

Demolition of Non-Landmarked Historic Properties Application



Zoning Administration
300 South State St.
Syracuse, NY 13202
(315) 448-8640
Zoning@syr.gov

For Office Use Only

Zoning District: _____
Application Number: DHP- _____ - _____
Date: _____

Demolition of Non-Landmarked Historic Properties Application

This application may be mailed or delivered to One Park Place Suite 700, 300 South State St. If you wish to discuss the application with a member of our preservation staff, please call 315-448-8108 or email SLPB@syr.gov.

General Project Information

Property Address:	
Tax Parcel Number:	Lot size (sq. ft.)
Applicant Information:	
Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	Email:

Owner/Owner's Agent Certification

<i>By signing this application below, I, as the owner of, or the agent of the owner, of the property under review give my endorsement of this application.</i>	
Print owner name:	
Signature:	Date:
Mailing address:	
The names, addresses, and signatures of all owners of the property are required. Please attach additional sheets as needed. If a legal representative signs for a property owner, please attach an executed power of attorney. Faxed or photocopied signatures will not be accepted.	

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Part 1: Property Description and History

Contact the Onondaga Historical Association for information pertaining to this address, review historic mapping and city directories for ownership information and construction dates

Building Description: (height in stories, materials, significant features, additions, alterations, etc.)

Site and Setting: (describe lot and surroundings including any related secondary buildings, as applicable)

History of Property: Describe the history of the property, including but not limited to building construction date, original and present use, original and subsequent owners, neighborhood history, etc.

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Part 2: Demolition Information

Demolition of property is being sought for: <input type="checkbox"/> Complete demolition <input type="checkbox"/> Partial demolition
Has an order for demolition of the structure been issued by the Division of Code Enforcement, Chief of Fire, or another agency of the City of Syracuse? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please indicate the date when the demolition order was issued and the issuing department
Explain the reasons for the proposed demolition: <i>(If structural condition is the primary reason for demolition, provide supporting documentation from a qualified engineer, architect, or contractor.)</i>
Describe post-demolition plan for the site:

727 COMSTOCK AVENUE
HISTORIC BUILDING ASSESSMENT

727 COMSTOCK AVENUE,
CITY OF SYRACUSE
ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

PREPARED FOR:

WHITEMAN OSTERMAN AND HANNA
ONE COMMERCE PLAZA
99 WASHINGTON AVENUE, SUITE 1900
ALBANY, NY 12260



PO Box 124
LAGRANGEVILLE NEW YORK 12540

APRIL 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The building at 727 Comstock Avenue was built in 1905 in a Colonial Revival style and is currently vacant, in a general state of disrepair. The building was determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places in May of 2022, based on photographs submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and not the result of a property visit or building inspection. The SHPO determination also does not consider the condition of the interior of the building. The Colonial Revival Style was widely and commonly used throughout the state in the early 20th century. The detailed and thorough assessment described in the enclosed report demonstrates that the current conditions and characteristics of the building do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's guidance for exceptional importance. Furthermore, the 727 Comstock Avenue building does not meet the Criteria for designation as Protected Site outlined in the Syracuse Zoning Ordinance.

The exterior currently features vinyl siding on all elevations, aluminum and vinyl replacement windows, aluminum flashing and trim around the window openings and roofline. The exterior doors are all modern replacements, including the emergency egress door within the 3rd story dormer. Many of the windows on the lower level have been boarded up. The roof coverings consist of asphalt shingles and aluminum flashing (on porches). The exterior shows substantial modification from its original design, with changes to the veranda and porch, exterior siding, window design and columns and an addition on the eastern elevation. The architectural integrity of the building at 727 Comstock Avenue is considered fair to poor.

The interior of the building was examined as part of the overall assessment and review. Currently the house consists of fourteen bedrooms, six bathrooms, and community rooms used by the fraternity for entertainments, dining, recreation and study. The second floor has four rooms identified as study rooms, but as they also contain closets that may have served as bedrooms for students. The basement has been altered to include a bar, mechanical rooms, and storage spaces. The original layout in the majority of the building cannot be determined due to the numerous changes that have taken place. All of the interior doors have been replaced with a mix of modern interior and exterior doors. Throughout the building modern replacement windows are present, with a few window openings in the main portion of the building retaining the original interior trim. Modern interior subdivisions are evident with the presence of modern sheetrock and similar wall board. The circulation pattern of the original 1905 design is only present on a portion of the main floor. None of the rooms can be considered to have any historic integrity except the living room, foyer, dining room, and second floor hall. While the library remains in its original location, it has been stripped of its architectural details. The dining room only retains the box window and the leaded glass panes (formerly a window) on the eastern wall. The interior integrity of the building is considered poor at best.

The Charles S. Estabrook family lived at the building located at the lot that is now 727 Comstock Ave. In 1905, when the building was constructed, the lot was numbered as 711 Comstock Avenue. In 1910, the address numbers on Comstock Avenue changed, and the property has since been 727 Comstock Avenue. In 1924, the Estabrooks moved to a house in Fayetteville, and the building was acquired by the Zeta Psi Fraternity Chapter. The Zeta Psi Fraternity continuously occupied the building for Greek purposes until the Syracuse University Chapter closed in 2007, and the national chapter of the fraternity began renting the building to the Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity.

The assessment confirms that various building systems and elements have undergone considerable alterations, and that any adaptive re-use that would be in compliance with building codes would be very difficult and prohibitively expensive. Restoring the function of this building to its original intention as a single family home is not supportable within the college campus and would not be economically viable. Furthermore, the rehabilitation or reconstruction of 727 Comstock Avenue, for a new function, would further obliterate any remaining historic details of the structure.

This assessment has examined the property utilizing the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for National Register Eligibility and the ReZone Syracuse criteria for determining a "protected site" status. Based on the analysis which included physical inspection of the interior and exterior, as well as research of the history of the building's occupation and function, the 727 Comstock Avenue property does not retain the architectural significance or historic integrity to be considered for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

The 727 Comstock Avenue does not meet the criteria outlined in the Syracuse ReZone under Article 6.3 (see Section H herein) for Protected Site status, as it no longer retains its historic integrity and its ability to convey historic significance.

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727 COMSTOCK AVENUE

HISTORIC BUILDING ASSESSMENT

In March of 2024 Hudson Cultural Services (HCS) was retained by Whiteman Osterman and Hanna to completed a Historic Building Assessment of 727 Comstock Avenue, located on the eastern side of Comstock Avenue, in the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York. The property was acquired by Syracuse University (University) in 2022. It has been used and occupied by one or more fraternities associated with Greek life at the University since 1924. From 1905 through 1924, the property was owned by Charles S. Estabrook, and served as a single family residence.

The building at 727 Comstock Avenue was built in 1905 in a Colonial Revival style. The building is currently vacant, in a general state of disrepair. The building was determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register in May of 2022 by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). As described fully in this report, a thorough assessment of the property, including the evaluation of the change in use, physical changes to and the condition of the property and the history of its ownership and occupants, reveals that the property fails to meet the Criteria for National Register Eligibility set forth under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The building is located on a ± 0.505 acre (0.204 h) parcel located on the eastern side of Comstock Avenue, with relatively level land that then slopes towards Comstock Avenue. A driveway borders the northern elevation of the building, with a large parking lot on the eastern portion of the building.

A. DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The building known as 727 Comstock Ave is $\pm 7,759$ square foot, and consists of a 3 stories and a basement. The main entrance is located on the western side of the building and is marked by a portico over the porch, which wraps around the building to porch on the northside, with a second entrance. (Photos 1, 5-7) 727 Comstock Avenue features an addition that was added between 1972 and 1984 on the eastern side of the building. (Photo 7). The building features a hipped roof and was originally built on a center hall square plan. The 3rd story features 3 gabled dormers with scrolled broken pediments. Pilasters with Corinthian capitals are located on each corner of the original portion of the building.

The exterior of the building lacks the original building materials. Currently, the exterior includes modern materials including: vinyl siding, aluminum and vinyl framed windows, aluminum flashing and infill around the windows, asphalt roofing tiles, aluminum gutters and flashing along the transom, and composite floor boards for the porch and outdoor steps. The porch roofs are supported by square doric columns with fluting. These square columns have replaced the original round columns with Corinthian capitals (Photo 2). A pediment with dentil blocks is located above the main entry way. Pilasters and single paned sidelights border this double paneled entrance. One of the sidelights contains leaded glass. All exterior doors are modern replacements, including the emergency egress door in the third story dormer. The northern entrance includes a semi-circular fan light over a single doorway, bordered by sidelights. A large box window is located on the southern elevation, which is bordered on the corners by matching pilasters, and contains aluminum casement windows. The original wooden railing has been replaced with a modern metal railing.

