

Aurora University
1408 Southlawn Place
Aurora
Kane County
Illinois

HIBS No. K-2021-1-2

Written Description
Topographic Location Map
Site Plan
Floor Plans
Index to Photographs
Photographic View Keys
Photographs

Illinois State Historic Preservation Office
1 Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, Illinois 62701

ILLINOIS HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

AURORA UNIVERSITY BUILDING

Location: 1408 Southlawn Place, Aurora, Kane County, Illinois 60506

Present Owner: Aurora University
347 South Gladstone Avenue, Aurora, Kane County, Illinois 60506

Present Use: Campus Public Safety Offices

Significance: The property at 1408 Southlawn Place is an example of a Mid-Twentieth Century Ranch home.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date(s) of Construction:

The residence at 1408 Southlawn Place was constructed in circa 1956-1958.

2. Contractor:

James Lowther

3. Original and Subsequent Owners:

James and Beulah Lowther (1955-1958)
Carl and Marian Ochenschlager (1958-1971)
Wayland P. and Jean Wright (1971-1993)
Martha W. Jelinski, Trustee of the Jean G. Wright Trust (1993)
Robert G. and Frances Hall (1993-2012)
Aurora University (2012-present)

4. Original plans and construction:

“Erect a one-story brick veneer residence”, Barton & Hall (owner) and James Lowther (contractor), 28 October 1955, Aurora City Building Department Contractor Permit #2655A.

5. Alterations and additions:

Interior renovations include the addition of walls and interior windows to create offices for Aurora University Campus Security.

B. Historical Context

1. Kane County, Aurora Township, and the City of Aurora:

Kane County is located in northeastern Illinois, bordered on the north by McHenry County, on the east by Cook and DuPage, on the south by Kendall, and on the west by DeKalb County. The Fox River runs the length of eastern Kane County, fed by numerous tributaries including Tyler, Ferson, Blackberry, Big Rock, and Mill Creeks from the west, and Brewster, Norton, and Indian Creeks from the east. Streams in the northwestern townships such as Burlington and Hampshire flow into the Rock River. Early settlers in eastern Kane County, especially along the Fox, encountered large tracts of timber, which were dubbed the “Big Woods” in Batavia and Aurora Townships, and “Little Woods” in St. Charles Township. The well-fed Fox River was an excellent source of water power and the largely limestone bed provided a solid foundation for numerous dams constructed along its route through the county. Early settlers harnessed this water power to operate grist and saw mills, and soon villages were established along the Fox River including Dundee, Elgin, St. Charles, Geneva, Batavia, and Aurora.¹

The first Euro-American to settle in Kane County was reputedly Christopher Payne, a native of New York State, who arrived in 1832 and began farming land in Batavia Township near the area known as the Big Woods. Daniel S. Haight located on the Fox River near Geneva in June 1833 but left and returned the following year. As elsewhere in Illinois, these early pioneers settled around timbered groves that provided fuel, building material, game, and shelter for livestock. The underlying soils were also more easily worked than those of the prairie. Only after the development of the self-scouring plow, first widely available in the 1840s, were the open prairies more fully utilized.² Settlement was interrupted in 1832 and 1833 by the Black Hawk War

¹ Beers, Leggett & Co., *Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois* (Chicago: Beers, Leggett & Co., 1888); Wm. Le Baron Jr. & Co., *The Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois* (Chicago: Wm. Le Baron & Co., 1878).

² John Mack Faragher, *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

but resumed following the removal of Native Americans west of the Mississippi River. The government surveys of Kane County were conducted in 1839 and 1840, and the lands came into market in 1842. The 1830s and 1840s saw the prairie-dominated central and western portions of the county become settled and cultivated. New York State provided a large percentage of early settlers in Kane County, but many families migrated from New England and the Mid-Atlantic States, Ohio, Indiana, and southern Illinois, as well as the British Isles and northern Europe.³

Kane County was organized in 1836, having previously been part of La Salle County. It originally included the whole of present-day DeKalb County and the northern tier of townships in Kendall County. It was reduced to its present limits by the formation of DeKalb County in 1837 and Kendall County in 1841. During this period, the county was divided into nine voting precincts, but by 1847, the precincts of Kane County were arranged to contain a single congressional township. With the adoption of township organization in 1850, the county commissioners elected a board of supervisors, which established 16 congressional townships, adjusted a few borders, and organized the political structure of the county as it exists today. The total population of Kane County increased from about 17,000 in 1850 to almost 45,000 by 1880. The major towns in the county were located along the Fox River, anchored by Elgin on the north and Aurora on the south. Aurora, home of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, soon became the largest town in the county with a population of 11,873 in 1880.⁴

Aurora Township is located in the southeast corner of Kane County and encompasses congressional Township 38 North, Range 8 East. It is bordered on the west by Sugar Grove Township, on the north by Batavia Township, on the east by Du Page County, and on the south by Kendall County. The Fox River flows north to south through the center of the township, in many areas over exposed limestone. Quarried limestone, and an abundance of high-quality clay for bricks and tiles, provided ample material to early settlers for buildings and other construction projects. In addition to possessing excellent farming soils, much of northern Aurora Township contained large timbered tracts known in the early days as the “Big Woods”.⁵ Many early settlers cleared the timber

³ Beers, Leggett & Co., *Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*.

⁴ Ibid.; United States Census Bureau, *Population Census of Kane County, Illinois* (1850); United States Census Bureau, *Population Census of Kane County, Illinois* (1880).

⁵ Beers, Leggett & Co., *Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*

to cultivate the rich soils, but others, recognizing the value of wood as a source of fuel and shelter, invested in small acreage “wood lots” from which trees were harvested and sold as raw materials. Euro-American settlement commenced following the end of the Black Hawk conflict and the completion of the Chicago & Galena Stage Road through the township in 1833. That same year Jacob Carpenter arrived from Ohio and built a log-house east of the Fox River near the stage road crossing, at present-day Montgomery. Carpenter was joined in 1834 by his father-in-law Elijah Pierce, whose house on the Fox River became a tavern, hotel and station on the Chicago & Galena stage road. Daniel Gray came from Montgomery County, New York in 1835 and built a frame house on the west bank of the river, across from Jacob Carpenter and Elijah Pierce. Gray named the new village Montgomery and for many years he played a prominent role in the commercial development of the community. Other names associated with the early settlement of Aurora Township include Isaac Van Fleet at Aurora in 1833, and John Peter Schneider at North Aurora in 1834. By 1837 farms had been established throughout the township by, among others, Ashbel Culver, Frederick Stolp, David Crane, Daniel Gray, Nicholas Gray, Lyman Isbell, and P. Y. Bliss. The area of the present Township formed part of the Fox River Precinct from 1835 to 1850, when Kane County adopted township organization and Aurora Township was established.⁶

Joseph McCarty came from Elmira, New York in 1834 and claimed 460 acres on both sides of the Fox River where the City of Aurora now lies. Joseph and his brother Samuel constructed a dam across the river at present-day Stolp Island and the Village of McCarty Mills was soon established. The original 1835 village plat by Joseph and Samuel McCarty was sited on the east bank of the Fox River. As people began settling close to the river and the mill, the area became more densely populated. When an alternate stage route was established across the Fox River near McCarty’s Mills, a post-office was opened in 1837 and McCarty’s Mills was re-named Aurora. The post office, operated by Samuel McCarty, helped strengthen the connection between Aurora and the boom-towns of Chicago to the east and Galena to the west. Despite the destructive effects of periodic flooding, the river provided water power for textile mills, grist mills, and early factories. Incorporated in 1843, the Town of Aurora was quickly becoming a thriving

