



Old Masonic Temple  
Name of Property

Solano County, CA  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
0		sites
0		structures
0		objects
1		<b>Total</b>

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

N/A

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

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

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

SOCIAL/ meeting hall  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

VACANT/NOT IN USE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

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

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/  
Classical Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: BRICK  
walls: TERRA COTTA  
BRICK  
roof: COMPOSITION  
other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

(See continuation sheet.)

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1918 – 1971

**Significant Dates**

1918, date constructed

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Hatch, John Davis

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The Old Masonic Temple was constructed in 1918 and was used by the organization as a meeting space until 1971, when a new facility was constructed.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Old Masonic Temple is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criteria A and C. The building is significant in local history in the context of social history for its association with the Freemasons fraternal organization and the role the Freemasons played in the social and cultural development of Vallejo. Fraternal societies were a common venue for social interaction around the country and in the city of Vallejo, which had a large number of such organizations for a city of its size. The building is also significant in local history in the context of architecture as an excellent example of the Classical Revival style. The building is one of the more prominent and outstanding examples of Classical Revival architecture in the city of Vallejo.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The fraternal and charitable organization of the Free and Associated Masons had its roots in the occupation of freemasonry in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Stone masons of the period formed Freemason societies, so called because stone masons were not tied as serfs by the feudal system of the time and thus known as "free" masons. In 17<sup>th</sup> century England and Scotland, the society opened its membership up to other professions, creating the Free and Accepted Masons.<sup>1</sup> The society was brought to the North American colonies during the same century. The Masons saw tremendous, and at times tumultuous, growth in the U.S. until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when membership surpassed two million people for the first time. Today, the organization has independent branches, known as Grand Lodges, all over the world, and membership numbers approximately six million.<sup>2</sup>

Naval Lodge No. 87, organized in July 1855, was the first organized lodge in Vallejo with a membership of sixteen people.<sup>3</sup> Much of the membership of the Naval Lodge came from workers, enlisted men, and officers at the Navy Yard at Mare Island, which was purchased by the United States Navy in 1854 for use as a navy shipyard.<sup>4</sup>

(See continuation sheet.)

**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

(See continuation sheet.)

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

- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: City of Vallejo Planning Division

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Lee Steiner, "Finding Aid: Free and Accepted Masons Records, 1900 – 1986," National Park Service, Keweenaw National Historic Park, 2.

<sup>2</sup> United Grand Lodge of England, "Frequently Asked Questions," <http://www.ugle.org.uk/what-is-masonry/frequently-asked-questions/> (accessed February 15, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> No Author, "100 Years of Masonry: A Brief History of Naval Lodge No. 87," from *Naval Lodge No. 87, F. & A.M. Centennial, 1855 – 1955*, 1955, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Jerry Bowen, "Mare Island Fostered Many Stories," *Historical Articles of Solano County* (October 5, 2003), <http://www.solanohistory.org/186> (accessed January 28, 2013).

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### 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre.  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1                                   
Zone Easting Northing

3                                   
Zone Easting Northing

2                                   
Zone Easting Northing

4                                   
Zone Easting Northing

#### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Assessor Parcel Number 0056-162-080, which corresponds to the attached map.

#### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the land area historically associated with the structure.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Elysha Paluszek, Architectural Historian II

organization GPA Consulting

date 2/28/13

street & number 231 California Street

telephone (310) 792 – 2690

city or town El Segundo

state CA

zip code 90245

e-mail elysha@gpaconsulting-us.com

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

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

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### Photographs:

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Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

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Name of Property: Old Masonic Temple  
City or Vicinity: Vallejo  
County: Solano County  
State: CA  
Name of Photographer: Elysha Paluszek (applies to all photographs)  
Date of Photographs: 1/25/11 (applies to all photographs)  
Location of Original Digital Files: 231 California Street, El Segundo, CA 90245 (applies to all photographs)  
Number of Photographs: 9

(See continuation sheet.)

