

5G3083

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Superior Packing Company Plant

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 2103 Wabash Avenue

City or town: Saint Paul State: MN County: Ramsey

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

 <hr/> Signature of certifying official/Title: Amy Spong, Deputy SHPO, MN Dept. of Admin	<u>9/20/18</u> <hr/> Date
<hr/> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/> Signature of commenting official:	<hr/> Date
<hr/> Title :	<hr/> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

for 
Signature of the Keeper

11/5/18
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE/meatpacking plant

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/not in use

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: CONCRETE; Walls: BRICK; Roof: SYNTHETICS/Rubber, TERRA COTTA

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Superior Packing Company Plant is located at 2103 Wabash Avenue in St. Paul, Minnesota. The meatpacking plant, located on the Wabash Avenue Lead of the Minnesota Transfer Railway Company, was originally built as the Henry G. Haas Slaughterhouse in 1886. The slaughterhouse operated as the Midway Abattoir from 1898 to 1927 and the Superior Packing Company purchased it in 1928 and began plant upgrades. The Superior Packing Company Plant is situated in the Midway Industrial District on a block bound by Myrtle Avenue at the north, Cleveland Avenue at the east, Wabash Avenue at the south and Montgomery Street (vacated) at the west. The Haas Slaughterhouse and the neighboring F.W. Luley Abattoir (1884, razed) and cattle yards (razed) comprised St. Paul's early meatpacking district. This area was surpassed by the concentration of meat wholesalers and national packing companies at the Union Stockyards, which developed in South St. Paul in the 1880s. Between 1928 and 1947, the Haas-Midway

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slaughterhouse was upgraded into the brick Superior Packing Company Plant to meet industry standards.¹ In 1928-29 packing additions and a rendering operation were built at the site and in 1935 the wood-frame Haas Slaughterhouse (1886) was razed and the three-story, red brick Moderne style meatpacking plant was built on the original limestone foundation. Covered loading docks and packing rooms were built at the north in the 1930s and the outdoor cattle holding pen was enclosed in 1947. The building retains much of the meat processing equipment and exhibits good overall integrity. The plant clearly indicates its industrial function and reflects the evolution of the early twentieth-century meatpacking industry.

Narrative Description

Location and Setting

The Superior Packing Company Plant occupies lots 118 and 119 of Hewitts Out Lots First Division and is situated within the Midway Industrial District, which is partially bound by I-94W at the south and Highway 280 at the west.² Between 1928 and 1947 the plant was built to the lot lines of the 1.71-acre lot. The railroad tracks at the north on Myrtle Avenue and at the south on Wabash Avenue remain, but have been vacated. The building is largely vacant; a guitar repair shop rents the offices at the main office entrance and a tire company occupies the covered trucking dock at the north.

The neighboring parcel at the east is a surface parking lot for the Rihm Motor Company and was the original site of the F.W. Luley Abattoir (later G. Bartusch Packing Company). The Rihm Motor Company also owns the concrete-block buildings at the north of the plant across Myrtle Avenue. A metal-clad commercial storage building, which was built in 1916 with additions in 2008, is located at the west of the plant. The Metropolitan Transit bus transfer and storage building (1980) occupies the entire block at the south of the plant. University Avenue and the co-aligned Green Line-Light Rail Transit are located one block north. The platted streets follow the railroad tracks and result in the elevations of the building facing northeast and southeast.³

General

The red brick Superior Packing Company Plant is designed as a Moderne style plant with multiple additions with heights varying from one-to-three stories. The simple design has corbelling at the brick pilasters (west and east elevations) and terra cotta tile coping at the flat

¹ The terms "slaughterhouse" and "abattoir" are used interchangeably and their plant processes centered around the killing floor when ice was the main refrigeration and there was little by-product processing beyond rendering. Following the invention of electrical refrigeration, packinghouses allowed for slaughter as well as extensive by-product processing and packaging of smaller cuts of meat.

² The City of St. Paul defines the boundary of the Midway Industrial District as a 600-acre area bound by the City of St. Paul boundary line at the west, I-94W at the south, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) rails at the north and Fairview Avenue at the east.

³ The building elevations face northeast and southeast, but for ease of description Wabash Avenue will be referred to as the south elevation and Myrtle Avenue will be referred to as the north elevation.

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cornice. Roof heights vary and generally indicate separate additions. There are entrances at all elevations, but the majority of pedestrian and loading entrances are located at the north and south elevations.

The plant is approximately 100,000 square feet and is predominately constructed of reinforced concrete with flat roofs and brick exterior cladding. The one-story refrigeration rooms (1911) and two-story loading dock (1929) at the southeast of the complex are wood-frame with interior glazed tile walls. Exterior brick cladding was added in 1934. An architect is not listed on the building permits and all additions built between 1928 and 1934 were completed by contractor A.G. Erickson.⁴ Additions completed between 1934 and 1938 were completed by contractor Hagstrom Construction and the 1947 cattle pen was completed by the O. Selin Construction Company.⁵

South Elevation (Wabash Avenue)

The main entrance is at the south elevation and faces Wabash Avenue (Photo 1). The south elevation is divided into a three-story portion (Photo 2) at the west and a one-story portion at the east, which are separated by a projecting two-story loading dock addition.

The one-story, wood-frame portion at the east was built in 1911 and is the oldest section of the plant. This red brick portion has nine window openings; three are filled with concrete block and others have aluminum sash (ca. 1960s).⁶ All openings have brick sills at the one-story portion of the elevation. The six basement level openings have been filled with concrete block. The main entrance (1934) to the building is located at this elevation and features a decorative cast concrete frame with "Superior" in the lintel. The entry system is aluminum (ca. 1960s). There is an opening at the east of the entrance that has been filled with concrete block.

The three-story portion of this elevation is the reinforced concrete slaughterhouse, which was completed in 1935 and built on the limestone foundation of the 1886 slaughterhouse. In 1935, three bays at the west were built at three stories and four-bays at the east were built at two stories; the third story at the east was added in 1938. The upper two stories were split between an open, two-story "kill room" and its neighboring refrigeration rooms and men's showers. Openings at the second floor are rectangular and have been filled with fixed sash and concrete block (ca. 1950s). Openings at the third floor are square and have also been filled with fixed sash and concrete block (ca. 1950s). All openings at the three-story portion have cast stone sills. The ground floor loading dock has been enclosed with concrete block (1949) and the historic openings are not visible; the condition behind the loading dock is unknown at this time. There is an exterior metal-clad ramp (cowhide ramp) leading from the second floor to a first floor loading

⁴ St. Paul building permits pulled by A.G. Erickson include: #B4558, 11/5/1928; #B18948, 10/28/1932; #B35632, 7/12/1934.

⁵ Building additions completed by Hagstrom Construction Co. are listed in St. Paul building permits #36587, 8/8/1934; #43605, 4/1/1935; #51983, 10/4/1935; #52461, 10/14/1935; and #28333, 5/14/1938. The cattle pen is listed under St. Paul building permit #146587, 8/13/1947.

⁶ According to interviews with William and Richard Bartusch, openings throughout the building were filled with concrete block in the 1950s and 1960s. Permit records do not record these window alterations.

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dock (ca. 1940s). The central, projecting addition at this elevation, built in 1929, is two-stories and is wood-frame; the brick cladding was applied in 1938. This central addition has three, loading dock openings at the first floor; two of the loading dock openings face east. There is a single loading dock entrance and pedestrian entrance at the south elevation of the projecting addition. The raised pedestrian entrance is filled with an aluminum system and has a poured concrete stair. The company offices and women's restrooms are located at the second floor. The original wood-frame sash is located behind the boarded second-floor openings. Two openings at the second floor of the south elevation of this addition have been filled with concrete block. All openings at this 1929 addition have brick sills.

North Elevation (Myrtle Avenue)

The north elevation of the Superior Packing Company Plant was originally serviced by the Myrtle Avenue Lead of the Minnesota Transfer Railway and truck loading docks were added in the 1930s. The north elevation features nine truck loading openings within three distinct building additions (Photo 4). All additions are clad in red brick with concrete foundations and terracotta tile coping at the parapet.

The five-bay, one-story brick addition (1936-37) at the east features a stepped parapet and a barrel-vault roof (Photo 5). Three of the five ground-level loading dock openings of this addition have been filled with concrete block. A pedestrian entrance is centered in the western, concrete-filled dock opening.

The recessed, one-story brick addition (1934) at the center features a central, ground-level loading dock entrance with a metal overhead door flanked by a pedestrian entrance at the east (Photo 5). Brick pilasters once flanked the loading dock door; the pilaster at the east has been removed and the dock door was widened at an unknown date. The parapet is stepped at this addition. The building's electrical systems are applied to the face of this addition.

The addition (1946-47) at the west features three bays at two stories and five bays at one story (Photo 6). The bays of this addition are separated by brick pilasters that are corbelled at the parapet. The two-story portion of this addition has a central, raised, poured-concrete loading dock; the opening has been filled with an aluminum pedestrian entrance system (ca. 1990s) and sheltered by a recent awning. The one-story portion has two, raised loading dock openings with metal overhead doors and a single pedestrian entrance accessed by poured concrete stairs. The one-story portion of this addition was a covered cattle pen. The brick lintel above one loading dock opening retains the overhead painted sign that reads "Cattle." Windows openings at this addition have been filled with concrete block and a central fixed sash (ca. 1950s).

West Elevation (Montgomery Street)

The west elevation faces the vacated Montgomery Street, which is currently used as a surface parking lot (Photo 7). The west elevation is similar to the north elevation and is red brick with terracotta tile coping. The bays are separated by brick pilasters and the majority of the cast stone pilaster caps at this elevation have been removed and the area skimmed with concrete (date of

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alteration unknown). Openings at this elevation have cast stone sills; some have been painted red to match the brick.

The one- and two-story sections were completed in 1946-47 and the three-story portion was completed in 1935. The five bays of the one-story portion at the north correspond to the covered cattle pen. The three central bays with stepped windows correspond to the interior cattle ramp that leads over the offal pit room and to the slaughter room, which is also called the "kill room."

The offal pit room has upper level windows that lighted the cattle ramp and a ground floor loading dock entrance with a metal overhead door. These windows have been filled with concrete block and a central fixed sash. The two, ground-floor window openings have been filled with brick.

The three-story slaughterhouse (1935) at the south of the complex has seven bays separated by brick pilasters (Photo 8). The reinforced concrete slaughterhouse was built in 1935 on the existing limestone foundation of the earlier wood-frame slaughterhouse (1886). The first floor of the building was used for refrigeration and loading; the second floor is open to the third floor and was the kill room. At the first floor, there is a loading dock opening with a metal overhead door and a pedestrian entrance with an aluminum system (ca. 1990s). First floor openings have been filled with brick. The pedestrian entrance is accessed by poured concrete stairs and has a recent awning. The second floor openings are rectangular and have been filled with concrete block and a central fixed sash; one second floor bay has been filled with brick and a metal pedestrian door. Openings at the third floor are square and have been filled with brick and a fixed sash.