⁶ Ibid.; “History of Montgomery”, Village of Montgomery, Illinois, accessed 20 February 2019, <https://ci.montgomery.il.us>.

manufacturing center.⁷ The west side of the Fox River was initially settled by brothers Theodore and Zaphna Lake, from New York, who purchased land along the river in 1835. In 1842, together with Theodore's wife, Esther S. Lake, they platted the Village of West Aurora, which incorporated in 1854. Industries on both sides of the river took advantage of the water power generated by the dam and falls at Stolp Island and a commercial center quickly developed, much of it on the east side and on Stolp Island. In 1855 the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad (CB&Q) established its offices and yards for the Chicago area at Aurora on the more populous east side of the Fox River. These shops included a round-house with stalls for thirty engines, a machine shop, the car shop proper, a paint shop, and a carpenter shop. Workers and their families, many of them eastern European immigrants, flocked to Aurora and settled near the rail yards and rail car shops where generations of families found employment.⁸ The less populated but developing west side took on a more affluent character as educated Yankee stock arrived to build fine homes and fill professional and managerial positions at CB&Q and other Aurora industries. In 1857 the Villages of Aurora and West Aurora united and were incorporated as the City of Aurora. To ease political tensions over the union, civic offices were located on Stolp Island in the river, ward boundaries were defined by the river, and the mayor of Aurora was elected from alternate sides of the river until 1913. Over the next several decades Aurora became a prosperous railroad town, but also developed a highly industrialized economy based in part on the manufacture of heavy-machine building equipment.⁹ Aurora was socially progressive regarding education, religion, welfare, and the position of women in society. Aurora's civic leaders openly supported the abolitionist movement and ethnic diversity, welcoming a variety of European immigrants and, after about 1910, a sizeable influx of migrants from Mexico seeking employment and housing.¹⁰ Following World War II, Aurora's manufacturing base remained strong, attracting new businesses and workers, but the 1980s brought an economic downturn, the closing of many factories and businesses, and high unemployment. During the 1990s and early 2000s, initiatives to revitalize the downtown, and the development of new residential communities and mixed-use business parks, resulted in job growth and increased

⁷ "The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago: Aurora IL", Chicago Historical Society, accessed 22 February 2019, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org>.

⁸ Ibid.; "Historic Districts and Landmarks Guidelines", City of Aurora, accessed 2-27 February 2019, <http://www.aurora-il.org>.

⁹ "The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago: Aurora IL"; "Historic Districts and Landmarks Guidelines".

¹⁰ "The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago: Aurora IL"; "Historic Districts and Landmarks Guidelines".

population. Today the City of Aurora is ranked as the second largest city in Illinois after Chicago.¹¹

As Aurora's population increased and west side residential neighborhoods slowly expanded west, speculators and developers began buying up tracts of unincorporated township land. Subdivisions were platted and annexed as Additions to the city. The dividing line between the northwest side and the southwest side was the Chicago-Galena Road running slightly northwest from the river through the near west side of Aurora into unincorporated Aurora and Sugar Grove townships. In 1890 the New Downer Place Subdivision was platted on the west edge of Aurora in the east half of Section 20, bordered on the north by Galena Road (now Galena Boulevard) and on the south by Prairie Street, essentially an east-west country road on the section line between Section 20 and Section 29 to the south. The NW ¼ of Section 29 had originally been purchased in 1844 by Edward Lawton.¹² It was Lawton, and neighbor Gus Aucutt, who in the 1870s laid out the intersection of what became Prairie Street and Edgelawn Drive at the northwest corner of the Lawton property. The land changed hands several times and in 1914 the Aurora Country Club purchased all but the NE ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 29 from Frank Minard.¹³ The NE ¼ of the NW ¼ was owned by Truman and Mardula Day, who also owned 89 acres and a farmstead in the south half of the SW ¼ of Section 20, north of Prairie Street, where the Country Club Estates sub-division was platted in 1926. The Day family leased the NE ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 29 to the Aurora Country Club, allowed the land to be developed as part of an 18-hole golf course, and eventually sold it to the club in 1925.¹⁴ The 18-hole golf course was designed by Scottish course designer and landscape architect Thomas Bendelow, who designed the renowned Medina Country Club, and William Boise Langford, a Chicago native who helped design over 200 golf courses in Illinois and across the Midwest. The original Lawton stone farmhouse in the west half of the property was remodeled and served as the clubhouse until it burned down in 1941.¹⁵ By 1910 the City of Aurora was poised for expansion into township land west toward Edgelawn from Prairie Street on the south to the Galena Road on the north.

¹¹ "The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago: Aurora IL"; "Historic Districts and Landmarks Guidelines".

¹² Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 8, p. 29.

¹³ Ibid., Book 580, p. 175.

¹⁴ Ibid., Book 840, p. 133.

¹⁵ "Aurora Country Club", Aurora Country Club, accessed 1 February 2019, <https://www.aeccountryclub.com>.

While development along the Galena Road corridor and the platting of residential subdivisions such as New Downer Place increased land speculation west of Aurora, expected growth out to Edgelawn progressed slowly. By 1910 many blocks and lots on the west side of New Downer Place subdivision remained unsold and undeveloped. About that time, Mendota College, a private institution founded by Adventist Christians about fifty miles west of Aurora, in Mendota, Illinois, was looking to establish a new campus in a more populous and accessible location. The west side of Aurora was promoted to the college by Aurora civic leaders who saw the economic and cultural benefits of being home to an institution of higher learning, and land was available and ready to be developed. In June 1911, Mendota College acquired all of Blocks 33 and 34 on the west edge of New Downer Place subdivision from William George, a Trustee with the Old Second Bank of Aurora.¹⁶ Construction commenced at once and, in October 1911, Mendota College was formally incorporated as Aurora College.¹⁷

2. Aurora University:

Aurora University was founded in 1893 by the Western Advent Christian Publication Association as Mendota Seminary, in Mendota, LaSalle County, Illinois. Initially, Bible Training courses were developed and offered to prepare graduating students for lives and careers in Christian ministry. J. Oscar Campbell served as the first president of the institution. The seminary opened with three students and grew to 31 students by the end of the first Winter Term. Six months after the Seminary opened, it was renamed Mendota College and the curriculum was expanded to include courses offered in the Preparatory, Academical, Musical, Art, and Commercial Departments. The College was sustained financially by tuitions and fees, as well as the fund-raising efforts of The Helper's Union, founded in 1894 by Advent Christian women to provide food, furniture and other household goods, and funds as they were needed. In 1910, the Mendota College seal was designed by then college president B. J. Dean and was used for the first time on the college catalogue issued that same year. The seal contained an inner circle embossed with images of a book, a scroll, and a torch surrounded by the Latin inscription "The wise man treasures knowledge". The outer rim contained the name Mendota College with the founding year of 1893 written in roman numerals.¹⁸

¹⁶ Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 531, p. 366-67.

¹⁷ "Aurora University's History", Aurora University, accessed 11 January 2019, <https://aurora.edu>.

¹⁸ Ibid.; "AU Historical Timeline", Aurora University, accessed 13 January 2019, <https://aurora.edu>.