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**Property Owner:**

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

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name Temple Art Loft Associates, LP  
street & number 9 Cushing, Suite 200 telephone (949) 923 – 7800  
city or town Irvine state CA zip code 92618

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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**National Park Service**

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**DESCRIPTION**

**Summary Paragraph**

The Old Masonic Temple dominates the northwest corner of Marin and Virginia Streets in historic downtown Vallejo. It is a four-story Classical Revival style building with a rectangular plan and a flat roof. The building is adjacent to Old City Hall on its north side and to the Empress Theater on its west side. As such, only its east and south elevations are fully exposed. The building is constructed of brick, which is clad with glazed terracotta on portions of the first floor of the south and east elevations. The Old Masonic Temple underwent a certified rehabilitation in 2012. It is in good condition and retains all seven aspects of integrity.

**Narrative Description**

Both the south and east façades of the Old Masonic Temple are symmetrical. Portions of the first floor are clad with glazed terracotta, while light-colored brick is exposed on the upper stories. The east façade faces onto Marin Street. It has seven bays and contains the main entrance to the building. The entrance spans the first and second stories and is located in the center bay. It is topped with a pediment decorated with three anthemium, or honeysuckle, ornaments and supported by fluted brackets decorated with acanthus leaves. The door frame is decorated with flowers, Masonic insignia, and egg-and-dart moldings, and houses a pair of multi-light doors topped with multi-light windows.

To the north and south of the main entrance, the east façade consists of non-original storefront bays. The three storefronts north of the main entrance were installed in 2012 to replace other non-original storefronts. They include anodized aluminum and glass doors, windows, and transoms and are separated by pilasters clad with light-colored brick. Each bay south of the main entrance consists of a large aluminum window with narrow sidelights and glazed terracotta tile.

The building's south façade faces onto Virginia Street and is divided into seven bays. The first floor was altered, presumably around 1930 – 1931, when a bank began occupying the space. It is clad with the same glazed terracotta tile that exists at the south end of the east façade. Five of the first floor bays have the same large windows with sidelights as the east façade, as well. The center bay features a pair of entry doors. The glazed wood doors are recessed and have sidelights and transoms. The bay at the façade's west end consists of a slab door topped with a transom. The door is accessed by a set of concrete stairs. East of the door is a small fixed window.

Tall, multi-part, arched windows are the dominant features on the upper stories of the east and south façades. They span the second and third stories. The lower portions of the windows, at the second story, feature a single-light window with sidelights. The upper portions of the windows, at the third story, feature multiple lights and multi-light sidelights. The spandrel between the second and third story windows is decorated with the Masonic symbol. The window above the main entrance on the east façade consists of only the third story, multi-light portion. Both façades have square pilasters that span the second and third stories between each window and at each corner. Above the pilasters is a simple entablature. The bays on the fourth story feature small, single-light windows grouped into threes. Above the windows is a decorative, overhanging cornice with corbels and dentils.

As part of the 2012 rehabilitation, the Old Masonic Temple was adapted into a mixed-use building with commercial uses on the first floor and apartment units on the upper floors. The first floor houses multiple commercial spaces, a corridor, restrooms, and a main lobby. The lobby is preceded by a vestibule. The vestibule is accessed via the multi-light wood doors in the center bay of the east façade. It has its original black and white marble floor. The central tile in the floor features the Masonic symbol. The vestibule walls are clad with light-colored brick and there is an elaborate ceiling molding along the perimeter. The vestibule was originally a partially

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open space without the multi-light entry doors. A different pair of doors originally led from the vestibule to the lobby, but these doors no longer exist. The original wood frame and sidelights, however, remain. When the original doors were removed is unknown.

The lobby is located west of the vestibule and up one step. It has a black and white linoleum floor, textured plaster walls and ceiling, and wood ceiling and wall moldings. These moldings continue onto the lobby's main feature, an L-shaped staircase leading to the upper floors. The staircase is carpeted. It has an original wood banister on its north side, which was restored as part of the 2012 rehabilitation, and a non-original handrail on the south side.

