

Aurora University
441 South Randall Road
Aurora
Kane County
Illinois

HIBS No. K-2021-1-6

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: 441 South Randall Road, Aurora, Kane County, Illinois 60506

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

Present Use: Campus Business Office

Significance: The property at 441 South Randall Road 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 441 South Randall Road was constructed in circa 1955.

2. Architects:

William L. Gibb Jr.

3. Original and Subsequent Owners:

William L. and Laura B. Gibb/ Laura B. Gibb, widow (1947-1958)
Harold E. and Christine Herting/Marie Christine Herting, Widow
(1958-1984)
Robert L. Herting, Trustee (1984-1986)
Barbara L. Melchert (1986-2000)
Cheryl L. Johnson/Cheryl L. Johnson and Pamela J. Olsen (2000-2003)
Sylvia Keene (2003-2011)
Aurora University (2011-present)

4. Original plans and construction:

“Erect a one-story masonry residence”, 21 May 1955 (Permit No. 2472A)
- William L. Gibb Jr. (owner and contractor).

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 but resumed following the removal of Native Americans west of the

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).

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 to cultivate the rich soils, but others, recognizing the value of wood as a

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*

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 manufacturing center.⁷ The west side of the Fox River was initially

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

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

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

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".

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

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.

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

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>.

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

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

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>.

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 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

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".

²⁵ "AU Historical Timeline".

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

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 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

²⁷ Ibid., Book 807, p. 97, 404.

²⁸ Ibid., Book 1711, p. 153.

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

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, 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

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”.

³³ “AU Historical Timeline”.

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 father in 1906 and her grandmother in 1909 she had inherited sole ownership of the south 89.03 acres of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ 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

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.

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

1920s and 1930s was owned by the Day family from 1847 until it was sold to Fred J. Walsh in 1926.

4. 441 South Randall Road:

The property 441 South Randall Road occupies Lot 25 except the Northerly 62 feet in Country Club Estates, Aurora, in Kane County, Illinois. Country Club Estates was platted and recorded in May 1926 by Fred J. Walsh.⁴² On 4 June 1926 Fred J. Walsh conveyed by Warranty Deed Lots 1 through 370 inclusive to the Aurora Trust & Savings Bank, Trustee.⁴³ On 12 June 1930 Aurora Trust & Savings Bank conveyed ownership of Country Club Estates Subdivision to the Broadway Trust & Savings Bank, Aurora.⁴⁴ On 27 June 1940, the Broadway Trust & Savings Bank conveyed by Deed in Trust Lots 1 through 370 in Country Club Estates to Elliott S. Denney as Successor Trustee.⁴⁵ On 27 October 1943, Denney conveyed ownership of all unsold lots in Country Club Estates back to Fred J. Walsh, and on 27 February 1946 Fred J. Walsh, of Evanston, Illinois, Quit Claimed all the unsold lots to Merchants National Bank of Aurora as Trustee.⁴⁶ On 5 April 1947, Merchants National Bank of Aurora conveyed by Quit Claim Deed Lots 24 and 25 in Country Club Estates to William L. Gibb, Jr. and Laura B. Gibb of the City of Paris, in Edgar County, Illinois. The deed was made “upon the conditions, (1) That the premises shall be used for single residence purposes only, (2) That no dwelling shall be erected upon said premises costing less than Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00)”, and (3) That said property will never be sold, conveyed or leased to any person not of the Caucasian Race,” and that “these conditions...be construed as covenants running with the land”.⁴⁷ The Gibbs mortgaged the properties several times, including a \$12,000 mortgage on Lot 25, dated 11 July 1955, from which they were released on 22 June 1956.⁴⁸ On 23 August 1958, Laura B. Gibb, a widow, sold by Warranty Deed Lot 25, “except the North 62 feet thereof”, commonly known as 1401 Prairie Street*, to Harold E. and Christine Herting, of the City of Aurora.⁴⁹ On 7 September 1984, Marie Christine Herting, widow, Quit Claimed Lot 25, except the North 62 feet thereof, commonly known as 1401 Prairie

⁴² Kane County Recorder Plat Book 26, Page 7.

⁴³ Kane County Recorder Grantor-Grantee Index, Book 810, p. 212.

⁴⁴ Ibid., Book 894, Page 350.

⁴⁵ Ibid., Book 1117, Page 194.

⁴⁶ Ibid., Book 1190, Page 437; Ibid., Book 1273, Pages 347-348.

⁴⁷ Ibid., Book 1348, Page 39, Doc. #578701.

⁴⁸ Ibid., Book 1750, Page 21; Ibid., Book 1800, Page 184.

⁴⁹ Ibid., Book 1920, Page 290.

