

Normal Hall Rehabilitation
Landmarks Commission Letter of Intent
February 4, 2026

Normal Hall

The Wisconsin Sunday School Assembly Normal Hall or Olin Park Pavilion is a designated Madison Historic Landmark and is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The structure was constructed in 1884 and is the only surviving building of the Monona Lake Assembly and is one of the few remaining buildings connected with Madison's heyday as a resort community. Long before Normal Hall was constructed, this site was utilized by people of the First Nation.

Project Description

The current project proposes to renovate the Normal Hall. The pavilion was built in 1884 as the Normal Hall of the Wisconsin Sunday School Assembly and was designed by David R. Jones, a prominent architect of public buildings. In its era, people came by train, steamship and streetcar to see nationally known lectures and entertainers at the Assembly. The pavilion is now part of Olin Park and continues to be used by thousands each year for a variety of picnics, weddings and dances. The proposed renovation would correct deterioration of the exterior wood siding and interior wood floor due to prolonged moisture exposure and rot.

Previous Alterations

In 2000 Normal Hall was renovated to correct structural problems and deterioration of the roof, walls and floor.

The original building did not have the infill above the railing line; it was open to the elements (see attached historical photo taken shortly after it was built).

In the 2000 renovation, the infill material was provided to add stiffness to the frame and allow angled structural bracing to be hidden from view and installed between interior and exterior paneling. The siding was renovated to match the original beaded board rails and the shutters were designed to be frameless. The doors required frames for structural stability, but they remain as plain as possible. Clerestory windows were added to match the original design, which were gone. The original vertical board siding was also restored. The roofing was replaced with a fiberglass shingle that approaches the look of wood shingles. In addition, the entire floor system was removed and replaced with a continuous concrete perimeter footing and foundation wall where wood I-joists at 16" on-center, span from a ledge at the foundation wall to perpendicular LVL beams. The interior floor is hardwood floor over tongue and groove plywood subfloor. The LVL beams and wood I-joists are deteriorating due to extended water intrusion and improper ventilation of the crawl space.

Current Proposal

The current proposal has two parts – the exterior alterations that require review by the Landmarks Commission and an interior change that is being explained in these documents to maintain the City preservation files for this landmark structure.

The proposed exterior alterations are as follows:

Replace damaged exterior beaded paneling and 1x4 groove paneling that has deteriorated over the last 25+ years from exposure to exterior elements. Paneling will be replaced in kind.

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The existing sill or top of railing, has significant rot, therefore we propose a new wood sill be added that has a stronger slope to direct positive drainage away from the building instead of sitting on the flat board and wicking into the end grain of the vertical wood panels (see photo of existing sill condition).

We also propose a new 1x5 board be horizontally installed above new sill, flash in plane with beaded paneling above. This board will proactively prevent water from wicking up the vertical beaded panel end grains and allow for more existing bead board material to be reused.

Once exterior wood repairs/replacements are completed, the exterior cladding will then be painted to match the existing white & gray paint scheme.

In other efforts to direct water away from the building we would like to take the downspouts at each corner of the building and continue them below the concrete sidewalk where they will go below grade and daylight further down the hillside on the southern and northern sides. The building was constructed on a known archaeological site that may be a burial site and therefore any ground disturbance must be reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office. This work may not go forward.

We also propose the addition of two replacement clerestory windows with wood louvers to provide the enclosed structure with access to natural ventilation. Two louvers in total, one per elevation (South and North).

Interior alterations that are outside of the purview of the Landmarks Commission, but are being provided here to maintain the preservation files on this landmark building are as follows:
The existing wood floor structure and flooring has deteriorated due to rot caused by inadequate ventilation of the building's substructure. Retaining a wood-joist supported floor would require significant improvements to the building's ventilation, including the addition of exterior ventilation louvers and exterior areaway, and the installation of ventilation fans and electrical improvements.

After evaluation by Madison Parks and City Engineering, the preferred approach is to replace the wood joist system with a concrete floor. A concrete floor will provide a more durable, resilient, and cost-effective structural system. Installing a concrete floor will also support the long-term preservation of this landmark building and site. The Engineering Division is seeking ground disturbance approvals from the SHPO to make this change and will continue to include the City Preservation Planner in project planning.

