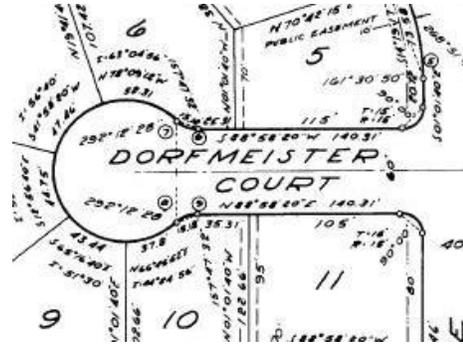# Land Surveying Records Research in Dane County, Wisconsin

A project of the Madison Area Surveyors Council
Updated July 5, 2007

Dane County Surveyor: Dan Frick, RLS
#(608)266-4252   frick@co.dane.wi.us

Madison Area Surveyors Council website:
http://matcmadison.edu/civiltech/MASC/

"Every property survey shall be made in accordance with the records of the register of deeds as nearly as is practicable. The surveyor shall acquire data necessary to retrace record title boundaries such as deeds, maps, certificates of title and center line and other boundary line locations."
- Wisconsin Administrative Code A-E 7.03 (from Register, December, 2005)

"Some of my surveys are good, others not so good. But you will find that you have a tendency to be lax once in a while when you can't find anything and everything goes wrong. But one thing you will find and that is this, that I keep field books in better shape than some people have, that I take B.T.s [bearing trees] as some permanent monument in almost every corner I establish, and that very nearly every survey is recorded in some way, telling how accurate it is and anything out of the ordinary about it. What I aim to do is to get things established even if they are off a little, and also establish them so that others than myself can find them."
- Phillip H. Hintze, Dane County Surveyor, written June 18, 1908 in his survey index.

Introduction

Records research is probably the most essential task in property boundary retracement. Previous surveyors' work provides critical evidence for locating boundaries as originally established and perpetuated. As reputable as former Dane County Surveyor Phillip Hintze's work is, his quote above shows that even the best surveyor's work is only as good as the evidence on which it is based.

The purpose of this document is to provide surveyors in Dane County with an overview of the survey records, including the indexes and databases for searching records, at the County Surveyor's Office and the Register of Deeds. Included at the end are recommended minimum search procedures.

Disclaimer

This compilation is from MASC members' experience using these records, indexes and databases. No warranty is expressed or implied that the information herein is entirely current or accurate, nor that the suggested research procedures herein will necessarily produce all relevant surveying records for a given project. The focus of this compilation is records relating to boundary retracement. This is not a guide to finding all recorded rights and interests in land, such as easements and covenants, that a title search or abstract might disclose. Also, users should be aware that some surveys filed at the County Surveyor's Office are only preliminary plans, and were never used to create property boundaries. Users of this document have full responsibility for their own records search, and for obtaining the necessary title work. Questions should be referred to the Dane County Surveyor at (608)266-4252.

Acronyms and Terms Used:

BCPL = Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
CSM = Certified Survey Map
DOT = Department of Transportation (State)
Laredo = Register of Deeds digital database
PLSS = Public Land Survey System
ROD = Register of Deeds office
TPP = Transportation Project Plat
WSLS = Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors

SURVEYING RECORDS <u>NOT</u> IN THE SURVEYOR'S OFFICE

Affidavits of correction filed by surveyors to correct errors on plats and CSMs: these are recorded in the Register of Deeds office. On older plats, and perhaps older CSMs, the recording information for affidavits was usually written on the face of the plat or CSM. More recent plats and CSMs are scanned, and will not have any affidavits noted on the scanned image. Affidavits can be located using the Register of Deeds' Laredo database. Currently (2007), Laredo is searchable back to 1978, and has scanned images back to about 1992. Affidavits recorded before 1978 can be located using the Tract Index on microfiche cards. The tract index goes back to 1943. Ask staff at the Register of Deeds desk for assistance.

Earlier Condominium Plats Condominium plats are filed in separate volumes in the Register of Deeds. Although condominium plats are not subdivision plats per Chapter 236 State Statutes, the base component of a condominium plat is a boundary retracement survey. Therefore, condominium plats are boundary evidence just as valuable as a plat of survey filed in the County Surveyor's Office. More recent condominium plats are starting to be included in the County Surveyor's Laserfiche Survey Database.

