

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **WORCESTER BLEACH AND DYE WORKS**

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number **60 FREMONT STREET** not for publication

city or town **WORCESTER** vicinity

state **MASSACHUSETTS** code **MA** county **WORCESTER** code **027** zip code **01603**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title *Elsa H. Fitzgerald*
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

October 6, 2000

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
☒ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

11-8-00

Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Name of Property

Worcester, MA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1 building
sites
structures
objects
1 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)

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility/factory

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility/factory

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th – EARLY 20th C. REVIVALS: Classical Reviv.

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof synthetics/rubber

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Worcester Bleach & Dye Works

Name of Property

Worcester, MA

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.)

- ☒ **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.
- ☒ **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 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

INDUSTRY

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

c. 1909-1950

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA

7. Location and Setting

The Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex is located in an industrial-residential, neighborhood in the southern section of Worcester, Massachusetts. Situated in the center of the state, Worcester is a city of about 160,000 and is the second largest city in New England.

The brick front portion of the complex is set directly on the sidewalks at the southeast corner of Fremont and Delaware streets. Although this section of Fremont Street is flat, the land rises rapidly to the south along Delaware Street. Correspondingly, the wooded southwest corner of the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works lot is higher than the rest of the factory property. A visitor parking lot on the south side of the complex is located in this area with an entrance off of Delaware Street. On flat terrain off of Fremont Street on the east side of the building is a delivery courtyard. Behind the complex, and reached from the driveway of the delivery complex, is an employee parking lot.

Nearby on Fremont Street are other brick industrial complexes also built up to the edge of the sidewalk. These buildings are similar in character and were built during approximately the same period. Scattered among them are parking lots. Both on Fremont Street and behind the complex on Delaware and New York streets are several wood-frame dwellings dating from the late 19th-early 20th century period.

Description of the Building

Worcester Bleach and Dye Works is composed of two formerly independent brick sections joined together by an intermediate section of wood. The front portion of the complex is a rectangular, two-story, brick industrial building set at the edge of the sidewalk on the southeast corner of Fremont and Delaware Streets (Photos # 1, 2, 3). Resting on a high concrete foundation, it has a very low-pitched gable roof with its roof ridge running east-west. The main facade, which faces Fremont Street, is eighteen bays long. The gable ends are each ten bays wide. Major features of the building are massive walls of red brick and large segmented-arched windows with rockface granite sills. In each window opening is a pair of 1/1-sash windows with a single wide transom above.

The chief ornamental feature of the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex is the original main entrance (Photo # 3). It is located in the fourth bay from the north on the Fremont Street facade of the front portion of the complex. Surrounded by a wide band of dressed, tooled granite and accented with a keystone at the top, this imposing round-arched, Classical style entrance leads to a flight of granite stairs with a recessed round-arched doorway at the top. The exterior entrance arch is closed by a pair of decorative wrought iron gates. A side entrance to the front portion of the complex is located in the tenth bay on the Delaware Street facade. Loading doors are placed at both the first and second levels of the building at the center of either gable end. A one-story loading dock addition is located on the east side.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA

A wood structure, covered in stucco since the 1986 remodeling of the complex, extends the full width of the south side of the front building. It is five bays deep on the west side that faces Delaware Street (Photo # 2) and is nine bays deep on the south facade. It has a flat roof and is seen as two stories in height, yet its roofline is slightly lower than that of the front section of the complex. Scarcely noticed from Delaware Street, the present main entrance to the complex is unassuming and unremarkable. Located inconspicuously on the south facade of this stucco-covered wooden section, it can only be reached from the visitor parking lot on that side. An enclosed, stucco-covered, pedestrian bridge that extends from the parking lot over the low terrain between the parking lot and the building forms a long narrow entry vestibule. The only emphasis given to this entrance is an unadorned, wide, stucco frame around the top and sides of the recessed doorway to the bridge. The entry door is of metal with a glazed panel at the top and at the bottom.

At its southeast corner, the stuccoed wood section of the complex is joined to a three-story brick building (Photos # 4, 5, 6) of the same general character and design as the front building. This brick building is eight bays wide and nine bays deep. Like the front building, it has a very low-pitched roof, massive walls, and segmented-arched window and door openings. The character of the brick walls, the fenestration, and the treatment of the roof cornice are nearly identical to that of the front building. Contrastingly, its roof ridge runs north-south instead of east-west. Loading doors are located on its north and south facades. On the north facade they all have segmented-arched openings. One group of doors is situated in the fourth bay from the east corner, with one door at each of the three floor levels. On this same facade another loading door is located at the first floor level in the second bay from the east. On the south facade is a larger flat-arched loading door, possibly added after the construction of the building. It is located at the first floor level in the third bay from the east end.

Structural Features

In the two brick portions of the complex, the lower floors are of fireproof construction with floors, structural piers, and beams of concrete. However, the top floors of each building have wood roofs and interior structural members of heavy timber. Some steel members are used on the second floor of the front building. The floors of these upper stories are of concrete. In the industrial areas of the wood section of the building, steel posts support steel roof trusses and wood roofs.

Interior

Today the brick portions of the building contain the major industrial spaces of the complex. Interior spaces there are generally large and open, as is typical of manufacturing space. Ceilings are high and large windows offer ample light. Structural elements are not hidden from view. Brick bearing walls are exposed, as are structural posts and beams. Some brick walls are unpainted, although most are. In many of the industrial areas of the complex concrete floors have no floor covering. Stairs are of concrete and surviving early stair railings are of metal pipe. Elevators, although modern replacements, occupy the original elevator shafts.

There is very little interior ornamental detail. The rounded edges of brick window and door openings in the front

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

**Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

building can be considered an ornamental feature. The paneling and divided light glazing of original interior doors and the iron knobs on iron-pipe stair railings add ornament to an otherwise utilitarian interior.

Modern offices (1986) and some industrial storage areas are included in the wood section. Unlike the industrial portions of the complex, the interiors of the office area are finished and carpeted.

1986 Alterations

Alterations were made to the building during major renovations, which were completed in 1986. Exterior changes made at that time include the removal of the original divided-light wood windows and wood exterior doors, and the removal of a decorative triple-stepped, moulded cornice at the roof line. All exterior windows were replaced with metal-framed, insulated windows of a configuration similar to that of the original windows (Photos #1, 2, 4, 5, & 6). For comparison, see the photocopy of a 1985 photograph made before windows were replaced (Illustration # 1). The new sash are glazed with large single panes of glass while the original sash had 6/6 divided lights. Wood doors have been replaced with metal doors. The wood roof-cornice moulding was removed and replaced with a plain metal sheathing (over wood?). Also in 1986, the wood section of the building between the two brick sections was modernized and covered with stucco. Today this stucco-covered section houses both business offices and storage space. It now also contains the main entrance on its south facade. The original main entrance on Fremont Street is no longer used at all. The changes made to the rear at this time have not greatly altered the appearance of the building, despite the contrast with the main building both in color and texture. This is due to the fact that this portion of the building is not large and is not highly visible when seen from Fremont Street.

Archaeological Description

Although no prehistoric sites are recorded on the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works property or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. Environmental characteristics of the property represent several locational criteria (soil drainage, slope, distance to wetlands) that are favorable indicators for most types of prehistoric sites. Most of the nominated property includes a well drained level to moderately sloping riverine terrace within 1000 feet of the Middle River which becomes the Blackstone River approximately 2 miles downstream from the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works property. Most of the property is developed by mill buildings, parking lots and a delivery courtyard. Elevations rise in the southwestern portion of the lot where the area is wooded. Given the above information, the size of the parcel (5.80 acres) and impacts related to construction of the mill complex, a moderate potential exists for the recovery of prehistoric resources.

A moderate potential also exists for recovering significant historic archaeological resources on the property. Structural evidence including a cellar hole and poured concrete foundations from at least one storehouse built in 1922 are visible in the back portion of the complex. Similar remains from other storehouse structures may also exist. Industrial trash

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7/8 Page 4/1

**Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

deposits may also be present beneath paved parking areas. No evidence of historic land use that predates Worcester Bleach and Dye Works development of the property is known to exist. The Fairmont Street locale was still sparsely developed in the late 1880's. The principals of the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works purchased the vacant lot in the 1890's.

