

Jennifer Walkowski – June 2018 SRB NOTES

**Colored Musicians Club, Buffalo, Erie County**

**SLIDE 1: INTRO**

The Colored Musicians Club in Buffalo is significant under criterion A in the areas of ethnic history, social history, and music as the home of one of the oldest, continually operating African American musicians' club in the country and as the offices of Buffalo Local 533, an early African American union of musicians. Both organizations were formed in response to racism and segregation in Buffalo's musical community, and together they are significant in documenting the artistic, social and economic history of Buffalo's African American musicians in the first half of the twentieth century. The period of significance begins in 1934, when Local 533 and the Colored Musicians Club first moved into the building, and closes in 1969 when the Local 533, composed of black musicians, merged with the Local 43, the union of white musicians. Local 533 was one of the last segregated AFM unions in the U.S. to merge, as leadership wanted assurances that their members' livelihoods would be protected. While the Colored Musicians Club still operates today, serving as a hub for local and regional musicians and performances, this period marks the era during which the club and the union was at its most significant as a refuge for African American musicians.

Buffalo Local 533, the eighth stand-alone segregated self-governing musicians' union in the United States, was formed in 1917, after a group of Buffalo's African American musicians were rejected by Local 43, the city's only American Federation of Musicians union which had total control of virtually all well-paying performance venues in the city. The club was informally created the following year to give union members a place to socialize and improve camaraderie. Local 533 and the Colored Musicians Club had largely overlapping membership but were always fully independent of each other in all respects. Local 533 served as the organizational structure for the musicians, while the Colored Musicians Club provided "for the welfare and entertainment of its members." Between 1917 and 1934, the club and Local 533 functioned together in donated or leased spaces within a five block area in Buffalo's predominantly African American neighborhood, centered at Broadway and Michigan Streets. After both organizations started renting space in the nominated building, 145 Broadway, in 1934, many of the era's most prominent musicians visited the building in order to finalize their AFM contracts, acquire permission to play in local venues, and pay performance fees after their shows.

## **SLIDE 2: HISTORIC PHOTO**

The club is significant in facilitating numerous performances of many of the most famous jazz bands and rhythm and blues bands in American history in Buffalo, and notables, including Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Nat “King” Cole, Miles Davis, Cab Calloway and many others, often stayed to eat, socialize, and play in impromptu and scheduled jazz jam sessions in the club. Throughout its history, the union developed many innovative programs and practices to protect the livelihoods of its members, which had a positive impact on the robust Buffalo music scene and the development of jazz in America. The union was also extremely active in matters of civil rights and racial equality. Local 533 established a fund for emergency loans in 1919, death benefits in 1926, and a credit union in 1940 for its members. The importance of these programs, which were limited or unavailable for all African Americans during the early twentieth century, made it possible for local musicians to stay employed under the auspices of the union even in the lean times during two World Wars, the Great Depression, Prohibition and the early Civil Rights era.

## **SLIDE 3: MAP**

Buffalo’s African American jazz bars and clubs were on the famous “Chitlin’ Circuit.” The Chitlin’ Circuit was a series of performance venues throughout the eastern, southern, and upper Midwest regions of the United States that were safe and acceptable for African American musicians, comedians, and other entertainers to perform in during the era of racial segregation in the United States. These establishments were on the circuit for a number of reasons, including the strength of Buffalo’s market for African American music, easy access to the city via train and car with direct connections to all the major northeast cities, its size as a media market, its supportive audiences, and its large nationally recognized entertainment district, which was located largely only a few blocks from 145 Broadway.

## **SLIDE 4: MUSEUM**

Today, the first floor of the building houses an interpretive display with artifacts, conveying the history and significance of the club and union.

## **SLIDE 5: CLUB**

Upstairs, the building retains much of its historic character as a historic jazz club. You still enter from the street, going up a long narrow hallway to a door with a peep hole, before you are granted access to the upstairs. Modestly finished, the focus now – as always – is on the musical experience. The most notable built feature in the space is the large mid-century wood bar, which continues to serve as a centerpiece for conversation and exchange.

We have with us today several folks from the Colored Musicians Club. I want to welcome George Scott, President, Dan Williams, Vice President, and Craig Steger, researcher and consultant on the project. Do you want to say anything?

This is the Colored Musicians Club, are there any questions?

**William Krattinger agenda items/significance overviews**  
**New York State Board for Historic Preservation 7 June 2018**

**Mooers Riverside Cemetery, Mooers, Clinton County**

The Mooers Riverside Cemetery, located in the Town of Mooers, Clinton County, remains an important and visible touchstone to the early history of this northern New York State community. Established as a dedicated burial yard in 1805, and used throughout that century and the following one until space for new burials was finally exhausted, the nominated cemetery serves as the final resting place for over 1,000 individuals, many of whom contributed to the settlement, development and growth of this immediate part of the upper Champlain Valley. Mooers, which took its name from Maj. General Benjamin Mooers (1758-1838), a New England native and Revolutionary War veteran who settled in Clinton County after the cessation of hostilities, was first settled in the mid-1790s and in large measure by pioneers who hailed from New England, in addition to New Yorkers and others. Many individuals from these founding families, among them members of the Churchill, Shedden, Bosworth, Southwick and Fitch families, are interred in the nominated cemetery, which collectively celebrates and portrays this community's early history through the interments of any number of notable community members. In addition to its historical significance, the cemetery is also significant for its sizeable collection of historic funerary art, a vast array of gravestones and markers which speaks to any number of periods, themes and fashions beginning in the earliest years of the nineteenth century, when burials were first made there. The Mooers Riverside Cemetery is being nominated in association with NRHP Criterion A, in the area of Settlement/Exploration, given the significant number of early and important families and individuals who are interred there, and the role these individuals collectively played in Mooers's history from the time of settlement forward. It is additionally being nominated in association with NRHP Criterion C, in the area of Art, given the remarkable collection of funerary art contained therein, and the information

this collection retains relative to local and regional patterns relative to gravestone customs and design. The cemetery is being nominated at the local significance level.