Street*, to Robert L. Herting, as Trustee of the Marie Christine Herting Revocable Living Trust.⁵⁰ On 9 July 1986, Robert L. Herting, Trustee of the Maria Christine Herting Revocable Living Trust, dated 20 August 1984, sold by Trust Deed Lot 25, except the North 62 feet thereof, commonly known as 1401 Prairie Street*, to Barbara L. Melchert, 128 Joy Street, Sugar Grove, Illinois. The deed directed to send subsequent tax bills to Barbara L. Melchert at 441 South Randall Road, Aurora.⁵¹ On 7 February 2000, Barbara L. Melchert conveyed by Warranty Deed Lot 25, except the North 62 feet thereof, “commonly known as 441 South Randall Road” to Cheryl L. Johnson, of 1509 Hawksley Way, North Aurora.⁵² On 19 May 2003, Cheryl L. Johnson and Pamela J. Olsen, single women, of 441 South Randall Road, sold by Warranty Deed Lot 25, except the North 62 feet thereof, to Sylvia Keene, a single person, of 635 Iroquois Drive, Aurora. The name and address of the taxpayer was given as Sylvia Keene, 441 South Randall Road, Aurora.⁵³ On 7 June 2011, Sylvia Keene, of 441 South Randall Road, sold Lot 25, except the North 62 feet thereof, commonly known as 441 South Randall Road, to Aurora University.⁵⁴

The residential structure occupying Lot 25, except the North 62 feet thereof, in Country Club Estates, the current address of which is 441 South Randall Road, was constructed circa 1955. 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. No entry was found for 441 South Randall Road, but an entry was found for 1401 Prairie Street* dated 21 May 1955 (Permit No. 2472A). The work being permitted was described in abbreviation as “Erect a one-story masonry residence”. The estimated cost of the construction was recorded as \$9,200.00. The Owner was listed as William L. Gibb Jr. and the Contractor was listed as “Himself” (William L. Gibb, Jr.).⁵⁵ 1401 Prairie Street aka 441 South Randall Road occupies Lot 25 except the North 62 feet thereof in Country Club Estates. Laura Gibb owned 1401 Prairie Street aka 441 South Randall Road until she sold the property to Harold and Christine Herting in 1958. The 1960 Aurora City Directory listed Harold and Christine Herting living at 441 South Randall Road. Barbara Melchert

⁵⁰ Kane County Recorder Doc. #1694456.

⁵¹ Ibid., Doc. #1780795.

⁵² Ibid., Doc. #2000K009295.

⁵³ Ibid., Doc. #2003K083177.

⁵⁴ Ibid., Doc. #2011K03386.

⁵⁵ City of Aurora Zoning & Planning Department.

purchased Lot 25 except the North 62 feet in 1986, and the 1986 Aurora City Directory listed Barbara Melchert living at 441 South Randall Road. Cheryl Johnson purchased the property in 2000 and was listed at 441 South Randall Road in 2002.⁵⁶ Sylvia Keene purchased the property in 2003 and sold it to Aurora University in 2011. The deed identified Sylvia Keene as a resident of 441 South Randall Road.⁵⁷

The property on the northwest corner of Prairie Street and South Randall Road, with the current address of 441 South Randall Road, was at one time assigned the address, or was known as, 1401 Prairie Street. Warranty Deed #870512 dated 1958, Quit Claim Deed #1694456 dated 1984, and Trust Deed #1780795 dated 1986 all stated that Lot 25 except the North 62 feet was commonly known as 1401 Prairie Street. William and Laura Gibb purchased Lots 24 and 25 in 1947. The 1952 to 1956 Aurora City Directories listed William and Laura Gibb living at 1409 Prairie Street, on the South 138 feet of Lot 24. William Gibb's occupation was recorded as Architect. In 1956 the Gibbs sold the south 138 feet of Lot 24, 1409 Prairie Street, to Charles B. and Esther Yonk.⁵⁸ William Gibb died in 1957 and in 1958 the Aurora City Directory listed Laura Gibb at 1401 Prairie Street. In September 1958 Laura Gibb sold Lot 25 except the north 62 feet thereof, "commonly known as 1401 Prairie Street", to Harold E. and Christine Herting.⁵⁹ The 1960 Aurora City Directory listed Laura Gibb's address as 435 South Randall Road.⁶⁰ The following sequence is assumed: William and Laura Gibb purchased Lots 24 and 25 in 1947. A residence was constructed on the South 138 feet of Lot 24, at 1409 Prairie Street, between 1947 and 1952 and was occupied by the Gibbs until circa 1956 (a building permit for this location has not been located, and the residence was demolished between April 2014 and May 2016 per Google Earth). A residence was constructed on Lot 25, except the North 62 feet, at 1401 Prairie Street, circa 1955, and was occupied by William and Laura Gibb until his death in 1957 and possibly by Laura through the fall of 1958. A residence was constructed on the North 62 feet of Lots 24 and 25, at 435 South Randall Road, circa 1956 and was occupied by Laura Gibb from circa 1959 until her death in 1969. Given that the Gibbs purchased all of Lots 24 and 25 in 1947, and William's occupation as Architect, it is reasonable to assume that all three residences with the addresses of 1409 Prairie

⁵⁶ *U.S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993*, Volume 1, accessed 19-21 August 2019, <https://www.ancestry.com>.

