United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	601 South Fourth Street						N/A	**not for publication**	
city or town	Stoughton						N/A	**vicinity**	
state	Wisconsin	**code**	WI	**county**	Dane	**code**	025	**zip code**	53589

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _ nationally _ statewide X locally. (_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _ meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

___ entered in the National Register.
____ See continuation sheet.
___ determined eligible for the National Register.
____ See continuation sheet.
___ determined not eligible for the National Register.
____ See continuation sheet.
___ removed from the National Register.
___ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as as apply)

	private
X	public-local
	public-State
	public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

X	building(s)
	district
	structure
	site
	object

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

contributing	noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT / Public works

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN / Romanesque

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: concrete
Walls: brick
Roof: concrete tile
Other: N/A

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

_ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

_ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

_ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

_ B removed from its original location.

_ C a birthplace or grave.

_ D a cemetery.

_ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

_ F a commemorative property.

_ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1911-1970

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Power Engineering Company (architect)
Becker, George W. (builder)

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

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):
- _ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- _ previously listed in the National Register
- _ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- _ designated a National Historic landmark
- _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:
- X State Historic Preservation Office
- _ Other State Agency
- _ Federal Agency
- X Local government
- _ University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: **0.27 acre**

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16N	318981	4753624
2			
3			
4			

☐ See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Gail Klein				
organization	UWM-Cultural Resource Management			**date**	August 28, 2020
street & number	PO Box 413			**telephone**	414-229-3078
city or town	Milwaukee	**state**	WI	**zip code**	53201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

Property Owner

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

name/title	City of Stoughton				
organization				**date**	September 1, 2020
street & number	207 S. Forrest St.			**telephone**	608-873-6677
city or town	Stoughton	**state**	WI	**zip code**	53589

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Introduction

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 was constructed in 1911 in the City of Stoughton, Dane County, Wisconsin to serve as the flagship power plant in the city's system of three municipal hydroelectric power plants, and the only such plant located within the city limits. The building is a modest representative of the Romanesque Revival style as characterized by its masonry construction, repeated use of multiple-coursed round arches over window and door openings, and its large, round-arched parapet. The nominated property contains one contributing resource (the power plant building) and no noncontributing resources.

Setting

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 is located in the City of Stoughton, approximately 20 miles southeast of Madison, Wisconsin. The property sits on the northern bank of the Yahara River at S. Fourth Street on a large parcel approximately four blocks south of the city's downtown commercial center. The municipal parcel on which the power plant sits is bounded by the Yahara River to the south, a tree line beyond which is an open (formerly industrial) lot to the east, residential and municipal parcels to the north, and S. Fourth Street to the west. Until recently, the power plant shared its parcel with Stoughton's municipal garage complex; the garage complex, which occupied the northern end of the lot, was demolished in 2019 and this area is now a grass lawn. An asphalt-paved parking lot is located between this grass lawn and an overgrown gravel strip that runs along the north side of the power plant building. The overgrown gravel surface continues along the building's east side. The south face of the building abuts the northern bank of the Yahara River and its concrete foundation rises approximately 15 feet above the water level. A concrete sidewalk runs along the east side of S. Fourth Street and abuts the west face of the building.

A concrete dam (constructed in 1916 and partially reconstructed in 2009) is located on the opposite (west) side of S. Fourth Street, approximately 270 feet southwest of the power plant. At this location, the Yahara River is divided into two channels via an elongated, manmade island. The dam spans the southern channel, creating a millpond to its west. The northern channel serves as the mill race (originally, a headgate spanned the millrace just west of the S. Fourth Street bridge, but this has since been removed). The millrace is lined with concrete-covered stone walls. On the east side of S. Fourth Street, the north bank of the river where the power plant is located is heavily overgrown with foliage, partly obscuring the building's south elevation. The S. Fourth Street bridge located adjacent to Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 is a two-span concrete box culvert that was constructed in 1990 as a replacement for the previous bridge which had been constructed in 1925. Northwest across S. Fourth Street from the power plant, a converted tobacco warehouse located on the north bank of the river serves as the current Stoughton Utilities office.

Exterior Building Description

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 is a small, one-story, Romanesque Revival building. It is rectangular in plan with a concrete foundation, cream brick walls laid in a 6-course common bond, and a gable roof comprised of interlocking concrete tiles on a steel frame (Federal tile). A large round-arched parapet dominates the western face of the building, and a cylindrical metal ventilator projects from the roof peak just behind the parapet. The building sits on the north bank of the Yahara River so that its southern wall (facing the river) is fully exposed at the basement level. Primary character-defining features of the building's exterior include its symmetrical facades; its multiple coursed round arches of contrasting red brick over windows and doors; its large round-arched parapet on the west face of the building; its Federal tile roof; and its steel-framed, multi-pane industrial windows (several of which are currently protected behind wood panels) with red brick surrounds. The building's front elevation faces north.

North Elevation (Photos 1 and 2)

The north elevation of the building is symmetrical in plan and contains three evenly-spaced bays separated by unornamented brick pilasters that terminate at a corbelled brick cornice spanning the width of the façade. Additional brick pilasters are located at both outside corners. The center bay of the north elevation contains the building's primary entrance. The entrance consists of double-doors of diagonal board construction set within a wide, round-arched surround composed of red brick. The multiple-coursed round arch above the doors is accentuated by stone imposts and keystone. The open space above the door (within the round-arched crown) originally held a steel-framed multi-pane transom window; this space has been infilled with a composition board panel. The east and west bays (on either side of the center bay) each contain a large, round-arched window opening. Both window openings feature wide, red brick surrounds; stone sills with red brick corbelling below; and multiple-coursed round-arched crowns of red brick construction with stone imposts and keystones. The space below each arch (that originally contained multi-pane transom windows) has been infilled with buff-colored brick. The remaining rectangular openings contain the building's original steel-framed, 20-pane industrial windows.

East Elevation (Photo 2)

The east elevation contains no fenestration. The unbroken brick wall terminates at the gable roof where the roof tiles are nearly flush with the wall of the building with very little overhang. An unornamented brick pilaster spans the height of the wall at the center of the elevation. A distinct change in the patina of the bricks comprising the east elevation indicate the previous location of a lean-to style frame addition that projected from the rear elevation (this addition was constructed between 1912 and 1926 and had been removed by 1949).

West Elevation (Photo 3)

The building's west elevation faces S. Fourth Street and is symmetrical in plan with two evenly-sized bays separated by an unornamented brick pilaster that terminates at a corbelled brick cornice that spans the width of the façade. Additional brick pilasters are located at each front corner. Each bay contains a large, round-arched window opening. Both window openings feature wide, red brick surrounds; stone sills with red brick corbelling below; and multiple-coursed, round-arched crowns of red brick construction with stone imposts and keystones. The space below each arch (that originally contained multi-pane transom windows) has been infilled with buff-colored brick. Below this, the remaining rectangular window opening in the northern bay has been boarded over, but the original steel-framed 20-pane industrial window remains in place beneath the wood panel and is visible from the building's interior. The rectangular window opening in the southern bay has been partially infilled with red brick with the remaining opening boarded over; the remaining steel-framed 12-pane window is in place beneath this wood panel and is visible from the building's interior. Above the corbelled cornice, a large, round-arched parapet rises above the building's roofline. The parapet features an inset semi-circular panel with corbelled edges; within the center of this is a small oxeye window with a wide red brick surround accentuated by contrasting keystones at each quarter. The top edge of the parapet contains a semi-circular peak at its center and is further characterized by narrow stone coping.