In 1910 Mendota College administrators, wishing to broaden the college's academic mission and increase enrollment, sought to relocate the campus from rural Mendota to a more populous area. As an inducement to locate near Aurora, William George of the Old Second Bank of Aurora, Trustee donated Block 33 in the New Downer Place subdivision, five acres, for a new college campus.¹⁹ A letter from a college official indicated that by May 1910 there already existed a drawing of the proposed main college building.²⁰ In May or June 1911, the college purchased a second block, Block 34, at a discounted rate from William and Alice M. George. Both acquisitions were filed with the Kane County Recorder's Office as Warranty Deeds dated 1 June 1911.²¹ Blocks 33 and 34 were on the undeveloped west side of the subdivision, which at that time was still in unincorporated Aurora Township. On 31 May 1911, President Orrin Roe Jenks conducted a groundbreaking ceremony for the main building, Eckhart Hall.²² The architect for the project was C. W. Webster, and the contractor was James Todd, an Adventist Christian, of Chicago. The three-story brick and limestone building, with an elevated basement level, was designed "after the old English style of architecture as employed at Oxford and Cambridge, and recently at the University of Chicago". Above the east-facing front entrance of the English Tudor Revival building was placed a stone slab inscribed "Eckhart Hall of Liberal Arts".²³ Flanking Eckhart Hall to the northwest and to the southwest are, respectively, Wilkinson Hall, a men's dormitory building, and Davis Hall, a women's dormitory building. All three buildings feature red-tile roofs as stipulated by benefactor Charles Eckhart, an Advent Christian who donated \$40,000 to the college of which \$10,000 was used to furnish Eckhart Hall and to appoint Davis and Wilkerson Halls.²⁴ Although the completion date was projected to be in October 1911, the interiors of the buildings were not completed until early 1912 and classes started for the Spring semester on 4 April 1912. Nevertheless, the institution was formally incorporated as Aurora College in October 1911, and the wording on the official

¹⁹ Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 367, p. 46-8.

²⁰ National Park Service, *National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Aurora College Complex*, accessed 19 February 2019, <http://gis.hpa.state.il.us>.

²¹ Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 531, p. 366-67.

²² "AU Today: Ties to the past, eyes to the future", Aurora University, accessed 15 February 2019, <https://news.aurora.edu>; "AU Historical Timeline".

²³ "AU Today: Ties to the past, eyes to the future"; National Park Service, *National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Aurora College Complex*.

²⁴ "AU Today: Ties to the past, eyes to the future".

college seal was changed from Mendota College to Aurora College.²⁵ More than a decade later, on 15 July 1923, the New Downer Place Addition, and thus the Aurora College campus, was annexed to the City of Aurora.²⁶

In May 1926, the college purchased approximately six acres of land in the northeast corner of the S ½ of the SW ¼ of Section 20, Aurora Township, from El Louise Schoeberlein.²⁷ Schoeberlein sold the balance of the S ½ of the SW ¼ at about the same time to developer Fred J. Walsh. By the 1950s Aurora College owned most of the property between Southlawn Place on the south, Evanslawn Avenue on the west, and just north of Marseillaise Place on the north. In 1954, by an ordinance of the City of Aurora, portions of Kenilworth Place and Glenwood Place within that property were vacated “by reason of the fact that Aurora College requests the vacation of said streets for the ordinary development of its campus”.²⁸ In the mid-1950s Campus Facilities took major steps to meet the growing demand for on-campus housing with an addition to Davis Hall and the construction of Memorial Hall in 1955 and Jenks Hall in 1957. In 1959 A new home for baseball, Snell Field, was dedicated in memory of Coach Percy Snell, the first coach hired by Aurora College. The field hosted baseball games on the southwest corner of campus for nearly 50 years. The campus continued to grow with the construction in 1962 of Stephens Hall of Science and the Charles B. Phillips Library. In December 1966, blocks of Calumet Avenue, Kenilworth Place, and South Randall Road running through campus were closed and removed, creating a physically unified campus, and two new parking lots were built on the north and south ends of campus. In 1970 two new buildings were dedicated: Watkins Hall, a residence hall; and Alumni Hall, where the college’s Athletics Programs were housed, replacing the long-standing Quonset huts that had served as the gymnasium. Perry Theater was constructed in 1978 and renovated in 2006 through a generous grant from the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley. The state-of-the-art theater stages live theatrical productions and hosts community-wide events addressing the arts, human services, education, and business.²⁹

Over time, Aurora College expanded and adapted its academic programs to serve the needs of the surrounding community. In 1930 the

²⁵ “AU Historical Timeline”.

²⁶ Kane County Recorder Doc. #69788.; Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 706, p. 617.

²⁷ Ibid., Book 807, p. 97, 404.

²⁸ Ibid., Book 1711, p. 153.

²⁹ “Facilities”, Aurora University, accessed 15 February 2019, <https://aurora.edu>.

Illinois Department of Public Instruction authorized Aurora College to train elementary and secondary school teachers, marking the beginning of one of the institution's most successful and long-standing academic programs. In 1947 Aurora College introduced an innovative evening degree program, featuring flexible schedules to allow returning war veterans to earn a college degree while working full-time jobs.³⁰ After decades of growth and expansion of academic programs, the institution changed its name in 1985 from Aurora College to Aurora University, and graduate programs were offered for the first time in Education and Business. A year later George Williams College, located in Downers Grove, Illinois, closed and transferred its Social Work and Leisure and Recreation Administration (LERA) programs to Aurora University.³¹ In 1989 Aurora University received the largest single donation in its history from Martha Dunham Schingoethe for the construction of Dunham Hall. The George Williams College of Aurora University was established in 1993 and soon encompassed the School of Education, the School of Physical Education and Recreation Administration, and the School of Social Work. The Geneva Lake campus of George Williams College began a period of expansion and renovation in 1997, with the acquisition of 91 additional acres of land, the establishment of a new conference center, and enhancements to existing facilities.³² A new era was begun with the inauguration in 2000 of the 13th President of Aurora University, Rebecca L. Sherrick, who promised to “put students first”. The university reached an important milestone in academic program development with the launch of the Doctor of Education degree, the first doctoral program in the institution's history. On the George Williams College campus, the summer performing arts festival Music by the Lake was restored to great acclaim. In 2001 the Wackerlin Center for Faith and Action was established, thanks to a generous bequest from Helena Zentmyer Wackerlin, a 1914 alumna of Aurora College. In 2003 Aurora University received a \$10 million federal grant to create the Institute for Collaboration. The building was opened two years later and is today the home to the School of Education, the Partnership School, and the local nonprofit organization Communities in Schools. As the university reclaimed its historically-strong undergraduate identity, new programs were added in art, museum studies, religion, special education and theater. The university once again opened its doors to the community with the establishment of the new Celebrating Arts & Ideas series,

³⁰ “AU Historical Timeline”.

³¹ Ibid.; “George William College of Aurora University”, Aurora University, accessed 20 January 2019, <https://gwc.aurora.edu>.

³² “AU Historical Timeline”; “George William College of Aurora University”.

which offered performing arts and educational events free of charge. Programs were added leading to the Master of Science in Nursing, the Master of Special Education, and Doctor of Social Work degrees. By fall of 2010, total enrollment at Aurora University reached 4,300 students.³³

3. Country Club Estates:

The properties on Southlawn Drive, South Randall Avenue, and Prairie Avenue in the Country Club Estates Subdivision are all located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20, Township 38 North, Range 8 East. In June 1842, Silas Hardy Baldwin purchased the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20 from the Federal Government, then sold the south half of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, 89 acres, to Charles Goodwin.³⁴ In 1847 Charles Goodwin sold the south half of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20 to Robert Miller.³⁵ In November 1847, Denison K. Town et al., representing the Miller and Goodwin families, sold the south half of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20 to Oresmus D. Day.³⁶ In 1862, Abigail Day, widow of Oresmus, sold the same 89 acres to her son Ezra S. Day.³⁷ In 1887, Ezra's son Truman, and Edith Day, conveyed half ownership in the south 89 acres in Section 20 to Truman's mother, Mardula Day.³⁸ Truman Day died in 1906 and Mardula Day died in 1909. In their probate inventories, filed with the Kane County Clerk, both willed their half interests in the south 89 acres of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20 to Truman and Edith Day's married only daughter El Louise (Day) Loser.³⁹ There ensued a period from 1909 to 1925 when no land transactions were recorded in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20. The land deed record resumed in 1925 and 1926 with several landowners selling various tracts to Fred J. Walsh, a resident of Joliet, Illinois. One of those land owners was El Louise Schoeberlein who, by warranty deeds signed 15 April 1926, sold the south half of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20 to Fred J. Walsh, excepting approximately 6 acres in the northeast corner that she sold at about the same time to Aurora College.⁴⁰ In two affidavits signed in 1926 and 1930, El Louise Schoeberlein explained that she was the same person named as El Louise Loser in the Last Will and Testaments of Truman H. Day and Mardula Day, and that upon the deaths of her

³³ "AU Historical Timeline".

