

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT:** NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY FOR DELTA UPSILON HOUSE  
(117 ASH AVENUE)

**BACKGROUND:**

The State Historical Society of Iowa has asked the City to review and comment on the proposed nomination of the Delta Upsilon Chapter House, located at 117 Ash Avenue, to the National Register of Historic Places (see attached excerpts from the National Register Nomination). "Delta Upsilon-The Colonnades" is the property owner. Public Historian William C. Page has prepared the nomination for the property owner.

The State Historical Society of Iowa is required to provide the City of Ames with a 60-day period for the review unless it is mutually agreed to expedite the process. The City received a copy of the nomination on April 12. The State Nominations Review Committee (SNRC) plans to consider the nomination during their June 11, 2010 meeting.

As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City of Ames is required to conduct a review of any nomination that lies in the jurisdiction of the Historic Preservation Commission. After allowing for public comment, the Commission and the chief elected local officials must decide if the property meets the significance criteria of the National Register.

The applicant has selected National Register Criterion C as being applicable to this application. Criterion C is described as follows:

**National Register Significance Criterion 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.***

**Significance Summary.** The completed nomination forms include a summary of the significance of the Delta Upsilon Chapter House as follows:

***"Completed in 1930, the Delta Upsilon Chapter House is National Register eligible under Criterion C, because of its architectural design. The building calls attention to Alexander McPherran Linn, its designer and Delta Upsilon fraternity alumnus. The Delta Upsilon Chapter House stands as Linn's most accomplished work in Iowa and demonstrates his skill at manipulating French Renaissance styling in a major commission along with his ability to exploit a difficult site to utilitarian and aesthetic advantage. One of the most imposing examples of architecture among fraternity chapter houses at Iowa State***

*University, the building features a complex roof design of steep pitches and polychrome slate, a well-organized massing of architectural shapes, and a rich interplay of brick and half-timbering wall surfaces.*

*The period of significance and a significant date, under Criterion C, is 1930, the year the building was completed and first occupied.*

*The property contains two resources for this nomination, the chapter house itself, which is contributing and classified as a building, and a network of pedestrian walks in front of the house, which are contributing and classified as a structure."*

**If the Historic Preservation Commission and the Mayor/City Council disagree with one another on the property's National Register eligibility, both views will be presented to the State Nominations Review Committee (SNRC) and the SNRC will conduct their review of the nomination.**

The National Register status in no way limits the right of the property owner to preserve, alter, or even demolish the property. Property owners are not required to do anything, or sign anything, or make commitments regarding the use of their property, provided that no Federal license, permit, or funding is involved.

It may be of interest to state how National Register properties are protected. The power to protect a National Register property is limited to local design guidelines and to a review of those projects which are funded, wholly or in part, by the federal government and which impact, directly or indirectly, listed properties. National Register status does not mean that a property cannot be destroyed by a highway, by urban renewal, or by some other project. However, it does mean that before a federal agency can be involved in any way with such a project (i.e., funding, licensing, or authorizing it), the federal agency must consider alternatives by which the National Register properties might be saved from destruction. After the review process has been completed, the federal agency may choose to avoid the property, or it may decide to go ahead with its project, even if a National Register property is destroyed in the process.

At its meeting of May 10, with a vote of 6-0, the Historic Preservation Commission found that the nomination of the Delta Upsilon House (117 Ash Avenue) to the National Register of Historic Places meets National Register Significance Criterion C and recommended National Register eligibility to the State Nominations Review Committee.

**The question to be answered by the Mayor and City Council is whether the nominated property meets the National Register of Historic Places significance Criterion C.** City staff agrees with the statement in the application that, "the Delta Upsilon Chapter House, located at 117 Ash Avenue is significant, under National Register Criterion C, because of its architectural design. The building with its steeply pitched roof, asymmetrical façade, and rich architectural detailing, shows the influence of French Renaissance styling and calls attention to Alexander M. Linn's ability as an architect."