**Stevens Hill Farm, Greenville, Greene County**

The Stevens Hill Farm is an architecturally and historically significant resource located in the Town of Greenville, a short distance east of the hamlet of the same name in Greene County, New York. The nominated property enjoys direct associations with the Stevens family, which came to settle in this part of the Hudson Valley in the 1790s and initiated a long association with the nominated property in the 1820s, an association which has only recently ceased with the transfer of the property to new owners. The family's Greene County pioneers, Reuben and Mary W. Stevens, came to New York from their native Connecticut, where the family's direct English ancestor, John Stevens, had first settled in the mid-seventeenth century. In 1827 the Stevens family purchased the nominated farm from the Reed family, including the existing dwelling, which had been constructed ca. 1800, and the pre-Stevens history of which remains unclear. The Stevens family subsequently built a sizeable barn complex and other outbuildings to support their agricultural endeavors, which centered for a time on general farming and fruit horticulture. Near the turn of the twentieth century the family expanded the existing house by removing an older kitchen ell and replacing it with the more sizable wing that remains today; the older ell remains on the property, having been moved to a nearby location. The house, with its layering of features expressive of multiple periods and styles, of which the Greek Revival style figures most prominently, serves as testament to the Stevens family and their successful cultivation of this land and their considerable success in other business endeavors. Most notable among the house's occupants was Capt. James Stevens (1834-1916), representative of the family's fifth generation to reside in Greene County and a figure who rose to considerable prominence in local and county business, civic, religious and political, affairs. Stevens served the Union cause during the Civil War, as did his brother Samuel, who died during that conflict in 1864. Following his service during the war, James Stevens served a term as Greenville town supervisor and additionally served two terms as the clerk of the Greene County board of supervisors. A well-respected member of the local community and a stalwart member of the Greenville Presbyterian Church, Stevens was additionally a prominent insurance agent whose son, Orrin C. III, followed his father into this business prior to his untimely death in 1925. The Stevens Hill Farm is being nominated to the NRHP in association with Criterion A, in the area of Social History, for its direct association with the Stevens family, which was central in the affairs of the Greenville community in the nineteenth and twentieth century, and of which Capt. James Stevens was a principal figure. It is

additionally being nominated in association with NRHP Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a largely intact Hudson Valley farmstead core which evolved in large measure during the period ca. 1850-ca. 1900. The property retains its central features, the Greek Revival-style dwelling and main barn complex, in addition to a number of ancillary features, all of which survive with outstanding physical integrity to the historic period.

### **Queensbury Hotel, Glens Falls, Warren County**

Started in 1924 and completed and first opened for business in May 1926, the Queensbury Hotel, located in Glens Falls, Warren County, New York, is historically significant for its salient associations with local boosterism and economic development in the early twentieth century. Beginning in 1916 the local chamber of commerce, a group of local businessmen and city officials desired that a hotel be built in Glens Falls not only to host Adirondack tourists and national businessmen, but to additionally serve as a community center for the city. On March 6, 1924, in an unprecedented show of business and civic teamwork, 100 representative businessmen met at the Glens Falls Insurance Company and unanimously voted to organize the Glens Falls Hotel Corporation; its immediate goal was to see to the construction a state-of-the-art \$600,000 hotel. The project was given strong impetus by the announcement that the Glens Falls Insurance Company was willing to purchase \$50,000 worth of stock to that end and that Finch, Pruyn & Company, the area's leading industry and employer, was willing to match that figure. Within eight days \$440,000 had been raised, or what amounts to roughly six million dollars in contemporary currency. The enthusiasm, organization and rapid success of the endeavor highlighted the contemporary climate of vigorous boosterism that pervaded Glens Falls in the period, and this success also demonstrates the determination of local entrepreneurs and civic-minded citizens to erect a city center landmark suitable for conventions, concerts, entertainment, and other social events, and one which would promote civic pride in Glens Falls and the greater Warren County region. The Queensbury Hotel is additionally significant for its architectural merits as a purpose-built hotel venue designed by the J.G. White Engineering Company of New York City, which was known for their contemporary oversight of large international projects including power plants, railroads, hotels, and military projects. For the Queensbury Hotel the firm generated a design for a five-story steel frame, brick-veneered and reinforced concrete edifice reflecting Neoclassical design influences. On the interior, artist Griffith Baily Coale (1890-1950) provided a mural for a central position, a depiction of an incident in James Fenimore Cooper's "The Last of the Mohicans," which still hangs above the fireplace in the hotel lobby. The Queensbury Hotel is being nominated to the NRHP, in the areas of Architecture, Commerce, and Community Planning and Development, with a period of significance spanning from 1924 to 1956, the period during which it was

built and served as a venue for social and commercial functions in Glens Falls and the Adirondack Region, and during which time it remained locally owned by Glens Falls businessmen.

### **Valley Falls Historic District, Valley Falls, Rensselaer County**

The Valley Falls Village Historic District, located in the towns of Pittstown and Schaghticoke, Rensselaer County, New York, is significant under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Industry, Community Development and Transportation during the period spanning ca.1813–1940. The village incorporates two former factory village areas, one located on each bank of the Hoosic river—in Pittstown and Schaghticoke—with shared development histories that were codified geographically in the village corporation boundary as drawn in 1904. The period of significance for the district in Valley Falls, known variously as Viele’s Bridge and the Valley early in its history and until establishment of the post office in 1854, developed in five slightly overlapping phases. These include the Viele family’s construction of a cotton factory on the Pittstown side and a bridge crossing to the Schaghticoke bank (ca.1813-30); the Slocum family’s subsequent development of textile factories and associated tenements and ancillary mills on both riverbanks (ca.1830-1856); the early railroad era and Thomas Lape’s manufacturing and real estate interests in Valley Falls (ca.1854-1874); James Thompson’s acquisition of the mills and the associated expansion of the residential and commercial area on the Pittstown side of the river (1875- ca.1915); and finally a period of gradual economic slump coupled with an aging and declining population (ca.1916-39). The nominated district contains a cohesive and historically significant collection of architectural resources which effectively speak to the community’s development, corresponding with historic developments as they occurred during the second, third and fourth quarters of the nineteenth century and extending towards the time of the First World War. Notable are Valley Falls’s many tree-lined streets, which abound with extant examples of nineteenth and early twentieth century domestic architecture, in addition to those resources which speak to relevant commercial, industrial, religious and civic themes. The nominated district offers itself as an excellent representation of a historic mill hamlet which first developed alongside water-powered industry during the second quarter of the nineteenth century and which continued to develop throughout the century in relation to the fortunes of its various industrial and commercial interests.

### **Faith Missionary Baptist Church, Buffalo, Erie County**

#### **SLIDE 1: INTRO**

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church building at 626 Humboldt Parkway is locally significant under Criterion C as a good example of a Neoclassical religious building in Buffalo.

## **SLIDE 2: HISTORIC PHOTO**

Designed for the Temple Beth David congregation in 1924 to front Humboldt Parkway, one of the city's grandest parkways, the building served the growing Jewish population in the surrounding East Side community. Inside, the simple basilica plan of the building, traditionally oriented east, allowed worshipers to face Jerusalem and included a raised Ark to hold the Torah and bimah. These traditional elements of synagogue design accommodated an easy transition of the house of worship to a Christian church in 1955, when Faith Missionary Baptist Church purchased the building. The building is additionally significant for its association with architect Louis Greenstein, one of the first and most prominent Jewish architects in Buffalo.