³⁴ Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 2, p. 324.

³⁵ Ibid., Book 10, p. 209.

³⁶ Ibid., Book 11, p. 180.

³⁷ Ibid., Book 75, p. 77.

³⁸ Ibid., Book 281, p. 338.

³⁹ Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Probate Inventory, Book 3, p. 236.; Ibid., Book 6, p. 39.

⁴⁰ Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 807, p. 57, 97, 404-5.

father in 1906 and her grandmother in 1909 she had inherited sole ownership of the south 89.03 acres of the SW ¼ of Section 20, the same property having been in her family for many years and occupied by herself, her father, and her grandfather.⁴¹ The land on which Country Club Estates and a portion of Aurora College were developed in the 1920s and 1930s was owned by the Day family from 1847 until it was sold to Fred J. Walsh in 1926.

4. 1408 Southlawn Place:

The residential structure occupying Lots 28 and 29 in Country Club Estates, commonly known as 1408 Southlawn Place, was constructed circa 1956 to 1958. The City of Aurora Zoning & Planning Department has bound ledger books from the Aurora City Building Department that contain an Index of Contractor Permits starting in the 1870s and ending in the 1970s. The Contractor Permits are organized by street addresses. An entry was found for 1408 Southlawn Place dated 28 October 1955 (Permit No. 2655A). The work being Permitted was described in abbreviation as “Erect a one-story brick veneer residence”. The estimated cost of the construction was recorded as \$14,500. The Owner was listed as Barton & Hall and the Contractor was listed as James Lowther.⁴² The 1954 Aurora City Directory listed Barton & Hall, Contractors, at 907 Lakewood Place on Aurora’s west side. The company was owned by Wesley A. Barton, who lived at 1005 Prairie Street, and Kenneth F. Hall, who lived at 907 Lakewood Place. James W. and Beulah G. Lowther were listed in the 1954 Directory at 216 Lancaster Avenue, a simple Ranch home on the west side north of Galena Boulevard. Beulah worked as a seamstress and James Lowther was a salesman. Four days after the Contractor’s Permit was recorded, on 1 November 1955, James and Beulah Lowther purchased Lots 28 and 29 in Country Club Estates from Kenneth and Vera Hall. The Lowthers owned Lots 28 and 29 until 30 December 1958, when they sold the property to Carl and Marian Aschenschlager. On the same day they purchased the property, the Ochenschlagers took out a \$7,000 mortgage with the Home Building and Loan Association of Aurora using as collateral security “Lots 28 and 29 in Country Club Estates with all buildings and improvements now and hereafter erected or located thereon”.⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid., Book 808, p. 607.; Ibid., Book 924, p. 59.

⁴² “AU Historical Timeline”.

⁴³ Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 1939, p. 367-68.

The Contractor Permit appears to indicate that Barton & Hall, Contractors, owned Lots 28 and 29 on the day the Permit was issued, and that James Lowther, who purchased the Lots from Kenneth Hall the next day, intended to construct a One-Story brick veneer residence on the property. At some point, and for some reason, the exterior plans were changed to brick veneer below window level on three sides only. The balance of the exterior, including the entire east face, is wide, horizontal clapboard wood siding to the roof lines.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

The residence located at 1408 Southlawn Place is a small Ranch house with an attached garage, constructed in circa 1956-58. The residence is now in use as facilities for Aurora University Campus Safety.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions:

Building footprint is approximately 1,800 square feet.

2. Foundations:

The foundation is composed of concrete block.

3. Walls:

The residence has an irregular semi-rectangular footprint. The walls are mixed material with a combination of brick veneer on the bottom third and aluminum siding on the upper two thirds. A course of raised bricks separates the two sections.

4. Structural system, framing:

The residence has a wood frame.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads:

There are concrete stoops at the front (north) and rear (south) doors.

6. Chimneys:

The residence has a rectangular brick chimney with a cement cap, located at the junction of the residence and attached garage.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: `

The main entrance includes a modern metal and glass door and a modern wood door with a fanlight. The rear entrance is a wooden door with 9 panes in the upper half.

The attached garage has two bays with 15-paneled wood overhead doors. Each door has three windows.

b. Windows and Shutters:

The majority of the windows are double hung with aluminum and vinyl frames. There is a large picture window, framed by double hung windows, on the front of the residence. There are 4 basement windows. In addition, the rear (south) enclosed porch has 4 groups of awning windows on the south side and 2 groups on the east side. The garage windows are single rectangular pane.

The residence has modern decorative aluminum shutters.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering:

The house has a simple side-gabled asphalt roof.

B. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans: The residence is single-story with a basement and attic. The floorplan has been dramatically changed since the building has been in use as Campus Safety offices.

a. First Floor:

Main entry into the building is into the main hallway. The hall immediately splits in two directions – the south leads to the rest of the building, while the east leads to a narrow waiting area. The waiting area is part of the original front room/living room of the residence, but this room has been divided into the waiting space and photography area, which forms an “L” around the added reception office. The waiting and photography areas include a large picture window on the north wall and a brick and tile gas fireplace on the wood-paneled east wall. The reception area is a small added room with desks and computers for monitoring campus safety, as well as windows to receive visitors.

To the south, the hallway leads to other rooms. There are four offices of about equal size – one each in the northwest and southwest corners, and two along the south wall (labeled as Rooms 1-4 on the attached floorplan). The corner offices were most likely the home’s bedrooms, while the south offices appear to be made from what was the kitchen and dining area. The rooms retain a mix of original simple pine window and door trim, with newer more modern pieces added where rooms have been created, specifically between the two south offices. One office on the south wall (Room 3) has a built-in pine cabinet/shelving unit in the northwest corner that is original to the residence. Room 4 provides access to Room 5, the garage, and basement. There is a modern bathroom on the west central wall, and three small hallway closets.

Another office space is located in the southeast corner, in a room that was originally a four-season room/mudroom area. This room is accessed by a 15-panelled wood and glass French door and has a ceramic tile floor, wood paneled walls, and numerous windows, all of which distinguish it from the rest of the main house. It is one step lower than Room 4, and is accessible from both that room or the house’s back door.

The garage, located in the northeast corner, is two bays wide. It has a cement floor and unfinished drywall panels and pegboard walls. The back of the brick fireplace and chimney is located on the west wall.

b. Ground Floor/Basement:

The basement is accessed by stairs that lead from Room 4. It has been subdivided and includes two large central meeting rooms, a locker room in the northwest corner, modern bathroom on the north wall, a storage room at the southwest corner, and an “evidence room” at the southeast corner. The floor is concrete and walls are wood panels and concrete block.

2. Stairways:

The house has one staircase that leads from the main floor, south of the reception area, to the basement.