Federal Bureau of Land Management Resurveys are filed at the Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands, but not necessarily at the corresponding County Surveyor's Office or register of deeds office. See section on "Public Land Survey Original Records" below.

Gombar Surveys at Dane County Title: A surveyor by the last name of Gombar (grandfather of Clev) is reported to have on file a number of surveys from the 1930's and 1940's in the files of Dane County Title. Most of the work is in and around the lakes and the southern half of the county, and may be useful in explaining found lake lot monuments that do not seem to be of record. However, as of 2007, Bob Carlson at Dane County Title was only able to locate a handful of Gombar surveys. These records may be lost.

City of Madison Engineering Division / Land Records: The city maintains some old records that may not be available or easily located elsewhere. For example, the city is in the process (2007) of compiling databases of street acquisitions and vacations originally recorded at the ROD but difficult to search pre-1943, before the ROD's tract index was started. The city also has recent PLSS tie sheets which may not be available at the county. Unfortunately, some records are now lost that were known to have existed. For example, when the Capitol Square was first rebuilt around the 1960's, Warzyn Engineering retraced boundaries per old surveys by Hintze, Mabbett and others. The notes and compilation map from that survey cannot be located, and Warzyn is no longer in existence. The city's Land Records Coordinator (Eric Pederson, 266-4056) has valuable knowledge of city survey records and is an excellent resource.
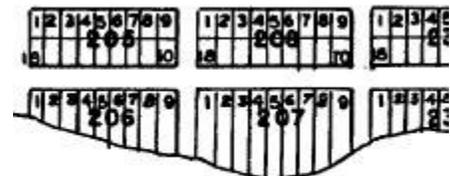
City of Madison MADMAPS Website: The City of Madison's parcel map website is currently (2007): http://gis.cityofmadison.com/MADMAPS/GISHome.html Platted lot lines, subdivision and CSM names, block and lot numbers are visible beneath tax parcel / ownership lines, making this a useful resource for determining adjacent plats and CSMs. Associated data may also available, such as abbreviated assessor's legal descriptions, aerial photography and utilities. However, *heed the city's disclaimer that these maps and associated records may not be accurate or current,* and that original recorded documents must be consulted for legal and survey issues.

SURVEYING RECORDS IN THE SURVEYOR'S (AND ZONING) OFFICE

Subdivision Plats, CSMs and later Condominium Plats: Scanned images are available through the Laserfiche Survey Database. Official copies are kept in the ROD and are indexed in the ROD's Laredo database.

Be aware that some older subdivision plats (including the scanned images) are not the originals, and may contain transcription errors. Copies were drafted around the 1930's as part of a Works Progress Administration document preservation project. The original plats are kept in large books in a restricted access room at the ROD. Consult ROD staff to access them if necessary.

Transcribed Subdivision Plat – note "copied by, checked by"

Also, be aware of the issues regarding the Madison "Original" Plat and Farwell's Replat, discussed in the Laserfiche Survey Database section of this document.

Plats of Survey: This is the main set of survey records in the County Surveyor's Office. They are currently (2007) in the process of being scanned. See the "Laserfiche Survey Database" section for looking up plats of survey.

Surveys before about 1992 are filed in bound books by surveyor name and survey number. Surveyors who did not produce much work are filed under "Miscellaneous", and the survey number starts with M (e.g., M554). Some surveys are organized by surveyor name in the back of a volume of other surveys. For example, Warzyn surveys are in the last volume of Thousand surveys.
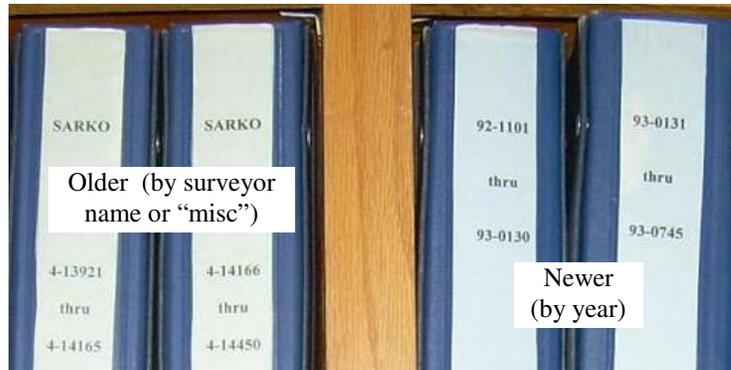
Plat of Survey Books (8.5x14 inch format)

