four windows at each story. Those at the first floor appear to be fixed windows with a Craftsman pattern; the second-story windows are 1/1 replacements. A one-story, enclosed entrance porch projects from the center of the front façade. The entrance porch's flat roof is enlivened with a broad, asphalt-shingled skirt. The entrance porch is flanked on either side by a large display window. At the second story, three 1/1 replacement windows are evenly-spaced between the towers.

On the east-facing façade of the front section, a door next to the tower opens onto the patio. The patio was constructed in 1991,² and consists of a platform with board flooring enclosed with fencing. Two fixed windows with a Craftsman pattern (composed of a large lower pane and two, small upper lights) are set to the north of the door. Two window openings can be seen at the second story. The southern one is bricked in and the northern one holds a 1/1 replacement window. The west-facing façade of the front section has no openings at the first story. Two, 1/1 replacement windows are evenly spaced at the second story.

The rear wing is centered on the north-facing (rear) façade of the front section, covering almost all of it. A tiny, flat-roofed brick section with a sash window in its east face is appended to the east-facing façade of the wing. A door is set close to the front section on the west-facing façade of the wing. A 3/1 sash window is found at the second story on each of the east- and west-facing façades. A small, one-story, shed-roofed enclosed entrance porch with a recessed door at its east end extends across the south-facing façade. The entrance porch is an addition and is finished with clapboards. Two, 1/1 replacement windows are set close together near the center of the second-story north-facing façade.

On the interior, the first floor is open and houses the public section of the business. A large, random ashlar fire place of dark stone dominates the room. The wooden bar is said to have been brought from Chicago.³ Although hidden compartments for weapons are said to have been included in the original plan, no evidence of this has been found. The second floor initially held a five-room apartment. As of 2008, a large banquet room and the bar's office were located upstairs. The basement is unfinished. The entrance to what is supposed to have been a secret tunnel out of the building can be seen in the east wall of the basement.

The interior is not presently accessible, although the preparer has been inside as recently as 2019. A review of building permits since 2008 indicates that plumbing, HVAC and electrical wiring were replaced and/or repaired in 2009 and 2010.⁴ These upgrades represent minimal alterations that would not impact the integrity of the interior. It is believed the first floor of the building retains good integrity to the period of significance. The Wonder Bar was re-roofed in 2019.⁵ This has not changed the appearance and does not impair the exterior integrity of the Wonder Bar, which remains very good.

¹ Dane County Deeds, 356:252, Paul F. Karloff to Edward and Evelyn Towey, June 24, 1932.

² Building Permit File, City of Madison Department of Planning, Community and Economic Development.

³ "Girls, guns, guts, gore," *The Capital Times*, July 20, 1985, 3 and 5.

⁴ Building Permit File.

⁵ Building Permit File.

5.) Describe Significance of Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria

Per MGO 41.07 or 41.10:

- (a) The landmark/district is associated with broad patterns of cultural, political, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community.
- (b) The landmark/district is associated with the lives of important persons, and/or with important events in national, state, or local history.
- (c) The landmark/district encompasses an area of particular archaeological or anthropological significance.
- (d) The landmark/district embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for its representation of a period, style, or method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.
- (e) The landmark/district is representative of the work of a master builder, designer, or architect.

The Wonder Bar is eligible for Landmark status under Criterion A, representing the Prohibition Era, and the criminal organizations that established outposts along highways in rural and suburban areas and on the outskirts of cities for the illegal distribution of liquor and other illicit activities. The Wonder Bar was built for Eddie Touhy and financed by his brother, Roger Touhy, who operated an illegal liquor distribution and gambling network northwest of Chicago, and whose gang battled Al Capone for control of the illegal trade in that area. When Prohibition ended in December 1933, organizations such as the Touhy gang and Al Capone continued with gambling operations and racketeering. Eddie Touhy played a role in his brother's syndicate and contemporary accounts show some illegal activities did take place in the Wonder Bar. For this reason, the period of significance extends from ca. 1932 to 1936. The Wonder Bar's location, on what was formerly Highway 12 and just outside of the city limits of Madison, was typical of roadhouses. The building's fortress-like appearance has enhanced its myth, which claims that there is a body buried beneath the second-floor fireplace, that the window glass is bullet proof, and that there are hidden compartments for weapon storage in the circular booths set in the towers. No evidence has been found to corroborate these claims, but there is a door into what was said to be a secret escape tunnel in the basement. The Prohibition Era should not be romanticized, but it does represent a memorable episode in Wisconsin history as Chicago mobsters extended their influence into the state.