## **SLIDE 3: EXTERIOR**

The church building is also locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its association with the shift in the demographic composition of Buffalo's East Side from predominantly white and European in character to predominantly African American. During the early 20th century, German, Polish, and Jewish residents of downtown Buffalo began to spread north throughout the neighborhoods of the East Side. This migration brought a significant Jewish population to the Hamlin Park neighborhood. Conservative families organized as the Temple Beth David congregation, the second Conservative congregation in Buffalo, and raised a synagogue which offered them a place to worship for nearly thirty years. Around the middle of the century, members of the original groups that settled the neighborhood moved further out in newly accessible suburban areas, and middle-class African American families, escaping the worsening conditions of the downtown area, purchased the homes they left behind.

## **SLIDE 4: INTERIOR**

One of the religious institutions founded by members of this second wave of settlement, the Faith Missionary Baptist congregation, purchased the building which became host to a second religious group with a distinct form of worship. However, the Baptist congregation made few major alterations to the building, installing some Christian iconography in the building, but largely leaving Jewish symbolism intact. The most substantial change to the building occurred in 1968, when the congregation constructed the major addition that held the Martin Luther King Memorial Center. Local architect George B. Smyth designed the addition, which included classrooms, office space, and meeting areas necessary for many community functions coherent with the Faith Missionary Baptist mission.

The period of significance for the church building begins with the building's construction in 1924. The period encompasses the three decades during which the Beth David congregation conducted services at 626 Humboldt Parkway and the year in which they sold the building to the Faith Missionary Baptist congregation. It also spans across the first few decades of Faith Missionary Baptist's occupation of the building, a period in which the congregation assumed a prominent role in local involvement in the American civil rights movement of the mid-20th century. The period of significance ends in 1969, the year that the Martin Luther King Community Center, an addition to the church building that the Faith Missionary Baptist congregation commissioned in honor of the late civil rights activist, was completed.

This is the Faith Missionary Baptist Church, are there any questions?

## **St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church Complex, Buffalo, NY**

### **SLIDE 1: INTRO**

St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church Complex is significant as a representative example of a Roman Catholic Church complex in Buffalo. The complex is located in the city's Fifth Ward, in a neighborhood known as "The Valley," historically a predominantly Irish working-class neighborhood located adjacent to the Buffalo River and its grain elevators, steel mills, and other industries. St. Stephen's parish was founded in 1875 to help relieve the pressure on the neighborhood's earlier church, St. Bridget's, located about one mile west. The first St. Stephen's church was a simple brick building, which opened on Christmas Day in 1875. The growth of the parish, however, quickly necessitated the need for expanded facilities at St. Stephen's, and plans for a new church were drawn up in the 1880s.

### **SLIDE 2: SANBORN**

The complex consists of two buildings: a **church** with an interconnected rectory and attached garage; and a free-standing **school** building. The school is located on the northwest corner of the site at the intersection of Elk and Euclid Streets.

### **SLIDE 3: CHURCH**

The current church was completed in 1889, supposedly subsuming the original 1875 small brick church at the same location. The current rectory wing was constructed in two phases: the southern brick building with limestone connector to church was completed in 1882, followed by



a c. 1930 stone addition to the north, mimicking the other stone buildings on the site. The church also had a convent wing, which was demolished by the church in 1981.

#### **SLIDE 4: CHURCH INTERIOR**

Despite the loss of its spires around 1932 due to their deterioration, the church remains largely intact, including retaining an elegant Gothic Revival interior with numerous ribbed vaults and clerestory windows.

#### **SLIDE 5: SCHOOL**

In late summer of 1882, Father McDermott established a partnership between St. Stephen's and the Sisters of Mercy to form a new school, a continuation of the partnership the Sisters had with St. Stephen's mother church, St. Bridget's. By 1894, the growing student body exceeded the capacity of the initial school building and in 1896, the current four-story brick and limestone school building was constructed for over \$25,000. Beginning in 1949, plans were made for a significant update to the school building. The intent of the project appears to have been to better fireproof what was at that time, a 75-year old school building constructed almost completely with a wood structure. The building reflects these fire safety updates today, most especially on the interior where wood columns have been replaced with steel columns, and the wood stair cases were replaced with concrete and metal.

#### **SLIDE 6: SCHOOL INTERIOR**

St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church Complex is significant under Criterion A in the area of Social Historic as a largely intact local example of a neighborhood church complex that served as a social, religious, and educational center for the immigrant neighborhood throughout its history. The complex is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a good representative example of the Late Victorian Gothic style of architecture, both in the church and the unusual school. The period of significance is 1882 to 1951, which spans from the construction of the complex as it currently stands until the completion of the 1951 alterations to the school, which was the last major construction project undertaken in the complex.

This is St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church Complex, are there any questions?

**Buffalo Public School #57 (PS 57), Buffalo, Erie County**

#### **SLIDE 1: Intro**

Buffalo Public School #57 (PS 57) is locally significant as a good representative example of an enlargement of an older school to incorporate an updated, early twentieth century educational program in the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood of Buffalo. PS 57 is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for embodying the design principles of early twentieth century school standardization in Buffalo. The period of significance for Buffalo Public School #57 is 1913 - 1914, which encompasses the original period of construction. Carl G. Schmill's design for the building reflects national trends of school design in the early twentieth century, and the building retains nearly all of the original features that demonstrate these standards.

## **SLIDE 2: FRONT ELEVATION**

Located at 243 Sears Street, the school was completed in 1914 to supplement an older school, built in 1897 and no longer extant, to address overcrowding resulting from a growing Polish immigrant population in the neighborhood. It also allowed for an opportunity to provide a modern school facility which included adding additional classrooms, an assemblyroom, gymnasium and one of the earliest swimming pools in the Buffalo schools. The building embodies the full realization of standardized school design at the start of the twentieth century, at a time when New York state and federal guidelines regarding educational architecture began influencing school construction across the state.

## **SLIDE 3: EXTERIOR**

Physically, PS 57 represents up-to-date school construction standards of the 1910s, incorporating strict standards of lighting and fireproof construction. During the 1950s, the school district undertook a concerted effort to replace the oldest remaining schools throughout the city and several that dated from the 1860s through the 1890s were demolished during this decade. Among them was the "old building" at PS57, which was demolished in 1960, leaving only the 1914 portion which continued to operate at PS 57 until the school closed in 2003. Unlike many other schools, at PS57 a new building was not constructed to replace the portion that was removed, likely due to decreased enrollment that no longer necessitated such extensive facilities.