The building at 727 Comstock Ave, has functioned as fraternity house from 1924 through 2022. The house was owned by the Zeta Psi Fraternity Chapter who purchased it in 1924 until it was sold Syracuse University in 2022. After the Zeta Psi Chapter closed, it was rented by the Sigma Alpha Mu

Fraternity, who occupied the structure until 2013, and then the Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity until 2019. The building has been vacant for almost two years.¹

In 2022, the NYS SHPO determined that 727 Comstock Avenue was eligible for inclusion in the National Register under Criteria C, for its architectural characteristics as a Colonial Revival style building. The SHPO's determination incorrectly identifies this building as having been built in 1940, and does not identify the various modernizations that have taken place to its original Colonial Revival design. The review completed by the SHPO did not include a site visit to the building, or an extensive review of the buildings current condition, history, function and importance.



Figure 1: 2023 USGS Topographical Map. Syracuse West and Syracuse East Quadrangles. 7.5 Minute Series. (Source: USGS.gov.) Scale: 1" = 500'.

¹ Danny Amron, "SU purchases former Fiji house for \$3.14 million," *The Daily Orange*.
<http://www.wew.dailyorange.com/2022/10/syracuse-university-purchases-former-fiji-house/>



Photo 1: View to the southeast of the façade of 727 Comstock Avenue. The entrances are marked by decorative porches.

B. THE HISTORY OF 727 COMSTOCK AVENUE

The current building located at present day 727 Comstock Avenue was originally constructed in 1905. Prior to 1910, the lot that is now 727 Comstock was numbered as 711 Comstock Avenue.² Based on the information in the City of Syracuse Directories, Charles S. Estabrook resided at 711 Comstock Avenue until 1908 (Figure 2).³ In 1910, the address numbers on Comstock Avenue changed, and the property has since been 727 Comstock Avenue. The 1910 Federal Census indicates that Charles was a lawyer and resided with his wife Laura and his two children Elizabeth (2 years of age) and a daughter (4 months) whose name is not listed. The 1920 Federal Census⁴ identifies Charles' as still residing at 727 Comstock Avenue. He and his wife are now listed as having four children: Elizabeth (12 years),

² 1908 G. M. Hopkins Map (Figure 2) , U.S., *City Directories, 1822-1995 City of Syracuse New York*. [Charles Estabrook 1906] Ancestry.com

³ U.S., *City Directories, 1822-1995 City of Syracuse New York*. [Charles Estabrook 1906] Ancestry.com

⁴ Charles Estabrook 1920 United States Federal Census Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

Charles S. Jr, (10 years), Henry (5 years of age) and Harriet (3 years of age). There are two staff listed as residing in the household, Kate Hannon (26 years) a cook, and Mary Catherine Moran (23 years) a domestic servant. In 1924, the Estabrooks moved to a house in Fayetteville,⁵ and in the 1930 Federal Census he is listed as residing in the town of Manlius.⁶



Photo 2: Undated photograph of 727 Comstock Avenue. ⁷ Based on characters present in the photos, this photo is believed to be circa 1915.

In 1924, the building was acquired by the Zeta Psi Fraternity Chapter.⁸ The Zeta Psi Fraternity converted the single family home for fraternity use and continuously occupied the residence until the Syracuse University Chapter closed in 2007, and the national chapter of the fraternity began renting the building to the Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity. During the Zeta Psi Fraternity's tenure, the original building was expanded with an addition on the eastern side of the building that included commercial style kitchen and food storage spaces as well as additional bedrooms and bathrooms on the upper floors. The interior spaces have been modified substantially over the years, and currently the second and third floors have been subdivided and converted into multiple bedrooms and bathroom spaces. In 2022, the building was purchased by Syracuse University.

⁵ U.S., *City Directories, 1822-1995 City of Syracuse New York*. [Charles Estabrook 1924] Ancestry.com

⁶ Charles Estabrook 1930 United States Federal Census Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Note: Fayetteville is a village in the town of Manlius.

⁷ Currently in the house at 727 Comstock Ave.

⁸ The Onondagan, 1924: *Syracuse University Yearbook*, Vol. XL. Bird Library, Syracuse University Libraries.



Photo 3: Image of 727 Comstock Ave. Circa 1925.⁹

Currently the building consists of fourteen bedrooms, six bathrooms, and community rooms used by the fraternity for entertainments, dining, recreation and study. The second floor has four rooms identified as study rooms, but as they also contain closets they may have served as bedrooms for students. The basement has been altered to include a bar, mechanical rooms, and storage spaces.

The interior of the building underwent a series of renovations in the 1980s when carpeting was removed, and new walls were constructed in the core of the building. In October of 1999 renovation activities were completed by Oliva Companies for the living room, dining room, library and center staircase, as well as exterior changes.¹⁰ Bathrooms feature linoleum wall coverings and flooring, and one-piece acrylic shower units. Earlier interior renovations likely occurred, given the building's use as a fraternity house and not a private residence.

When HCS visited the building in April of 2024, all of the interior wood paneling in the dining room and living room had been removed. In the dining room, the plaster and lathe had been removed, and the interior brick chimney was visible. (Appendix A: Photo 24) The original mantels have been removed from the fireplaces in all locations except the living room and an upstairs bedroom. A large hole had been cut in the wall of the main stair case, revealing several layers of modern plywood, insulation beneath sheetrock (Appendix A: Photos 28-29) Wood paneling is still present in the chapter room in the basement. (Appendix A: Photo 36) Modern carpeting is located throughout the hallways and in some of the bedrooms within the modern addition. (Appendix A: Photo 46)

⁹ Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.

¹⁰ C&S Companies. Limited Hazardous Material Pre-Renovation Report Residential Building 727 Comstock Avenue, Syracuse New York, 13210

C. CHARLES S. ESTABROOK

Charles S. Estabrook was the son of Charles G. Estabrook (M.D.) and Caroline M. Sears Estabrook, and was born in Binghamton in 1879. He graduated with a Bachelor's in Law from Cornell University in 1900 and was admitted to the New York State Bar within the year. He began his legal practice and operated on his own until 1905 when his brother William S. Estabrook joined the practice.¹¹ The offices of Estabrook & Estabrook were located in the Post Standard Building. Charles was the director of the Syracuse Trust Company, director and Secretary of the Woodhull, Goodall, & Bull Company, and Vice President of the Post Standard Company. Fraternally, he was associated with the Chi Psi Fraternity and as a member of the Onondaga Golf and Country Club.¹² Throughout his career he would serve with many organizations both as trustee and as an attorney.

Charles Scott Estabrook married Laura Curry at her mother's house, in Magnolia, Massachusetts¹³ on September 6, 1905. Charles was a well known lawyer practicing in Syracuse, and Laura was the daughter of H. M. Currey, a steel magnate from Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. They newlyweds occupied their new residence, built on Comstock Avenue in Syracuse.¹⁴ They would sell this single family residence to the Zeta Psi Fraternity in 1924, when they relocated to the Village of Fayetteville.

Charles was the personal attorney for Harvey Moyer, a successful automobile and carriage manufacturer in Syracuse New York. Harvey's daughter Maude Moyer was married to architect Ward Wellington Ward, who in 1908 moved to Syracuse New York, where WW Ward established his architectural firm.¹⁵ Prior to moving to Syracuse, WW Ward has only a few buildings attributed to him, despite practicing architecture in New York City from 1900 to 1908. One is located in Larchmont, (37 Woodbine Ave) and was built between 1901 and 1903.¹⁶ One of the earliest buildings attributed to Ward is an elaborate Mansion in Magnolia Massachusetts, possibly the same building where Charles and Laura Estabrook were married in 1905. This mansion was destroyed by fire prior to 1915. Charles Estabrook's law career continued with the law firm of Estabrook, Burns, Hancock and White until his death in 1975. He served as the attorney for numerous organizations and professional boards throughout his life.¹⁷

One of Charles Estabrook's friends was Ward Wellington Ward, an architect who practiced in New York City from 1900 through 1908 and then in Syracuse between 1908 and 1926 designing more than 250 buildings, primarily middle class residential buildings. He designed the Estabrook's home in Fayetteville, and the house at 819 Comstock Avenue. Ward is best known for his Arts and Craft style residences, with a focus on subtypes such as Tudor Revival, English Cottage, Swiss Chalet and California Bungalow. His earliest houses reflected a generic late Queen Anne or Foursquare style that characterized much early twentieth century architecture for the middle class. The Colonial Revival style has not been attributed to any of his known designs.

¹¹ Franklin Henry Chase, *Syracuse and its Environs: A History Volume 3*, (Lewis Historical Publishing Company Syracuse, New York. 1924), p. 168.

¹² Chase, *Syracuse and its Environs*, 168.

¹³ The house was designed by Ward Wellington Ward, but has since been destroyed.

¹⁴ "Estabrook-Curry-Daughter of Pittsburg Steel Kin Wedded to Syracuse Lawyer at Mother's Summer Home at Magnolia." *The Boston Globe* (Massachusetts) Sept 7 1905. Newspapers.com.