East Elevation

The east elevation is close to the property lot line and the Rihm Motor Company vehicles are parked along the property line (Photo 3). The east elevation features the similar red brick and terracotta tile coping from other elevations. There is a one-story portion (1911) at the south and a central two-story portion (1934, 1938) and a three-story portion (1936-37) at the north. The one-story portion of the building at the south has a faint painted sign on the brick that reads "Superior Packing Co." There is one window at the one-story portion and it is filled with an aluminum sash. There is one loading dock opening and it is enclosed with plywood. The central, two-story portion of the building has three bays of openings, which are filled with concrete block. The three-story portion also has three bays of openings, which are filled with concrete block.

Interior Plan (Figures 3-5)

The interior of the building is characterized by historic open plans and a structural grid of steel and wood columns. The workflow of this plant began at the north elevation where cattle were loaded from trains and, later, trucks, into the covered cattle pen. The covered cattle pen has a poured concrete floor and exposed steel columns and brick walls. Cattle were herded into the brick ramp to the second floor "kill room." The brick ramp is rough to prevent slipping and retains the wood cattle door and the brick platform for the "stunner" (Photo 10). The kill room of the slaughterhouse is two-stories with glazed clay tile walls and a poured concrete floor with

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multiple drains (Photo 11). Carcasses were washed in this room. Offal, consisting of inedible organs and entrails, was originally thrown into an open pit at the north side of the kill room near the rendering addition, but the pit was enclosed with a roof in 1947 and the offal appears to have left the kill room through carts to the rendering rooms in the center of the complex. There is a freight elevator at the north of the room, which extends to the basement. Hides were originally transported to the basement for salting, but in the later years, hides were processed elsewhere and moved via the hide ramp. The hide ramp, leading to the first-floor docks, is at the south side of the room. The overhead trolley system for carcasses remains at the ceiling and leads through the large insulated doors to the overnight refrigeration rooms at the west. All refrigeration rooms have poured concrete floors and glazed clay tile walls. The men's showers and locker rooms (lockers remain) are located at the third floor and are accessed by a metal stair at the south side of the "kill room" to keep soiled clothes confined to the kill area. The third floor also has poured concrete floors and glazed clay tile walls.

Rendering occurred onsite in the center portion of the complex. For fire protection, the three-story rendering plant has separate supporting walls. The boiler and steam tank have been removed from the rendering room, but holes in the ceiling indicate the positions of the equipment (Photo 12). The rendering plant has a separate freight elevator. Walls are glazed clay tile and floors are poured concrete.

Corridors from the overnight refrigeration rooms lead to the primal cutting and packaging rooms. All refrigeration and packing rooms have poured concrete floors and glazed clay tile walls; building permits describe the refrigeration room construction as "mill construction" (Photo 9). The overhead trolley system remains in these rooms and a poured concrete offal pit is located at the second floor. The third freight elevator serviced the primal cutting rooms and packaging. The women's restrooms and showers are located at the second floor east of the primal cutting rooms.

Superior Packing Company offices are located at the east of the slaughterhouse at the second floor and are accessed by the south office entrance.

The first floor of the northeast corner of the complex was primarily utilized as a transportation floor for meat products from refrigeration and packaging to shipping (Figure 3). A central east-west corridor separates the refrigeration rooms from the shipping and loading docks. The electrical and refrigeration systems for the complex were located in side rooms on this corridor; the systems have been disabled. Loading dock areas have poured concrete floors and exposed steel columns. The separation corridor has poured concrete floors and painted brick walls.

Integrity

The Superior Packing Company Plant retains a high degree of interior and exterior integrity and clearly reflects the process of cattle slaughter, packaging and shipping. Few alterations have occurred since the slaughterhouse and packing plant was completed in 1947. Electrical upgrades and a fire suppression system were installed in the 1980s. The boiler has been removed and individual electric heating systems (ca. 1980s) were placed in the few occupied rental spaces.

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With new artificial lighting and air-conditioning systems in the 1950s, the majority of the windows were filled with fixed sash and concrete block to avoid pests and pollution.

The three freight elevators retain wood grates and original pulley systems. Brick and glazed clay tile walls remain throughout the building as well as ceiling trolley systems and insulated refrigeration rooms and doors. The limestone foundation of the 1886 slaughterhouse is exposed as well as the brick cattle ramp to the second floor and the basement drainage system required for the buildings' daily cleanse. Overall, the building conveys its historic character and clearly illustrates the meatpacking process during the period of significance (1928-1947). The plant retains integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling and association.

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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.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1928-1947

Significant Dates
1928, 1929, 1934, 1935,
1936, 1938, 1947

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

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
A.G. Erickson, builder
Hagstrom Construction, builder
O. Selin Construction Company, builder

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Superior Packing Company Plant at 2103 Wabash Avenue in St. Paul, Minnesota is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent example of a pre-World War II meatpacking plant constructed in the Moderne style to meet the evolving industry standards of beef slaughter and packaging. The plant is an intact and rare example of an early twentieth-century slaughterhouse designed with straight-line production workflows on adaptable, open floor plates with spaces for killing, refrigeration, rendering, packaging and shipping. The building reflects incremental changes in meat processing standards and retains the distinctive characteristics of a multi-story cattle processing plant. These include the overhead trolley system, brick cattle ramp, second floor kill room, glazed clay tile walls and hide ramp. The meatpacking plant was built on the foundation of the Haas Slaughterhouse (1886) adjacent to the Minnesota Transfer Yard and stockyards to provide convenient processing and shipping. It predated the larger Union Stockyards packing plants in South St. Paul.⁷ In response to the consent decrees of 1920 and 1932, which regulated the conglomerate meat companies, smaller wholesale slaughterhouses, like the Superior Packing Company, were able to thrive. In 1928, the Superior Packing Company purchased the early slaughterhouse and proceeded with significant expansion plans and plant upgrades. As slaughterhouses moved to rural regions in the 1950s, the Superior Packing Company continued in St. Paul and remained the city's only graded beef supplier.⁸ From 1928 to 1979 the slaughterhouse remained one of two wholesale meatpacking plants in St. Paul.⁹ The period of significance extends from 1928 when Superior Packing Company purchased the slaughterhouse to 1947 when the building modernization and upgrades were completed.

Frameworks for understanding the industry's development and the significance of this property are provided by the statewide contexts, "Historic Context Study of Minnesota Farms, 1820-1960" and "Railroads in Minnesota, 1862-1956."

⁷ The Union Stockyards and packing plants in South St. Paul were razed in the 1970s.

⁸ "Graded beef" refers to young beef steers with high fat, which are processed for full cuts of meat and meet grades of "Prime" first and "Choice" second. Older bulls and heifers are not graded and are processed as ground meats.

⁹ The neighboring beef wholesaler, F. W. Luley Abattoir (later G. Bartusch Packing Company), was razed in the 1990s.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Minnesota's Early Cattle Industry

Slaughtering and packing of beef raised in the Minnesota Territory developed initially as a decentralized operation, with slaughterhouses located on farms and small meat markets in most communities. In 1850, there were 1,395 cattle other than dairy cows in the Minnesota Territory and beef for consumption was in short supply.¹⁰ With livestock diversification and breeding, by 1860 the beef cattle figure had increased to 51,345 and ranked second to hogs in the state's meat production.¹¹ Dairy and beef cattle farms concentrated in the state's southern counties around open pastureland. In the 1860s, large cattle herds from Blue Earth County were driven to Chicago, the nation's meatpacking hub, for slaughter.¹² The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 stimulated the meat industry as farmers strove to meet the demands of the war effort.¹³

Early St. Paul Meatpackers

By the late 1870s, the expanding rail network led to meat processing concentrating on the Minneapolis and St. Paul population centers. Railroads were the single greatest contributor to the establishment of major meatpacking plants; the industry shifted to cities with the best railroad connections.¹⁴ Because railroads had high fixed costs and competed for traffic, they pursued livestock shipping, which was regular and valuable.¹⁵ The beef farmers abandoned their individual meatpacking plants and started to ship live cattle to the populated areas. In 1878, Holbrook and Company of Minneapolis opened a meatpacking business in the developing warehouse district by the railyards.¹⁶ Martin Delaney and M. J. O'Connor established St. Paul's early stockyards and meatpacking operations in 1880 on ten acres of the Upper Levee above the Mississippi River near the Smith Avenue Bridge.¹⁷ Called the Union Stockyards (razed), it was serviced by two meatpacking operations (razed) built by J. M. Williams, one for pork and one for beef.¹⁸ The next large operation was the Minnesota Rendering Company (razed), incorporated in 1882. It was located near the present-day Town and Country Golf Club, west of downtown St.

¹⁰ Merrill E. Jarchow, *The Earth Brought Forth: A History of Minnesota Agriculture to 1885* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1949), 202; Charles Edward Bottemiller, "Meat and Men in Minnesota: The St. Paul Union Stockyards to 1907," (Thesis submitted to Macalester College, 1963), 16.

¹¹ Jarchow, 202-03.

¹² Jarchow, 206; Clifford Clark ed. *Minnesota in a Century of Change: The State and Its People Since 1900* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1989), 275.

¹³ Barbara Wyatt, ed., "Meat Products," *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* (Vol. 1-3). Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 10-2.

¹⁴ Wilson J. Warren, *Tied to the Great Packing Machine: The Midwest and Meatpacking* (Iowa City: University of Iowa, 2007), 9.

¹⁵ Warren, 9-10.

¹⁶ Jarchow, 199.

¹⁷ Bottemiller, 44; St. Paul Directory 1884.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 45. This stockyard is separate from the later South St. Paul Union Stockyards and disappeared after the development of the South St. Paul facility.