A non-original door in the lobby's north wall leads to a corridor that was introduced in 2012 to access the commercial spaces, restrooms, and new elevator, which is located to the west of the historic stair. All of these spaces had experienced numerous alterations prior to the 2012 project and had very little extant historic fabric, so new finishes were installed. Extant plaster and moldings, where present, were preserved and remain intact.

The second floor originally housed office space and retail mezzanines. The retail mezzanines, which were located on the northern half of the building, were reorganized into offices at an unknown time. Most of these offices had no windows or access to natural light and ventilation. Because the original function of the second floor was as mezzanines for the first floor spaces, they did not originally connect. They were accessed from individual stairs in their individual spaces. An unusual connection involving a winding corridor and interim steps was created between the historic stair and the office spaces to the south at an unknown time. As part of the 2012 rehabilitation, a new, continuous circulation was provided via a corridor that circles off the central stair. The offices were converted into apartment units and a large art studio. The apartment units are along the south and east perimeter walls; the art studio occupies the northwest portion of the floor which previously housed the windowless offices. An elevator, mechanical room, and laundry room were added to the building's core, west of the historic stair. A secondary stair in the floor's southwest corner was extended up to the third and fourth floors, to create a new means of continuous egress.

The third floor has very tall ceilings and originally consisted of three large meeting spaces, presumably used for Masonic gatherings, off of an L-shaped corridor. The corridor has plaster walls and ceiling with dark wood moldings. The stair is exposed at the bend of the L and open to the corridor. Flooring in the corridor and stair is carpet. Original doors in the corridor are large wood panel doors in wood frames. Several of the door frames originally had two large wood panel doors hung back to back – a common feature of Masonic temples. The extra doors were removed in the 2012 rehabilitation project to comply with current code. A few new doors were added to the corridor to access new apartment units. These doors are differentiated from the original doors in terms of size and design.

The main meeting hall is located on the north end of the building and remains intact. It features dark wood floors with carpet along the perimeter, dark wood wainscoting, wood pilasters, a wood frieze decorated with medallions, crown molding, and plaster walls and ceiling. The woodwork is accented with gold leaf paint. The ceiling has multiple panels framed with decorative wood trim. The panels originally formed a skylight which is no longer functional. The room's dominant feature is a raised stage against the west wall. It is flanked by two Doric columns and topped with a Doric entablature. The entablature features triglyphs, medallions, and the letter "G." Portions of the entablature, such as the crown molding, are painted with gold leaf. Dark wood paneling covers the wall space between the Doric columns. Across the room from the stage is a balcony. The balcony has a wood railing with turned wood balusters.

The other two meeting spaces on the third floor were used as dance rehearsal and performance spaces for some period of time after the Masons vacated the building. They were located along the east and south perimeters. As part of the 2012 rehabilitation, they were adapted into loft-style apartment units. The units were divided using existing partition wall locations wherever possible. All extant original materials in these spaces, such as plaster,



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wood paneling, flooring, and perimeter and window moldings were preserved and remain intact. In addition, several original wood panel pocket and sliding doors were preserved.

There is a mezzanine level between the third and fourth floors. This level housed the balcony that overlooks the main Masonic hall, as well as original changing rooms and a lounge off of the balcony. It also included another smaller balcony and changing suite overlooking the meeting hall at the south end of the building. While the larger balcony and its associated spaces remain intact, the smaller suite has been modified and incorporated into the loft portion of one of the apartment units.

The fourth floor of the Masonic Temple consists of a nearly L-shaped corridor and several apartment units. The north-south portion of the corridor is original. At the south end it jogs around the historic stair landing and transitions to the non-original east-west portion. This portion was moved north a few feet in 2012 to accommodate the apartment units. At the same time original attic space in the southwest corner was converted to living space. Original features and finishes were preserved wherever possible, and include plaster walls and ceilings, wood perimeter moldings, wood door and window moldings, and original wood panel doors.

