United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DRAFT

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Syracuse Boys Club

other names/site number 430 E Genesee Street

name of related multiple property listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 430 E Genesee Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Syracuse ☐ vicinity

state New York code NY county Onondaga code 042 zip code 13202

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide _X_ local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Syracuse Boys Club
Name of Property

Onondaga, New York
County and State

5. Classification

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

X	private
	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

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

X	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	**Total**

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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Social/Civic

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Collegiate Gothic Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete
walls: Brick, Limestone Terra Cotta
roof:
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.)

Summary Paragraph

The Syracuse Boys Club building is located at 430 East Genesee Street, in the downtown business district of Syracuse, New York. It was designed in 1922 by Syracuse-based architect Melvin King in the Collegiate Gothic style and constructed by the Dawson Brothers in 1923. It was originally constructed to serve as the first clubhouse building for the Syracuse branch of the boys club. The impressive five-story, steel-framed building has a rectangular floorplan and is clad in a combination of brick, limestone, and terra cotta. The five-bay façade of the building, oriented to the north, is articulated with coursed limestone cladding on the first floor and generous limestone window surrounds throughout. It also features pointed Tudor arches, pressed copper detailing, stylized pilasters, bracketed overhanging cornices, and diamond-paned window casements. The fifth floor was added in 1988 and is composed of a row of aluminum-framed fixed ribbon windows. A section of overhanging Spanish tile roof, a remnant of the original design prior to the 1988 addition, shelters the center three bays of the fourth floor. The secondary elevations are significantly less articulated and feature simple brick cladding and flat window openings with simple concrete sills. The east elevation shares a party wall with the adjacent building and is entirely obscured. The roof is flat, concrete, and punctured with two skylights. The primary entrance into the building is centered on the north façade and accented with a decorative limestone surrounding. Secondary entrances, located on the west and south elevations, are utilitarian in character. All windows have been replaced with contemporary aluminum-framed casement windows, except for the first story windows on the south (rear) elevation, which have been infilled with glass block.

The Syracuse Boys Club building's high-style Collegiate Gothic design emphasizes the organization's important mission of providing educational, recreational, and developmental opportunities for the city's youth. Late twentieth century modifications, including the addition of a partial fifth floor and window replacement, do not substantially detract from the overall character of the building. The highly intact high-style exterior Collegiate Gothic design emphasizes the building's historic function as a boy's club and offers testimony to its important mission of providing educational, recreational, and developmental opportunities for the city's youth.

Narrative Description

Setting and Grounds

The Syracuse Boys Club building is located in the downtown business district of Syracuse and occupies the entirety of an urban lot at 430 East Genesee Street. The lot is bound to the north by East Genesee Street, to the east by a non-historic four-story office building (444 East Genesee Street), to the south by McCarthy Avenue, and to the west by the former Utica Mutual Insurance Company Office Building, a two-story International Style office building and its rear parking lot (420 East Genesee Street). The Utica Mutual building is also being nominated to the National Register; however, its significance is entirely unrelated to that of the Boys Club. On the north side of East Genesee Street, the historic Fayette Park (now Firemen's Memorial Park) spans the entire block. The Syracuse Boys Club is set back from East Genesee Street by a wide sidewalk. It shares a narrow, paved alleyway with 420 East Genesee Street.

In general, the surrounding block has a mixed-use character, with small businesses, public offices, and churches. There are several buildings that date back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century surrounding the Fireman's Memorial Park, including the Gothic Revival style Park Central Presbyterian Church (1872-73) and the Georgian Revival style University Club (1916). The Hamilton White House (1840-42) is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places and located across the park.

Exterior Elevations

The Syracuse Boys Club is an impressive five-story rectangular steel-framed building with a partially above-grade basement. It is clad in brick and executed in the Collegiate Gothic style. The generously articulated façade (north elevation) assumes the bulk of the stylistic effort, accented by limestone, terra cotta, and pressed copper details. Secondary elevations are utilitarian in character, clad in red brick with limited ornamentation. In keeping with its Gothic character, the verticality of the façade is emphasized by dramatic multi-story window openings supported by pointed masonry arches and stylized pilasters. The flat concrete roof features parapet walls capped with clay tile copings. The building is topped with a non-historic one-story addition, composed of black ribbon windows and metal siding, which is partially obscured by the historic battlement parapets and the historic Spanish-style awnings. The primary entrance is located along East Genesee Street and holds a contemporary double-leaf door centered on the façade. Secondary entrances, located along the west and south entrances, hold single-leaf doors.

The façade is five bays wide and clad in a combination of red brick laid in a Flemish bond and limestone. The first story is clad entirely in smooth ashlar limestone panels and features the main entrance and recessed, paired window openings. The upper stories (two through four) are finished in red brick on the end bays, with limestone enframements surrounding the window openings on the central three bays. Visually, the façade is anchored by the central, three-bay limestone section, which is emphasized by continuous vertical lines and multi-story pointed-arched window enframements. These three center bays are sheltered by a Spanish-tile roof awning on the fourth story. Ornamentation includes stone crest bas relief plaques, pressed copper spandrels, stylized pilasters and blind stone traceries, all of which reinforce the institutional nature of the Syracuse Boys Club. The building historically featured crenulated parapet walls characteristic of the Collegiate Gothic style; however, these were removed with the addition of a fifth floor in 1988. Fenestration is symmetrical and regular. The main entrance, within the center bay, is highlighted by a decorative limestone overdoor, which continues upward to the second story. Window openings hold a combination of paired and three-part fixed single-light aluminum-framed metal windows.

The first story is clad in a uniform, smooth ashlar limestone masonry. The five bays protrude modestly in tiers, from the outer bays to the center, culminating in a center bay that holds main entrance. A continuous, slanted stone still divides the first and second stories but is interrupted by an overdoor above the main entrance. The main entrance is emphasized by a dramatic stone ogee arch with an egg-shaped keystone. Above the entrance, on the second story overdoor, a sign with metal lettering reads PARK 430 PLAZA, accented by stepped stone molding. It is flanked by stylized stone pilasters embellished with blind stone traceries. The entrance holds a contemporary double-leaf metal-framed glass door, topped with a five-part arched transom with stained-glass panels. A metal sconce and flagpole are affixed to either side of the main entrance. The outer four bays of the first story are each dotted by pairs of simple flat-headed window openings, recessed into the stone.

The second, third, and fourth stories feature prominent limestone window surrounds that give the impression of large, continuous window openings. The central three bays are clad entirely in limestone and the outer two bays are clad in red brick with limestone accents. The central bays feature arched window surrounds divided by stylized pilasters topped by chamfered capitals. Within this center section, the three-part second-story window openings are vertically divided by limestone mullions. Only the center bay of the second story, which supports a limestone overdoor above the main entrance, lacks fenestration. Second-story window openings are separated from the third and fourth story windows by a row of stone panels that feature stone bas relief carvings with a simple crest motif. The third and fourth stories also feature three-part windows, divided by decorative pressed-metal panels and metal mullions. All three center bays are sheltered by a Spanish roof awning, supported by a denticulated copper cornice and brackets that meet the chamfered capitals. The outer two bays of the façade

mimic the overall appearance of the central bays, with multi-story limestone window enframements that emphasize verticality. Unlike the center bays, the tops of these enframements are rectangular with flat heads, as opposed to pointed arches. On the second story, paired window openings are topped with stone panels with crest motifs. On the third and fourth story, paired window openings are divided by metal mullions and metal spandrels. On the outer bays, a stone belt course aligns with the awnings at the top of the fourth story.

The fifth floor of the façade is composed of the new metal-frame addition, organized around a row of ribbon windows. This floor is partially obfuscated by the decorative parapet and Spanish awning. On the outer bays, the parapet walls are brick with ornate inset limestone coats-of-arms reliefs. Historically these featured crenulations, giving the appearance of battlement towers. The crenulations have been removed, but the remainder of the tower appearance is intact and shelters the lower portion of the addition. The center bays of the addition are further covered by the awning.

The west elevation is fifteen bays long and utilitarian in treatment. It is clad in red brick, laid in a five-course common bond and faces onto a narrow alleyway and parking lot. On the far south end of the elevation, the brickwork transitions to a tan brick to match the south elevation. Due to the partial fifth-story addition, the northern six bays of this elevation are roughly two feet taller than the southern nine bays. A concrete block foundation is partially visible above grade on this elevation. The fenestration is generally regular, with rectangular flatheaded windows supported by cast-stone sills. The fifth-story window openings on the north section of the building were added with the modern addition and are offset from the pattern of the rest of the building. There are two secondary entrances on the first floor; one entrance holds a single-leaf metal door, and the other holds a single-leaf metal door with a glass panel. Window openings hold aluminum frame single-light casement windows.

The south elevation is eight bays wide and utilitarian in treatment. It is clad in tan brick and laid in a five-course running bond. The roof profile is stepped in three tiers. The foundation is cast stone and there is a cast-stone water table belt course above the first story. Although fenestration is generally regular, it is interrupted by a half-moon window that accesses the auditorium between the second and third stories. The first story has recessed glass block windows. The upper stories are pierced by simple flat-headed window openings with cast-stone sills. A secondary entrance holds a single-leaf metal door. Window openings hold aluminum frame single-light fixed and casement windows. The east elevation abuts an office building and is not visible. This elevation is identical in terms of stories to the west elevation.

Taken as a whole, the exterior of the building has been altered very modestly after the period of significance. The overall footprint remains unchanged, and the façade retains its characteristic Collegiate Gothic ornamentation, communicating the building's historic function as a space of community and learning. The primary alterations relate to the 1980s remodel of the building to be used as office space. These include the addition of a partial fifth story on the north end of the building and the replacement of original double-hung wood sash and fixed wired glass windows with contemporary aluminum-framed windows. The fifth-story addition does not detract from the overall appearance of the façade due to it simple, modern design and placement behind the historic parapet and roof awning. Select alterations to the fenestration are concentrated on the rear of the building and do not substantially alter its utilitarian character.

Interior Description

The Syracuse Boys' Club building has a rectangular footprint that includes a basement level, four stories constructed in 1923, and a fifth story constructed in 1988. The fifth-story addition was only added to the north half of the building. Two stories were added to the south half of the building by inserting new floors into

historic double-height spaces, which did not alter the overall height and volume of the south half. The north and south halves of the building are connected by a central elevator lobby flanked by two stairs: a contemporary and utilitarian east stair and a historic and decorative west stair. A third staircase connects the first floor to the basement in the south half of the building. On the fifth floor, the two building halves are separated by a concrete block wall, accessed via a shared stairwell on the east side of the building. Early conceptual plans and historic photos of the interior indicate that the original programming for the boys club was organized around a gymnasium, auditorium, swimming pool, recreation rooms, and classroom spaces. In the 1980s, the club was sold to a law firm, which altered many of the spaces for new office use. The auditorium and gymnasium spaces were converted into office spaces with partition walls. During this renovation, a partial floor was inserted into the former two-story auditorium, disrupting the original functional divisions. A second mezzanine floor was inserted to the double-volume gymnasium space. The original ground floor pool remains, with its historic tiling and overall configuration. Many of the original red quarry tile and wood floors, including those for the game room, the auditorium, and the gymnasium are intact. Two-toned ornamental brick walls and historic fireplaces are present throughout. Elements of the plan are readable and many historic materials and finishes survive.

The basement is only accessible in the north half of the building and was most recently used as a locker room with several mechanical closets. The first floor features a partially below-grade entrance lobby on the north half of the building and the historic swimming pool, storage area, and mechanical closets on the south half. The second floor features office spaces with contemporary partition walls throughout. The southeast quadrant of this floor was historically a double-height auditorium, which retains its historic stage. The mid-height floor inserted into this space does not extend the full length of the former auditorium, allowing for some communication between the two floors. The third floor features an open floorplan on the north half and a combination of offices and open spaces on the south side. The fourth floor features offices with contemporary partition walls throughout. The south half was formerly a double-height gymnasium space, which has been altered with the insertion of a mezzanine floor. The fifth floor features a partially unfinished addition to the north half and a mezzanine floor with a skylight on the south half.

Basement

The basement floor of the building is composed of three major sections: the building's north section is composed of a large locker room; the southwest quadrant is composed of a large open room with exposed steel beam columns; and the inaccessible southeast quadrant houses pipes and the excavated space for the first-floor pool. Basement circulation is navigated through both the east and west stair, as well as via a one floor staircase in the southwest quadrant that connects to the first floor.

The northern half of the building has locker rooms with red tile flooring and contemporary acoustic tile ceilings. Mechanical rooms and storage spaces have concrete floors and exposed concrete ceilings. The southwest quadrant has an open floorplan with concrete floors, exposed ceiling beams, and drywall.

First Floor

The first floor is composed of three sections: a north section, a southeast quadrant, and a southwest quadrant. The entire floor is partially below grade and is entered from the main entrance along Genesee Street. The entrance is composed of a small vestibule with two sets of double-leaf doors. Directly to the south of the vestibule, stairs descend into the first-floor lobby. The lobby is finished with contemporary wood paneling, linoleum tile floors, and acoustic tile ceilings. Selective demolition suggests that underneath these contemporary finishes, the lobby retains its historic unfinished smooth concrete floors. The entrance lobby is flanked by offices on the east and west and terminates in the elevator lobby to the south, finished with contemporary tiles.

The southeast quadrant is a large open room which contains the historic swimming pool with intact historic finishes including decorative tiling on the pool deck and exposed decorative tile walls. The southwest and southeast quadrants are connected via a doorway accessed by a few stairs. The southwest quadrant has a large open floorplan with carpeted floors and brick walls. There is a small HVAC and electrical gear room behind this. A staircase leads to the basement area. Three concrete steps lead to the secondary entrance on the west elevation.