## **SLIDE 4: INTERIOR**

PS 57 reflects how a smaller outdated school could be enlarged to incorporate an updated educational program by including specialized spaces for vocational and manual training and also incorporating functions such as a swimming pool, gymnasium, and auditorium to provide for expanded physical training opportunities for students while also updating the building to the current standards of schools in the early twentieth century.

This is Buffalo Public School #57, are there any questions?

## **Buffalo Public School #44 (PS 44), Buffalo, Erie County**

### **SLIDE 1: Intro**

Buffalo Public School #44 (PS 44) is architecturally significant as an example of the developing ideas of early twentieth-century standardized school design in the city's East Side neighborhood.

### **SLIDE 2: PLAN**

Located at 1369 Broadway Street, the school was constructed in two main stages. Commissioned by the City of Buffalo and the Board of Education, the northeastern portion of the school (highlighted in red) was designed first by the city's Building Bureau architect, Howard L. Beck, in 1907-1909, and then the remaining portions were subsequently designed by the city's Board of Education architect, Ernest Crimi in 1930, highlighted in yellow.

### **SLIDE 3: HISTORY**

While each part of the building was commissioned and designed by different architects, the overall plans of the building were adapted from standardized plans that were used throughout many schools in Buffalo throughout the early twentieth century. The initial part of the school was oriented to the east, and designed in an E-plan. The later portion, rather than extend the E-plan wings, reoriented the building to front Broadway at the north, and enclosed the building in the then-popular block type. Given that the building consists of these two major parts, PS 44 demonstrates the evolution of school design through the early twentieth century. The period of

significance begins in 1907, when the oldest portion of the school was constructed by Howard Beck, and ends in 1930 after the construction of the addition by Ernest Crimi was completed. This era encompasses all major, significant architectural developments at the school.

#### **SLIDE 4: EXTERIOR**

PS 44 meets National Register eligibility Criterion C in the area of architecture as an excellent example of standardized school design in the first three decades of the twentieth century. During this time, school design was believed to play an important role in the education, health and safety of the student. Classroom size, daylight, ventilation, room finishes, heating systems, corridor size, circulation and fireproof construction were all designed to standards that would benefit the physical, mental and moral health of the student.

#### **SLIDE 5: INTERIOR**

The plans, siting, and material fabric of PS 44 were designed according to these requirements in order to enhance student exposure to natural light, hygienic practices and certain educational values put in place by state and federal school guidelines during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. While hygienic values were emphasized as a priority in school designs of the early 1900s, concerns for fire safety, prevention and egress began to dominate school design in the 1920s. As the building was constructed in two stages during this era, the architecture of PS 44 thereby encompasses both of these distinctive periods in the twentieth-century history of public school design in Buffalo.

This is Buffalo Public School #44, are there any questions?

### **Fiddler's Green Historic District, Springville, Erie County**

#### **SLIDE 1: Intro**

The Fiddlers Green Historic District is significant as an intact civic and religious center that developed around a public green space within the Village of Springville. The Fiddlers Green Historic District ~~therefore~~ demonstrates significance under criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its distinct development of a village center, an intentional design that endured through the area's history. The district also merits consideration under criterion C in the area of Architecture as a collection of religious, civic, cultural, and residential buildings that demonstrate the evolving national architectural trends over the course of Springville's development. The district reflects national trends in popular architectural styles.

ranging from the Gothic Revival style of the mid- to late-1800s, to the Queen Anne and Shingle style in the late nineteenth century, to the Colonial Revival typical of the early twentieth century and of Works Project Administration buildings nationwide. The period of significance for the Fiddlers Green Historic District encompasses the years during which most of the significant architectural development occurred, beginning circa 1818 when the establishment of the “Public Square,” and closing in 1937 with the construction of the WPA-era post office and fire hall.

## **SLIDE 2: MAP, HISTORY**

The land for Fiddlers Green park was set aside by 1818, within the first ten years of Springville’s settlement and development. Rufus Eaton moved his family west from Eatonville in Herkimer County, which his family founded. Eaton drew the community’s first map, mostly of the land that he owned, then donated land for the public square or park, a cemetery, an academy, and the First Presbyterian Church and built a saw mill at the mill pond nearby. While initially known as the Public Square, the park took on the name “Fiddler’s Green” for its anecdotal associations with early Irish fiddlers who met and played in the park.

## **SLIDE 3: CURRENT MAP**

Eaton’s early plan gave rise to a small yet distinct part of Springville consisting largely of civic and religious buildings, standing apart from commercial and residential development in the community. In the tradition of public squares, Fiddler’s Green became a center for civic life in Springville. The park was a hub of activity once square played a vital role in the village community as the village began to be was being established. In early times the “Green” was used as a parade ground by the military companies that trained in Springville. Sometimes caravans and other traveling shows exhibited there or games of baseball were played. During the memorable Van Buren-Harrison presidential campaign of 1840 a log cabin was erected on the south-west corner of the “Green,” and a large political meeting was held there on that Fourth of July.

## **SLIDE 4, 5: Photos**

Ring the park, a variety of civic, municipal and religious buildings located. This included at one time five churches, of which three remain extant. The 20th century ushered in a wave of municipal building construction that reinforced Fiddlers Green as the civic center for the Village. This began with the construction of Goddard Memorial Hall in 1902. The Springville Post Office, constructed in 1936-37 just east of the Green, highlights the continued importance

of the Fiddlers Green area as a civic hub in the twentieth century. At the same time as the post office's construction, a brick municipal and fire hall building was built next to it by the WPA.

## **SLIDE 6: PREVIOUSLY NR LISTED**

While small, this historic district also helps to contextualize several previously individually listed resources; the Post Office and the former Free Baptist church and its parsonage.

We have received no letters of objection for this district. This is Fiddler's Green Historic District, are there any questions?

### **Amagansett U.S. Life-Saving and Coast Guard Station**

160 Atlantic Avenue, Amagansett, Nassau County

[Aerial] The Amagansett U.S. Life-Saving and Coast Guard Station is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of maritime history as one of a network of almost 300 life-saving stations built by the U.S. Life-Saving Service up and down the Atlantic Coast, the Pacific Coast, and the shores of the Great Lakes from the mid-1800s through 1914. Only about 115 survive today.

[Historic] Built in 1902 to replace two earlier stations in Amagansett, the station housed lifesaving supplies, small craft, and a crew of surfmen who patrolled the shore and performed rescues. As ocean-going ships provided the principal means of transporting goods and people in the coastal region, this work remained essential during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> c before the advent of reliable radio communication, better navigational aids, and motorized vessels.

[Current] The station is also locally significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as one of the few extant examples of the Quonochontaug life saving station building type. Created in 1900 by George Russell Tolman for the life-saving service, the distinctive building type demonstrated a trend toward architectural simplicity.

