

**BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM**

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION  
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
UNIQUE SITE NO. _____
QUAD _____
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

YOUR NAME: Ted Bartlett DATE: 2-84

YOUR ADDRESS: 130 Spring St., Rochester TELEPHONE: 716-546-7029

ORGANIZATION (if any): Landmark Society of Western New York

\*\*\*\*\*  
**IDENTIFICATION**

1. BUILDING NAME(S): Sibley's, Lindsay and Curr Building

2. COUNTY: Monroe TOWN/CITY: Rochester VILLAGE: NA

3. STREET LOCATION: 228 East Main Street

4. OWNERSHIP: a. public  b. private  Associated Drygoods, Inc.

5. PRESENT OWNER: Associated Dry Goods ADDRESS: 228 East Main St., Rochester, 14604

6. USE: Original: Department Store Present: Department Store

7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes  No

Interior accessible: Explain yes

**DESCRIPTION**

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard  b. stone  c. brick  d. board and batten   
e. cobblestone  f. shingles  g. stucco  other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: (if known) a. wood frame with interlocking joints   
b. wood frame with light members   
c. masonry load bearing walls   
d. metal (explain) steel skeletal frame  
e. other \_\_\_\_\_

10. CONDITION: a. excellent  b. good  c. fair  d. deteriorated

11. INTEGRITY: a. original site  b. moved  if so, when? \_\_\_\_\_  
c. list major alterations and dates (if known):

major alterations, 1911, 1924. Few exterior changes except closing of western entrance on Main Street.

12. PHOTO:

See continuation sheet.

13. MAP:

See continuation sheet.

14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known  b. zoning  c. roads   
 d. developers  e. deterioration   
 f. other: \_\_\_\_\_
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:  
 a. barn  b. carriage house  c. garage   
 d. privy  e. shed  f. greenhouse   
 g. shop  h. gardens   
 i. landscape features: \_\_\_\_\_  
 j. other: building fills entire lot
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):  
 a. open land  b. woodland   
 c. scattered buildings   
 d. densely built-up  e. commercial   
 f. industrial  g. residential   
 h. other: \_\_\_\_\_

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:  
 (Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

See continuation sheet.

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):

See continuation sheet.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: 1904 with major additions: 1911, 1924

ARCHITECT: J. Foster Warner

BUILDER: Sibley Lindsay and Curr Company

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

See continuation sheet.

21. SOURCES:

Rochester Plot maps and city directories;  
 Historical and architectural files and surveys, Landmark Society of Western New York  
 Local History Division, Rochester Public Library; and City of Rochester Public Records.

22. THEME:

Department store

Inner Loop Multiple Resource Area, Rochester, Monroe Co., NY  
Department Store Thematic Group  
Sibley Lindsay and Curr Building  
228 East Main Street

17. The huge Sibley's building is situated on the entire irregular block between Main Street, Clinton Avenue and Franklin Street. Across Clinton Avenue, Main Street and Franklin Street are other multi-story commercial buildings. An attached ten-story parking garage (non-contributing) (1959) is directly behind the building. The building occupies a lot of 3.219 acres (source: City of Rochester tax maps).

18. The Sibley's building is a monumental Roman brick structure irregular in plan with a five-story western section (1904) and a twelve-story eastern section known as the Tower building (1911, 1924). Occupying an entire city block, it is a representative example of the early twentieth century Chicago style as interpreted by local architect J. Foster Warner. Granite trim on the first story storefront, a denticular cornice, and a Baroque clock tower rising three stories above the eastern section are the building's only decorative features. The tripartite organization of its fenestration is typical of the Chicago style.

The eastern section was the first to be built in 1904; the attached addition (present Tower building) was constructed in two phases: the first six stories completed in 1911, the upper six stories in 1924. The entire design was the work of J. Foster Warner.

The store has not been significantly altered on the exterior with the exception of the closing of the Main Street entrance. In the 1950s, an addition to the rear of the building (1918) was demolished. The interior of the building retains its original floor plan although original details and appointments are no longer extant.