Second Floor

On the second floor, the building is divided into three sections. The north section of the building is composed of a large open room to the east and several smaller offices spaces and bathrooms to the west. This space features decorative brick walls, and a historic decorative brick fireplace in the northeast corner of the building remains. The north half of the building, inclusive of the elevator lobby, retains its historic red quarry tile flooring. The southeast quadrant, which was historically a double-height auditorium space, has been modified to accommodate a mezzanine floor that extends two-thirds of the length of the auditorium. Contemporary wood and glass partition walls divide the auditorium into smaller office spaces. This space retains its historic wood floors, ornamental two-tone decorative brick walls and a portion of the historic stage with its decorative historic railing. The southwest quadrant of this floor contains offices spaces; partition walls separate spaces for three small offices in this quadrant and a large lobby room on the south end.

Third Floor

On the third floor, the building is divided into three sections. The north section is composed of an open floorplan with a partially exposed ceiling, revealing trusses and I-beams. The historic brick fireplace is located in the northeast corner. The southeast quadrant is composed of the former two-story auditorium space. A small mezzanine room overlooks the auditorium. The southwest quadrant of the building has an open floorplan with reinforced concrete columns. The elevator lobby retains its configuration and relationship to the historic stair to the east. This floor is generally unfinished.

Fourth Floor

On the fourth floor, the building is divided into a north and south half. The north half is composed of offices and auxiliary rooms including bathrooms and mechanical closets. This space is finished with contemporary carpet, drywall, and acoustic tile ceilings. Selective demolition indicates that underneath these finishes, the historic two-tone decorative brick walls and polished concrete floors remain. The historic fireplace is present in the northeast corner. The south half of the building is open and was historically the gymnasium space. It has been remodeled and organized as an atrium, with the exposed trusses on the fifth floor visible through a central skylight. Office spaces surround the atrium, finished with acoustic tile ceilings and drywall with wood wainscotting. The historic wood floors of the gymnasium are present and exposed.

Fifth Floor

The fifth floor is divided into two major spaces. The addition was added to the north side of the building in 1988, and the south section dates to 1923. The two sections are connected by an unfinished elevator lobby; the south wall of this section was formerly the exterior wall, and the historic window openings have been covered with contemporary materials. The north section is stepped-up from the central space and accessed via a small utilitarian stair. A contemporary barrel skylight permits light into this section. The north section is largely unfinished. The south section has a generally open floorplan, interrupted by a large aluminum storefront

enclosure, through which the atrium below is visible. The surrounding floor is concrete. A large historic steel truss spans the room.

The interior of the building has undergone significant alterations in line with its reuse in the 1980s. These alterations include the addition of a second stair, the insertion of a mezzanine and partial floors in two double-height spaces, the construction of additional partition walls to accommodate office spaces, and the addition of new finishes throughout. Despite these programmatic alterations, the interior of the building retains sufficient historic material, circulation, and overall character to communicate its original function as a boys club. The building continues its historic bifurcated organization with its central staircase. Many of the historic finishes, including the two-tone decorative brick walls, historic quarry tile floor, polished concrete surfaces, and historic wood flooring remain. Selective demolition suggests that these finishes are consistently located through the building, covered by reversible finishes, and can be easily restored. The historic pool space is remarkably intact, with its original volume, surrounded by a decorative tile deck and complementary subway tile walls.

Integrity

The Syracuse Boys Clubs retains integrity, despite interior modifications to accommodate the building's later use as a law office. The building is in its original **location** on East Genesee Street and retains its historic **setting**, directly across from Fireman's Memorial Park (historically Fayette Park) in downtown Syracuse. The surrounding blocks retain their general historic density, with low buildings in an urban setting. Many of the buildings surrounding the Fayette Park area are still extant from the period of significance, including the Hamilton White House Building (307 South Townsend Street, 1842), Park Central Presbyterian Church (310 South Townsend Street, 1873), and the University Club (447 East Fayette Street, 1916). The building's iconic Collegiate Gothic façade is well-preserved, demonstrating a high degree of **design** integrity. Although the interior has undergone remodeling, evidence of its original programming is still evident in select spaces, such as the historic pool. Others can be discerned despite alterations. Despite some changes to the plan, quite a few historic materials and finishes survive on the interior. These include interior wood and quarry tile flooring, two-tone decorative brick walls, decorative pool tiles, and polished concrete throughout, as well as a historic fireplace mantel. Together with the retention of historic materials on the exterior, such as the historic brick, limestone, terracotta, and cast-stone elements, these convey a relatively high degree of integirty of **materials. M**oreover, a high degree of **workmanship** can be seen in the exterior Gothic Revival detailing of the building façade, including the ornate stone and metalwork. Altogether, the design, location, and materials communicate the **association** with the Syracuse Boys Club and its historic **feeling** within the context of turn-of-the-century twentieth social reform movements, which increased focus on the welfare of children with after school programming such as boys clubs. **(See also Appendix A, Special Statement on Integrity and photos).**

Syracuse Boys Club
Name of Property

Onondaga, New York
County and State

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.)

- [X] 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.
- [X] 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.)

Architecture
Social History

Period of Significance
1922-1982

Significant Dates
1922-1923

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Melvin King
Dawson Brothers

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for this building is 1922 to 1982, which reflects the period of occupation and use by the Syracuse Boys Club.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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

The Syracuse Boys Club meets National Register **Criterion A** in the area of Social History as a significant charitable social service institution in the city of Syracuse established for the benefit of the city's youth and for its association with one of the important social reform movements of the time. The Boys Club of America was born out of progressive era ideals about youth development and the subsequent rise of afterschool programs. It was established to provide health services, technical skills, and a safe recreational space for the nation's youth. In Syracuse, as in many other cities in New York, the need for community-based education and care was further compounded by waves of immigration from Eastern Europe. Many of these afterschool programs were spearheaded by individuals who were concerned about the "physical and moral hazards posed by growing up in the immigrant neighborhoods of major cities" and sought a place to address these concerns.[1] After school programs often served the additional function of "americanizing" new populations by offering a space to learn language and cultural values outside of the home.

The Syracuse Boys Club building also meets National Register **Criterion C** as an excellent example of a Collegiate Gothic style building from the early twentieth century adapted by an organization that provided opportunities for youth to reach their full potential as productive citizens. Designed by prominent local architect Melvin King and built between 1922 and 1923, the College Gothic design of the building communicates the club's dedication to its mission of education and social betterment. The grandeur and details of the buildings mirror other fine academic buildings of the time, promoting a sense of stability, permanence, and the educational opportunities possible within the walls. The high-style treatment and use of brick, stone and terracotta on the façade conveys the building's importance in the community.

Narrative Statement of Significance

CRITERION A: SOCIAL HISTORY

The Syracuse Boys Club was formed with the intention of providing after-school care, education, and training for the youth of Syracuse. Spurred in part by progressive ideals about child development, the club was part of a national movement to establish spaces for recreation and learning outside of schools. Boys clubs emerged in most major east coast cities around the turn of the century, providing resources to low-income populations, especially children in urban areas with limited spaces to play and congregate after school. In Syracuse, the boys club program was specifically targeted to the children of recent immigrant families; local activists and social reformers identified that this demographic was in particular need of additional education, recreation, and structure, as they assimilated to the American way of life.

A History of After-school Programs

Boys clubs and similar after-school programs gained popularity in the early twentieth century. This need for boys club programming was brought about by two major factors: new ideas about discretionary time and child development and increased urban residency in poor quality, crowded housing. During the second half of the nineteenth century, rapid industrialization in America led to the employment of children in factory labor; children had limited free time or opportunities for education and were largely unsupervised. In the Progressive Era (1900-1929), reformers began to advocate for the welfare of children and successfully campaigned for the

[1] Robert Halburn, "A Different Kind of Child Development Institution: The History of After-School Programs for Low-Income Children," *Teachers College Record*, Volume 104, No. 2, 2002.

passage of child labor laws. Simultaneously, cities in the early twentieth were plagued by housing issues, brought about by increased immigration. Multiple generations of families were crowded under one roof in tenement-style housing, leaving children little privacy or space for play or educational purposes. Many children, fleeing from the conditions of their homes and unburdened by the responsibility of work, found themselves on the street for extended periods of the day.[2]

This new leisure time for children created an issue for cities, as recreation was unsupervised and unstructured. Initially, many local governments combatted the increase in youth activity in public spaces by criminalizing outdoor play with "street laws," which included bans on "fire setting, begging, roaming around, loitering, blocking sidewalks, and playing street games."[3] However, progressive reformers began to reconsider this strategy and looked for ways to make space for structured recreation.[4] Reformers saw afterschool programs and facilities as places where the city's youth could congregate in a structured manner, diverted from the unsupervised temptations of the city street. Although initially these programs were informally held in churches or private residences, they gradually formalized into institutions such as boys clubs, which had separate buildings and governing boards.

The Boys Club of America

The origins of the boys club have been widely attributed to three women: Elizabeth Hamersley, Mary Goodwin, and Alice Goodwin. In the mid to late nineteenth century, many parents in Hartford, Connecticut, worked long hours at their jobs in the mill and were unable to provide consistent guidance and structured recreation for their children. Hamersley and the Goodwin sisters recognized the negative effects of industrial society on the community's children, and, in response, the trio formed the Dashaway Club, a space for boys to congregate outside of school. Although this experiment was short-lived and the club disbanded with the onset of the Civil War, the idea of afterschool programming for children took hold. In 1876, the first boys club was formed in New York City's lower east side.

The organization quickly expanded to include branches in Rhode Island and greater New York and then later in the Midwest and American west. In 1906, a national office was created to organize the fifty-three boys clubs across the country, and the Federated Boys Club offices were established in Boston, Massachusetts, before moving to New York City and changing its name to the Boys Club Federation in 1915. The name was again changed in 1931 to the Boys' Clubs of America, and by 1946, there were 260 clubs nationwide, many in the central New York area.[5] In 1990, it became the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, although girls were admitted to some clubs as early as the 1950s.[6]

Boys clubs operated with several goals, including minimizing juvenile delinquency, providing safe spaces to congregate, and offering health services. One of the main differences between the Boys Club of America and other youth organizations of the time, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, was the focus on serving families with limited funds. According to William Hall, the National President of the Boys Club in 1916, this program was formed because the streets were the only play areas for children who were forced out of crowded tenement apartments. Hall stated that the origin myth for the Boys Club of New York was that a young boy once threw a rock through a window, landing on founder E.H. Harriman's lap. Instead of seeking punishment

[2] Halburn, "A Different King of Development," *2002.*
[3] Halburn, *2002.*
[4] Halburn, *2002.*
[5] Hall, 21
[6] Hall, 111.

for the boy, Harriman decided to consider what children might need to succeed in an urban environment. The club's early motto was "a boys' club where a boy always has a place to go and something to do."[7]

Although boys clubs often started in repurposed spaces, such as abandoned industrial buildings, churches, and parlors, communities banded together to fund modern, well-equipped buildings. Minimal programming requirements for a boys club building included space for a game room, library, classrooms, gymnasiums, and toilet facilities. Large, urban boys club buildings often included additional programming such as spaces for a swimming pool, library, and vocational classrooms. Often, the clubs provided medical and dental care to members, knowing that this was not something they would otherwise have access to. The boys club solicited membership from boys aged eight to sixteen, although "senior clubs" provided separate spaces for older boys for continued care. Boys clubs tended to be in poorer neighborhoods of large cities, although they also served small communities outside of cities.[8] In a 1939 summary of the Boys Club of America operation, former educational director R.K. Atkinson writes that this location was intentional, to service those most in need:

> To understand a Boys' Club one must visit it with enough time to see what is going on; and so let us visit a typical club . . . Immediately off the main street we find an area of humble homes, once the abode of the relatively well-to-do now too close to the central business district to be regarded as desirable residential property. This district houses a larger number of persons per square block than any other part of the city; and near the center of this neighborhood is found the Boys' Club.[9]

Although boys clubs were typically located in the downtown core of cities, Atkinson claimed that they were most successful when they were located within a one-and-a-half-mile radius of their members.

Membership

Boys clubs prided themselves on inclusivity and were open to boys of all races, ethnicities, religions, and perspectives, even going so far as to state that the clubhouses were "not limited to boys of proven good character."[10] These clubs funded themselves from community support and donations, although they also requested minimal annual dues for membership, ranging from twenty-five cents to two dollars.[11] The *Encyclopedia of African American Education* notes that racial integration was common among Boys Club of America chapters, which took an early interest in the improvement of education and general welfare for African Americans. Many boys clubs formed specifically for African American youth, such as the West Side Colored Boys Club (New York, NY), Boys' Welfare Association (New York, NY), and the Wissahickon Boys' Club (Philadelphia, PA), while other clubs were racially integrated.[12] Early racial integration was contentious, and national leadership deferred to "local custom" in determining which boys clubs were segregated and which were integrated.[13] According to Atkinson, members included boys of "diverse racial characteristics" and represented a "real cross section of American boyhood from the poorest section of the city."[14]

[7] Hall, 18.
[8] Hall, 6-21.
[9] R.K. Atkinson, *The Boys' Club* (New York: Association Press, 1939), 11.
[10] Hall, 27.
[11] Hall, 21.
[12] Carter Julian Savage, "'In the Interest of the Colored Boys': Christopher J. Atkinson, William T. Coleman, and the Extension of Boys' Clubs Services to African American Communities, 1906–1931." *History of Education Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (2011): 486–518., 501.
[13] Savage, 513.
[14] Atkinson, 12.