The building retains integrity of design, materials, location, feeling, association, setting, and workmanship. The surrounding area remains populated by buildings constructed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Exterior alterations are limited to changes in the first floor storefronts. Those located on the southern half of the building occurred during the period of significance. Those on the northern half occurred in 2012 as part of the certified rehabilitation, and they comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. On the interior the most significant, intact spaces, such as the lobby, historic stair, third floor corridor, and main Masonic hall, have been preserved. Alterations have been limited to only what was necessary to adaptively reuse the building and comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Intact finishes and features were preserved wherever possible. The building remains fully able to convey its historical and architectural significance.

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

The Naval Lodge had two other headquarters before constructing the Masonic Temple at Marin and Virginia Streets. The first meetings were held in a room above a store owned by one of the original members, William Aspenall, at the northeast corner of Virginia and Santa Clara Streets. The Naval Lodge held meetings here from their founding in 1855 until 1866. The meeting room soon proved to be too small, and poor ventilation caused it to be dubbed "Aspenall's Sweatbox." In 1866, the Naval Lodge constructed larger facilities at the northwest corner of Marin and Virginia Streets, which were completed that same year.<sup>5</sup>

By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Naval Lodge had over 200 members.<sup>6</sup> The 1910s saw tremendous growth for Freemason organizations around the country and in Vallejo in particular. Although Vallejo grew slowly in the years before World War I, the Masonic Lodge doubled its membership between 1905 and 1912.<sup>7</sup> World War I brought an increase in population to the Vallejo area because of the presence of the Navy Yard. The population increase during and after World War I was reflected in the growth of the town's Masonic organizations, a trend that occurred around the country during this period. A number of factors contributed to this growth, including the return of soldiers from the war. Between 1915 and 1921, membership of Naval Lodge No. 87 increased from 404 members to 567 members.<sup>8</sup>

Continued growth of the Naval Lodge again made the acquisition of new facilities necessary. A committee was formed, and in 1917, the Masons sold their existing building to the Loyal Order of Moose. The building was moved to Virginia Street midblock between Marin and Sacramento Streets and no longer remains. The Naval Lodge went about constructing a new structure on the site at Marin and Virginia Streets, which was completed in January 1918 at a cost of approximately \$130,000. An undated article from the *Vallejo Evening Times* heralded the construction of the Masonic Temple as "a modern and model building" and "the first of Vallejo's modern structures to be erected at the [height] of the building boom here."<sup>9</sup>

The Old Masonic Temple at Marin and Virginia Streets is associated with Naval Lodge No. 87, one of the numerous fraternal organizations in Vallejo in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and reflects the unique abundance of these organizations in the community. For a city of its size, Vallejo had an unusually high number of fraternal organizations including the Naval Lodge, numerous Shrine Temple organizations, and the Ancient Egyptian Order of Sciots, all of which fit under the umbrella of Freemasonry. Other Masonic lodges in Vallejo included the Naval Chapter 35 Royal Arch Masons (organized in 1868), Solano Lodge No. 229 (organized in 1873), and Vallejo Pyramid No. 7 (part of the Ancient Egyptian Order of Sciots, organized c.1905, when the umbrella organization was formed in San Francisco). While usually only larger cities had multiple Masonic Temples and organizations, the *Vallejo Times-Herald* noted, Vallejo was "one of the strongest cities in the state for fraternal organizations" and had several Masonic structures.<sup>10</sup> They played a crucial role in the life of the community and included women's, African American, and Filipino chapters.

Naval Lodge functions played an important role in the social life of Vallejo from early on. They hosted banquets and receptions for visiting naval officers, and held "in absentia" funeral services for the country's presidents, including Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, and William McKinley. The organization participated in community

<sup>5</sup> No Author, "Vallejo's Masonic Temples: A Short History," no publication date, 26.

<sup>6</sup> No Author, "100 Years of Masonry," 10 and 12.

<sup>7</sup> No author, "100 Years of Masonry," 12 – 13.

<sup>8</sup> No author, "100 Years of Masonry," 13.