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Paul.¹⁹ The rendering plant received offal from the Williams plants, but most of the refuse came from another Union Stockyards operation (razed), which was located at Prior and University Avenues, a few blocks north of the rendering plant in a developing industrial area “midway” between St. Paul and Minneapolis.²⁰

In 1882, St. Paul’s beef cattle and horse trade amounted to over \$2 million.²¹ That year, Frederick W. Luley (b.1832) opened an abattoir (razed) at the corner of Wabash and Cleveland Avenues in a growing industrial area “midway” between St. Paul and Minneapolis near University Avenue. Luley, a German immigrant, also operated a retail meat shop on Jackson Street in downtown St. Paul.²² In 1891, Luley’s twenty-five employees processed fifty cattle and two hundred hogs per day.²³

In 1886, another “packing house and abattoir” was built next to Luley’s abattoir on the north side of Wabash Avenue between Havana Street (present-day Montgomery Avenue) and Cleveland Avenue.²⁴ The wood-frame building was situated on Lot 118 of First Division Hewitts Out Lots and the neighboring Lot 119 was reserved for cattle yards. Building permits indicate the two-story slaughterhouse, designed by Lemuel Jepson (1847-1929) for the Henry G. Haas Company, sat on an eight-foot-deep limestone foundation measuring sixty by fifty feet and had two brick chimneys (Figure 8). A wood-frame shed was also built on the property.²⁵ Jepson, a Minneapolis architect, tested construction material strength and designed concrete-block-houses in north Minneapolis that same year.²⁶ In February 1886 Haas received special permission by Ordinance No. 617 from the City of St. Paul to operate the slaughterhouse.²⁷

In 1886, Haas’ operation was among St. Paul’s twelve “provisions and dressed meat” wholesale operations and sixty retail butchers.²⁸ Henry Haas (1848-1915), son of German immigrants, was born in Pennsylvania and moved to St. Paul by 1860. In 1875, Henry and his siblings, Charles (b. 1850) and Jacob (b. 1855), operated a butcher shop in the St. Paul Public Market.²⁹ In the 1880s, Charles Haas listed his occupation as a cattle drover and eventually operated a livestock commission house at the Minnesota Transfer Railway (MTR) stockyards next to the family-

¹⁹ Bottemiller, 45.

²⁰ Ibid. This stockyard has also been razed.

²¹ Jarchow, 199; Bottemiller, 15.

²² *Saint Paul Globe*, July 19, 1884.

²³ *Saint Paul Globe*, July 27, 1891.

²⁴ Havana Street changed to Montgomery Avenue in 1886.

²⁵ City of St. Paul Building Permit #5975, February 3, 1886; *St. Paul Daily Globe*, July 17, 1886.

²⁶ Alan K. Lathrop, *Minnesota Architects: A Biographical Dictionary* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 115.

²⁷ *Saint Paul Globe*, February 3, 1886; *Saint Paul Globe*, February 6, 1886.

²⁸ *Annual Report of the Saint Paul Chamber of Commerce*, 1886, 17-18.

²⁹ St. Paul Directory 1875; U.S. Federal Census 1860.

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owned abattoir.³⁰ Henry Haas' abattoir was a feeder for the Haas family butcher shop and was conveniently located next to the MTR stockyards (Figures 9 and 10).

It appears that the Haas brothers continued ownership of the retail meat store, but sold the slaughterhouse in 1895. The plant processed cows and hogs in the same plant and may have been sold in response to the Meat Inspections Acts of 1890 and 1891, which discouraged the practice of multi-species slaughterhouses.³¹ Also, by the 1890s, smaller meat packing operations were more successful when they focused on single-species operations so their cutters could focus their technical skills.³² In 1895, Halvor Hammer and Alfred Jackson operated the beef slaughterhouse and, three years later, the Midway Abattoir Company, under the ownership of Reuben Katz and Louis Hertz, was located in the facility.³³ These two side-by-side slaughterhouses on Wabash Avenue were completely dependent on the Minnesota Transfer Railway services for cattle shipping as well as the rail-owned cattle yards.

Minnesota Transfer Railway (MTR) and Midway Industrial District Development

By the 1870s, nine railroads entered Minneapolis and St. Paul and maintained separate freight terminals, which caused rail traffic and expensive delays; delays were especially hazardous for live cattle.³⁴ The Minnesota Transfer Railway (MTR) was incorporated on March 1, 1884 to facilitate freight transfer functions for the various rail lines that served St. Paul and Minneapolis and was built "midway" between the two cities.³⁵ The short line commenced in the Merriam Park area, south of University Avenue, where it connected with the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Short Line. In the 1880s, the extensive MTR railyard, encompassing two hundred acres, was known as the Midway and later as the Midway Industrial District.³⁶ Eventually nineteen tracks funneled into the railyard, north of University Avenue and west of Prior Avenue. The railyard was surrounded by stock pens, ice houses and repair facilities.³⁷ A roundhouse and diesel shop (extant) were built near Cleveland and University Avenues.³⁸ In 1898, the MTR purchased the Minnesota Belt Line Railways and Transfer Company line, which operated a line from St. Anthony Park to Fridley and connected the Luley and Haas abattoirs to additional cattle sources at the New Brighton stockyards. There was early indication that the slaughterhouses were not welcome in the growing industrial area, which was surrounded by increasing residential development.

³⁰ 1884 St. Paul Directory, Bottemiller, 45,

³¹ Minnesota Dairy and Food Department, Biennial Report, 1898; Skaggs, 125.

³² Warren, 21.

³³ St. Paul Directories, 1895 and 1898.

³⁴ Andrew Schmidt, Andrea Vermeer, Daniel Pratt and Betsy Bradley. "Railroads in Minnesota, 1862-1956" (National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2007), 122.

³⁵ Ibid, 121. The Minnesota Transfer Railway Company line has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The line was purchased by the Minnesota Commercial Railway in 1987 and is still in use.

³⁶ Ibid, 121; Henry Castle, *History of St. Paul and Vicinity* (Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing, 1912), 620. Today the Midway Industrial District encompasses 600 acres.

³⁷ Schmidt, Vermeer, Pratt and Bradley, 123.

³⁸ These buildings remain and are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

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In the 1880s, a delegation of cattlemen advocated for centralization of meat stockyards and processing in St. Paul.³⁹ The men recognized that a site distant from the expanding residential development and downriver from ice harvesting was important. In April of 1886, the site requirements were described in the *Saint Paul Globe*,

“It is altogether important in the selection of grounds for these stock yards that a location should be had where the drainage is good and where it leads off to the river at such a place as would not inflict injury upon the city. It is also important that a location should be had where water could be obtained in abundance and it would be convenient to get ice. In selecting a site for the stock yards it should be kept in mind that it is necessary to have room enough for the expansion of the business in the future in proportion to the increase in the cattle business.”⁴⁰

City residents protested against further slaughterhouse near the Minnesota Transfer claiming “a huge sewer a mile and a half long must underlie a large portion of the fairest residence and business territory” and “such a sewer must have vents at every street crossing, out of which the stench of putrid offal will find its way to pollute the air with intolerable odors and disseminate germs of diseases bred in darkness.”⁴¹

In February 1886, a group of investors established the 260-acre Union Stockyards by the Chicago Great Western Railway in South St. Paul.⁴² The stockyards were placed in an undeveloped region south of St. Paul and helped to incorporate the city of South St. Paul. Envisioned as a livestock holdover to attract cattle from the Dakotas and Montana before shipping to Chicago, the stockyard’s first slaughterhouse, the Anglo-American Packing and Provision Company, opened in 1888 and was quickly followed by the Minnesota Packing and Provision Company.⁴³

In 1888, the City of St. Paul attempted to condemn the Haas and Luley slaughterhouses at the Minnesota Transfer Yard. The Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that St. Paul officials superseded the city’s authority and the slaughterhouses were allowed to remain unless the city gave ample notice of condemnation and paid the value of the businesses.⁴⁴ The slaughterhouses remained, but no new slaughterhouses were allowed within the city limits of St. Paul.

³⁹ *Saint Paul Globe*, April 23, 1886. The new stockyards would provide yards to hogs and sheep as well as beef steers.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Saint Paul Globe*, June 30, 1886.

⁴² Jarchow, 199; Clark 275; Lois A. Glewwe, *South St. Paul* (Charleston, S.C.: The History Press, 2015), 41.

⁴³ Clark, 275; Glewwe, 44.

⁴⁴ *Star Tribune*, February 9, 1888.

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Meatpacking Growth and Regulation

With agricultural diversification, urban stockyards and refrigerated railcars invented in the 1890s, Minnesota's livestock industry increased considerably at the turn-of-the-century.⁴⁵ Southwest Minnesota became a chief steer raising producer.⁴⁶ Between 1880 and 1900 the state's beef cattle tripled from 383,505 to more than 1.1 million steers and the majority were processed in South St. Paul.⁴⁷ Between 1870 and 1900, South St. Paul was listed among the ten most significant stockyard cities in the country and packing employment in South St. Paul was especially crucial to foundation of the city's growth.⁴⁸ In 1890, Charles Haas was enticed by South St. Paul's growth and moved his commission house from the Livestock Exchange Building at the MTR yards to the new Exchange Building at the South St. Paul yards.⁴⁹

By the 1890s, the "Big Five" meatpacking companies, Swift, Armour, Morris, Cudahy and S&S, dominated the national market and all maintained regional plants in South St. Paul.⁵⁰ In 1897 these firms had twenty national plants and approximately 600 branch houses.⁵¹ By 1904, South St. Paul dominated the state's livestock industry and the Midway Abattoir (former Haas Abattoir) and Luley Abattoir were St. Paul's only remaining packing houses.⁵² It appears the two slaughterhouses remained competitive with the South St. Paul facilities by sharing ice facilities, rendering operations and a cattle holding pen on the land between them. In 1906, the two slaughterhouses were targeted for closure again when the Minnesota Board of Health tried to condemn operations at the Midway as unsanitary. The owners claimed that "Swift & Co. interests of South St. Paul were behind the complaint of the Merriam Park citizens" but nuisance claims were eventually dropped.⁵³

The "Big Five" firms continued to purchase smaller plants and, during World War I, the group maintained ninety-one plants and more than 1,120 branch houses; Armour and Company completed a \$14 million plant in South St. Paul in 1919.⁵⁴ In 1914, the eleven non-corporate meatpacking plants in Minnesota processed less than two percent of the state's beef market valued at \$47.7 million.⁵⁵ In 1915, Minnesota ranked fifth nationwide in the number of beef cattle and, in 1919, meatpacking ranked second behind milling as the state's main industry.⁵⁶

⁴⁵ Sue Granger and Scott Kelly, "Historic Context Study of Minnesota Farms, 1820-1960" (Prepared for the Minnesota Department of Transportation, 2005), 3.78.

⁴⁶ Clark, 271; Granger, 3.79.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Warren, 31.

⁴⁹ Bottemiller, 55.

⁵⁰ Jimmy Skaggs, *Prime Cut: Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1983* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986), 99.

⁵¹ Richard J. Arnould, "Changing Patterns of Concentration in American Meatpacking, 1880-1963" (*The Business History Review*, Vol. 45, No. 1, Spring 1971), 20.

⁵² "Manufacturing Sites are Ideal at Midway," *The Minneapolis Journal*, April 29, 1905; St. Paul Directories.