(end)

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex is significant under National Register Criterion A for its role in the industrial life of the city of Worcester as the early 20th century manufacturing site of the first, most successful, and most long-lived thread company operating in the city during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. After the complex was vacated by this company about 1938, it became the home, consecutively, of other companies that have made a positive contribution to the city's industry. One of these was the Economic Machinery Corporation, which occupied it from 1944 through 1966. The complex is also significant under Criterion A for its role in the industrial development of Worcester, and specifically for its pioneering role in the development of the Webster Square area in the late 19th and early 20th centuries during the final stage of the city's historic industrial period. Under Criterion C Worcester Bleach and Dye Works, built in 1909 with additions made by Worcester Bleach and Dye Works between 1911 and 1922 and between 1922 and 1933, is a characteristic example of the city's early 20th century industrial architecture.

Worcester Bleach and Dye Works

The earliest section of the factory complex at 60 Fremont Street was constructed about 1909 for Worcester Bleach and Dye Works Company as an addition to its 1888 wood frame factory, which then stood across the street at 61 Fremont Street. Among the operations carried out by the company were the bleaching, dyeing, and mercerizing of cotton yarns in fast colors, glazed yarns, and artificial silk. Threads produced by Worcester Bleach and Dye Works included cotton and wool and worsted threads for all manufacturing purposes. According to Charles Washburn's 1917 Industrial Worcester, Worcester Bleach and Dye Works was considered one of the best thread dye houses in the country. In the 1930's the company occupied over 150,000 square feet of manufacturing space in two buildings on Fremont Street and employed approximately 200 workers.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

**Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

Founded as Springside Dye Works in 1865 by Messrs. Taft and Wheeler, the company was purchased by Hackett & Haley in 1868 and, in turn, by George Orr and Neil Walker in 1870. Mr. Walker retired in 1873 and sold his interest to Peter Wood. At that time the firm's name was changed to Worcester Bleach and Dye Works. James E. Orr served as manager from 1890 until his death in 1920. In 1892 the company became a corporation, with James Orr as president and treasurer. Worcester Bleach and Dye Works was last listed in the Worcester Directory in 1938.

Worcester Thread and Dye Company in the Context of Thread Manufacturing in Worcester

The manufacture of thread began in Worcester in 1865 with the founding of the Springside Dye Works, the predecessor to Worcester Thread and Dye. Several new thread companies began operation in the city during the 1880's. From the 1880's through the mid-20th century, thread manufacturing was an important component of the city's diversified industry. As many as six thread manufacturers were in operation in Worcester during this period. Threads for a variety of industrial and home sewing uses were produced in the city, including cotton and wool thread, carpet thread, corset thread, and thread for shoemaking and harnesses. In 1940 there were four thread manufacturers operating in the city. By 1953 there were only two. Today only one Worcester company still produces thread, manufacturing industrial sewing thread.

Locations of Worcester Bleach and Dye Works Over Time

The predecessor companies to Worcester Bleach and Dye Works were located at Southgate and Gardner streets in South Worcester. Beginning in 1879, Worcester Bleach and Dye occupied a building adjoining Washburn & Moen wire works on Grove Street just north of the city center. When in 1888 the company built a new, two-story, wooden factory at 61 Fremont Street (across the street from 60 Fremont Street), it became a pioneer in the industrial development of the Webster Square section of the city, also known as New Worcester. The Fremont Street site was ideal for industry, since it was located directly on the tracks of the Boston & Albany Railroad, to its north, and adjoined the Blackstone River on the east. About 1909, to enlarge the company's facilities, the front portion of the present complex at 60 Fremont Street was constructed across the street from the original factory. The lot on which it was built had been owned by the principals of the firm since as early as the 1890's.

The Worcester Bleach and Dye Works Complex and How It Was Used

Relationship of 60 Fremont Street to the Company's Original Building at 61 Fremont Street

The 1933 Sanborn map shows that the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works occupied buildings at both 60 and 61 Fremont Street at that time. Standing opposite one another, the Fremont Street facades of the two buildings were joined at the second story level by an iron-clad wooden bridge spanning the street below. A door can still be seen in the 6th bay from the north at the second story of the main facade of 60 Fremont Street, where the bridge once entered the building. The original 1888, two-story, wood Worcester Bleach and Dye Works factory at 61 Fremont Street is not part of the present complex today. It either no longer exists or has been altered by the removal of its second floor and incorporated into a more recent building.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA

Locations of Manufacturing Procedures

The 1933 Sanborn Map also indicates the specific locations within the complex where the company's manufacturing procedures were carried out:

61 Fremont Street (opposite 60 Fremont Street)

In 1933 a dye house and storage rooms occupied the first floor of the original building. On the second floor were a warp and skein room and a storage area. Bleaching was done in the basement.

60 Fremont Street

In 1933, the first floor of the of the brick front section of 60 Fremont Street was used as a store house and drying room. Offices, and dressing and spooling rooms occupied the second floor. Attached to the rear of the brick front building was a wood dye house. To its rear was the present three-story rear brick section, used as a storehouse. Two other storehouses stood on the far eastern end of the lot. They are either no longer standing or are no longer part of the property.

The Chronology of Additions to 60 Fremont Street

According to the 1911 Worcester Atlas, the brick portion of the complex that faces on to Fremont Street was the first building to be built opposite the 1888 factory. The three-story, brick rear addition was built as a free-standing building sometime between 1911 and 1922. Other one-story wood rear additions were made at the back of the original building during this same period. A narrow wood portion added to the rear of the front building between 1911 and 1922. It was expanded to its present size, or possibly replaced by a larger wood section, joining the two brick buildings together into a single continuous building complex. The expansion occurred between 1922 and 1933. This wood section was remodeled and covered in stucco in 1989. All but one of the additions outlined above were made under the auspices of Worcester Bleach and Dye Works Company. Only the 1989 renovation is unrelated to its occupation of the complex.

A one-story building that is no longer part of the property was built by Worcester Bleach and Dye Works between 1911 and 1922 apparently as a storage building. It stands close to Fremont Street immediately to the east of the driveway to the loading area. Possibly built before 1911, it was shown on the 1933 Sanborn map as a storehouse. With a low-pitched roof and steel windows, it is sheathed in corrugated metal and has exposed roof rafters at the eaves. It has had extensive mid-20th century additions to its east side.

Another similar store house, probably built around 1922, stood as an outbuilding at 60 Fremont Street until recent years. It was located immediately east of the back section of the complex. A cellar hole with some of its poured concrete foundations intact indicate its location. Apparently not built by Worcester Bleach & Dye Works, it appears on the 1933 Sanborn map as part of the holdings of the company. Illustration # 4 (1922 Worcester Atlas) shows both storehouses in existence.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA

Later Occupants of 60 Fremont Street

Later occupants of this property have also played important roles in the diversified industry of the city:

Economic Machinery Corporation

60 Fremont Street was occupied in 1944 by Economic Machinery Corporation, known as the world's largest manufacturer of labeling machinery. This company was acquired in 1950 by George J. Meyer Manufacturing Company. The company developed the "Super CM" machine and the World Tandem Labeler. The Super CM was used primarily to attach labels onto glass bottles, but also worked on semi-rigid containers such as plastic. Virtually all food packages of any size in the United States used this Worcester-developed and manufactured labeler. In 1961, Meyer Manufacturing employed 425 during three shifts. The company moved to other quarters in 1966.

Capital Shoe Footwear Corporation

The next occupant of 60 Fremont Street was Capital Shoe Footwear Corporation. This company was chartered in 1955 and moved its operations to 60 Fremont Street in 1967. Capital Shoe manufactured men's and women's shoes, slippers and sandals under the "Manistee" brand name.

Increased competition from foreign shoe manufacturers caused Capital's sales to decline beginning in the early 1970's. Capital Shoe was the only remaining footwear manufacturer in Worcester when its production ended in 1984. The closing of Capital Shoe was the end of an era for Worcester. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries shoe manufacturing had been an important part of the city's industrial production.

The Valkyrie Company

The present occupant, the Valkyrie Company, Incorporated, purchased the building from Capital Shoe in 1985 and modernized it. Valkyrie manufactures small leather goods and accessories. As part of a \$4,000,000 corporate capital investment program, the company plans to computerize its material handling and production operation and complete the rehabilitation of the building between 1999 and the year 2000.

