

NOMINATION OF PUBLIC INTERIOR PORTION OF BUILDING OR STRUCTURE

PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with a Board of Revision of Taxes address)

Street address: 1801 Vine Street

Postal code: 19103

Councilmanic District: 5th

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Municipal Courthouse

Current Name: Family Court Building

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building Interior

☐ Structure Interior

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☒ excellent ☐ good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☒ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use: Court Building

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach an interior plan with the boundary marked and written description of the boundary.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a description of the historic resource.

7. INVENTORY OF FEATURES AND FIXTURES

Please attach an inventory of all features including fixtures with their locations within the public interior portion indicated on architectural plans and/or annotated photographs.

8. INVENTORY OF FEATURES AND FIXTURES

Please attach annotated photographs describing all aspects of the physical appearance of the public interior portion, with a key showing the locations from which each photograph was taken.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1938 to 1941

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1938-1941; renovated 2005

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: John T. Windrim; William Richard Morton Keast

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: John McShain

Original owner: Board of County Commissioners/City of Philadelphia

Other significant persons: _____

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- ☒ (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- ☐ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- ☐ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- ☒ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- ☐ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- ☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- ☐ (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- ☒ (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

10. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

11. NOMINATOR

Name with Title Benjamin Leech, Director of Advocacy Email ben@preservationalliance.com

Organization Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia Date 10/8/10

Street Address 1616 Walnut Street, Suite 1620 Telephone 215-546-1146 x5

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19103

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

12. PROPERTY OWNER

Name City of Philadelphia

Organization _____

Street Address Broad and Market Street

City, State, and Postal Code 19107-3298

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: _____

☐ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: _____

Date of Notice Issuance: _____

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Postal Code: _____

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: _____

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

7/6/2010

5. Boundary Description

This nomination includes those interior spaces of the Family Court Building whose historic uses and architectural finishes define them as ceremonial public spaces. These spaces are as follows: the entry vestibule, the reception hall, the main hall, the main stairs, the elevator lobby, the east and west waiting rooms, and four courtrooms (see attached plan). With the exception of the stairs, which rise uninterrupted to the third floor, all are located on the first floor of the three-story building. The vestibule, reception hall and main hall are aligned along the building's central north-south axis, while the courtrooms and waiting areas are arranged along an east-west cross-axis. These axes intersect at the reception hall. The remainder of the building's interiors are comprised of circulation, office space, utilitarian and auxiliary areas whose historic uses and architectural finishes are clearly differentiated from the character of the ceremonial public spaces. These are not included in this nomination.

The entry vestibule is 39 feet wide by 23 feet deep, located immediately behind the portico of the primary south elevation. The reception hall (39 feet by 31 feet) is immediately to the north. To the east and west of the reception hall are waiting rooms (85 feet by 33 feet each), each separated from the reception hall by interstitial staircases (not included in the nomination). Each waiting room serves two adjacent courtrooms. Courtroom A (26 feet by 55 feet) is located to the west of the west waiting room, extending to west exterior wall of the building, while Courtroom B (40 feet by 22 feet) is located to the south of the west waiting room, extending to the south exterior wall of the building. This arrangement is mirrored on the east by the east waiting room, Courtroom C to the south, and Courtroom D to the east. The far southeast and southwest corners of the building are occupied by offices and judges' quarters not included in this nomination.

The main hall (39 feet by 97 feet) is north of the reception hall. At its southern end, the east and west hallways branch off to serve the east and west waiting rooms. At its northern end, a small vestibule leads to a secondary exit along the north (Wood Street) elevation. The elevator lobby (27 feet by 15 feet) is to the west of the main hall, opposite the main stairway, which lands on the east side of the main hall. Two interior light courts (not included in the nomination) sit on axis with the elevator lobby and stairs, lighting each.

The boundaries of the resource are formed by the center lines of the demising walls of the rooms described above. In cases where rooms are adjacent, the entire wall is therefore included. Included within the boundary are all interior and exterior doors along these walls, as well as all

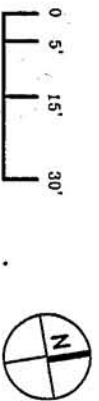
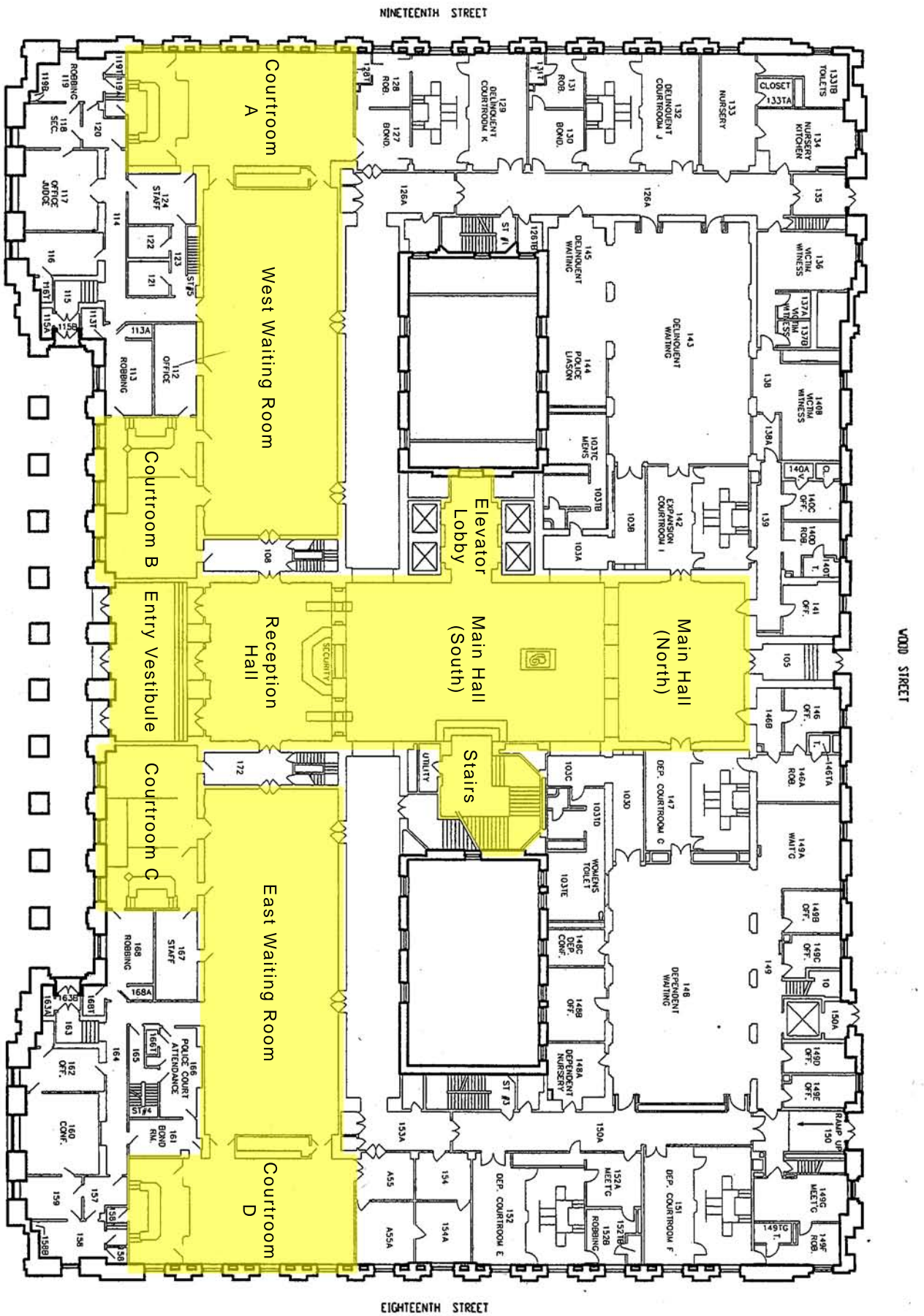
windows. In the vertical dimension, the boundary extends from the centerline of the floor to the line of lath above the ceiling finish.