3. Flooring:

The house has wood floors; some are newer and one room has wide boards. There is carpet in the front entry hall and tile in the bathroom and rear enclosed porch. The garage has a cement floor.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finish:

Walls and ceilings typically have a drywall finish, some walls have additional wood paneling. The wall between the front waiting area and office has one viewing window and one reception window.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors:

Interior doors are mid-century and more modern hollow core doors with wood veneer. The door leading from the main residence to the enclosed rear porch is a 15-paned French door. In addition, the door leading to the garage is solid core with a single square viewing window at the top center.

b. Windows:

The majority of the windows are double hung with aluminum and vinyl frames and simple pine trim. There is a large picture window, framed by double hung windows, on the front of the residence. There are 4 basement windows. In addition, the rear (south) enclosed porch has 4 groups of awning windows on the

south side and 2 groups on the east side. The garage windows are single rectangular pane.

6. Decorative features and trim:

First floor rooms have simple smooth baseboards, some also include a quarter round shoe at the junction with the floor. The bathroom, which is completely modern, has only quarter round. Room 2 also has a chair rail. Door and window trim is also simple and smooth, with no decorative detailing.

7. Hardware:

Original existing hardware consists of unadorned brass hinges, knobs, locks, and hooks. Some hardware has been replaced with modern versions.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:

The house has a newer furnace and modern central air conditioning. There are attic vents at both gable ends.

b. Lighting:

Lighting is modern ceiling-mounted fluorescent.

c. Plumbing:

Plumbing is a mix of original mid-century and modern.

C. Site:

1. General setting and orientation:

The property is located at 1408 Southlawn Place, Aurora, Kane County, Illinois 60506. The residence faces north onto Southlawn Place, towards the Aurora University campus. The property is bound to the north by Southlawn Place, to the east 1400 Southlawn Place and to the west by 1414 Southlawn Place – both residential properties now owned by the University, and to the south by yards belonging to other residential properties (435 South Randall Road and 1419 Prairie Street, also owned

by the University). The property includes the residence and a garden shed, as well as mature trees and a lawn.

2. Outbuildings:

The property includes small board and batten garden shed with double doors and an asymmetrical side-gabled asphalt roof.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

City of Aurora Zoning & Planning Department, Aurora City Building Department, Index of Contractor Permits, February 28, 2019.

Kane County Recorder Land Search Records – Grantor-Grantee Index, February 13-28, 2019.

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Mr. Steve Broadwell - Planner: Zoning and Planning Division, personal communication, February 22-26, 2019.

Ms. Jill Morgan – Planner: Zoning and Planning Division, personal communication, February 22-28, 2019.

2. Secondary and published sources:

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Joslyn, R. Waite and Frank W. Joslyn. *History of Kane County, Ill.* Chicago: The Pioneer Publishing Co., 1908.

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Village of Montgomery, Illinois. “History of Montgomery”, accessed 20 February 2019, <https://ci.montgomery.il.us>.

Wm. Le Baron Jr. & Co. *The Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois*. Chicago: Blanchard, Wm. Le Baron Jr. & Co., 1878, accessed 1 February 2019, <https://archive.org>.

E. Supplemental Material

1. See IIIA (Sources of Information) for early views and architectural drawing credits.

PART IV. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

A. Research Strategy:

Research undertaken to document the property at 1408 Southlawn Place included archival, field, and report preparation. Archival research was undertaken prior to field investigations and included examination of local histories and records as well as known architectural documents to develop an architectural and historical context for the building and grounds. The field investigations included photographing and documenting interior and exterior structural elements of the building in its present conditions, as well as preparing detailed floor plans and footprints of the building.

B. Actual Research Process:

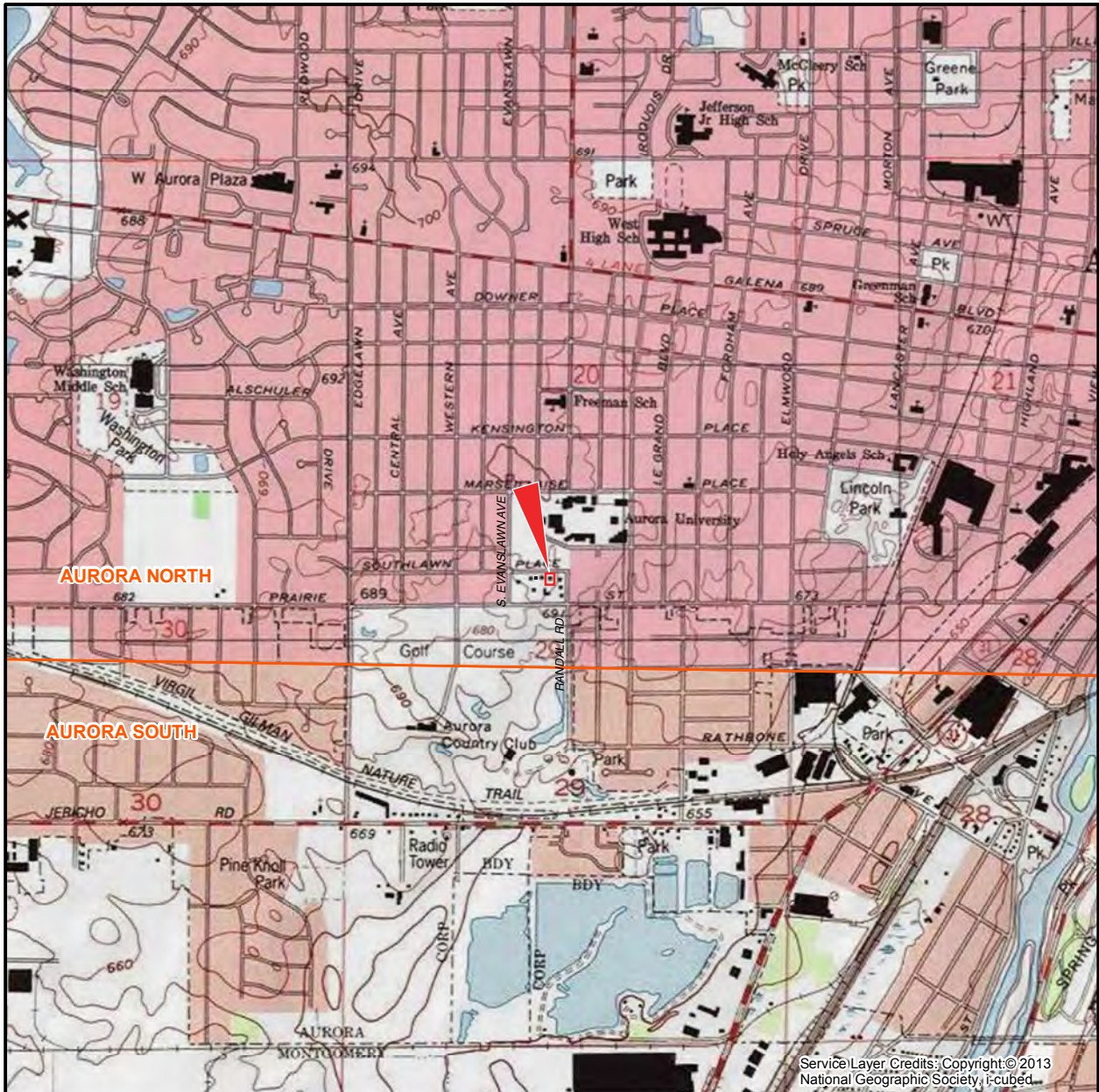
Actual research included archival, field, and report preparation. In addition, information regarding the history of property at 1408 Southlawn Place was provided by personal communications and the City of Aurora; this information included newspaper articles, historical documentation, and other secondary sources.