The History and Geography of Worcester's Industrial Development

Overview of Worcester's Industrial History

During the 18th and early 19th centuries Worcester's early industries were scattered at waterpower sites on area waterways. With the success of the American Industrial Revolution during the early 19th century, it soon became apparent that the town's few natural resources and limited waterpower would hinder the expansion of industrial

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

**Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

enterprise. Fortunately, modern technology quickly came to the rescue. The introduction of the steam engine in 1825 began a trend that would ultimately relieve Worcester's dependence on waterpower. The opening of the Blackstone Canal in 1828 and the advent of the railroad a few years later, in 1835, opened up broader markets and provided a compelling impetus to industrial growth.

From these small beginnings, Worcester became one of the region's chief industrial cities with a diversified manufacturing base. Between 1828 and 1855 Worcester underwent its first industrial boom, producing a wide variety of products including textiles, wire, agricultural tools, architectural cast iron, woodworking machinery, and musical instruments. In 1848 the town became a city. By 1855, its industrial success had quadrupled the population -- to 22,284.

The city and its industry continued to grow at a fast pace between 1856 and 1890. During this period the population swelled to 84,655, fueled in part by massive foreign immigration. A few of the city's manufactures during this period included wire, looms, firearms, shoes and boots, leather belting, carpets, textiles, abrasives, architectural building products, organs and organ reeds, greeting cards, and paper envelopes.

The years between 1890 and 1918 mark the city's last period of industrial expansion. Its industrial growth and foreign immigration unchecked, Worcester's population more than doubled during this period to a count of 187,492. Many of the city's industries built new buildings and expanded their existing manufacturing complexes to meet the demands of the market. The construction of the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works buildings belongs to this period.

World War I created a boom period for industry. During this time the city's industries were working overtime and housing was in short supply. Statistics for the boom year of 1917 show that more than 500 Worcester factories produced \$1,000,000 worth of goods that year. While industrial production dropped off markedly after the end of the war, the prosperity and growth of the city continued at a slower rate through about 1925. In that year, the population reached 190,757.

During the 1930's and 1940's, with the Great Depression, Worcester's industry faltered and her population saw little growth. It was during this period that Worcester Bleach and Dye Works closed its doors.

Where Worcester's Industry Was Located

Worcester's early industries were centered around various waterpower sites throughout the city. Yet, during much of the early and mid 19th century the town's industry was largely clustered near the town center on Mill Brook, where the Industrial Revolution had first taken hold here. By about 1870 industrial development was becoming particularly dense along rail lines south of the center in South Worcester. Industry gradually spread further southward during the latter years of the century.

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

**Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

The Webster Square area, located at the southern edge of the city, was one of the last sections of Worcester to be developed for industry. Worcester Thread and Dye Works was one of the pioneers in the industrial development of this area when it built its a wood-frame factory building at 61 Fremont Street in 1888. During the early 20th century more factories, including the additions to the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works at 60 Fremont Street, were built in the area. However, as southern competition and the effects of the Great Depression slowed industrial growth in New England during the 1930's, little new industrial growth occurred anywhere in the city.

In 1888 the Fremont Street area was still sparsely developed. The 1896 Worcester Atlas shows that the few other buildings on the street at that time were dwellings (see Illustration 2, 1896 Worcester Atlas). It was expected that more houses would be built here soon. House lots, most of which had not yet been built upon, had been laid out on the both sides of Delaware Street. G. F. Orr of Worcester Bleach and Dye Works owned a vacant lot that would late become the site of the present front portion of the complex at 60 Fremont Street, apparently with future plans for expansion of the manufacturing plant.

Nearly all the buildings in the area, including industrial buildings nearby on Webster Street, were of wood construction in 1896. It was not until around the turn of the 20th century, that this area became more industrial in character and that the factory buildings built here were more commonly of brick than of wood. The brick buildings built by Worcester Bleach and Dye Works at 60 Fremont Street in 1909 and between 1911 and 1922 were among a growing number of brick factories being built in the area at this time. Nearby on Webster Street, the Spencer Wire Company built an extensive complex of brick buildings on both sides of the street. Those buildings now lend a substantial and distinctively industrial character to the entire neighborhood. Just across the river from Worcester Bleach and Dye, off of Cambridge Street, Reed & Prince Screw Works also built a large brick complex during this period. On the north side of Fremont Street, the David Gessner Company, manufacturers of textile machinery, built a brick factory building across from 60 Fremont Street. The locations of all of these industrial complexes can be seen on the 1971 Sanborn Map (Illustration # 5).

Despite the industrial development of the area, Fremont and other adjoining streets remained more residential than industrial through the early years of this century. In 1911 houses stood on most of the lots on the west side of Delaware Street (see Illustration # 3). Yet only a few were ever built on the east side behind the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works buildings. When additions were made to the complex, lots originally planned as house lots were taken for their construction (see Illustration # 4, the 1922 Worcester Atlas map of the area). Today single and multi-family wooden dwellings are still liberally scattered among the industrial complexes in the area, preserving the neighborhood's traditional mixture of industrial and residential buildings.

Architecture

Today the largest number of surviving factory buildings in Worcester date from the period between 1890 and 1930, the period during which the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex was built and enlarged. Although Worcester has a long history as an industrial city, most of its earlier factory buildings were replaced by newer ones in order to maintain a

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 7

**Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

competitive edge during this period. Because the growth of the city's industry was curtailed by the Depression, more modern factories never replaced those built during the 1890-1930 period. Although many of Worcester's industrial buildings from this era have been adapted to new uses, many others, like the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex, are still occupied by manufacturing concerns.

The exteriors of the brick buildings in the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex have much of the traditional appearance of granite-trimmed brick 19th century brick factory buildings. Yet, they also bear many of the distinctive characteristics of industrial buildings built in Worcester during the early years of the 20th century. Early 20th century factories are generally less ornate and more functional in appearance than those of the 19th century. Other characteristics are low-pitched (nearly flat) and flat roofs; segmented-arched window and door openings; wide, transomed double windows; and elements of Classical Revival detailing. Other factories built during this same period nearby in the Fremont, Cambridge, and Webster street area bear most of these same characteristics.

20th century factories required stronger construction methods and materials to allow for heavier machinery and for the larger windows needed to light the wider floors of the typically larger buildings of the period. By the early years of this century, single-window openings in industrial buildings had largely been replaced by the use of wider openings containing double windows, as are seen here. Flat or nearly flat roofs were typical because of the availability of modern asphalt roofing materials and because they met the fire code requirements of insurance companies providing insurance for mill buildings. While traditional brick-and-wood mill construction continued to be used, the introduction of reinforced concrete and steel construction created a trend away from traditional construction techniques and materials.

The use of reinforced concrete became common in factory buildings of this period. Reinforced concrete factory construction was introduced in the late 19th century by the California engineer, Ernest Ransome. Ransome's first all-reinforced-concrete factory on the east coast was the East Coast Pacific Borax Plant in Bayonne, New Jersey. After a terrible fire there in 1902 proved that reinforced concrete could withstand the intense heat that left heavy steel a twisted mass, all-reinforced-concrete mill construction was recognized for its "fireproof" qualities. This example was enough to encourage even conservative mill engineers to adopt the new material.

The use of new materials in the construction of the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex reflects this early 20th century trend in mill construction. Rather than representing the more "cutting-edge" all-reinforced-concrete type of construction, a combination of standard mill construction and fireproof construction is seen here. The buildings at 60 Fremont Street mark the period of transition from traditional "slow-burn" brick-and-wood mill construction to all-reinforced-concrete construction. Despite the traditional granite-trimmed brick exteriors, the foundations of both of the brick buildings in the complex are of concrete and concrete structural elements are seen inside. The walls are of brick and therefore do not have the advantage of as great a window size as would be permitted in (and was already being used in) all-reinforced-concrete structures. The lower stories are of fireproof construction to the extent that within the outer

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 8

**Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

brick envelope, floors, structural piers, and beams are of concrete. The upper floors of each building have floors of concrete, however, their roofs are of wood and their interior structural members are of heavy timber (as was typical of traditional "slow-burn" mill construction). Some steel members (apparently added later) are seen on the second floor of the front building in the complex.

