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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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 8 thru 156 Castle St; 16 & 20 East Castle St; 396 thru 555 Exchange St; 20 thru 120

N/A not for publication  
 N/A

Seneca St; 24 thru 52 Linden St; 317, 319, 325 & 329 Main St.

city or town Geneva vicinity \_\_\_\_\_

state New York code NY county Ontario code 069 zip code 14456

### 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

Rick A. Stewart DSHPO 3/26/14  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Alexis Abernathy 5/13/14  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

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

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

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
83	4	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
83	4	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

3

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/hotel; DOMESTIC/apartment building;  
COMMERCE/TRADE/store; COMMERCE/TRADE/  
bank; COMMERCE/TRADE/professional office;  
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant; SOCIAL/meeting hall;  
GOVERNMENT/ municipal building; GOVERNMENT/  
post office; RECREATION & CULTURE/theater;  
RECREATION & CULTURE/opera house

**Current Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/store; COMMERCE/TRADE/  
bank; COMMERCE/TRADE/professional office;  
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant; GOVERNMENT/  
municipal building; GOVERNMENT/post office;  
RECREATION & CULTURE/theater;  
RECREATION & CULTURE/music facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Greek Revival, Italianate; Romanesque Revival,  
Neoclassic Revival; Italian Renaissance;  
Late 19<sup>th</sup>/Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements:  
Chicago & Commercial; Colonial Revival  
Modern Movement: Art Deco

**Materials**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: stone, brick, concrete  
 walls: stone, brick, concrete  
 roof: asphalt, metal, EPDM membrane  
 other: cast iron (storefronts)

**Narrative Description**

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(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

Geneva is a small city located in the New York State Finger Lakes region along the northwestern edge of Seneca Lake in eastern Ontario County. The Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District is located at the heart of the city and is bounded roughly by Seneca Street to the south, Main Street to the west, Castle Street to the north and Exchange Street to the east. The historic district has a rich history connected to the settlement of the region, especially with the development of lake and rail trade from the mid nineteenth century through the early twentieth century. The commercial center was built up near the lakefront, conveniently located near waterways that were developing into an important transportation route for goods and services, contributing to the incorporation of Geneva as a city in 1897. Many historic buildings constructed between 1840 and 1940 are within the district's boundaries, determining its period of significance. These buildings also retain historic integrity in terms of historic features, character, feeling and association. Buildings included in the commercial district are mostly two-story or more commercial block buildings with details reflective of a wide variety of architectural styles popular throughout the period of significance, including Italianate, Romanesque, Gothic, and Neoclassical Revival and a few mid nineteenth century Greek Revival buildings. The district contains 83 contributing buildings and 3 previously listed buildings, representing the largest concentration of historic commercial buildings in the downtown area of the city with very little non historic intrusion.

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**Narrative Description**

Geneva is located in the New York State Finger Lakes Region along the northwestern edge of Seneca Lake in eastern Ontario County. The city of Geneva is the largest municipality in the eastern part of the county and connects via State Routes 5 and 20 to the city of Canandaigua to the west, which is also the county seat. State Route 14 runs through the city south along the western shore of Seneca Lake, connecting the city to the village of Watkins Glen at the head or south end of the lake. The historic district is located at the heart of the city, which has a rich history centered on Seneca, Main, Castle, and Exchange Streets. Seneca, Main and Castle Streets run east to west between North Main Street (SR 14) and Exchange Street. The latter parallels the rail tracks that roughly follow along the SR 5&20 bypass between the city and the lake. Established as the City of Geneva in 1897, the commercial center was built up near the lakefront to take advantage of shipping routes provided by Seneca Lake, feeder canals and the railroad. The waterways became part of an important early transportation network for goods and services beyond the local market and helped shape Geneva's downtown as the commercial hub for the surrounding areas in Ontario, Wayne and Seneca Counties.

The Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District comprises 83 contiguous contributing buildings and 3 previously listed buildings between North Main Street and Seneca Lake. The district also includes four non contributing buildings built after the period of significance (ca. 1840-1940). The streets comprising the downtown commercial core are Castle, Seneca, Linden, and Exchange Streets and a contiguous small portion along North Main Street. The district is bordered to the north by Castle Street and a block of Exchange Street just north of Castle. This boundary marks the separation of commercial buildings to the south and the residential neighborhoods to the north that lack association and, in many

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cases, are discontinuous with the historic district. The western border is mainly along the intersections of Castle and Seneca, which also marks the transition between the commercial and residential areas. To the southwest of the historic district is the existing South Main Street Historic District (NR listed 1974), which includes large residential homes, row houses, religious structures and buildings that are part of the large Hobart and William Smith Colleges campus. The eastern border of the district is along Exchange Street with Seneca Lake in close proximity to the east. The southern border is along the northern side of Seneca Street and a partial block of Exchange Street.