¹⁵ Richard Carlson, National Register Nomination Form. *Architecture of Ward Wellington Ward in Syracuse, New York, 1908-1932*. NYS Division of Historic Preservation, December 1996.

¹⁶ Larson Fisher Associates, Village of Larchmont Westchester County, New York Historic Resource Reconnaissance Survey, Village of Larchmont Historic Preservation Task Force, April 2021.

¹⁷ Obituary: *The Herald-Journal newspaper* Syracuse, New York Monday, July 7, 1975

While there is a connection between Ward Wellington Ward and Charles S. Estabrook, the research completed did not reveal any indication that he was involved with the design or construction of the building at 727 Comstock Avenue.

There may have been characteristics of the Arts and Craft style incorporated into the original building, such as the mosaic tile around the living room fireplace, tiled vestibule and the leaded glass within some of the windows on the main floor. Other elements often attributed to the Arts and Crafts style such as a built in nook under the stairs and built in wall units in the chapter room are still present. Many of the interior details have been removed, and therefore the interior design cannot be attributed to Ward. In addition, the Arts and Crafts details which would be generally attributed to Ward, such as Moravian tiles, or medallion leaded or stained glass windows are not present in the building. Nor do any decorative windows appear in the early photographs or renderings of the building (Photos 2-3).



Photo 4: 1987 rendering of 727 Comstock Avenue showing the rear addition.¹⁸

¹⁸ Collegiate Renderings, Andover NJ. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GammaZetes/>.

D. CARTOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Maps completed in the early 20th century were reviewed to ascertain details about the construction date and later changes to the building at 727 Comstock Avenue. Images of these maps with the appropriate lot demarcated are included below.



Figure 2: 1908 G.M. Hopkins and Company, *Atlas of the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York*. Scale: 1" = 100'.¹⁹

The 1908 Hopkins map shows the subject property at 711 Comstock Avenue. The building is depicted as a large square shape, with a porch on the western and southern elevations. This building is shown to be of wood frame construction.

¹⁹ Special Collections Syracuse University. Bird Library. Digital Collections.



Figure 3: 1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York Volume 1 Sheet 59. Scale: 1" = 100'.²⁰

The 1910 Sanborn Map shows additional details of the 727 Comstock Avenue building. This map indicates the building is a wood frame dwelling with single story porches on the northern and western elevations, a small box window on the southern, and a two story porch on the eastern side. A single story garage is shown on the southeastern side of the building, that may have belonged to the owners at the time. The address numbers have changed, and the subject property is now identified as 727 Comstock Avenue.

²⁰ Library of Congress Digital Collections

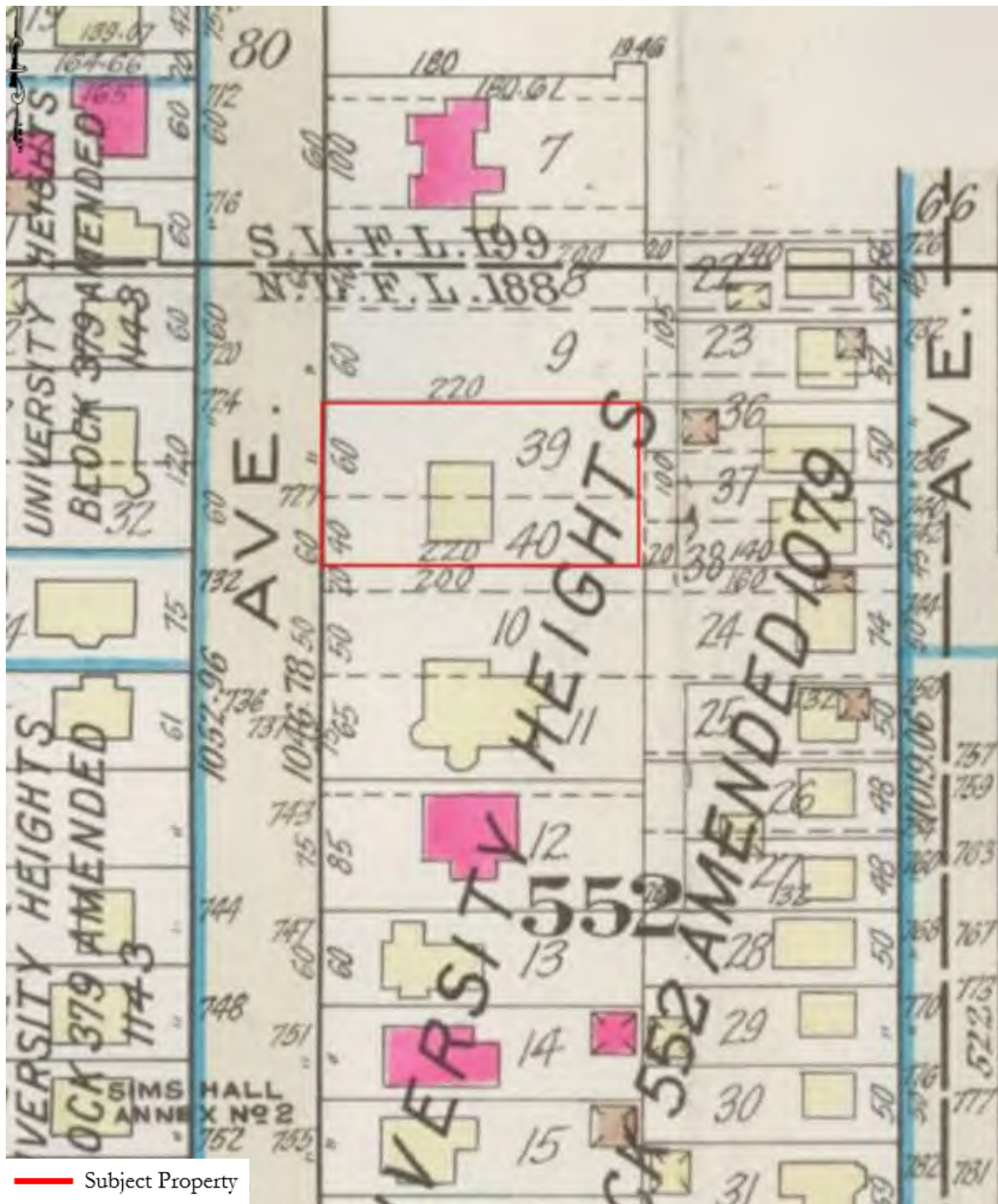


Figure 4: 1938 G.M. Hopkins and Company, *Atlas of the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York*. Scale: 1" = 65'.²¹

The 1938 map shows fewer details than the previous years, and just includes the location of the building as a square, with no additional details. The building is shown as being located within a neighborhood called University Heights.

²¹ Special Collections Syracuse University. Bird Library. Digital Collections.



Figure 5: 1952 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Volume 1 Sheet 59. Scale: 1" = 75'²²

The 1952 Sanborn Map shows that the building now functions as a fraternity house. No additional changes are shown on the main building. The garage in the rear of the lot has been removed.

²² Library of Congress Digital Collections.

E. BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS

EXTERIOR

The following discussion is based on an assessment of the exterior characteristics of the building. The remaining original exterior features include the porch roofs, the corner pilasters, the entrance way sidelight and fanlight and the scrolled broken pediments on the dormers. The exterior currently features vinyl siding on all elevations, aluminum and vinyl replacement windows, aluminum flashing and trim around the window openings and roofline. The exterior doors are all modern replacements. Many of the windows on the lower level have been boarded up. The roof coverings consists of asphalt shingles and aluminum flashing (on porches). The brick chimneys are still present as are the corner pilasters and the Corinthian capitals. The broken scrolled pediments above the dormer windows are still present, as are the pediment and fan light over the first floor entrances.



Photo 3: Detail photo of the main entryway. View to the east.

Early photos of the building show that awnings were present on all but the 3rd story windows, and on the veranda on the northern side of the building. Railings were located on the roofs of both the building itself, and the porches. Columns on the porch and veranda were rounded with Corinthian capitals. The veranda on the northern elevation featured flower boxes as a railing and had a curved outline, with a portion extending out beyond the roofline. (Photo 6) These features have all been replaced or removed, and the veranda has been shortened to parallel the roofline. The porch roofs are now supported by square doric columns with fluting, the railings are metal, and the awnings have long since been removed. The railings on the roofs have also been removed. A third story dormer on the northern elevation has been altered to accommodate a fire escape/ emergency access point.



Photo 2: The northern elevation features an emergency access ladder over the northern portion. View to the southwest.

Historically the windows in the 3rd story dormers consist of 6/6 double hung, while the second and main levels vary in style. The second level featured single pane $\frac{3}{4}$ sash windows while the first floor featured a mix of stationery and casement windows. These have all been replaced with modern double hung windows, with the exception a single box window on the southern elevation which includes casement windows. The circa 1925 image of the Zeta Psi house shows two circular windows on either side of the north entry way. These windows do not appear in any other photos, and have since been boarded over.