South Elevation (Photos 3 and 4)
The south elevation is symmetrical in plan and contains three evenly spaced bays separated by unornamented brick pilasters that terminate at a corbelled brick cornice spanning the width of the façade. Additional brick pilasters are located at the outside corners. The outer two bays each contain a large, round-arched window opening. The window opening in the western bay features a wide, red brick surround; stone sill with red brick corbelling below; and a multiple-coursed round-arched crown of red brick construction with stone imposts and keystone. The space below the arch (that originally contained a multi-pane transom window) has been infilled with buff-colored brick while the remaining opening contains the original steel-framed, 20-pane industrial window. The window opening in the eastern bay features a wide, red brick surround; stone sill with red brick corbelling below; and a multiple-coursed round-arched crown of red brick construction with stone imposts and keystone. The space below the arch (that originally contained a multi-pane transom window) has been infilled with buff-colored brick while the remaining opening contains the original steel-framed, multi-pane industrial window that is interrupted at the lower corner of its eastern side by a doorway. The doorway is currently covered by a hinged metal grate. The center bay contains a large blind arch that mimics the size, shape, and decorative surround of the windows in the outer bays. The color, patina, and bond pattern of the brickwork inside the blind arch suggests that it was constructed as such (rather than built as a true window opening and later infilled with brick).

The exposed basement wall of the south elevation contains no fenestration or other detailing. Areas where the concrete has spalled reveal a fieldstone foundation, suggesting that at least a portion of this

wall is the reinforced base of the nineteenth century mill cellar upon which the power plant was constructed. Although not visible, the millrace continues to run underneath the building. A reinforced concrete wall projects from the southwest corner of the foundation and serves as the base of the 1990 S. Fourth Street bridge.

Interior Building Description
The interior of the building consists of large, open spaces at the first floor and at the basement level. Character-defining features of the building's interior include its open plan, its two poured concrete generator foundation rings, and its overall utilitarian aesthetic with concrete floors and painted brick walls at the first floor and concrete floors and painted concrete walls at the basement level.

First Floor (Photos 5 through 8)
The first floor contains one large open room that features a concrete floor, painted brick walls, and the remains of a partially collapsed drop ceiling. The space is divided by a frame partition wall that runs north-south to span approximately half the width of the building; the partition wall does not rise the full height of the interior space, but terminates at a steel I-beam that spans the width of the building and is anchored in the masonry at the center of the north and south walls. An additional steel I-beam is located at the same height and is flush along the west wall.

On the west side of the center partition wall, in the building's southwest corner, are two large, poured concrete rings that rise approximately 3 feet from the floor. These served as the foundations for the power plant's two generators (the generators were removed sometime after 1988). The generator foundation rings are slightly tapered inward from their bases and have narrow openings in their northern faces. Small openings in the floor at the center of each ring have been boarded over. Adjacent to the generator foundation rings, a larger opening in the concrete floor has also been boarded over; this opening provided access to the turbines that powered the generators.

On the east side of the center partition wall, a small, hinged metal door in the building's eastern wall opens to the original electrical panel; this opening is capped by a 2-course segmentally arched crown of brick construction. A small freestanding, wood-framed enclosure is located in the building's northeast corner. This enclosure features painted beadboard walls and a flat roof with a wood panel door in its western wall and a 2-pane fixed-sash window near the top of its southern wall. Inside the enclosure, a quarter-turn staircase of steel grate construction leads to the building's basement.

Basement
The power plant's basement consists of one open space that features concrete floors and painted concrete walls. Squared concrete piers at regular intervals support reinforced concrete beams that span the length of the ceiling. No electrical generating equipment remains.

Integrity
Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 retains six of the seven aspects of integrity including integrity of design, setting, location, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Integrity of association has been lost as the building is no longer associated with electrical production in the City of Stoughton, although it remains in municipal ownership and its prominent riverside location and industrial design elements (such as its masonry construction, steel-framed industrial windows, Federal tile roof, and utilitarian interior) clearly suggest its original function as a hydroelectric power plant. Although the building's integrity of design has been somewhat diminished due to the infill of transom window openings, the building's original form and massing, Romanesque Revival design features, concrete tile roof, and interior spatial organization remain intact and largely unaltered. The only other significant alterations that have occurred since the property ceased to function as a power plant are the removal of its turbines and generators sometime after 1988.

Summary
Located on the north bank of the Yahara River just south of Stoughton's downtown commercial center, Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 was constructed in 1911 in a Romanesque Revival style as characterized by its masonry construction, multiple coursed round arches over window and door openings, and round-arched parapet along the western façade. The building is in fair condition and retains a moderate degree of integrity. With its riverside location, open plan interior, and industrial design features (including its brick construction, steel-framed multi-pane windows, utilitarian interior, and concrete tile roof), the building is clearly recognizable as an early twentieth century hydroelectric power plant.

This nomination recognizes the depth of human presence here, the ancestral homeland of American Indians for millennia, including the Menominee and Ho-Chunk tribes. From as early as the 17th century, inter-tribal conflict, Euro-American exploration and settlement, and ensuing military campaigns all had the effect of repeated displacement of Indians of many tribal affiliations. This continuous tribal movement resulted in Wisconsin being home to many tribes who originated from other parts of the country, generating a pattern of immigration, relocation, and formation of a new homeland. Some of these tribes remain in Wisconsin; others may not, but numerous count Wisconsin as home: Brotherton, Dakota, Fox/Meskwaki, Ho-Chunk, Kickapoo, Mascoutens, Menominee, Miami, Munsee, Odawa, Ojibwa, Oneida, Potawatomi, Stockbridge, Sauk, and Wyandot tribes. We acknowledge that the property that is the subject of this nomination is located on land long occupied by American Indians, and since 1850 by the Ho-Chunk, Sauk, Meskwaki, and Sioux tribes.

Introduction

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 is a small, industrial building that was constructed in 1911 in a modest Romanesque Revival style as characterized by its brick construction, repeated use of multiple-coursed round arches over door and window openings, and large, round-arched parapet. The building is in fair condition and retains a moderate degree of integrity. As the earliest and most ornamental of the city's three small hydroelectric power plants and the only such plant located within the city limits, the building served as the most visible element of Stoughton's municipally-owned electrical utility system from 1911 through the mid-1970s, after which time the property passed into a period of private ownership. As Stoughton's first purpose-built power plant, Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 represents the progressive effort the City made to enhance its residents' quality of life and bolster community development by providing homes and businesses with consistent, reliable, and affordable electrical service. Because it is locally significant in the areas of *Government* and *Community Planning and Development*, the property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under *Criterion A*. The property's period of significance is 1911, the year of construction, to 1970, the fifty-year cut-off for eligibility.