Note: For the purposes of this nomination, the thirty-five historic murals included within these boundaries are included as fixtures, following the definition set forth in the Philadelphia Historical Commission Rules and Regulations 2.10:

An article which has been so annexed to and/or affixed to a public interior portion of a building or structure that it is regarded as a part of the public interior portion of the building or structure. An article is deemed to be annexed to and affixed to a public interior portion of a building or structure when it is attached to it by roots, embedded in it, permanently resting upon it, or permanently attached to what is thus permanent, by means including but not limited to cement, plaster, nails, bolts, or screws.

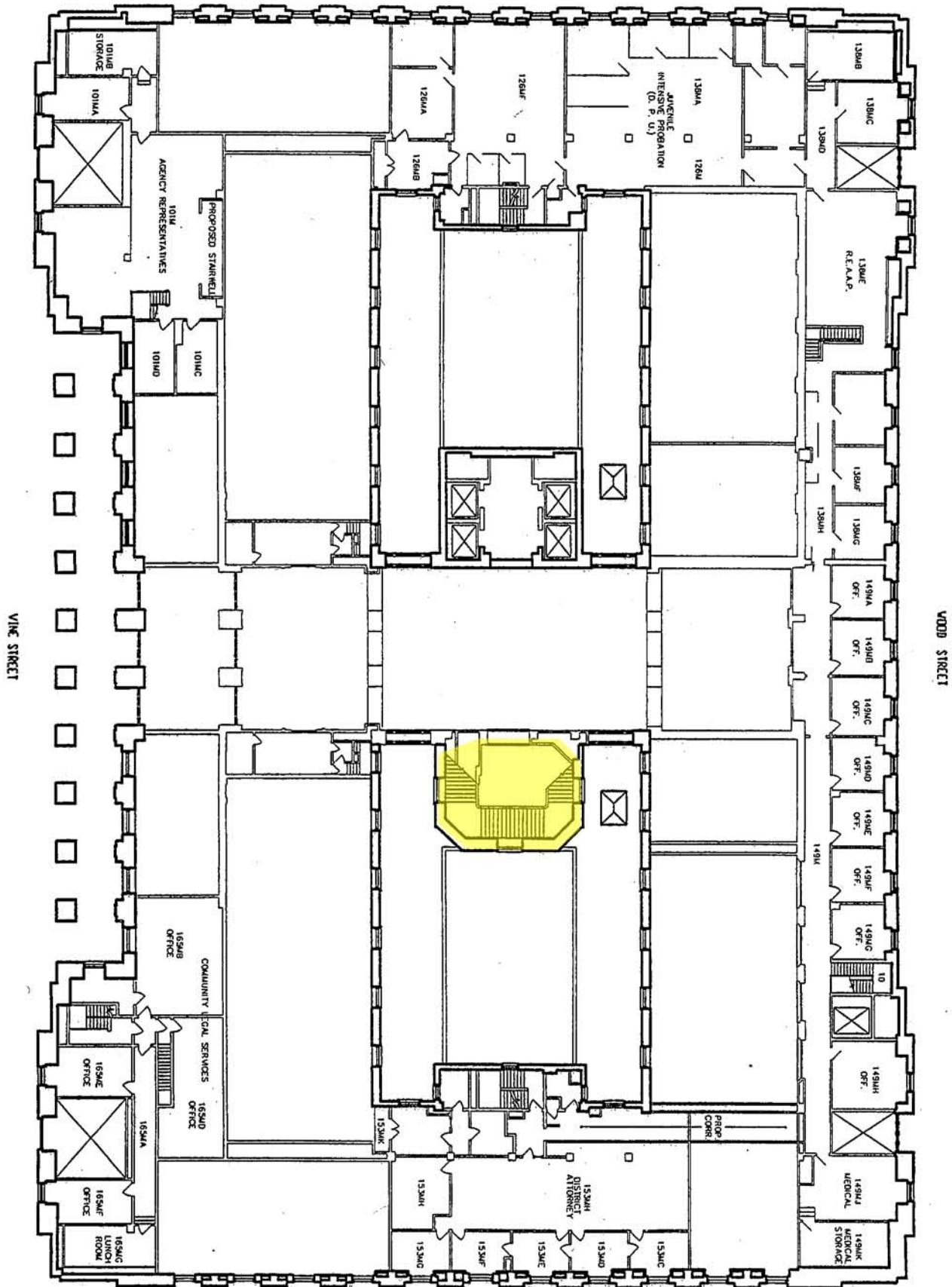
All murals are screwed, nailed, or attached with adhesive to the walls of the building in such manner that they are in plane with the surrounding wall surfaces and can be considered “affixed” and “embedded.”