## **STREETScape**

In 1793, Charles Williamson, a land agent for Pulteney Associates, drew out the first street plans for Geneva around a village square located on a ridge overlooking Seneca Lake. Streets connecting to the square were Main (originally known as Broadway), Washington (Lake), Exchange (Front), and Seneca (Genesee) Streets. At this time, residential, public and commercial buildings began to be erected along Main, which ran north-south along the top of the ridge, overlooking a sloping landscape leading to Seneca Lake. Williamson's goal was to create a premier village in the newly settled land and to reserve lands on the ridge for residences with unobstructed views of the lake. His plan was to develop a trading center around Pulteney Park (the village square) on Main Street; however, in the early 1800s, development of the east side of the street toward the lake began as villagers rejected Williamson's restrictions and development pressure escalated after the opening of the Franklin House hotel on Front Street (now Exchange Street) in 1825. With this new development, Main Street became more suitable for residential and institutional use at the top of the hill, maximizing on the views. This area is now part of the South Main Street Historic District, which includes residential homes, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and a few religious structures. This visible division between residential and commercial still exists, marking the separation of the historic residential area from the commercial core of the city.

As commercial business began to move down the hill, stores and shops were built along Seneca, Castle and Exchange Streets. Seneca and Castle paralleled each other, connecting Main Street to Exchange, which ran north to south close to the lakeshore near the lake. The switch from commercial activity on top of the hill to the bottom was also influenced by its proximity to the lakefront. Throughout the nineteenth century, water was an efficient means of transporting goods and passengers from Geneva to other settlements along the lake. Other developments, such as the opening of the feeder canals that connected Seneca Lake to the Seneca-Cayuga Canal and eventually the Erie Canal (1825), played a major factor in the location of where business and factory owners chose to operate their businesses, mostly at the bottom of the hill near the lake. This led to Front (Exchange) Street becoming a fast growing commercial and industrial center. By the turn of the twentieth century, these streets were lined with densely packed brick and masonry commercial buildings of two stories or more, with ground level store fronts and office space above. Several contained factory space in the upper levels and a few larger block buildings, such as the Dove Block at Castle and Exchange, had public meeting spaces.

Along with commercial growth, the city also saw an increase in private businesses, especially in terms of hotels and boarding houses established on Exchange, Castle and Seneca streets to accommodate salesmen who were attracted to Geneva by its bustling business and industry. The lakefront and beautiful resort hotels like the Nestor House (now demolished) also attracted politicians and wealthy tourists. Many early hotels, such as the Franklin House, were constructed along Exchange Street to capitalize on the views and close proximity to the lake. As steamboat traffic

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increased in the nineteenth century, visitors from the growing tourism trade were greeted by many the hotels and boarding houses along the lake and Exchange Street, including the Kirkwood Hotel (now demolished), which featured a separate dining room and an attached livery. Chain hotels continue to locate in the downtown, although closer to the lake and outside of the historic district.

Roadways also played a role in the development of Geneva's commercial downtown. The growth and construction of commercial buildings began to increase well into the twentieth century along Seneca, Washington, and Castle Streets with the introduction of major roadways. Over time, street names in the downtown area began to change, with Front Street becoming Water Street, no doubt due to it being the main thoroughfare for the city and situated within close proximity to the lake. Sanborn maps from the late 1870s and early 1880s indicated that the street name changed again from Water Street to Exchange Street (its current name). Logically, the name change was fitting as this was considered the main street for business exchanges throughout Geneva's commercial growth and still functions as the main "exchange" or thoroughfare through the commercial section of the city. Stores, offices and shops still line Seneca, Castle and Exchange Streets, providing convenient stops as people continue to travel through these streets on to their destinations.