⁵⁷ Kane County Recorder Doc. # 2011K03386.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Doc. #809339.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Doc. #870512.

⁶⁰ *U.S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993*.

Street, 1401 Prairie Street/441 South Randall Road, and 435 South Randall Road, were all designed and constructed by William L. Gibb, Jr., Architect.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

The residence located at 441 South Randall Road is a Ranch house, constructed in circa 1956. The residence has been converted into the Aurora University Campus Offices.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions:

Building footprint is approximately 2,030 square feet.

2. Foundations:

The foundation is composed of concrete block with concrete facing on the exterior.

3. Walls:

The residence has mostly rectangular footprint.

Exterior walls are brick. The exterior walls are unusual in that they are treated individually – there is one decorative brick buttress at the southwest corner of the residence (angle is to the south), the southeast corner projects past the southern wall of the residence, there is a brick raised flower bed running along the southern wall, and the planes of the walls are uneven, giving the house a pitched appearance.

4. Structural system, framing:

The residence has wood frame walls.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads:

The front entry includes a two entry stoops at the front (east) and one at the rear (west). There is a paved concrete patio at the rear as well.

6. Chimneys:

There is a rectangular brick chimney in the center of the residence.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: `

There are two front (east) entries – one near the northeast corner and one near the southeast. There is also a door on the rear (west) side.

b. Windows and Shutters:

The house has a combination of vertical casement windows and rectangular 1x1 sets. In addition, there is a long horizontal dormer at the south end.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering:

The house is divided into two sections – north and south. Both have individual low-pitched gable roofs, but the house also has a series of shed roofs at various pitches. In addition, there are exposed support beams at the roofline at the south end.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: The residence is single-story with a basement and attic. The original floorplan has been modified.

a. First Floor:

There are two possible “front” entries - the following description is based on entering via the southeast door.

Entry is into what was originally the main living room (Room 1). This room includes a central fireplace – it has been walled around, but the original flat bricks are still exposed, as is the side chimney. This room also has a high ceiling with exposed beams, and the string of east-facing skylights. There is now also a

reception desk/counter. This room leads to a western hallway, from which Rooms 1 and 2 as well as a bathroom are accessed. Rooms 1 and 2 are offices (originally bedrooms) with few additions, and the bathroom has modern facilities.

To the northeast of Room 1 is Room 4, originally a kitchen but now an office with no appliances, and Room 5, which leads to the basement and another hallway to the north. This hallway, which runs east to west, and Rooms 6 and 7 (connected to the north) are located in what was originally the garage. These are now modern offices.

b. Ground Floor/Basement:

The house has a partial finished basement, that includes a second brick fireplace (below the first floor unit) and a bathroom, as well as a crawl space (located under the south portion of the house).

2. Flooring:

Floors are a combination of wood, tile, and carpet.

3. Wall and Ceiling Finish:

Walls and ceilings typically have a drywall finish.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors:

Interior doors are paneled hollow core doors with wood veneer.

b. Windows:

The house has casement windows.

6. Decorative features and trim:

The house has basic molding and window trim.

7. Hardware:

Hardware consists of unadorned brass or brushed steel hinges, knobs, locks, and hooks.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:

The house has a modern furnace and central air conditioning.

b. Lighting:

Lighting is a mix of mid-twentieth century incandescent light fixtures and more modern fluorescent.

c. Plumbing:

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

B. Site:

1. General setting and orientation:

The property is located at 441 South Randall Road, Aurora, Kane County, Illinois 60506. The residence faces east onto South Randall Road. The property is bound to the north by 435 South Randall Road, to the east by South Randall Road, to the south by Prairie Street and to the west by the property owned by 1419 Prairie Street. The property includes the residence and sidewalk.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Bibliography

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

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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 441 South Randall Road 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:

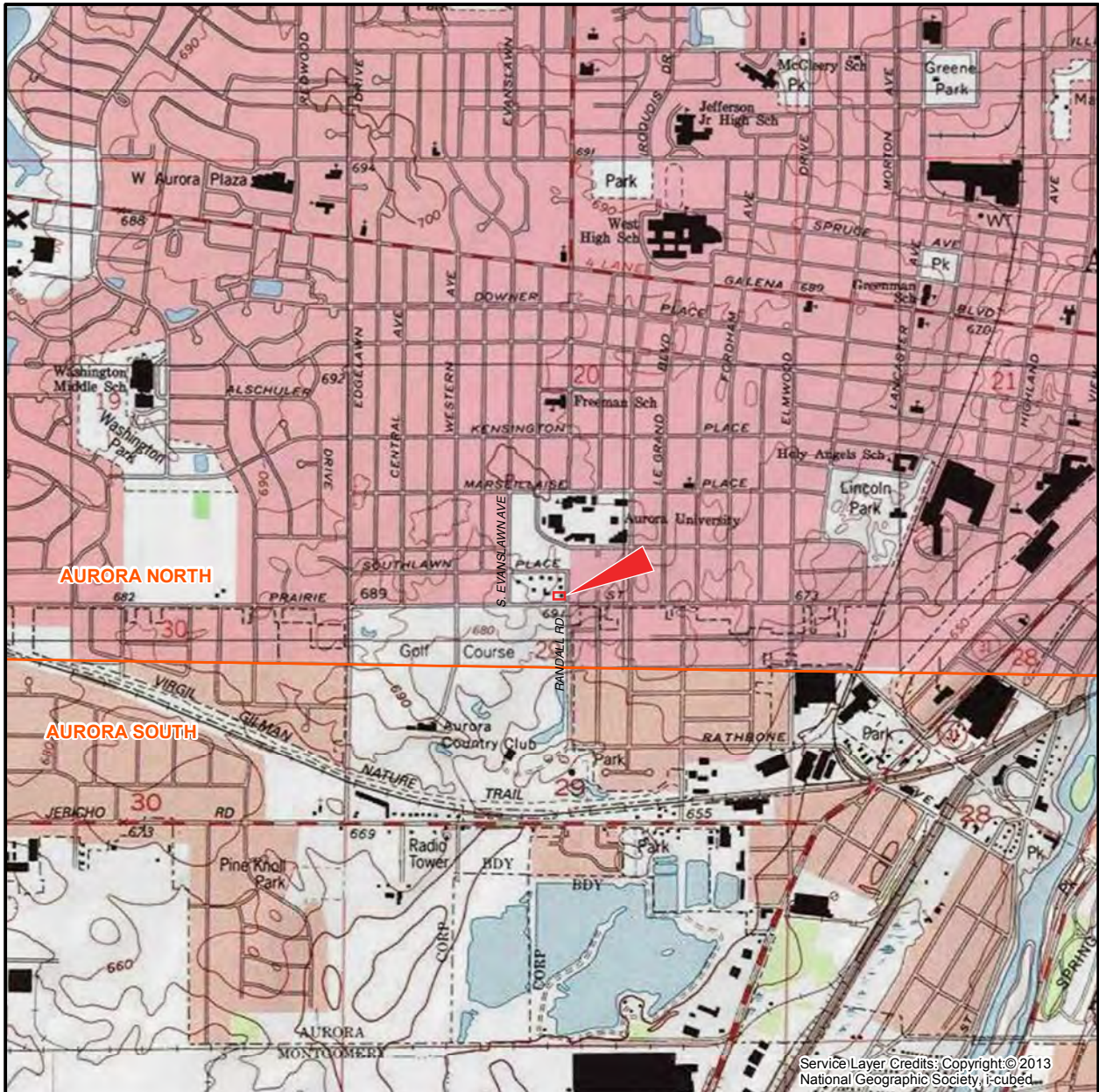
Actual research included archival, field, and report preparation. In addition, information regarding the history of property at 441 South Randall Road was provided by personal communications and the City of Aurora; this information included newspaper articles, historical documentation, and other secondary 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: Mr. Chris Flynn and Ms. Marcy Prchal, 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 441 South Randall Road 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 441 South Randall Road, Aurora, Kane County, Illinois.



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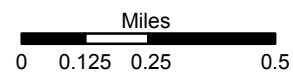
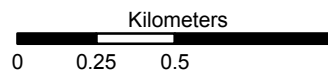
441 South Randall Road
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County



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



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Sheet 1 of 1

Aerial Photograph Obtained from ESRI World Imagery - January 2019



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441 South Randall Road
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Kane County