City of Stoughton

Located in Dane County about halfway between the cities of Madison to the north and Janesville to the south, the present-day City of Stoughton was home to the Ho-Chunk, Sauk, Meskwaki, and Sioux tribes long before the first Euro-American settlement. The area was first surveyed in 1833 with a scattering of Euro-American settlers – primarily Scandinavian immigrants and transplants from New England states – arriving in the 1840s. One such New Englander was Vermont native Luke Stoughton who arrived in the region in 1847 and purchased an 800-acre site where the Catfish River (renamed the Yahara River in 1855) had a suitable drop for powering saw and grist mills and provided a route to the Mississippi River. The same year, Stoughton platted his village, built a dam and sawmill, and hired a

miller to build and operate a grist mill.[1] Agricultural development increased rapidly through the late 1840s and early 1850s in the surrounding country. With a sawmill providing lumber for the construction of homes and businesses and a grist mill bringing a steady stream of farmers, Stoughton's namesake village soon began to take shape.

Initially, the village's primary role was that of an agricultural support center; however, the village's growth beyond this was ensured in 1853 when Luke Stoughton offered the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad free land for both its right-of-way and its depot as a means of enticing the company to change its planned route through the nearby village of Dunkirk (which contained little more than a grist mill and blacksmith shop) in favor of a route through Stoughton.[2] Stoughton's population grew rapidly through the 1850s and 1860s due both to its location along the railroad (which later became the Chicago, Milwaukee, & St. Paul) as well as the establishment of the T.G. Mandt wagon factory. Later renamed Stoughton Wagon Company, the wagon works quickly became the village's largest industry, bringing waves of new residents to Stoughton. Many of these new arrivals were Norwegian immigrants who came directly to Stoughton after their arrival in the United States due to positive communications from Norwegians who had already settled in and around Stoughton. By 1868, Stoughton had grown sufficiently in size to be formally incorporated as a village. By 1870, Stoughton's population had reached 985 and within ten years, the village would be ranked as "the first in commercial importance in the county."[3]

A large part of the village's commercial success during this period was due to a change in the primary agricultural product of the surrounding townships. Following the failure of the region's wheat crops in the 1870s, farmers in the area began planting tobacco – a cash crop that was particularly well suited to the soil characteristics and climate of southeastern Dane County and north central Rock County. According to one account, more tobacco was grown in the Township of Dunkirk (within which the city of Stoughton is located) than in any other township in the country.[4] Stoughton soon became a regional center for the storing and sorting of tobacco with seventeen sizable warehouses constructed in the village in the last decades of the nineteenth century. With its prosperity and population continuing to rise, Stoughton was incorporated as a city in 1882. The city's booming tobacco industry provided additional work – both in tobacco fields as well as in the warehouses – for Norwegian immigrants who

[1] "Stoughton, Wisconsin – A Brief History," Wisconsin Historical Society, wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS2447 (accessed August 24, 2020).
[2] Ferd Homme, *Oak Opening: The Story of Stoughton* (Stoughton, WI: Stoughton Centennial History Committee, 1947 with 2005 update), 24.
[3] *History of Dane County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1880), 842.
[4] Homme, 53-54.

continued to arrive in high numbers through the 1890s, giving Stoughton the nickname "Little Norway."[5]

By 1900, the city's population had grown to 3,431. By 1920, this number had reached 5,101. The years after World War I, however, saw the end of Stoughton's wagon industry as the popularity and affordability of automobiles increased and the demand for wagons dwindled. At the same time, tobacco could no longer be cultivated at high yields as years of over farming the crop had greatly depleted the soil. The result led to diminished employment opportunities in Stoughton and a population decrease of more than eleven percent between 1920 and 1930. As the city struggled with the loss of its two largest industries, the advent of the Great Depression only brought continued adversity to the community. However, following World War II, the city was able to attract new industries – not the least of which were Stoughton Truck Body, Inc. (today's Stoughton Trailers) and U.S. Rubber (today's Uniroyal Engineered Products) – and, with them, a new period of growth.[6] By 1950, Stoughton's population had reached 4,833 and new residential subdivisions were established on the city's north and west sides. The city's population continued to rise through the second half of the twentieth century as local employment opportunities continued to grow and as the city became an increasingly popular residential choice for Madison commuters.

History of Stoughton's Electrical System

In the years following Thomas Edison's 1879 creation of a reliable and long-lasting electric light bulb, a number of American cities were quick to establish small electrical stations that would provide electricity – via direct current (DC) – to a few city blocks each. These early stations were powered by coal-fired steam engines. In September of 1882, the country's first hydroelectric power plant began operation on the Fox River in Appleton, Wisconsin. Produced as DC, the electricity generated by the Appleton hydroelectric plant was only able to transmit electricity for about ten blocks from the generator site. In 1883, Nikola Tesla developed the alternating current (AC) which allowed for the transmission of electricity over long distances. Perfected by George Westinghouse in the mid-1880s, AC systems were utilized by power plants in cities across the United States, including several in Wisconsin by 1890.

Electricity first came to Stoughton in 1891 when the Stoughton Electric Light & Power Company was organized and filed an application to supply electricity to the city.[7] Power poles were installed in the

[5] Homme, *Oak Opening*, 45.
"Stoughton, Wisconsin – A Brief History," Wisconsin Historical Society, wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS2447 (accessed August 24, 2020).
[6] Homme, *Oak Opening*, 72-76.
[7] Rolfe Hanson, *A History of Stoughton Government, Village and City: 1868-1983* (Stoughton, WI: Stoughton Historical Society, 1984), 11.

summer of 1891 along with ten street lights provided by Stoughton Electric Light & Power.[8] The company leased a preexisting dam in the Town of Dunkirk for $100 per month and purchased the adjacent flour mill (both of which are located about three miles south of Stoughton on the Yahara River) from brothers F.R. and Charles Lyon. The milling machinery was removed from the building and an electrical generator was installed.[9] However, as this first generator operated as DC, the electrical current was unable to reach Stoughton, and the system was converted to AC later in the year. The Stoughton Electric Light & Power Company continued to provide electric service to the City of Stoughton over the next ten years with varying degrees of reliability.