GROUND FLOOR PLAN



MEZZANINE PLAN

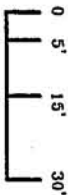
NINETEENTH STREET



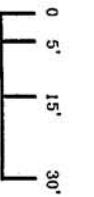
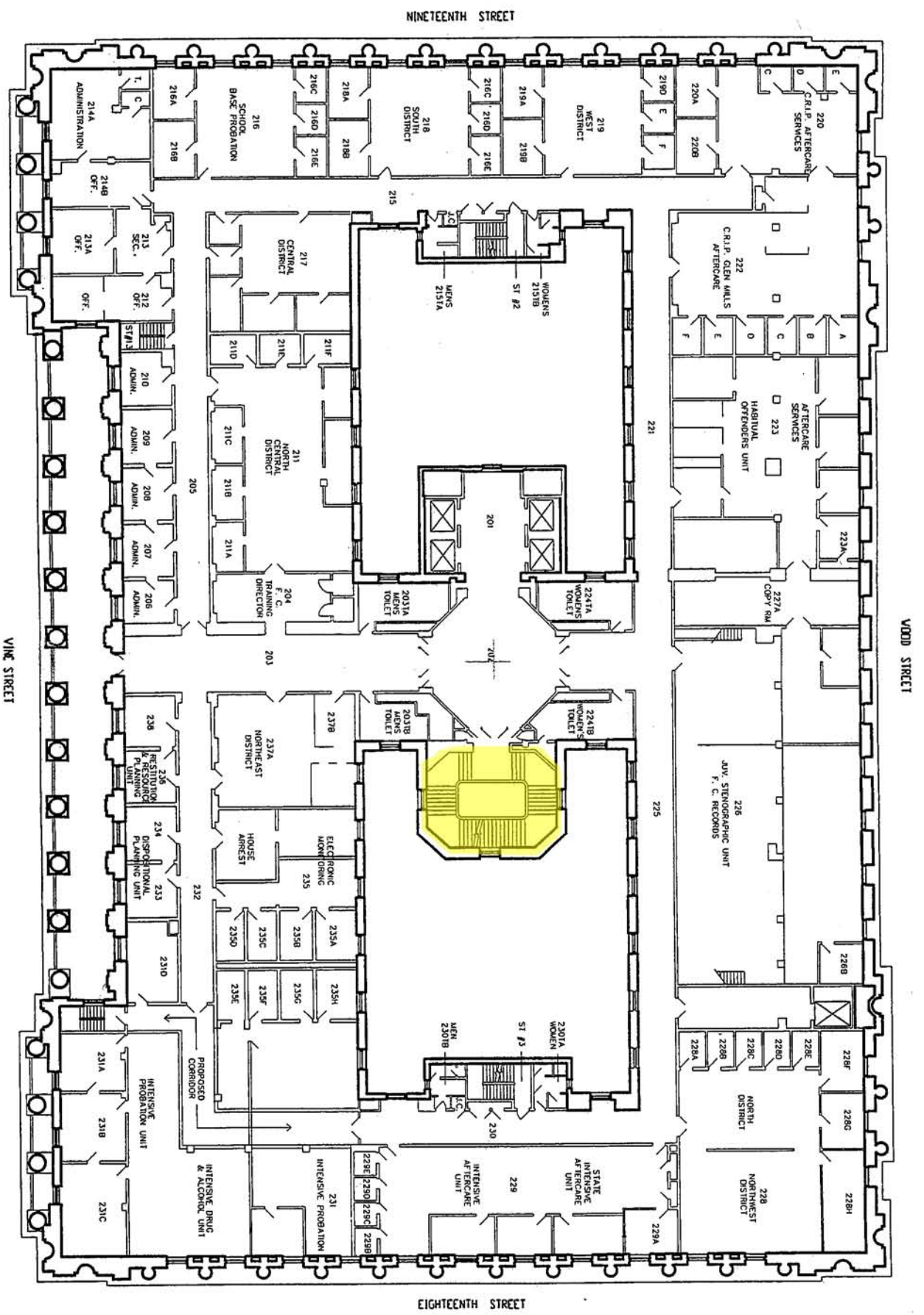
WOOD STREET

EIGHTEENTH STREET

VINE STREET



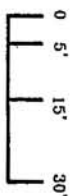
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



WOOD STREET



THIRD FLOOR PLAN



6. Description &

7. Inventory of Features and Fixtures

Entry Vestibule (Fig. 1)

The vestibule is the main public entrance to the Family Court building, measuring 39 feet by 23 feet. Three double-leaf exterior doorways are arranged symmetrically along its southern wall, mirrored by three double-leaf interior doorways along its northern wall. Each doorway is set within an arched opening 8 feet wide by 16 feet tall. The exterior doors are aluminum. The interior doors are 3' x 8' clear-finished paneled wood leaves with two glazed lights, set in a painted wood frame with multi-paned sidelights and transoms. Five risers span the full length of the vestibule at its northern end, leading up to the interior doorways. The walls of the vestibule are plaster, unpainted, scored and textured to resemble travertine, with a 6-inch textured travertine base and 30-inch travertine wainscot. The floor and steps are also travertine. The ceiling is plaster, with a plaster molding around the perimeter painted cream, gold, and burgundy. Brass handrails are mounted along the vestibule steps, and ornamental brass duct grilles are set within the walls. The wood doors also have brass handles and kickplates.

Historic Features:

1. Travertine floors and steps
2. Plaster wall surfaces
3. Travertine wainscot
4. Plaster ceiling surfaces
5. Interior and exterior doors and transoms

Historic Fixtures:

1. Brass handrail
2. Brass duct grilles

Features, fixtures and objects not included in the nomination:

1. Non-historic wall-mounted directional signage
2. Non-historic rope barriers

Reception Hall (Figs. 2, 3)

The reception hall measures 39 feet by 31 feet. It shares the above-described wooden interior doors and arched doorways with the vestibule immediately adjacent to the south. These archways are mirrored to the north by three open arches leading to the main hall. The east and west walls each feature a central doorway set in a flush blind arch defined by a painted stencil surround and half-round mural set above a painted wood door surround. The west wall mural depicts two male figures; the east wall mural depicts an eagle. Both were painted by artist George Harding in 1940. The stencil trim is a simple floral vine pattern in cream and rose. The doors themselves are of the same configuration as the vestibule doors, but feature frosted glass lights with no sidelights and a divided clear glass transom. Each doorway is flanked by a pair of

inset brass building directories set in a stone fret surround. The walls of the reception hall are a cast tabby material composed of crushed seashell, flush set in panels measuring 16" x 28" oriented vertically. The walls also feature a 6-inch textured travertine base and 30-inch travertine wainscot. The floor is terrazzo set in a buff grid with burgundy diamond accents. The ceiling, lined with an intricate painted cast plaster cove molding, is composed of original 12" x 12" perforated acoustic tiles. The molding features egg-and-dart molding, voluted brackets and dentils. A round brass clock hangs from rods mounted to the central archway soffit. A large wood paneled reception desk sits along the north wall beneath this archway. It stands 42" tall, measuring 10 feet by 20 feet. Though possibly original to the building, it was altered c.1995 to accommodate ADA accessibility. Non-historic security stations are currently installed at the two flanking archways. Neither the desk nor the security stations are included in this nomination.