20. The Sibley's building (1904-1924) is architecturally significant as an early twentieth century urban department store structure in Rochester executed in the Chicago style to the design of noted local architect J. Foster Warner. It is historically significant for its association with Sibley, Lindsay and Curr, Rochester's largest and most influential retail concern. The retail trade was a major force in Rochester's economy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and Sibley's was the apotheosis of that industry. Foster's use of the Chicago style in his design for the building and its major additions (1911, 1924) is unique to the thematic group; and its prominent location on East Main Street, where it remains essentially intact, renders it a significant landmark within the multiple resource area.

Inner Loop Multiple Resource Area, Rochester, Monroe Co., NY  
Department Store Thematic Group  
Sibley Lindsay and Curr Building  
228 East Main Street

20. (continued)

The firm of Sibley Lindsay and Curr was organized in 1868 by Rufus A. Sibley, Alexander M. Lindsay and John Curr, all of whom came to Rochester from Boston where they had met while working for Hogg Brown and Taylor, a dry goods establishment. Although the partners styled themselves as "Sibley Lindsay and Curr," the store was known as the "Boston Store." Boston stores, a fixture on the American retail scene for many years, were given their name because Boston was the scene of the invention of the department store of the mid-nineteenth century. Sibley, Lindsay and Curr brought the Boston store to Rochester.

Sibley Lindsay & Curr began business in a store in the Marble Block adjoining the famous Osburn House hotel on East Main Street (on the site of the present Granite Building). Sibley's emphasized volume and price: it was the first major store in the area to mark all merchandise clearly, treating all customers alike. As contrasted with the drab, haphazard appearance of many of the older retailers, their establishment was bright, clear, and well lighted. They laid great emphasis on counter display and were quick to extend credit. They also developed a large wholesale business which catered to country stores throughout New York State, northern Pennsylvania and New England. With the wholesale business they also developed an unusual dry goods manufacturing business for which part of the Cox Building was constructed in 1888.

By 1893 the firm had outgrown its varied collection of buildings and had constructed the Granite Building on East Main Street and the large Cox Building warehouse for its wholesale business on St. Paul Street. The wholesale and retail business of the firm was so extensive that it was obliged to maintain offices and buyers in New York City and four European cities. The Granite Building opened on October 23, 1893 and was only equalled in size and appointment by department stores in New York and Chicago. Proclaimed a fireproof building, the interior of the Granite Building was, nevertheless, consumed in the Great Sibley Fire of 1904, resulting in the loss of Sibley's retail space and warehouse.

Construction of the present building (228 East Main Street) was started in 1904 following the fire. In fact, the fire only accelerated the construction of the new store on a site which Sibleys already owned. Just 30 days after the fire, Sibleys reopened in the old Empire Theater Building at the northeast corner of East Main Street and Clinton Avenue and in adjoining older structures. Because of these new conditions, the present store was built in sections, with the Empire Theater and adjoining buildings used until the first new section was ready for occupancy. In 1905, the store moved into the ell-shaped five-story first section; by the fall of that year, the entire new structure had been completed. The frontage on East Main Street was an impressive 360 feet and that on Clinton Avenue was more than 300 feet. The use of the stark and unadorned Chicago style, new to Rochester, was accentuated by the sheer massiveness of the new Sibley's Building.

In 1911 a major addition to the store was completed. This was the Mercantile Building, and it carried the store all the way east to North Street and Franklin Street. The store then comprised thirteen acres of floor space and employed 2,400 people at Christmas time. The Mercantile Building was six stories tall and, in addition to more retail space, contained special areas for the still active wholesale division. This 1911 addition was designed by Warner in a style identical to that of the 1904 building.