⁵³ *Star Tribune*, January 10, 1906; *Minneapolis Journal*, January 8, 1906.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ United States Bureau of the Census, *Census of Manufactures* (Vol.1-3), 1914.

⁵⁶ Clark, 274-275; Granger 3.80.

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Following World War I, the "Big Five" meat firms slaughtered 82.2 percent of the nation's cattle while 600 non-corporate firms controlled less than twenty-five percent of the beef.⁵⁷

Pending anti-trust investigations, the "Big Five" submitted to a consent decree in 1920 and were ordered to dismantle the complex business structures that assured them a steady supply of raw materials.⁵⁸ The decree ruled the big meatpackers could not own any interest in stockyards, terminal railroads, and market newspapers nor sell at the retail level. Following years of litigation, the U.S. Supreme Court modified the consent decree in 1932 to allow large packers to retain their fleets of refrigerator trucks, but ordered packing companies to sell off their remaining stockyards, terminal railroads and grocery lines.⁵⁹ These decrees provided opportunity for the two smaller slaughterhouses adjacent to the Minnesota Transfer Railway to purchase livestock at a fixed rate from the quasi-public stockyards.

Superior Packing Company Plant

By the 1910s a significant portion of the manufacturing, warehousing and wholesaling functions of Minneapolis and St. Paul were located at the Midway Industrial District.⁶⁰ In 1912, the MTR transfer yard was second to Pittsburgh in carrying the nation's freight tonnage and twenty percent of the freight through the yard represented local firms.⁶¹ In 1916 the MTR handled 700,000 cars, which grew to 800,000 cars by 1923.⁶² In the 1940s and 1950s, the MTR handled between 2500 and 3500 cars per day and 700 employees managed the yards and 47 engines.⁶³ The surrounding industries included lumberyards, furniture and linseed oil manufacturers, and two of the largest refrigeration factories in the country, which must have been advantageous for the neighboring meatpacking plants.⁶⁴ Rail spurs and leads fed the surrounding industrial facilities and the Wabash Avenue and Myrtle Avenue Leads served Waldorf Paper, Weyerhaeuser Timber, Willys-Overland operations and International Harvester as well as the city's only wholesale slaughterhouses: Luley and Midway (former Haas).⁶⁵ The growth in heavy industrial uses may have protected the slaughterhouses from further residential complaints. Also, the 1922 invention of chlorine deodorizing agents in meatpacking plants masked the odors and led to fewer complaints.⁶⁶

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Skaggs, 107. The "Big Five" packing companies used the courts to block enforcement of the law and delayed with litigation, but the stockyards started to develop relationships with smaller packing companies like Superior Packing Company during the litigious periods.

⁵⁹ Skaggs, 155.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 124.

⁶¹ Castle, 620.

⁶² Schmidt, Vermeer, Pratt and Bradley, 125. Superior Packing Company received cattle by rail every day, but the exact number was not made public due to the competitive nature of the industry.

⁶³ John Stottlemeyer, *The First 100 Years: A History of the Minnesota Transfer Railway* (Minneapolis: s.n., 1982), 7.

⁶⁴ Castle, 621.

⁶⁵ Schmidt, Vermeer, Pratt and Bradley, 125.

⁶⁶ Warren, 168.

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In the 1910s, Gustav E. Bartusch (1869-1927), son of the St. Paul retail butcher Ernst W. Bartusch⁶⁷ (1844-1922), managed the Midway Abattoir (former Haas Abattoir). The plant provided product for the Bartusch retail meat store, later operated by Gustav's brother, Otto, on West Seventh Street. The rendering operations in the plant were managed by D. Bergman & Company, which also operated a rendering plant at the South St. Paul yards.⁶⁸ In 1927, Gustav Bartusch died and the plant was sold to new owners. Gustav's sons, Richard Ernest Bartusch (1897-1981) and Carl Gustav Bartusch (1900-1978), purchased the neighboring Luley Abattoir and incorporated the business as the G. Bartusch Packing Company, which operated next to the Midway (former Haas Abattoir) until 1978.⁶⁹ (See Figure 11)

In 1928, the Midway Abattoir (former Haas Abattoir) was incorporated as the Superior Packing Company and underwent significant plant upgrades for "graded beef" processing. Graded beef comes from young steers and is considered prime beef with abundant marbling. The Superior Packing Company Plant processed "graded cattle," which required the labor-intensive break down of the animal into small loin cuts known as "primals." The neighboring G. Bartusch Packing Company processed "utility cattle," older bulls and non-producing dairy cows, and sold quartered animals for later grinding at local butcher shops. The difference in meat cuts meant the two slaughterhouses did not compete for cattle product or retail buyers. By the 1920s, the two slaughterhouses operated separately with their own rendering, cattle pens and ice storage.

The Superior Packing Company benefitted from the 1920 and 1932 consent decrees, which regulated the meatpacking industry and specifically restrained the larger packing plants known as the Big Five. By regulating the cost of beef and halting the monopoly hold on stockyards and shipping, the small slaughter operations were able to compete with the larger plants.⁷⁰ The smaller meatpacking plants were allowed to work directly with the farmers and negotiated the price of the animal before it left the farm, whereas stockyards were apt to change the price during transportation.⁷¹ Direct marketing increased significantly between 1923 and 1938; from 11 to 25 percent with cattle, which coincided with the Superior Packing Company Plant upgrades.⁷² After 1930, the branch system of larger plants was gradually replaced by independent wholesalers like Superior Packing Company.⁷³ Few independent meatpacking operations survived the competition of the conglomerate operations and they remained small until the 1930s.⁷⁴ St. Paul had not allowed new meatpacking plant operations since the 1890s so Superior Packing and its neighbor Luley-Bartusch grew into larger operations following the consent decrees.

⁶⁷ Ernst became Ernest in later census records.

⁶⁸ St. Paul Directories, *The Packers' Encyclopedia*.

⁶⁹ Susan Hankin, *A Family Album: The Bartusch Family Story Told in Words and Pictures* (Mission Viejo, CA: Unisys, 1997), 25. The Luley Abattoir complex of wood-frame buildings, and brick additions by Bartusch, closed in 1979 and was razed in the 1990s. The Bartusch sons, Richard and Carl, were meatpackers and worked for their father at the Midway Abattoir; they purchased the neighboring Luley Abattoir ca. 1928.

⁷⁰ Arnould, 28.

⁷¹ Warren, 18.

⁷² Ibid, 17.

⁷³ Arnould, 28.

⁷⁴ Warren, 19.

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Superior Packing Company Plant Operations

The conditions of meatpacking plants and workers described in Upton Sinclair's muckraking novel, *The Jungle* (1906), greatly affected the future of the industry.⁷⁵ Motivated by the book, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Meat Inspection Act of 1906, which extended postmortem inspections of all livestock and red meats in interstate commerce.⁷⁶ Pork operations and inspections were more mechanized than contemporary beef plants and federal regulations for guarding against trichinosis, and other dangers particular to pork, were more than a decade old by the time of the 1906 beef act.⁷⁷ As part of the "beef act", the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) was empowered to require sanitary conditions and methods in slaughtering and packing production.⁷⁸ The act also regulated the size of yards, chutes, lighting, refrigeration, ventilation, cleaning procedures and required toilet and dressing-room facilities for beef plants.⁷⁹ The act specifically targeted cleaning procedures in Minnesota plants where hemorrhagic septicemia and infectious cerebral-spinal meningitis was prevalent.⁸⁰

Before the Superior Packing Company Plant upgrades, the Midway Abattoir continued to operate much as Henry Haas did in the 1880s. The wood-frame building had a killing room on the second floor and ice storage on the first floor with hide salting and storage in the basement (Figures 13 and 15). The plants were labor intensive with specific roles and the animals were broken down on the floor or on tables described as "bed dressing." The "knocker" stunned the steer, a "sticker" severed the carotid artery, a "legger" severed the legs, and the "sider" and "skinner" pulled the hides off the carcass.⁸¹ Cutting jobs were highly skilled and individualized and included the "backer," "gutter," and "splitter."⁸² Carcasses chilled overnight in rooms cooled by ice and the hides were salted and stored in the cool basements. The bones and offal were rendered on site and close to the slaughter room, which presented a fire danger within wood-frame buildings.⁸³

In 1928, Superior Packing Company began the process of updating the meatpacking plant and adopted the latest efficient technology and cleaning standards, which included mechanical stunners, conveyors, power-driven overhead chains, refrigerated tile rooms, showers, sewer systems and cooled truck loading docks.⁸⁴ These innovations as well as new federal guidelines on cleanliness and provisions for graded beef processing led to multiple building upgrades and additions at the Superior Packing Company Plant between 1928 and 1947.⁸⁵ The stone foundation of the original slaughterhouse was retained and a three-story reinforced concrete

⁷⁵ Skaggs, 123.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 124.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 125.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ F.W. Wilder, *The Modern Packing House* (Chicago: Nickerson & Collins Co., 1905), 26.

⁸⁴ Warren, 25.

⁸⁵ Skaggs, 154.

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slaughterhouse was built on the foundation. The neighboring one-story, wood-frame refrigeration rooms (1911) were retained, but clad in brick to match the 1930s additions and tiled at the interior. The fireproof, brick Moderne style facility had large windows and a flat roof. Large refrigeration room additions for cutting primals and a trucking facility were completed at the north in a similar style and, by 1937, the meat processing plant seen today was largely complete (Figure 15). Cattle lost weight quickly in cold temperatures and, in 1947, the cattle holding sheds at the northwest were replaced with brick additions to match the complex.⁸⁶

The demolition of the wood-frame slaughterhouse (1886) may have also been related to sanitation concerns. In 1933, concerns about overloaded sewers and pollution in the Mississippi River led the state legislature to create the Minneapolis-St. Paul Sanitary Sewer District.⁸⁷ In 1935, construction of St. Paul's treatment plant began as the three-story Superior Packing Company Plant slaughterhouse and drainage system was constructed. The new "kill room" included poured concrete floors with tilts to large floor drains and a basement sewage system.