Surveys after about 1992 are filed in a single set of books by date submitted. Each survey is assigned a year-number index number (e.g., 92-00541, 1997-01430 or 2005-00031).

Surveys are either small (generally 8.5 x 14 inch) or large format. Small format surveys are in bound books, and large surveys are in either the map file cabinets or in map tubes in the County Surveyor's Office vault. Unfortunately, the Laserfiche Survey Database usually does not indicate if a given survey is large or small.

Additionally, some surveys have been discovered to be incorrectly indexed. Please contact staff in the Surveyor's Office when you find an incorrectly indexed survey.

Laserfiche Survey Database: This is the most current digital database of surveys, originally derived from the Card Catalog Survey Index and the 1990's computerization in FoxPro. The Laserfiche Survey Database includes subdivision plats, CSMs, more recent condominium plats, and plats of survey. It does not include older records such as the Blue Books, railroad and highway surveys, old County Surveyor Field Books, and Mabbett Field Books (Mabbett plats of survey are included, but the Mabbett Field Books contain many additional surveys). Also see the section "Surveying Records NOT Kept in the County Surveyor's Office" for additional omissions.

In Laserfiche, surveys can be searched by location, surveyor name, and other fields. Users should note that subdivision names and CSM numbers are not standardized. For example, a certain plat of survey done on a lot in First Addition to Petty Acres might be coded under "First Addition to Petty Acres" or "Petty Acres, First Addition" or "Petty Acres-1st Addition". Searches must be very broad in order to find all relevant records.

Laserfiche search tips:

- **In Subdivision**: use key word with asterisk wildcards before and after key word (*Petty* to find surveys in "First Addition to Petty Acres" or "Petty Acres, First Addition" or "Petty Acres-1st Addition")

- **In Madison "Original" Plat**: The Register of Deeds considers the 1839 Pritchette plat (Volume A of Plats, Page 3, Document Number 102 in the Register of Deeds) to be the "original" plat of Madison. However, Blocks 165-240 were replatted in 1853 as "Farwell's Replat of a Part of the Village of Madison" (Volume A of Plats, Page 7, Document Number 106). Surveys in those blocks may be indexed under "Original Plat," "Pritchette," "Farwell's Replat," or variations thereof. There are other "Farwell's Replat" plats in the city as well. Because there are few plats in Dane County with high block numbers, it is safest to search for surveys in the "original" plat using only the block number. For example, enter *165* in the BLOCK field. Use asterisks as wildcards at the start and end so that records containing "165" anywhere in the field are listed. For example, a survey over blocks 165 and 166 would have "165, 166" in the BLOCK field, so a search for the exact text string 165 (without wildcards) would not list that survey.

- **In CSM**: search *CSM* in the NAME field to find all surveys done over all CSM's. This is safer because CSM naming is inconsistent (e.g. CSM #1003 entered as "CSM 1003" or "CSM01003" or CSM1003, etc.) Then click on column heading to sort records alphabetically for easier review. Although all surveys within CSM's appear to be cataloged by "CSM #…", it is possible that some future surveys might be catalogued by

"C.S.M. #" or "Certified Survey Map #", so a search using the number only is a good double check (e.g. search for *343* in name field to find surveys over lots in CSM 343 or CSM 00343 or C.S.M. #343, etc).

- **In Unplatted Lands**: Enter town, range, and section (broadest search), then sort results by 1/4-1/4 section. 1/4-1/4 sections are coded A through P; see key next to computer. If you do limit a search to a 1/4-1/4 section, enter the letter bounded by asterisk wildcards. For example, entering C (for SW1/4 of NE1/4) will not find a survey coded in multiple 1/4-1/4's such as A,C,E. Entering *C* will find entries for C only, as well as entries with multiple 1/4-1/4's including C.