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can find that the nomination of the Delta Upsilon Chapter House, (117 Ash Avenue) to the National Register of Historic Places meets National Register Significance Criterion C and recommend National Register eligibility to the State Nominations Review Committee.
2. The City Council can find that the nomination of the Delta Upsilon Chapter House to the National Register of Historic Places does not meet the National Register Significance Criteria and recommend National Register ineligibility to the State Nominations Review Committee.
3. The City Council can postpone this request for additional information from the applicant and/or City staff.

### **MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

As was noted above, "the Delta Upsilon Chapter House, located at 117 Ash Avenue is significant, under National Register Criterion C, because of its architectural design. The Historic Preservation Commission came to the same conclusion, as has City staff.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, thereby finding that the nomination of the Delta Upsilon Chapter House at 117 Ash Avenue to the National Register of Historic Places meets National Register Significance Criterion C and recommending National Register eligibility to the State Nominations Review Committee.

APR 01 2010

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" on the appropriate line 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 from 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 Property

historic name DELTA UPSILON CHAPTER HOUSE

other names/site number D. U. HOUSE

2. Location

street & number 117 Ash Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Ames N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Story code 169 zip code 50014

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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 the property is:

Signature of 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)

Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
Name of Property

Story County, Iowa  
County and State

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**    **Category of Property**  
(Check as many lines as apply)    (Check only one line)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure
	<input type="checkbox"/> object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
2		Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources  
previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/education-related

SOCIAL/clubhouse

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT, NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/

French Renaissance

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Other

walls Brick

Stucco

roof Stone/slate

other Stone

## Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
Name of Property

Story County, Iowa  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all the lines 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.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

1930

### Significant Dates

1930

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

Linn, Alexander McPherran

**Narrative Statement of Significance** - (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

## 9. Major Bibliography References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

#### Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historical Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository

Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
Name of Property

Story County, Iowa  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	15	446620	4652050
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Zone Easting Northing

2	---	-----	-----
---	-----	-------	-------

Zone Easting Northing

3	---	-----	-----
---	-----	-------	-------

Zone Easting Northing

4	---	-----	-----
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### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title William C. Page, Public Historian

organization 117 Ash, L.L.C. date January 20, 2010

street & number 520 East Sheridan Ave. (Page) telephone 515-243-5740

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50313-5017

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** - Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** - (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name 117 Ash, L.L.C. c/o Jami Larson

street & number P. O. Box 1937 telephone 515-292-9083 (Jami Larson)

city or town Ames state IA zip code 50010-1937

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

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7

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CFN-259-1116

Delta Upsilon Chapter House, Story County, Iowa.

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Site

Completed in 1930, the Delta Upsilon Chapter House (a.k.a. D. U. House) is located on the west side of Ash Avenue near its intersection with Lincoln Way Avenue in the Fourth Ward of Ames, Iowa. The house sits on Lots 20 and 21 of Parker's Addition and is situated immediately south of the St. Thomas Aquinas Church and Catholic Student Center at 2210 Lincoln Way. The surrounding neighborhood is a high-density residential zone with fraternity and sorority housing predominating. The intersection of Ash Avenue and Lincoln Way is situated in a swale. From there to the south, Ash slopes upward and crests a block or so beyond the Delta Upsilon property. The site of that property itself abruptly rises more than ten feet from its north to its south boundaries. The campus of Iowa State University is located immediately to the north of Lincoln Way in this area. A number of religious organizations and commercial establishments cluster along the south side of Lincoln Way, including the potentially National Register-eligible Campustown Historic District. (Page 2007: E31-E39; E207-E211) Another potential historic district, including the Delta Upsilon Chapter House, is situated along Ash Avenue and the area immediately to its east, significant because of its many well-built and architecturally sophisticated early 20th century chapter houses for Greek organizations. (Page 2003: E120-E121; 2007: E145-E150)