Historic Features:

1. Terrazzo floors
2. Tabby (crushed shell) wall surfaces
3. Travertine wainscot
4. Plaster and acoustic tile ceiling surfaces
5. Doors and transoms

Historic Fixtures:

1. Brass building directories
2. Brass duct grilles
3. Brass clock
4. Brass chandelier
5. Murals (2)

Features, fixtures and objects not included in the nomination:

1. Reception desk and desk accessories
2. Non-historic safety and security equipment
3. Moveable furniture
4. Flags and flag standards
5. Supplemental non-historic recessed light fixtures

Main Hall (Figs. 4, 6, 7)

The main hall is composed of two adjacent spaces separated by a colonnade wall that mirrors the wall dividing the main hall from the reception hall. The central portion of the main hall measures 39 feet by 65 feet, and the northern portion measures 39 feet by 32 feet. Both rooms continue the floor, wall, and ceiling finishes of the reception hall immediately adjacent to the south. At each corner of the central hall along the east and west walls are open passageways leading to circulation corridors beyond. Each is topped by a painted wood spandrel set below a rectangular divided-light window lit by the building's interior lightwells. Along the west wall, these passageways flank the elevator lobby, while along the east wall they flank the landing of the main stairwell, both of which are described in further detail below. Each are also flanked by a pair of freestanding brass torcheres and non-historic display cabinets. At the center of the main hall sits

a large marble statue of a seated male figure carrying the inscription, "Charles Lincoln Brown 1864-1947." The statute, given the date of the inscription, is not an original feature and is not included in this nomination. The room is encircled by flagpoles mounted to the walls, and two large brass chandeliers hang from the ceiling. As along the southern colonnade wall, a bronze clock is mounted beneath the central arch separating the central and northern portions of the main hall. The northern portion of the main hall features five doorways; one each along the west and east walls, and three along the north walls. The east, west and central north doorways match the composition of the archway doors in the reception hall, with double-leaf doors set within a molding and mural surround (the north doors are glazed, while the east and west are all wood). The half-round mural on the west wall depicts a group of studying children; the central mural depicts a hospital scene; and the east wall mural depicts a classroom scene. The flanking doorways along the north wall feature single-leaf wood doors without transoms set in large arched mural panels. Both murals are complex compositions featuring multiple human figures, including construction workers, agricultural workers, beggars, swimmers, children and the elderly. All five murals were painted by George Harding in 1940. A central bronze chandelier hangs from the ceiling, with lighting augmented by modern recessed fixtures.

Historic Features:

1. Terrazzo floors
2. Tabby (crushed shell) wall surfaces
3. Travertine wainscot
4. Plaster and acoustic tile ceiling surfaces
5. Doors and transoms
6. Light court windows

Historic Fixtures:

1. Historic directional signage
2. Brass duct grilles
3. Brass clock
4. Brass chandeliers
5. Murals (5)

Features, fixtures and objects not included in the nomination:

1. Marble statue
2. Brass torches (4)
3. Flags and flagpoles
4. Rope barriers
5. Flag standards
6. Non-historic safety and security equipment
7. Non-historic display cases
8. Non-historic directional signage
9. Supplemental non-historic recessed light fixtures

Elevator Lobby (Fig. 5)

The elevator lobby is to the west of the main hall, continuing its floor, ceiling and wall finishes. Its west wall is dominated by a large leaded stained glass window by the D'Ascenzo Studios depicting Justice presiding over figures representing family life. The lobby contains four elevators, two each along the north and south walls. Above each pair are large murals painted in 1940 by Frank H. Schwarz. Both murals depict families gathered around a table with children playing in the distance. The north mural bears the inscription, "Examination, diagnosis and treatment cure social ills," and the south mural reads, "Investigation and probation aid humanized justice." The elevator doors are stenciled, and a chandelier hangs from the ceiling.

Historic Features:

1. Terrazzo floors
2. Tabby (crushed shell) wall surfaces
3. Travertine wainscot
4. Plaster and acoustic tile ceiling surfaces
5. Elevator doors
6. Stained glass panel

Historic Fixtures:

1. Brass chandeliers
2. Murals (2)

Features, fixtures and objects not included in the nomination:

1. Non-historic safety and security equipment
2. Supplemental non-historic recessed light fixtures
3. Non-historic directional signage

Central Stairway (Figs. 20, 21)

The central stairway rises three floors from a landing to the east of the main hall. The ceiling at the top of the stairwell is plaster with a stenciled decorative cove molding. Walls are tabby with a travertine wainscot, and the landings and treads are travertine. Brass sconces light each landing, and a brass lantern is suspended from a chain mounted to the stairwell ceiling. Doors are glazed painted metal. A brass handrail is mounted on bronze balusters.

Historic Features:

1. Travertine steps and landings
2. Tabby (crushed shell) wall surfaces
3. Travertine wainscot
4. Plaster and acoustic tile ceiling surfaces
5. Doors and windows
6. Stained glass panel

Historic Fixtures:

1. Brass chandelier and chain
2. Brass sconces
3. Metal handrails and balusters
4. Brass duct grilles

Features, fixtures and objects not included in the nomination:

1. Non-historic safety and security equipment
2. Non-historic window shades
3. Non-historic directional signage

Waiting Rooms (Figs. 13-17)

The east and west waiting rooms are each 85 feet by 33 feet, aligned on axis with the reception hall and served by corridors to their north leading from the main hall. The floors are original linoleum tile laid in a tricolor grid pattern. Walls are tabby panels with a paneled wood wainscot and fluted pilasters that carry a coffered plaster and acoustic tile ceiling with elaborate stenciled cove moldings. There are eleven small murals in each waiting room, set between pilasters directly beneath the ceiling molding. In the west waiting room, the murals depict famous figures in American history and were painted by Joseph Capoline. The east waiting room murals were executed by Vincent Maraglielli and depict a variety of human figures. Both rooms feature paired paneled wood doors, both glazed and unglazed, leading to adjacent courtrooms and hallways. The rooms are lit by suspended brass fixtures augmented by modern recessed lighting.