[Division of Spaces] The type also featured a carefully thought-out plan that integrated living and life-saving areas under one roof, but separated them functionally. Of the 21 stations built using this type, Amagansett is one of the few that remain.

[Living space] The Station which had been auctioned and moved off-site in 1966, recently underwent a multi-year restoration to restore the building to its original location and appearance.

[Boat room entrance]

[Historic boat room entrance]

[Boat room]

[Watchtower]

[Watchtower view] The Amagansett Station is additionally nationally significant under Criterion A in the area of Military History for its role in the interception of the landing of four would-be German saboteurs sent by the

Nazi regime in 1942. Two groups of saboteurs, each of which had the mission of blowing up strategic industrial and transportation resources, left from Brittany in submarines in May 1942. One of the groups arrived in Amagansett, where John Cullen, a patrolman from Amagansett Station, approached them during his patrol.

[1942 patrol] Cullen's report, and the subsequent discovery of hidden materials which the saboteurs had intended to retrieve later was followed by a successful FBI investigation and the capture of both groups. The Coast Guard responded swiftly, establishing new, substantial beach patrols on 3,700 miles of shoreline across the United States. The beach patrol lasted approx. two years, and never detected another attempt by Axis forces to land on American soil.

[Aerial] The Amagansett Station continued to operate until 1944, when it was decommissioned.

**Letter of Support from the East Hampton Town Supervisor, Prof. Michael Lewis from Williams College and Robert Hefner, who prepared the HSR**

**VISITORS: Nina Gillman & Charles Savage**

## Pine Hollow Cemetery

Pine Hollow Road, Oyster Bay, Nassau County

[Entrance and parking lot] Pine Hollow Cemetery is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of social and ethnic history for its association with Oyster Bay's native and African American community during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The cemetery, established in 1884, bears witness to the history of Oyster Bay's free black and native community.

[Central path, stones] Between the 1685 manumission of Owah, also known as Tom Gall, the earliest documented manumission on Long Island, and New York's passage of gradual manumission, Oyster Bay's free black community grew. In 1790, the town had equal number of enslaved and free people of color.

[Maps, AME] Many settled on the edges of the village. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Pine Hollow, a small enclave of predominantly free people of color, had developed just south of the village. The community organized an AME Zion congregation in 1848 and constructed a wooden church on South Street in 1856 on land donated to them by Edward A. Weeks, a large landowner. (1937)

[Plato Gale & Sarah Treadwell Harte] Plato Gale, a black landowner and likely descendant of Tom Gall, founded the congregation, one of six black churches established in Nassau County before the Civil War. The church started from meetings at the home he shared with his wife, Sarah. Plato died before the cemetery was founded, and was reburied Pine Hollow in recognition of his role in the congregation.

[Samuel C. and Nancy W. Brown] Nancy and Samuel Brown worked for the Weeks family in Oyster Bay, and were instrumental in obtaining the land the congregation needed to build a church. The Weeks family again played an important role as a benefactor to the church when Nathaniel and Alice Weeks donated land to the congregation for a cemetery in 1884.

[Potter family plot] Located south of the Pine Hollow enclave on a steeply sloping piece of land, Pine Hollow Cemetery quickly joined the church as a second, important community space. The cemetery reflects growth and change within the community and Hood AME Zion Church during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and is the final resting place of twelve Civil War veterans and prominent families and members of Oyster Bay's community of color.

[David Carll] After the Bureau of Colored Troops was formally created, 37 men enlisted. David Carll is one of the men who served that are buried in Pine Hollow Cemetery. Carll married Mary Louisa Appleford before leaving for the war; their union was the first recorded interracial marriage in Oyster Bay. Carll returned, purchased land in Pine Hollow that remains in his family, and earned a living as a coastal merchant.

[Overview] During the early 1960s, Gordon Maddox Sr., whose family had long lived in Pine Hollow, became the voluntary caretaker for the cemetery. Maddox cleared the overgrowth and created a simple model to make concrete headstones to replace those that had broken or vanished, or to offer to families who needed a headstone for their loved ones. These concrete headstones now dot the cemetery.



[End of cemetery] The cemetery, which remains an active burial site, remains intact to its historic appearance, documents the community's history over time and continues to serve an important role within it today.

## **Letter of support from Assemblymember Charles Lavine, Oyster Bay Historical Society**

**VISITOR: Rev. Linda and Rev. Harry Vanager, Hood AME Zion Church**

### Immanuel Union Church

693 Jewett Avenue, Staten Island

[Façade] Immanuel Union Church, located in the Westerleigh neighborhood of Staten Island, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of social history for its association with the National Prohibition Park and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century temperance movement.

[Prohibition Park map] The park, conceived in 1887 as a summer campground and meeting place for supporters of the temperance movement, opened on July 4, 1888. While the original intent was for the park to only serve as a summer retreat, its popularity during the warmer months and of Staten Island more generally as a residential area led the park's leadership to sell individual building lots for the construction of year-round residences.

[Historic chapel] In 1894, the growing community founded the Union Congregational Church. Working with the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, they constructed the Deems Memorial Chapel in 1895. This marked the beginnings of Immanuel Union Church as one of the earliest churches established on Staten Island.

[Chapel interior] When the church voted to leave the Congregational denomination in 1896 to serve the increasingly diverse religious needs of the residents, it became one of the first non-denominational churches in the United States. (point out reorientation)

[1901 parlor addition] By the early twentieth century, Prohibition Park was well into its transition from a seasonal community into the neighborhood of Westerleigh. Immanuel Union Church remained an important religious and social center. In 1901, the congregation constructed a Sunday School and meeting room addition to the rear of the chapel to better serve the social, literary, and religious groups associated with the congregation – including one of Staten Island's earliest Boy Scout troops.

[Drawing] To accommodate the growing congregation, Immanuel Union Church undertook a major expansion of the sanctuary in 1916.

[Façade] Based on the design of James Whitford Senior, the modest chapel was recast as an expansive Tudor Revival Church. (point out location of chapel)

[Chapel looking into church] (photos to show reorientation)

[Looking both directions]

[Stained glass] In 1957, the church constructed its final addition, a multipurpose gymnasium and hall space to provide much-needed recreational, social, and community space.

[Stained glass from chapel] Benjamin Sellers window – CE Christian Endeavor

**Nomination prepared by Glen Umberger, NY Landmarks Conservancy  
Letter of Support from NYC LPC**

Fuller Shirt Company Factory

45 Pine Grove Avenue, Kingston, Ulster County

[Facade] The Fuller Shirt Company Factory is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of industry for its association with the Fuller and Kingston Shirt Companies, which operated between 1892 and 1965. The facility, which was established in 1906 and expanded between 1928 and 1957, reflects the history of the prominent local manufacturing enterprise.