Location

Site Plan

 441 South Randall Road Property

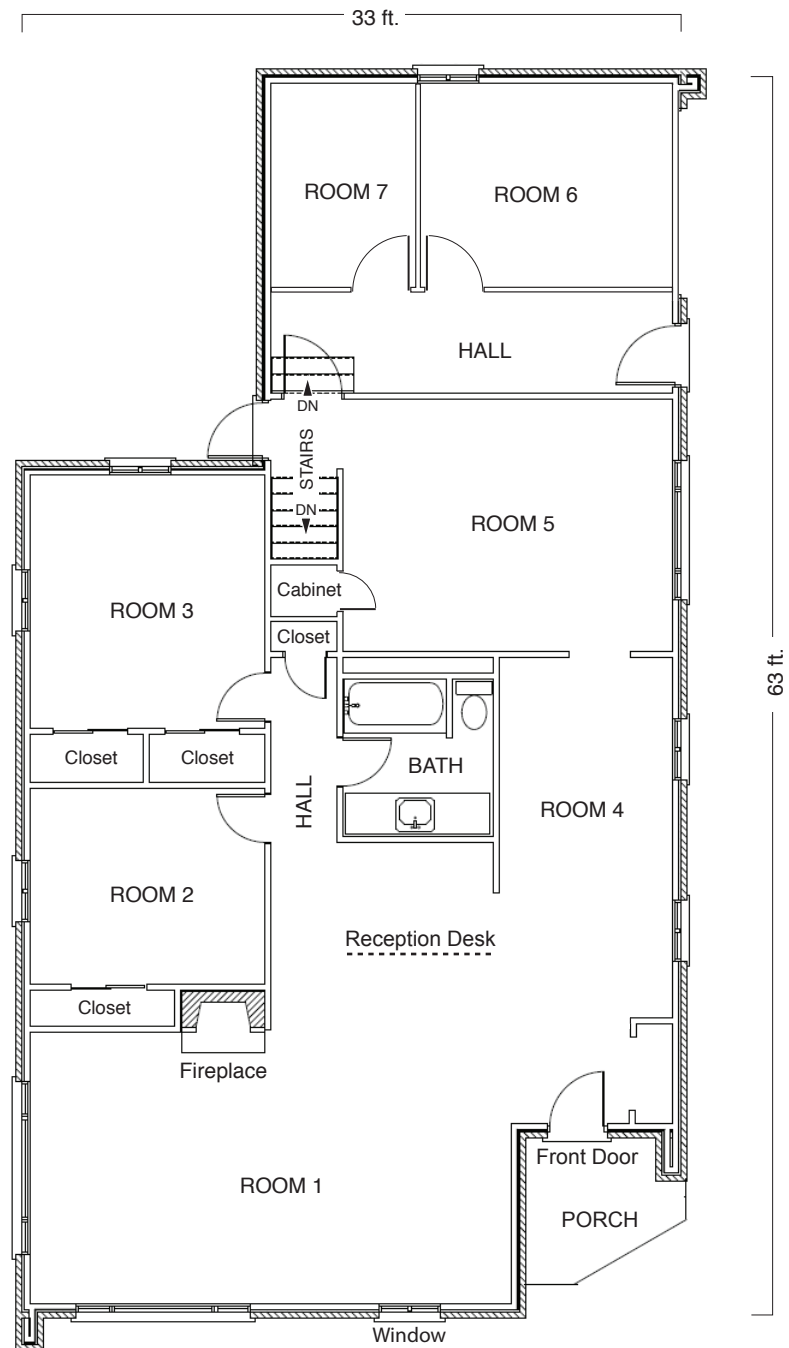
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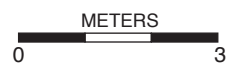
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Sheet 1 of 1



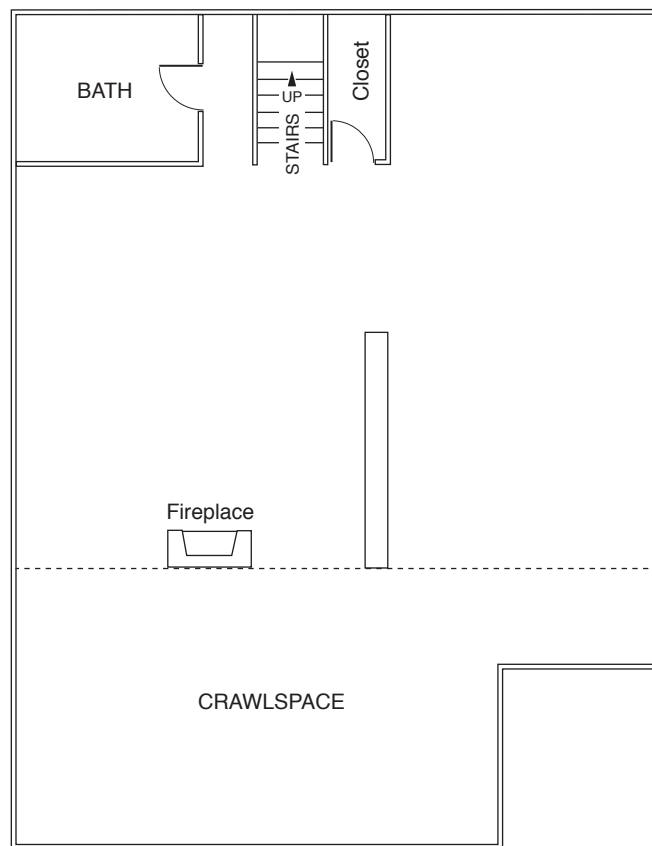
441 South Randall Road
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Plan - First Floor



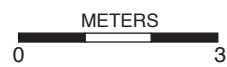
HIBS No.
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Sheet 1 of 2