Lots 20 and 21 possess pedestrian amenities as character-defining features of the property. A poured concrete pedestrian walk runs from the front door of the chapter house to Ash Avenue on the east. Another poured concrete walk runs north and south and parallels a grassy strip (called, in Ames, the parking) situated between Ash Avenue and the front yard of the property. A shallow trough edges this walk on its eastern edge to facilitate drainage. The front walk from the chapter house bisects this walk and leads to the street. A third pedestrian walk of poured concrete immediately edges Ash Avenue and stretches all along the eastern edge of the property. About 36-inches in width, this walk allows motorists to park any where along the curb and gain access to the front walk to the chapter house without having to step in the parking. The parking area itself is about five feet in width. A vehicular driveway edges the southern edge of the property. This was constructed in the 1960s and is not considered an historic character-defining feature.



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Delta Upsilon Chapter House, Story County, Iowa.

**SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Completed in 1930, the Delta Upsilon Chapter House is National Register eligible under Criterion C, because of its architectural design. The building calls attention to Alexander McPherran Linn, its designer and Delta Upsilon fraternity alumnus. The Delta Upsilon Chapter House stands as Linn's most accomplished work in Iowa and demonstrates his skill at manipulating French Renaissance styling in a major commission along with his ability to exploit a difficult site to utilitarian and aesthetic advantage. One of the most imposing examples of architecture among fraternity chapter houses at Iowa State University, the building features a complex roof design of steep pitches and polychrome slate, a well-organized massing of architectural shapes, and a rich interplay of brick and half-timbering wall surfaces.

The period of significance and a significant date, under Criterion C, is 1930, the year the building was completed and first occupied.

The property contains two resources for this nomination, the chapter house itself, which is contributing and classified as a building, and a network of pedestrian walks in front of the house, which are contributing and classified as a structure.

**ALEXANDER MCPHERRAN LINN**

Biographical Sketch

Alexander McPherran Linn (1892-1961) was born in Des Moines, Iowa, on October 2, 1892, the only child of Dr. Alexander McP. Linn and Elizabeth Guyer Linn. Dr. Linn was a Des Moines homoeopath, as well as a member and sometime president of the Iowa State Board of Health. (King: Vol. IV, 210) Although named for him, his son apparently did not use "Jr." after his name.

The younger Alexander McPherran Linn was known as Alex. (In 1959, he changed the spelling of his family name to "Lynn," although this nomination uses the original spelling because it is recognized as such in Iowa and at Iowa State University.)

Linn attended Iowa State College during his sophomore year in 1921-1922 and studied architectural engineering. He joined the Delta Upsilon fraternity at that time and lived in the fraternity's chapter house at 209 Hyland Avenue. (*Iowa State College Directory* 1921) Linn subsequently transferred to

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Delta Upsilon Chapter House, Story County, Iowa.

ALEXANDER MCPHERRAN LINN DESIGNS IN AMES

Name	Address	Date of Construction	Notes
Delta Upsilon Chapter House #	209 N. Hyland Ave.	1928	Remodeling plan for D.U. Chapter House, never implemented
Delta Delta Delta Chapter House ## (a.k.a. "Tri-Delta House")	302 Ash Ave. a.k.a. 919 Gaskill Dr.	1930	2.5-story, red brick, Georgian Revival influ.
John Hopkins House ##	2217 Donald St.	1930	1.5-story, frame, Tudor Revival influ.
Delta Upsilon Fraternity Chapter House #	117 Ash Ave.	1930	Colonnades Corp. client, Ames, IA
A. L. Bakke House ##	701 Ash Ave.	1931	1.5-story, stucco, Mediterranean Revival influ.
Edward. M. & Bess T. Effler House ##	317 Pearson Ave.	1931	2-story, frame
Henry & Ruth Gilman House @	3221 Oakland St.	1935	2-story, frame, Neo-Colonial Revival influ., west addition later designed by Barney J. Slater

Source: \* Architects in Iowa, Linn File  
# *The Delta U-Nite*, April 18, 1928  
@ Knipe  
\*\* Page 2007  
## Linn File, unreferenced newspaper clipping dated July 10, 1936

Within this context, Linn's design for the Delta Upsilon Chapter House stands as his greatest achievement in Iowa. Its large size and richly detailed design exceed any of Linn's other work identified statewide to date.