In addition to the lofty and high-minded goals of the organization, boys clubs also offered programs and spaces that were instrumental in "building character for citizenship," especially for members of immigrant communities.[15] In his article, "'A Different Kind of Child Development Institution': The History of After-School Programs for Low-Income Children," Robert Halburn argues that boys clubs strove to "americanize" large populations of new immigrant communities in the early twentieth century.[16] As many children lived in segregated ethnic enclaves, afterschool programs offered an opportunity for youth to encounter American cultural norms and to prepare children for American industrial society. This idea was reinforced by members of the boys club organization; a speaker at the 15th Annual Boys Club Federation Conference told his audience that the best way "to impart Americanism to children of alien birth or parentage is to pit an American heart up against their heart."[17] This statement illustrates the widely held belief that cultural assimilation was achieved though sustained contact with immigrant youth.

Immigration to Syracuse

The early twentieth century was marked by a wave of European immigration to the United States, as populations primarily from Southern and Eastern European flocked to American cities in search of economic prosperity and religious freedom. Many of these new immigrants moved into urban centers, which led to overcrowding and overall poor living conditions as cities struggled to accommodate and provide service to new residents. These urban centers had previously been home to affluent residents but had been largely abandoned in the early twentieth century in favor of new suburban developments facilitated by the automobile and the streetcar.

The overall demographics of the Syracuse immigrant communities closely aligned with the immigrant communities in the rest of the state during the early twentieth century. Around the turn of the nineteenth century, a wave of Italian immigrants, many of whom were former railroad laborers, settled in Syracuse and formed the first "Little Italy."[18] By 1920, over half of the immigrants to Syracuse hailed from Southern and Eastern Europe, and they had established ethnic enclaves throughout the city.[19] These immigrant communities often lived in segregated neighborhoods, and a substantial number of Eastern European immigrants were employed in industrial factory work.[20] Jewish persons hailing from Russia and Poland moved into the downtown area, as earlier settlements of German Jewish families migrated towards the east side of the city. The Fifteenth Ward, which encompassed the historic business district and surrounding neighborhoods and stretched from East Washington to Montore Street, served as the heart of this immigrant community; the integrated neighborhood was home to Irish, Italian, Polish, and Jewish immigrants, as well as African Americans.[21]

The burgeoning immigrant community of Syracuse was plagued by many of the same issues facing immigrant communities in other East Coast cities at the time, including inadequate accommodations and cramped and often unsanitary living conditions. Tenement housing was common as the downtown core grew increasingly

[15] Savage, 499.
[16] Halburn, 2002.
[17] Boys' Workers Roundtable. Midwestern Division Report (1921), 15.
[18] John Harwood, *North Salina Street Historic District*, National Register Nomination, 1985.
[19] Kenneth Jones-Wolf, "Revivalism and Craft Unionism in the Progressive Era," 392; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920: Population (Washington, DC, 1922), vol. 3, pp 702-704, 721.
[20] Kenneth Jones-Wolf, 392
[21] Evamaria Hardin, *Syracuse Landmarks: An AIA Guide to Downtown and Historic Neighborhoods* (Onondaga Historical Association: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 123.

dense, and Syracuse struggled with its increasing population. According to a pamphlet published by the boys club of Syracuse, many houses or apartments had poor or nonexistent bathing facilities in the home.[22]

The response from existing residents to the influx of immigration was mixed. Local newspaper articles suggest some animosity towards immigrant communities in Syracuse in the early twentieth century. A 1904 article by the local Syracuse newspaper warned about the "peril of the criminal and pauper immigration," urging Congress to act on the "aliens without reputation, property, or character, mendicants, the diseased, the criminals, vagrants, deluded by false stories of the wealth to be had in America."[23] In contrast to these concerns, many activists and organizations began to consider ways to improve the conditions of immigrant communities, especially in downtown urban cores. In 1909, the Syracuse Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) hosted a convention with 1,000 delegates in Syracuse, with the intention to discuss "problems of the boy, immigration, and social conditions."[24] In particular, activists in the progressive era began to consider after-school programs to offer services and educational opportunities to immigrant youth that they believed were not being offered at home.[25]

Syracuse Boys Club

The first iteration of the Syracuse Boys Club was founded in 1892 in the May Memorial Church as a place to socialize and play. Dr. Samuel Calthrop invited boys, many of whom were employed as errand and news boys, to the church parlor area in the evenings, charging annual dues of fifty cents. In 1901, the informal gathering was incorporated as the Syracuse Boys Club and found new quarters on South Salina Street and later in 240 E. Water Street. From its inception, the club adhered to a moral vision of betterment, with the motto "form character, and reform will not be necessary." Primarily concerned with shaping the "men of tomorrow," the virtues of the new club were extoled in this 1904 article:

> The men of tomorrow will control tomorrow's national destinies. There will be no national destiny if the men of tomorrow are not made fit to control. Whether they shall be or not depends upon the proper equipment of the boys of today. It is this recognized principle that concerns the men and women who control the Syracuse Boys Club. The boys most benefited by such organizations are, of course, those with indifferent home surroundings. Right here in Syracuse there are boys safely started on the right track, through the efforts of this organization, who were originally found with the most vicious of environments.[26]

By 1904, the Syracuse Boys Club boasted 220 members. The services provided by the boys club included a savings bank, free medical dispensary, tutoring, and after-school activities such as sport and singing instruction. In 1912, prominent national activist Fred Zerbe was asked to take charge of the Boys Club, and membership rose to 650 boys. [27] By 1919, membership had increased to 676 boys from a variety of diverse backgrounds. A 1919 newspaper article indicated that there was religious diversity amongst members, who identified as belonging to the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths.[28] The Syracuse Boys Club was also an early proponent of racial integration; a pamphlet from the early 1900s stated that the club welcomed all races, and a 1955

[22] *Syracuse Boys Club*. Pamphlet. Courtesy of the Onondaga Historical Society.
[23] "A Growing Peril," *Post-Standard*, December 22, 1904.
[24] "Expect 1,000 Delegated to State Meeting," *Post-Standard*, December 25, 1909.
[25] Halburn, *A Different King of Development, 2002.*
[26] "Things That Help Syracuse- The Syracuse Boys Club," *Post-Standard*, November 16, 1904.
[27] *Syracuse Boys Club*. Pamphlet. Onondaga Historical Society.
[28] "What Other Cities Are Doing: The Syracuse Boy's Club," *Dayton Herald*, June 12, 1919.

newspaper article about the club stated that, "the club strives for . . . good, wholesome, interracial relationships."[29]

In the late 1910s, director Henry W. Cook and executive director Frederick Zerbe began fundraising for a new space as membership continued to grow, supported largely by community donations.[30] The boys club was partly financed with the assistance of the City of Syracuse, which initiated a subscription campaign that raised $385,000 for the building.[31] In 1920, the Boys Club purchased the property at 430 East Genesee Street, demolishing the existing house on the site. Like other boys clubs of the time, the site was chosen for its central location in the downtown business district, close to some of the city's poorest neighborhoods. Located within walking distance of the Italian, Irish, and African American neighborhoods, the site could effectively service the youth from the city's fifteenth and sixteenth wards.[32]

The demolition was ceremoniously initiated by four members of the boys club, aged ten to fourteen years old, with an audience of hundreds of boys, neighbors, and police officers.[33] Construction started in 1922 and the building was dedicated on June 1, 1923.[34] The impressive, four-story building was executed in the Collegiate Gothic style and was situated across from Fayette Park. An early pamphlet for the boys club indicated that 2,100 boys paid dues in a single year, averaging between two and four hours in the clubhouse a day. When the East Genesee Street building first opened, most members had foreign-born parents, notably from Italy, Poland, and Russia, reflecting the recent immigration patterns to the city.[35]

The initial design of the rectangular building conformed to the overall programming of a boys club building, including spaces for a library, gymnasium, auditorium, game room, multiple reading rooms, and a swimming pool. The main lobby, located at the top of the stairs, had nineteen-foot ceilings, a mezzanine floor, quarry-red tile in a herring bone pattern, and two-tone ivory and yellow-brick walls. An auditorium room, which opened off the main lobby, had seating capacity for 350 people, steel furniture, a stage with foot and proscenium lighting, and a dressing room. The auditorium was also equipped with a moving picture camera to show educational pictures.[36] The gymnasium, located on the top floor, boasted a running track. Other specialized rooms were adapted to teach the boys employable skills. Instructors taught woodworking in the "sloyd" wood-working room, typewriting, small motor electricity and sign printing in classrooms, and printmaking on commercial printmaking equipment. A room to the east of the entrance provided for bicycle parking and lockers. There was a small basketball court in the basement, on the same floor as the swimming pool.[37]

The club was particularly well known for skill building programs and athletics. Fred Zerbe considered "athletics are a real course in the school of citizenship," and the boys club emphasized sports, not only for play but also for development. [38] In particular, the Syracuse Boys club was known for its basketball program, holding

[29] Farewell Party in Honor of Frederick K. Zerbe, January 1, 1937. Pamphlet. Library of Congress; "Common Creation Features Boys' Club Meetings," *Post-Standard*, February 5, 1955.
[30] Evamaria Hardin, *Syracuse landmarks: an AIA guide to downtown and historic neighborhoods* (Onondaga Historical Association: Syracuse University Press, 1993).
[31] "*Farewell Party,"* Pamphlet, 1937.
[32] "Fayette Park Realty Taken by Boys Club," *Post Standard*, April 19, 1922.
[33] "Boys Club Members Begin Work of Cleaning Site of Their Fine New Clubhouse," April 1922. Clipping courtesy of Onondaga County Public Library. No newspaper indicated.
[34] "Judge Hiscock Calls Signing of Repeater and Unwise Move," *Post-Standard*, June 2, 1923.
[35] *Syracuse Boys Club*. Pamphlet. Onondaga Historical Society.
[36] "Boys Clubs May Have New Home," *Herald*, January 17, 1922.
[37] "Syracuse Boys Club's 'Housewarming' June 1," May 1923, Clipping courtesy of Onondaga County Public Library
[38] *Syracuse Boys Club*, Pamphlet, Onondaga Historical Society.

tournaments at the facility and travelling through the state to compete with other boys clubs.[39] The club's modern sports facilities allowed it to host tournaments, which often raised money for the club.[40] The club also held boxing tournaments; both the Polish legion branch and the main clubhouse had their own teams.[41] Additionally, the sloyd room was particularly well-used; the Syracuse Boys Club garnered national attention in 1936 for its woodworking skills when thirty members of the Boys Club built one and two-seater kayaks for use on nearby Oneida Lake. The boys made eighteen boats, costing approximately $10 each, and their efforts were published in newspapers across the country.[42]

In 1946, the Boys Club began fundraising for the $125,000 expansion campaign.[43] Funds were intended to be used to improve facilities at the off-site summer camp associated with the club, as well as to restore the building on East Genesee Street. Community fundraising included door-to-door solicitation, as well as donations from local organizations. Given the focus on immigrant communities, many of the contributors were from specific cultural organizations, such as the Polish Community Home and the Polish Legion of American Veterans.[44] Renovations were bolstered by volunteer support, as local tradesman offered their plumbing, painting, carpentry, and electrical services for free.[45] As part of this expansion, the Boys Club opened a dental clinic on the balcony floor of the clubhouse in 1949, complete with x-ray equipment. The dental clinic was established in response to physical examinations of the dental health of the club's 3,700 members, which determined that dental hygiene was a major concern for members.[46] Although the building at 430 E Genesee Street served as the main clubhouse for the boys club, several branches were added later, including the Polish branch club, the Naborhood (sic) house on Shonnard St., and the Manlius Branch club.[47]

The building continued to serve as a boys club facility for six decades. In 1982, the Syracuse Boys Club relocated to a new facility and sold the clubhouse building to lawyers Hugh Gregg and Tom Goodfellow. In 1983, developers began the conversion of the building into offices spaces but retained many of the historic interior finishes and the original pool space. As part of this renovation, the project added a partial fifth story. In 1986, the new owners donated six of the leaded-glass windows from the building to an auction in support of the club.[48]

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

The Syracuse Boys Club is an excellent example of twentieth-century Collegiate Gothic architecture. While the style is not especially common in the city of Syracuse, there are few notable examples, including the National Casket Company (719 E. Genesee St), and the former C.G. Meeker Food Company Warehouse (538 Erie Blvd West), listed. Several years ago. Both buildings were constructed in 1930 and both are listed on the National Register. While the Boys Club is a more exuberant and ornate than the casket company, the Meeker building stands out because it is a reinforced concrete warehouse. Certainly the boys club in Syracuse's best example of this style. The boys club is also an unusually ornate example of an early twentieth century boys club building

[39] "Boys Club to Notes 50th Anniversary," *Post-Standard*, February 1, 1956.
[40] "Keeping Posted," *Post-Standard*, December 11, 1948.
[41] "Boxing Bouts, Movies on Boys' Club Programs," *Post-Standard*, March 17, 1946.
[42] "Cheap Hobby," *The Sheboygan Press*, June 26, 1936.
[43] "Syracusan from All Walks of Life Backing $125,000 Boy's Club Expansion Campaign," *The Post Standard*, May 26, 1946.
[44] "2 Polish Groups Give $500 Each to Boys' Club Drive," *Post Standard*, May 27, 1946.
[45] "New Boys Club Dental Clinic," 1949.
[46] "New Boys Club Dental Clinic in Full Operation by February 15," *Post-Standard*, January 30, 1949.
[47] "Visit Boys Clubs This Week," The Post-Standard, April 16, 1947.
[48] "Boys Club to Auction Leaded-Glass Windows," *Post-Standard*, April 4, 1986.

and stands out from the modest buildings usually employed as boys clubs. The design signals its importance within the community and connects it to a lineage of facilities that strive towards progressive era ideals of betterment and education.