Historical Context: Prohibition and the Touhys

From the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment on January 29, 1919, prohibiting the manufacture, sale, and transportation of "intoxicating liquors" in the United States, until its repeal by the Twenty-First Amendment on December 5, 1933, a black market for alcoholic beverages flourished. Organized crime syndicates directed the manufacture and distribution of alcohol during Prohibition, and battled each other to expand their territories. One of the most notorious and violent criminals of the era, whose name has become synonymous with Prohibition, was Al Capone. He controlled the Italian mob and its bootlegging, gambling and prostitution networks in Chicago from 1925 until the early 1930s. In 1927, Capone attempted to expand his territory northwest of Chicago's city limits by opening houses of prostitution in an area already controlled by another criminal organization: the Touhy gang.⁶ The violence and trickery that characterized this dispute reached all the way to the Wonder Bar.

Roger Touhy (1898-1959) led the Touhy gang, which appears to have involved all four of his surviving brothers, John, Joseph, Tommy, and Eddie. The Touhys were born on the west side of Chicago in a poverty-stricken, ethnically-Irish slum known as "the Valley." Their father, James Touhy, was a Chicago policeman. The eldest, James Touhy, Jr., was killed while attempting a robbery in 1917. The other brothers remained petty criminals until Roger became involved. Roger Touhy had made a small fortune working for the Sinclair Oil Company in Oklahoma, and returned to Chicago in 1920. Roger and his

⁶ John W. Tuohy, *When Capone's Mob Murdered Roger Touhy: The Strange Case of Touhy, Jake the Barber, and the Kidnapping the Never Happened*, (Fort Lee, NJ: Barricade, 2001), 13.

brothers leased a small fleet of trucks from syndicate boss Johnny Torrio's enormous bootlegging operation. The money from those leases enabled the brothers to buy a "franchise" from Torrio for beer delivery in northwestern Cook County. The franchise brought the brothers enough cash to enter a bootlegging partnership with two north side gangsters. By 1922, the brothers had bought out their partners in the beer delivery service, and were operating a brewery, and a string of gambling parlors as well. For the next three years, the brothers worked to develop their various enterprises. In 1925, the Touhys formed a partnership with Matt Kolb, who had been a part of Johnny Torrio's organization. Kolb and the Touhys were based in Des Plaines, Illinois, where they built a cooper shop, a brewery and a wort plant (which Eddie Touhy ran). Wort is a liquid extracted from grain and is used to ferment beer. By 1926, they had ten fermenting plants, and were operating some 225 slot machines.⁷ As Touhy explained,

We sold beer to about 200 roadhouses, night clubs and saloons outside of Chicago, to the west and northwest of the city. Our boundaries were from the city line west to Elgin and from North Avenue to the Lake County, Illinois line.⁸

The Touhys kept themselves free of interference from local authorities by bribing local politicians with beer, and hiring off-duty patrolmen to drive their trucks.⁹

In 1927, Al Capone began pressuring Kolb and the Touhys to become partners with him. In late 1927, Roger Touhy met with a representative of Capone's at The Arch, a roadhouse in Schiller Park, Illinois, that was purportedly run by Eddie Touhy. When the Touhys refused Capone's offer, Capone opened several houses of prostitution in Touhy territory, sparking a gang war.¹⁰ The Touhys' roadhouses were the scenes of several casualties of this conflict, including John Touhy, who was killed at the Lone Tree Inn, near Niles, Illinois, on December 4, 1927, and Joseph Touhy, who was shot to death at the Windmill Tavern, near Schiller Park, Illinois, on October 11, 1929. Matt Kolb was killed on November 18, 1931, at the Morton Inn, in Morton Grove, Illinois.¹¹ Although a shoot-out is said to have taken place at the Wonder Bar as well, no evidence supporting this has been discovered.