Historic Features:

1. Linoleum flooring
2. Tabby (crushed shell) wall surfaces
3. Paneled wood wainscot
4. Plaster and acoustic tile ceiling surfaces
5. Doors and windows

Historic Fixtures:

1. Historic hanging light fixtures
2. Historic wall-mounted clocks
3. Brass duct grilles
4. Murals (11 in each room, 22 total)

Features, fixtures and objects not included in the nomination:

1. Non-attached wooden chairs
2. Non-historic safety, security, and audiovisual equipment
3. Non-historic directional signage

Courtrooms (Figs. 11, 12, 18, 19)

Each waiting room serves two courtrooms: A and B to the west, and C and D to the east. Courtrooms A and D measure 26 feet by 55 feet; Courtrooms B and C measure 40 feet by 22 feet. Each courtroom features tabby walls with paneled wood wainscot, painted plaster ceiling cove, and an acoustical tile ceiling. All floors are covered in non-original carpet. Each courtroom has exterior windows facing either Nineteenth Street (Courtroom A), Vine Street (Courtrooms B and C) or Eighteenth Street (Courtroom D). Courtrooms A and D feature four windows each, while B and C feature three each. All windows are segmental arch inswinging wood casements. Window treatments are non-historic red cloth curtains. Each courtroom is furnished with a

paneled wood bar wall separating a viewing gallery from a judge's bench featuring original brass lamps. Each room contains a prominent 19 foot by 7 foot mural: Alice Kent Stoddard's scene of a construction site in Courtroom A, Stuyvesant Van Veen's complicated multi-figure composition in Courtroom B, Joseph Hirsch's family scene in Courtroom C, and a second Van Veen composition in Courtroom D.

Historic Features:

1. Linoleum flooring
2. Tabby (crushed shell) wall surfaces
3. Paneled wood wainscot
4. Plaster and acoustic tile ceiling surfaces
5. Doors and windows

Historic Fixtures:

1. Historic hanging light fixtures
2. Historic wall-mounted clocks
3. Brass duct grilles
4. Murals (1 in each room, 4 total)

Features, fixtures and objects not included in the nomination:

1. Carpet
2. Paneled wood bar walls
3. Judges' desks and desk accessories
4. Window drapes
5. Non-attached wooden chairs
6. Non-historic safety, security, and audiovisual equipment
7. Non-historic directional signage
8. Supplemental non-historic recessed light fixtures
9. Non-historic wall hangings

9. Significance

The Family Court Building was built in the years 1938-1941 following the designs of architects John T. Windrim and William Richard Morton Keast. The building, one of the most prominent structures along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, was listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places on June 29, 1971. The interior portions of the building described in the preceding section satisfy the definition of an eligible historic interior as defined by the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 14-2007(5.6.b), as they constitute “an interior portion of a building or structure that is, or was designed to be, customarily open and accessible to the public, including by invitation” and exist in near-original condition. This interior portion has significant architectural and cultural value, satisfying the following criteria for historic designation as defined by the Philadelphia Historical Commission:

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

Criterion A: Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;

and

Criterion J: Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

The Family Court Building stands as one of the most prominent public buildings in the city of Philadelphia and one of the city’s most significant legacies from the Great Depression era of federally-funded public works projects known popularly as the New Deal. Dubbed the “Palace of Justice” at the time of its construction from 1938 to 1941, the building’s exterior mirrors that of the adjacent Free Library of Philadelphia (Horace Trumbauer, 1917-1925); the pair is a faithful replica of the Ministerie de la Marine and the Hotel Crillon on the Place de la Concorde in Paris.

The Family Court Building was designed to house the Juvenile and Domestic Relations branches of the Philadelphia Municipal Court system, which since 1914 had operated in a number of makeshift (and notoriously substandard) facilities scattered across the city. Though Philadelphia voters approved funds for the construction of a dedicated court building as early as 1916, debates

over budgets and site selection delayed progress on the project for two decades. After a series of aborted schemes in the 1910s and 1920s, plans for the court on its current site were begun in 1930 by prominent Philadelphia architect John T. Windrim and approved by the city's Art Jury and City Council the following year. But budget shortfalls further delayed progress on the \$3.5 million project until 1938, when the Federal government granted \$1.5 million to the city for its construction (the balance was paid for by previously authorized city loans).¹

In June 1933, at the height of the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the National Industrial Recovery Act as part of his sweeping New Deal reform package. This act, in order to stimulate the stagnant national economy and create jobs for millions of unemployed workers, provided \$3.3 billion for the creation of the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, also known as the Public Works Administration (PWA). Between 1933 and 1939, the PWA funded a series of ambitious infrastructure projects nationwide, producing such icons of the era as the Lincoln Tunnel (New York City, 1938-1945), the Grand Coulee Dam (Washington State, begun 1933), and countless neighborhood schools, post offices, and hospitals. The Family Court Building was Philadelphia's largest and most prominent PWA undertaking.

By this time, the city's current municipal court facilities had become a civic embarrassment. Citing the facilities of the Domestic Relations Division in rented space at 21st and Race Streets, a *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* editorial in 1938 declared, "A more sordid and depressing setting for a municipal activity would be hard to imagine. Slummy is the word."² A probation officer lamented the conditions of the Juvenile Division housed in the former Wills Eye Hospital building at 18th and Race by remarking to another *Bulletin* reporter, "It is in such [dingy] surroundings that Philadelphia has been attempting to deal with the problems of wayward boys and girls, broken families, unmarried mothers, and unwanted children. The sordid surroundings cast a shadow of sordidness over all the cases that come before it."³

In contrast, the new court building was designed to be a civic showcase and a model of judicial efficiency. Plans included four ground-floor court rooms, two spacious public waiting areas, a grand entry lobby, and extensive office and auxiliary facilities. Public areas were further enhanced by the inclusion of a Public Works Administration-funded art program depicting the social benefits of the justice system. This program, consisting of 37 murals, one stained glass panel, and two exterior frieze sculptures, represents the largest New Deal-era public art project

¹ "Mayor is 'Amazed' by Court Grant." *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, June 25, 1938.

² "Men and Things: Municipal Court's Absurd Housekeeping." *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, July 22, 1938.