Collegiate Gothic Style

The Collegiate Gothic style was first introduced in the United States in the nineteenth century and gained popularity during the early twentieth century. Influenced by medieval forms, it shares characteristics with the Tudor Revival style and early Stuart Collegiate styles. This variant of the Gothic Revival Style was initially employed in conservative private schools across the East Coast, including Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, which drew inspiration from prestigious European Gothic style institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge to emphasize connection with antiquity and the European educational lineage. The style also paralleled the design of European cathedrals, which further attracted religious universities and churches to its use. Typically rectangular in plan, Collegiate Gothic buildings were often clad in brick or stone, and frequently constructed with flat rooflines with crenulated parapets, Gothic-arched entrances, Gothic tracery, and bas-relief decorative panels. The style was later adopted by a wider array of educational institutions in the United States and quickly became associated with college campus architecture.[49]

The design of the Syracuse Boys Club building in the Collegiate Gothic style marked its aspirations and mission to provide a strong presence in the downtown community of Syracuse. A far cry from its modest beginnings in a church parlor followed by its home in "old ramshackle buildings" on Water Street, the Syracuse Boys Club transformed into an established pillar of community life, housed in a building worthy of this new status.[50] The façade of the building features Collegiate Gothic ornamentation reminiscent of more prestigious educational buildings, including crenulated parapet walls, dramatic arched window openings, and decorative bas relief plaques and panels. The Boys Club building also has characteristics of Tudor Revival and Spanish Revival architecture, reflecting the Mediterranean influences and skills of Syracuse's Italian builders. The Tudor Revival details on the building include the tall, multi-pane windows with leaded-glass, diamond-shaped panes, and crenellated parapets, and the Spanish clay tile roof reflects the Mediterranean influence.[51] The Boys Club building artfully uses the vocabulary of collegiate architecture to express the educational mission of the boys club, and the high-style design of the building further communicates the value of the Boys Club within the community. Situated across from Fayette Park, the building appears at home with other substantial masonry buildings, such as the Park Center Presbyterian Church, built in the Victorian Gothic style (1872), and the University Club Building, built in the Neoclassical style.

Collegiate Gothic is a particularly apt choice of style for this building, given the importance and emphasis placed on schoolwork and other programs, on character and leadership development, the arts, health, and life skills. Architectural historian Glenn Patton contends that the symbolism of the style was popular with those who were threatened by late nineteenth century immigration to the United States. Patton writes that "in opposition to foreign values and ideologies, [Collegiate Gothic architecture] proclaimed the superiority of tradition, of broad culture, of manly virtues, of sportsmanship and fair play."[52] These same values are at the heart of the Boys Club mission, focusing on capturing boys' interests and integrating them to American values.

[49] Glenn Patton, "American Collegiate Gothic: A Phase of University Architectural Development," *Journal of Higher Education* 38, no. 1 (1967).
[50] "Phelps Sees Work on Syracuse Boys' Club," *Press and Sun Bulletin*, July 7, 1920.
[51] John Harwood, *North Salina Street Historic District*, National Register of Historic Places Form, 1985.
[52] Glenn Patton, "American Collegiate Gothic: A Phase of University Architectural Development," 8.

The interior of the building was significantly less ornamental and more functional. Many of the original public spaces featured two-tone brickwork, quarry tile flooring, and original wood. The two-tone brickwork is especially effective around the window openings; on the fifth floor, the Tudor-arched openings are emphasized by the darker yellow brickwork surrounds. Additionally, the interior architecture is representative of building typology associated with boys' clubs. Like other clubs of the time, the building was designed around contemporary ideas of childcare and growth. Ideas of structured play, physical recreation, and skill-building were all critical to the theory of child development around the turn of the century. The interior spaces of the Boys Club accommodated this programming with spaces to play, create, swim, and socialize. Boys clubs often campaigned within the community to finance construction of their buildings, which included gyms, industrial art spaces, libraries, kitchens, pools, and auditoriums.[53] In this way, 430 E Genesee Street is a premier example of grassroots architecture for a civic purpose, supported and paid for by the community. Approximately 5,000 Syracusans donated to the construction of the building.[54]

Rare Example of Collegiate Gothic Boys Club Architecture

Despite its popularity amongst colleges and universities, examples of Collegiate Gothic architecture are rare in Syracuse. Syracuse University, located less than half a mile from the Boys Club building to the southeast, features many eclectic examples of collegiate architecture including Romanesque Revival, Beaux Art, and Neoclassical, but no extant Collegiate Gothic buildings.[55] One of the earliest buildings on campus, the Yates Castle, was constructed as a private residence in 1852, in a Tudor Gothic style that served as an early protype for the burgeoning Collegiate Gothic style. Syracuse University purchased the building in the early twentieth century, but it was unfortunately demolished in 1954.[56] Evamaria Hardin's comprehensive architectural survey of the city, *Syracuse Landmarks: an AIA Guide to Downtown and Historic Neighborhoods*, does not specially identify any example of the Collegiate Gothic style within the city, although she calls out a number of Gothic Revival styles, especially High Victorian Gothic designs. These include fine examples such as the Syracuse Savings Bank Building at 1 Clinton Square (1875), the White Memorial Building at 201 South Salina Street (1876), the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception at 259 Onondaga Street (1886), the First Baptist Church and Mizpah Tower at 215 East Jefferson Street (1914), the Park Central Parish House at 504 E. Fayette Street (1926). The only buildings in the book that reflect a Collegiate Revival style are the handful of ecclesiastical buildings that features a combination of Tudor and Gothic Revival elements, including Grace Episcopal Church at 819 Madison Street (1876) and the Trinity Episcopal Church at 523 West Onondaga St (1915).[1]

The Syracuse Boys Club building is also an exceptional example of an early twentieth century boys club building, and unusual in its high-style Collegiate Gothic design. Financed by community donations or occasionally by wealthy philanthropists, the architecture of boys club buildings was often simpler and utilitarian. In his 1939 description of a typical boys club building, R.K. Atkinson outlined a "plain four-story brick building," suited for the needs of those with limited means.[57] In larger cities, these buildings were more ornamental. One of the first purpose-built boys' club buildings, the Harrison Clubhouse in New York, was a five-story brick building with a simplified Italianate style. The buildings still stands at 287 E. 10th St., but its decorative brackets and overall ornamentation have been removed. The impressive Battle Creek, Michigan

[53] Halpburn, 2002.
[54] "Boys Club Members Begin Work of Cleaning Site of Their Fine New Clubhouse," April 1922.Clipping courtesy of Onondaga County Public Library, No newspaper indicated.
[55] *Syracuse University - Comstock Tract Buildings*, National Register Nomination, 1980.
[56] "Renwick Castle or Yates Castle," Syracuse University Libraries. PDF available at https://researchguides.library.syr.edu/c.php?g=978052&p=7074936.
[57] Atkinson, 12.

Clubhouse (NR- 04000457) was built in the Art Deco style, although it is unornamented save for the crenulated parapets and decorative lintels. A number of the extant boys club buildings are executed in a restrained Colonial Revival style, including former Pittsburg Boys Club building (NR- 100001976; adapted from a former YMCA building), the Little Rock Boys Club (NR-82000906), and the New Haven Boys Club (31 Jefferson Street). The Jefferson Clubhouse (321 E. 111th Street) in New York is a more exuberant expression example of the Colonial Revival style, and the Philadelphia Boys Club building (23 W. Penn Street) is a fine example of the Georgian Revival style. No other examples have been located of high-style Collegiate Gothic clubhouses. Although these other boys clubs demonstrate a sense of gravity and presence through their styling, they do not connect to the educational mission in the same way as the Syracuse Boys Club. Although the style is not common in Syracuse, the city boasts at least two other excellent examples of the Collegiate Gothic Style in addition to several churches: the Syracuse Casket Company (717 East Genesee Street) and the C.G. Meeker Food Company Warehouse (538 Erie Blvd W). Both also date to the 1920s and both have been listed on the National Register. Neither example is as high style as the Boys Club; however, the Meeker building is interesting because it is a warehouse. The Syracuse Boys Club building is certainly among the best examples of Collegiate Gothic style architecture in the city.

Architect: Melvin King

Local architect Melvin L. King designed the building in 1922. King was born in Onondaga County and moved to Syracuse when he was fourteen years old in order to take courses at Danford High School.[58] Like many New York architects of his time, King trained under a master architect, rather than at a university, in order to gain his professional accreditation. In 1886, he entered into an apprenticeship under well-known Syracuse architect James H. Kirby. In 1888, King joined the office of renowned architect Archimedes Russell, working in his office for a decade and becoming a partner with Russell in 1906, when the firm was renamed Russell & King. Russel designed many of the buildings at the University of Syracuse, demonstrating a fluency in a variety of architectural styles. After Russell's death in 1915, King continued to design buildings in Syracuse and greater New York State under his own name. His firm was renamed King & King in the 1930s, when his son, Harry A. King, became a partner.

Throughout his long career, Melvin King designed a variety of important public and private buildings, including schools, banks, hotels, and churches.[59] Some of his most notable works include the Central High School of Syracuse; several branches of the First Trust & Deposit Company Building; the Onondaga County Court House; St. Peter's Church in Rome, New York, and the Yates Hotel in Syracuse.[60] King was perhaps most famous for the design of the Hills Building and Niagara Mohawk Building. The Hills Buildings (217 Montgomery St, 1928) is an Art Deco commercial skyscraper with Gothic Revival influences in the Chicago School "set back" style, located at the corner of Fayette and Montgomery streets, in Syracuse.[61] The Niagara Mohawk Building (300 Erie Street, 1932) is an Art Deco office building constructed for the Niagara Mohawk Power Company, initially referred to as the "cathedral of light" for its innovative use of light as ornamentation.[62]

[58] Franklin Chase, *Syracuse and its Environs* (New York: Lewis historical Publishing Company, 1924).
[59] "Melvin King, 77, Dies; Architect of 40 years," *Syracuse Herald Journal*, August 12, 1946.
[60] Franklin Chase, *Syracuse and its Environs*,1924.
[61] "Melvin King, 77" *Syracuse Herald Journal*, 1946; David Lowe, *Building Structures Inventory Form for the Hills Building*, December 5, 1978.
[62] Hardin, *Syracuse landmarks: an AIA guide to downtown and historic neighborhoods*, 47.

Conclusion

The Syracuse Boys Club Building represents an important part of Syracuse's social and architectural history. Spurred by the changing needs of both children and immigrant communities, afterschool programs began to take on a more formal and expansive role in the social character of early-twentieth century Syracuse. The building that housed the Boys Club of America in Syracuse became a critical space for the youth to learn to play sports, develop technical skills, and receive quality health care. The building itself was created and funded with widespread public support and became an important community asset in the heart of Syracuse's downtown neighborhoods. Its relationship to social reform movements around child development, education and growth qualify the building for National Register Criterion A (Social History).

Additionally, the building is a rare example of a Boys Club designed in the Collegiate Gothic Revival style from this period. Designed by a prominent local architect, Melvin L. King, the former Boys Club building retains much of its exterior integrity and effectively communicates the Progressive vision of the Syracuse Boys Club. Although originally boys clubs were held in private spaces such as parlors and churches, the erection of buildings specifically designed for afterschool care, recreation and education indicates a growing understanding and need for youth and social welfare programs. The building is striking for its large Gothic windows, limestone detailing, overall ornament, and symmetry, which announced its importance to the community and the mission of the Boys Club organization across the country.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

X 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:

X State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.22
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Syracuse Boys Club | Onondaga, New York
Name of Property | County and State

Latitude: Longitude:

1. Latitude: Longitude:

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

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

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary for this property was determined using its historical parcel description.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kim Daileader, Director of Technical Preservation Services
organization EHT Traceries, Inc. date February 2025
street & number 440 Massachusetts Avenue, NW telephone 202-393-1199
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20001
e-mail Kim.daileader@traceries.com

Additional Documentation

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.)