- **Keep it general!** Start by searching the whole subdivision or section, not just the lot/block or 1/4-1/4. Sort records alphabetically (e.g. by lot number) for easier review.

Laserfiche Survey Database - Known Discrepancies

"Karnes" surveys are in the Held & Associates books. The 8.5x14" format surveys are numbered e.g. 4-6155 in the database but only 6155 in the Held books.

Surveys numbered 95-98 (or so) for Lots 1-4, Block 219, Farwell's Replat (may be under Madison Original Plat) are actually Mabbett surveys around number 1203 in the Mabbett plat of survey book. The 95-98 numbered copies are in the extra filing cabinets in the back of the vault. There may be other records in the Laserfiche database which reference surveys in those filing cabinets. The cabinets are organized alphabetically by township name in rural areas and by subdivision name in cities.

Arnold & O'Sheridan surveys numbered S-#### are not necessarily small-format surveys. Check both the small and large format surveys. Index numbers may be on the back of the paper.

LASERFICHE SURVEY DATABASE – LOGIN SCREEN

LASERFICHE SURVEY DATABASE – SEARCH SCREEN

Callouts on screenshot:

4. Click magnifying glass to search

10. Click on a gray column heading (Name, Lot#, etc.) to sort alphabetically

5. Select "Field" option

9. Click & drag gray edge to see full column

6. Use wildcards (*) and single key word for broadest search.

8. Review records (note inconsistent plat names!) Drag slider to see more

11. Reset for new search

7. Search!

Card Catalog Survey Index (Superceded): This is a small gray metal file cabinet in the vault, with paper records of plats of survey. It does not index very old surveys, such as the "Blue Books" or the County Surveyor Field Books or Mabbett field books. The card catalog was replaced around the 1990's by a computerized database in FoxPro software (now defunct), and most recently by the Laserfiche Survey Database. The Laserfiche Survey Database is the most current, however it is sometimes necessary to check the card catalog if a survey is not found, in case there was a transcription error when creating the digital databases.
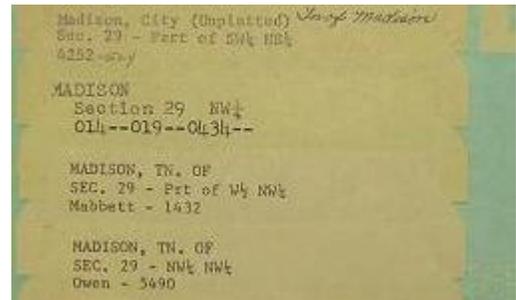
Card catalog survey index
(individual records on small paper tabs)

Index to (Old) Survey Records

Index to (Old) Survey Records: This 13 x 13 inch tan hard-covered book is the main index for old surveys, most of which are *not* indexed in the Laserfiche Survey Database (nor in its predecessor, the Card Catalog Survey Index). This index is currently kept in the small filing cabinet in the vault. The index has separate sections for the City of Madison, other municipalities and villages, and unincorporated areas. Some municipalities are not listed in alphabetical order, so users should scan the entire index before determining that records are not available in a given municipality. Surveys are indexed by plat, block and lot where available, and elsewhere by PLSS township, range and section. The index references book and page numbers in the County Surveyor Field Books. The index also lists compilation survey plat books that some surveyors

kept, such as the Hintze Survey Plat Books (numbered with Roman numerals). This index also contains the original notes for the layout of some of the town roads. Several have quite a different look today. The Index to (Old) Survey Records replaced older indexes (e.g. for Hintze, Dahlen), which are also in the small filing cabinet.

County Surveyor Field Books: There are hundreds of old county surveyor field books in the small filing cabinet in the vault. They are generally consecutively lettered or numbered, although there are some double and non-continuous numbers or letters. The Index to (Old) Survey Records and the Blue Book Index reference these field books.

County Surveyor Field Books (Samples)

Old Hintze Survey Plat Books: County Surveyor Hintze kept compilation plat books of surveys. The books have tan covers and are numbered by roman numerals. These plat books are indexed in both the Index to (Old) Survey Records and the Old Green Book Index, and have references to Hintze's County Surveyor Field Books. Unfortunately, some pages are known to have disappeared. The books are currently stored in a filing cabinet in the vault. There may be other compilation plat books maintained by other surveyors as well.