³ Cassidy, Morley. "Law and Lawless to Find Dignity in City's New Municipal Court," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, November 13, 1940.

undertaken for a single site in all of Philadelphia.⁴ Nine painters were selected by the Board of County Commissioners and funded by the Public Works Administration: Joseph Capolino, Walter Gardner, George Harding, Joe Hirsch, Vincent Maragliotti, Alice Kent Stoddard, Frank Schwarz, Benton Spruance, and Stuyvesant Van Veen. All were locally or nationally significant artists and proponents of social realism, a style virtually synonymous with Depression-era public art.⁵ In addition, the renowned studio of Nicola D'Ascenzo produced a 6-foot by 15-foot stained glass panel depicting a robed figure of Justice protecting figures representing the family. The Philadelphia-based D'Ascenzo Studio was perhaps the most prolific stained glass producer of their era, designing high-quality pieces for ecclesiastical, commercial, municipal, and residential clients nationwide from 1896 to 1954.⁶ As noted by the *Philadelphia Record* art critic upon the building's completion, "[T]he architect... has had the courage to give to American artists an opportunity unequalled in any other municipal building in this city," and the result was "a cross-section of contemporary activity in that particular phase of art."⁷

The didactic quality of the art program (with inscriptions such as "Examination, diagnosis and treatment cure social ills," "Investigation and probation aid humanized justice," and "The strength of democracy abides in the family") reflected an ambitious social agenda behind the court's construction, part of a larger civic pursuit of a "modern" Philadelphia embodied in the continued development of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. Not only did the new court represent a new approach to the justice system ("The building represents a recognition of the new conception of the treatment of crime, in attempting to study the offender rather than the crime," noted a court

⁴ Two of these murals were placed in first-floor conference rooms (now judges' quarters) not considered part of the public area of the building.

⁵ John Joseph Capolino (1896-?) studied at Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and eventually specialized in official military portraits. He served as director for the Spring Garden Institute and the Chestnut Hill Art Center and was curator of the Woodmere Art Gallery. Walter Gardner (1902-1996) painted Post Office murals in Philadelphia, Honesdale, Pennsylvania, and Berne, Indiana. His studies for an unknown mural are in the collection Smithsonian Institute. George Harding (1882-1959) is best known for his 31-panel mural series in the Philadelphia Customs House. The Brandywine School painter was also an accomplished magazine illustrator. Philadelphia native Joseph Hirsch (1910-1981), in addition to his Family Court work, also painted murals for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America Building at 21st and South Streets. He later became an artist war correspondent during World War II and a instructor at various art schools nationwide. Vincent Maragliotti (1888-1971) was an Italian-born immigrant who produced a number of murals for the Pennsylvania Capitol Building between from 1934 to 1973. He also did mural work for a number of prominent New York establishments, including the Waldorf-Astoria and Biltmore hotels and the Majestic, Roxy, Shubert, and Strand theaters. Alice Kent Stoddard (1885-1976) was a landscape and portrait painter who studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. She was an art war correspondent during World War I. Frank Schwarz (1894-1951) was a New York-based painter best remembered for his Oregon State Capitol murals. Benton Spruance (1904-1967), another Philadelphia native who studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, was a master lithographer. Stuyvesant Van Veen (1910-1988) was a New York native and student of Thomas Hart Benson who specialized in mural painting.

⁶ Tatman, Sandra L. "D'Ascenzo Studios," *American Architects and Buildings Database*. http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/23357 [Accessed September 28, 2010].

⁷ Grafley, Dorothy. "Artists Win Municipal Court Mural Race," *Philadelphia Record*, October 13, 1940.

official at the time⁸), but also contributed to a heightened civic consciousness. One *Bulletin* editorial described the new court and its Parkway neighbors as “emblematic of the religious, cultural and humanitarian ideals of western civilization” when commenting favorably on the participation that Federal and municipal officials had in the design and construction of the building.⁹ The commodious and elegant interior public spaces, especially in contrast to the facilities being replaced, were celebrated as civic accomplishments upon the building’s opening. Newspaper reports notes the “cheerful system of bright colors... selected to stimulate an atmosphere of ‘sympathy and understanding.’”¹⁰ Another reviewer described the hypothetical scene of juvenile offender “Willie J.” as he enters the new court building: “There he’ll find himself in a cathedral-like lobby surrounded by marble and walnut and great chandeliers. He’ll face an array of murals from the brushes of some of America’s greatest artists. He’ll bat his eyes at a sweeping staircase four stories high.... [H]e is going to know—as he faces the judge in a courtroom decorated by a world-famous muralist—that The Law has its eye on Willie.”¹¹ In contrast to the “dingy, cramped” former buildings “in which the only waiting room is a narrow hallway,” the new building emphasized an agenda of social dignity through the grandeur of its high-ceilinged, well-lit, richly-detailed lobbies, waiting rooms, and courtrooms.¹²

Criterion E: Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation.

Initial plans for the Family Court Building were completed in 1931 by John T. Windrim, one of the city’s most active and favored architects of the early twentieth century. The son of James H. Windrim, whose winning designs for the Masonic Temple and Academy of Natural Sciences competitions of 1868 launched an architectural dynasty, the younger Windrim began his career with his father’s firm in 1882. He inherited the practice upon his father’s death in 1919, though the firm was probably under his direction as early as 1892. Cultivating a broad and well-heeled client base from the ranks of Philadelphia’s commercial, civic, and industrial elites, Windrim’s firm designed a number of buildings for the Wanamaker empire, the Bell Telephone Company, and

⁸ Cassidy, Morley. “Law and Lawless to Find Dignity in City’s New Municipal Court,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, November 13, 1940.

⁹ “Municipal Court Building,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, August 20, 1940.

¹⁰ “Justice Palace Dedicated,” *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, January 22, 1941.

¹¹ Cassidy, op. cit.

¹² Ibid.

the Philadelphia Electrical Company. He was also responsible for the Franklin Institute, another Neoclassical fixture of Logan Square just west of the Family Court Building.¹³

Windrim died in 1934 and was succeeded at the firm by William Richard Morton Keast (1888-1973). Keast, as a designer in the Windrim office since 1910, was likely involved in the initial Family Court designs and remained involved as chief architect once ground was finally broken in 1938. Little evidence suggests significant deviation from the plans approved in 1931, save for the accommodation of the PWA art program and updates to the planned utilities and mechanical systems (including the addition of air conditioning, a relatively new technology) in 1939.¹⁴

Given that the building's exterior design was meant to replicate nearly exactly the adjacent Free Library and the Parisian palaces at Place de la Concorde, only the building's interior can be considered a wholly original Windrim and Keast design. Stylistically, it's grand neoclassical volumes share distinct similarities to the interior of the Franklin Institute, designed by Windrim and Keast at the same time as Family Court. These two Logan Square monuments together constitute Windrim's most significant interiors, since many of his other prominent commissions (The Philadelphia Electric Company's Chester Station, for example) combined neoclassical exteriors with largely utilitarian interiors. Both the Franklin Institute and Family Court presented an opportunity to carry a monumental design vocabulary into the building itself, and both resulted in grand open spaces arranged symmetrically along clearly defined axes, adorned with elegant lighting fixtures, neoclassical moldings and richly-colored stencil work. While Windrim's Franklin Institute design was never fully realized and portions have been somewhat altered, his design for Family Court's public spaces remain cohesive and intact.