Despite its losses, the Touhy gang continued to operate its small but profitable beer and gambling empire. Roger Touhy claimed to have earned more than \$1 million a year on beer sales alone. Anticipating the end of Prohibition, the Touhy gang expanded into racketeering around 1930, in competition with Al Capone, both extorting the Teamsters Union. When Capone went to prison for tax evasion in May 1932, his successor, Frank Nitti, escalated the war between the two gangs, in an effort to monopolize the Teamsters' protection money. In 1933, Nitti engineered the arrest of Roger Touhy and three of his associates in the kidnapping of William A. Hamm. The FBI already had evidence indicting the real culprits, and Touhy and his associates were found not guilty on November 28, 1933. However, on December 4, 1933, Touhy was arrested again, and charged with the kidnapping of John "Jake the Barber" Factor. Factor, the brother of Max Factor (founder of the cosmetics company), had fled England to avoid a long jail term for having perpetrated one of the largest stock frauds in British history. In an attempt to save himself from extradition, Factor, working with the Capone/Nitti organization, had himself kidnapped, and with the assistance of some of Roger Touhy's men, framed Touhy for the crime. On February 22, 1934, Touhy was sentenced to 99 years, and imprisoned at the Stateville Correctional Center, near Joliet, Illinois.¹²

Roger Touhy appealed his conviction, but was denied. On October 9, 1942, Touhy broke out of the Stateville Correctional Center. Hiding in an apartment in Chicago, Touhy recalled, in inimitable prose,

⁷ Roger Touhy and Ray Brennan, *The Stolen Years*, (Cleveland, OH: Pennington Press, Inc., 1959), 62-65 and 69.

⁸ Touhy and Brennan, 66.

⁹ Tuohy, 36 and 47.

¹⁰ Touhy and Brennan, 70-71.

¹¹ Touhy and Brennan, 80.

¹² Tuohy, pp. 60-73; and Touhy and Brennan, 66.

I needed a substantial bankroll, just in case I had to pay off a bribe or get out of Chicago. My best source was my brother, Eddie. He owned a roadhouse, Eddie's Wonder Bar, near the State Fairgrounds outside of Madison, Wisconsin. I had put up the money for the place, and Eddie would come up with any reasonable amount I needed. But making a meet with him was almost as tricky as getting out of Stateville. The FBI would be sticking as close to him as hogs to a swill barrel. His phones would be tapped. If he got caught with me, it would be a harboring rap for him.¹³

Touhy arranged for an intermediary to travel to Madison and ask his brother for some money.

[The intermediary] parked his car in downtown Madison so his license wouldn't get spotted and took a bus out to my brother Eddie's place. I figured I needed \$1,500 but Eddie said to make it \$2,500. He would get it from the bank next day and send it by messenger to Chicago. [The intermediary reported, "[T]here are a lot of guys acting like surveyors around your brother's club...They got spyglasses set up on tripods so as to get a fix if you try sneaking up to the joint across the fields or through the fairgrounds." [Roger Touhy responded,] "They're FBI men. They hang around Eddie's bar and peek through the windows of his living quarters at night. I told him to have his messenger make damn sure he isn't tailed when he comes to Chicago." I got the \$2500 the next day. An ex-convict working at the fairgrounds brought it to me at my apartment...[h]e also brought word that Eddie wanted to fix me up with a hideout in Arizona. To hell with that I said. I wasn't going to bury myself in some hole in the desert.¹⁴

Disregarding Eddie Touhy's advice, Roger Touhy stayed in Chicago, and was captured and returned to prison December 29, 1942. He was paroled in November 1959, and was shot to death on December 16, 1959. His killers were never identified, but were rumored to have been former associates of Al Capone and Frank Nitti. On the way to the hospital, Touhy told a reporter, "I've been expecting it. The bastards never forget."¹⁵

Eddie Touhy (1891-1945) was a small-time criminal in Chicago before his brother Roger organized the Touhy gang in 1920. Eddie is named as a known associate of Leonard Banks and a suspected accomplice in Banks' robbery of a mail pouch carrying \$100,000 from an Illinois Central Railroad station in August 1920.¹⁶ The police were reported to be hunting for Eddie, which may have prompted him to use an alias, Eddie Burns, in the 1920 census.¹⁷ Eddie was living in Chicago at that time, with his wife Evelyn (Byrnes) Touhy and their daughter, Marion. He gave his occupation as railroad switchman, which suggests that he may have been the "inside man" the police suspected in the mail pouch robbery. As part of the Touhy gang, Eddie ran the wort plant near Roselle, Illinois, for their beer-making enterprise beginning about 1925, and was supposedly running The Arch, a Touhy roadhouse in Schiller Park, Illinois in 1927.¹⁸ In the 1930 census, Eddie is living in Leyden Township, Illinois (where Schiller Park is located) under the name Touhy.¹⁹ He is listed as in the real estate industry, which may have been a role Eddie carried out as part of the Touhy gang's protection racketeering of labor union leaders. The Touhys employed real estate agents for union leaders hiding out in the suburbs, "...renting houses for them under assumed names, buying furniture...[and] groceries and hiring housekeepers."²⁰ By 1932, Eddie and Evelyn Touhy had

¹³ Touhy and Brennan, 35.