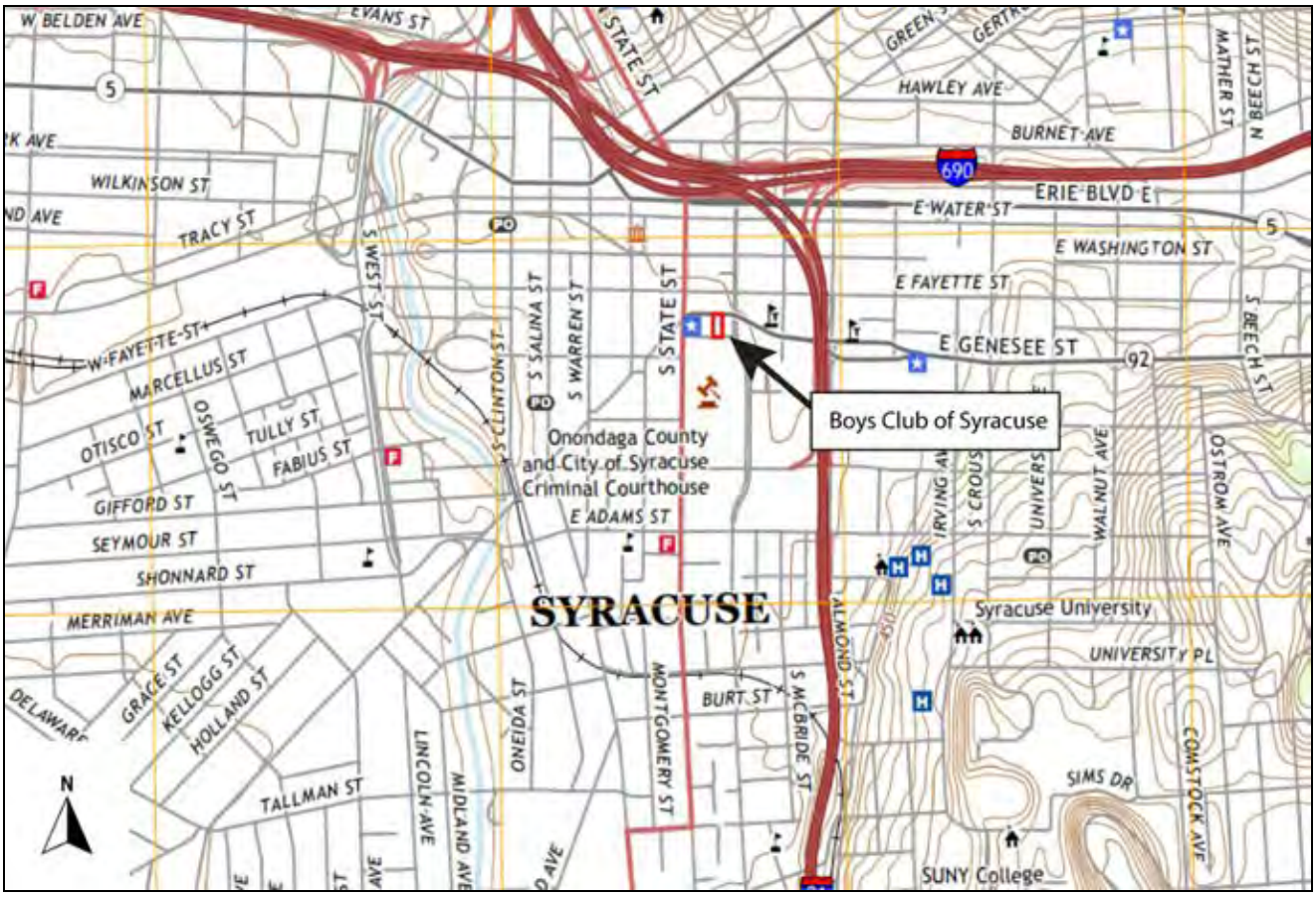


Figure 1: Detail from USGS Washington West 7.5-minute quadrangle with subject property annotated (USGS)

Figure 2: Property map with subject property outlined in red (Onondaga County, annotated by Traceries)

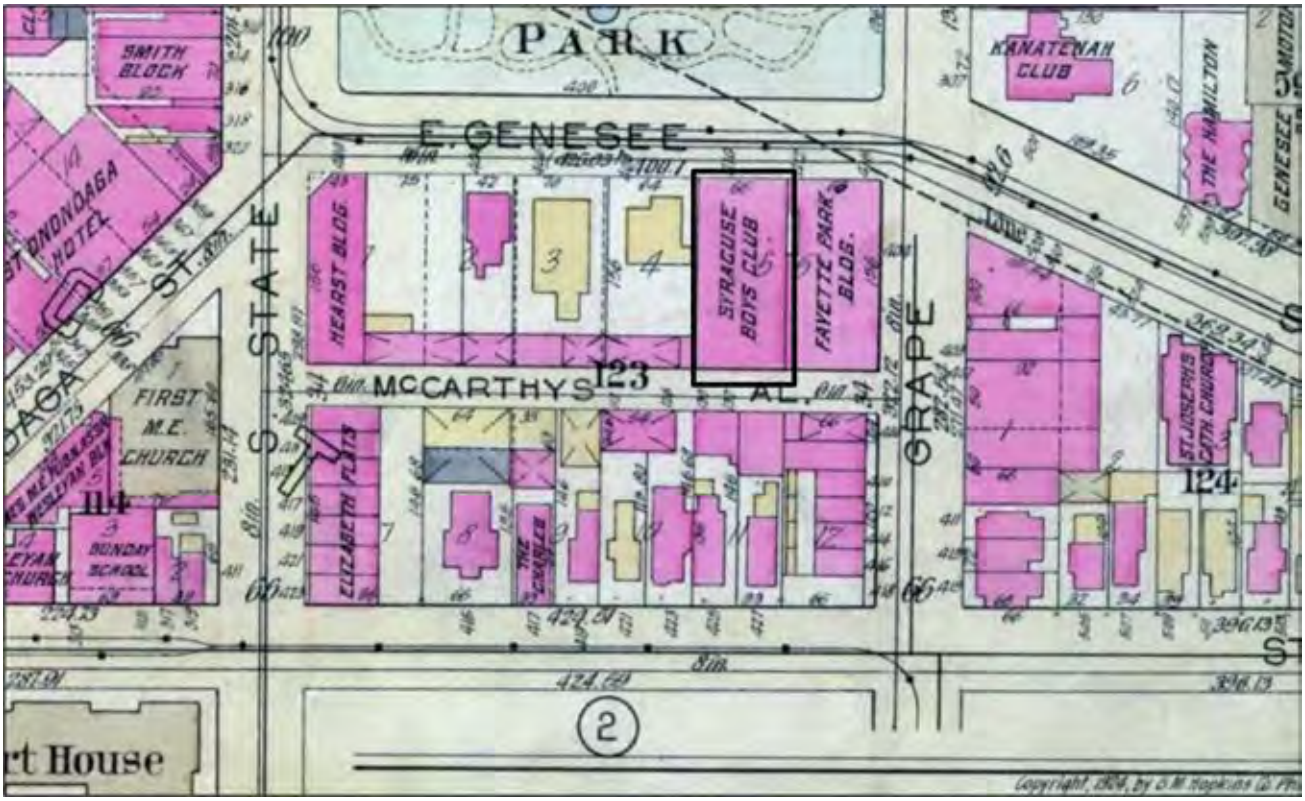


Figure 3: Detail of 1924 Hopkins map, subject property annotated in red (LOC)

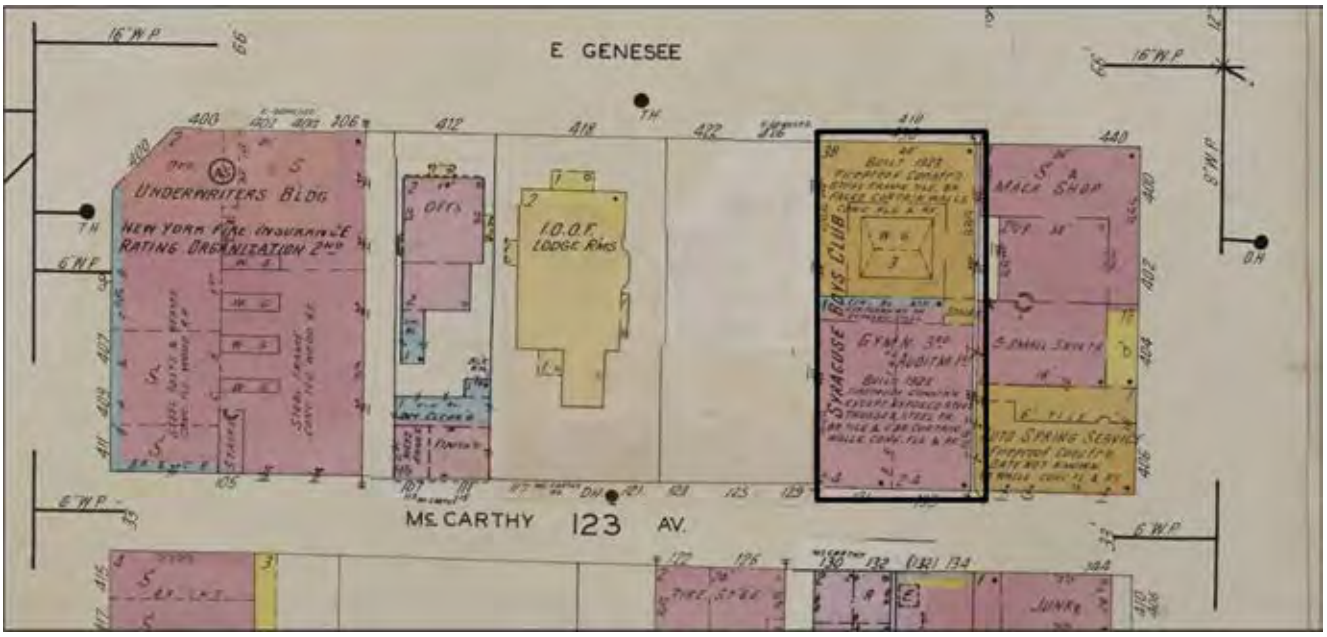


Figure 4: Detail of 1951 Sanborn map, subject property annotated in red (LOC)

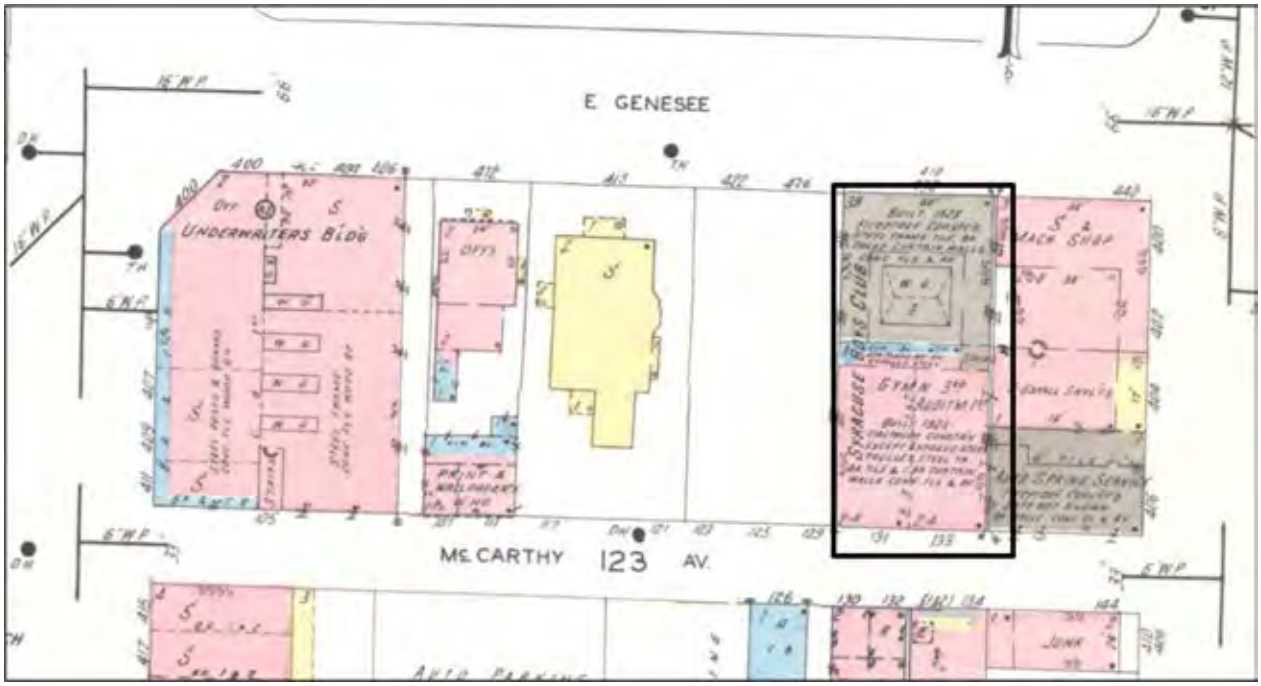


Figure 5: Detail of 1953 Sanborn Map, subject property annotated in red (LOC)

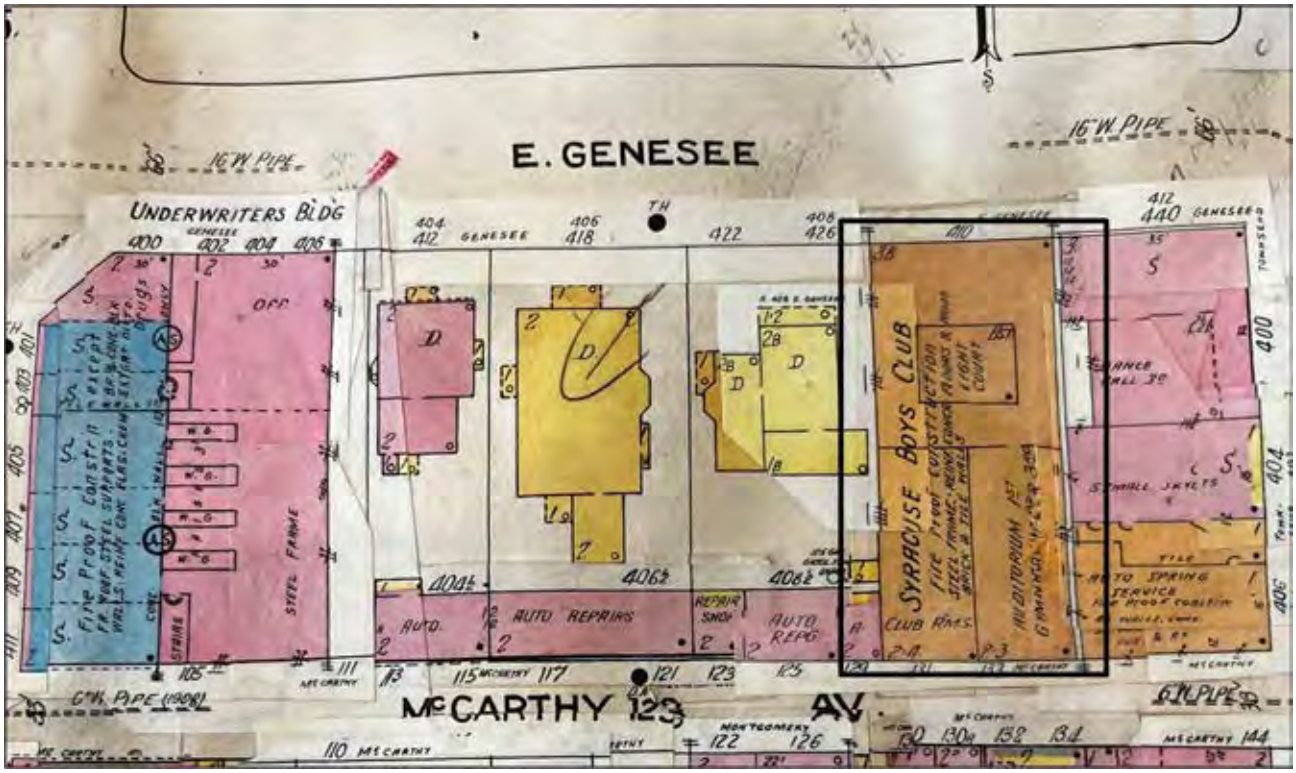


Figure 6: Detail of 1957 Sanborn map, subject property annotated in red (LOC)