By 1903, many residents had become dissatisfied with the Stoughton Electric Light & Power Company's service, due to a combination of factors including "a lack of power, obsolete apparatus, [and] poor management."[10] The company's inability to provide uninterrupted electrical service had led Stoughton residents to advocate for a municipally owned and operated electrical utility as had proven successful in a number of other comparably-sized Wisconsin communities. In October of 1904, a special election was held regarding the city's option to purchase the Dunkirk power plant from the Stoughton Electric Light & Power Company which would effectively dissolve the corporation and institute a municipally owned electrical utility. Prior to the vote, editorials in Stoughton and Madison newspapers, promoted both sides of the issue with those in favor of municipal ownership citing that 815 communities throughout the country were then served by municipally-owned electric utilities, the benefit of which was proven by their profit to the city, reduced rates for customers, and overall efficiency of operation.[11] In the end, residents voted to purchase the Dunkirk power plant from the Stoughton Electric Light & Power Company at a cost of $12,500.[12] However, deliberations with the Power Company dragged on through the spring of 1905.[13] At the same time, the Dunkirk dam remained in the ownership of the Lyon brothers as the Power Company's lease on the dam was valid for another eleven years. In order to own the entirety of the Dunkirk operation – including both the power plant and the dam – the City of Stoughton agreed to pay the Lyons $11,000 for the purchase of the dam.[14]

With the City now in charge of its own electrical service, a three-member Electric Light Committee was established within the Common Council to manage the utility and hire an engineer to perform on-

[8] Rolfe Hanson, *A History of Stoughton Government, Village and City: 1868-1983* (Stoughton, WI: Stoughton Historical Society, 1984), 11.
Unnamed notice, *Stoughton Hub*, July 3, 1891.
[9] "Stoughton News Notes," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 31, 1904.
[10] "Outlines Growth of Stoughton Power Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 12, 1927.
[11] "City Ownership Growing in Favor," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 24, 1904.
[12] "Stoughton City Votes For Ownership," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 26, 1904.
[13] "More Talk on Lighting Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 10, 1905.
[14] "History of the Dunkirk Dam Lake District," Dunkirkdam.com/history (accessed September 15, 2020).

site operation and maintenance of the power plant and dam in Dunkirk (the first such engineer was Charles Lyons who had originally owned the property).[15] Under the City's ownership, the Dunkirk facility was rehabilitated in 1906 and 1907 to include two new water wheels with a combined capacity of 300 horsepower. The work allowed for increased electrical output with much improved results. However, by 1910, the Dunkirk plant was operating at maximum capacity and the city council began looking for another means of increasing the municipal electrical generation output.[16] The council quickly turned its attention to the Stoughton Mill Company and the old dam across the Yahara River at S. Fourth Street. As it was generally agreed that water power was cheaper than steam power and as the S. Fourth Street dam was not being fully utilized (reports noted "hundreds of horse power going to waste every day"), the City began negotiations with the Stoughton Mill Company to purchase the property to make way for a new power plant.[17] Located within the city limits, the new plant – which would later become known as Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 – was constructed in 1911 and made use of the nineteenth century timber dam that had been built to power saw and grist mills.

Four years later, a heavy storm washed out both the S. Fourth Street and Dunkirk dams, requiring complete rebuilding of both structures. Through the remainder of the decade – in particular the years during and after World War I, Stoughton residents and businesses came to view electrical service as an indispensable requirement of modern life, and the city's electrical consumption increased, pushing the output of both of the city's electrical plants to their limits. Despite the effort and expense required to maintain its own power plants and dams during this period, the City of Stoughton continued to operate its electrical utility at a time when the newly formed Wisconsin Power & Light Company was rapidly purchasing dozens of small electrical utilities throughout the southern and central Wisconsin. By 1916, about 370 Wisconsin communities had electrical service, but only 86 of these – including Stoughton – were served by municipally-owned electrical utilities.[18]

With Stoughton's electrical consumption increasing, by 1919, both the Stoughton and Dunkirk plants were operating at full capacity and failing to meet the city's full power needs. As A.L. Bogart, president of the Minneapolis-based Power Engineering Company (which had been contracted to design and install the equipment at both plants) recalled, "the only solution of the power problem, then, was by increasing the utilization factor of the river by building another plant."[19] To this end, a third power plant and dam were constructed along the Yahara River at the unincorporated community

[15] *City Assessor's Directory of Stoughton, Wisconsin: 1908* (Stoughton, WI: Arne Midgard, Printer, 1908).
[16] "Outlines Growth of Stoughton Power Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 12, 1927.
[17] "Confer over Lighting Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 28, 1904.
[18] Forrest McDonald, *Let There Be Light: The Electric Utility Industry in Wisconsin, 1881-1955* (Madison, WI: American History Research Center, 1957), 172-173.
[19] "Outlines Growth of Stoughton Power Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 12, 1927.

of Stebbinsville (just over five miles southeast of Stoughton) in 1920.[20] At about this time, Stoughton's three power plants became known as Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 (the S. Fourth Street plant), Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.2 (the Dunkirk plant), and Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.3 (the Stebbinsville plant).

By the mid-1920s, with three power plants providing electricity to the City of Stoughton, the average annual output of these facilities was 2,014,113 kilowatt hours which was distributed to homes, businesses, and industries throughout the city. At the same time, the city also purchased occasional supplemental power from the Wisconsin Power & Light Company when its electrical needs were greater than the output of its own facilities; however, at an annual average of 626,100 kilowatt hours, the amount purchased from Wisconsin Power & Light was far less than that produced by the city's own plants and the city was able to maintain electric rates that were far lower than those of any other city of its size in the state.[21]

In 1926, the Stoughton city council commissioned the Power Engineering Company to inspect the equipment at the old Dunkirk power plant. The inspectors found that "the wheels were practically useless as efficient prime movers [and] the power house, flumes, wheel chambers and harness had about reached the limit of their usefulness;" a new plant of an "ultra-modern type" was recommended.[22] Construction of the new Dunkirk plant was completed the following year at a cost of $60,000. Coming at a time when Stoughton had not yet recovered from the loss of its wagon works and tobacco industries, the city council justified the expense stating that its electric utility was "one municipal interest which could be turned into a money making system for the city" that would eventually cover all of its general fund expenses.[23] The output of the new plant was more than double that of the previous facility, eliminating the need for purchases of supplemental electricity from Wisconsin Power & Light. In addition, because the new Dunkirk plant was remote operated, the expense of a full-time attendant was eliminated at that location.[24] In 1928, the city began to sell electricity to farms in the surrounding townships where rural residents "were becoming more and more anxious for this modern convenience."[25] Through the 1920s, Stoughton's electrical utility operated at a profit with a healthy cash balance and ample reserve funds.[26] With an annual profit of more than $25,000, the city's "profound faith" in the earning power of its municipal electric utility during this period was entirely justified.[27]

[20] "Outlines Growth of Stoughton Power Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 12, 1927.
[21] "Outlines Growth of Stoughton Power Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 12, 1927.
[22] "Outlines Growth of Stoughton Power Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 12, 1927.
[23] Marjorie Mattson, "Project's Success Pleases Mayor and Alderman," *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 4, 1927.
[24] Marjorie Mattson, "Project's Success Pleases Mayor and Alderman," *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 4, 1927.
[25] Marjorie Mattson, "Project's Success Pleases Mayor and Alderman," *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 4, 1927.
[26] "Outlines Growth of Stoughton Power Plant," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 12, 1927.
[27] Marjorie Mattson, "Project's Success Pleases Mayor and Alderman," *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 4, 1927.