This claim is justified by an examination of the residential designs identified in the table above. The Tudor Revival-influenced John Hopkins House is a 1.5-story, frame dwelling and features a

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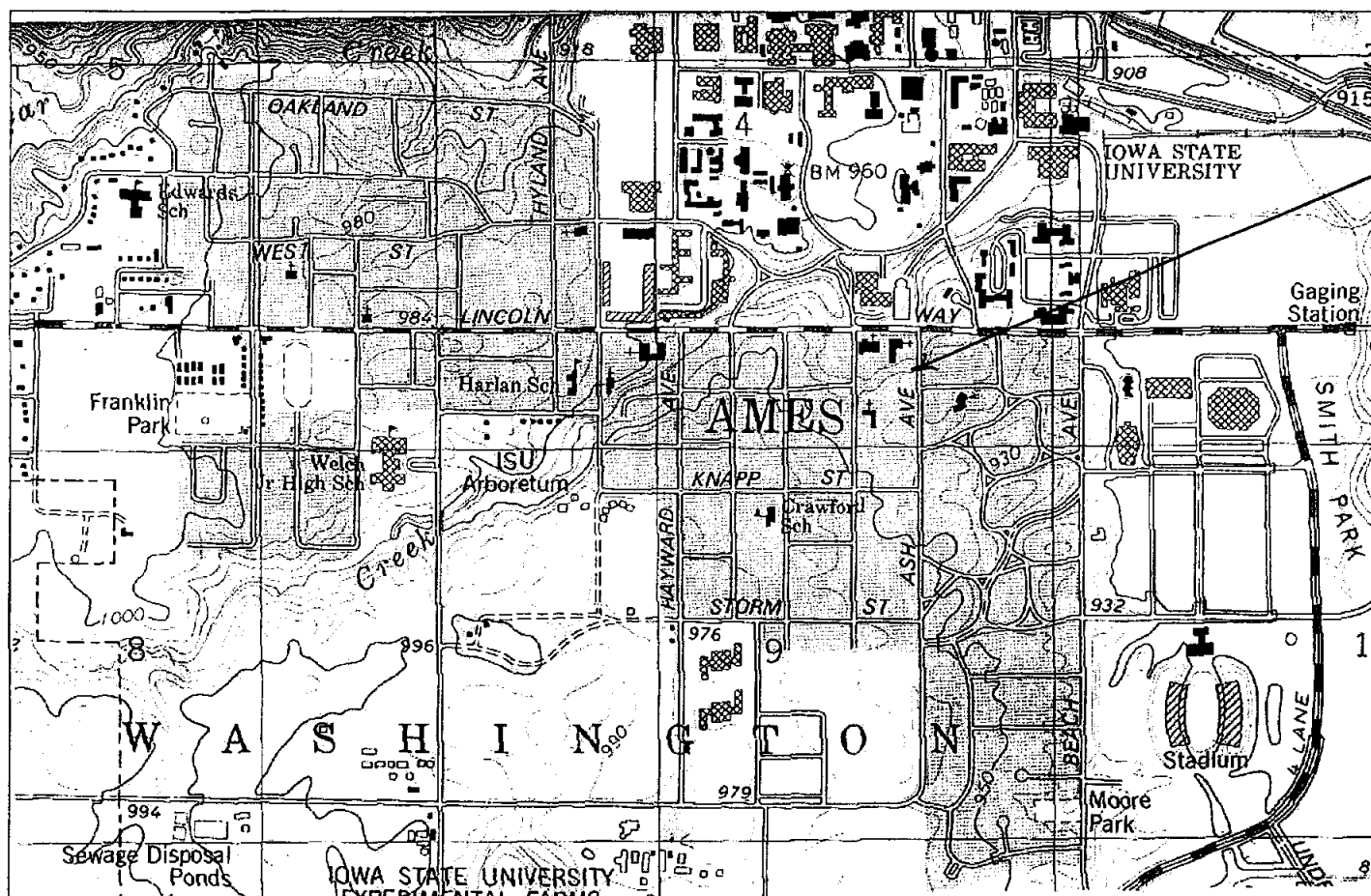
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Delta Upsilon Chapter House, Story County, Iowa.