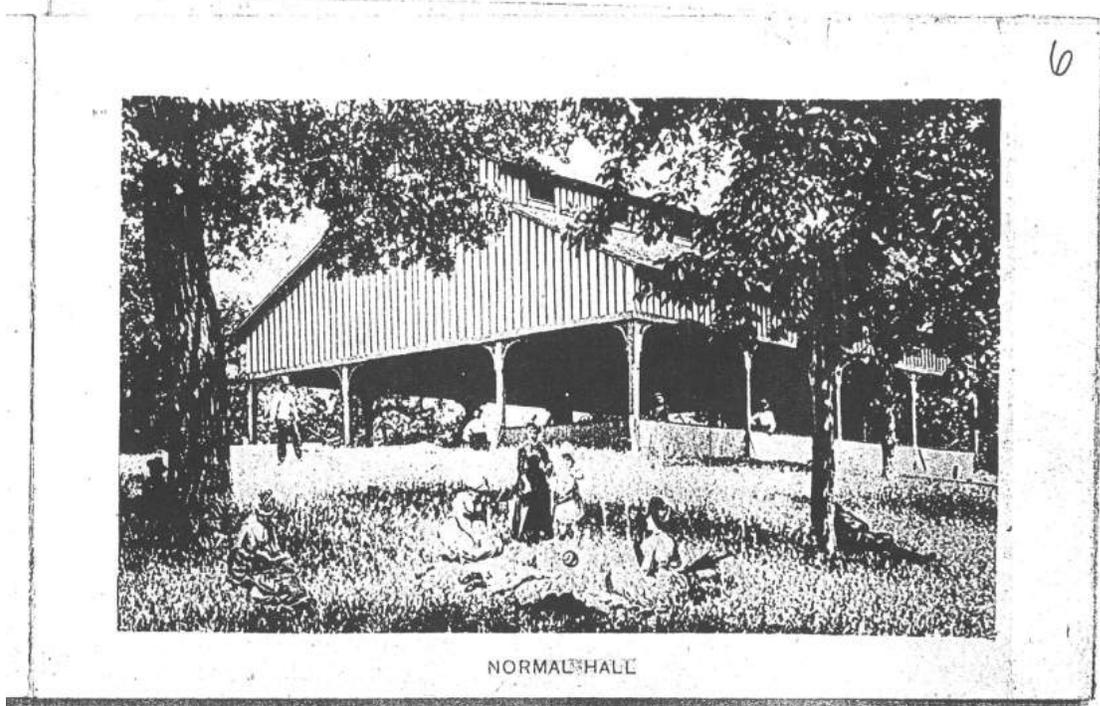


Photo from: Preservation files in the planning division. *Monona Lake Assembly Grounds*



From Wisconsin Historical Society (Reference number 29901)
Photo taken before 2000 renovations.



From Wisconsin Historical Society (Reference number 29901)
Photo taken after 2000 renovations.



From Wisconsin Historical Society (Reference number 29901)
Photo taken after 2000 renovations.

Current conditions of existing structure:







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Landmarks Commission Submission
February 4, 2026





SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1"=0" = 200'-0"



CITY OF MADISON
 DEPT OF PUBLIC WORKS
 ENGINEERING DIVISION
 CITY COUNTY BLDG RM 115
 210 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD
 MADISON, WI 53703
 PHONE: 608-266-4751

NORMAL HALL
 (HISTORIC)
 1156 OLIN-TURVILLE CT
 MADISON, WI 53715

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 DEPT OF PUBLIC WORKS
 ENGINEERING DIVISION
 CITY COUNTY BLDG RM 115
 210 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD
 MADISON, WI 53703
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SITE PLAN
 SCALE: 1"=0" = 60'-0"