Despite the fact that a version of flat-slab method of reinforced concrete construction had been developed in Worcester as early as 1902 by Orlando W. Norcross of the important local construction firm of Norcross Brothers, the earlier post and beam method of reinforced concrete is still used here. The flat-slab method eliminated the use of beams so that the specially reinforced floor was supported directly by posts with flared tops. In the industrial areas of the wood section of the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex, steel posts can be seen supporting steel I-beams and wood roofs. The use of steel provided a lightweight and easy-to-use material that allowed for the wide spans desired in industrial buildings. Beginning around 1920, as the production of this material had been improved during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and it became less expensive, steel was more commonly used for the structures of both commercial and industrial buildings. During the early 20th century, exposed steel was often used in parts of industrial buildings where fire was not considered a threat. Where there was a threat of fire, steel needed to be sheathed in a protective material.

Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of prehistoric settlement in Worcester are poorly documented, any surviving sites could be significant. Prehistoric sites in this area may contain information important in the study of Native subsistence and settlement in the interior Blackstone River drainage, the relationship of Native settlement along the Blackstone River and its tributaries and, the relationship between interior upland and coastal settlement. Worcester also represents an ideal location to study prehistoric site survival in an urban setting. Despite its intense development during the 19th and 20th centuries, Worcester retains a potential for significant prehistoric sites. At present, 10 sites are recorded in the city. Information recovered at these sites indicates prehistoric settlement in the area during the Late Archaic (6,000-3,000 B.P.) and Woodland (3,000-4,000 B.P.) periods. However, current evidence for Worcester County in general and the Blackstone River drainage indicates that Native Americans occupied sites in this area from the Paleo Indian (12,000 B.P.) period until European contact early in the 17th century. Isolated fragments of land including the wooded land in the nominated parcel may characterize the potential of many areas to contain prehistoric survivals in the Worcester area. Prehistoric sites can also be present under paved parking areas including those in the nominated parcel.

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to contribute significant information on the industrial life of the city of Worcester in the early 20th century. Structural remains of storehouse buildings on the property can help reconstruct the full range of industrial facilities present on the Worcester Bleach and Dye Complex and later industries that occupied the site. Potential trash deposits that may underlie parking areas can also be important by contributing valuable evidence of the activities that occurred in the industrial complex including products manufactured and raw materials and technologies that were used.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Maps and Atlases

- 1886 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts. G.M. Hopkins, 1886.
1892 Insurance Maps, Worcester, Massachusetts. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1892.
1896 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts. Springfield, Ma.: L. J. Richards & Co., 1896.
1911 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts. Springfield, Ma.: L. J. Richards & Co., 1911.
1922 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts. Springfield, Ma.: L. J. Richards & Co., 1922.
1933 Insurance Maps, Worcester, Massachusetts. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1933.
1971 Insurance Maps, Worcester, Massachusetts. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1971.

City Directories

- Worcester Directory (1900, 1905, 1908, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1930, 1932, 1940, 1953, 1973, 1993)
Worcester Street Index. (1872)
Worcester House Directory. (1888, 1890, 1894, 1896, 1898, 1929, 1940, 1848, 1962, 1964, 1966, 1968)

Clippings

- Worcester Historical Museum-Clippings File (Economic Machinery, Capitol Footwear)
Worcester Public Library-Clippings File (Economic Machinery)

Published Works

- Banham, Reyner. A Concrete Atlantis: U. S. Industrial Building and European Modern Architecture. Cambridge, Ma.: MIT Press, 1989.
Condit, Carl W. American Building. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, second edition, 1982.
Gordon, Robert B. and Malone, Patrick M. The Texture of Industry: An Archaeological View of the Industrialization of North America. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
Stone, Orra L. History of Massachusetts Industries, vol. II. Boston-Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1930.
Washburn, Charles. Industrial Worcester. Worcester: Davis Press, 1917.

Unpublished Works

- Massachusetts Historical Commission. "Reconnaissance Survey Report: Worcester". 1984.

(END)

Worcester, MA
County and State

Acreage of Property 5.8 acres

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone	Easting	Northing
---------	---------	----------

4. Easting Northing

— See continuation sheet

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan McD. Ceccacci, Consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date October 2000

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name James Devaney, The Valkyrie Company

street & number 60 Fremont Street telephone 508-756-3633

city or town Worcester state MA zip code 01603

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503 NPS Form 10-900 OMB No.

1024-0018
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works complex are the same as those recorded with the City of Worcester Assessor as Map 27, Block 23, Lot 1.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the lot represent portions that were historically part of the Worcester Bleach and Dye Works property and portions that were added to the lot later.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

**Worcester Bleach & Dye Works
Worcester (Worcester), MA**

10. PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Photographer: Susan Ceccacci

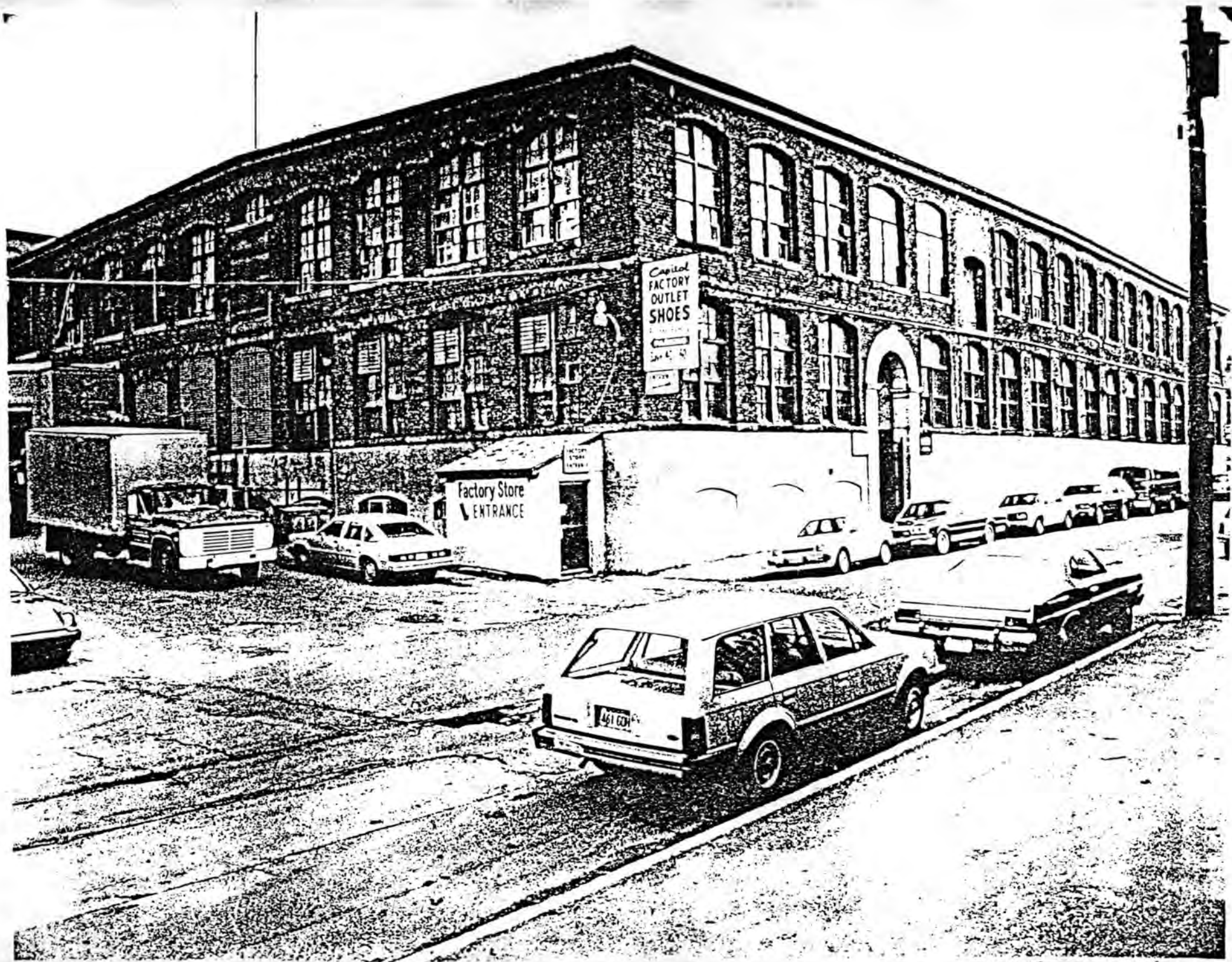
Date: March 1998

Negatives in possession of owner

1. Main façade looking W on Fremont Street
2. W facades on Delaware Street, looking S
3. Main entrance, Fremont Street, looking S
4. Main (front) building on right, back building left. View looking south from driveway toward loading dock
5. Looking NW from rear parking area, east façade on right, south façade on left
6. Looking N from rear parking area, south façade of rear building