## SITE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



United States Department of the Interior  
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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

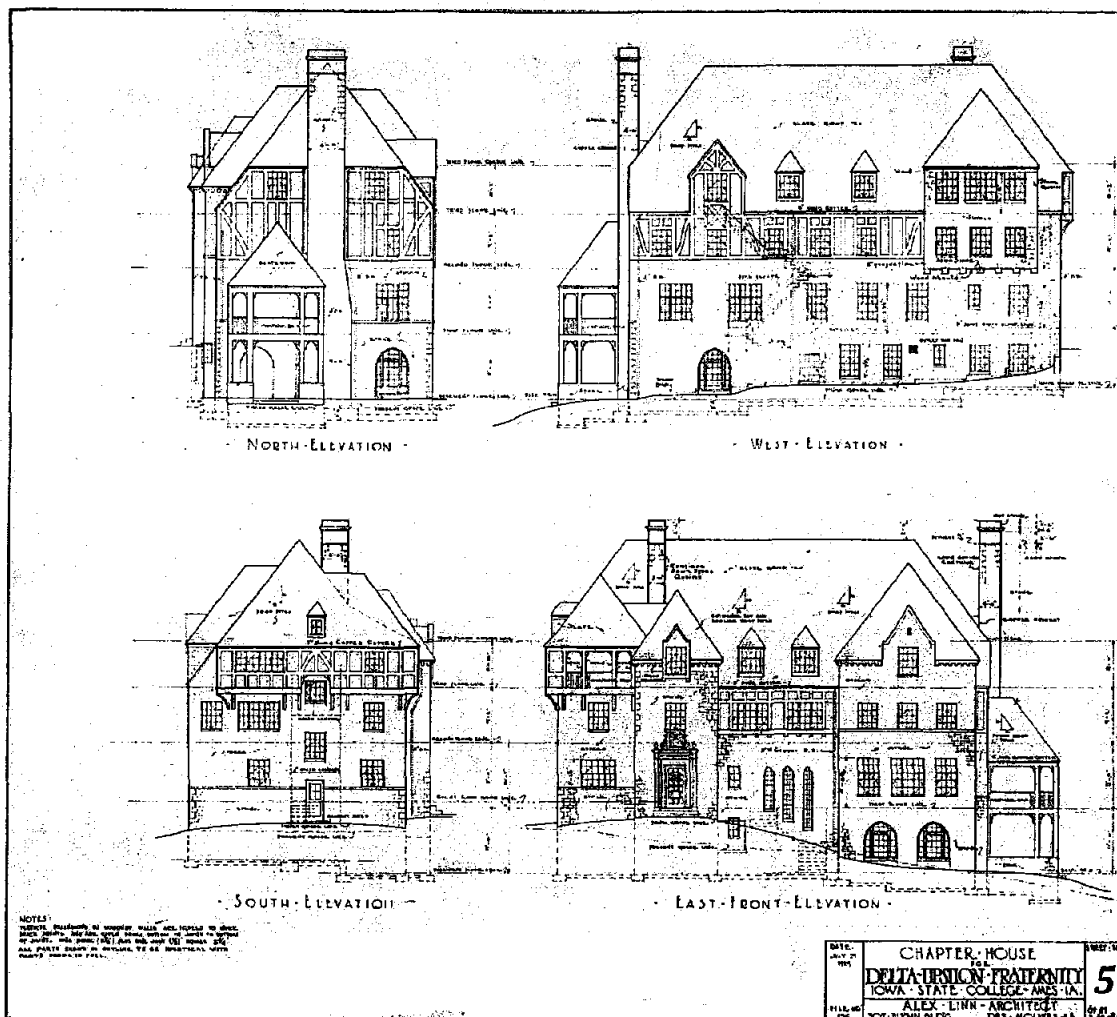
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Delta Upsilon Chapter House, Story County, Iowa.