Old Mabbett Surveys: W. F. Mabbett was an assistant engineer for the City of Madison around the 1940's. He did many surveys in the City of Madison, and his work is reputed to be of good quality. The Mabbett Survey Plats are in a 9 x 22 inch bound book (brown cover). The plats of survey are indexed in the Laserfiche Survey Database. The Mabbett field books are 6 x 8 inch brown books in a small filing cabinet in the County Surveyor's Office vault. There are also old photocopies in 3 large green volumes, but some pages are out of order. The field books are indexed in the Mabbett Survey Index (not Laserfiche). The Mabbett Survey Index is a 16 x 18 inch bound book with a black cover. It is a 1976 Atlas of Dane County with Mabbett field book and page numbers written in red ink across the surveyed parcels (e.g. M9-49 = Mabbett field book #9, page 49).

Mabbett Survey Plats (long book)

Mabbett Survey Index
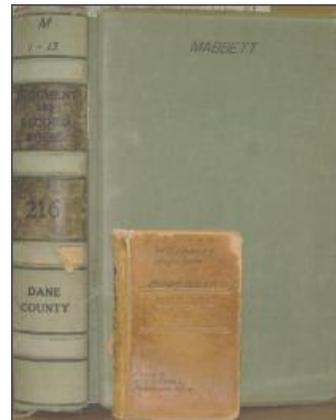
Mabbett Field Books & Copies

Old Green Book Index: An additional index of Mabbett and Hintze surveys in the City of Madison was compiled in an old ~14 x 21 inch green City of Madison Plat Book dating perhaps from the 1950's or 1960's. The book references Hintze Survey Plat Books (e.g. code "H-IX-4"), Hintze field book and page (H-213-15), and Mabbett field book and page (S-13-42). This index was kept at the front counter in zoning, but has been moved to the County Surveyor's Office vault with the other old indexes. Again, these records are not in the Laserfiche Survey Database.

Old Green Book Index

Old Peterson Field Books: W. N. Peterson was an engineer for the City of Madison. His field books labeled P1 – P8 date from 1947 to 1966. They are apparently not indexed. They can be searched page by page as a last resort when no other records are available.

Old Conrad Field Books & Index: Surveyor Al Conrad's field books numbered 101-113 include a spiral-bound index, but the index is by client name, not location. Conrad's filed surveys are in the regular plat of survey books and are indexed in the Laserfiche database.
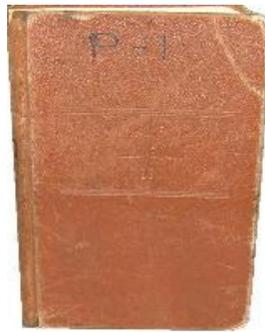
Peterson Field Books

Conrad Index

Conrad Field Books

Old Blue Books and Index: These are 6 blue-covered volumes about 18 x 18 inches containing old (1800's – early 1900's) retracement survey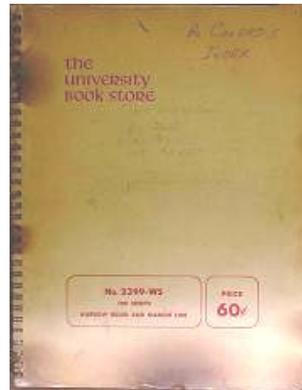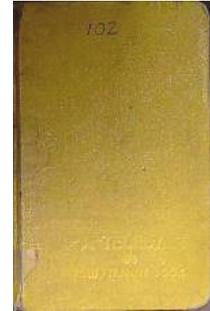s of PLSS sections and section subdivisions. The Blue Books also contain references to the County Surveyor Field Books. There is a black index book to the Blue Books in a nearby filing cabinet. The index includes a list of county surveyors since 1839, and an old note about systematic errors in certain county surveyors' chains. Note that the Blue Book surveys are not the original PLSS surveys or federal resurveys. However, they have been found very useful mostly in rural areas for identifying corner monuments and determining which rule was followed for locating the center of section and smaller subdivisions.