<sup>9</sup> No Author, "Masonic Temple – A Modern and Model Building," *Vallejo Evening Times*, no date. This article was obtained from the clipping file at the Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum, and no date was indicated on the clipping.

<sup>10</sup> No Author, "Masons In Vallejo 99 Years," *Vallejo Times Herald*, September 16, 1954, 96C.

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functions, such as the ceremonies to lay the cornerstone of the Vallejo Carnegie Library in 1903.<sup>11</sup> The Naval Lodge also acted as a community service organization. It played a key role in the founding and construction of the Vallejo Orphans' Home, which served the community from 1869 until 1919. The building at Marin and Virginia Streets was the center of Naval Lodge activity until 1971, when the most recent lodge hall, Springbrook Temple, was built in the eastern part of Vallejo. Today, the organization continues to be a part of the community, hosting events such as conferences, weddings, and birthday parties.

The Masonic Temple is an excellent representation of the lodge halls that once graced historic downtown Vallejo; few historic lodge buildings remain today. The only other notable example remaining is the Odd Fellows Temple one block south at the corner of Marin and Georgia Streets. The Odd Fellows Temple has Italianate style elements such as double-arched windows and narrow bracketed cornices at the roofline and between the first and second stories. The Masonic Temple is significant under Criterion A for representing the important role Masonic organizations played in the community life of Vallejo in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The Masonic Temple is also eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as an excellent example of the Classical Revival style. The building is significant in local history in the context of architecture. The building is one of the more prominent and outstanding examples of Classical Revival architecture in the city of Vallejo.

Classical Revival is an umbrella term used to describe a trend in architecture that began during the 1500s. During this period, Italian architect Andrea Palladio awakened an interest in the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. Palladio emphasized a strict interpretation of Classical architecture, in contrast to the looser interpretations of earlier architects.<sup>12</sup> Spread by his famous work *The Four Books of Architecture*, Palladio's ideas and designs influenced architecture in both Europe and North America in subsequent centuries. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the newly-formed United States drew upon classical ideals to construct grand government buildings as well as smaller private homes. Buildings constructed during this period are often referred to as Neoclassical or Palladian.

The resurgence of Classical Revival architecture during the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be traced to the École des Beaux Arts, the French school of fine arts located in Paris. Established after the French Revolution, the École des Beaux Arts taught its architectural doctrines from 1819 to 1968. The school's design principles were based on orderliness, symmetry, and the use of significant architectural styles. Their sources of inspiration ranged from Classical Greece and Rome, to the Renaissance (Italian, French, and Spanish), and even the Baroque.

The École was the most prestigious training ground for American architects between the Civil War and World War I. Richard Morris Hunt became the first American to attend the École in 1846. Thereafter, many Americans studied there and in turn trained other architects upon their return. The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago, with its magnificent collection of Beaux-Arts buildings, is widely credited with popularizing the style in the United States. Buildings constructed during this period are often referred to as Beaux Art or Classical Revival. The Classical Revival style was enthusiastically embraced in California for both design and professional reasons. The design principles of the École offered a legitimate alternative to the exuberant but chaotic English-derived architecture of the 1870s and 1880s. In absence of any schools of architecture in California, an École education became a standard for professional accreditation. Albert Pissis was the first Californian to be admitted to the École in 1872. John Galen Howard patterned the curriculum at the school of architecture at the University of California on the one he learned as a student at the École. Other California architects who studied at the École include Carleton Winslow, Julia Morgan, Bernard Maybeck, G. Albert Lansburgh, and Stiles O. Clements.

Character-defining features of the Classical Revival style include symmetrical primary façade; main entrance with pediment, entablature, or fanlight; the use of entablature, cornice, pilasters, and columns; and the use of motifs from Classical architecture, such as egg-and-dart molding or acanthus leaves. The Masonic Temple exhibits the

<sup>11</sup> No Author, "100 Years of Masonry," 12.

<sup>12</sup> Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in their Cultural and Technological Context* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), 42.