Inner Loop Multiple Resource Area, Rochester, Monroe Co., NY  
Department Store Thematic Group  
Sibley Lindsay and Curr Building  
228 East Main Street

20 (continued)

The optimism of the 1920s and the remarkable prosperity of the business (in 1924) led to still another enlargement of the giant store building. Six floors were added to the Mercantile Building which resulted in the Sibley Tower Building of twelve stories. When completed, it was the largest office building in the city and dominated the central business district: with its commanding position at the downtown culmination of East Avenue. Unfortunately, its construction coincided with the beginning of a real estate collapse in Rochester, and the Tower Building would not be commercially successful until the office space shortage which developed from World War II, nearly two decades later.

(The above text is adapted from Andrew D. Wolfe, Bold Century, 1868-1968: The Story of Sibley Lindsay & Curr Company of Rochester, New York. Rochester, 1968.)

The building and all its additions were the fastidious work of J. Foster Warner, one of Rochester's most important architects of the period. Warner took particular care with the Sibley's building and its additions, and to him went the responsibility of overseeing its continuity of design. It was Warner's obsession that the joining of new construction to old be absolutely indiscernable in the Roman bricks and granite trim of the exterior as well as the columns, walls and floors of the interior.

In 1913 a five-story Achilles Street addition to the rear of the building consisted of new stables, garages and a power plant. In the Warner tradition, all were of the best polished granite. (This section was demolished in the 1950s for the present parking garage.) With the completion of the 1924 addition, the Sibley's building had over twenty-three acres of floor space and was the largest retail store in the state outside of New York City.

It survives virtually unaltered since its completion as testament to the company that has cared for it for over 80 years and to the architect who designed it. Pride in the building is evident in the care with which all alterations are made, including the restoration of the original restaurant.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received 8/25/84  
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 2

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Inner Loop Multiple Resource Area  
State New York

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. National Company Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 10/11/84

Attest

12. Sibley, Lindsay and Curr Building

Substantive Review

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

for Keeper

Thomas L. Dwyer 10/11/84

Attest

13. Stone Arch Bridge Thematic Res. (Cover)

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Thomas L. Dwyer 10/11/84

Attest

14. Main Street Bridge

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 10/11/84

Attest

15. Andrews Street Bridge

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 10/11/84

Attest

16. Court Street Bridge

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Thomas L. Dwyer 10/11/84

Attest

Determined Eligible

\* 17. Duffy-Powers Building

Substantive Review

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

for Keeper

Thomas L. Dwyer 3/8/85

Attest

18.

Keeper

Attest

19.

Keeper

Attest

20.

Keeper

Attest



INNER-LOOP MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA NOMINATION  
JUNE 1984

DEPARTMENT STORE THEMATIC GROUP

PHOTO: LANDMARK SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK

NEGATIVE: LANDMARK SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK

SIBLEY BUILDING

228 East Main Street

Rochester, New York

View looking west on East Main Street

PHOTO #5





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Sibley's, Lindsay and Curr Building  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Inner Loop MRA; Department Store TR  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Monroe

DATE RECEIVED: 11/26/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/12/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 84003945

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 1-8-14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 1-8-14

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

November 13, 2013

Ruth Pierpont  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Peebles Island State Park  
PO Box 189  
Waterford, NY 12188



RE: Sibley Lindsay & Curr Building, 228 East Main Street, Rochester, NY

Dear Ms. Pierpont,

This letter is provided to notify you the current owner of the Sibley, Lindsay & Curr Building, commonly referred to as the Sibley Building, at 228 East Main Street in Rochester, NY wishes to have the Sibley Building listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Sibley Building received a Determination of Eligibility for listing on the National Register by the Keeper of the Register in 1984 when it was recommended for listing as part of the Department Store Group within the Inner Loop Multiple Resource Area. At that time, the owner objected to the listing. The Sibley Building was identified as a "DOE" on the Nomination and was not officially listed as part of the MRA due to owner objection.

Sibley Redevelopment LP, the current owner, wishes to withdraw the owner objection to the National Register listing for the Sibley Building. Sibley Redevelopment LP supports the listing of the Sibley Building on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the MRA.