441 South Randall Road
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County

Plan - Basement

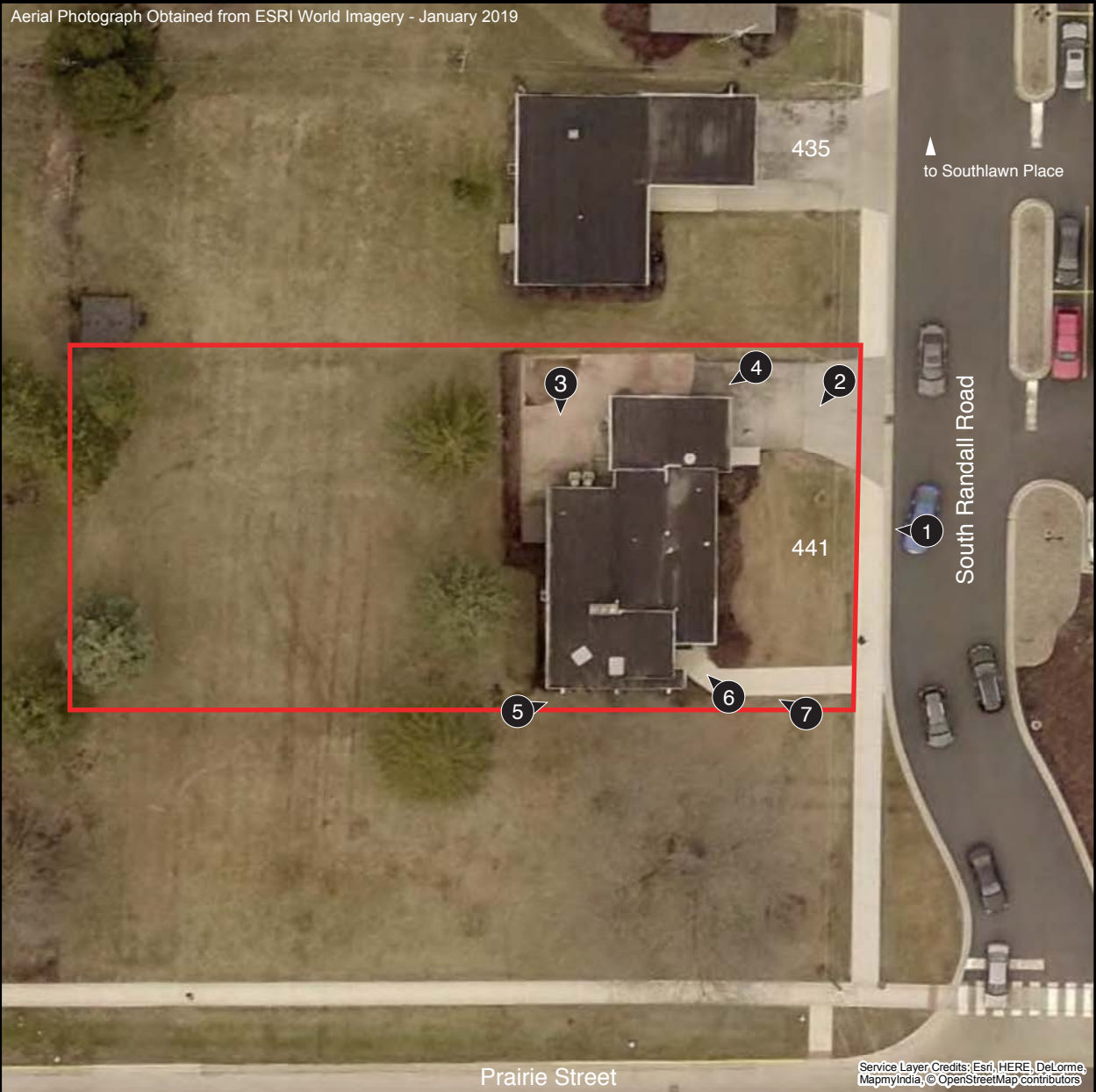


HIBS No.
K-2021-1-6

Sheet 2 of 2

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

- K-2021-1-6.1: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing west, 441 South Randall Road front elevation
- K-2021-1-6.2: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing north, 441 South Randall Road
- K-2021-1-6.3: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southeast, 441 South Randall Road
- K-2021-1-6.4: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southwest, 441 South Randall Road
- K-2021-1-6.5: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing northeast, Buttress and planter
- K-2021-1-6.6: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southeast, Front door
- K-2021-1-6.7: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southeast, Front door, stoop, and dormer
- K-2021-1-6.8: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing northwest, Room 1 and fireplace
- K-2021-1-6.9: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing northeast, Fireplace
- K-2021-1-6.10: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southeast, Room 1 dormer
- K-2021-1-6.11: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southwest, Room 2
- K-2021-1-6.12: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southeast, Room 3
- K-2021-1-6.13: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing east, Bathroom
- K-2021-1-6.14: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing south, Room 4
- K-2021-1-6.15: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing northwest, Room 5
- K-2021-1-6.16: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing east, Hallway
- K-2021-1-6.17: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing south, Room 6
- K-2021-1-6.18: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing south, Basement fireplace
- K-2021-1-6.19: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southeast, Basement
- K-2021-1-6.20: Marcy Prchal, 8/30/2019, facing southwest, Basement bathroom