C. Research Staff

1. Primary Preparer: Ms. Marcy Prchal, Architectural Historian, Public Service Archaeology & Architecture Program, University of Illinois
2. Archival Research and Preparer: Mr. Christopher Flynn, Public Service Archaeology & Architecture Program, University of Illinois.
3. Photographers: Ms. Marcy Prchal, Architectural Historian, Public Service Archaeology & Architecture Program, University of Illinois
4. Delineator: Ms. Susan Brannock-Gaul, Graphic Artist, Public Service Archaeology & Architecture Program, University of Illinois
5. Additional Staff: Dr. Kevin McGowan, Program Director, Public Service Archaeology & Architecture Program, University of Illinois.

PART V. PROJECT INFORMATION

The demolition of the property at 1408 Southlawn Place was reviewed by the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office under the Illinois State Agency Historic Preservation Act (20 ILCS 3420). The production of this report serves as mitigation for the adverse effect of demolition of the structure located at property at 1408 Southlawn Place, Aurora, Kane County, Illinois.



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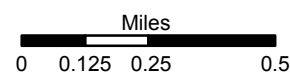
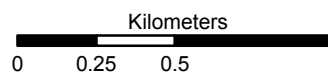
1408 Southlawn Place
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County



Quadrangle Location
Aurora North Quadrangle
7.5 Minute Series (Topographic) 1993



HIBS No.
K-2021-1-2



Sheet 1 of 1



1408 Southlawn Place
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County



Site Plan

1408 Southlawn Place Property

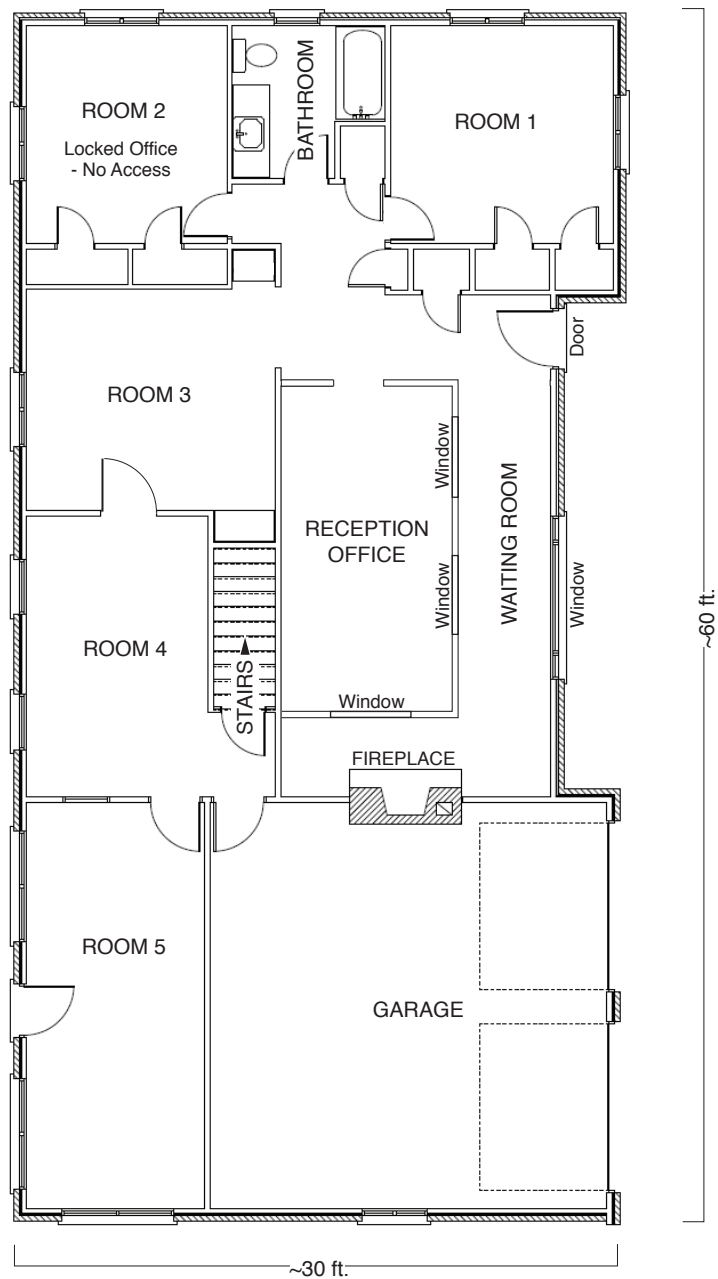
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HIBS No.
K-2021-1-2

Sheet 1 of 1



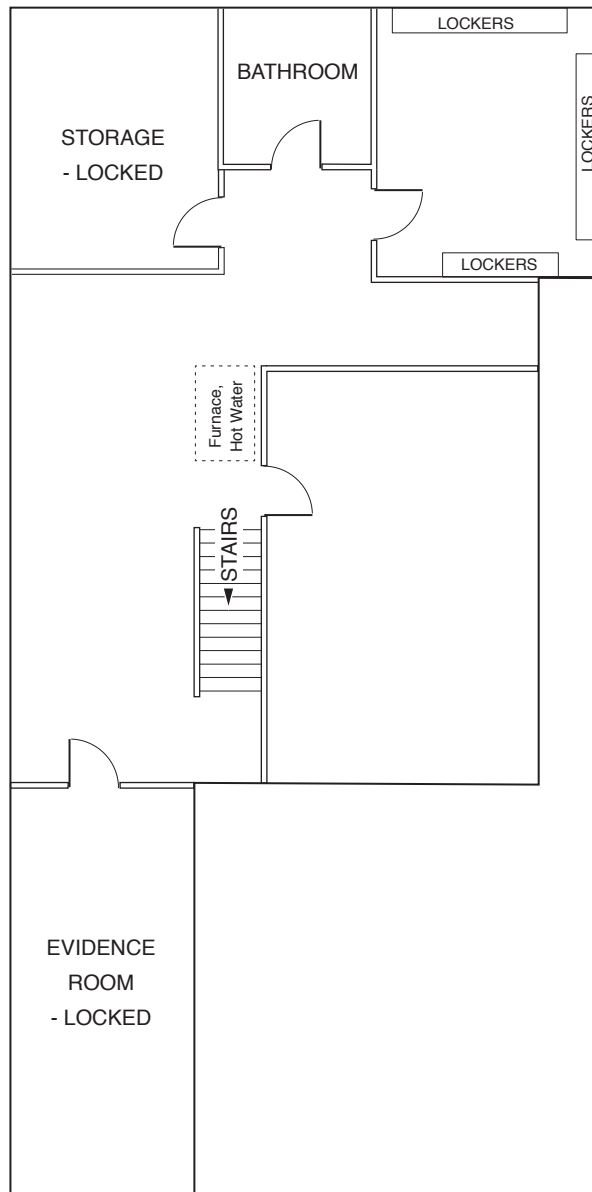
1408 Southlawn Place
 Aurora, Illinois 60506
 Kane County