¹⁴ Touhy and Brennan, 36.

¹⁵ Touhy, 181-185; and William J. Helmer, Rick Mattik, and Rose Keefe, *The Complete Public Enemy Almanac: New Facts and Features on the People, Places, and Events of the Gangster and Outlaw Era, 1920-1940*, (Nashville, TN: Cumberland House Publishing, 2007), 79.

¹⁶ "Leonard Banks Arrested as \$100,000 Thief," *Chicago Tribune*, August 22, 1920, 1.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*, <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved August 9, 2021).

¹⁸ Touhy and Brennan, 64.

¹⁹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved August 9, 2021).

²⁰ Touhy and Brennan, 83.

relocated to Madison and bought the parcel on which the Wonder Bar is located. Although the Wonder Bar could have been built before 1932, it could not be much earlier as Highway 12 was not present until ca. 1930.²¹ By 1933, Eddie and Evelyn Touhy had built the Wonder Bar, called The Garden Lunch, and the Garden Service Station next door (where the Coliseum Bar and Restaurant is now located).²² How long Eddie operated the two businesses is unclear but by July 1934, The Garden Lunch had been renamed the Wonder Bar and was being operated by someone else (see History of the Wonder Bar, below). By this time, the Touhy gang was out of business.²³ Eddie is supposed to have left Madison, returning and running the service station in 1938. He was certainly in Madison in the fall of 1942 when Roger Touhy broke out of prison. FBI agents questioned him in Madison and Eddie denied knowing Roger's whereabouts and said he would not tell them even if he knew.²⁴ Interestingly, Eddie listed Phoenix, Arizona as his residence on the World War II draft registration card he filed in April 1942, lending credence to Roger's story that Eddie wanted him to hide out in Arizona.²⁵ At the time of Eddie's death in May 1945, he was working as a bartender in a Chicago hotel, where he was found dead in his hotel room. Although his death was ruled accidental due an episode of heavy drinking, the circumstances were somewhat suspicious.²⁶ Evelyn Touhy died in 1939, so his estate likely passed to their daughter, Marion.

History of the Wonder Bar

The Wonder Bar was erected as The Garden Lunch ca. 1932, operated by Eddie and Evelyn Touhy (Towey). In July 1934 the establishment was re-opened as the Wonder Bar, operated by Oscar Hein and Ray Hansen. Advertisements suggest that it was a supper club, hosting musical acts and sponsoring a bowling team.²⁷ However, in 1935 Hein and Hansen were fined \$50 each for operating gambling machines at the Wonder Bar.²⁸ The following year, Hein was charged with serving liquor to minors following a fatal automobile accident.²⁹ Eddie Touhy appears to have retained ownership of the Wonder Bar property until at least 1940 and possibly until his death in 1945. In July 1940, Mamie Collier and her sister, Ruby Faringer, bought the Wonder Bar "fixtures and furnishings."³⁰ They appear to have operated the business as a bar and restaurant only and did not run afoul of the law during their tenure. Collier and Faringer were not related to Touhy and do not seem to have owned the building until about 1947. That year, Faringer died and another sister, Maude Buerger, became a co-owner with Collier.³¹ Joseph and Elizabeth Kassak acquired the Wonder Bar from Collier and Buerger in May 1950, continuing its operation as a supper club and keeping the name, Wonder Bar.³² The Kassaks sold to Richard Whalen in June 1974.³³ Whalen also ran the Wonder Bar as a supper club until April 1990, when the Stadium Bar, Inc. bought it. The Stadium Bar, Inc., was a corporation owned by Michael O'Brien of the locally-known "Jingles" bars.³⁴ The patio was built in 1991 to provide outdoor seating. In 1993, O'Brien changed the name of the Wonder Bar to M.O.B. Roadhouse, operating it as a gangster-themed supper club until 1996.³⁵ The Jingle's Coliseum Bar and Restaurant had just been completed next door, and the staff of

²¹ *Atlas & Plat Book, Dane County, Wisconsin*, (Rockford, IL: The Thrift Press, 1931).