Routes 5 and 20 were constructed, running east to west, just south of the commercial core, connecting to Main Street near the Hobart and William Smith Colleges campus, following the lakeshore north through Geneva and around the lake. This became an important route connecting Geneva to other communities and cities to the east and west and in spite of the NYS Thruway bypassing the city, the road still functions as a major thoroughfare. A number of vineyards and wineries have located south of the city along Route 14, drawing traffic to Geneva either as the beginning or end point along the Seneca Lake wine trail. Route 14 also became a very important factor in the development of Geneva. This route was built along an old Indian trail and ran north to south along the lake as a main route between Geneva and Watkins Glen to the south, and Waterloo and Lyons, to the north. Route 14 ran directly through the commercial center of the city along Main, Seneca, and Exchange Streets. As a result of increased traffic, business and industry kept growing at a steadily pace. By the early twentieth century, government buildings, such as the courthouse and post office, were constructed on Castle Street. This kept businesses along Route 14, which helped them flourish and created a government core within the main commercial corridor, within but off the main thoroughfare of the city. Linden Street, which runs north to south, connected Castle and Seneca Streets at the center.

## **CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES**

The Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District is composed of mainly two and three-story brick commercial buildings, with a few examples of cast stone facades and cast iron details. Contributing buildings in the historic district were constructed from the mid nineteenth through early twentieth centuries, mainly erected with brick masonry and wood framing. A few examples of steel framed buildings, which were considered somewhat advanced at their time of construction, are present within the historic district. These buildings were erected for commercial uses, including grocers, dry goods, clothing stores, hardware stores, specialty shops, restaurants, an optical company and the Geneva Water Works, among a variety of others. Included within the district are buildings with other functions, such as the United States

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Post Office, Geneva City Hall, a fire station, and several banks. Entertainment venues also located within this area, most importantly the large Romanesque style Smith's Opera House (1894) on Seneca Street, which continues to operate as a music and entertainment venue.

Typical of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial architecture, the building features illustrate an array of popular styles, including Classical Revival, Italianate, Greek Revival, Richardson Romanesque, Colonial Revival, Neoclassical Revival, and a few later examples of the Chicago Style, and are identified in the attached building list. Although Geneva's commercial center reflected the popular styles of the time, the eclectic tastes of different building owners, builders, and architects can be seen through the hybridization of ornamentation and architectural detailing. Common to many buildings in the historic district are ornate cornices, decorative brickwork, stepped corbelling, decorative brackets and various trim and molding details. A few buildings even feature cast iron details, such as the ca. 1850 building at the northeast corner of Castle and Exchange (444-446 Exchange St.). Some of the most ornate buildings also feature massive columns and others have decorative elements, such as WPA era reliefs on the post office that were later. The extant showcase of stylistic differences on each block makes the Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District a statement of the district's character and also reflects the wealth and development of the historic downtown.

A string of disastrous fires throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s led to the rebuilding, alteration, and loss of some of the historic structures within the district. A fire on Castle Street in 1903 burned down two businesses across the street from the US Post Office. Other prominent buildings in the district were severely damaged due to fire, including the Prouty Block in 1876, the YMCA in 1902, the Wheat Building in 1904, and the Guard Building in both 1917 and 1924. As a result of the fires, many of these buildings were rebuilt with changed rooflines and new façade details. Another impetus to change was the desire to improve or update an existing building. Typical of downtown commercial buildings, modernization took over at various times, and as a result many of the buildings' storefronts and facades were altered during renovations over the past century. Some buildings were demolished for new construction. Although business in the commercial district saw a decline with the construction of shopping plazas outside the city center during the mid to late 1900s, Geneva's downtown has been able to retain occupancy in many of the storefronts and has seen a strong interest in the restoration and rehabilitation of many of the commercial buildings and storefronts. The Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District retains its historic and architectural integrity with only minor loss of historic fabric and non historic intrusions.

## **PREVIOUSLY LISTED RESOURCES**

The Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District contains three individually listed properties in the National Register of Historic Places, which are all examples of high-style architecture and ornamentation. These properties are the US Post Office (67 Castle Street – listed May 11, 1989), Smith's Opera House (82 Seneca Street – listed December 10, 1979), and the Farmers and Merchants Bank (24-26 Linden Street – listed February 28, 2008). The US Post Office is a Classical Revival style building constructed in 1906. The building retains a majority of the exterior historic details, such as the Doric columned portico and a decorative entablature. Reliefs depicting industry, education, aviation, agriculture, and patriotism

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on the façade of the building were added during the 1930s and 1940s as WPA projects. Smith's Opera House was designed by the prominent Elmira, New York architectural firm of Pierce and Bickford, who designed many buildings in Geneva's downtown starting in the 1890s. Also known as Geneva Theater, the opera house was designed as a brick and stone Richardsonian Romanesque building and quickly became the center of cultural activity in the city after it was built in 1894. The Farmers and Merchants Bank was constructed ca. 1914 with a cast-stone façade and array of neoclassical features. Neoclassical details include massive ionic columns supporting an ornamented pediment in white cast-stone that resembles marble.