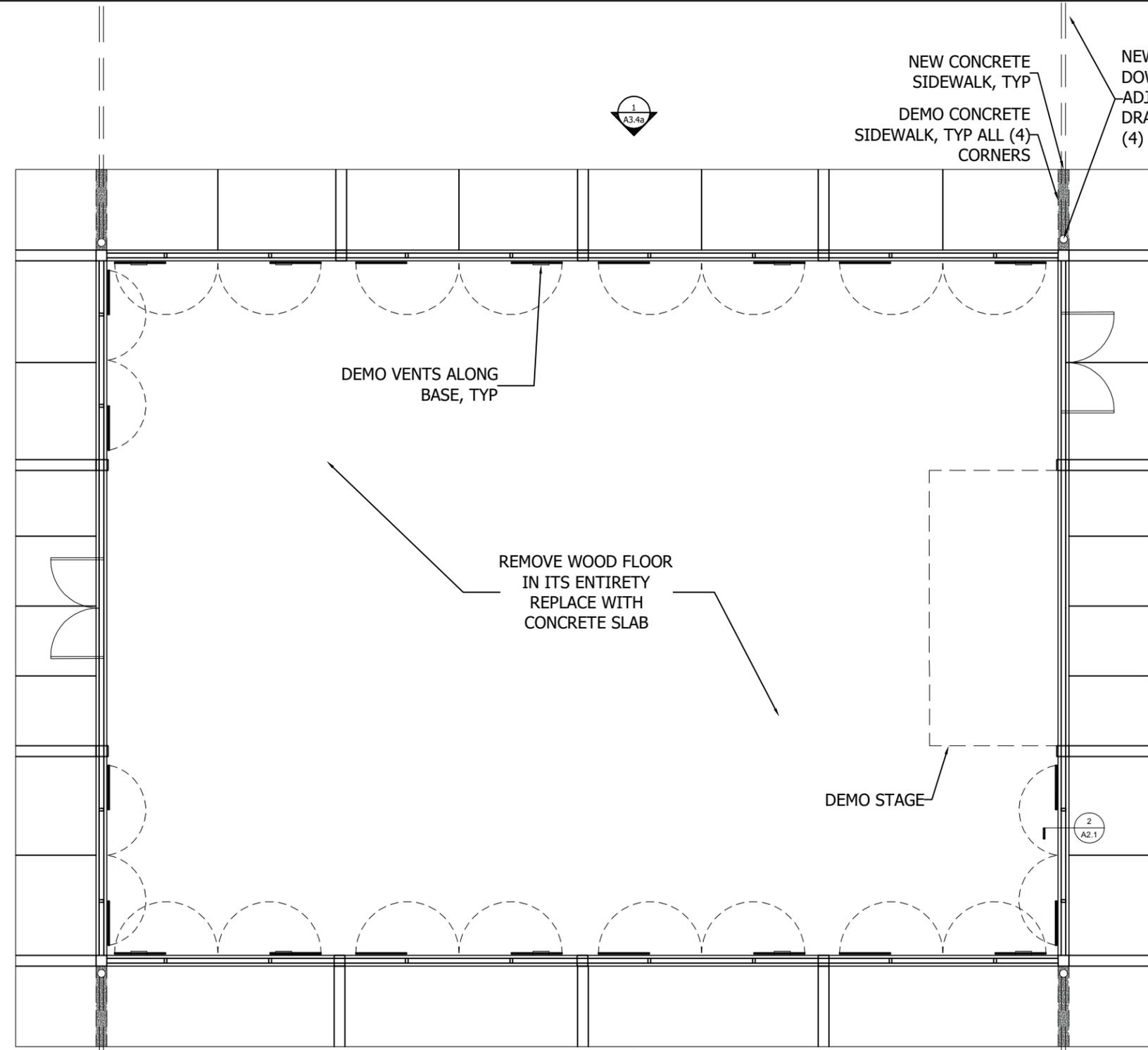


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 MADISON, WI 53703
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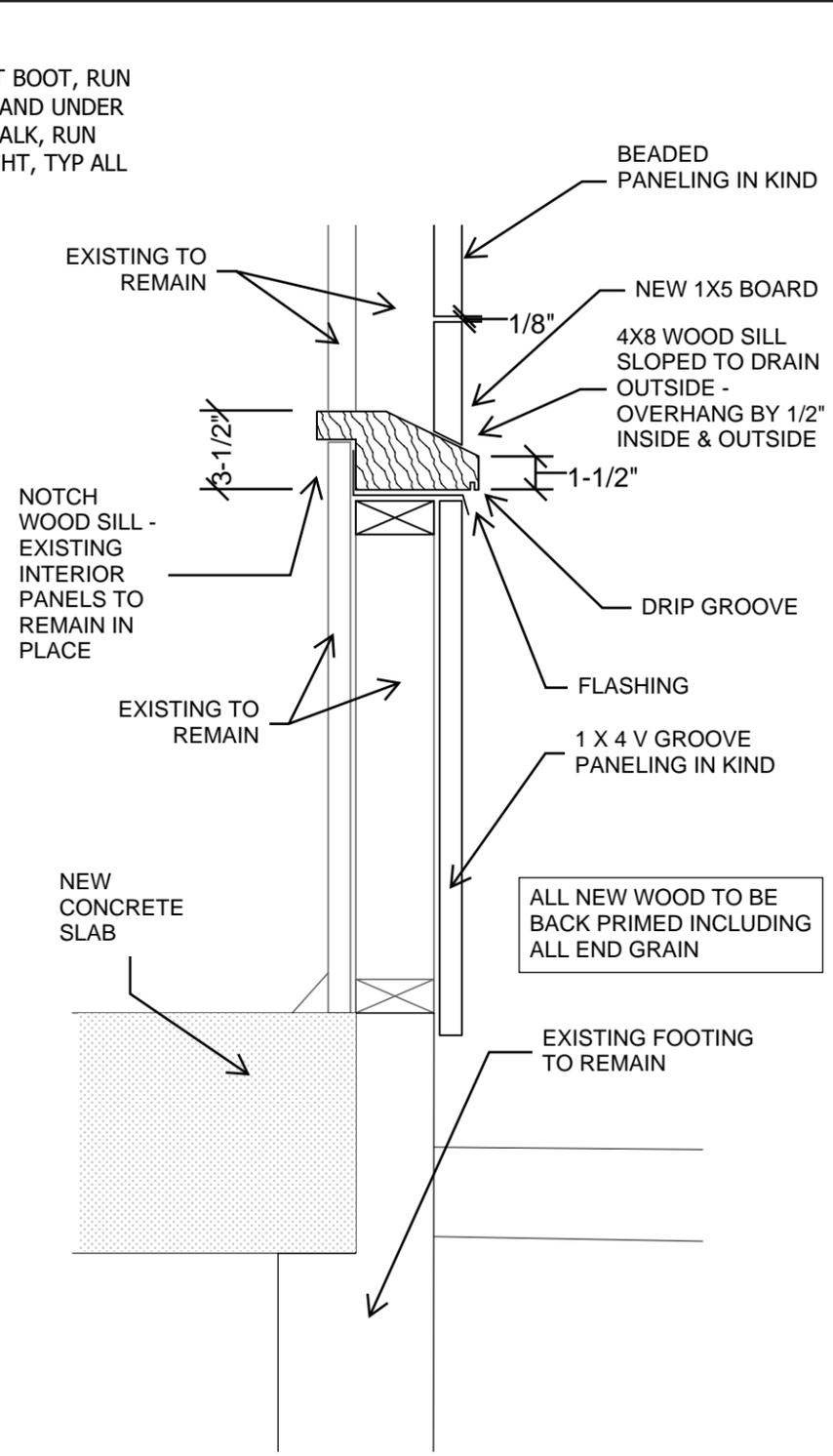
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1 FLOOR PLAN
 1/8" = 1'-0"



2 ENLARGED SILL DETAIL
 1-1/2" = 1'-0"





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**THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR WEST
 ELEVATION INCLUDES
 BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:**

1. REMOVE AND SALVAGE ALL BEADED PANELING. ASSUME 20% REPLACEMENT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES. REPLACE BEADED PANELING IN KIND. VERIFY INFILL STUDS ARE SUITABLE AND BUILDING FELT IS CONTINUOUS.
2. REMOVE AND PROTECT ALL EXTERIOR BRACKETS DURING DEMOLITION.
3. REMOVE EXISTING 1X4 V GROOVE PANELING WHERE DETERIORATED. ASSUME 60% REPLACEMENT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES. REPLACE 1X4 V GROOVE PANELING IN KIND.