With this letter, we understand your office will notify the Keeper of the Register of the withdrawal of the owner objection and the owner's support of the National Register listing. We understand that following this notification, the Keeper will officially list the Sibley Building on the National Register.

We look forward to the listing of the Sibley Building, and thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Joe Eddy at 617-239-4527 or our historic preservation consultant, Taya Dixon at 978-461-6245 at Epsilon Associates, Inc.


Sincerely,

  
Lawrence H. Curtis  
President

Sibley Redevelopment LP



**PATRICIA M. CARUCCI**  
Notary Public  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
My Commission Expires  
November 16, 2018





National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

84003945 oh

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Sibley, Lindsay and Curr Building (Department Store TR) (Inner Loop MRA)  
Monroe County  
NEW YORK

Substantive Review  
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Working No. AUG 28 1984  
Fed. Reg. Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Due: 10/12/84  
Action:  ACCEPT 10-71-84  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Determined Eligible

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria Accept  
Reviewer Tom Bougel  
Discipline F.H.  
Date 10/11/84  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category Ownership Status Present Use  
Public Acquisition Accessible

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition  excellent  good  fair  
 deteriorated  ruins  unexposed  
Check one  unaltered  altered  
Check one  original site  moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

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**8. Significance**

Period      Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates                      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title                      date

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NEW YORK

DATE DETERMINED **OCT 11 1984**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sibley, Lindsay and Curr Building (Department Store TR) (Inner Loop Multiple Resource Area)	Rochester Monroe County
Eastman Historic District (Inner Loop Multiple Resource Area)	Rochester Monroe County

Also Notified

NPS REGIONAL OFFICE: Mid-Atlantic

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
The Old Post Office Building  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW #809  
Washington, DC 20004

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Orin Lehman  
Commissioner, Office of Parks  
Recreation & Historic Preservation  
Agency Building #1  
Empire State Plaza  
Albany, New York 12238

NR/DOE JMS

For further information, please call the National Register at (202) ~~272-3504~~.

343-9554

# SIBLEY, LINDSAY & CURR CO.

ROCHESTER, N. Y. 14604

JUSTIN KLEIN  
VICE PRESIDENT, TREASURER

REGISTERED MAIL

October 6, 1982



Ms. Janette Johnstone  
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau  
New York State Office of Parks,  
Recreation & Historic Preservation  
Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller Plaza  
Albany, New York 12238

Dear Ms. Johnstone:

We have received your letter of 9/28/82 in which you asked that Sibley's property at 228 East Main Street, Inner Loop Multiple Resource Area, be considered as Historic Preservation Property.

After careful consideration of the various elements affecting the status of this property, Sibley's does not wish to be considered for listing in the National and State Registers.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Justin Klein".

Justin Klein

JK/mea

cc: Mrs. Patrick Harrington

Sworn to before me this 7th day of October 1982.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert D. Lauber Sr.".  
Robert D. Lauber Sr.

ROBERT D. LAUBER, JR.

No. 28-7440735

NOTARY PUBLIC, State of N.Y., Monroe County  
My Commission Expires March 30, 1984





## New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division for Historic Preservation  
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189  
518-237-8643

**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
Governor

**Rose Harvey**  
Commissioner



19 November 2013

Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: Withdrawal of Owner Objection

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit a notarized letter from the owner of the Sibley Lindsay and Curr Building, Monroe County, New York, withdrawing a notarized letter of objection to National Register listing. The building was nominated as part of the Inner Loop Multiple Property Nomination, and within that as part of the Department Store Theme, and it received a determination of eligibility on 11 October 1984.

Please feel free to call Kathleen LaFrank at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Ruth Pierpont  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
New York State Historic Preservation Officer



506555002

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau  
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189



UNITED STATES POSTAGE  
02 1A  
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MAILED FROM ZIP CO

Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St NW 8th floor  
Washington DC 20005