Illus. 1 Fremont Street façade, c. 1985

- 2 Future site of Fremont Street, 1896 Atlas
- 3 1911 Worcester City Atlas
- 4 1922 Worcester City Atlas
- 5 1971 Sanborn map

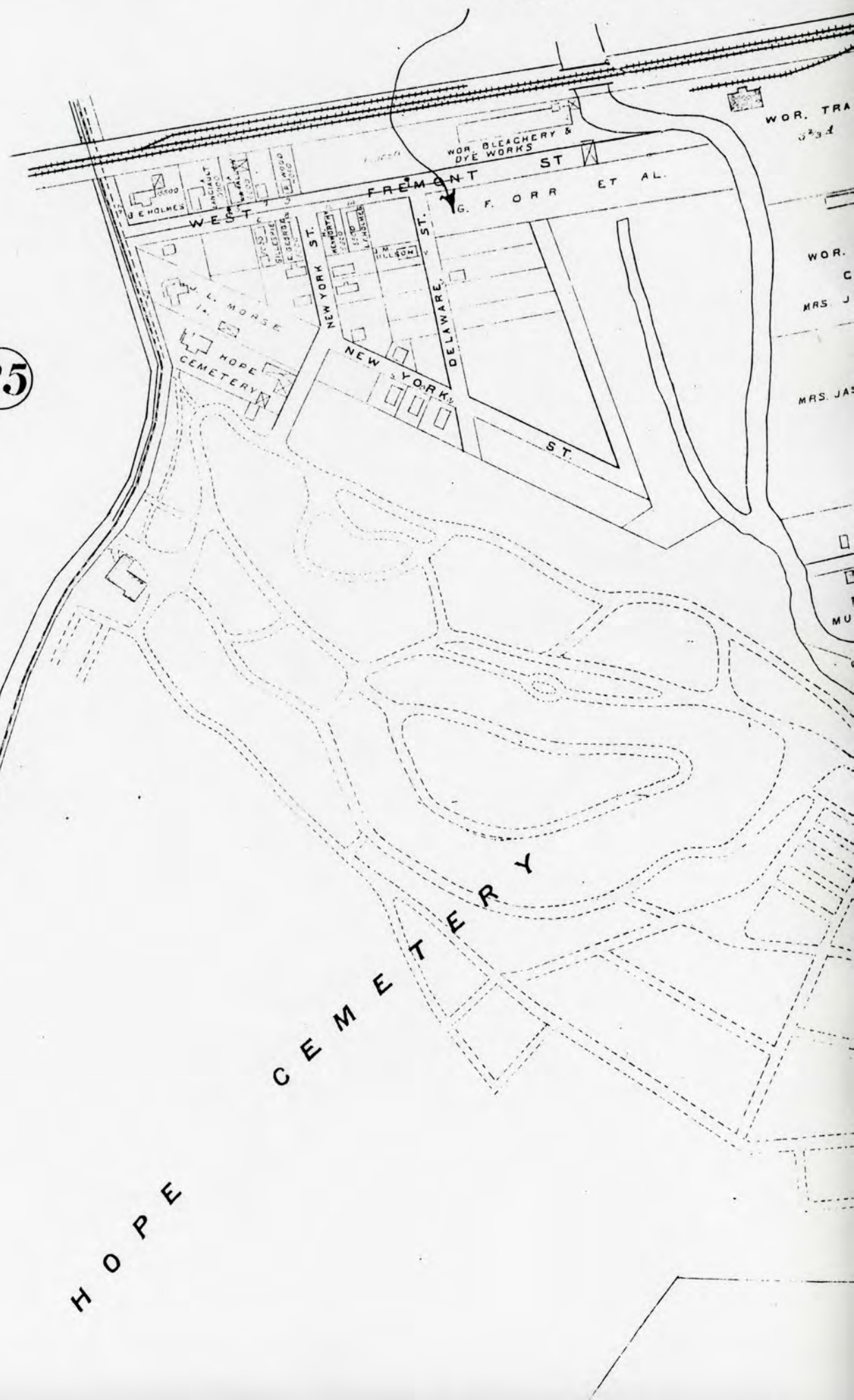


WROSTER

60 FREMONT STREET CIRCA 1985

ILLUSTRATION #1

25



1911 WORCESTER ATLAS

ILLUSTRATION #3

WOODEN "	
BRICK, 1st STORY	
Wood above	
STONE, 1st STORY	
Wood above	
WOODEN FRAME	
Metal or Slate Covered	
IRON BUILDING	
BARN, STABLE OR SHED	
GREEN HOUSE	
WATER PIPE	
and Fire Hydrant	
SEWERS	
STEAM RAILROAD	
STREET RAIL WAY	
ADJOINING PLATE	

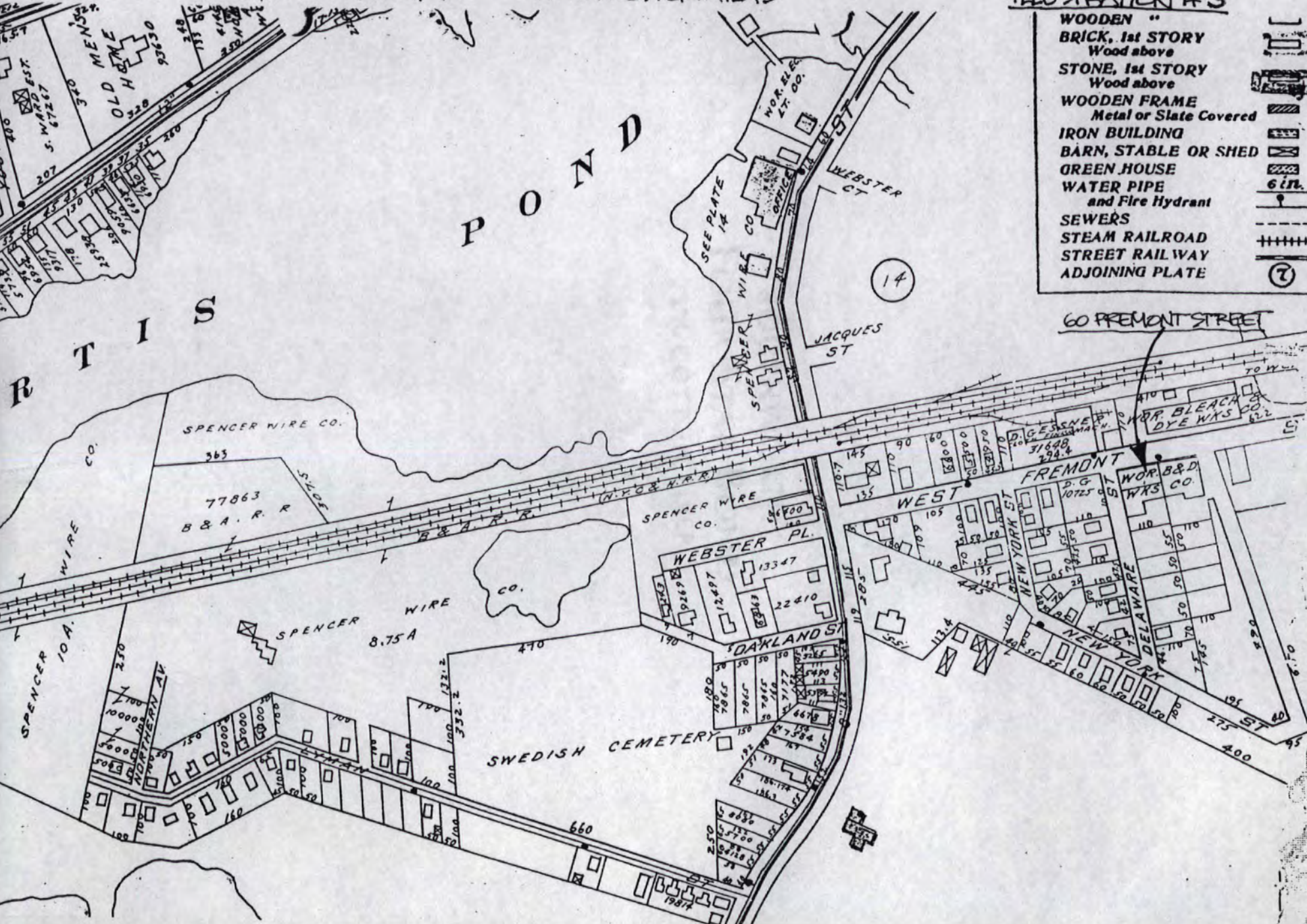
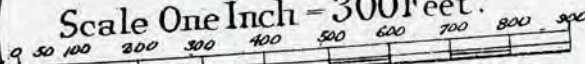