[Façade] The Fuller Shirt Company was founded by Isaiah Fuller in 1892 in a building on Prince Street. After over a decade of growth, the company constructed a new factory at this site adjacent to the West Shore Railroad. The company, which remained in family hands, continued to be a formidable presence in local industry during the next decades.

[Rear courtyard / W elevation] After Isaiah Fuller's death, his daughter Annie became the president of the company in 1918, leading it for over 30 years. She continued to operate the company at a high level, overseeing the expansion of the facility.

[Interior – 1906 section, 1<sup>st</sup> fl] In addition to her business acumen, Annie Fuller's success in leading the company was attributed to her attention to the employee welfare and company culture. After the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire and the increased attention to working conditions in New York City, Kingston's textile industry grew dramatically during the 1910s.

[Interior – 1906 section, 2<sup>nd</sup> fl] Compared to New York City, where predominantly female textile workers could be easily replaced, factories in Kingston had an incentive to offer steady employment, good working conditions, and good pay. By 1916, the average female clothing worker in Kingston was earning \$15-20 a week, while men were only earning \$12. The company remained stable through the Great Depression and into the postwar years, when it participated in two veteran training programs.

[Interior – 1947 section, 2<sup>nd</sup> fl] Production peaked for the company during the late 1940s and early 1950s, attracting the John B. Stetson company to buy it in 1956. When Stetson shut down operations after five years, the Fuller family repurchased the building, reformed the Fuller Shirt Company, and continued manufacturing until 1965.

**Approved Part 1**

**Letter of Support from Mayor Steven Noble**

**VISITOR: Lee Riccetti, Heritage Consulting, who prepared the nomination**  
Wardencllyffe Laboratory

56 NY-25A, Shoreham, Suffolk Co

[Historic / Tesla] Wardencllyffe Laboratory is nationally significant under Criterion B in the areas of science and engineering for its association with famous inventor and visionary Nikola Tesla. Tesla, one of the most important scientists and inventors of the modern age, worked at this lab between 1902 and 1906. It was the site of his most advanced experiments in wireless power transmission.

[Lab / Tower foundation] The laboratory, which was Tesla's last, and ruins of his tower were both designed to Tesla's specifications by American architects McKim, Mead, and White. They are the only remaining historic resources associated with the inventor and his productive career.

[Lab façade] Born in Croatia, Tesla displayed promise in his early education and work in technology. After inventing new equipment and rising to the head of Budapest's telephone exchange, Tesla began working for the Edison Company in Paris before moving to the US in 1884 to work with Edison directly.

[Side elev] Within the next two decades, Tesla, working with Westinghouse and independently as an inventor, made a mark on the scientific community and in the public imagination. His experiments with electricity resulted in the invention of the alternating current that we use today. He was a pioneer in X-ray technology, remote control, and wireless communication.

[Side elev] Wardencllyffe, Tesla's laboratory and office from 1902 to 1906, represents the apex of Tesla's career, during which he developed and promoted his idea for a "World Wireless System" which would transmit energy and communications without wires. Unfortunately, his failure to perfect his ideas for wireless technology quickly enough, as well as the success of Marconi's telegraph system, led his backers to abandon him and led to his emotional and financial ruin. In 1915, he lost the heavily mortgaged property in his attempts to cover his debts.

[Details] While Tesla continued to come up with new ideas, he was never able to rehabilitate his reputation and finances to secure another laboratory. In 1917, soon after Tesla lost the property, his tower was demolished for its scrap value. The building largely remained vacant until the property was purchased in 1938 by Peerless Photo Products.

[Floor plan] Peerless renovated the laboratory for use as a factory and offices, extending the mezzanine into a full second floor. Thankfully, the brick construction and open design of the laboratory, which had two primary open spaces, allowed for its subdivision with minimal disruption. Despite these later twentieth century alterations, the laboratory is identifiable and understandable to Tesla's period. (quickly explain diagram – reversibility)

[Machine shop / workshop]

[Windows]

[Second floor]

[Experimentation area / hall]

[Dynamo room]

[Dormer / Steam tank]

[Landscape and additions] Later in the twentieth century, a series of additions were added to the building. In most cases, these simply extended away from the original laboratory and did not directly impact it. The Tesla Science Center, which purchased the property in 2013, plans to remove these additions and modifications and restore the original laboratory.

[Historic] Wardencllyffe Laboratory is an important, and incredibly rare resource that stands as a testament to the life of Nikola Tesla.

**Letters of Support from NYS Congressman Lee M. Zeldin, the Serbian Consulate in New York City, Suffolk Co. Legislators Sarah S. Anker and Kara Hahn, Brookhaven Town Supervisor Edward Romaine, Brookhaven Town Councilwoman Jane Bonner, Preservation Long Island, the Nikola Tesla Museum in Belgrade, the Board of Directors of the Tesla Science Center, Lacey Thaler Reilly Wilson, and several individual letters and an e-letter signed by 9,500 individual supporters of the Tesla Science Center's effort to preserve and restore the laboratory**

**VISITOR: Mark Thaler, Lacey Thaler Reilly Wilson, who prepared the nomination  
NYS Board for Historic Preservation Meeting 7 June 2018 PIRC—Auditorium  
Text for V. Bartos presentations**

## **Camillus Cutlery Headquarters Building, Onondaga County**

**Slide 1:** The Camillus Cutlery Headquarters Building in Onondaga County is being nominated under Criterion A in the areas of commerce, industry and social history for its role in making the village of Camillus a quintessential company town. It's also being nominated under Criterion C for architecture as an early twentieth century daylight factory building. The original 1925 structure fronts onto West Genesee Street and was built after the company relocated its headquarters from New York City to Camillus. The 1925 portion of the building is a rectangular, reinforced concrete structure with brick spandrel walls.

**Slide 2:** The concrete L- portion was constructed in 1940 and expanded in 1973. The 1925 portion was rehabilitated into office, and commercial space on the first floor and apartments in the second floor. The later additions were also rehabilitated as apartments on both floors.

**Slide 3:** The main entrance is now what was a secondary entrance in the 1940 building that enters into a lobby space with a historical display of the cutlery factory. I know you've read the nomination, but for the benefit of guests, let me say that the company was founded in the 1870s by German immigrant Adolph Kastor as a knife distribution business of mostly English and German products. Due to tariff issues, the company manufacturing knives in Camillus after Kastor bought a failing knife factory. Many of the early workers were German immigrants, recruited by Kastor. Throughout its history, the major clients were the U.S. military and later the Boys Scouts, Sears and Remington Rand. Business began to seriously decline in the 1980s and the company declared bankruptcy in 2007. I should mention that a large factory building was in the east side of the property that was destroyed by fire in 2013, the largest fire the village experienced. It was due to the Camillus Cutlery Company that the village of Camillus had a fire department, but even with additional help, the firefighters could only save the Headquarters building.

