



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 256-0004-0078

1. General Property Information

Property name: Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (GUOOF) Lodge Hall #2121

Property address: 700 South Main Street

City or Town: Madison

Zip code: 22727

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Madison County

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building Site Structure Object

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 1/2 acre

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban Suburban Town Village Hamlet Rural

Briefly describe the property’s overall location and setting, including any notable landscape features:

The Grand United Order of Odd Fellows Lodge Hall #2121 is located at 700 South Main Street, standing as the last building on the right at the southern end of the Main Street Historic District in the Town of Madison. This tall, two-story, white frame structure features dark blue trim, a red tin roof, and a single brick chimney. Its symmetrical front façade is distinguished by a prominent ornamental arch and a bracketed cornice, architectural elements that contribute to its historic character and visibility within the district. A continuous line of mature shrubbery defines the southern property boundary and extends toward the rear of the lot, marking the edge of the parcel. Historically, the southern end of Main Street served as the center of commerce and residential life for Madison’s African American community. The location of Lodge Hall #2121 within this area underscores its role as a significant social, cultural, and fraternal institution for African American residents during the era of segregation.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Vernacular style

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Unknown

If the builder is known, please list here: The membership of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows. We have not found any builder information otherwise.

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1917-18

Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):

Briefly describe the property's general characteristics, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions or other major alterations.

The Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (GUOOF) Lodge Hall #2121 stood as a cornerstone of African American civic life in Madison County. The GUOOF provided African American residents with essential social infrastructure during an era of segregation, offering burial insurance, moral instruction, mutual aid, and a protected space for fellowship and community organizing. The lodge members gathered for meetings, ceremonies, and public events that strengthened solidarity, nurtured leadership, and reinforced resilience in the face of exclusion.

Today, GUOOF Lodge Hall #2121 continues its legacy of service as the museum and headquarters of the Madison County African American Historical Association (MCAAHA). The building houses numerous artifacts uncovered during its acquisition, many of which illuminate the long and rich history of African American fraternal life in the county. Due to deterioration caused by extreme climate conditions, MCAAHA partnered with the University of Virginia to preserve the lodge's original meeting minutes, which date back to the first recorded gathering in 1880. Among the most remarkable discoveries is the lodge's original 1880 charter from England – now professionally conserved and displayed in an archival fame.

Architecturally, the lodge is of the vernacular civic style. The top front of the building is a symmetrical facade which includes a prominent ornamental arch and a bracketed cornice. It is a tall, narrow, two-story white frame structure located on the south end of Main Street in the historic district of the Town of Madison. The building features fifteen (six over six) wooden windows, a right-side entrance, and a double front door with two glass panes. Despite its age, the interior retains a high degree of integrity, including original wooden ceilings, wooden floors, a solid wooden door with a peephole, and the staircase – all of which require restoration but remain structurally sound. The building is remarkably close to its original form. The first-floor Dutch door beneath the staircase, once used for selling refreshments, survives intact. A small bathroom was added to this area with county approval and architectural guidance from Manor Ball. The only significant alteration occurred in the 1950s, when two interior walls were added upstairs during a brief period when the building served as a single-family residence.

The exterior shows areas of needed repair, including deteriorated boards, insufficient insulation, and a chimney requiring repointing. The structure rests on a six-pillared stone foundation with mesh and concrete infill added between the pillars to protect against animals and cold weather. Around 2010, new wooden windows and doors were installed with approval from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and the front walkway and concrete entrance were restored. A small rear porch – part of the original design – has also been reconstructed, providing access to the historic upstairs entrance. The rear elevation is a solid clapboard with no windows or doors. GUOOF Lodge Hall #2121 is a rare surviving example of an African American fraternal lodge in rural Virginia. Its architectural integrity, documented history, and continued community use make it an invaluable cultural resource. Its preservation ensures that the stories, leadership, and resilience of Madison County’s African American community remain visible and honored for generations to come.

In a bullet list, include any outbuildings or secondary resources or major landscape features (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

- N/A
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4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

Briefly explain the property's historic importance, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property.

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

The Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (GUOOF) Friendship Lodge No. 2121 is significant for its association with African American civic life and community leadership in Madison County from the Reconstruction era through the mid-twentieth century. Chartered from England on March 8, 1880, the lodge was founded by formerly enslaved African American men who organized in response to racial exclusion by creating systems of mutual aid, leadership development, and social support.

Friendship Lodge No. 2121 served as a central institution in African American life, providing burial insurance, moral instruction, and the county's first life insurance program available to African American residents. The lodge hall functioned as a vital gathering place for meetings, rituals, parades, and community events that fostered solidarity and self-determination during segregation.

The lodge is also significant for its association with prominent African American community leaders, including its charter members-William N. Gordon, M. F. Weaver, Minor Jackson, James Gordon, Henry V. Porter, William M. Reaves, Abram Johnson, Buck Walker, Alfred Weaver, Benjamin Gray, and Benjamin James – whose descendants remain in Madison County today. The property at 700 South Main Street, acquired in 1917 and likely constructed shortly thereafter, reflects the lodge's stability and enduring role in the African American community in Madison.

Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

- Deed of Sallie Mallory to GUOOF
- Minutes and Records of GUOOF starting in 1880
- Member registration books

5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public\Local Public\State Public\Federal

Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Nancy Garnett Williams

organization:

street & number: 871 John Tucker Rd

city or town: Madison state: VA zip code: 22727

e-mail: nancygarnett9@gmail.com telephone: 540-717-5813

Legal Owner's Signature:

Date: 4/3/26

•• Signature required for processing all applications for privately-owned properties. ••

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person:

Daytime Telephone:

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title:

organization:

street & number:

city or town: state: zip code:


e-mail: telephone:

Date:

PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!

PIF BOUNDARY MAP

Grand United Order of Odd Fellows
Lodge Hall #2121
Town of Madison, Madison County, VA
DHR ID# 256-0004-0078

 Proposed Boundary

0 150
 Feet







MCAAHA
Mental Health Community Action Agency
1000 W. 10th St. Ste. 100
Tulsa, OK 74106-1000
Phone: 918.492.4200

700

Hello



McAALA
McAALA
McAALA

700























Odd Fellow meetings were held upstairs. This peephole was used to identify members after a special password was given to proceed upstairs.

The downstairs area was used for fundraising and activities.



Odd Fellow meetings were held upstairs. This
photograph was used in literature elsewhere after a
special permission was granted to present it again.
This arrangement was made for the building
and available.