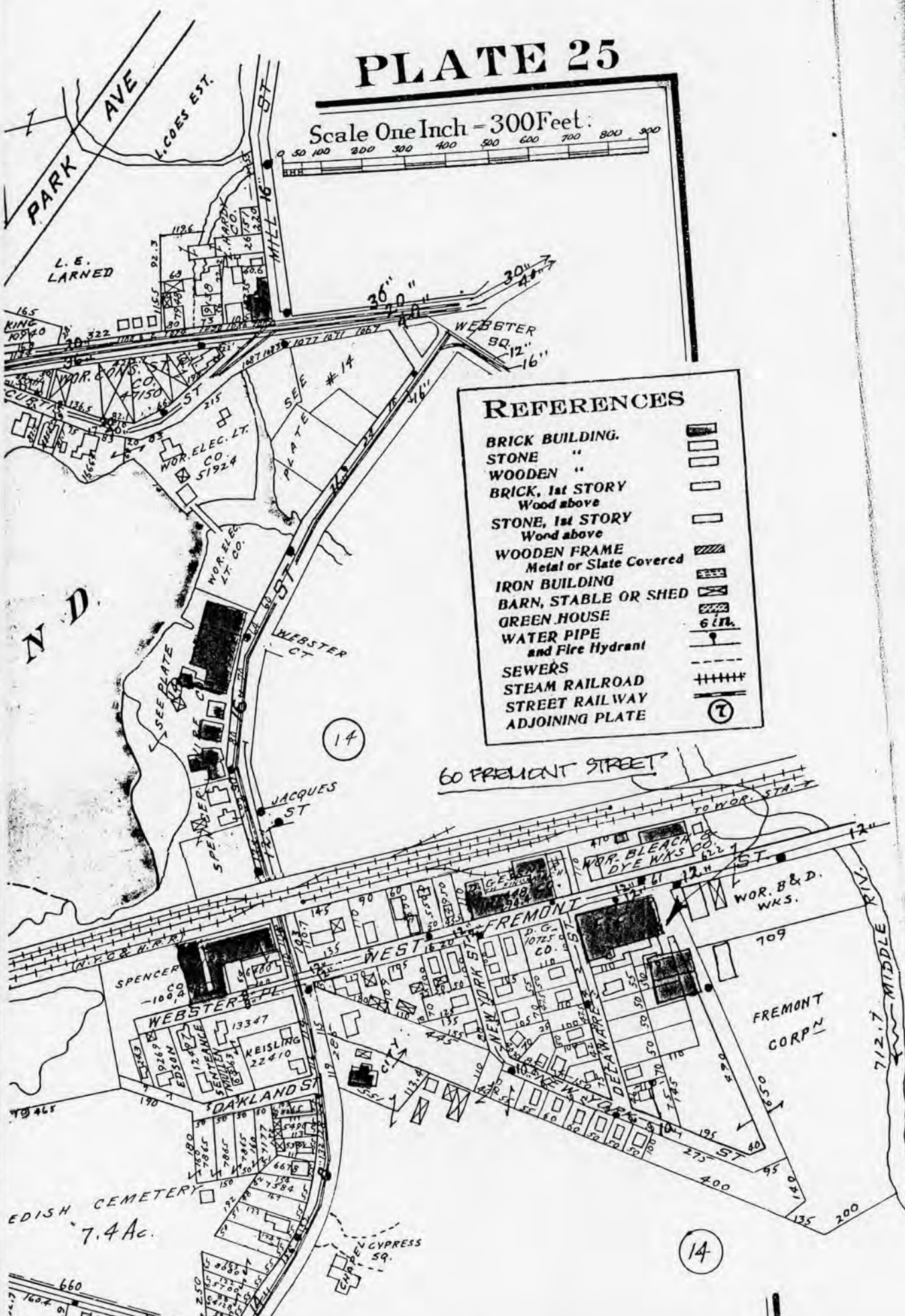
PLATE 25

Scale One Inch = 300 Feet.



REFERENCES

BRICK BUILDING.	
STONE "	
WOODEN "	
BRICK, 1st STORY	
Wood above	
STONE, 1st STORY	
Wood above	
WOODEN FRAME	
Metal or Slate Covered	
IRON BUILDING	
BARN, STABLE OR SHED	
GREEN HOUSE	
WATER PIPE	
and Fire Hydrant	
SEWERS	
STEAM RAILROAD	
STREET RAILWAY	
ADJOINING PLATE	