## BUILDING LIST

### Castle Street (North side)

#### 8-10 Castle Street

##### Contributing – Constructed 1880s

Three-story, Italianate, brick masonry commercial building. A metal cornice with decorative corbelling and brackets flanks the top of the facade. Large, one-over-one, double-hung bay windows at the second and third-stories with a painted metal roof and painted panels between levels. One-over-one, double-hung replacement window in a low-arched opening is at the center of the second floor. An identical opening on the third-story is in filled with decorative brickwork. Center windows have simple vertical brick lintels and rough stone sills. Windows appear to be vinyl replacements. The first-story features two storefronts and a central entrance for the upper levels. Storefronts are wood with a wood paneled bulkhead atop a concrete foundation and metal framed storefront display windows. Painted wood panel transom above both storefronts.

#### 14 Castle Street

##### Contributing – Constructed 1880s

Three-story, two bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. This building consists of the eastern two bays of a four bay façade. A metal cornice with wood brackets below. One-over-one, double-hung windows are at the second and third-stories with painted stone sills and stone lintels. The building has an altered storefront, which has been parged along with the foundation and bulkhead. Non-original metal frame display windows. A retractable fabric awning has been installed just above the storefront.

#### 18 Castle Street

##### Contributing – Constructed ca. 1880s

Three-story, two bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. This building consists of the western two bays of a four bay façade. A metal cornice with wood brackets below. One-over-one, double-hung replacement windows are at the second and third-stories with painted stone sills and lintels. The building has an altered storefront, which has been parged along the foundation and bulkhead. Non-original metal frame display windows. A small metal awning protrudes just above the storefront.

#### 22 Castle Street

##### Contributing – Constructed 1926

Three-story, six bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A non-original cornice and brick entablature are ornamented with simple brackets, fluted corbels, and dentil detailing. Second and third-story windows are two-over-two, double-hung, wood frame and sash with stone sills and decorative arched lintels. The second level also features two large display windows, which are replacements from the originals. Heavy molded metal lintels sit above each. The storefront level features an altered storefront, paneled bulkhead and transom, and a metal signboard above. The westernmost bay of the storefront level is an opening into the building.

#### 26 Castle Street

##### Contributing – Constructed 1920

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Three-story, three bay, former Italianate, brick commercial building. The cornice has been previously removed along with bay windows on the second and third-stories. The outer portions where the bay windows were have been in filled with wood panel boards and an eight-over-eight replacement window has been installed at the center of each. Center windows on the second and third-stories have been replaced with fifteen-over-fifteen, double-hung windows, which are smaller than the opening. Wood panel board has been installed around the outer edges of these windows. The storefronts have been severely altered. Brick infill and metal storefronts exist. The building retains a low level of historic integrity.

### **30 Castle Street**

#### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1800**

Three-story, two-bay wide, Italianate brick commercial building. The original decorative brick cornice exists with a simple brick banding below. The second and third-stories feature two-over-two, double-hung wood frame windows with decorative brick lintels and stone sills, both of which are original except for the upper lintel portion which appears to have been removed. The storefront has been altered from an inset center entrance to an applied wood, center entrance storefront which is flush with the façade of the building. A fabric awning covers the in filled transom area.

### **34-40 Castle Street**

#### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1800**

Two-story, five-bay wide, commercial brick building. The simple stone parapet and stone banding above the second story are original to the building. Five second-story one-over-one, double-hung windows are replacements, but the original stone sills and lintels remain. The storefront has been completely altered from the original, and features two metal framed storefronts and a brick veneer bulkhead. A door to the far west leads to the second floor. This building has a very simple and unadorned façade.