By the mid-1930s, however, the city's electrical usage had once again risen to surpass that produced by its three power plants and supplemental power was again purchased from the Wisconsin Power & Light Company. A referendum in 1934 explored the possibility of installing additional diesel powered generators in the S. Fourth Street plant. Although the referendum passed and plans to expand the facility were prepared, the proposal was later rejected as unsound and the diesel engines were never installed.[28] The city purchased increasing amounts of supplemental electricity from Wisconsin Power & Light through the 1940s, particularly in winter months when low water and ice in the river decreased the efficiency of its hydroelectric generators. In the postwar years, the role of Wisconsin Power & Light became even more important to Stoughton when the city's booming population caused its electrical needs to increase rapidly so that the majority of the city's electricity was supplied by Wisconsin Power & Light while its three municipal power plants were only able to serve as supplemental providers. However, as any amount of electricity produced by the municipal plants offset the expense of purchasing electricity from an outside company, all three plants were kept in operation.

By the early 1970s, all three plants and their associated dams were in need of maintenance and repair, but the city no longer saw the utility as a revenue generator and the value of repairing the facilities was questioned. Between 1973 and 1980, electrical engineer and hydroelectric enthusiast Peter Burno purchased each of Stoughton's municipal power plants from the city for one dollar each. After restoring the functionality of the dams and the generating equipment inside each power plant, Burno's plants (which, along with two others in Rock County, comprised Burno's Wisconsin Edison Company) were able to generate electricity which Burno sold to the City of Stoughton.[29] However, even with all three power plants in operation, the electricity produced by Wisconsin Edison only accounted for about five percent of Stoughton's total electrical usage with the remaining amount supplied by Wisconsin Power and Light.[30] Wisconsin Edison's output was further reduced in 1984 when the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) required Burno to open the Dunkirk dam after a dispute with the Committee for Preserving the Yahara regarding water levels between Stoughton and the Dunkirk dam. The Stebbinsville and Stoughton power plants continued to generate electricity until the Stebbinsville plant was taken out of operation in 1996 followed by the Stoughton plant in 1999.[31]

"Stoughton Light Plant Gives City Annual Profit of $25,000," *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 26, 1928.
[28] "Private Engineering Reports Favor Buying Stoughton Equipment," *Wisconsin State Journal*, August 6, 1934.
[29] "Power Drives Keeper of Dams," *Janesville Gazette*, December 6, 1986.
[30] Jerry Ambelang, "Yahara Water Level Splits Utility, Ecologists," *Madison Capital Times*, January 18, 1985.
[31] "Contention Continues About Stebbinsville Dam," *Janesville Gazette*, March 31, 2009.

In 2009, the dam that had been constructed in 1916 opposite Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 was rehabilitated after an inspection two years earlier indicated major structural deficiencies. As part of the rehabilitation, more than 400 square feet of failing concrete were replaced, all three gates were replaced, and the embankments on each side of the dam were filled and reshaped.[32]

Property History

On October 30, 1910, the city council voted to purchase the property and power plant of the former Stoughton Milling Company flour mill on S. Fourth Street for a cost of $18,700. The milling equipment was disposed of and the old mill was razed to prepare the site for the construction of the city's new municipal power plant.[33] The Minneapolis-based Power Engineering Company (which had installed the new power equipment at the Dunkirk plant) was contracted to design city's new power plant and install the necessary equipment. In September of 1911, the City awarded the contract for the construction of the building to local contractor George W. Becker for a bid of $4,325. Plans called for a building measuring 41 feet 8 inches by 55 feet 8 inches. At the time, the *Stoughton Courier Hub* reported that the building was the first municipal structure "to be of absolutely fire-proof construction" with only concrete, brick (from a brickworks in nearby Edgerton), steel, and tile as its building materials with "pressed red brick" for decorative trim around windows and doors.[34] A separate contract was supplied for the construction of the roof which was steel framed and clad in Federal Tile, a type of interlocking, reinforced concrete tile that served as a structural deck as well as a roof covering and was frequently used in industrial buildings.[35] The old mill cellar was repurposed and was spanned with reinforced concrete beams to support the floor above.[36]

By September 22, 1911, the first phase of the construction project – consisting of the installation of two 125-horse power S. Morgan Smith vertical shaft hydraulic turbines "with their governor and controlling machinery" – was nearly complete.[37] This work, as well as the installation of the electric exciter and 150kw generator, was completed by George W. Clark of the Power Engineering Company. As soon as the water wheel and generating equipment had been installed, a temporary frame shed was built over the installation to allow its immediate use.[38] Construction of the power house itself was completed before the end of the year.

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[32] Rick Hummell, "Historic Dam Gets a Makeover," *Stoughton Courier Hub*, 2009 clipping on file at Stoughton Public Library (Stoughton, WI).
[33] "Will Purchase Electric Light Plant," *Janesville Daily Gazette*, December 1, 1910.
[34] "George Becker to Build Power House," *Stoughton Courier Hub Weekly*, September 22, 1911.
[35] *Roof Standards* (Chicago: Federal Cement Tile Company, 1925).
[36] "George Becker to Build Power House," *Stoughton Courier Hub Weekly*, September 22, 1911.
[37] "George Becker to Build Power House," *Stoughton Courier Hub Weekly*, September 22, 1911.
[38] "Work on Stoughton Power Plant Progresses," *Wisconsin State Journal*, September 11, 1911.

The S. Fourth Street dam associated with Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 was built in 1916 as a replacement for a nineteenth-century dam that was washed out during a heavy storm the year before. The same storm also damaged the Dunkirk and Stebbinsville dams. At around the same time, a frame garage was constructed along the east elevation of the power plant (this was removed sometime after 1949).[39] In 1928, the machinery in Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 was replaced with new vertical shaft, propeller driven turbines and vertical shaft S. Morgan Smith generators. The new generators were rated at 48kw and 50kw. Despite a failed proposal to install diesel engines in the building in 1934, few alterations occurred over the following decades while the power plant continued producing electricity for the city.

The city continued to operate its Power Plant No.1 into the 1970s despite the growing disparity between the amount of electricity produced by the plant and the total amount consumed by the City. In phases between 1974 and 1980, the City of Stoughton sold the S. Fourth Street building and its generating equipment to electrical engineer Peter H. Burno for one dollar; during the same period, the City leased Burno the rights to operate the adjacent dam. Following approval by the city council, Burno rebuilt the two hydroelectric generators at Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 and began providing electricity produced at the site to the City.[40] By this time the round-arched transom windows over the window banks in the north, south, and west elevations had been infilled with brick, and the multi-pane transom window over the front door removed within the next ten years. In September 1989, Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 was designated a local landmark by the Stoughton Landmarks Commission. The power plant and dam continued to generate electricity until the summer of 1999 when ownership of the building reverted to the City and Burno's lease on the dam was terminated after nearly a decade of conflict regarding Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) and Wisconsin DNR requirements for repairs to and operation of the Stoughton dam. Since that time, the building has served as ancillary municipal storage space with few, if any, alterations occurring during this period.