Blue Books & Index
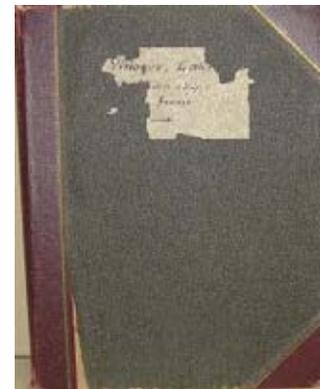
Villages, Lakes & Townships Index

Other Old Surveys / Indexes: A "Villages, Lakes and Townships" index apparently references special field books of unknown location or existence.

Public Land Survey Original Records & Federal Resurveys: The Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL), in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin, created a website with original PLSS notes and plats: http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/SurveyNotes/ However, some of these on-line records have been found to be incorrectly indexed. If records cannot be located on the website, consult the paper copies in the County Surveyor's Office vault (small blue books – not the large "Blue Book" retracement & subdivision surveys). The original paper records are at the BCPL (phone: (608)266-1370, website http://bcpl.state.wi.us). BCPL staff has noted that federal Bureau of Land Management resurveys are filed at the BCPL, but not necessarily at the County Surveyor's Office or ROD.

Copies of Original PLSS Notes

Public Land Survey Monument Records (Tie Sheets): Older (~1960's-1980's) tie sheets and newer (1980's – present) tie sheets are in separate file cabinets at the County Surveyor's Office (as of 2007). Be aware that new and old sheets may be in the wrong cabinet. Search both cabinets if location uncertain. If a tie sheet is missing, the City of Madison Engineering Division may have a copy. The City of Madison has some tie sheets on the web at: www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/map_records.htm The City commissioned Carl Sandsnes, RLS of Ayres & Associates (now at Royal Oak Engineering) to produce tie sheets with GPS-measured geodetic coordinates in 2004. Some were updated in 2006. These are currently (2006) only available from the City, and are on the city's website. The city tie sheets should eventually be filed at the County Surveyor's Office.

Railroad & Utility Plats: These are filed by township in a file cabinet in the County Surveyor's Office vault. The railroad plats are useful for confirming the existence and location of tracks called in deeds but no longer in existence, as well as right-of-way widths and curve data. Also, a complete set of railroad records is available in digital format, for sale by the Southwest Chapter of WSLS (contact Bruce Bowden, (608)935-5513 www.wsls.org/chapters.htm). Be aware that existing tracks may not be centered in the right-of-way of record. For example, curves were often laid out with spiral transitions, such that the circular curve segment is shifted as much as four or five feet toward the center of curve. Conversely, some tracks have been found shifted away from the center of curve due to centrifugal force.

Railroad & Utility Maps

Highways: Records for highways (including municipal/town roads & streets) can be difficult to locate. State statutes specify where highway records (such as orders, plans and final award / conveyance documents) are to be recorded, but the statutes have changed over time, and have not always been followed. In practice, very old town and county highway records are found in the (Old) Dane County Highway Register in the County Surveyor's Office (see the old Dane County tax parcel maps for a spatial index). County highway plans are at the County Highway Department (2302 Fish Hatchery Rd., Tel. (608)266-4261). State and federal highway plans are in the County Clerk's Office and the DOT. Copies of highway plans are also filed in the County Surveyor's Office vault. If a Transportation Project Plat (TPP) was made for the project, it is recorded at the Register of Deeds office and used like a subdivision plat for legal descriptions. TPP's should also be indexed and available in the County Surveyor's Office Laserfiche Survey Database. Municipal or town highway (street) records may also be available at the County Clerk's Office. City of Madison highway (street) plans are also available at the city engineer's office; Madison is currently (2007) making digital images of their archives. Contact the DOT Regional Office for state highway plans not found elsewhere.

The controlling documents for boundary location are the final award / conveyance documents which transfer fee simple ownership or easement rights, and are recorded at the ROD. Even TPP's are followed by conveyance documents. Note that some conveyance documents dating around the 1930's were executed by the parties but not recorded at the ROD as a cost saving measure during the Great Depression.