### **44 Castle Street**

#### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1890s**

Three-story, two-bay wide, Italianate brick commercial building. The original decorative brick cornice exists with a simple brick banding below. The second and third-stories feature two-over-two, double-hung wood frame windows with decorative brick lintels and stone sill, which are both original to the building. A center entrance storefront has been altered, but likely has a similar configuration to that of the original. The storefront features four simple large columns, wood panel bulkhead, and large transom windows.

### **46 Castle Street**

#### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1890s**

Four-story, one-bay wide, brick commercial building. Aside from the central bay windows from the second to the fourth-story, there is little architectural style or detailing to this building. The cornice is vertical panels which follow the line of the front façade and bay window. A metal parapet is above with two, large unadorned corbels at each end. Bay windows are all one-over-one replacement windows with vertical paneling between each level. The storefront has been slightly altered with a wood frame storefront and wood bulkhead. Two entrance doors sit side-by-side with wood framing and transom windows above. The storefront and second-story are separated on the façade by vertical paneling.

### **48-50 Castle Street**

#### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1890s**

Three-story, three-bay wide, Italianate brick commercial building. A simple metal cornice with a large corbel at each end flanks the top of the building. The second and third-stories have one-over-one, segmental arched, double-hung wood frame windows at the east and west bays. The center bay of each story has a decorative bay window with a stone façade and stone ornamentation and a copper roof. The bay windows are also one-over-one, double-hung with a segmented arch. Second and third-story single windows have rough stone sills and segmental arched lintels, which continue in a banding across the building, only stopped by the bay window. The storefront has been rebuilt with a configuration that may be similar to the original. The storefront features a central entrance with sidelights, wood frame storefront, paneled bulkhead and transoms above the display windows. To the east and west ends of the storefront are original cast iron columns.

### **68 Castle Street – The Centennial Building**

#### **Contributing – Constructed 1906**

Three-and-one-half-story, five-bay wide, commercial brick building with hints of Italianate detailing. The original parapet and bracketed eaves have been removed and a modern metal parapet exists with a framing. Windows on the upper story



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have decorative glass panes and stone sills. At the center of this level, the words 'The Centennial' are inscribed in a stone entablature. The eastern and western bays retain the original wood bay windows on the second and third-stories with replacement windows. Inset wood panels ornament the bay windows. The center three bays have one-over-one, double-hung, replacement windows set within segmental arched openings, stone sills and vertical brick lintels that are flush with the façade. The storefront has been rebuilt to closely match the original. The center door leads to the upper floors, and a door to either side lead into the commercial spaces. Storefront bulkheads are paneled and have transoms above the display windows. An exposed metal beam spans the length of the façade just above the storefront and below the second story. The original brick columns to the east and west of the storefront have been retained.

#### **72 Castle Street-- Vacant Lot.**

#### **78-86 Castle Street – Young Men’s Christian Association Non-Contributing – Constructed 1894**

Four-and-a-half-story, Richardson Romanesque, brick building with cast stone detailing. The building retains much of its original historic materials and character. Gutted in 1902 by a damaging fire, the interior and upper fourth story has been rebuilt. Windows are deeply recessed into the masonry façade, many with highly decorative columns between windows. Most windows are one-over-one, double-hung with a transom window above, except for four windows on the third-story. Heavy stone banding spans across the upper third-story, acting as the lintel for windows on that level. A thin stone banding acts as the window sill on each story. Some windows have decorative arched stone lintels. Four windows on the second-story are surrounded by decorative stonework and 'Young Men's Christian Association' inscribed above. At the western end of the second and third-stories is a rounded turret with one-over-one, double-hung windows and transoms and decorative stonework. The storefronts have been rebuilt according to the historic configurations. The original arched stone block entry and stone block ends remain on the first story. Storefronts are wood framed with paneled bulkheads and transom windows below an exposed beam supported by cast iron columns.

#### **100-108 Castle Street Contributing – Constructed 1894**

Three-story, ten-bay wide, Italianate, brick commercial building. An original decorative brick cornice remains, which features brick bracket-like detail and dentil ornamentation. Second and third-story windows are two-over-two, double-hung with simple stone sills and vertical brick lintels with a stone keystone. An original door opening, archway, and pediment remain at the angled portion of the building between the front façade and side. The first story has been completely altered and retains little, if any of its historic integrity. Bricks between the five western bays and eastern bays are different in color. A bracketed metal cornice remains above the storefronts on the western half of the building.

#### **112-114 Castle Street (former address, now part of 218 Genesee Street)-Parking lot.**

Buildings were demolished after period of significance for part of parking lot. District boundary follows the historic building footprint.