## ARCHITECT'S ELEVATION DRAWINGS

1929



Source: Alexander McPherran Linn, Plot Plan, Sheet 5, 1929.  
Property Colonnades Corporation, Ames, Iowa.

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**National Park Service**

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Delta Upsilon Chapter House, Story County, Iowa.

**LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
117 Ash Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014  
Looking northwest  
William C. Page, Photographer, November 11, 2009
2. Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
117 Ash Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014  
Looking southwest  
William C. Page, Photographer, November 11, 2009
3. Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
117 Ash Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014  
Looking southeast  
William C. Page, Photographer, November 11, 2009
4. Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
117 Ash Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014  
Looking northeast  
William C. Page, Photographer, November 11, 2009
- 4.5 Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
117 Ash Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014  
Pedestrian walks looking north  
William C. Page, Photographer, November 11, 2009
5. Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
117 Ash Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014  
Living room looking north  
William C. Page, Photographer, November 11, 2009
6. Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
117 Ash Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014  
Library looking south  
William C. Page, Photographer, November 11, 2009
7. Delta Upsilon Chapter House  
117 Ash Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014  
Main staircase looking northeast  
William C. Page, Photographer, November 11, 2009

These photographs were printed on Hewlett-Packard Premium Plus Photo Paper with Vivera HP ink.

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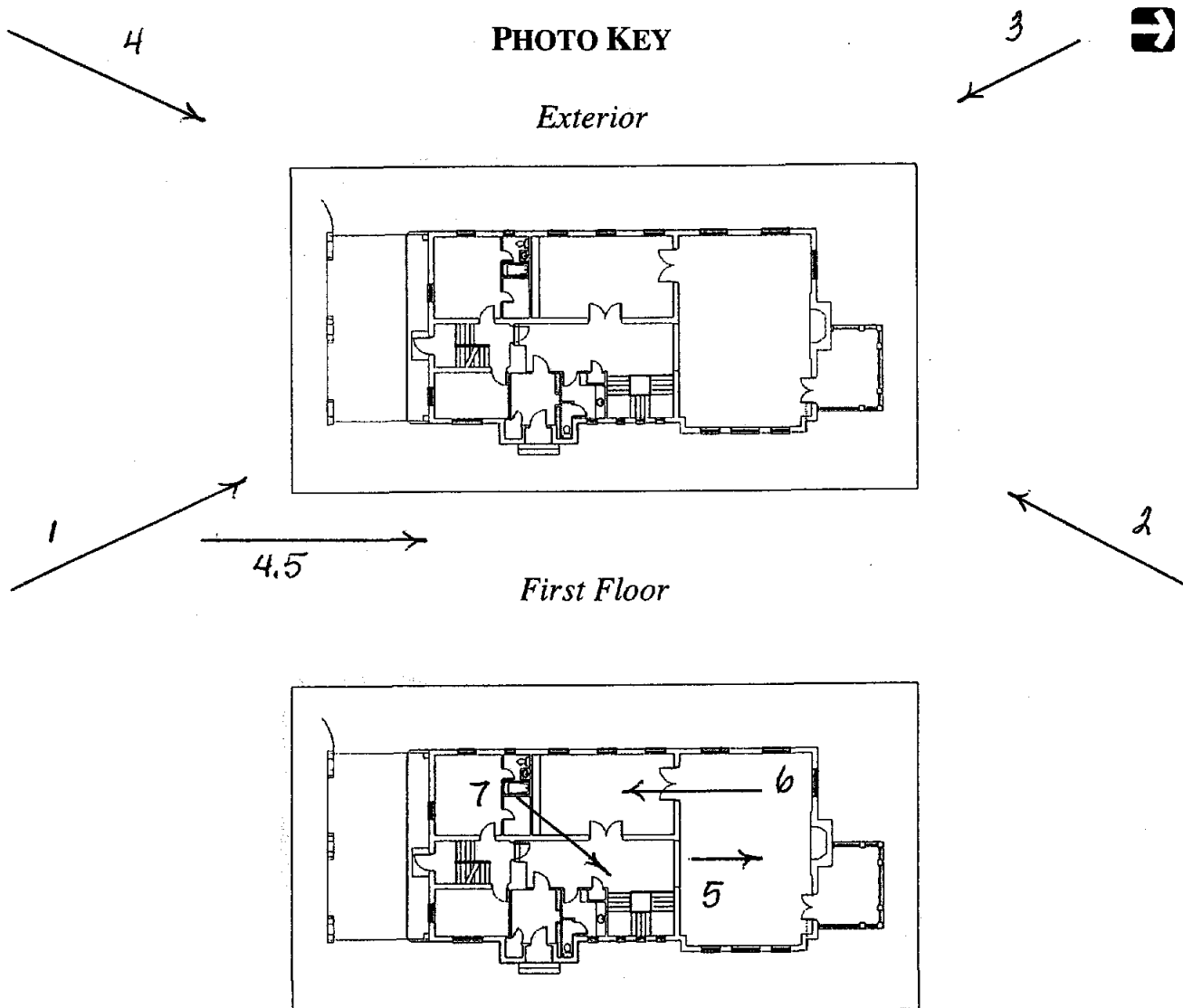
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Delta Upsilon Chapter House, Story County, Iowa.