Users should be careful to verify that a given highway plan or other record is complete and is the final version, and was actually used to acquire right-of-way. The county surveyor and/or an attorney may need to be consulted to help determine if a record is valid.

(**Old) Dane County Highway Register:** This is a set of 8.5 x 14" blue books (not the "Blue Books" in the vault) with the highway orders or other records that created old town and county highways. This register is currently (Feb 2007) on the top shelf of one of the plat of survey bookcases. The documents go back to the 1800's. A note at the beginning of each book alerts the user that the Highway Register may not be complete; that public highways were created in many ways, such as pre-statehood Military Roads and Territorial Roads, as well as State, County and Town Roads; and that early records may be at the Wisconsin Secretary of State Office, the National Archives, or the Library of Congress (not just the ROD). The quality and completeness of the Highway Register varies by township. Most documents are handwritten and often difficult to read. Clearer copies may be available from the original custodian. The books are indexed by PLSS town, range and section. There is also a spatial index in the old Dane County tax parcel maps, which are black books underneath the front counter in Zoning. Red notation was added on each parcel affected by a document in the highway register.

Old Highway Register

Finally, users should be aware that some of these highways were created with right-of-way widths different than the standard four rods (66 feet). There are many three-rod (49.5 foot) highways per the County Highway Register. Also, old town and county public highways are generally presumed to be by easement rather than fee simple

acquisition, but the relevant records for a given highway may determine otherwise. The existence, location, width and type of ownership for older highways can involve complex applications of legal principles such as "highway by user" or "highway by worker"; consult the County Surveyor and an attorney if necessary when problems are discovered.

"Wisconsin Highways" Book: A book titled "Wisconsin Highways 1835-1945" compiled in 1947 by the State Highway Commission and the Public Roads Administration – Federal Works Agency describes the historical development of highways in Wisconsin. While mostly an economic, political and technical history, the book does contain maps and descriptions of pre-statehood Military Roads and Territorial Roads, which may be of some use in determining the origin of some highways if other information is not available. The book is available at the Madison Public Library (call number 625.7 W75) along with a follow-up volume titled "Wisconsin Highways 1945-1985" (call number 388.109775B387h).

DOT Rural Road Mileage Maps: The DOT maintains databases of rural roads for funding calculations and other purposes. The maps are in ~14 x 20-inch books, dating between 1970 and 1996, currently stored in the County Surveyor's Office vault. Later updates are maintained by the DOT in digital format (contact the DOT Regional Office). The maps show rural road length to 0.01 mile, and sometimes right-of-way width. However, these records are not necessarily based on original recorded documents, so their legal validity for relocating right-of-way boundaries is questionable. These mileage maps were used to map old roads in the county tax parcel maps, so this information is preserved in the current Dane County Tax Parcel Maps (DCIMap) as well.

Current County Tax Parcel Maps: The current Dane County tax parcel maps can be printed by staff at the County Surveyor's Office. Coverage is by full PLSS section, or 1/4-1/4 section where available. Check the printout to make sure it covers the full area. Dane County parcel maps and other data are also available on-line from DCIMap at: www.countyofdane.com/lio *Heed the county's disclaimer that these maps and associated records may not be accurate or current.* Original recorded documents must be consulted for legal and survey issues.

Older Tax Parcel Maps / Plat Books: Several older tax parcel maps / plat books provide useful information. Underneath the front counter at the Dane County Zoning, the township plat books contain older information not found on Dane County's current digital parcel maps. For example, they have notations referencing the (Old) Dane County Highway Register books. Additionally, the County Surveyor's Office vault contains several older land atlases and plat books which may be useful for researching historical ownership, for example to clarify an ancient legal description which calls a boundary only by adjoining owner's name. Both the Old Mabbett Survey Index and the Old Green Book Index (in the vault) were created from old plat books as well.

Current City of Madison Parcel Maps: See the "City of Madison MADMAPS Website" section at the beginning of this document.