The asphalt shingles currently on the building are replacements, but the original material used cannot be discerned from the historic photos. Asphalt shingles were in popular use by 1911, although not ubiquitous until the 1930s.

Prior to the construction of the addition in the 1980s, the eastern elevation featured a rectangular picture window, with leaded details. (Appendix A: Photo 26) The window panes are still present in the building, but it no longer functions as a window; it is bordered by the addition wall. An opening was also present on the eastern elevation, that has since been incorporated into the addition.



Photo 4: An addition was added to the western side of the building in the late 20th century. View to the south.

INTERIOR

The interior of the building was examined as part of the overall assessment and review. The main entrance includes a vestibule with the monogram of CSE in mosaic tile. (Appendix A: Photo 18) The entry way provides access to the foyer and living room and stairwell to the second floor. (Appendix A: Photos 19-20) On the southern side of the central square layout are the dining room (southeastern corner) and the library (SW corner). The kitchen is located in the northeastern corner of the main floor, and the living area is located off the foyer in the northwestern corner. There is no direct access to the main floor of the addition from this portion of the building.

The living room features a fireplace, with a wooden mantel, and mosaic tile surround. (Appendix A: Photos 22, 24) The wood paneling that previously covered the walls in the library and dining room have been removed, as have any mantles or fireplace surrounds. (Appendix A: Photo 36) The kitchen has been fully modernized and is incorporated into the addition. The original layout cannot be determined. The dining room features a box window on the southern elevation, and a rectangular picture window (with leaded panes) on the former eastern elevation. (Appendix A: Photos 25-26) The ceiling is open in portions of the dining room showing evidence of prior water leaks and rotting lathe. (Appendix A: Photo 26)

The 1980s addition on the eastern elevation includes a food storage and preparation area, a media room and game room. (Appendix A: Photos 30-32) The food storage spaces can be accessed through the kitchen, but the media and game room can only be accessed from an exterior entrance or from the basement. (Appendix A: Photo 34)

The second floor consists primarily of bedrooms and bathrooms. Some of the bedrooms may have also served as study rooms or similar communal spaces. The layout on the second floor has four bedroom and a single bathroom opening into a hall or landing. (Appendix A: Photo 38) The northeastern corner of this level has been further subdivided into a second stairwell that provides access to the third floor and three additional bedrooms and two bathrooms. (Appendix A: Photos 42-43) The second floor of the addition can be accessed from the eastern side of the hall, with a second hall area providing access to four bedrooms and a bathroom. Outside of the main staircase from the first to the second floor in the main portion of the building, the other staircase are very narrow and may have only been used by house staff, or are the result of interior modifications done after the building became used for multiple occupants. (Appendix A: Photos 42, 51)

Only one of the bedrooms on the second floor has a fireplace (Room 202), and the others contain steam radiators. (Appendix A: Photo 39) The modern addition features baseboard heating. The balance of the rooms exhibit evidence of extensive modification over the years to accommodate the changing needs of the fraternity. Drop ceilings hide original ceilings in some locations, but also hide modern and historic mechanical systems. (Appendix A: Photos 33, 41, 45) Room 206 appears to have been the location of a network hub. Numerous Cat 5 cables are visible exiting the wall. The bathrooms are very small with narrow openings, an indication that these were part of the modification of the interior. (Appendix A: Photos 44, 48, 50)

The third story covers the main portion of the building, and includes six bedrooms, a hall area at the top of the stairs and access to the fire escape on the northern elevation. The rooms on the corners of the building feature sloped ceilings (Appendix A: Photos 47).

All of the interior doors have been replaced with a mix of modern interior and exterior doors. Throughout the building modern replacement windows are present, with a few window openings in the main portion of the building retaining the original interior trim. Modern interior subdivision are evident with the presence of modern sheetrock and similar wall board. No evidence of an original bathroom was noted. All prior carpeting had been removed, and the wooden floors exposed. In several bedroom spaces this wood appeared unfinished, as if the intent had been to cover it with carpet at the time of construction. In some location there is evidence of damage to the wood, and slats have either been replaced or are missing.

F. BUILDING INTEGRITY

The architectural integrity of the exterior of the building at 727 Comstock Avenue is considered fair to poor. The exterior shows substantial modification from its original design, with changes to the veranda and porch, exterior siding, window design and columns. The eastern elevation has been modified by a late 20th century addition, and the northern dormers have been modified to accommodate emergency egress. The construction materials of the porch have also changed. The original entryways on the northern and western elevation remain, as do the porch overhangs, chimneys and original fenestration.

The interior integrity of the building is considered poor at best. The circulation pattern of the original 1905 design is only present on a portion of the main floor. The only rooms that can be considered to have any historic integrity include the living room, foyer, dining room, and second floor hall. While

the library remains in its original location, it has been stripped of its architectural details. The dining room only retains the box window and the leaded glass panes (formerly a window) on the eastern wall.

Throughout the balance of the building the arrangement of rooms is no longer intact, and the interior trim surrounding the doors and windows is intact in only a few of the spaces. The original flooring cannot be discerned outside the second floor hall, and the spaces on the first floor previously identified. The circulation on the second floor was modified to provide access to the addition on the eastern side of the building. Original interior divisions have been substantially modified to provide additional bathrooms and bedrooms as well as other spaces to accommodate Fraternity use.

In the basement the Chapter room retains the original wood paneling and fireplace, but otherwise the basement has been modified to accommodate modern equipment, meet current fire code, and with the establishment of a bar for the fraternity.

The historic intention, and function of the building was to provide private living accommodations for an upper middle class family. This historic intention was abandoned by a change in the use of the building in the mid-twentieth century, when it was converted into a fraternity house. Throughout the 20th century the function of the building also changed as it was adapted to feature more bedroom spaces, and fewer social and activity spaces.

A building that has been updated repeatedly over the years loses integrity unless care has been taken to retain historic fabric and features.²³ It is evident that the changes to the building at 727 Comstock Avenue were made without any attempt to retain the historic fabric (materials) or features.

G. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

In May of 2022, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) determined that 727 Comstock Avenue was eligible for listing in the National Register under “Criteria C: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of an (architectural) type.” The eligibility determination on file with the SHPO is based on photographs submitted to their office and not the result of a property visit or building inspection. It incorrectly identifies the building as having a construction date of 1940. The determination notes that the building is an early-twentieth-century Colonial Revival residence in the city of Syracuse. The determination also notes that the building is a “five-bay, center-entrance 2-1/2-story clapboard-sided house with prominent corner pilasters...a modillioned cornice caps the façade and the hipped roof features dormers capped by broken scrolled pediments.”

The determination does not correctly identify the exterior finish of the building as modern vinyl siding, nor does it consider the modern replacement doors and windows, or the other numerous alterations that have taken place to the exterior, including a modern addition on the eastern elevation. The SHPO determination of National Register Eligibility also does not consider the condition of the interior of the building.

Under guidance port forth by the Secretary of the Interior, for properties to qualify for inclusion in the National Register, they must “represent a significant part of the history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture of an area, ...it must also present the characteristics that make it a good representative of properties associated with that aspect of the past; that is, it must have historic

²³ US Department of the Interior, “How to Complete the National Register Registration Form,” National Register Bulletin 16A.

integrity.²⁴ Taking into account the physical and functional changes over the past 100 this building lacks the historic integrity.

Under Criteria C, a building is evaluated based on architectural style, but also on the importance of the representation of that style. The Colonial Revival style was the dominate style for domestic buildings throughout the country in the first half of the 20th century (1910-1930) when about 40 percent of all the residential houses built were in this style.²⁵ Under the guidance provided by the Secretary of the Interior there needs to be justification as to why a property can be determined to be of exceptional importance.²⁶ Given that the Colonial Revival Style was widely and commonly used, the characteristics of 727 Comstock Avenue, do not meet the condition of importance.

In addition to the architectural characteristics this property was also assessed to determine if it meets Criteria B, “associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.” This criterion applies to properties that are associated with the period in which a person achieved their success or significance.²⁷ The original owner of the building, Charles S. Estabrook, was a well-known attorney within Syracuse. His importance within city is attributed to the house at 819 Comstock Avenue and the Wellington House, where he lived during his years contributing to the Syracuse community.

The two remaining Criteria for inclusion in the National Register include: Associated with events that have contributed to our history (Criteria A) and may contain significant archaeological deposits (Criteria D). These two remaining criteria are not applicable to the property at 727 Comstock Avenue.