Figure 7: 1920 construction Photo. (Onondaga Historical Society)

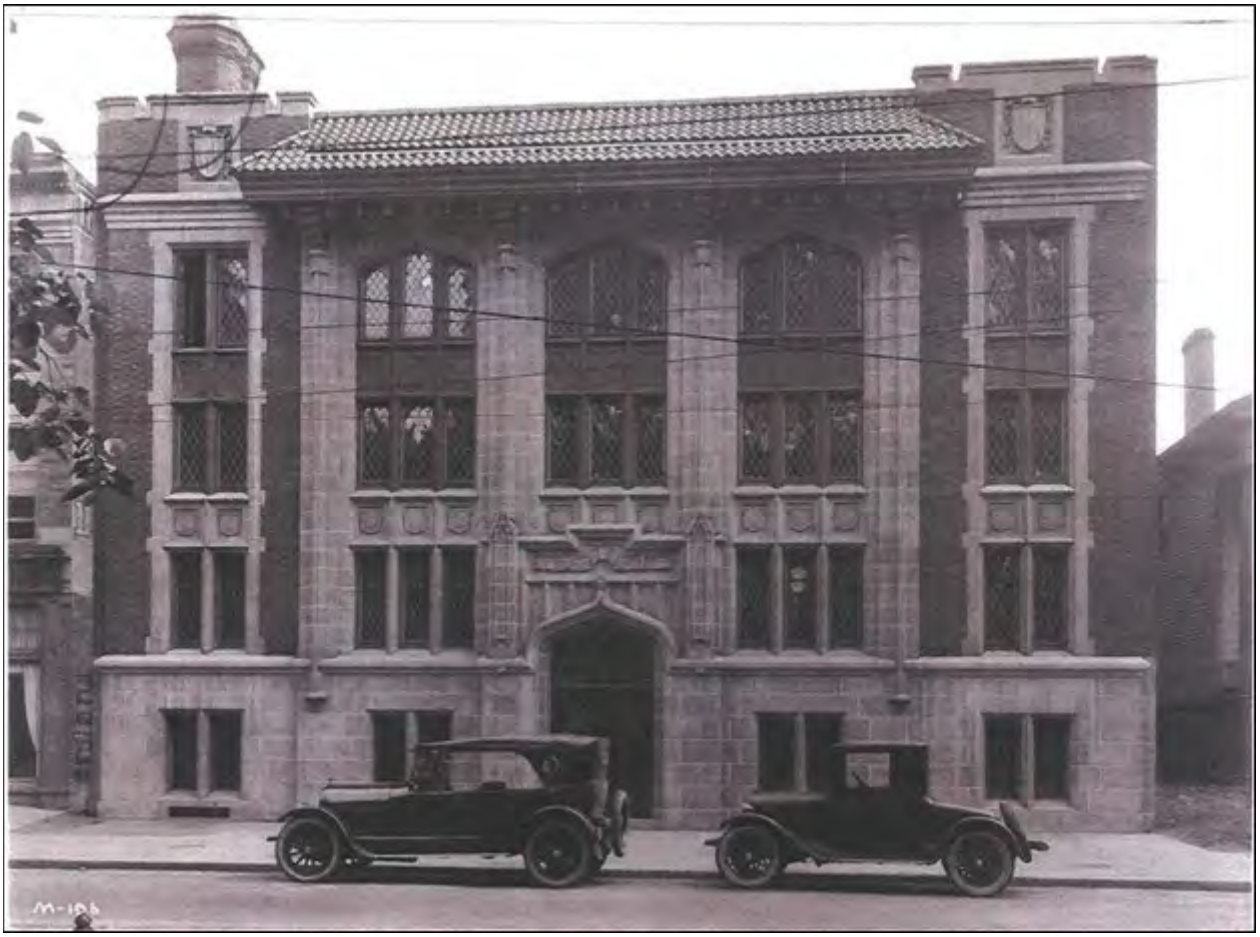


Figure 8: Historic Photo. (Onondaga Historical Society, Undated)

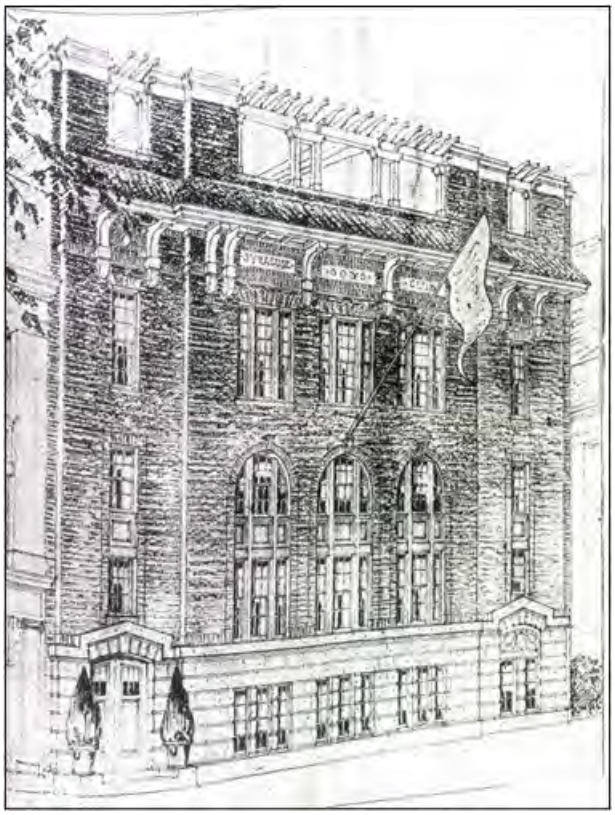


Figure 9: 1920s sketch of original building plan. (Onondaga Historical Society)

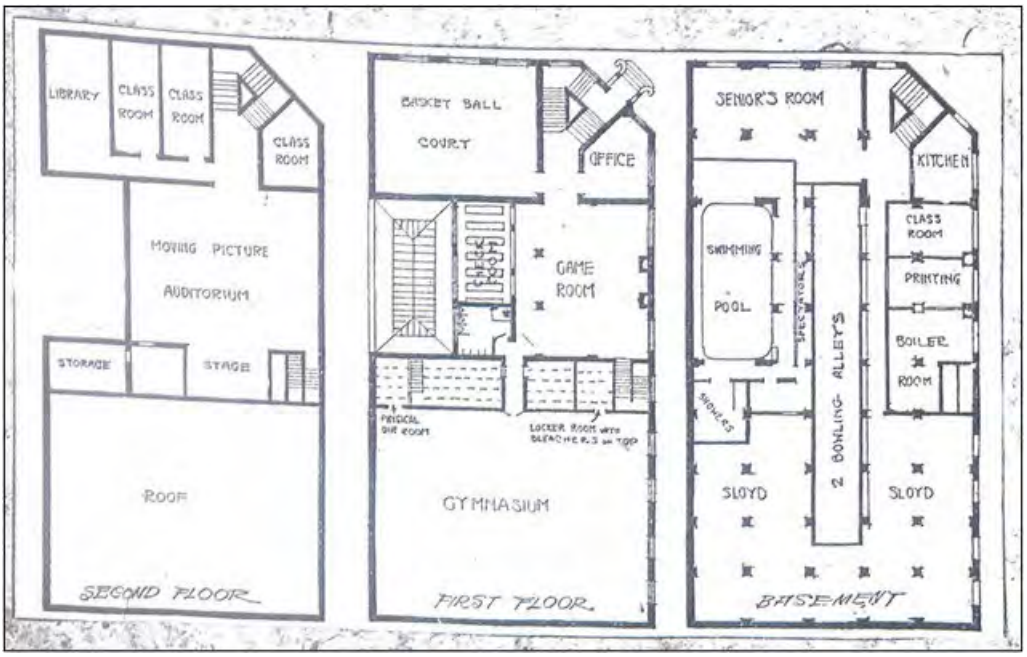


Figure 10: Conceptual Building Plan (not constructed according to plan). Syracuse Herald Journal. January 14, 1917. (Onondaga County Public Library)

Figure 11: Image of the rear of the building taken January 1962. (Onondaga Historical Society)

Figure 12: November 1962 aerial taken by Anihun Cornelius. (Onondaga Historical Society)

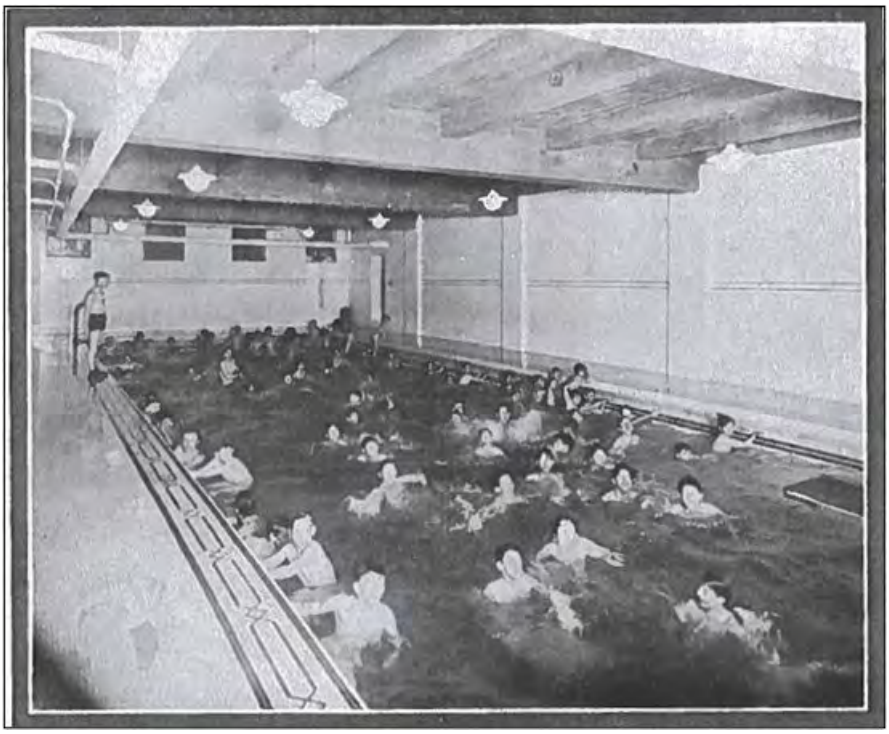


Figure 13: Early 1920s photo of the pool. (Onondaga Historical Society)

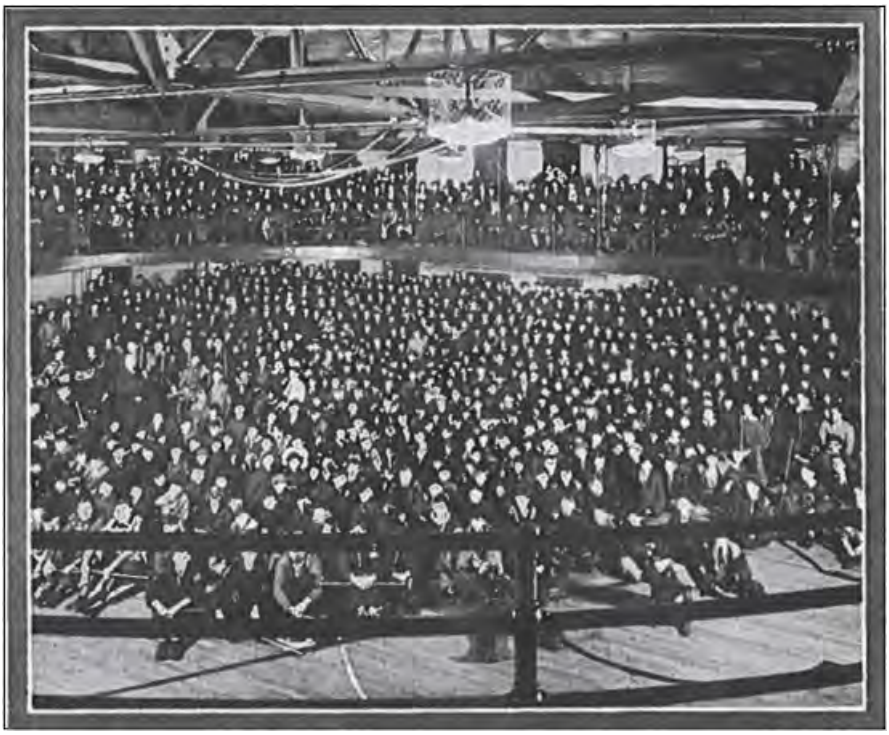


Figure 14: Early 1920s photo of the gymnasium. (Onondaga Historical Society)