**Slide 4:** Here are view of typical one of the apartment spaces—these happen to be on the second floor of the 1940s building. The Camillus Cutlery Headquarter Building recently received its part 3 approval for the federal Historic Preservation Commercial Tax credit and is pursuing the required listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Questions, comments?

### **Wollensak Optical Factory Building, Rochester, Monroe County**

**Slide 1:** The Wollensak Optical Factory in Rochester was where the company manufactured camera and telescope lenses from 1925 through 1969. The building is being nominated under

Criterion A for association with the growth of the Wollensak Company and the diversification of industry in Rochester in the early twentieth century. It's also being nominated for architecture/Criterion C as an intact example of early twentieth century fireproof four-story brick-clad steel frame building with large window openings for natural light and ventilation. One of its primary exterior features is the decorative canopy over main entrance.

**Slide 2:** The building was originally constructed for the Home Profit Hosiery Company (1922-1925) to make knitting equipment that was leased or sold primarily to homemakers to make and/or sell hosiery for the company. Home Profit Hosiery went bankrupt in 1924. The Wollensak Company was looking for new space to manufacture its iris diaphragm shutter prism lens and other camera lenses after outgrowing its building on Clinton Street and bought the building at auction in 1925.

**Slide 3:** The four-story building is built out to the edge of the property at 872 Hudson Avenue and is slightly longer on the north and south elevations. Vacant, since the year 2000, the windows were boarded up to reduce vandalism. This view provides a good view of how the decorative cornice is absent from the rear or east end of the building.

**Slide 4:** This is a view of the first-floor interior showing that some of the double-hung six-over-six windows survived.

**Slide 5:** The interior retains its largely open floor plan as seen in the right image of one of the upper floors. To the left is an image of one of the historic staircases. Visible throughout the interior are concrete and tile floors and wood supports and beams. It appears to be a good

candidate for the commercial rehabilitation tax credit, and our office just received a part one application.

Questions? Comments?

## **First Congregational Church, Fairport, Monroe County**

**Slide 1:** Significant under Criterion C and Criterion Consideration A for its architecture, the First Congregational Church of Fairport is an excellent example of what Richard Upjohn called “the Rounded Arch Style” or if you prefer the German, “Rundbogenstil.” It’s a design of John Rochester Thomas, done well before the engraving of him was done around 1900 (seen in the upper right). Just a quick recap of Thomas’s career: In his early twenties, he entered the architectural practice of well-known Rochester architect Merwin Austin. After continuing his education in Europe, he returned to the U.S. He began his own practice and the church in Fairport was one of his first commissions, building in 1868. The building was expanded in 1900 and again in 1924. The 1900 expansion is behind the brick entrance ell seen in the right and the 1924 wing flanks the building on the other side. Two final expansions took place in 1951 and 1971, which are hidden from street view by the 1900 and 1924 wings.

**Slide 2:** The sanctuary was renovated in 1944 but retains a number of earlier features, including the plaster ceiling, choir balcony and stair to the bell tower.

**Slide 3:** The arches behind the pulpit platform were replaced during the 1944 renovation with the oak retable (reh-ta’-ble), organ pipe installation and screening. The pews, pulpit and altar

were replaced at the same time but they kept and still use the three original Gothic Revival platform chairs, now located behind the pulpit.

**Slide 4:** The sanctuary features a number of grisaille stained-glass windows, which unfortunately are woefully undocumented in the church records. They may date from around the time of the 1900 addition, but this is speculation. Pike Studios of Rochester is assisting the church on researching the windows.

**Slide 5:** Church records do confirm that Pike Studios made the windows for the Snow Meeting Room when the east wing was added in 1924, seen on the left. The right image shows interior renovations from 1951 that included a nursery, kitchen, Sunday school and offices. The sponsor of the nomination is the church. Fairport is a CLG but we have yet to receive a letter of support from the mayor or the commission.

Questions? Comments?

### **Elmira Civic Historic District Boundary Amendment, Chemung County**

**Slide 1:** Every so often, our office gets the opportunity to update an older historic district nomination with new, more detailed information about the resources and possibly expand the district. This is such a case with Elmira Civic Historic District, originally listed in 1980. The heart of the listed district was the Chemung County Courthouse complex, that consisted of the courthouse designed by Syracuse architect Horatio Nelson White. An annex was added in 1874 by Rochester architect John R. Thomas—you saw a picture of him earlier—and it was expanded later by the well-known Elmira firm of Pierce and Bickford.

**Slide 2:** The other primary civic building was the city hall, slightly north on Lake Street. The T-shaped listed district is the black line on the left map. The areas in red show the areas being



added. I need to say that the black line on the map reflects the amended listed boundary. If you look at Kath's map on the right, the areas in pink are either buildings that were demolished or no longer contributing. The boundary now eliminates where possible. The area in yellow in the lower left is this section on the aerial view. The amendment adds resources that represent a period of urban renewal that began with the Chemung Canal Trust plaza in 1971 and was accelerated by devastating floods in 1972 from Hurricane Agnes. The result was the transformation of this part of the city into a financial center with the construction of the Elmira Savings Bank in 1975 and the Marine Midland Bank in 1972. Studies indicated a lack of parking was one of the issues in the city and a key part of the urban renewal plans was the Carroll Street Parking Garage in 1975. By expanding the end period of significance from 1925 to 1977, buildings that were either non-contributing or left out of the original nomination are now being included as contributing resources to the amendment. The "orphans" were the justice building and jail from the 1940s and the Star Gazette News building. Buildings that are now contributing in infilled with yellow. Just to finish off, the buildings in blue were previous individual listings.

**Slide 3:** With all that explained, it's time to show some of these areas, beginning with the new additions, like this stretch of late-nineteenth through early twentieth century buildings at the corner of East Water and Baldwin Streets. The storefronts suffered damage from the 1972 flood but as you can see, many of them were repaired or reflect the original historic storefronts. The buildings were omitted from the original district due to being flanked by two 1970s bank buildings. Adding these buildings now allows them to take advantage of federal commercial tax credits.

**Slide 4:** Across Baldwin Street from the commercial buildings is the 1971 Chemung Canal Trust Plaza with its dramatic six story elliptical building of concrete columns with aggregate wall panels and almond shaped windows. It's the design of the firm of Haskell, Connor & Frost that was the successor to the well-known Elmira firm of Haskell and Considine. The address is One Chemung Canal Plaza being the first of the urban renewal era banks that included a detached drive-thru, large parking plaza and minimal landscaping. Although it predates the flood of 1972, its construction set the tone for the reshaping of this section of the city as a financial center that accelerated during the recovery period after the flood.