H. SYRACUSE CRITERIA FOR PROTECTED SITES

The Landmark Preservation Board may recommend designation of a property, structure, object, landscape, site, or district is found to possess historic characteristics (A). The Criteria that would be applicable to 727 Comstock Avenue as a single structure not in a potential historic district include:²⁸

- 1) Association with persons or events of historic significance to the city, region, state or nation;
 - 2) Illustrative of historic growth and development of the city, region, state, or nation;
 - 3) In the case of structures or sites, embodying distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or representing the work of a master, or possessing unique architectural and artistic qualities, or representing a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
 - 5) In the case of interiors, possessing one or more of the characteristics enumerated in paragraphs 1, 2, or 3 above; and, in addition, embodying distinctive characteristics of architectural scale, form, and visual homogeneity, which are an integral part of the character of the structure in which the space is contained.
- B. In addition to possession of one or more of the characteristics noted above, the property must retain historic integrity, or the ability to convey its significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and/or association.

²⁴ National Park Service “Evaluating Non-Historic Exteriors” Best Practices Review, Issue 1 | September 2022.

²⁵ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (Alfred Knopf New York 2018)

²⁶ U.S. Department of the Interior “Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years,” National Register Bulletin 22.

²⁷ Anne E Grimmer, *The Secretary of The Interior’s Standards*, (National Park Service, 2017).

²⁸ A full listing of all of the Landmark Preservation Board Criteria can be found at: Article 6: Historic Preservation, Syracuse Zoning Ordinance Page 203-204.

The 727 Comstock Avenue building is not associated with any significant events in the city (a.1). The building and its location are not representative of the historic growth or development of the city, or region (a.2).

While some characteristics of the Colonial Revival style are still present, the modifications have removed the integrity, and as a common architectural type its importance has not been validated (a.3). As detailed throughout this report, the building no longer retains integrity of materials, design, workmanship or feeling, for both exterior and interior (a.5, B). The location of the building has not changed, but the overall setting has changed to that of a college campus, rather than a middle class residential neighborhood.

Based on the data gathered for this report, and the evaluation of the existing conditions of the building, the building at 727 Comstock Avenue, does not meet the criteria identified for Protected Sites.

I. POTENTIAL FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE

Notwithstanding the loss of architectural integrity, HCS was asked to evaluate the practicality of adaptive re-use. Currently the building features a foundation that is partially above grade, with three stories above grade. The addition on the rear of the building has been built on a slab, and is designed so that the ground floor is only accessible from the basement, from the second floor, or from an exterior door. The second floor layout consists of a central hall, with two separate smaller and narrower halls that lead sections of rooms located on the eastern and northeastern portions of the building. The addition consists of two stories and is attached in part to the main portion of the building by a very narrow hyphen, that consists of dead space between walls. The circulation pattern that currently exists within the buildings is impractical.

In considering adaptive reuse it is important to determine how the building could be repurposed, while retaining its historic elements. As outlined previously, the interior of the building has been renovated and substantially modified over the past 100 years. As part of the changes made, the historic integrity of the interior has been lost and the original construction materials cannot be fully discerned. In addition, the original materials on the exterior have been replaced with modern materials. There is also evidence of water damage in the ceilings, and a haphazard arrangement of utilities, including exposed piping. To adaptively reuse this building, either for residential, or commercial purposes, the interior would need to be completely redesigned which would necessitate gutting the interior to bring the building up to appropriate design and safety codes. A large restaurant style kitchen is located on the main floor that would need to be evaluated to discern if it meets safety codes. In particular, the staircases would need to be widened, as would the interior halls, and entrances to most of the bathrooms, some of which feature very narrow doorways.

Currently the building features a cut stone foundation and concrete slab, which may not be able to safely support heavy loads. The building would need to be updated to ensure that all applicable fire, safety and health codes are met, including emergency egress. For an adaptive reuse plan that would include a publicly accessible function, compliance with ADA codes would be necessary, requiring additional modifications to the building.

In 2022, Syracuse University purchased the building for \$3.2 million dollars. For any adaptive reuse plan, the use of modern construction design and technology, cost effective materials, building on an in-fill location where massive amounts of sitework are not required are critical paths to minimizing any future costs. The costs associated with retaining certain details of the building, and developing an

adaptive reuse plan would exceed the cost of new construction and would be prohibitive for any such project.

The assessment confirms that various building systems and elements have undergone considerable alterations, and that any adaptive re-use that would be in compliance with building codes would be very difficult and prohibitively expensive.

J. HISTORIC PRESERVATION APPROACH

The Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards are directed to the preservation of features which are significant to a property's historic, architectural, and cultural values.²⁹ In applying these standards, the highest quality and most distinctive buildings should be considered for rehabilitation and preservation, rather than those necessitated by time, nature and redevelopment practices.³⁰ Historic preservation is about not only the structure, but also its function and its history. Historic buildings that are to be protected, rehabilitated or restored need to be functional, and economically viable, while at the same time reflecting the criteria that make them significant and their historic intention.

The building at 727 Comstock Avenue currently lacks integrity of the original interior design, as well as integrity of function. The original character of the interior design was erased over the past century, during which time the original function of the building also changed. There has already been a considerable amount of alteration to the building exteriors, including replacement of original windows, and siding, character-defining elements of any historic resource.

Restoring the function of this building to its original intention as a single family home is not supportable within the college campus and would not be economically viable. Furthermore, the rehabilitation or reconstruction of 727 Comstock Avenue, for a new function, would further obliterate any remaining historic details of the structure.

K. CONCLUSIONS

The 727 Comstock Avenue was originally designed as Colonial Revival style center hall square residential building. It has been extensively modified over the years, which has resulted in a substantial change in the exterior details, and the degradation of the original Colonial Revival characteristics. The interior has been so significantly modified it no longer represents the building's original design for use as a private residence. It reflects the ever changing needs of a large fraternity house that utilized the building for the past 100 years.

The building was first built for Charles S. Estabrook, a prominent lawyer in the Syracuse community. After residing in the house until 1924, he sold building to the the Zeta Psi Fraternity and it has been used as a fraternity house since then. The building was used by Zeta Psi until 2007, when it was leased to the Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity, who occupied the structure until 2013, followed by the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity until 2019. It was purchased in 2022 by Syracuse University, and it is currently vacant.

Charles S. Estabrook was a well known attorney in Syracuse, but is also recognized for his friendship with Ward Wellington Ward, who built the Wellington house for Estabrook in 1922 in Fayetteville and the Estabrook Estate which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

²⁹ Anne E Grimmer, *The Secretary of The Interior's Standards*, (National Park Service, 2017).

³⁰ Theodore Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture*, (New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons, 2008):161.

The building is designed in a Colonial Revival Style, which the common, dominate style for domestic buildings throughout the country in the first half of the 20th century (1910-1930) when about 40 percent of all the residential houses built were in this style.³¹

The assessment confirms that various building systems and elements have undergone considerable alterations, and that any adaptive re-use that would be in compliance with building codes would be very difficult and prohibitively expensive. Restoring the function of this building to its original intention as a single family home is not supportable within the college campus and would not be economically viable. Furthermore, the rehabilitation or reconstruction of 727 Comstock Avenue, for a new function, would further obliterate any remaining historic details of the structure.

This assessment has examined the property utilizing the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for National Register Eligibility and the ReZone Syracuse criteria for determining a "protected site" status. Based on the analysis which included physical inspection of the interior and exterior, as well as research of the history of the occupation, and function, the 727 Comstock Avenue property not retain the architectural significance or historic integrity to be considered for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, the building does not represent a significant part of or period of local history or exceptional importance.

The 727 Comstock Avenue does not meet the criteria outlined in the Syracuse ReZone under Article 6.3 for Protected Site status, as it no longer retains its historic integrity and its ability to convey historic significance. The numerous changes to the building and its function as a fraternity house has removed its historic integrity and does not portray any significance of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and/or association.