Figure 15: Early 1920s photo of the game room. (Onondaga Historical Society)

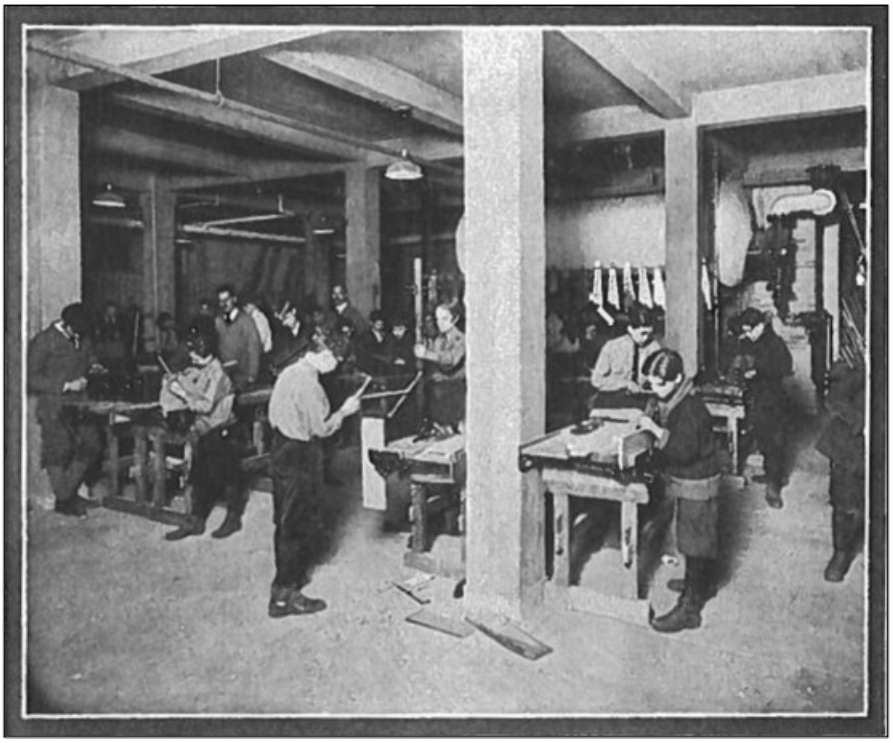


Figure 16: Early 1920s photo of the sloyd. (Onondaga Historical Society)

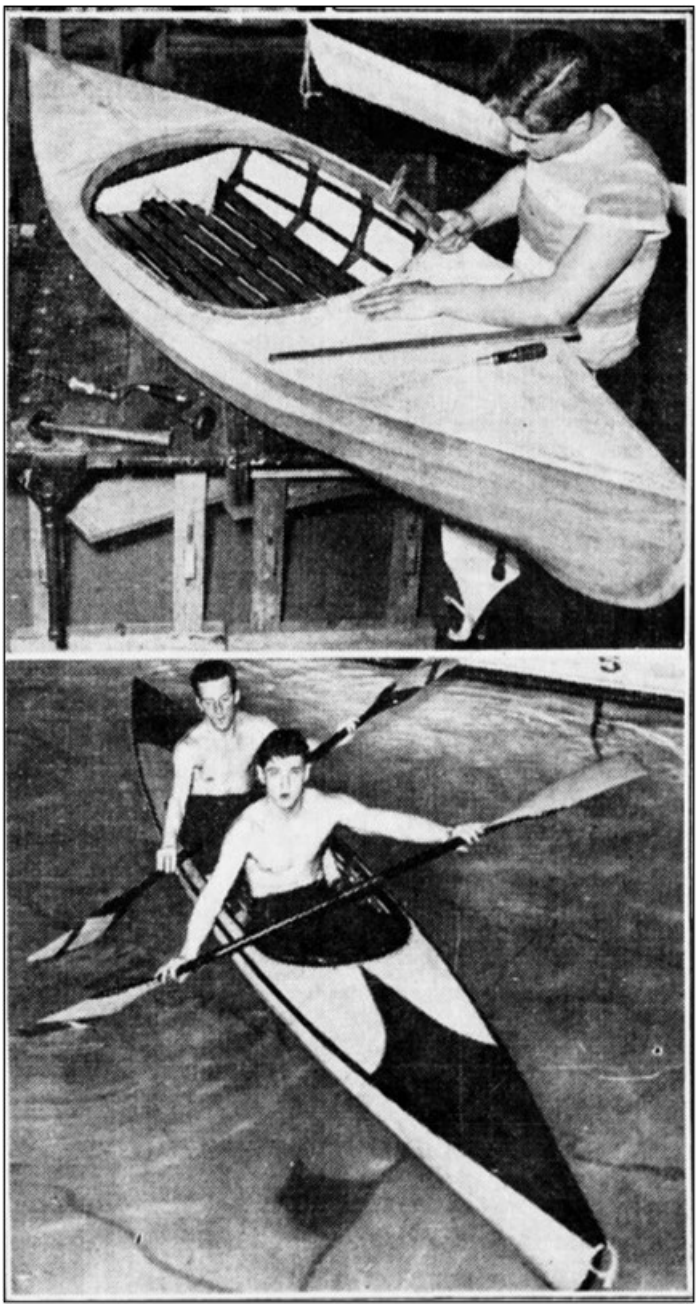


Figure 17: 1936 Photo of the boys' club making kayaks in sloyd room. (Onondaga Historical Society)

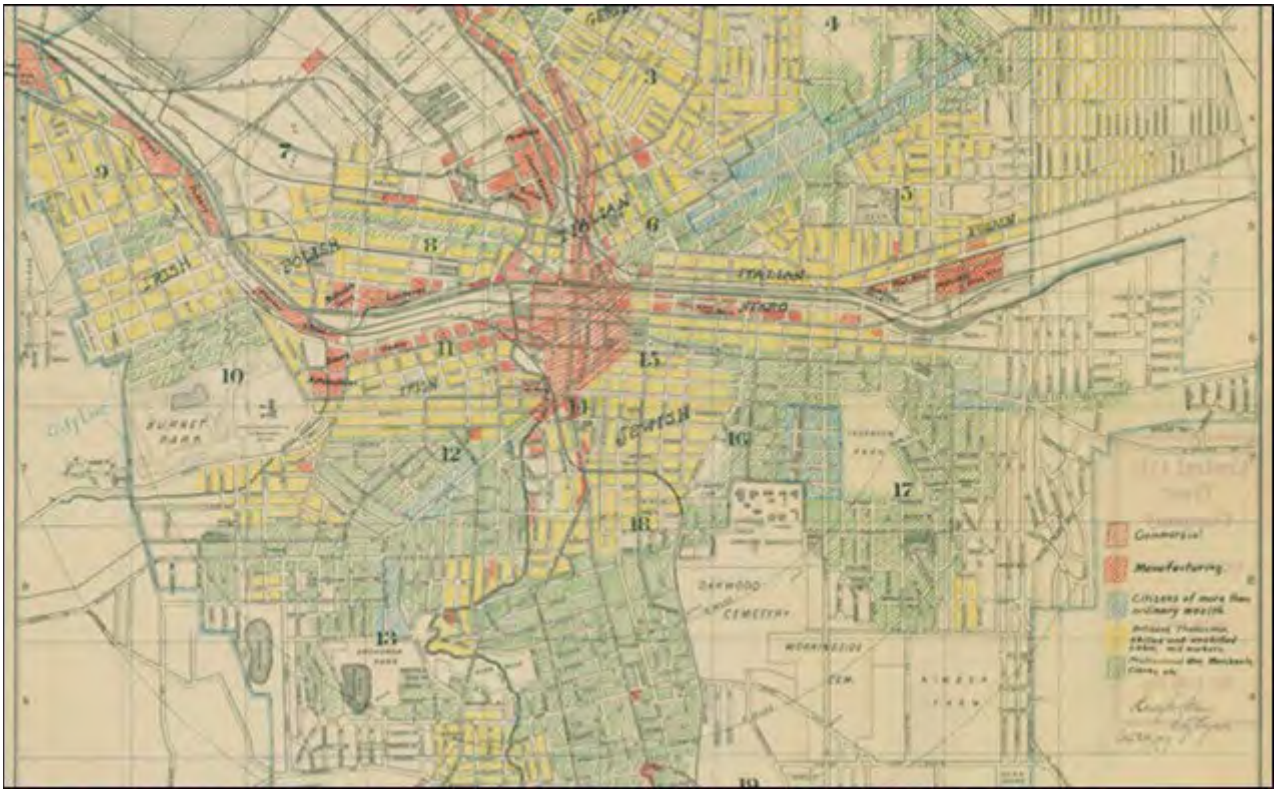


Figure 18: 1919 Map of Syracuse, with annotations detailing demographics of downtown areas. Syracuse City Engineer Henry C. Allen's signature is on the Map. (NARA)

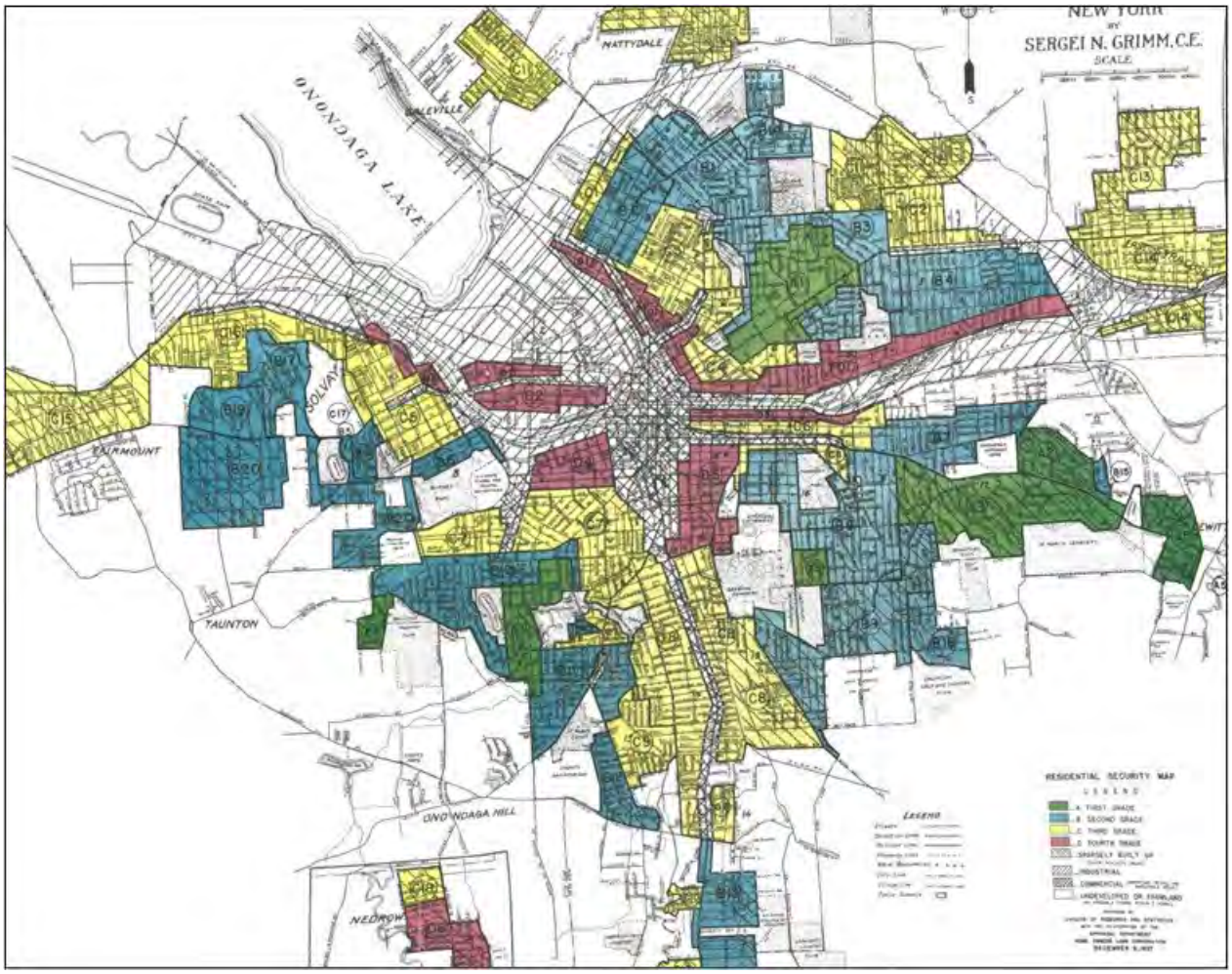


Figure19: Map of Home Owners' Loan Corporation [Syracuse, New York], 1937. Red areas are described as "least desirable." (Mapping Inequality, University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab)

Syracuse Boys Club | Onondaga, New York
Name of Property | County and State

Photographs:
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.

Name of Property:

City or Vicinity:

County: State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of ___.