²² *Wright's Madison City Directory, 1933*, (Milwaukee, WI: Wright Directory Company, 1933).

²³ "Once Powerful Touhy Gang Broken," *Chicago Tribune*, February 13, 1934, 6.

²⁴ "Brother Here Won't Locate Roger Touhy," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 13, 1942, 4.

²⁵ Edward Towey, Registration Card, April 27, 1942, <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved August 9, 2021).

²⁶ "Edward Towey Found Dead," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 10, 1945, 1; and "Touhy's Brother's Death Accidental, Jury Repots," *Chicago Tribune*, May 25, 1945, 7.

²⁷ Advertisement, *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 1, 1934, 15; and Advertisement, *Wisconsin State Journal*, August 3, 1934, 12.

²⁸ "Proctor Slaps \$50 to \$100 Assessments on Proprietors," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 1, 1935, 1.

²⁹ "Liquor Sale Warrants Follow Cash," *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 8, 1936, 7.

³⁰ "Wonder Bar Changes Owners," *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 2, 1940, 10.

³¹ Ruby Faringer, Obituary, *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 4, 1947, 10.

³² Liquor license application, *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 24, 1950, 18.

³³ "Whalen Buys Wonder Bar from Kassak," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 5, 1974, 25.

³⁴ "The Jingles Dynasty," *Wisconsin State Journal*, April 8, 1990, 3.

³⁵ "Name Change Reflects History," *Wisconsin State Journal*, August 11, 1993, 18; and "M.O.B., reputed hang out of 30's mobsters, closes," *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 14, 1996, 50.

the M.O.B. Roadhouse was transferred to the new business. The property had transferred from Stadium Bar, Inc. to the Michael and Anne O'Brien Trust in 1995. The Wonder Bar reopened as the Madison Cigar Bar in September 1996, but by May 1999, that business had closed and the Wonder Bar had reopened as The Bar Next Door.³⁶ In 2002, JAX Holdings II acquired the property, operating The Bar Next Door until 2009, when JAX Holdings II reopened the Wonder Bar as a supper club.³⁷ The current owner, Real Suite Assets, LLC, entered a land contract with JAX Holdings II in 2017 and then acquired the property in 2019.³⁸ The Wonder Bar is presently closed.

The Wonder Bar's association with the Prohibition Era ended in December 1933, but like many roadhouses, continued involvement in illicit activities such as gambling and serving alcohol to minors went on until at least 1936. No evidence was discovered that the Wonder Bar was the site of illegal activities after 1936 but rather, it served as a supper club for decades. Roadhouses of the era seem to have been built in rural areas, suburbs and outside city limits along a highway. The Wonder Bar's location, just south of city limits at Murphy's Creek along a highway connecting downtown Madison with communities south and east, is typical of a roadhouse of the era. Roadhouses were sometimes built to serve as bootlegger bars, as the Wonder Bar appears to have been, but were often existing houses or commercial buildings converted for bootlegging, gambling and prostitution. A search of roadhouses associated with the Touhys found The Arch, the Morton Inn and the Lone Tree Inn to be gone. Some may still be standing, but they have not been identified.

³⁶ "Sellers," *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 3, 1996, 46; "Scrapbook," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 30, 1999, 60; and Property Information Record, City of Madison Assessor.

³⁷ Property Information Record; "Wonder Bar Gets New Lease on Life," *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 5, 2009, 2.

³⁸ Property Information Record.

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U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930.* <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved August 9, 2021).

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7.) Additional Information

Attachments:

Map Showing Landmark Site Boundary and Legal Boundary
Photographs

Wonder Bar, 222 East Olin Avenue: Map Showing Landmark Site Boundary and Legal Boundary

Source: <https://dcimapapps.countyofdane.com/> (retrieved August 10, 2021)



**Wonder Bar, 222 East Olin Avenue, Photos
Photographer: Alex Saloutos, July 25, 2021**

Photo 1: South (front) façade



Photo 2: North (rear) façade



Photo 3: East (side) façade



Photo 4: West (side) façade