³¹ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (Alfred Knopf New York 2018)

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APPENDIX A: BUILDING PHOTOGRAPHS AND FLOORPLANS WITH PHOTO KEY

8. View to the southwest of the 1980s addition.



9. View to the west of the southern elevation.



10. View to the east of the main entrance to 727 Comstock Ave.



11. View to the west of the roofline detail and 3rd story details.



12. View to the northwest of the southern elevation.



13. Detail view of the dormers on the eastern elevation.



14. Detail of the
leaded sidelight
at the main
entrance.



15. Detail view of
the veranda and
entrance on the
northern
elevation.



16. Detail of window wells for basement bar on northern elevation.



17. View to the southwest of the northern entrance. Note modern replacement materials throughout.



18. Detail of monogram mosaic on vestibule floor.



19. View of the foyer and main staircase.



20. View of the main entrance from the foyer.



21. View of the living room and northern entrance.



22. View of the fireplace in the library. All wood paneling and mantel details have been removed.



23. Library entrance features pocket panel doors.



24. View of the fireplace in the dining room. All wood details and mantel pieces have been removed.



25. A small area of wood paneling remains underneath the casement windows in the box window.



26. View of the leaded picture windows in the east wall of the dining room.



27. Evidence of water damage and structural repairs is evident in the exposed ceiling.



28. View of the landing to the second floor.



29. Openings in the wall show numbers renovations with modern building materials.



30. A modern kitchen is located in the northeastern corner of the main portion of the house.



31. This kitchen is partially located in the house addition.



32. An exterior access point is located on the east wall of the kitchen.



33. Drop ceilings are located throughout the kitchen space.



34. View of the game room within the addition space.



35. The bar is located in the northern portion of the basement.



36. The chapter room in the basement retains original wood detailing and wall paneling.



37. View down the main stairwell to the basement.



38. View of the second floor landing and hall.



39. Only one fireplace is located on the second floor in Room 202.



40. The wood flooring is damaged in several of the rooms or is entirely unfinished.



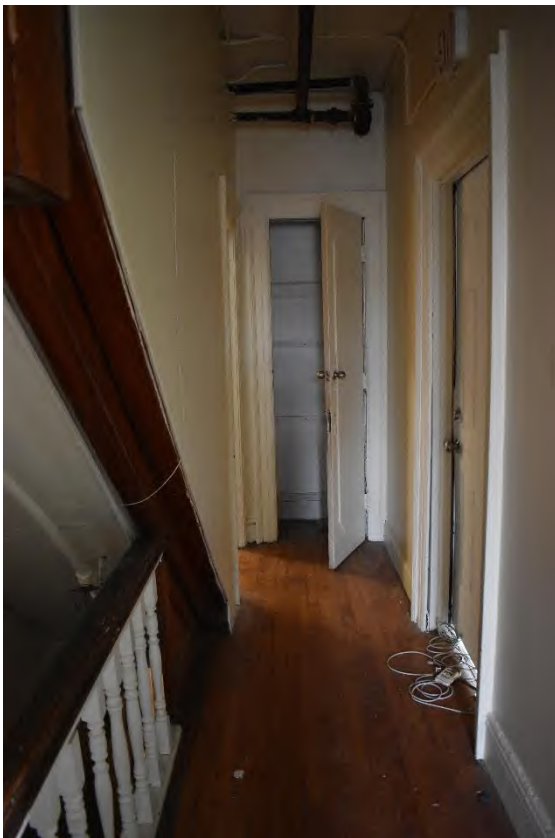
41. Detail of the ceiling in a third floor bedroom.



42. View of the stairs in the second hall to the third floor.



43. View of the second, second floor hall.



44. View of the bathroom on the second floor.



45. The bathrooms include drop ceilings that hide original ceiling details.



46. View of a bedroom space on the second floor of the addition (Room 207)



47. View of a 3rd floor bedroom (Room 304)



48. View of a bathroom. Note the vinyl wall coverings on the interior division.



49. View of 3rd story room (Room 303)

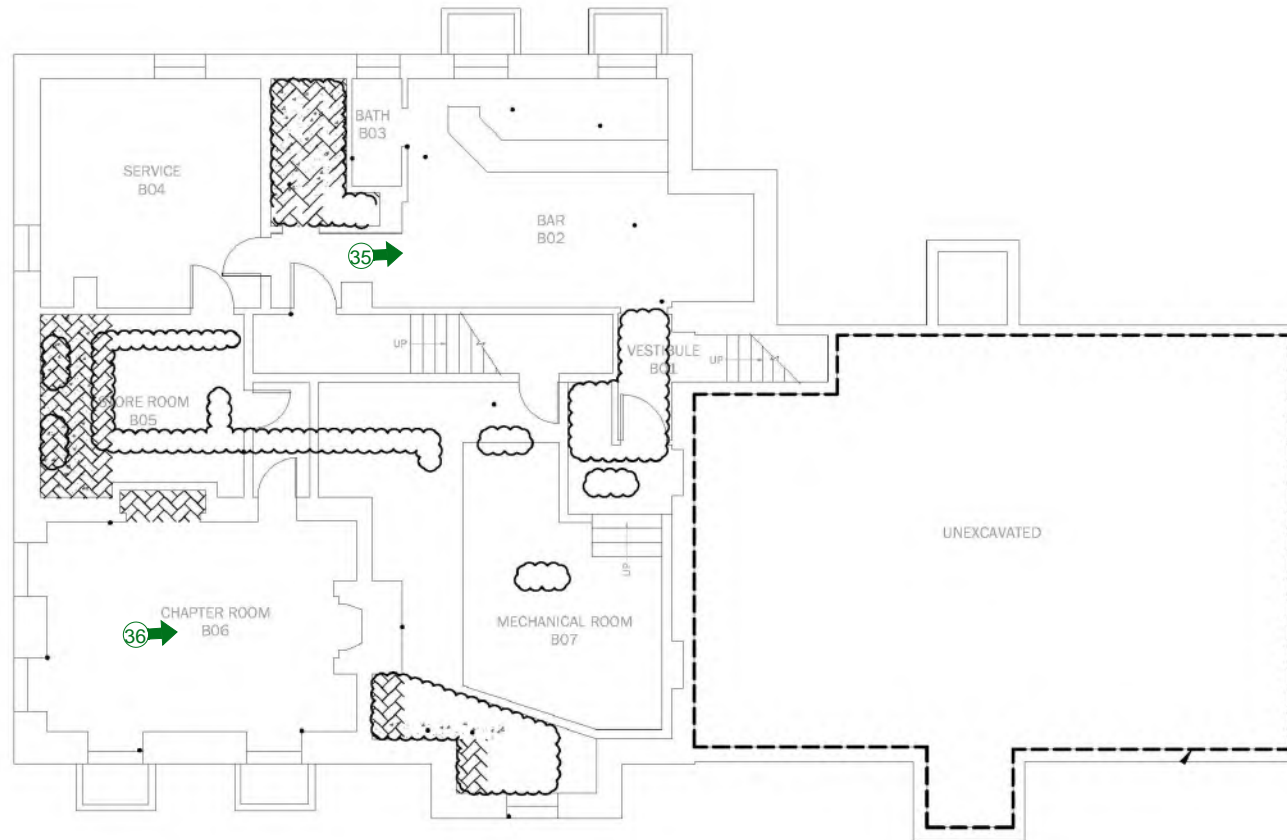


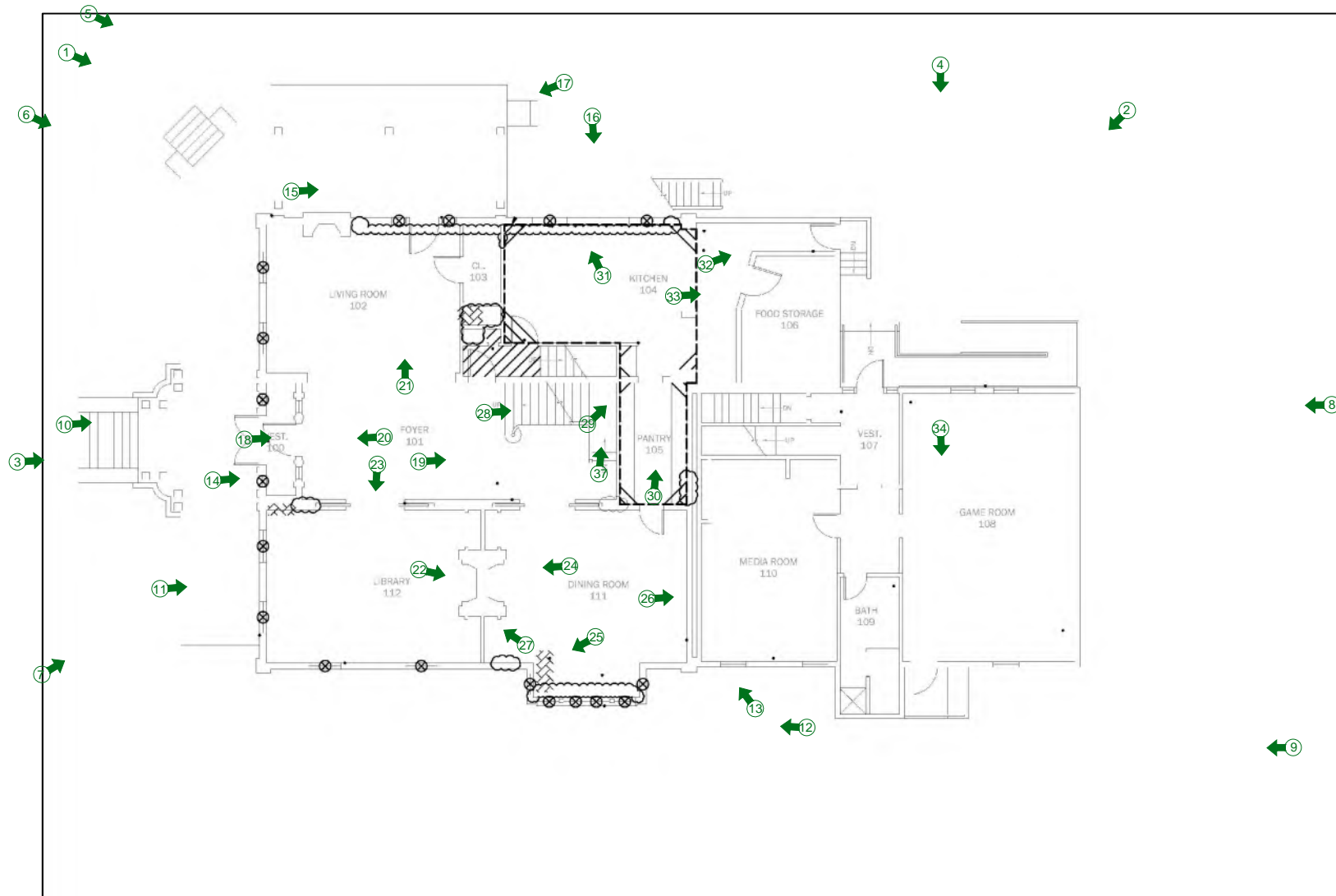
50. View of bathroom (Room 215)