Plan - First Floor



HIBS No.
 K-2021-1-2

Sheet 1 of 2



1408 Southlawn Place
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County

Plan - Basement



HIBS No.
K-2021-1-2

Sheet 2 of 2

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

- K-2021-1-2.1: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing south, 1408 Southlawn Place front elevation
- K-2021-1-2.2: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing east, 1408 Southlawn Place
- K-2021-1-2.3: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing north, 1408 Southlawn Place
- K-2021-1-2.4: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing west, 1408 Southlawn Place
- K-2021-1-2.5: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing southwest, Brick detail
- K-2021-1-2.6: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing southwest, Picture window and shutters
- K-2021-1-2.7: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing west, Waiting room
- K-2021-1-2.8: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing east, Fireplace
- K-2021-1-2.9: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing northeast, Reception Office
- K-2021-1-2.10: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing northwest, Room 1/Office
- K-2021-1-2.11: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing southeast, Room 3/Office
- K-2021-1-2.12: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing east, Room 4/Office
- K-2021-1-2.13: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing northwest, Room 3 built-in cabinets
- K-2021-1-2.14: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing west, Bathroom
- K-2021-1-2.15: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing east, Room 5/Office
- K-2021-1-2.16: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing southeast, Garage
- K-2021-1-2.17: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing southeast, Basement south main room
- K-2021-1-2.18: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing east, Basement north main room
- K-2021-1-2.19: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing north, Basement locker room
- K-2021-1-2.20: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing northwest, Basement bathroom
- K-2021-1-2.21: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing southeast, Heat vent detail
- K-2021-1-2.22: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing south, Garden shed
- K-2021-1-2.23: Chris Flynn, 12/19/2018, facing east, Garden shed



Aerial Photograph Obtained from ESRI World Imagery - January 2019

Service Layer Credits: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, ©OpenStreetMap contributors

1408 Southlawn Place
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County



Location

Photo Key - Exterior

(Photos 1 - 6, & 22 - 23)

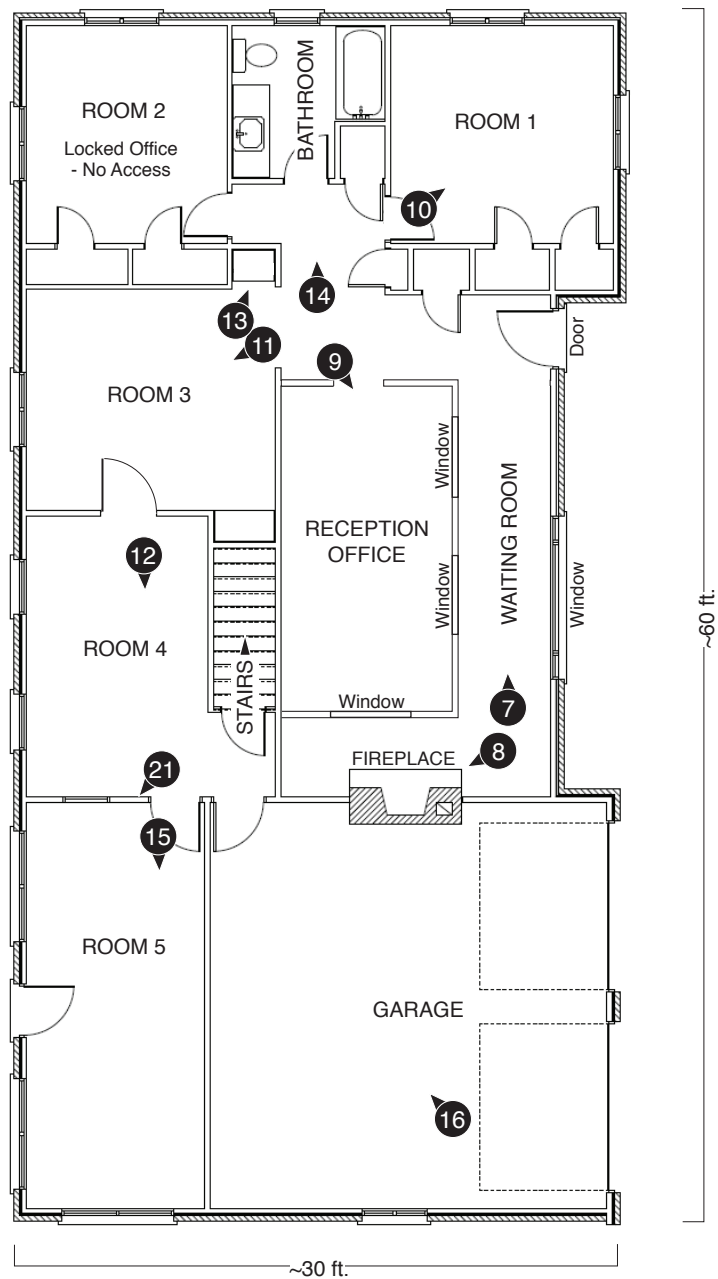


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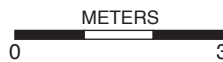
Sheet 1 of 1



1408 Southlawn Place
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County

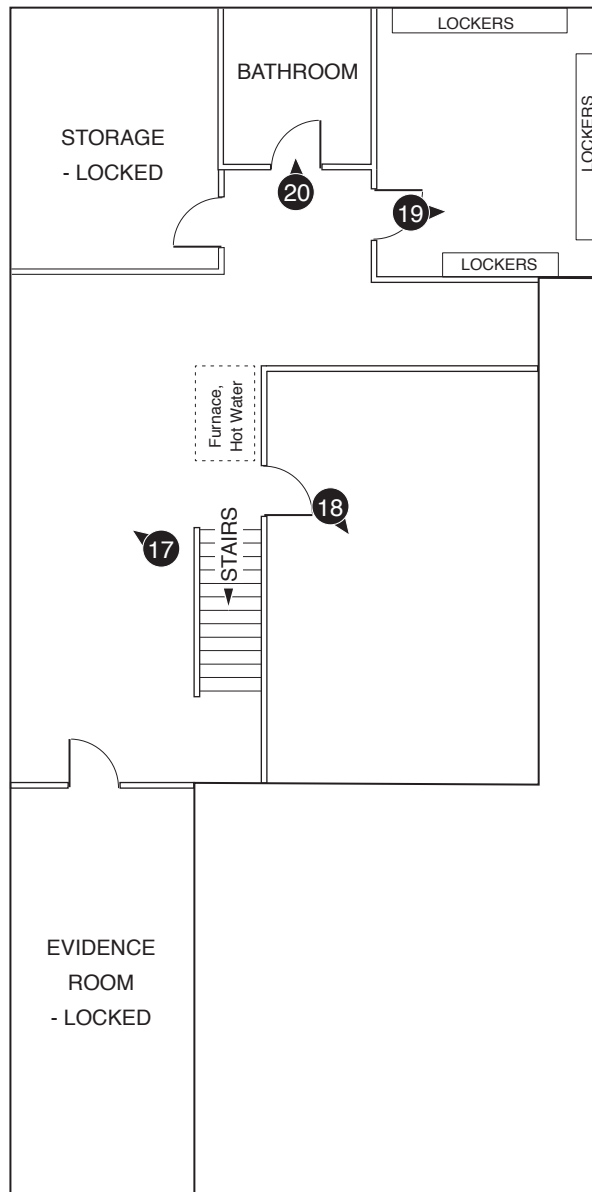
Photo Key - First Floor

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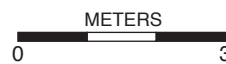
Sheet 1 of 2



1408 Southlawn Place
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County

Photo Key - Basement

(Photos 17 - 20)