Romanesque Revival Architecture

The Romanesque Revival style was introduced in the eastern United States in the mid-nineteenth century by architects James Renwick and Richard Upjohn, although it is believed that the style may have been introduced in Wisconsin and other areas of German settlement by German immigrant architects who had been influenced by the popular *Rundbogenstil* ("round arch style") of mid-nineteenth-century Germany. The Romanesque Revival style recalled the round-arched medieval building style that preceded the pointed-arch Gothic style in Europe. Popular in Wisconsin between about 1855 and 1885, the style is distinguished by its masonry construction (typically monochromatic

[39] Sanborn Map Company. City of Stoughton, WI: 1904, 1912, 1926, 1949. Golda Meier Library (UW-Milwaukee) Digital Collections. Accessed September 4, 2020.
[40] "Sale of Stoughton Dams Goes Before Plan Group," *Madison Capital Times*, September 23, 1974.

brick or stone) and repeated use of the rounded arch in windows, entrances, and corbel tables. Commonly, these round arches were comprised of multiple courses of brick or stone, accentuating the style's heavy, permanent aesthetic. Hipped roofs and towers with parapets or pyramidal roofs were a common element of many Romanesque Revival designs. Some examples of the style display asymmetrical massing (often where towers of differing heights and roof shapes are employed) while others display compact, symmetrical compositions.[41] With an aesthetic suggesting formality and permanence, the Romanesque Revival style was most often applied to churches and other ecclesiastical buildings, schools, and other public buildings.

In the 1880s, the style was reinterpreted by American architect Henry Hobson Richardson whose Romanesque designs featured especially bold arches, strong sculptural forms, Syrian (rather than Roman) arches, and polychromatic masonry. Richardson's interpretation of the style came to be known as Richardsonian Romanesque and, unlike true Romanesque Revival, was applied to both public buildings and large residential properties through the turn of the twentieth century. Many Romanesque buildings constructed in the last two decades of the nineteenth century are more accurately classified as Richardsonian Romanesque rather than true Romanesque Revival, although the latter style continued in use, particularly for school and church design, alongside its Richardsonian counterpart in the 1880s and 1890s.

As a modest example of Romanesque Revival architecture, Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1, displays the characteristic multiple-coursed round arches over window and door openings, masonry construction, and a compact, symmetrical design.

Comparative Analysis

No other properties associated with electrical power generation (hydroelectric or otherwise) remain in the City of Stoughton. One other property associated with the city's early municipally owned electrical system remains outside of the city limits. This is Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.3 in Stebbinsville (Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.2 in Dunkirk was demolished in 1996, although the dam remains in place).

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.3 is located in the unincorporated community of Stebbinsville in rural Rock County (just south of the Dane County border) approximately 6 miles downstream along the Yahara River from Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1. Built in 1920, this diminutive, astylistic power plant is of poured concrete construction with a flat concrete roof and no overt ornamentation. The front elevation faces west and contains a bank of two large, wood-framed window openings that have been boarded over, a smaller rectangular window opening that has been infilled

[41] Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, Vol. 2 (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), 9.

with concrete block, and a doorway covered in a steel grate with a two-pane rectangular transom above. Three rectangular window openings in the south (street facing) elevation have been infilled with concrete block. Overall, the building appears to be in poor condition and retains a low degree of integrity. The Stebbinsville facility stopped generating power in 1996 due to structural deficiencies in its associated dam (the dam was removed in the spring of 2010). As of August 2020, Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.3 remains in the ownership of Peter Burno's Wisconsin Edison Company.

In comparison with Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1, Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.3 is of a much more utilitarian design with no stylistic references. In addition, Power Plant No.3 retains a lower degree of integrity with most window openings infilled with concrete block, and the building appears to be in a deteriorated condition. Finally, Power Plant No.3 is located approximately 6 miles outside the City of Stoughton and no identifying features remain to visually associate the building with the City's municipally owned electrical utility. Because it is in better condition, retains a higher degree of integrity, and was constructed within the city limits in a distinctive architectural style (rather than as an astylistic utilitarian structure as in the Stebbinsville plant) at a prominent riverside location, Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 is the best preserved, most visible, and most identifiable resource associated with the City's municipally owned electrical system.

Archaeological Potential

The potential for historic period archaeological deposits associated with Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 exists but has not been evaluated. In addition, there are a number of known precontact archaeological sites within one mile of the property; however, the potential for precontact archaeological deposits within the property's historic boundary has not been evaluated.

Conclusion

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 was constructed in 1911 in a modest Romanesque Revival style as characterized by its brick construction, repeated use of multiple-coursed round arches over door and window openings, and large, round-arched parapet. The building is in fair condition and retains a moderate degree of integrity. It served as the flagship plant in Stoughton's municipally-owned, three-plant electrical utility system from 1911 until the mid-1970s when it passed into a period of private ownership. As the city's oldest, best-preserved, and most visible electrical power plant, Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 represents the City's long-standing effort to enhance its residents' quality of life by providing consistent, affordable, and reliable electrical service for more than sixty years.

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Verbal Boundary Description:
The historic boundary of Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 consists of an irregular polygon that encompasses the property's only contributing resource (the power plant building) and no noncontributing resources. Beginning at the southwestern corner of the power plant building, the boundary runs north along the eastern edge of the South Fourth Street sidewalk (which abuts the western face of the building) for approximately 70 feet. From there, the boundary runs east for approximately 110 feet along an imaginary line located 30 feet from the north wall of the building. At that point, the boundary runs south for approximately 110 feet along an imaginary line located 50 feet from the east wall of the building. From there, the boundary runs west for approximately 145 feet to follow the property's southern tax parcel line that parallels the northern bank of the Yahara River to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:
The historic boundary has been delineated to include the property's single contributing resource. The historically associated dam is not included in the historic boundary due to its diminished integrity (resulting from a partial reconstruction in 2009) and because inclusion of the dam is not considered essential for conveying the power plant's historical association with Stoughton's municipally-owned electrical utility. The boundary does not coincide with the property's existing legal tax parcel as this large parcel contains an expanse of unassociated land north of the power plant building (until recently this land was the site of Stoughton's municipal garage complex; neither the land nor the garage complex was historically associated with the operation of the power plant). The boundary is defined by the existing property lines to the west and south and by imaginary lines on the north and east that were delineated to provide the property with an appropriate setting and generally coincide with the historically associated land immediately surrounding the building (historically, railroad tracks located roughly where the northern historic boundary line has been drawn divided the power plant from the unassociated remainder of the lot to the north).