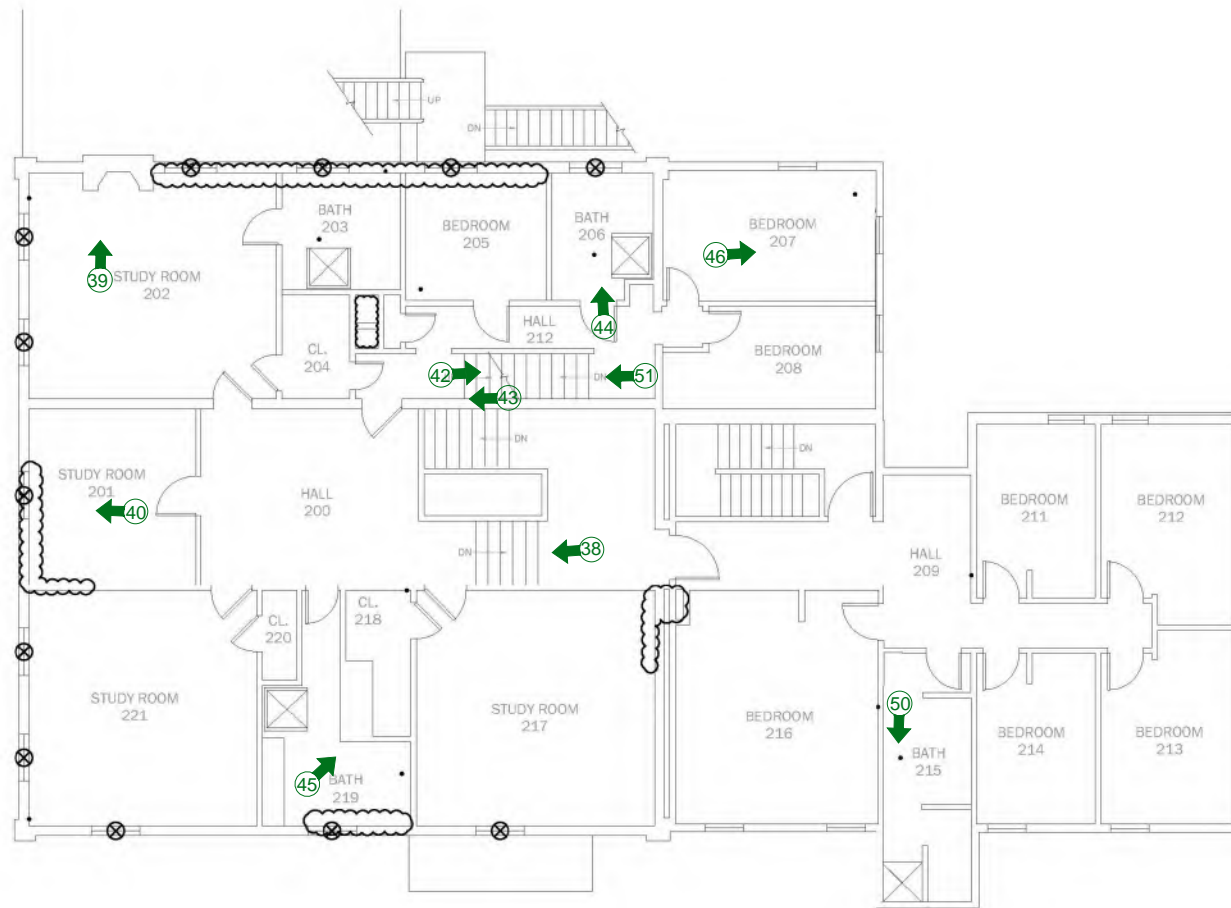


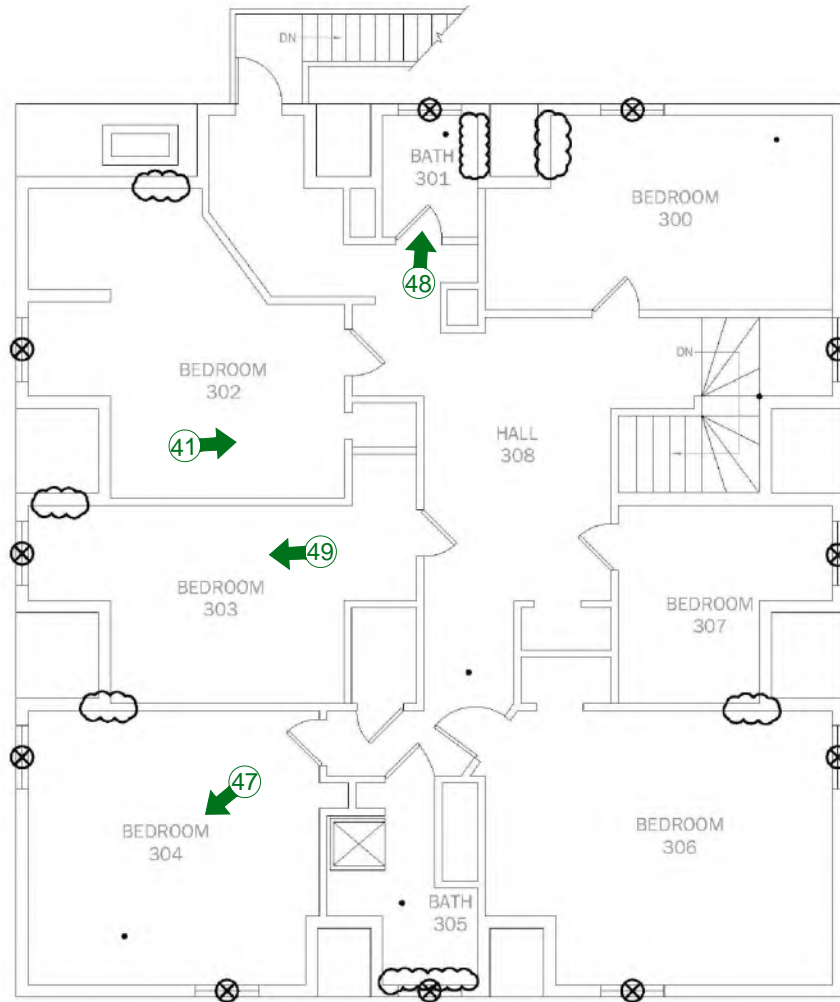
51. View of narrow staircase leading to kitchen on first floor.













Hudson Cultural Services

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914-456-3698/ hudsoncultural@gmail.com

May 14, 2024

Gregory D. Faucher
Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP
One Commerce Plaza
Albany, NY 12260
gfaucher@woh.com

Re: 727 Comstock Avenue
Historic Building Assessment

Dear Mr. Faucher,

As a follow up to the Historic Building Assessment report for 727 Comstock Avenue, dated April 2024 you have asked two (2) additional follow up questions. These questions are listed below, followed by our response.

• Did the study identify an architect or builder of the house?

No, HCS did not identify a builder or architect associated with 727 Comstock Avenue. Based on the scope of our research, and similar campus setting projects we believe that such information, if available, would have been in those records.

• Explain the history of the Zeta Psi Fraternity Chapter.