¹³ Tatman, Sandra L. "Windrim, John Torrey (1866-1934)," *American Architects and Buildings Database*. http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/21563 [Accessed September 28, 2010].

¹⁴ "Court to be Modernized," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, March 2, 1939.

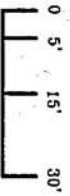
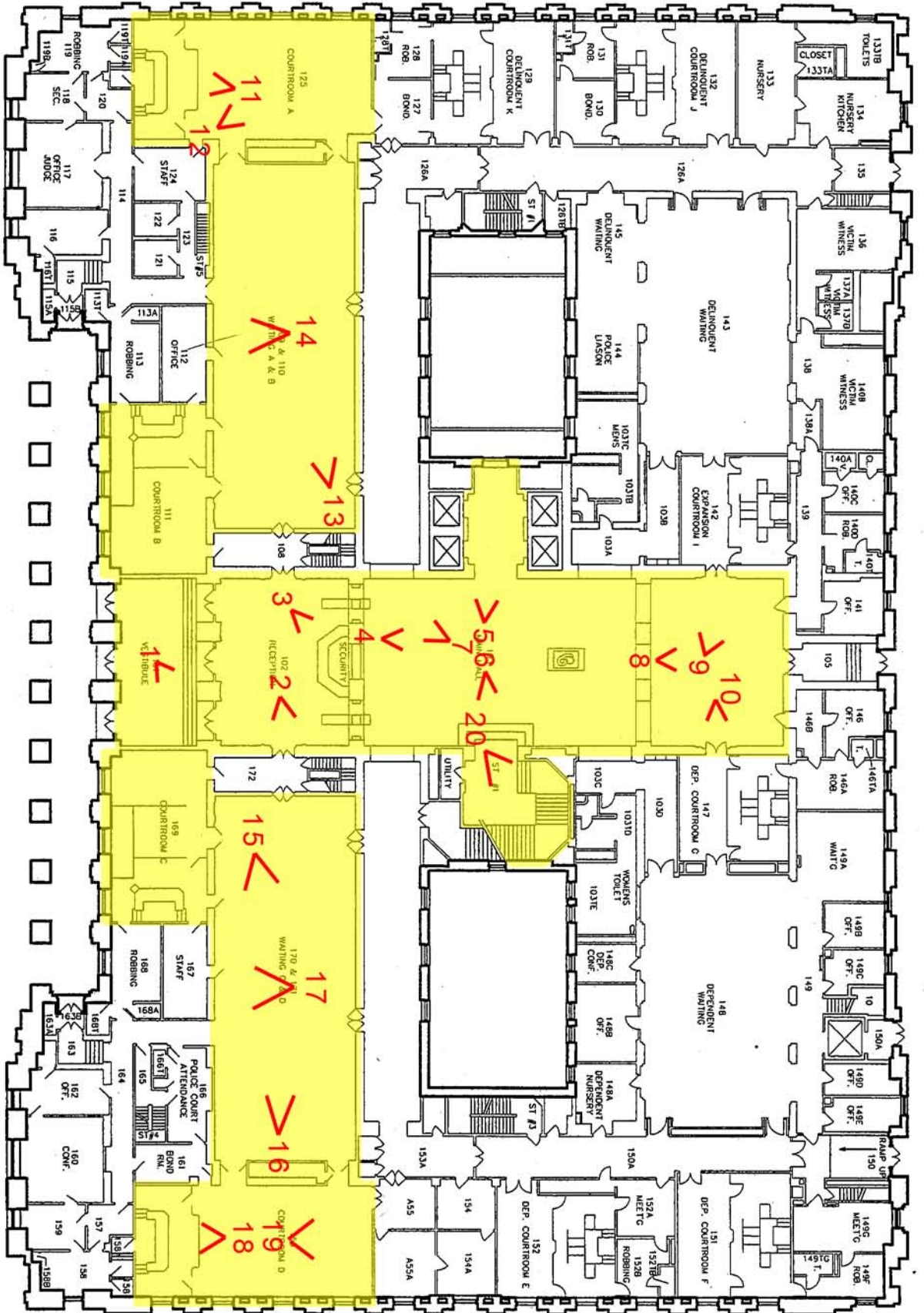
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