Name of Property:	Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1
City or Vicinity:	City of Stoughton
County:	Dane County
State:	WI
Name of Photographer:	Gail R. Klein
Date of Photographs:	August 27, 2020
Location of Original Digital Files:	Wisconsin Historical Society

Photo 1 of 8
North elevation, looking south

Photo 2 of 8
North and east elevations, looking southwest

Photo 3 of 8
West and south elevations, looking northeast

Photo 4 of 8
South elevation, looking north from island

Photo 5 of 8
Interior, looking south from doorway

Photo 6 of 8
Interior, looking southeast from doorway

Photo 7 of 8
Interior, looking southwest toward generator foundations

Photo 8 of 8
Interior, looking northwest toward doorway

Figure Index

Figure 1: Locations of three Stoughton power plants, September 2020.
Figure 2: Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing nominated property site before and after construction, 1904 and 1912.
Figure 3: Sketch map of Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 nominated area, September 2020.
Figure 4: Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 floor plan, September 2020.
Figure 5: USGS map with UTM coordinates showing location of nominated property.

Figure 1: Locations of three Stoughton municipal power plants, September 2020.

Figure 2: Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing nominated property site before and after construction, 1904 *(left)* and 1912 *(right)*.

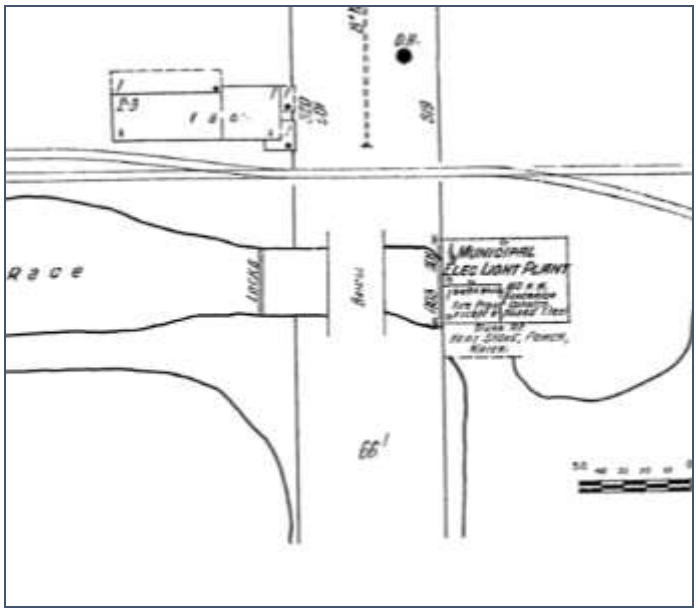


Figure 3: Sketch map of Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 nominated area, September 2020.

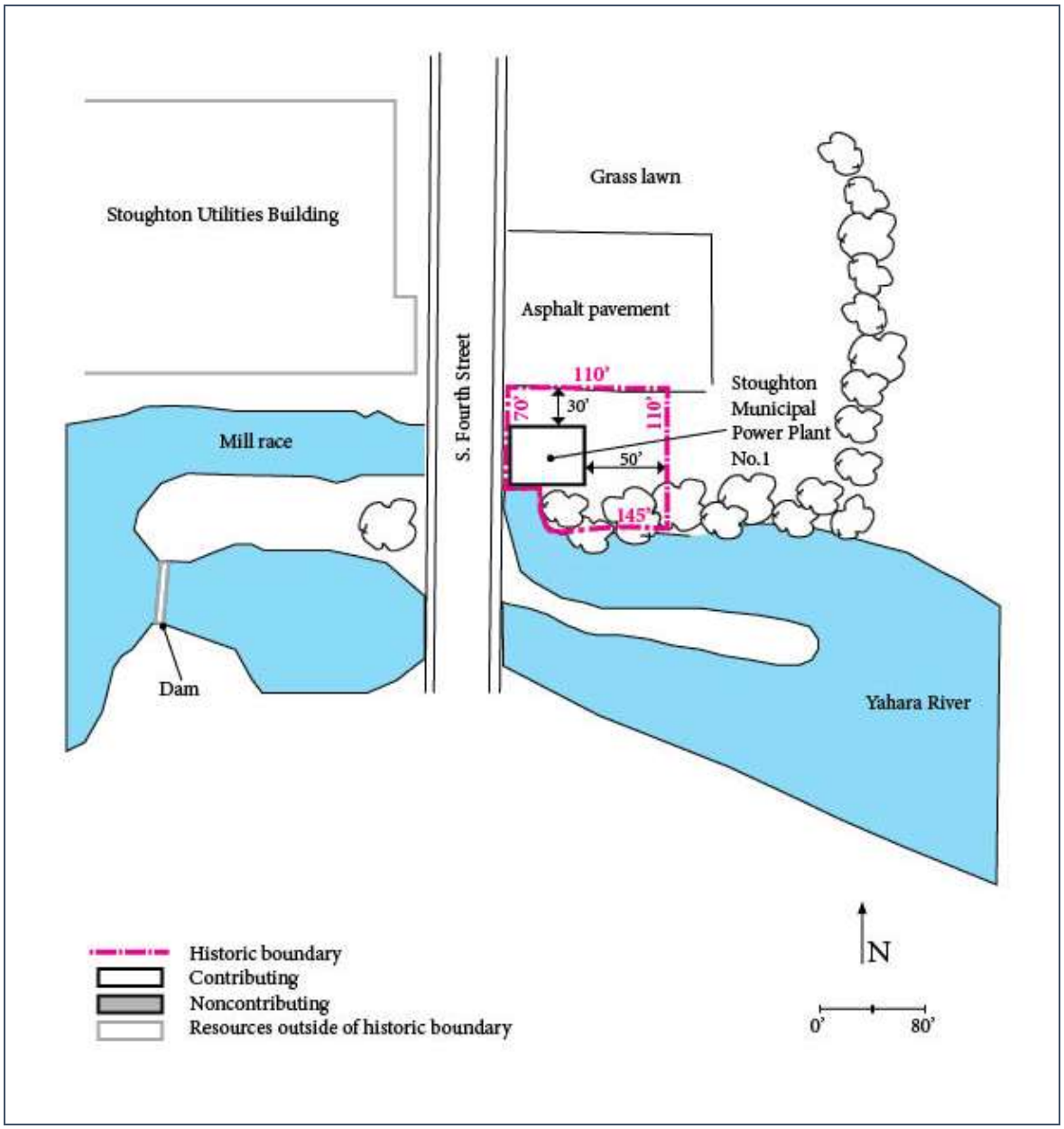


Figure 4: Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No.1 floor plan (main level), September 2020.