The Superior Packing Company Plant design closely follows the industry standards of meat processing of the 1930s and 1940s (Figure 14). Like most early facilities, the plant is multi-storied and relied on the cattle to walk up ramps to upper floors for processing; the brick cattle ramp to the second floor is located along the west side of the building with windows arranged along the ramp. The steers were slaughtered at the top of the ramp and hoisted by one leg to an overhead gravity trolley, developed in the 1930s, that propelled the carcasses along the disassembly line to refrigeration rooms; the overhead hoist and meat rail system remains. The slaughter room has multiple drains, which connected to the sewers. The blood was saved in carts and sent off-site for processing into animal feed. The offal was discarded into an open pit off the slaughter room for glue rendering in steam-powered cookers; rendering occurred in the central portion of the building with the chimneys. Hides were pulled in the slaughter room and sent in the attached freight elevator to the basement for curing. Later, hides went directly down the exterior ramp (post 1937) from the slaughter room to trucks for curing elsewhere. Grease from rendering left the building in tanker cars and "crackling," to be processed into bone meal, left by rail and, later, trucks. The overhead trolley system at the plant continued through the refrigeration and packaging rooms and to the truck loading docks.⁸⁸

Electricity-generated, mechanical refrigeration became increasingly common after World War I and packing plants expanded refrigeration areas beyond the storage room to include areas in which carcasses were boned and broken into retail cuts.⁸⁹ The anhydrous ammonia refrigeration system was installed as part of the 1929 plant upgrade and was carefully maintained to guard against dangerous spills. As Superior's graded beef production load grew, more tiled refrigeration rooms were added to the complex for storage as well as primal processing and packing. Equipment in these rooms was limited to movable, work tables and the concrete floors and tile walls were easily cleaned. Women often worked in the primal cutting rooms and handled

⁸⁶ City of St. Paul Building Permit # 131503 April 8, 1946; #146587, April 13, 1947.

⁸⁷ William E. Lass, *Minnesota: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2000), 290.

⁸⁸ Interview with William Bartusch, December 15, 2016.

⁸⁹ Skaggs, 154.

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smaller cuts of meat. A second-floor, poured concrete offal pit remains in the primal cutting room.

In response to cleaner factories and better conditions for meatpacking workers, federal regulations required on-site showers. The third floor of the Superior Packing Company Plant was reserved for toilets, showers, lockers and a break room for male employees. Showers for women are located at the second floor near the primal cutting rooms. Soiled uniforms were washed overnight in the plant's laundry and returned to workers' lockers by the next morning.⁹⁰

Transportation was the most important siting factors for meatpacking plants.⁹¹ The Superior Packing Company Plant was serviced by two rail leads from the MTR. The Wabash Avenue Lead at the south provided an individual spur for the plant and offal and rendering grease left from this line. Tankers were allowed to sit by the building for extended periods until filled. The Myrtle Avenue Lead at the north brought cattle into the plant at the three north gates, but by the 1950s, cattle arrived by truck. While the plant continued to use these spurs into the 1960s, covered, brick, loading docks were built in the 1930s for the refrigeration trucks and local distribution.

One of the few alterations to the Superior Packing Company Plant after the period of significance was required by industry standards. In the 1950s, window openings were filled with concrete block and fixed sash to remove the temptation to open windows and allow flies and pollution in the plant.

Data on animal kills and profits are difficult to obtain. The government regulated the costs of cattle and dressed beef, but plants were not required to publically disclose the daily slaughter. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the Superior Packing Company had 200 employees.⁹² The neighboring G. Bartusch Packing Company maintained 85 employees throughout the 1960s and 1970s and estimated 350 kills per day.⁹³ The Superior Packing Company Plant killed upwards of 600 steers per day and produced more expensive cuts of beef.⁹⁴

Decline

A number of factors led to the decentralization of the meat industry. In 1935 Minneapolis engineer Frederick M. Jones developed the world's first refrigeration unit for a truck, which revolutionized meat distribution and freed the meatpacking plants from the static railroad.⁹⁵ Minnesota's demoralizing meat packers strike of 1948 further eroded the system of concentrated plants.⁹⁶ Rural areas offered cheaper and less organized labor and new plants were built near

⁹⁰ Interview with Richard Bartusch, December 15, 2016.

⁹¹ Warren, 9.

⁹² Directory of St. Paul Manufacturers, various years.

⁹³ Interview with Richard Bartusch, December 15, 2016.

⁹⁴ Interview with Richard Bartusch, December 15, 2016.

⁹⁵ Granger and Kelly, 3.81; Skaggs, 152.

⁹⁶ The 200 employees at Superior Packing Company and 50 employees at G. Bartusch Packing Company were on strike. Over 8,000 meatpackers in South St. Paul were picketing. *Minneapolis Star*, January 16, 1946.

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livestock farms.⁹⁷ New highway system construction in the 1960s allowed processing plants to locate near the livestock farms. New meatpacking plants were built as one-story operations and did not include hide curing, rendering, or cattle pens. When Superior Packing Company incorporated in 1928, ninety-one per cent of the cattle were purchased at terminal markets adjacent to the railyards and, by 1961, only forty-two per cent of the cattle were purchased from terminal markets.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the consent decree of 1920 separating packers from retail operations led to the emergence of full-service grocery stores, which increased their share of the meat market from 31 percent in 1929 to 74 percent in 1954; larger grocery chains packed their own meat.⁹⁹

By the 1960s there was a dramatic drop in railroad freight traffic and in 1964 the MTR sold fifty acres of the yard to the St. Paul Port Authority.¹⁰⁰ The Superior Packing Company Plant filed for bankruptcy in 1964 and was purchased by the John Morrell Company for meat processing until 1979 when the plant closed permanently.¹⁰¹ The neighboring G. Bartusch Packing Company (former Luley Abattoir) also closed in 1979 and the site was cleared in the 1990s. The Swift & Company plant in South St. Paul closed in 1969 and the South St. Paul stockyards and plants were razed between 1969 and 1975. Between 1967 and 1982 the number of the country's meatpackers with twenty or more employees dropped from 955 to 668.¹⁰²

Summary

Despite city opposition and local nuisance complaints as well as competition from the "Big Five" national meatpacking companies operating in South St. Paul, the Haas-Midway Abattoir (1886) was one of the few independent meatpacking plants to survive in Minnesota. In 1928, the Superior Packing Company, cognizant of the inability to build new slaughterhouses in St. Paul, purchased the Haas-Midway plant at 2103 Wabash Avenue and began significant plant upgrades to meet sanitary standards and technological advances. Between 1928 and 1947, the wood-frame slaughterhouse was dismantled and replaced with a brick, Moderne style meatpacking plant. The Superior Packing Company Plant meets Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent local example of a multi-story, reinforced concrete meatpacking plant with intact cattle ramp, tiled refrigeration rooms, ceiling trolley system and hide ramp.

⁹⁷ Clark, 76; Michael Broadway and Terry Ward. "Recent Changes in the Structure and Location of the U.S. Meatpacking Industry," (*Geography*, January 1990), 78.

⁹⁸ W. J. Will, "Livestock Market Location Theory," (*Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. 34, May 1952), 253.

⁹⁹ Jon, Lauck, "Competition in the Grain Belt Meatpacking Sector After World War II," (*The Annals of Iowa*, Vol. 57, No. 2, 1998), 140.

¹⁰⁰ Schmidt, Vermeer, Pratt and Bradley, 125. The Minnesota Commercial Railway purchased the MTR facilities in 1986.

¹⁰¹ *Star Tribune*, September 27, 1964 and August 18, 1965. John Morrell Company purchased the plant because the Morrell plant at 1301 South Fourth Street in Minneapolis was being condemned by the Minnesota Department of Transportation for highway construction. There were no building alterations under the John Morrell ownership.

¹⁰² Lauck, 147.

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Barbara Wyatt, ed., "Meat Products," *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* (Vol. 1-3). Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

Zellie, Carole and Garneth O. Peterson. "Transportation Corridors: 1857-1950." St. Paul: Historic Context Study. Prepared for the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, 2001.

Maps and Directories

Dahl, P.M. Plat Book of Ramsey County. Minneapolis: Northwest Map Publishing Co., 1898.

Foote, C.M., Map of Ramsey and Hennepin Counties. Minneapolis: C.M. Foote, 1890.

Sanborn Map Company. Fire Insurance Maps for St. Paul, Minnesota. Sanborn Map Publishing Co., 1912-1951.

Interviews

William Bartusch of G. Bartusch Packing Company, December 15, 2016

Richard Bartusch of G. Bartusch Packing Company, December 15, 2016

Collections

Ramsey County Historical Society, St. Paul (RCHS)

Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul (MNHS)

Superior Packing Company Plant
Name of Property

Ramsey County, MN
County and State

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): RA-SPC-8841

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 1.62 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Superior Packing Company Plant
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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15N	Easting: 484893.48	Northing: 4978504.09
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

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

The Superior Packing Company Plant occupies lots 118 and 110 of Hewitts Out Lots First Division and vacated NELY 7 feet of Wabash Avenue adjacent and vacated SELY 10 feet of Montgomery Street adjacent.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the acreage historically associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Amy Lucas
organization: Landscape Research LLC
street & number: 1926 Penn Avenue South
city or town: Minneapolis state: MN zip code: 55405
e-mail alucas@landscaperesearch.net
telephone: 612-414-7949
date: May 15, 2018

Superior Packing Company Plant
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Superior Packing Company Plant

City or Vicinity: Saint Paul

County: Ramsey

State: MN

Photographer: Amy Lucas

Date Photographed: November 9, 2016 and December 20, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #1 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0001)
Exterior, south elevation, camera facing northwest.

Superior Packing Company Plant
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Photo #2 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0002)
Exterior, west and south elevations, camera facing northeast.

Photo #3 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0003)
Exterior, east and south elevations, camera facing west.

Photo #4 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0004)
Exterior, north and west elevations, camera facing southeast.

Photo #5 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0005)
Exterior, north elevation, camera facing south.

Photo #6 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0006)
Exterior, north elevation, camera facing south.

Photo #7 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0007)
Exterior, west elevation, camera facing northeast.

Photo #8 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0008)
Exterior, west elevation, camera facing east.

Photo #9 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0009)
Interior, first floor, chilling room, camera facing north.

Photo #10 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0010)
Interior, cattle ramp looking from second floor down to first floor, camera facing northwest.

Photo #11 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0011)
Interior, second floor, kill room, camera facing north.