**Slide 5:** East of the added commercial buildings is the Elmira Savings Bank, completed in 1975 as part of the recovery. This low-rise modern building with its vertical piers and windows is at the corner of Lake and East Water Streets. The consultant is still investigating the building's construction, attempting to identify an architect. This building includes a hardscaped plaza to the west. What is significant about this building is that during construction, the bank president traveled to Washington D.C. to lobby for the release of federal funds earmarked for Elmira's recovery from the flood of 1972. I apologize for always saying "the flood of 1972," but that's only to do differentiate it from the floods of 1866 and 1946.

**Slide 6:** The former Marine Midland Bank, now the Five Star Bank was constructed in 1971. It's a large modern-steel frame building with a concrete and brick façade and a central five-story tower framed in concrete. This is the third major bank building completing the financial district.

**Slide 7:** This is view looking down Lake Street from the courthouse complex. Another view of the Five Star bank is near the center. The YWCA is on the right had side of the image at the

Corner of Lake Street. It is one of the buildings that is now being considered contributing, being built in 1952 and designed by the local firm of Fudge and Underhill, Architects and Engineers.

**Slide 8:** Another building now considered contributing is the former IBM Building on East Church Street. It was constructed in 1959 on the site of an earlier apartment building and is an excellent example of International Style steel frame construction. The most recent occupant was the Star-Gazette newspaper and the building is currently vacant.

**Slide 9:** We're now up to the "should have been included" resources, most notably the Jail and Justice center on William Street which technically are part of the courthouse property. The buildings are streamlined, or rather, restrained Art Deco design, both designed by the Elmira firm of Haskell and Considine in 1941. No explanation was found as to why these were left out in the first place other than they were built after the 1980 nomination end date of 1925.

**Slide 10:** This is a view of two of the three buildings on William Street, these being contemporary with the Jail and Justice Building (Art Deco design ca. 1930s).

**Slide 11:** We've pretty much circled the listed district and looked at the areas being added. Hurricane Agnes was a significant event for Elmira and this boundary amendment clearly demonstrates how this event and economic decline affects the city's recent past. The sponsor of the nomination is Elmira Downtown and the nomination was funded by the Preservation League of New York State and the NYSCA. Elmira is a CLG and the local Preservation Commission approved a resolution at its last meeting supporting the nomination. To date, no letters of objection have been received and we've received one letter of support.

Comments? Questions

Taylor Flats

Watertown, Jefferson Co

ITC

This is the Taylor Flats, a small, early 20<sup>th</sup> century apartment building in Watertown, Jefferson County, which was built in 1907 to provide housing for middle class railroad and factory workers in the village. It was just a few blocks from the train yard for the New York Central and Hudson River Rail Line

The brick building is four stories tall, six bays wide and four bays deep, and nearly identical on all four elevations. The original plan is completely intact with eight units, two to a floor. They vary in size, however, with a combination of one, two and three bedroom plans. Original finishes include baseboard, door and window moldings

This Taylor Flats is significant in social history as an example of a middle class residential apartment building in Watertown and in architecture as an interesting and intact example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century apartment building type

It is also a completed tax credit project

R.E. Dietz Building  
Syracuse, Onondaga County  
CLG, ITC

This is the R.E. Dietz Co Factory Building in Syracuse. The Dietz Factory is on the city's west side, and it was one of a number of companies that located along the Erie Canal and railroad corridor just west of downtown in a residential and commercial neighborhood known as Park Ave. The canal and railroad provided easy access both to manufacturers and to workers, who lived in the surrounding blocks and could walk to work. This 1908 map provides that context. Dietz was oriented north toward the large, full-block Leavenworth park, and the canal and railroad ran along the south behind it.

Dietz was established in Brooklyn 1840 by Robert E Dietz, who is credited with the invention of the kerosene lamp in 1853. Almost from the beginning, this company was the acknowledged leader in the development of lanterns and lighting products. It built tubular lanterns, street, and station lamps, signal lamps and dozens of models of kerosene lanterns. The company held numerous patents, provided lighting for the construction of the panama canal in 1903, and was a pioneer in the auto industry. There were a number of Dietz brothers and several reorganizations, but in 1897, R.E Dietz's large factory in Greenwich Village, led by the founder's son Frederick, burned. Frederick Dietz needed a new factory, so he bought out his nearest competitor in Syracuse while rebuilding in New York. The Dietz Company then operated both factories as factory 1 and factory 2. In the 1950s all operations were consolidated here and Dietz was a significant employer in Syracuse well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Manufacturing ceased here in 1992, but Dietz lanterns are still made in Hong Kong and China.

Dietz took over an extant factory, and the nominated building was constructed in at least 8 stages between 1892 and the 1940s. The earliest section is the small one-story wing on the left, and the first section built by Dietz is on the far right. As the company expanded, it gradually replaced everything in between the two until we got to the current configuration, which is shown here in an aerial – this is actually from the rear

and color-coded here in a plan. [sequence is yellow, pink, blue, orange] As it is today, it is a single, connected building resembling a long, open U with the open part to the south, two courtyards in the center, and shorter, rectangular wings on each side.

So, going around quickly: beginning on the east elevation, with the façade to the right, you can see the original one story pavilion

Now looking back at the long east elevation;

And a detail – the back corner was severely damaged in a wind storm; it had been repaired in non-historic materials and was rehabbed as part of the tax credit project

This is the rear;

and back to the front – this is the first section built by Dietz, and this corner was also severely damaged by the windstorm and had been covered in metal panels – it was completely rebuilt in brick as part of the tax credit rehab

the building was constructed of brick with a heavy timber frame, with large open interior spaces for factory use, and we expected to see typical mill construction; but, it turned out to have a more interesting and unusual method of construction that we had not seen before. Unlike typical mill construction, the brick walls are not load bearing, but they are interdependent with the timber frame – as you see here

At first we couldn't figure out if this had been ignorance or intention, as the architect, Albert Brockway, was a Beaux Arts trained architect with no other industrial buildings to his credit, but then Bill discovered an article about this very method, describing it as “skeleton slow burning construction”

– Which allowed for thinner walls and more open floor space - as the article said “the columns will be 18 foot centers, which means that the floor space will be only half as much obstructed by the pillars as is usually the case” – so, this was really an advancement, almost like a steel frame

This shows both the Syracuse factory in its final form, on the left, and the second Greenwich Village factory, on the right, which is extant [and is also apartments]

The Dietz factory is significant under criteria A and C as a representative example of a late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century factory in Syracuse, for its interesting method of construction, for its role in the city's growth, and for its association with a prominent manufacturer of lanterns and lighting products.

It is a tax credit project and also a recent award winner from the Preservation League – and we have a letter of support from the CLG