Aerial Imagery: Aerial photos from 1955, 1957 (Madison only), 1968, 1976 and 1987 are stored at the County Surveyor's Office. The Dane County Land Conservation has aerial photos from 1947. More old photos are available at the City of Madison Engineering Division. Current aerial photography is also currently available on-line at the county and City of Madison parcel mapping websites. The Wisconsin State Cartographer's Office is a statewide clearinghouse for information about aerial photos and other spatial data: www.sco.wisc.edu/

Suggested Boundary Research – Dane County, Wisconsin

A project of the Madison Area Surveyors Council - Updated July 5, 2007

Disclaimer: This is the last page of the document "Land Surveying Records Research in Dane County, Wisconsin". See main document for details. No warranty is expressed or implied that the information herein is entirely current or accurate, nor that the suggested research procedures herein will necessarily produce all relevant surveying records for a given project. The focus of this compilation is records relating to boundary retracement. This is not a guide to finding all recorded rights and interests in land, such as easements and covenants, that a title search or abstract might disclose. Also, users should be aware that some surveys filed at the County Surveyor's Office are only preliminary plans, and were never used to create property boundaries. Users of this document have full responsibility for their own records search, and for obtaining the necessary title work. Questions should be referred to the Dane County Surveyor at (608)266-4252.

1. Check available on-line parcel mapping websites to determine which (if any) CSM's, subdivisions and condominium plats cover adjacent lands. The City of Madison's website is MADMAPS: http://gis.cityofmadison.com/MADMAPS/GISHome.html Dane County's website is DCIMap: www.countyofdane.com/lio/. ***Heed the disclaimers that these maps and associated records may not be accurate or current,*** and that original recorded documents must be consulted for legal and survey issues.

2. Check the Laredo database at the Register of Deeds for any affidavits of correction applicable to the CSM's, subdivisions and condominium plats. Remember that older CSMs and subdivision plats generally had any affidavit of correction hand-annotated on the map before it was scanned. This is not the case for newer ones.

3. Search the Laserfiche Survey Database for plats of survey on the subject parcel and adjoining parcels. Search as far away as necessary (e.g. entire city block) to have sufficient records for applying boundary retracement principles. Remember to enter a minimum number of very general search terms, using asterisk wildcards at the beginning and end (e.g. enter Block = *165*, with no plat name, to find surveys in Block 165 of Madison Original Plat).

4. The Index to (Old) Survey Records should always be consulted when surveying in older plats or unplatted lands. Critical records such as County Surveyor Field Books and survey compilation plat books may only be indexed here, and not in the Laserfiche Survey Database. Also be aware that municipalities are not all organized alphabetically in this index.

5. In older areas of the City of Madison, also check the Mabbett Survey Index to locate any Mabbett field books, and the Old Green Book Index to locate Mabbett and Hintze surveys. These older records are not cataloged in the Laserfiche Survey Database. If no other records are found for your area, check the Peterson field books (not indexed). The Land Records Coordinator in the City of Madison Engineering Division (Eric Pederson, 266-4056) is also a valuable resource for information about city street rights-of-way (such as acquisitions and vacations) and other public lands.

6. In unplatted / unincorporated areas, check the Old Blue Book Index. If necessary, obtain original Public Land Survey field notes and plats from the University of Wisconsin website: http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/SurveyNotes/ Additionally, there may be federal resurveys by the Bureau of Land Management on file at the Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands.

7. When Public Land Survey corners must be used, obtain monument records (tie sheets) by checking both the new and old file cabinets at the County Surveyor's Office. In and near the City of Madison, also check the city's website: www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/map_records.htm

8. For highway or street right-of-way not found through the above searches, check the County Surveyor's Office vault for state and county highway right-of-way maps, but verify with the appropriate authority that the version is the most current. Newer highway relocations may be recorded as a Transportation Project Plat at the ROD. Contact the Dane County Highway Department for county highway plans. For older highways, check the old Dane County Tax Parcel Maps at the Zoning counter for any notation, usually in red pencil, referencing the (Old) Dane County Highway Register. The DOT Rural Road Mileage Maps may also be useful, but that data may not be based on official documents. If necessary, contact the appropriate authority, such as the town or county clerk, city public works department, or the DOT Regional Office. Finally, the conveyance document by which the highway right-of-way was acquired should be obtained from the ROD, since this is the controlling document. Be aware that a title report may not go back far enough to include the award / conveyance document.