

CAPITAL CITY AIRPORT
(Capital City Airport, Wood Garage)
North Side of Grand River Avenue
Lansing Vicinity
Clinton County
Michigan

HAER No. MI-320-H

HAER
MICH
19-LAND.V
14.

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
Northeast Field Area
Chesapeake/Allegheny System Support Office
National Park Service
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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CAPITAL CITY AIRPORT, Wood Garage

HAER No. MI-320-H

Location: Capital City Airport, West Ramp Area
Lansing vicinity, Clinton County, Michigan

UTM: 16.696210.4738540
Quad: Lansing North, 1:24,000

Date of Construction: Unknown, pre-1939 (assumed)

Engineer: None
Architect: None

Present Owner: Capital Region Airport Authority
Capital City Airport
Lansing, Michigan

Present Occupants: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The Wood Garage contributes to the significance of the West Ramp because of its historic use as a field maintenance structure.

Project Information: The Wood Garage is an identified airport hazard under the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standards, and is scheduled for removal. During an environmental review (1988), the State Historic Preservation Officer determined that the building meets the criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and, therefore, would require mitigation of the adverse effect caused by its removal. The Memorandum of Agreement (1995) stipulates documentation of the Wood Garage according to HAER guidelines. This documentation was undertaken to fulfill that stipulation.

Ilene R. Tyler, AIA
QUINN EVANS/ARCHITECTS
219 1/2 North Main Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

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Refer to the Overview Report MI-320 for a more complete description of the history of aviation and its ties to the Lansing area. The Wood Garage is located behind the State Hangar, on the opposite side of the access drive, oriented north-south, with four doors along the east facade. There is one small multi-pane window in the north gable, and one sliding door covering an access door in the south gable.

This structure has been relocated at least once, and likely twice, before arriving at its current location. What appears to be the same structure can be observed in a 1939 aerial photo, sited near Airport Road at the original entry to the airport. And, in an interview for this report, Sylvester Zander who worked at the airport for the Bureau of Aeronautics beginning in the mid-1950s, said that when he arrived, the Garage was located at the end of the runway, down in a sort of hole near Airport Road, and that it was used as the field's main garage to store trucks, lawnmowers and snowplows (Zander 1995). He further said that the garage was moved in the 1970s to its present location after almost being destroyed by a DC-6 that overshot the runway (Zander 1995). The building was then primarily used for miscellaneous storage, since the updated equipment was too large to be stored in the structure.

The construction of the Wood Garage supports the theory that it was designed for dismantling and moving to meet the needs of the growing airport. At its current location, the structure has a concrete block foundation visible at three sides with a wood base plate on top. The walls are made of modular panels 5 feet wide by about 10 feet high, bolted to each other and to the base plate. Horizontal tongue-and-groove boards are attached to the exterior side. After erection of the panels, the exterior was sided with vertical tongue-and-groove boards, and a narrow batten attached to cover the joints between panels. Ledgers attached to the exterior walls and a row of columns down the center support 2' x 6's for an attic floor. These have been cut out to accommodate the four non-original, sectional, overhead doors in the east elevation. The original treatment of the east elevation is unknown. The building is scheduled for demolition to enable airport expansion, and compliance with FAA regulations requiring a wider clear zone associated with the runways.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. ENGINEERING DRAWINGS

Plan for Removal of 60' x 96' Hangar and Rehabilitation of Site. 1951. (The plan also shows the location of the state garage, thought also to be known as the Wood Garage.) State of Michigan, Department of Aeronautics.

B. HISTORIC VIEWS

No historic views of the Wood Garage were found.

C. INTERVIEWS

Zander, Sylvester. Telephone interview with the author. 7 June 1995. Sylvester's association with the Capital City Airport was as an employee of Francis Aviation, Hebert Aviation, Spartan Aviation, and the Bureau of Aeronautics from the mid-1950s until the early 1990s.

D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

No written materials or information on the Wood Garage were found.