4. REMOVE & REPLACE SILL - REF DETAIL 2/A2.1
5. INSTALL NEW 1X5 BOARD, HORIZONTALLY ABOVE NEW SILL - REF DETAIL 2/A2.1
6. SALVAGE & PROTECT ALL DOOR/WINDOW HARDWARE FOR REUSE.
7. REMOVE & PROTECT ALL SIGNAGE FOR REUSE.
8. SHOULD INFILL STUDS BE DETERIORATED, CONTACT CITY PM TO DISCUSS.
9. REINSTALL ALL EXTERIOR BRACKETS.
10. REINSTALL ALL DOOR/WINDOW HARDWARE AS NEEDED.
11. REPAIR DOOR IN KIND. REPLACE BEAD BOARD, SQUARE UP STICK & FRAME AND REGLUE.
12. REINSTALL ALL SIGNAGE.
13. CLEAN ALL SURFACES BEFORE PAINTING (ENTIRE ELEVATION).
14. PAINT TO MATCH EXISTING PAINT COLORS (ENTIRE ELEVATION).
15. EXISTING BOARD & BATTEN OF UPPER ELEVATION TO REMAIN IN PLACE. REPAIR SCOPE IS LIMITED TO MINOR AREAS OF WOOD REPAIR FOR PAINT PREPARATION.
16. EXISTING ROOF OVERHANGS, EAVES, RAFTER TAILS & ROOF MATERIAL TO REMAIN IN PLACE. REPAIR SCOPE IS LIMITED TO MINOR AREAS OF WOOD REPAIR FOR PAINT PREPARATION.