Property Owner:

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

name N/A

street & number _____ telephone _____

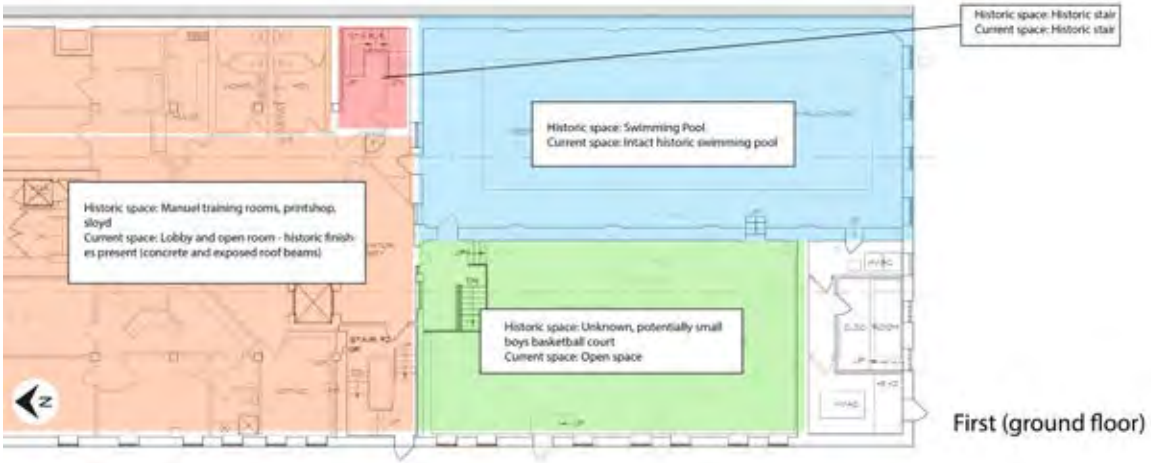
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Appendix A -Special Integrity Analysis

This building was initially submitted for review under the pdil program in order to advantage of historic preservation tax credits. Because of the number of interior alterations. SHPO staff wanted to ensure that the building could be listed. The consultant prepared and submitted the special integrity analysis presented below. The pdil was approved with the following comment from the NPS reviewer:

> The draft nomination supports listing under Criterion A (Social History) and C (Architecture) with a period of significance of 1923-1974. The draft nomination has made a concerted effort to document essential physical features of the historic plan and finishes altered in the late twentieth century. While acknowledging those alterations, the nomination and SHPO comments recognize the significance of the property for its architecture and as an important social institution with a history of community support.

Integrity Analysis



SYRACUSE BOYS' CLUB

430 E Genesee Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Historic Tax Credit Application
January 26, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Figure 1: Postcard of the Syracuse Boys' Club. No Date.

The Syracuse Boy's Club is located at 430 E Genesee Street, in the downtown business district of Syracuse, New York. The building was designed in 1922 by prominent local architect Melvin L. King and constructed the following year by The Dawson Brothers. The impressive four-story building was executed in the Collegiate Gothic Style, a seemingly unusual choice for a non-educational building in Syracuse's residential Fifteenth Ward. Funded primarily through community donations, the building was the first purpose-built clubhouse for the Syracuse branch of the Boys' Clubs of America, and one of the most impressive in New York State. The purposeful use of the Collegiate Gothic style helped to communicate the organization's importance the community, with its critical role in educating and providing social services for newly arrived immigrant youth, especially those hailing from Italy and Eastern Europe. The building operated as a boys' club for nearly sixty years before it was sold to a private developer in the 1980s, when it was repurposed as an office building and fitness center. During this renovation, the exterior of the Syracuse Boys' Club building remained relatively intact, except for a fifth-story addition. Although many of the historic spaces on the interior were remodeled for use as an office building, some of the historic spaces, materials, and circulation remain.

The current applicant intends to convert the office building into an apartment building and retain and restore as much existing historic fabric as possible. The exterior of the building will be minimally altered, and the overall historic character will be retained. The applicant has initiated some selective demolition of the building to remove contemporary finishes. This selection demolition has revealed a significant amount of historic fabric, which the applicant intends to re-expose once again during this renovation.

INTERIOR INTEGRITY

The Syracuse Boys' Club Building retains some interior integrity, despite the significant 1980s renovation. Due to the absence of historic plans for the building, as well as the contemporary finishes covering the historic fabric, it is somewhat difficult to determine what is left of the historic interior. By comparing historic photos, a historic building description, and the photos from the selective demolition of the property, researchers have been able to determine several areas which retain their historic appearance.

The First Floor Lobby

The first-floor lobby was historically an unfinished work area used as workshops. Selective demolition has revealed that underneath the historic finishes, the historic exposed concrete floors, ceilings, and beams, are still extant, and communicate the space's historic use (Figures 2-4).

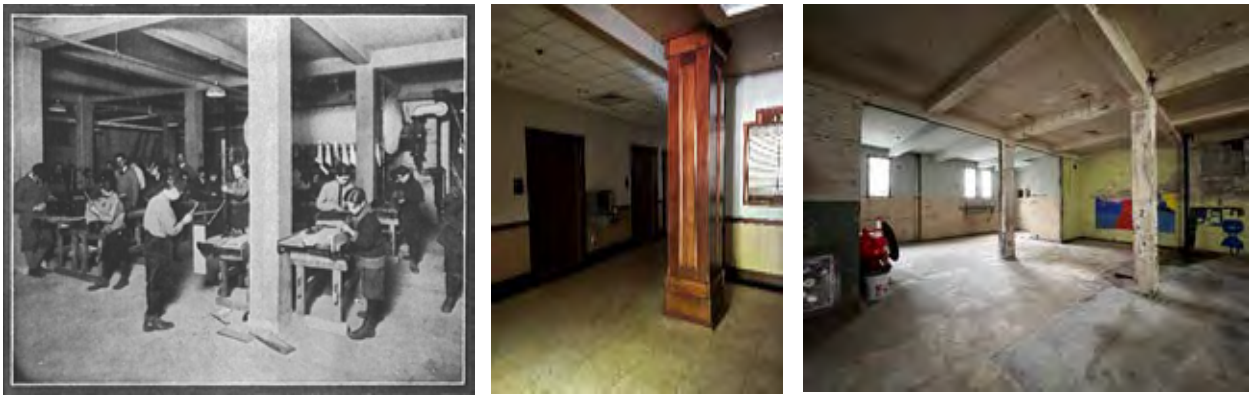


Figure 2-4: 1920s Photo of First Floor Workroom (left), 2022 Photo of Lobby (middle), 2023 Photo of Lobby with Selective Demolition of Contemporary Finishes (right).

The First Floor Pool

The first-floor pool remains intact, with its historic volume and decorative tile deck. Selective demolition revealed the historic concrete ceilings.

Figure 5-7: 1920s Photo of Pool (left), 2022 Detail of Pool Deck (middle), 2022 Photo of Selective Demolition of the ceiling(right)

Historic East Staircase

The historic east staircase retains its historic location, slate treads, landing, and decorative metal handrails. There are no historic photos of this space, but the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps indicate its historic location.

Historic Gymnasium Space

The gymnasium space, located on the fourth floor, was historically double height, with a circular track at the mezzanine level, and exposed trusses at the ceiling level. This track was removed in the 1940s. During the 1980s renovation, a new partial mezzanine level was inserted at the height of the track, leaving an atrium to see the historic trusses. The historic wood floors were refinished to remove the gym flooring outlines, but the wood itself remains.

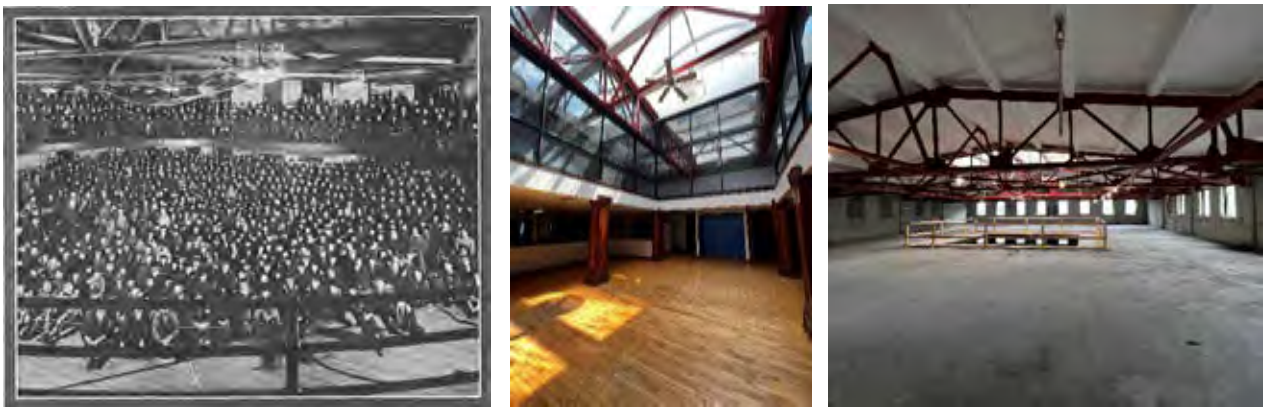


Figure 8-10: 1920 Photo of Gymnasium (left), 2022 Photo of Gymnasium with Atrium (middle), 2022 Photo of Historic Trusses on the Fifth Floor (right)

Historic Finishes

Selective demolition has revealed historic finishes throughout the building. In the former auditorium space and gymnasium space, and throughout the building, there are exposed decorative brick walls and historic wood floors. In many of the elevator lobbies, and a significant portion of the second floor, there historic red quarry tile floors, laid in a distinctive herringbone pattern. Historic fireplaces are located on multiple floors in the northeast corner of the building. In the workshop spaces, such as first floor sloyd and classrooms, the polished concrete floors, ceilings, and beams remain.

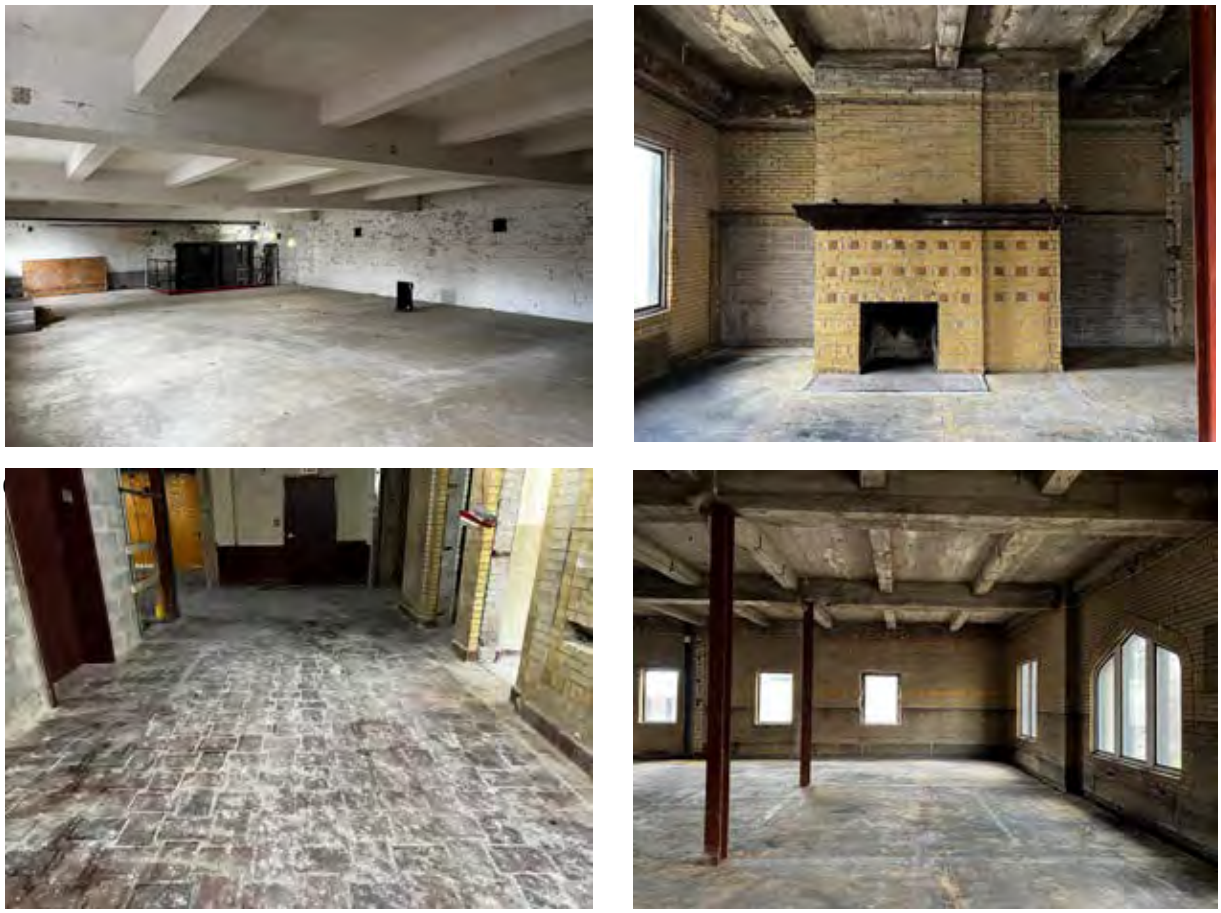


Figure 11-14: Historic Ceiling (top left), Historic fireplace (top right), Historic quarry tile flooring (bottom left), Historic brick wall (bottom right)


EXIT


PARK 430 PLAZA
COMMERCIAL
SOLD


PARK 430 PLAZA


PARK 430 PLAZA