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distinctive characteristics of the style, including symmetrical façades, cornice, entablature, and Classical motifs around the entrance.

The Classical Revival style was widely used for various types of structures, including civic and bank buildings. The use of the Classical Revival style for the Masonic Temple fits within the widespread use of this style during the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. Other buildings in historic downtown Vallejo were constructed in the Classical Revival style; these include the second City Hall, built in 1927 and located across the street from the Masonic Temple, and bank and commercial structures on Georgia Street.

The Vallejo Masonic Temple can also be understood within the context of the Freemasons' use of architectural styles based upon historical precedents. Between 1870 and 1930, Masonic structures were built in many cities and towns across the country and became common features of the American landscape. Architecture was central in Masonic ideology; thus, the style for their buildings was extremely important. The defining characteristics of its ideology revolved around the identity of Freemasons as heirs to the craftsmen who had constructed Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. They were "speculative" masons whereas the craftsmen who had built the temple were "operative" masons. Freemasons saw themselves as building a membership and organization utilizing symbols and concepts related to architecture. To this end, they used specific elements and styles of architecture for their buildings.

Freemasons often used historical styles of architecture for their lodges, also called temples, because they viewed themselves as existing simultaneously within the past as well as the present. The most common styles used to this end were Classical or Gothic Revival. Classical architecture was also linked to Masonic symbolism. In Masonic legend, the three principal players in the story of the building of Solomon's Temple—King Solomon; Hiram, King of Tyre; and Hiram Abiff, the architect of the Temple—were each symbolized and associated with a classical column, further tying Masonic imagery and ideology to Classical architecture.

The lodge room of a Masonic Temple was one of the most important aspects of the building. Intended to symbolize Solomon's Temple, the lodge room contained a raised platform surrounded by columns and had a prescribed configuration of seating and decoration. The lodge room in the Old Masonic Temple fits within these specified limits and reflects its function as a representation of Solomon's Temple. These aspects can be seen in the Vallejo temple's lodge room with its raised platform flanked by Doric columns and entablature and the pilasters that decorate the walls of the room.

The use of space in the Old Masonic Temple follows the same types of design patterns as Masonic structures around the country. As in the case of the Old Masonic Temple in Vallejo, many Masonic temples were built with commercial spaces on their first floors to assist in the upkeep of the structure without having to impose additional fees on their members. The lodge room was supposed to be above street level, longer than it was wide, and constructed with a high ceiling. A balcony could be constructed to increase seating capacity for the members.

The Old Masonic Temple is significant as one of the prominent buildings in historic downtown Vallejo. It is one of the more elaborate examples of Classical Revival architecture in the historic downtown area. It is an excellent example of both Classical Revival architecture and the use of Classical architecture within the Masonic tradition.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Old Masonic Temple

Name of Property  
Solano County, CA

County and State  
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Old Masonic Temple