VINE STREET

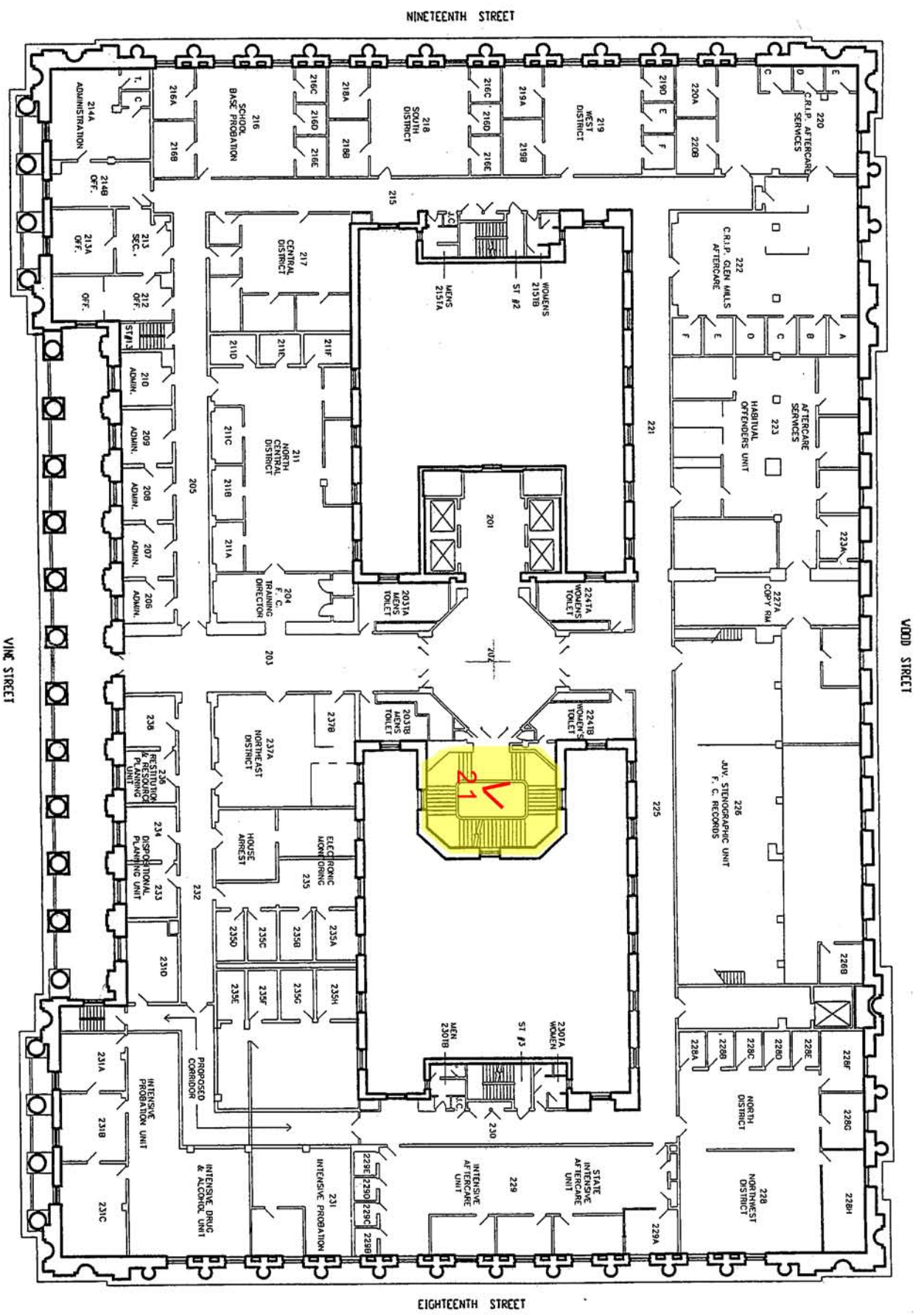
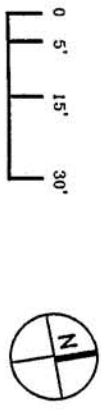
NINETEENTH STREET

WOOD STREET

EIGHTEENTH STREET



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



Figure 0: Exterior (south elevation



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16

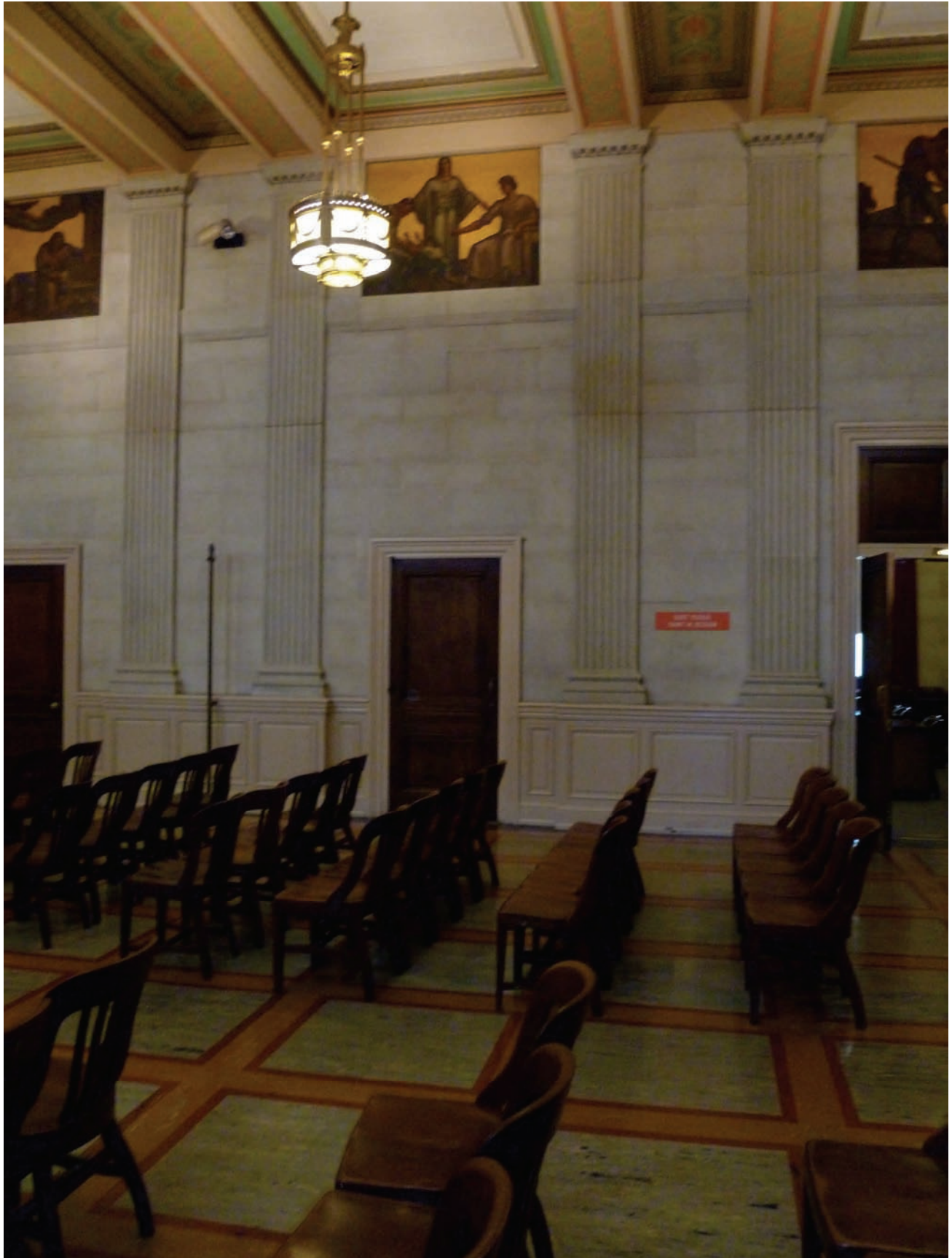


Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20



Figure 21