1 EXTERIOR - WEST ELEVATION



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 ENGINEERING DIVISION
 CITY COUNTY BLDG RM 115
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**THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR SOUTH
 ELEVATION INCLUDES
 BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:**

1. REMOVE AND SALVAGE ALL BEADED PANELING. ASSUME 100% REPLACEMENT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES. REPLACE ALL BEADED PANELING IN KIND. VERIFY INFILL STUDS ARE SUITABLE AND BUILDING FELT IS CONTINUOUS.
2. REMOVE AND PROTECT ALL EXTERIOR BRACKETS DURING DEMOLITION.
3. REMOVE EXISTING 1X4 V GROOVE PANELING WHERE DETERIORATED. ASSUME 100% REPLACEMENT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES. REPLACE ALL 1X4 V GROOVE PANELING IN KIND.
4. REMOVE & REPLACE SILL - REF DETAIL 2/A2.1
5. INSTALL NEW 1X5 BOARD, HORIZONTALLY ABOVE NEW SILL - REF DETAIL 2/A2.1
6. REMOVE & PROTECT ALL SIGNAGE FOR REUSE. PROVIDE LANDMARK PLAQUE TO CITY STAFF.
7. REMOVE AND SALVAGE ONE CLERESTORY WINDOW.
8. PREPARE AND INSTALL NEW WOOD LOUVER AT EXISTING CLERESTORY OPENING.
9. SHOULD INFILL STUDS BE DETERIORATED, CONTACT CITY PM TO DISCUSS.
10. FIX AND REPLACE STICK AND WINDOW FRAME AT WINDOWS THAT SHOW DETERIORATION.
11. REINSTALL ALL EXTERIOR BRACKETS.
12. REPAIR DAMAGED DOWNSPOUTS.
13. EXTEND DOWNSPOUTS INTO PVC BOOT BELOW THE CONCRETE SIDEWALK AND DAYLIGHT FURTHER DOWN THE HILL SIDE.
14. POUR BACK CONCRETE SIDEWALK.
15. REINSTALL ALL SIGNAGE AND LANDMARK PLAQUE.
16. CLEAN ALL SURFACES BEFORE PAINTING (ENTIRE ELEVATION).
17. PAINT TO MATCH EXISTING PAINT COLORS (ENTIRE ELEVATION).
18. EXISTING BOARD & BATTEN OF UPPER ELEVATION TO REMAIN IN PLACE. REPAIR SCOPE IS LIMITED TO MINOR AREAS OF WOOD REPAIR FOR PAINT PREPARATION.
19. EXISTING ROOF OVERHANGS, EAVES, RAFTER TAILS & ROOF MATERIAL TO REMAIN IN PLACE. REPAIR SCOPE IS LIMITED TO MINOR AREAS OF WOOD REPAIR FOR PAINT PREPARATION.



1 EXTERIOR - SOUTH ELEVATION



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ENGINEERING DIVISION
CITY COUNTY BLDG RM 115
210 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD
MADISON, WI 53703
PHONE: 608-264-4751