Name of Property  
Solano County, CA

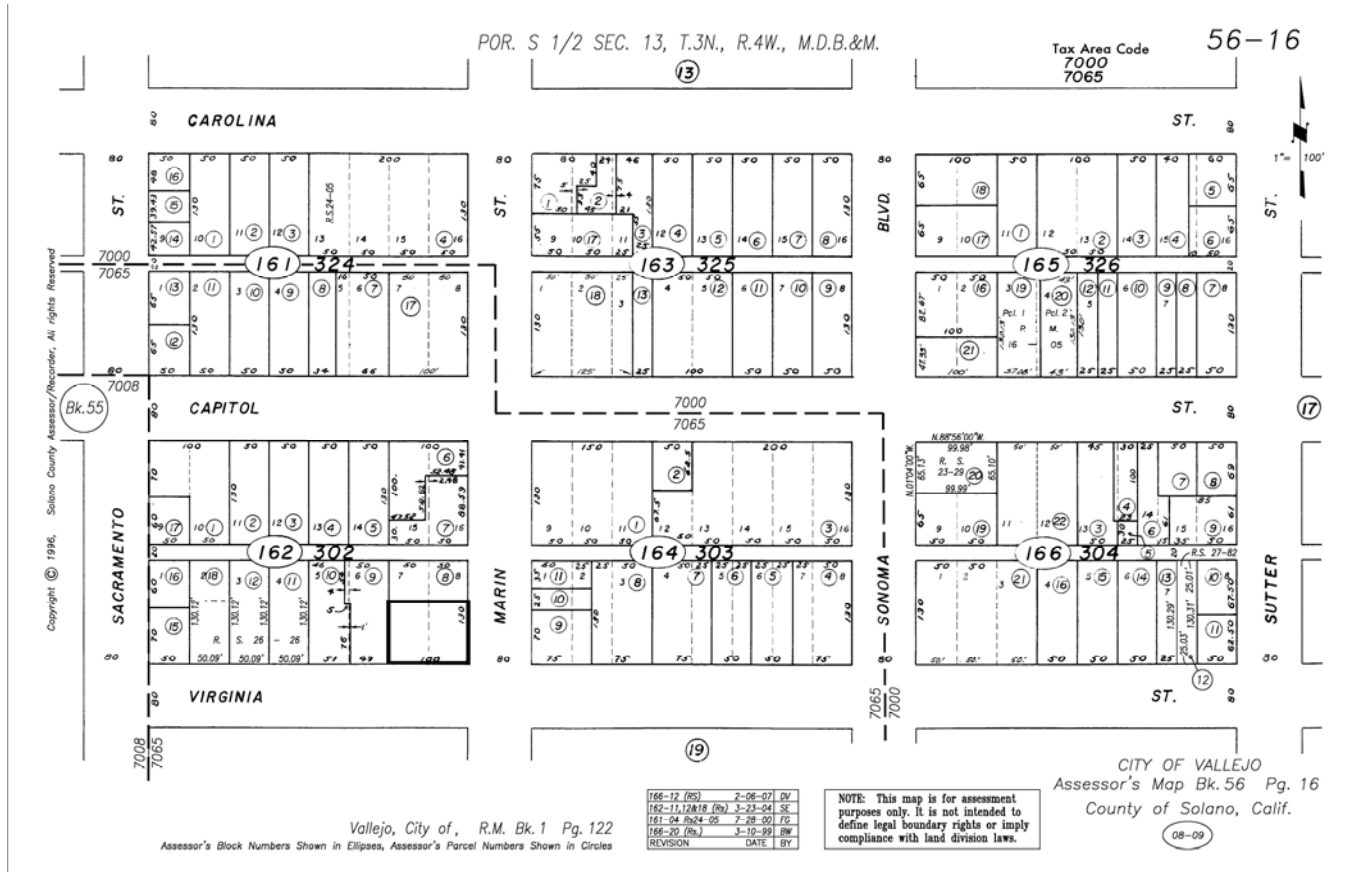
County and State  
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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## SKETCH MAP



Property boundary outlined in bold.  
Source: Solano County Tax Assessor

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

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Old Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Solano County, CA

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

Name of Property:	Old Masonic Temple
City or Vicinity:	Vallejo
County:	Solano County
State:	CA
Name of Photographer:	Elysha Paluszek (applies to all photographs)
Date of Photographs:	1/25/2011 (applies to all photographs)
Location of Original Digital Files:	231 California Street, El Segundo, CA 90245 (applies to all photographs)
Number of Photographs:	9

**Photo #1**

East elevation (right) and south elevation (left), camera facing northwest.

**Photo #2**

East elevation, camera facing west.

**Photo #3**

East elevation door detail, camera facing west.

**Photo #4**

East elevation fourth floor detail with cornice, camera facing west.

**Photo #5**

South elevation window detail, camera facing north.

**Photo #6**

Interior lobby staircase detail, camera facing west.

**Photo #7**

First floor vestibule, camera facing east.

**Photo #8**

Third floor meeting space, camera facing south.

**Photo #9**

Third floor balcony, camera facing east.