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441 South Randall Road
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County



Location

Photo Key - Exterior

(Photos 1 - 7)

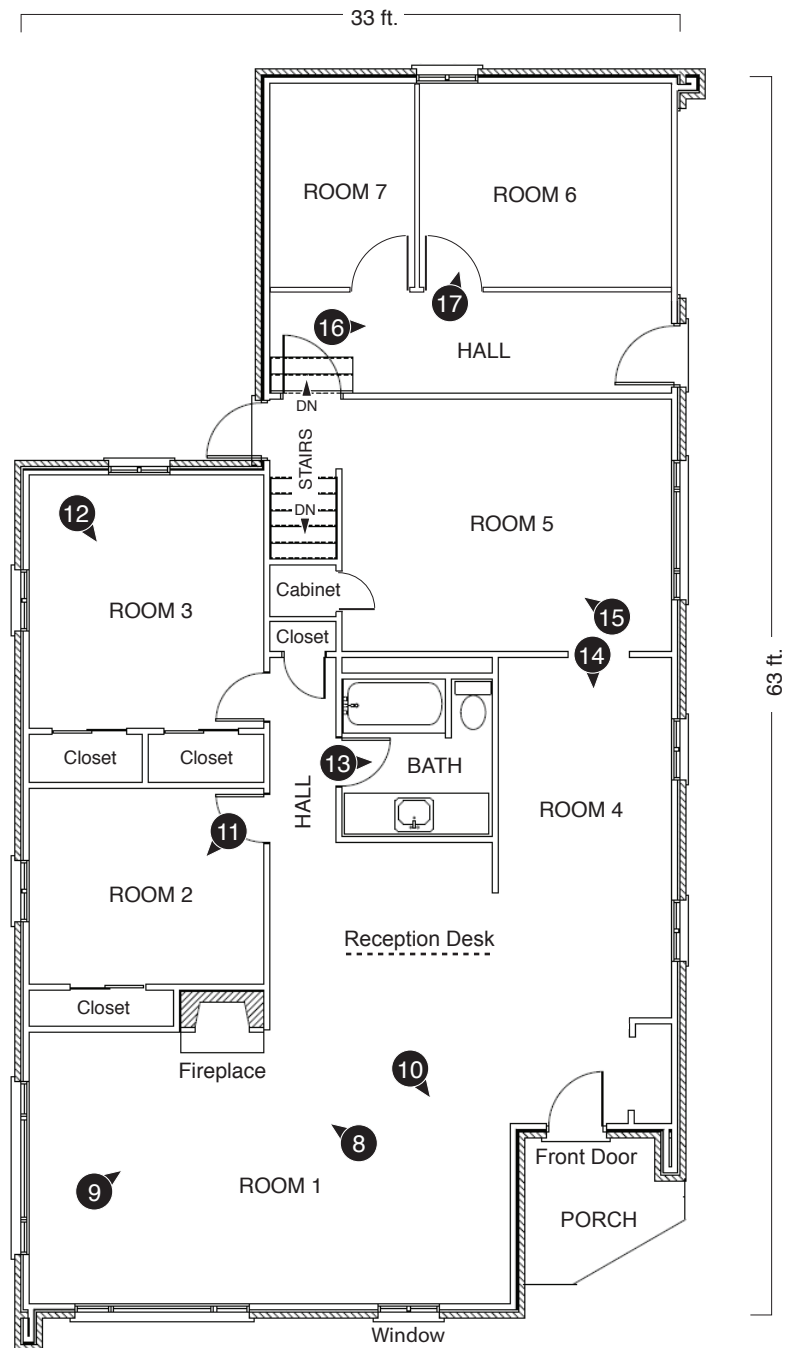
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HIBS No.
K-2021-1-6