NORMAL HALL
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1156 OLIN-TURVILLE CT
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THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR EAST ELEVATION INCLUDES BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. REMOVE AND SALVAGE ALL BEADED PANELING. ASSUME 100% REPLACEMENT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES. REPLACE BEADED PANELING IN KIND. VERIFY INFILL STUDS ARE SUITABLE AND BUILDING FELT IS CONTINUOUS. SALVAGE MATERIAL TO BE INSTALLED ON WEST OR NORTH ELEVATIONS.
2. REMOVE AND PROTECT ALL EXTERIOR BRACKETS DURING DEMOLITION.
3. REMOVE EXISTING 1X4 V GROOVE PANELING WHERE DETERIORATED. ASSUME 100% REPLACEMENT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES. REPLACE 1X4 V GROOVE PANELING IN KIND. SALVAGE MATERIAL TO BE INSTALLED ON WEST OR NORTH ELEVATIONS.
4. REMOVE VENTS AND METAL STRAPPING, PATCH AND REPAIR IN KIND.
5. REMOVE & REPLACE SILL - REF DETAIL 2/A2.1
6. INSTALL NEW 1X5 BOARD, HORIZONTALLY ABOVE NEW SILL - REF DETAIL 2/A2.1
7. SALVAGE & PROTECT ALL DOOR/WINDOW HARDWARE FOR REUSE.
8. REMOVE & PROTECT ALL SIGNAGE FOR REUSE.
9. SHOULD INFILL STUDS BE DETERIORATED CONTACT CITY PM TO DISCUSS.
10. REINSTALL ALL EXTERIOR BRACKETS.
11. REINSTALL ALL DOOR/WINDOW HARDWARE AS NEEDED.
12. REPAIR DOOR IN KIND. REPLACE BEAD BOARD, SQUARE UP STICK & FRAME AND REGLUE.
13. REINSTALL ALL SIGNAGE.
14. CLEAN ALL SURFACES BEFORE PAINTING (ENTIRE ELEVATION).
15. PAINT TO MATCH EXISTING PAINT COLORS (ENTIRE ELEVATION).
16. EXISTING BOARD & BATTEN OF UPPER ELEVATION TO REMAIN IN PLACE. REPAIR SCOPE IS LIMITED TO MINOR AREAS OF WOOD REPAIR FOR PAINT PREPARATION.
17. EXISTING ROOF OVERHANGS, EAVES, RAFTER TAILS & ROOF MATERIAL TO REMAIN IN PLACE. REPAIR SCOPE IS LIMITED TO MINOR AREAS OF WOOD REPAIR FOR PAINT PREPARATION.



1 EXTERIOR - EAST ELEVATION



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THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR NORTH
ELEVATION INCLUDES
BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. REMOVE AND SALVAGE ALL BEADED PANELING. ASSUME 25% REPLACEMENT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES. REPLACE BEADED PANELING IN KIND. VERIFY INFILL STUDS ARE SUITABLE AND BUILDING FELT IS CONTINUOUS.
2. REMOVE AND PROTECT ALL EXTERIOR BRACKETS DURING DEMOLITION.
3. REMOVE EXISTING 1X4 V GROOVE PANELING WHERE DETERIORATED. ASSUME 90% REPLACEMENT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES. REPLACE ALL 1X4 V GROOVE PANELING IN KIND.
4. REMOVE & REPLACE SILL - REF DETAIL 2/A2.1
5. INSTALL NEW 1X5 BOARD, HORIZONTALLY ABOVE NEW SILL - REF DETAIL 2/A2.1
6. REMOVE AND SALVAGE ONE CLERESTORY WINDOW.
7. PREPARE AND INSTALL NEW WOOD LOUVER AT EXISTING CLERESTORY OPENING.
8. SHOULD INFILL STUDS BE DETERIORATED CONTACT CITY PM TO DISCUSS.
9. FIX AND REPLACE STICK AND WINDOW FRAME AT WINDOWS THAT SHOW DETERIORATION.
10. REINSTALL ALL EXTERIOR BRACKETS.
11. REPAIR DAMAGED DOWNSPOUTS.
12. EXTEND DOWNSPOUTS INTO PVC BOOT BELOW THE CONCRETE SIDEWALK AND DAYLIGHT FURTHER DOWN THE HILL SIDE.
13. POUR BACK CONCRETE SIDEWALK.
14. REMOVE AND REPLACE DAMAGED SECTIONS OF GUTTER. NEW SECTION TO MATCH EXISTING.
15. CLEAN ALL SURFACES BEFORE PAINTING (ENTIRE ELEVATION).
16. PAINT TO MATCH EXISTING PAINT COLORS (ENTIRE ELEVATION).
17. EXISTING BOARD & BATTEN OF UPPER ELEVATION TO REMAIN IN PLACE. REPAIR SCOPE IS LIMITED TO MINOR AREAS OF WOOD REPAIR FOR PAINT PREPARATION.
18. EXISTING ROOF OVERHANGS, EAVES, RAFTER TAILS & ROOF MATERIAL TO REMAIN IN PLACE. REPAIR SCOPE IS LIMITED TO MINOR AREAS OF WOOD REPAIR FOR PAINT PREPARATION.



1 EXTERIOR - NORTH ELEVATION