Photo #12 (MN_Ramsey County_Superior Packing Company Plant_0012)
Interior, second floor, rendering room, camera facing east.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Figure 3	Sketch Map-Photo Key, First Floor
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Figure 5	Superior Packing Company Plant aerial with meatpacking areas noted.
Figure 6	Superior Packing Company Plant aerial with dates of additions noted.
Figure 7	Sanborn Insurance Co. Map, 1903, Vol. 3, Sheet 371. Highlighted Midway Abattoir before Superior Packing Company purchase and plant upgrades.
Figure 8	Luley Abattoir at right and Midway Abattoir (former Haas Abattoir) at left, ca. 1925, looking west. (MNHS)
Figure 9	Minnesota Transfer Railway yards in 1913 with meatpacking plants noted. (MNHS)
Figure 10	Looking southwest down University Avenue, over the Minnesota Transfer tracks, F.W. Luley Abattoir at far left, ca. 1920. (MNHS)
Figure 11	Looking southwest over the Pittsburgh Coal Company Yards construction, G. Bartusch Packing Co. signage has replaced Luley Abattoir sign, ca. 1932. (MNHS)
Figure 12	Interior of Midway Abattoir (later Superior Packing Company Plant) before plant upgrades and ceiling trolley system, ca. 1906. (MNHS)
Figure 13	Typical vertical slaughterhouse and packing plant program which was followed at the Superior Packing Company Plant. (<i>The Modern Packing House</i>)
Figure 14	Layout of Modern Abattoir Beef Plant (2014, Meattechnology.com)
Figure 15	Superior Packing Company Plant, facing northeast, before cattle ramp and pens were built in brick, 1937. (MNHS)
Figure 16	Superior Packing Company Plant, ca. 1940. (MNHS)

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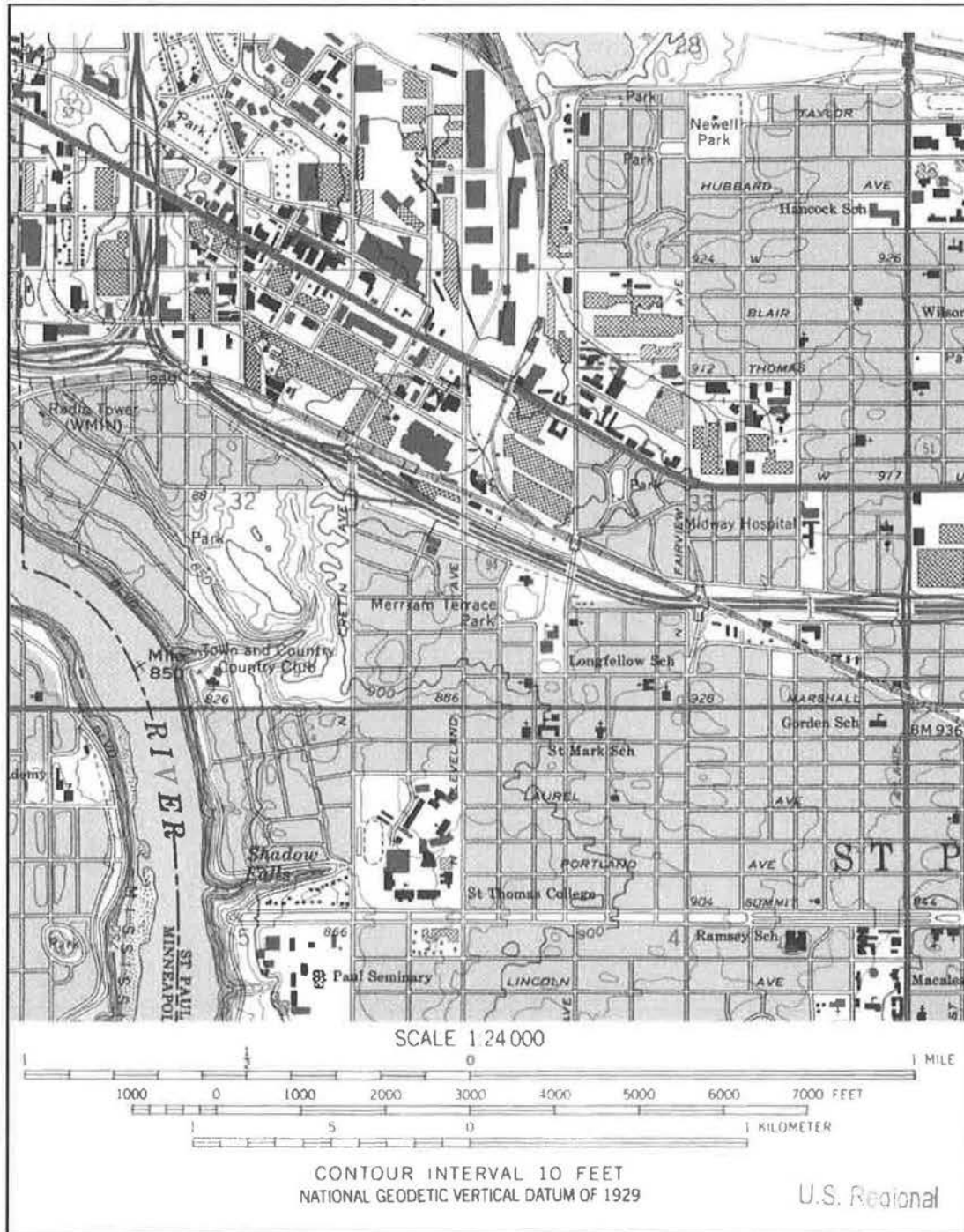


Figure 1.

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Figure 2.



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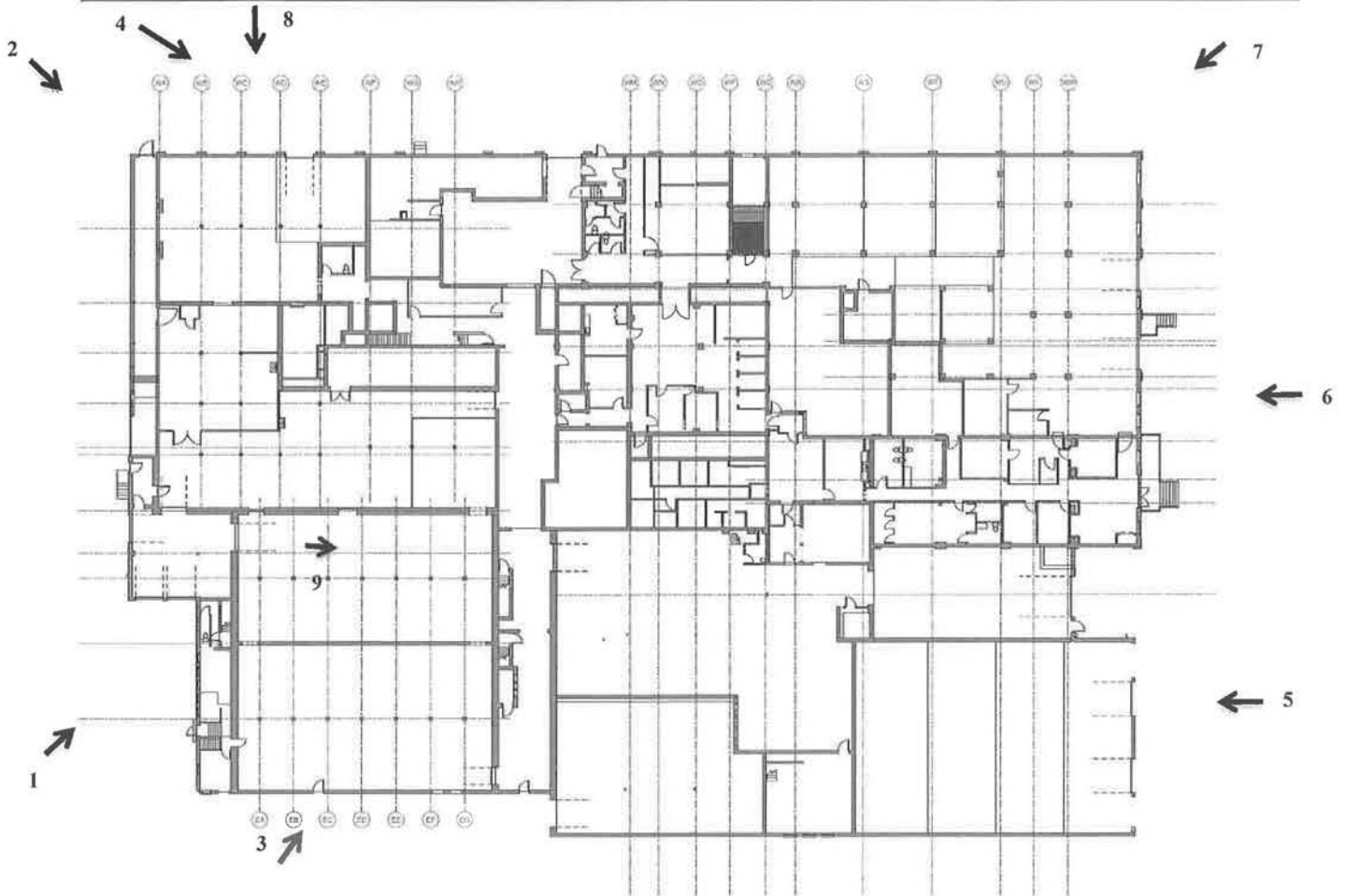


Figure 3. Photo Key, First floor, Superior Packing Company Plant.

Plan North →

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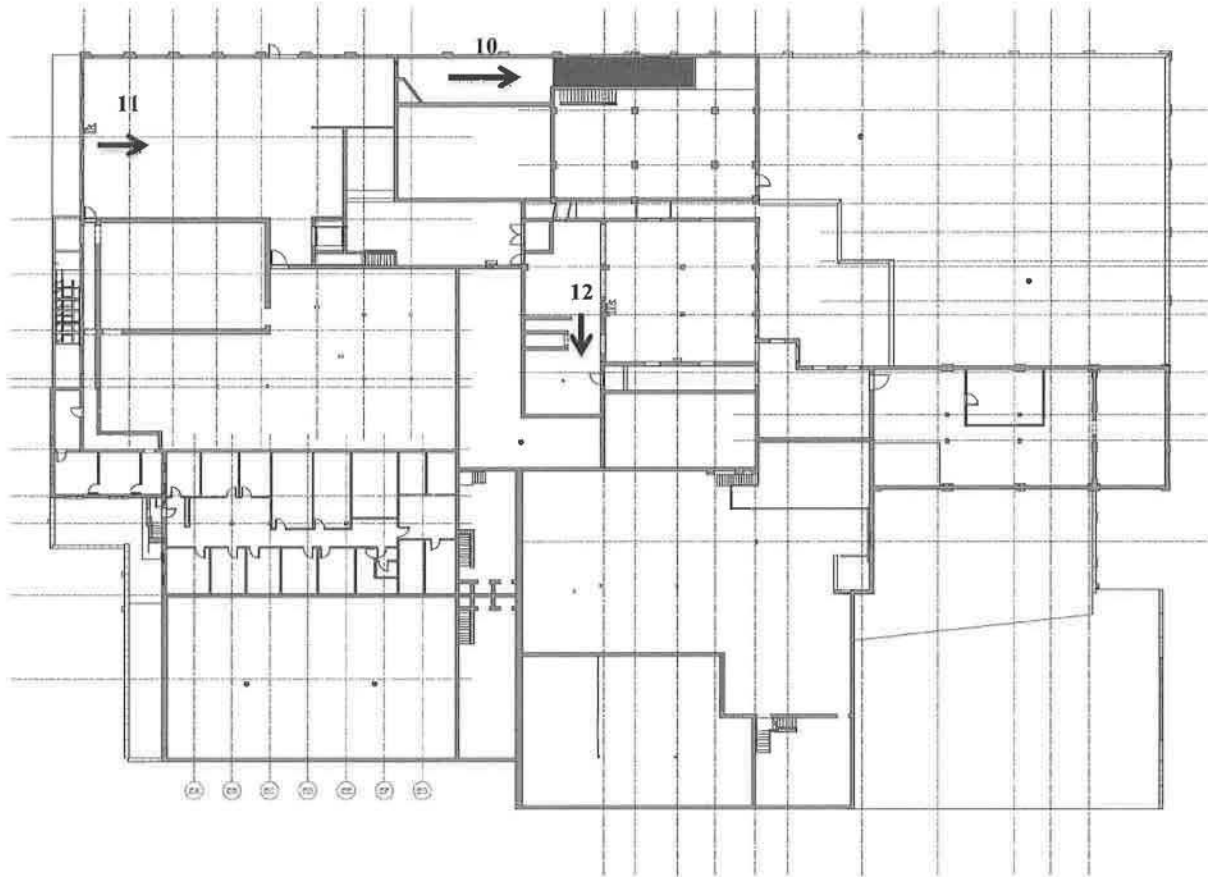