14

14

223

AREA 175+

221

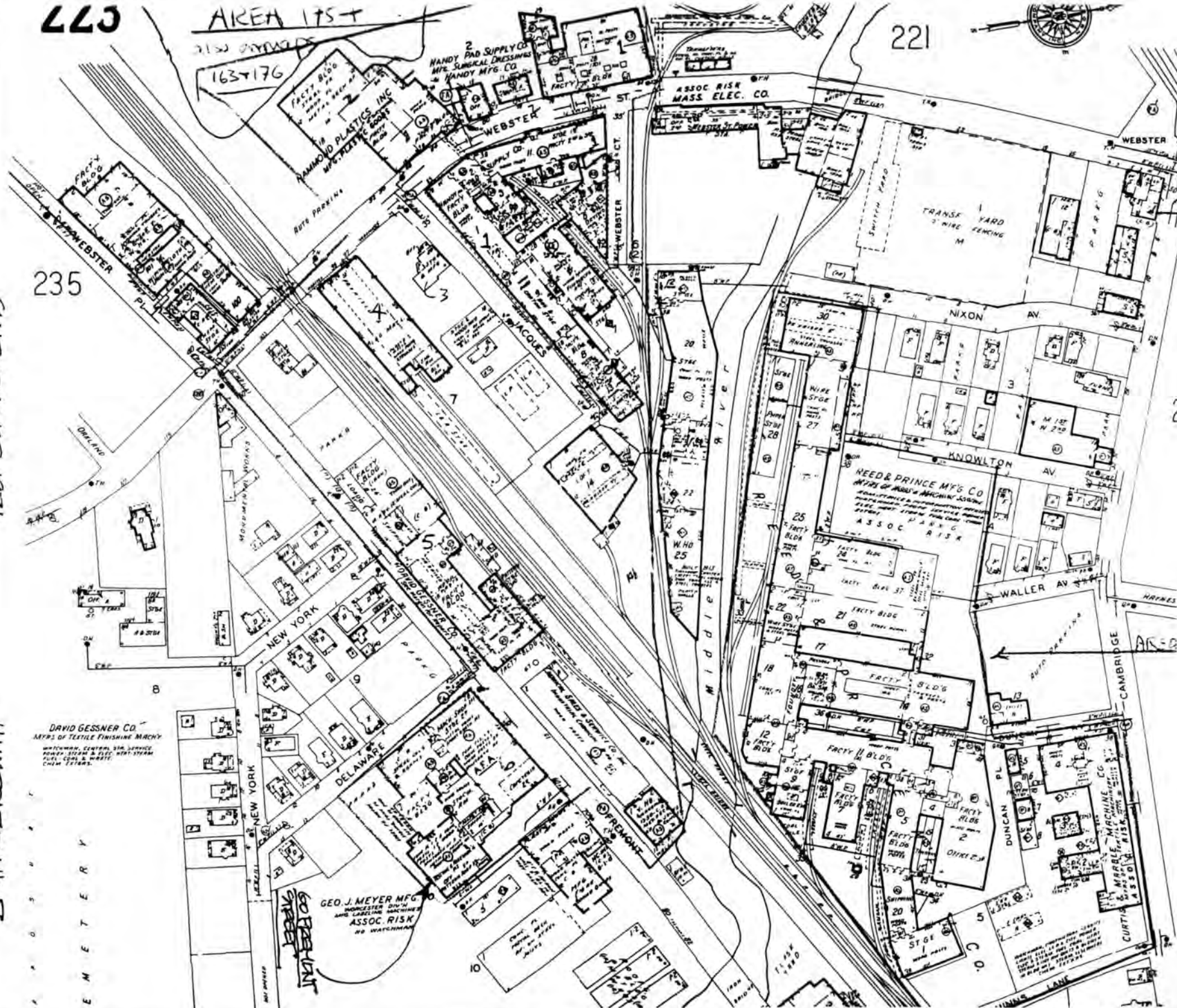


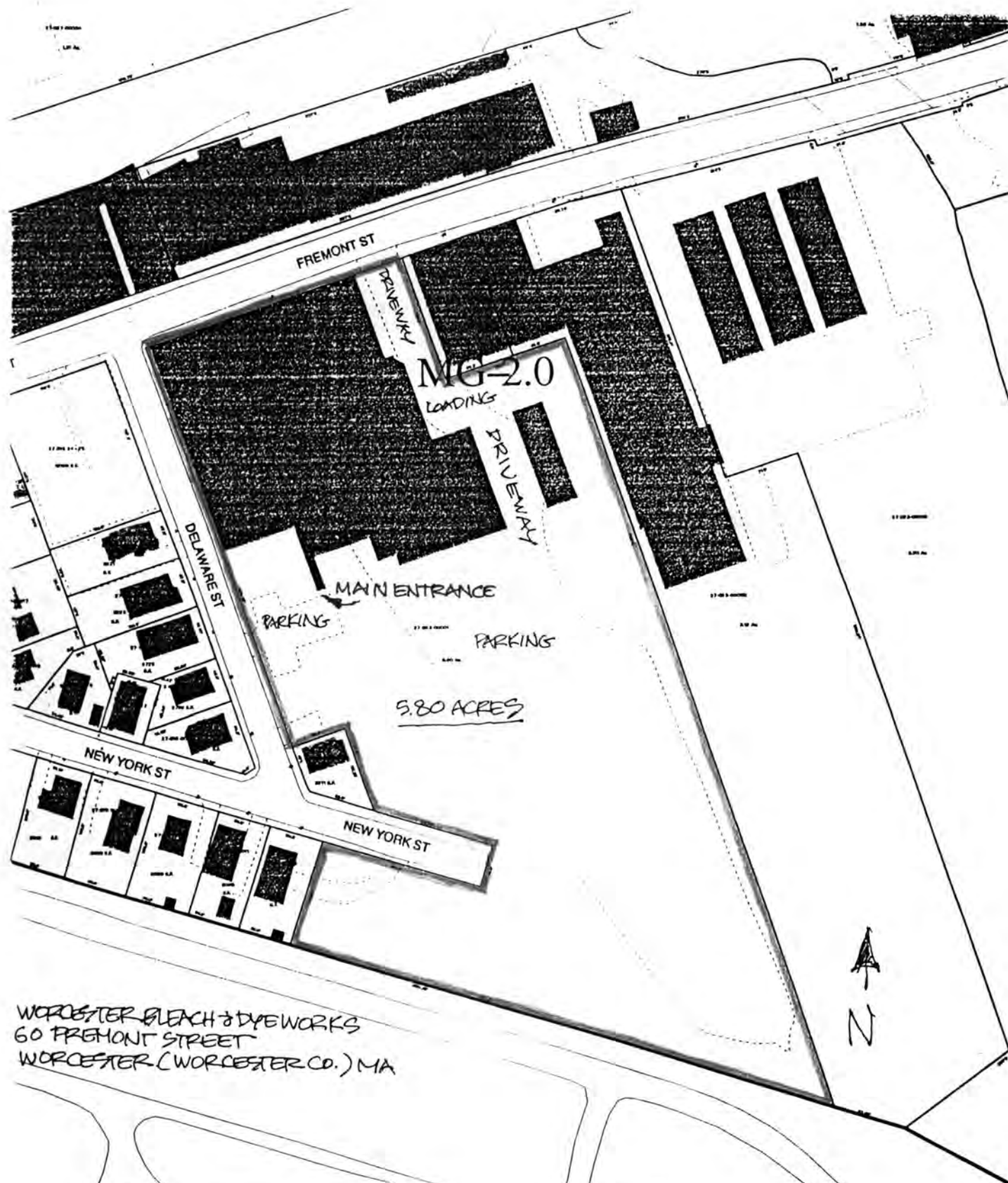
SANBORN MAP 1971

ILLUSTRATION # 5

DAVID GESSNER CO.
MFGS OF TEXTILE FINISHING MACHS
NEWTON, CENTER ST. LONDON
POWER, STATION & ELEC. MFG. STATION
FUEL, COAL & OIL

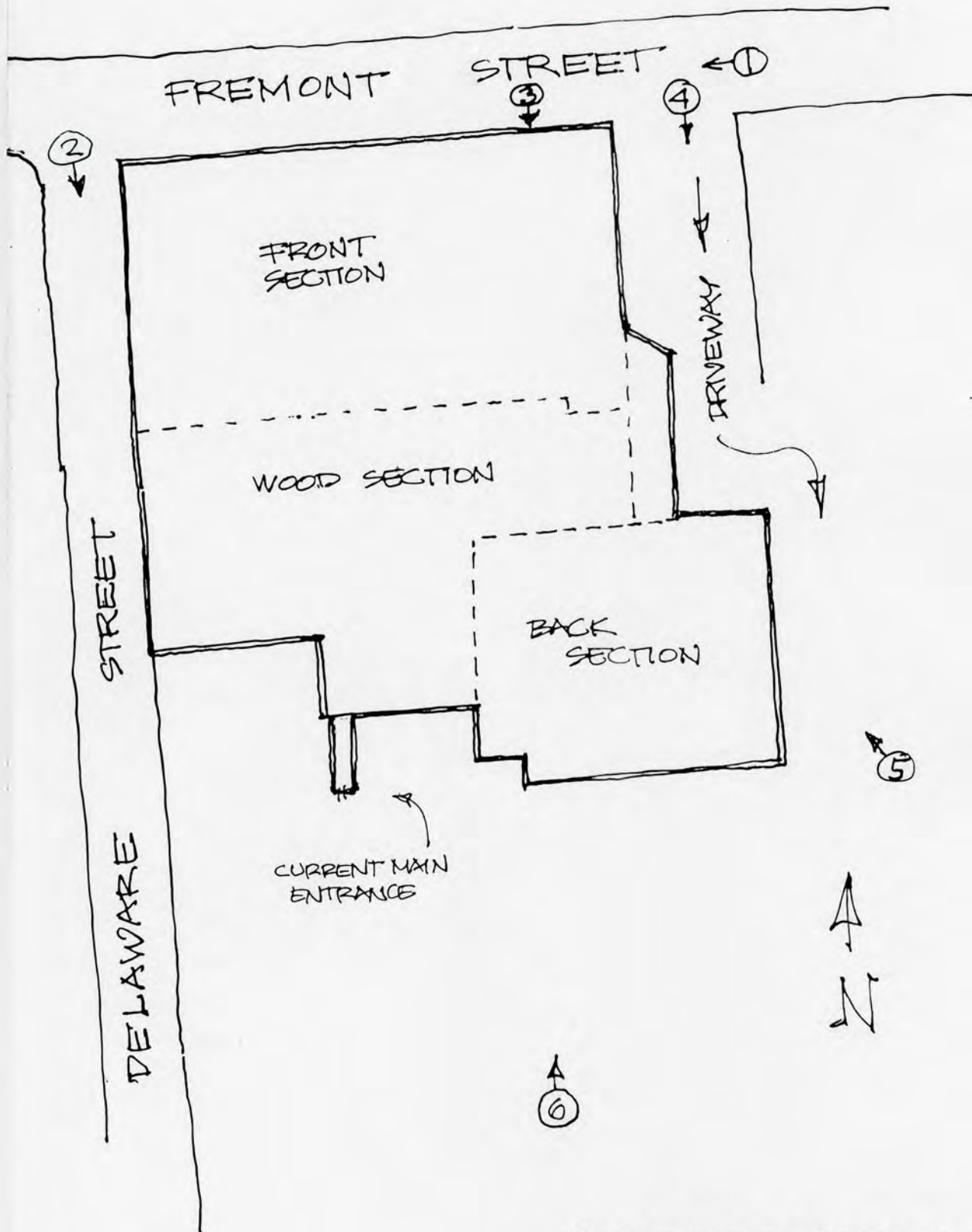
E M E T E R Y





WORCESTER BLEACH & DYE WORKS
60 FREMONT STREET
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

RS-7



60 FREMONT STREET, WORCESTER, MA
LEGEND

- ①➔ PHOTOGRAPH # & DIRECTION OF VIEW
- == BUILDING PERIMETER
- INTERIOR SUBDIVISION OF BUILDING

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Worcester Bleach and Dye Works

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 10/13/00 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/23/00
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/08/00 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/27/00
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 00001343

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 11/8/00 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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



WORCESTER BLEACH & DYE WORKS
60 FREMONT STREET
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: MARCH 1998

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: MAIN FACADE LOOKING WEST ON FREMONT STREET

PHOTO # 1



WORCESTER BLEACH & DYE WORKS
60 FREMONT STREET
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: MARCH 1998

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: WEST FACADES ON DELAWARE STREET

PHOTO # 2



Valkyrie Co.