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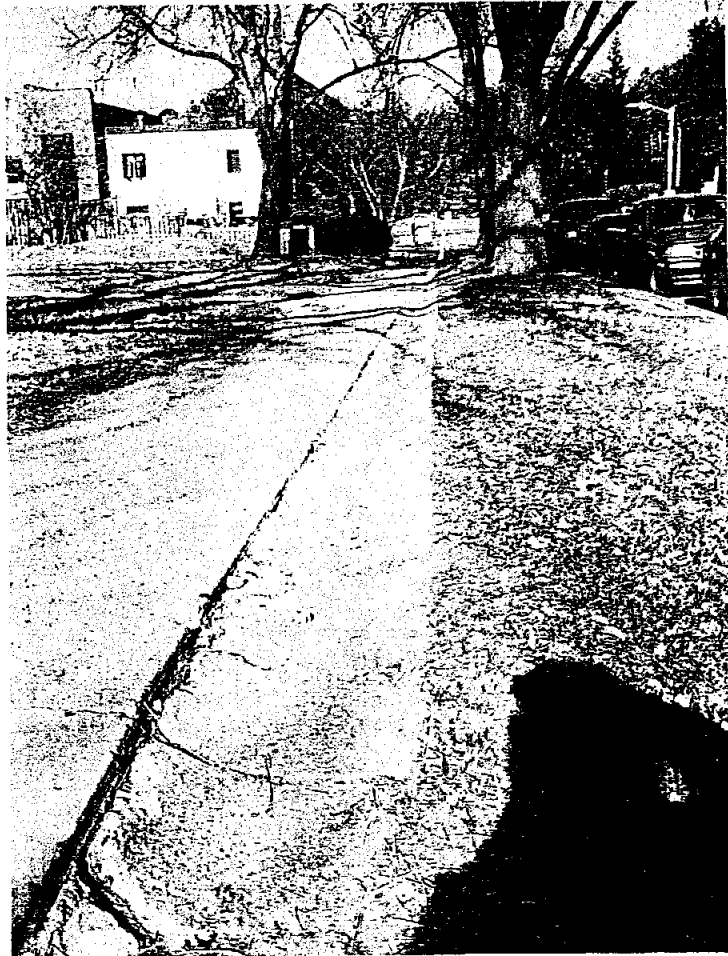
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