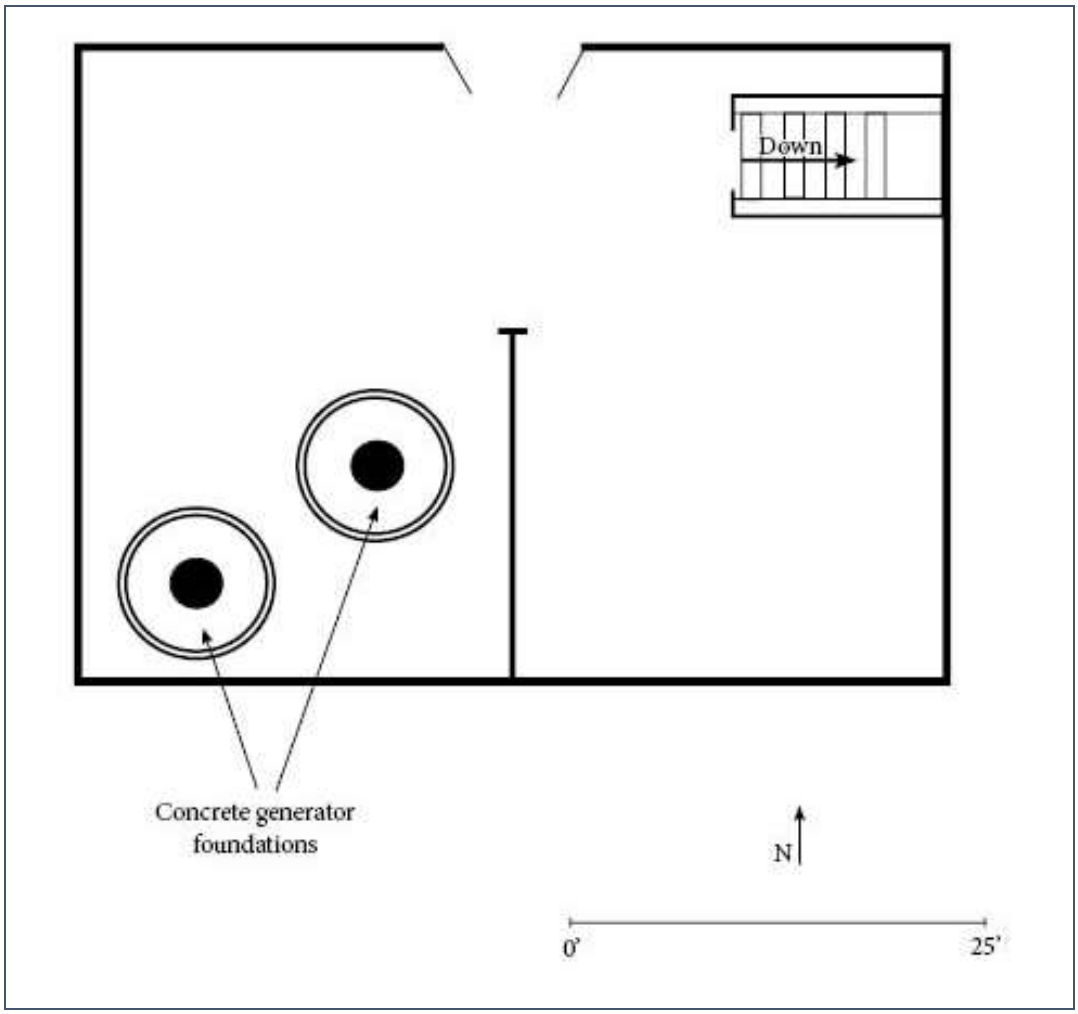
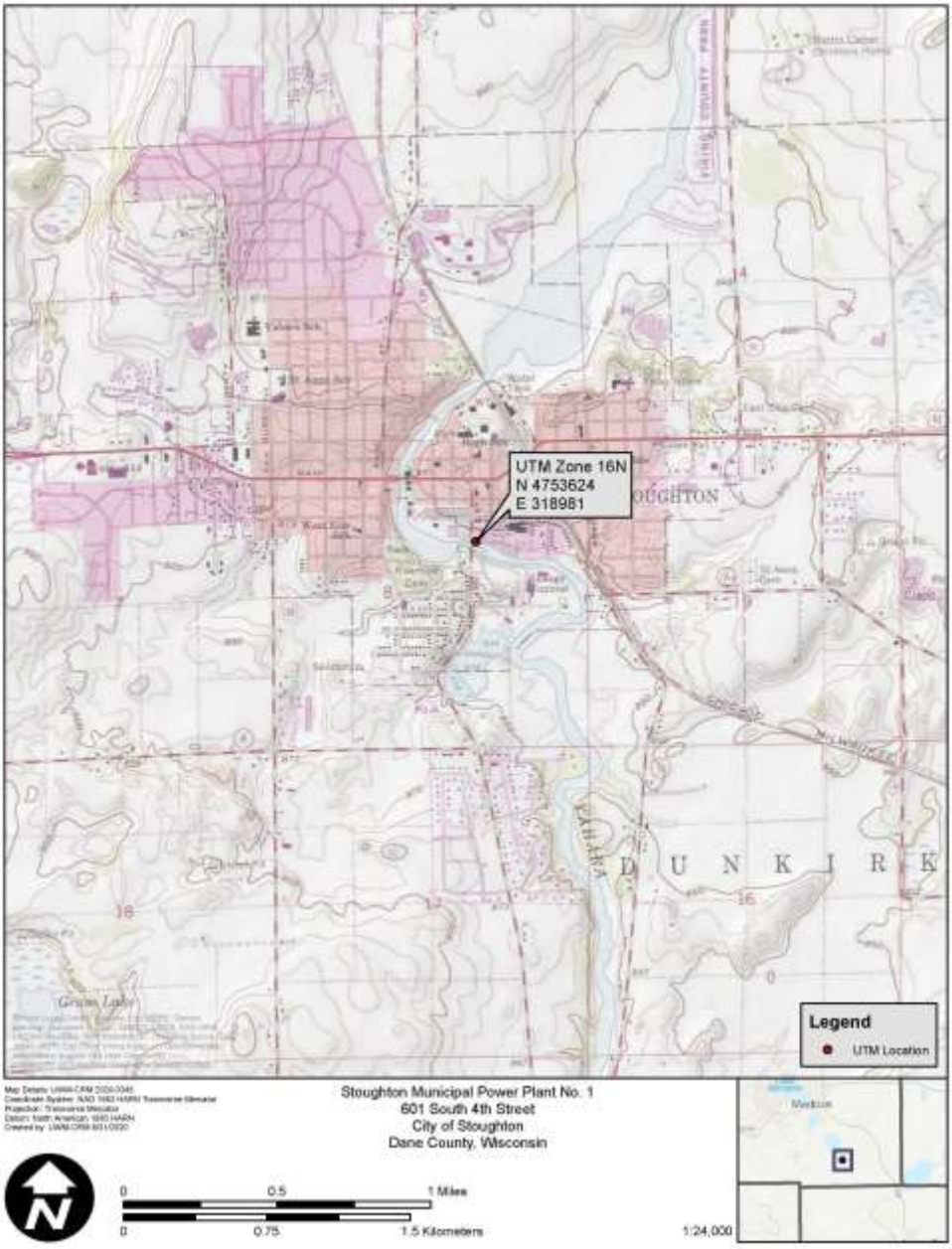


Figure 5: USGS map with UTM coordinates showing location of nominated property.



Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No. 1, Stoughton, Dane County, 1 of 8

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No. 1, Stoughton, Dane County, 2 of 8

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No. 1, Stoughton, Dane County, 3 of 8

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No. 1, Stoughton, Dane County, 4 of 8

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No. 1, Stoughton, Dane County, 5 of 8

Stoughton Municipal Power Plant No. 1, Stoughton, Dane County, 6 of 8