Figure 4. Photo Key, Second floor, Superior Packing Company Plant.

Plan North →

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Figure 5.



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Figure 6.



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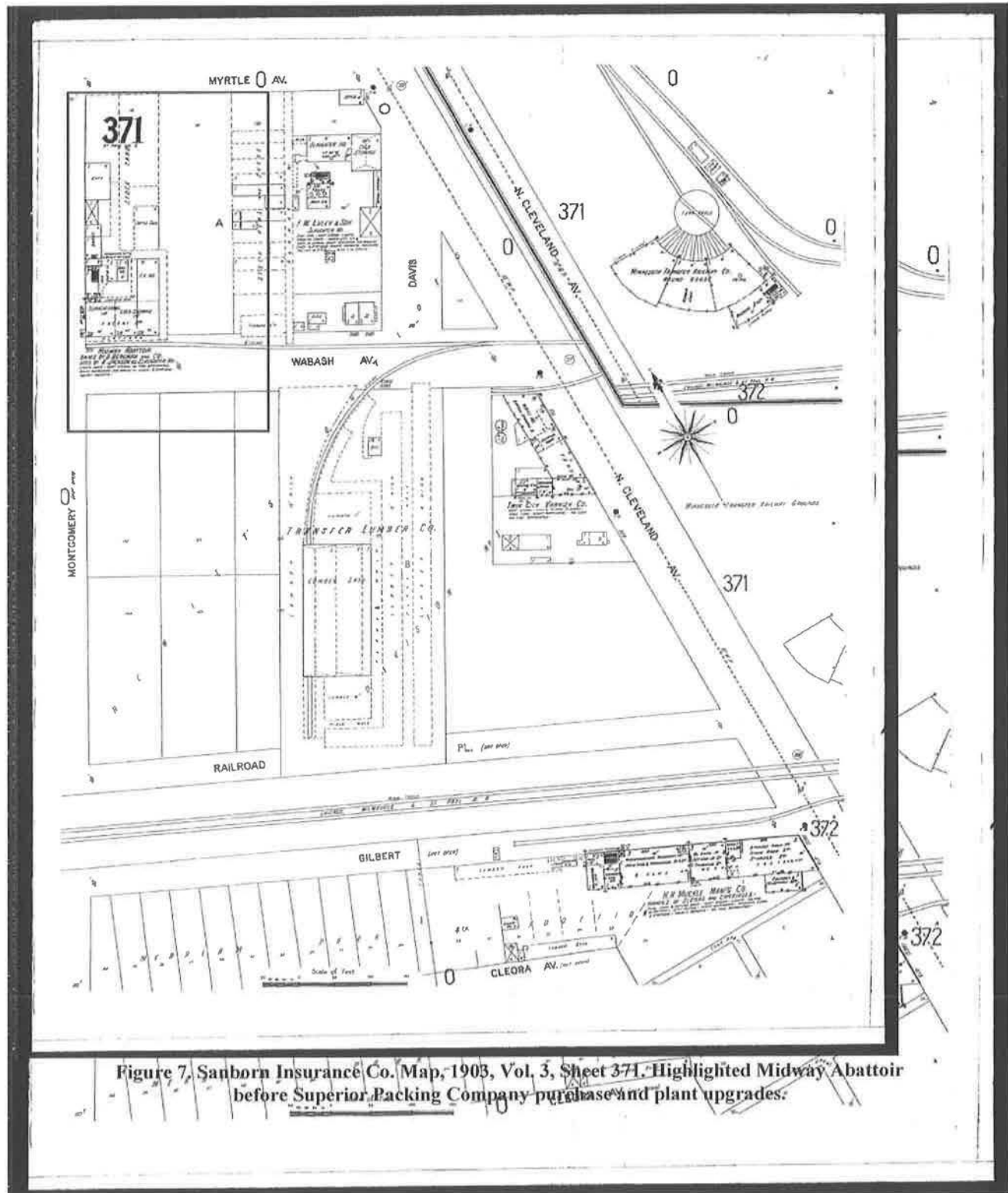


Figure 7, Sanborn Insurance Co. Map, 1903, Vol. 3, Sheet 371. Highlighted Midway Abattoir before Superior Packing Company purchase and plant upgrades.

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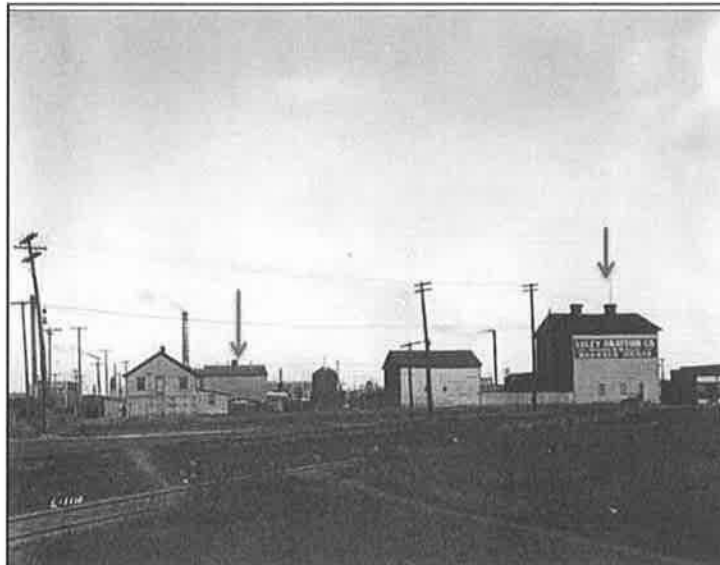


Figure 8. Luley Abattoir at right and Midway Abattoir (former Haas Abattoir) at left, ca. 1925, looking west. (MNHS)

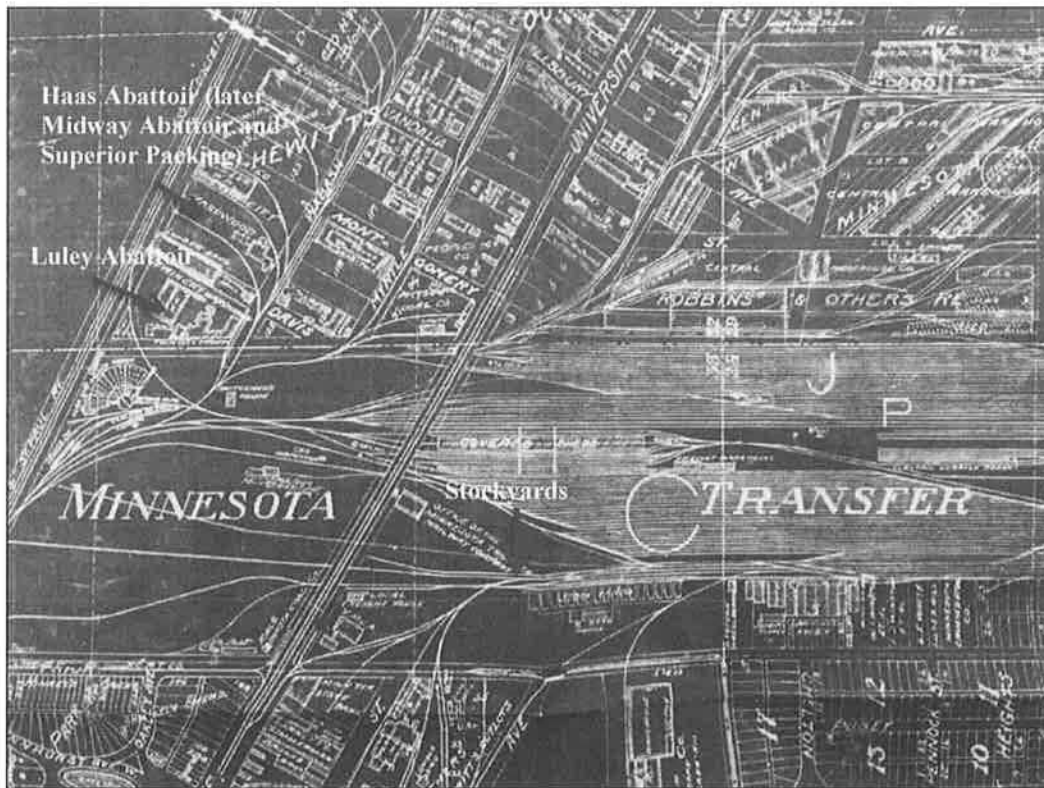


Figure 9. Minnesota Transfer Railway yards, 1913. (MNHS)



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Figure 10. Looking southwest down University Avenue, over the Minnesota Transfer tracks, F.W. Luley Abattoir at far left, ca. 1920. (MNHS)