HIBS No.
K-2021-1-2

Sheet 2 of 2



HIBS No. K-2021-1-2.1



HIBS No. K-2021-1-2.2



HIBS No. K-2021-1-2.3



HIBS No. K-2021-1-2.4



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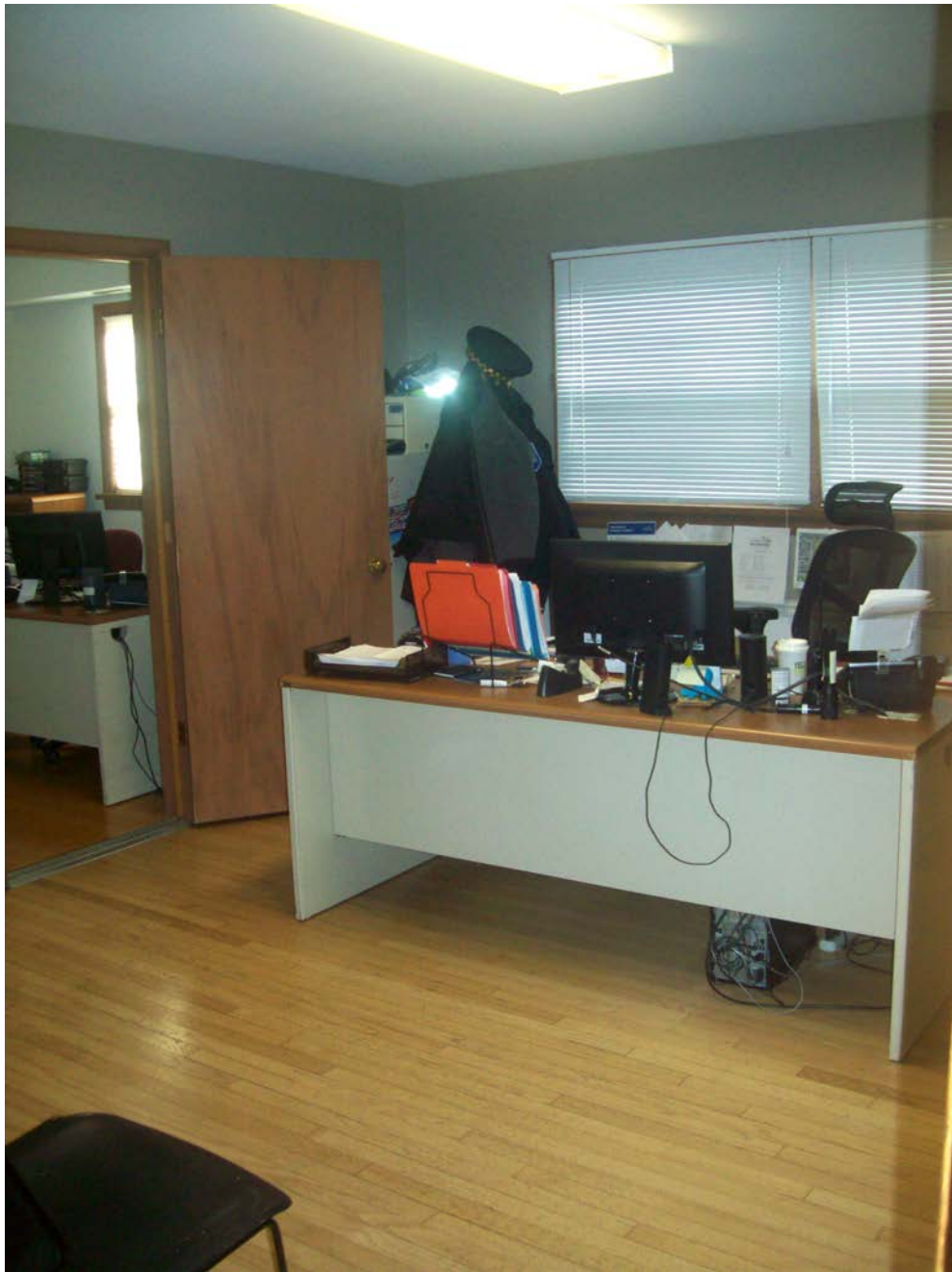
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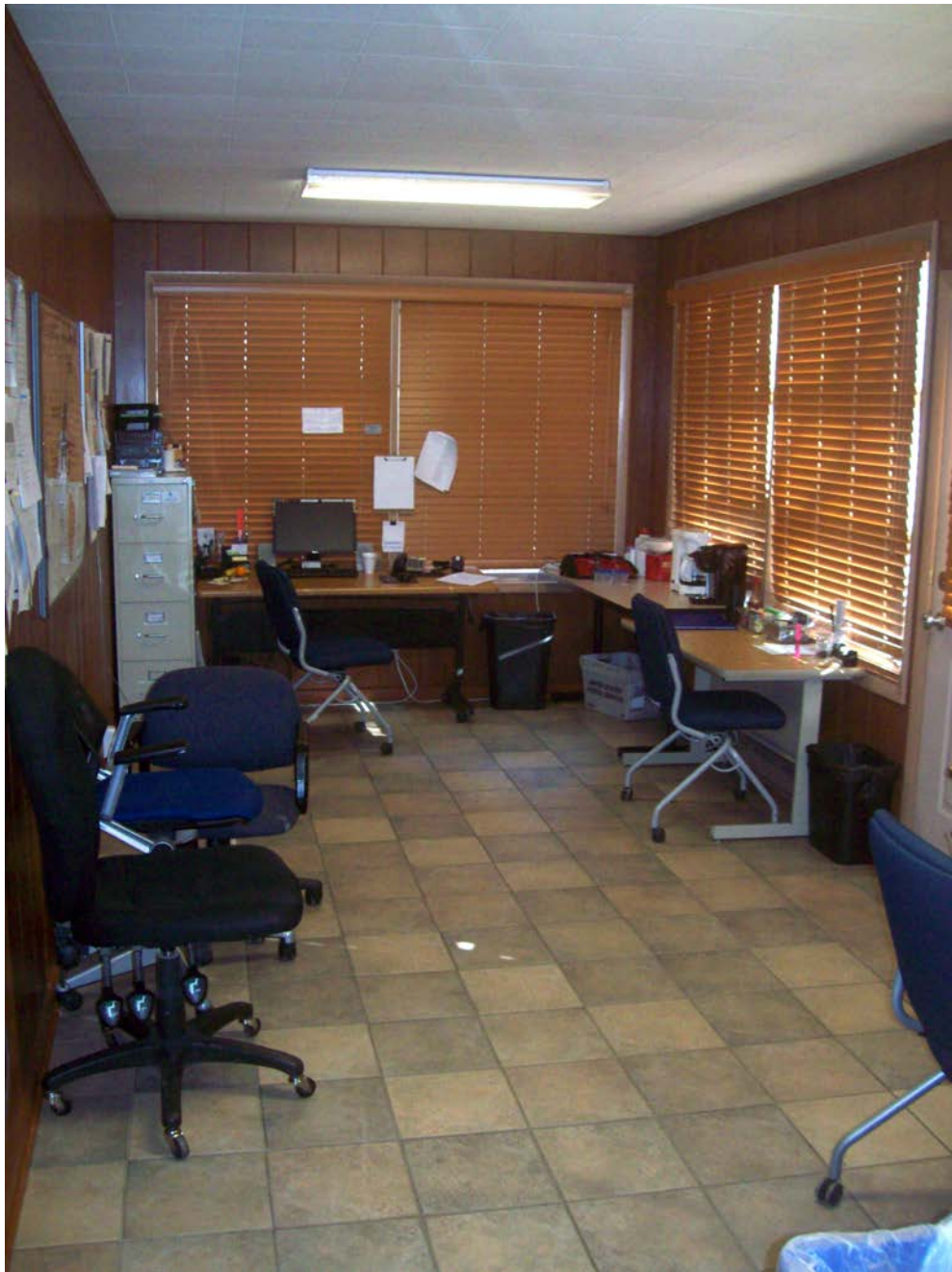
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