Sheet 1 of 1



441 South Randall Road
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County

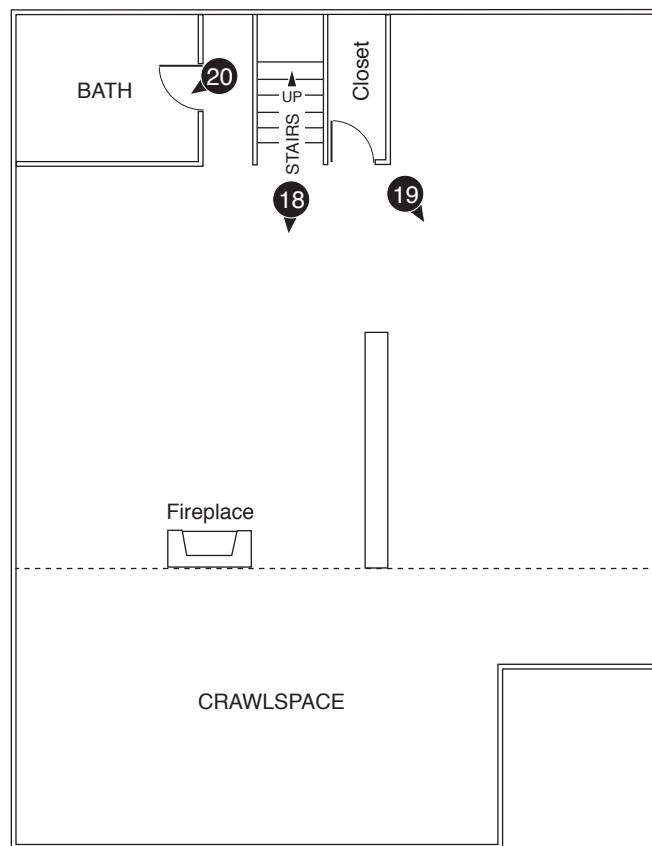
Photo Key - First Floor

(Photos 8 - 20)



HIBS No.
K-2021-1-6

Sheet 1 of 2



441 South Randall Road
Aurora, Illinois 60506
Kane County

Photo Key - Basement

(Photos 18 - 20)



HIBS No.
K-2021-1-6

Sheet 2 of 2



K-2021-1-6.1



K-2021-1-6.2



K-2021-1-6.3



K-2021-1-6.4



K-2021-1-6.5



K-2021-1-6.6



K-2021-1-6.7



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K-2021-1-6.9



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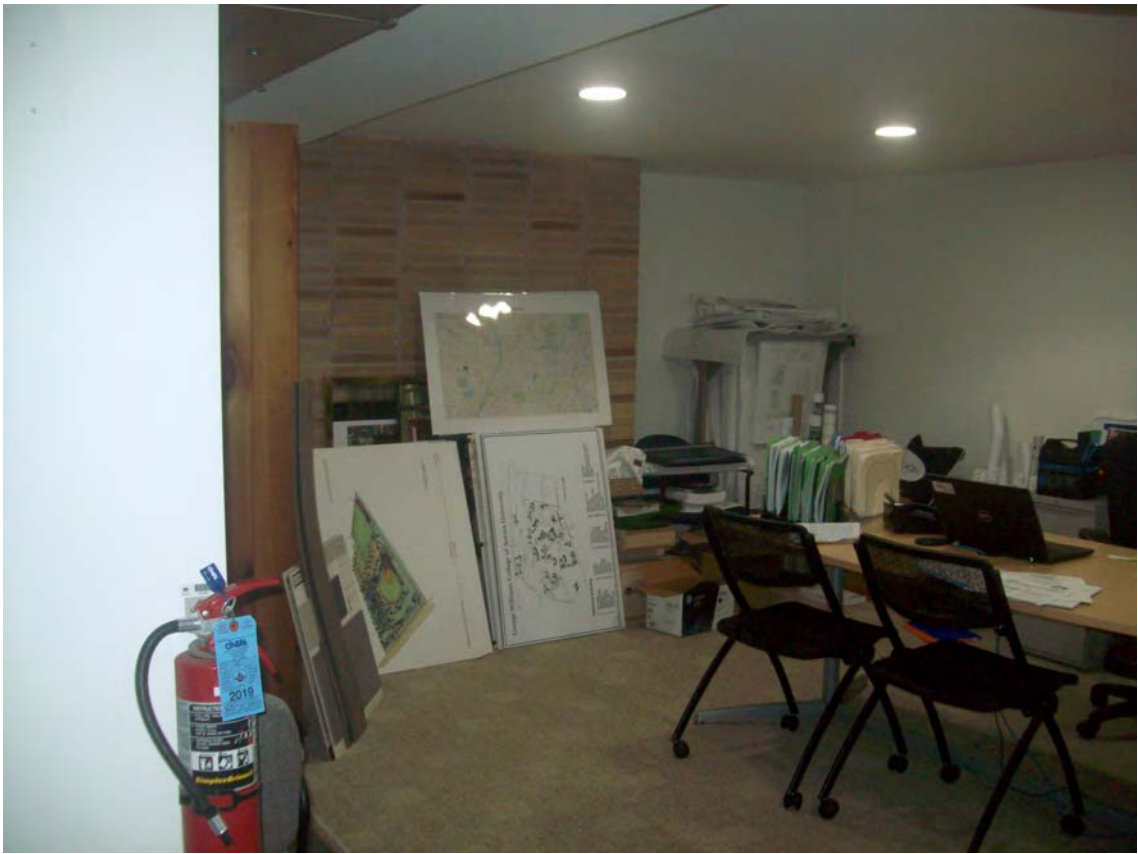
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K-2021-1-6.16



K-2021-1-6.17



K-2021-1-6.18



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