VISITORS ENTRANCE
ON DELAWARE ST. →

← FACTORY ENTRANCE
IN REAR

WORCESTER BLEACH & DYE WORKS
60 FREMONT STREET
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: MARCH 1998

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: MAIN ENTRANCE, FREMONT STREET

PHOTO # 3



WORCESTER BLEACH & DYE WORKS
60 FREMONT STREET
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: MARCH 1998

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: MAIN (FRONT) BUILDING ON RIGHT, BACK BUILDING LEFT. VIEW LOOKING SOUTH
FROM DRIVEWAY TO LOADING DOCK AREA

PHOTO # 4



WORCESTER BLEACH & DYE WORKS
60 FREMONT STREET
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: MARCH 1999

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: (LOOKING NW, EAST FACADE OF BACK BUILDING ON RIGHT
FROM REAR SOUTH FACADE " " " " LEFT
PARKING AREA

PHOTO # 5



WORCESTER BLEACH & DYE WORKS
60 FREMONT STREET
WORCESTER (WORCESTER CO.) MA

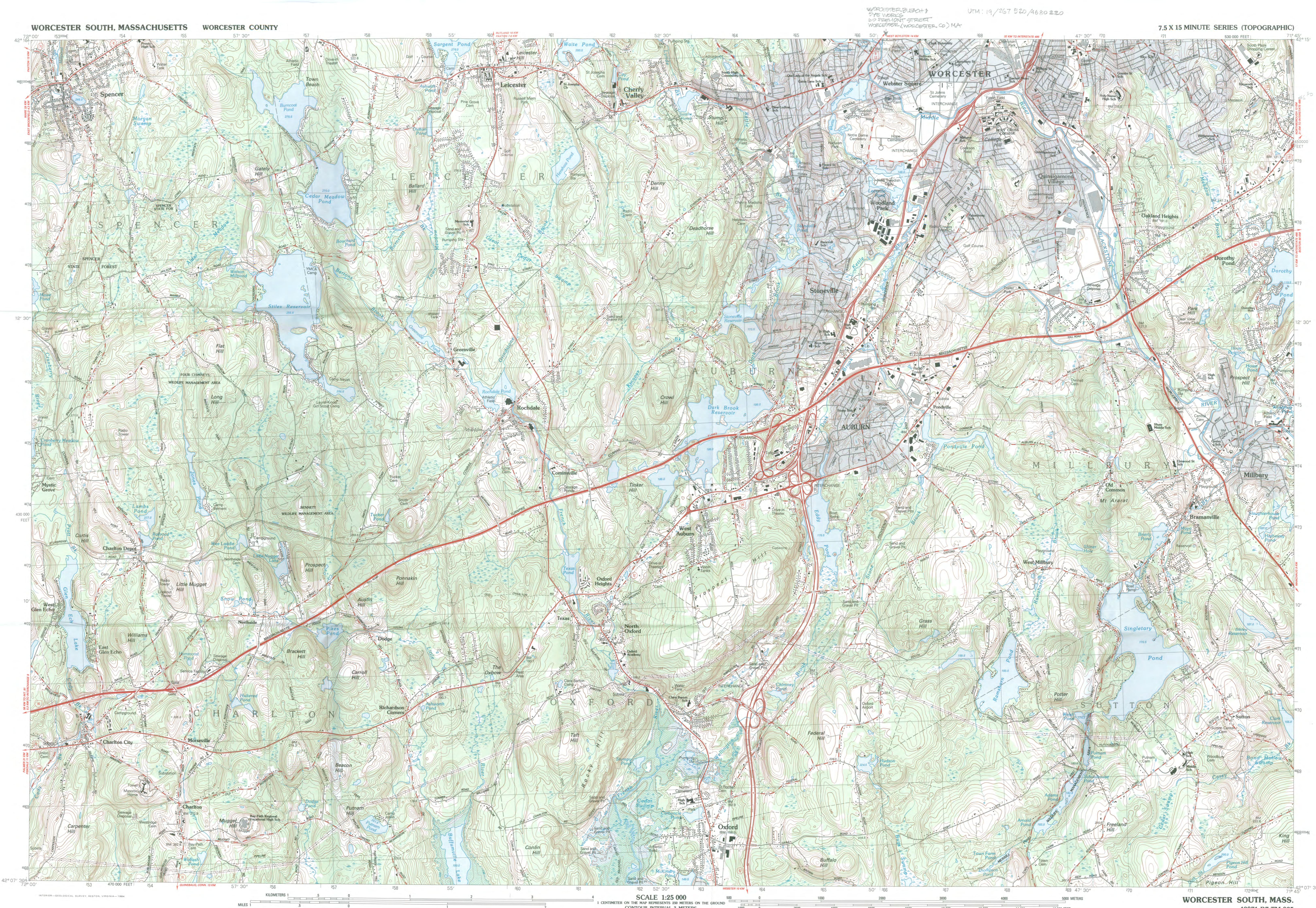
PHOTOGRAPHER: S. CECCACCI

DATE: MARCH 1999

NEGATIVE: OWNER

VIEW: LOOKING NORTH FROM REAR PARKING AREA
SOUTH FACADE OF REAR BUILDING

PHOTO # 6



WORCESTER SOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS
WORCESTER COUNTY

42° 07' 30" N
71° 45' 00" W

UTM: 19/267 520/4680 220

7.5 X 15 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

42° 07' 30" N
71° 45' 00" W

WORCESTER SOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS
1:25 000-scale metric
topographic map

7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE
SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names

Leroy & Preston Co.
(508) 835-4517

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

1983

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
in cooperation with Massachusetts Department
of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1980. Field checked 1982. Map edited 1983

Supersedes Leicester and Worcester South 1:25,000-scale
maps dated 1969 and 1973

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19: Universal
Transverse Mercator

10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate
system, mainland zone. 1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 6 meters south and 40 meters
west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL: 3 METERS

NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM of 1929

CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER

OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225

CONVERSION TABLE

Meters	Feet
1	3.2808
2	6.5617
3	9.8425
4	13.1234
5	16.4042
6	19.6850
7	22.9659
8	26.2467
9	29.5276
10	32.8084

To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

To convert feet to meters
multiply by 0.3048

DECLINATION DIAGRAM

UTM grid convergence
1980 and 1983 magnetic
declination (MM)
at center of map
Diagram is approximate

ADJOINING MAPS

1	2	3
1 North Brookfield	2 Worcester North	3 Marlborough
4 Wrentham	5 Millis	6 Southbridge
7 Webster	8 Litchfield	

Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface

Secondary highway, hard surface

Light-duty road, hard or improved surface

Unimproved road; trail

Route marker: Interstate; U. S.; State

Railroad: standard gage; narrow gage

Bridge: drawbridge

Footbridge, overpass, underpass

Built-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown

Houses; barn; church; school; large structure

Boundary:

- National, with monument
- State
- County, parish
- Civil township, precinct, district
- Incorporated city, village, town
- National or State reservation; small park
- Land grant with monument; found section corner
- U. S. public lands survey: range, township; section
- Range, township, section line: location approximate
- Fence or field line
- Power transmission line, located tower
- Dam: dam with lock
- Cemetery; grave
- Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument
- Windmill; water well; spring
- Mine shaft; prospect; ash or cove
- Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation
- Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression
- Distorted surface: strip mine, lava; sand
- Bathymetric contours: index, intermediate
- Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
- Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small
- Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp
- Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland
- Scrub; mangrove
- Orchard; vineyard