The Zeta Psi Fraternity Chapter started at Syracuse University in 1875. It relocated to 727 Comstock Avenue in 1924. It experienced periods of inactivity 1887-1905, 1973-1975, and 1993-1998. The Chapter was officially suspended at Syracuse University 2007.ⁱ

If you require any further information to facilitate your review, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Beth Selig

President, Hudson Cultural Services

ⁱ Zeta Psi (Syracuse University Chapter) Collection, University Archives, Special Collections Research Center Syracuse University Libraries

727 Comstock Avenue – Owners

The early 1900s saw steady development along Comstock Avenue. Advertisements appeared frequently in the newspaper offering “choice lots” on Comstock Avenue. In 1900 only two properties, 712 and 715 appear in the city directory. In 1902 724 Comstock had been added. 712 Comstock Avenue was the Phi Gamma Delta chapter house. Maurice Graves lived at 715 and 724 was the home of Prof. William H. Metzler. On 20 Feb 1905 an item in the Syracuse Herald announced that Prof. T.C. Hopkins would build a house in the 700 block of Comstock Avenue and on 29 Apr 1905 the Post-Standard announced a building permit had been issued to F. [sic] C. Hopkins for a home at 725 Comstock Avenue. The house was to be 29' x 41' and it would cost \$5,000. 727 Comstock Avenue does not appear in city directories until 1906 when Prof. Thomas C. Hopkins is listed as the occupant. The number of dwellings on the block continued to grow every year for the rest of the decade, until by 1910 there were 15 homes in the 700 block. James M. Gilbert owned 15 lots on Comstock Avenue between University Place and Euclid Avenue, which he was advertising for sale about 1906. He lived at 715 Comstock Avenue.

Thomas C. Hopkins

Thomas Cramer Hopkins was born 4 May [other sources say March] 1861 in Warriors Mark, Huntingdon County, PA. He was a son of Isaac Cramer Hopkins and Mary Ann Glenn. He was a student for two years at Dickinson Seminary in Williamsport, PA and then after teaching school for a year went on to earn his BS degree in 1887 and his master's degree in 1890, both from DePauw University. He then went on to earn a MA from Stanford University in 1892. He earned his PhD at the University of Chicago in 1900. Before coming to Syracuse, he worked for the Arkansas and Indiana Geological Surveys. During this time he authored a number of articles relating to his work. He returned to DePauw University in 1888 as an instructor in the chemistry department, where he stayed until 1889. His tenure there overlapped with a professorship in geology at Pennsylvania State College from about 1896 to 1898. In 1900 he took a position as head of the geology department and professor of geology at Syracuse University. He retained those positions until his retirement in 1931. He was also the author of a geology textbook which was used at the high school level and *Geology of the Syracuse Quadrangle*. Throughout his career he continued to write and publish articles in his field, as well being a frequent speaker.

He was twice married. His first wife was Edistina Farrow. She was born 12 May 1863 and was a daughter of Thornton Simpson Farrow and Susan Elinor Soward. They were married on 8 Jan 1890 in Greencastle, Putnam County, IN. They had no known children. Mrs. Hopkins died on 28 May 1907 at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, where she had gone for an operation. She was buried in Forest Hill Cemetery, Greencastle, Putnam County, IN.

On 31 Mar 1909 Thomas Hopkins married Elizabeth (Bess) Grace Hendrix, his first wife's niece. She was born 13 Jul 1878 in Indiana, a daughter of George Walter Hendrix and Sarah Jane Farrow. About the same time he sold his home to Charles S. Estabrook, as the 1910 census enumerated him, his wife and his mother living at 763 Comstock Avenue. Following that they continued to move around University

Hill, living at 819 Ackerman Avenue in 1920 and 114 Victoria Place in 1930. Professor and both Mrs. Hopkins were frequently mentioned in the newspaper for hosting and attending social and professional events.

Thomas Hopkins died 3 Apr 1935 at his home on Victoria Place and was buried in Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis, IN. The second Mrs. Hopkins died in January 1967 in Franklin County, Ohio and was buried beside her husband.

An aside:

Thomas Cramer Hopkins' brother Homer and his first wife, Ellen Cutter Hopkins, were the parents of film star Miriam Hopkins (1902-1972). When Miriam's parents' marriage broke up her mother brought her and her sister to Syracuse to live with or near Thomas and Elizabeth Hopkins. Apparently, Elizabeth Hopkins was not pleased and they soon relocated to New York.

Charles Scott Estabrook

Charles Scott Estabrook I was born 23 Jun 1879 in Binghamton, Broome County, NY. He was the oldest of the two sons of Dr. Charles Gouder Estabrook and Caroline Miranda Sears. He was educated in the public schools and graduated from Cornell University in 1900 with his law degree and was admitted to the New York bar within a year. Mr. Estabrook was a principal in the firm of Estabrook and Estabrook, attorneys, with his brother, William Sears Estabrook (later Estabrook, Burns, Hancock and White, then, Hancock, Estabrook, Ryan, Shove and Hurst).

On 6 Sep 1905 he married Laura J. Curry daughter of Henry M. and Harriet G. Curry of Pittsburgh at the Curry's summer home in the Magnolia Community in Massachusetts. Her father was in the steel industry and was associated with Andrew Carnegie.

The Estabrooks were parties in at least three real estate transactions on Comstock Avenue. On 9 Jul 1905 the Syracuse Herald (p. 7) announced that Charles Estabrook had purchased a lot from James M. Gilbert at No. 711 Comstock Avenue to have a home, designed by Gaggin & Gaggin, built for him and his new wife. In 1910 Mr. Estabrook was issued a building permit for another home on Comstock Avenue. It is presumed this permit was for the house designed by Ward Wellington Ward for Mr. Estabrook's mother and step-father, Theron and Caroline Sears Estabrook Barnum, at 819 Comstock Avenue. By the taking of the 1910 federal census, Charles S. Estabrook (30) and his wife, Laura (30), had moved up the block and had purchased 727 Comstock Avenue. They had been married for four years. By that time they had had three children, an infant who died at birth in 1906 and two of whom were living in 1910: Elizabeth, born 1907 and an unnamed son [Charles Scott, Jr. b. 1909] aged four months. They had three live-in servants, a cook, maid and a nurse for the children.

Like many women of her time and social class, Mrs. Estabrook was active in the social and charitable activities of the city. Her name appears frequently in the newspaper recounting her participation in or as hostess of teas, luncheons, receptions, dinners and other social activities. She was one of the founding members of the Rummage Shop, a charitable organization, the Girl Scouts, the Visiting Nurse Association and Community Chest. She was a member of the auxiliary of the University Hospital of the Good Shepherd for over 50 years and served on its board of directors for about 25 years. She and her husband

were members of the Onondaga Golf and Country Club. The family were members of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, where Mr. Estabrook had served as a vestryman and warden.

Mr. Estabrook was equally active in the community. He was elected to the Board of Counselors of the Syracuse Home Association in 1913 and served as the president of the board from 1929-1952. During his tenure the Home (212 North Townsend Street) was altered to be fire resistant and a sprinkler system was added. He was a member of the Board of Directors of Syracuse Trust Co. and the successor to that bank, the Marine Midland Trust Company and served as their attorney. His other board work included terms as member and vice-president of the board of the Post-Standard Company. He served as president of the board of the University Hospital of the Good Shepherd and on the Syracuse Foundation. His professional associations were as a member of the Onondaga County Bar Association, the New York Bar Association and the American Bar Association. For a time he served as a commissioner of deeds.

In 1920 the family still resided at 727 Comstock Ave. There were two more children by then, Henry (b. 1 Oct 1914) and Harriet (b. 1916). They retained three live-in servants, a cook, maid and a nursery maid.

In 1923 the Estabrooks sold their home on Comstock Avenue to Zeta Psi fraternity and relocated to their new home in Fayetteville designed by Ward Wellington Ward.

Zeta Psi Fraternity

Zeta Psi Fraternity was founded at New York University in 1847. The gamma chapter was founded by seven charter members at Syracuse University in 1875. It was originally located at 805 University Avenue. In intervening years it was located in other areas near campus and at 8 Crouse Avenue before moving to Comstock Avenue. An article in the Syracuse Journal on 25 Aug 1922 (p. 2) recorded that Zeta Psi Fraternity was considering the purchase of the Estabrook house at 727 Comstock Avenue as their new chapter house and expected the purchase deal to be closed within a week. The article described the house as "one of the finest in the hill section" and it could be "converted into a home for fraternity use without alteration." The grounds were described as spacious and that with the conversion of the Estabrook house there would be four fraternity houses in that section of Comstock Avenue. However, the negotiations took longer than anticipated as an article in the newspaper a year later, on 5 Sep 1923, reported that the Zeta Psi Fraternity had sold property and would be relocating to Comstock Avenue. Proceeds from the sale would be used to finance alterations to their new house, which they purchased for \$43,000. In October 1923 they held an open house at their new location for the other fraternities and sororities at the University.

Although the fraternity went through periods when it was inactive at the university (1887-1905, 1973-1975, 1993-1998), once it acquired 727 Comstock Avenue it maintained its ownership, leasing the property to other parties. Even though the fraternity was finally closed by the national chapter in Spring 2007, it continued to lease the property to other Greek organizations until it was purchased by Syracuse University in October 2022 for \$3.14 million dollars.

<http://www.wew.dailyorange.com/2022/10/syracuse-university-purchases-former-fiji-house/>