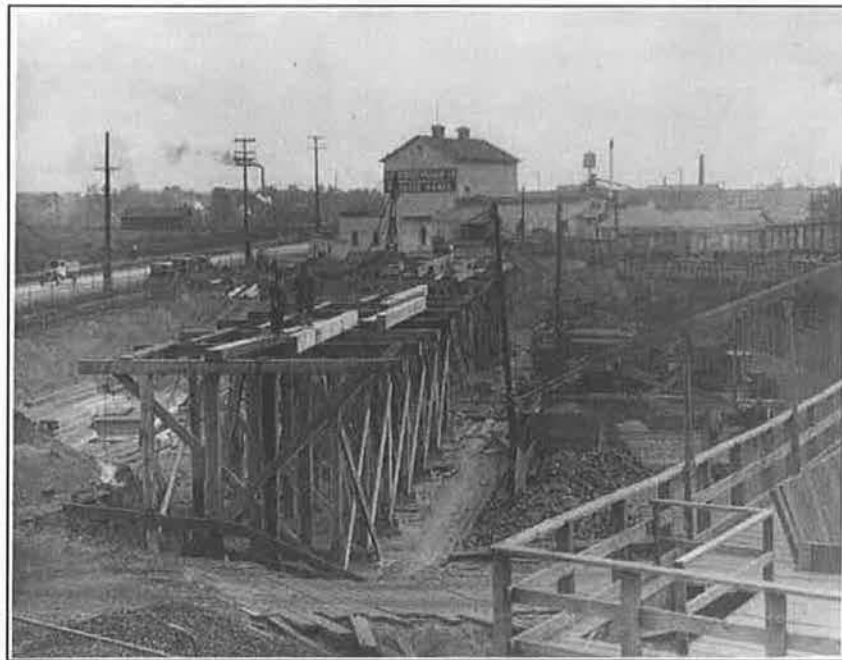


Figure 11. Looking southwest over the Pittsburgh Coal Company Yards construction, G. Bartusch Packing Co. signage has replaced Luley Abattoir sign, ca. 1932. (MNHS)

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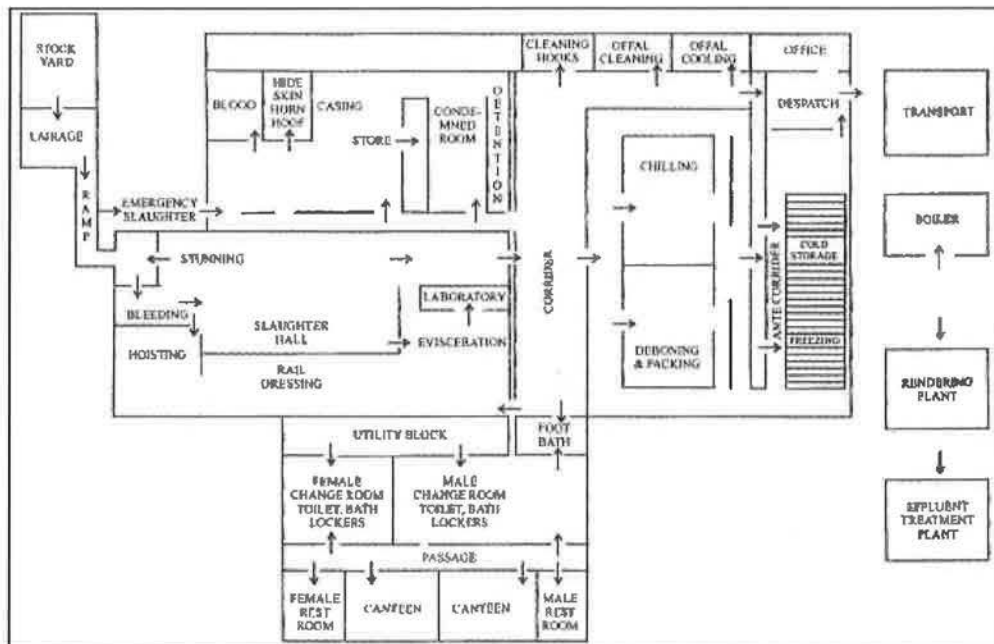


Figure 14. Layout of Modern Abattoir Beef Plant (2014, Meattechnology.com)

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Figure 15. Superior Packing Company Plant, facing northeast, before cattle ramp and pens were built in brick, 1937. (MNHS)

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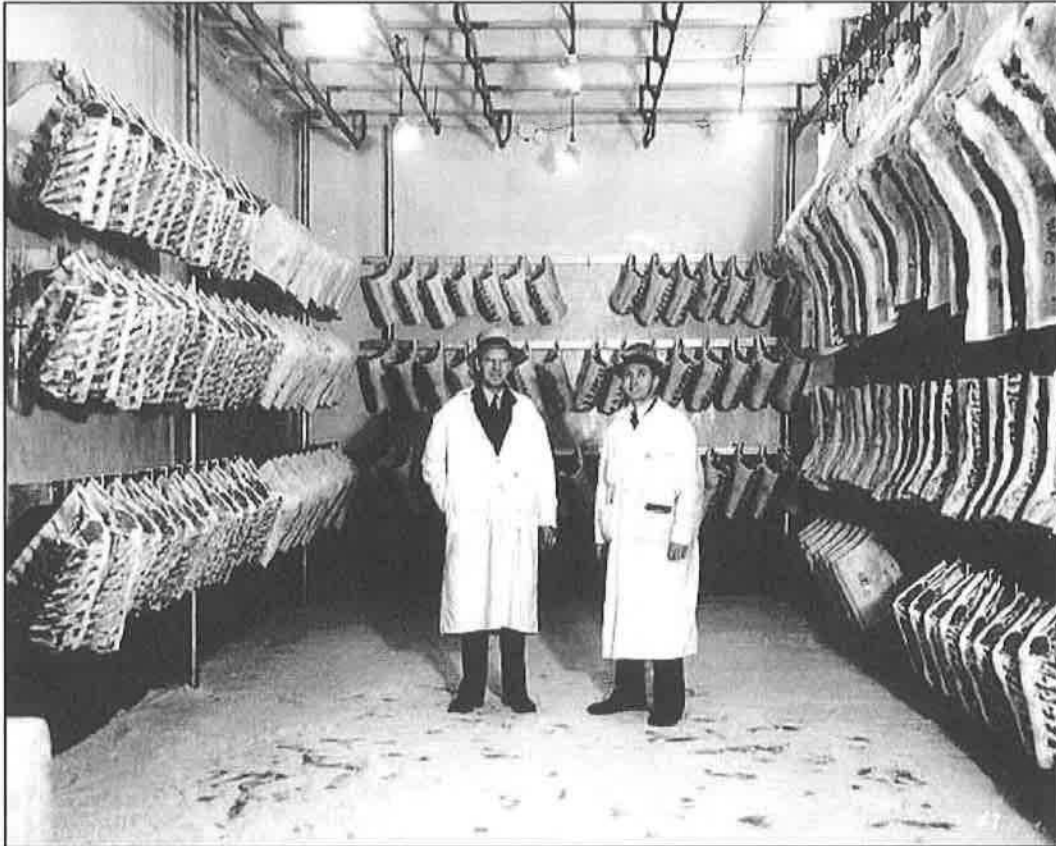


Figure 16. Superior Packing Company Plant, ca. 1940. (MNHS)



The Guitar Museum
1000 1st Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

NO PARKING
ANY TIME

6

7

Yield

No Parking







Buller

the city

CAYLLE

177th St

RAILROAD CROSSING

 **Butler**
INDUSTRIAL TIRE

**NOW
HIRING**

INDUSTRIAL TIRE SALES, INC.

2118

dog days & nights



AL TIRE SALES, INC.

2116

dog days

GATLEY



600

610



610

CAMERA SURVEILLANCE
LEGAL TAPING









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 9/25/2018 Date of Pending List: 10/17/2018 Date of 16th Day: 11/1/2018 Date of 45th Day: 11/13/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 11/5/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Roger Reed  Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2278 Date 11/5/18

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Melvin Carter, Mayor

25 West Fourth Street, Ste. 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Telephone: 651-266-6700
Facsimile: 651-266-6549

July 27, 2018

Amy Spong
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
50 Sherburne Avenue
Administration Building 203
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Certified Local Government Comment on the nomination of: **Superior Packing Company Plant, 2103 Wabash Avenue, Saint Paul, Ramsey County** to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Ms. Spong,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed nomination of the Superior Packing Company Plant at 2103 Wabash Avenue to the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination is classified as architectural, Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commissioners Barbara Bezat, Robert Ferguson, Michael Justin, Stuart MacDonald, Casie Radford, and Steve Trimble meet the Federal Standards for architectural history/architecture/historic architecture and provided comment at their meeting on July 26, 2018.

The commission voiced concern that Criterion C in the area of architecture, as listed in the nomination, may not be the best fit for the property. They felt that Criterion A may be a better option. Overall, the commission felt that the nomination did not focus enough on the architecture of the plant, noting that there is only one paragraph dedicated to the design. It was brought up that the nomination seems to focus mainly on the history and processes of the slaughterhouse rather than the significance of its architecture or design. The addition of architectural plans would help to strengthen the application. Several commissioners voiced concern over the structure being classified as "modern" or "moderne." Commissioners also commented that it would be helpful to have more context of concurrent slaughterhouses and how the Superior Packing Company Plant compared. Finally the commission noted that the nomination would benefit from more primary sources.

The Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission allowed for public comment during their July 26, 2018 meeting and did not receive public comment.

Please feel free to contact me at Allison.suhan@ci.stpaul.mn.us with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allison Suhan", written over a horizontal line.

Allison Suhan
Senior Historic Preservation Planner

Cc: Office of Mayor Melvin Carter
HPC Chair Michael Justin
HPC File

Minnesota Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office
345 Kellogg Blvd West, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
651-259-3451



TO: Joy Beasley, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Ginny Way

DATE: September 20, 2018

NAME OF PROPERTY: Superior Packing Company Plant

COUNTY AND STATE: Ramsey County, Minnesota

SUBJECT: National Register:
 Nomination
 Multiple Property Documentation Form
 Request for determination of eligibility
 Request for removal (Reference No.)
 Nomination resubmission
 Boundary increase/decrease (Reference No.)
 Additional documentation (Reference No.)

DOCUMENTATION:

- Original National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
- Multiple Property Documentation Form
- Continuation Sheets
- Removal Documentation
- Photographs
- CD w/ image files
- Digital Map
- Sketch map(s)
- Correspondence
 - Owner Objection
 - The enclosed owner objections
 - Do Do not constitute a majority of property owners

STAFF COMMENTS:

Preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) was approved 5/4/2017 (NPS project number 35990). The City of St. Paul voiced concern that the nomination was submitted under Criterion C instead of Criterion A. (letter dated 7/27/2018) The SHPO contends that the meatpacking industry in St. Paul was not significant enough to the city as a whole to justify listing in the area of industry. Not only were the number of meat packing plants limited at the turn of the twentieth century, the industry in South St. Paul was much more significant to the region. The plant is, however, an excellent example of the architectural type in the city and the region.