#### **120 Castle Street Contributing – Constructed 1899**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. An extended eave with shallow bracketing flanks the top of the building. Just below, a flat molding piece is ornamented with egg and dart molding along the top and dentil molding at the bottom. The center bay of the second and third-stories is inset and replacement windows are inserted into segmental arched openings with vertical brick lintels and simple stone sills. The western and eastern bays feature decorative wood bay windows with paneled bulkheads and molding between each level. The underside of the bay windows has decorative wood brackets. The first-story consists of two separate storefronts and a center entrance that leads to the upper floors. The storefronts have large display windows and paneled bulkheads with simple wood columns at each side and to either side of the central door. Fabric awnings have been attached above the storefront.

#### **134 Castle Street Contributing – Constructed ca. 1909**

Three-story, two-bay wide, brick commercial building. No cornice exists. The eastern bay retains a bay window on the second and third-stories. Front bay windows are a single pane of glass, while the windows at the sides are one-over-one, double-hung, wood frame and sash and paneled bulkheads. Fortress-like detailing sits at the top of the bay window area with lattice work in the panels below. Western second and third-stories bays have a single, one-over-one, double-hung

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windows with stone sills and flush stone lintels. The storefront retains the original configuration with wood framing and paneled bulkhead. Display windows are topped with large transom windows.

### **138 Castle Street**

#### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1850**

Three-story, four-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. A simple brick stepped corbel with dentil ornamentation remains at the top of the building. The second and third-stories have the same configuration with six-over-one, double-hung replacement windows and small four-over-one, double-hung windows at the eastern bay. A vinyl sided bay window with replacement windows is centrally located on the upper levels. The storefront has been altered with an entrance to the upper floors to the east and a center entrance storefront with brick bulkhead. A wood cornice is above the storefront.

### **142 Castle Street**

#### **Contributing – Constructed 1850**

Two-story, three-bay, brick commercial building. A simple metal cornice flanks the top of the building. Bricks on this building are unique in that they are a gray color, which is different from many of the other masonry buildings in the district. Center bay window with vinyl siding and replacement windows on the second story. Other two second story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows with simple stone sill and vertical brick lintel. The storefront has been altered and features a minor brick veneer bulkhead and large metal frame display windows. A wood cornice is above the storefront.

### **148-150 Castle Street – Dilman Block**

#### **Contributing – Constructed 1899**

Three-story, three-bay, Renaissance Revival, brick masonry commercial building. Original decorative cornice has a high arch at the center with square brackets, dentil work, large paired corbels, and a decorative railing and posts on top. Highly ornate bay windows to the east and west of the second and third-stories feature columns, pediments, and decorative woodwork. The façade features some vertical brickwork and decorative brick columns at each side of the building. The original cast iron storefronts remain with an arched entry at the center of the building. The arched entry has ionic-style ornamentation. Original transom windows remain above. A metal escape stair has been installed on the front.

### **154-156 Castle Street**

#### **Contributing – Constructed 1875**

Three-story, four-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. Simple metal cornice with small dentil details. Second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with thin wood sills and hooded lintels. The center two bays have bay windows with panel details. Storefronts have been altered with metal frame display windows and paneled bulkhead. A central entrance features thick brick columns supporting an arch overhead with dentil ornamentation.

## **Castle Street (South Side)**

### **47 Castle Street – Geneva City Hall**

#### **Contributing – Constructed 1913, rehab in 1940**

#### **Architect: Lloyd Philo Adams – Geneva, NY.**

Three-and-a-half-story, three-bay, Renaissance Revival, brick government building. An extended eave with bracketing sits below a solid stone railing with carved detailing. A full fourth-story protrudes the roofline at the center of the façade, acting as a clock tower with large triple windows below. A mansard roof is ornamented with arched dormers and circular windows. Façade windows are paired, one-over-one, double-hung. Panel insets are a simple detail above the third story windows. Between the first and second-stories is a heavy stone banding that doubles as a railing for the central deck on the second-story. This area also features two large Doric columns with the words 'City Hall' inscribed above. The first-story features a heavy stone segmental arched opening with stone steps leading to replacement double entrance doors. A stone water table wraps the building with a stone foundation and exposed basement level windows below.

### **67 Castle Street – United States Post Office, NR listed 1989**

#### **Contributing – Constructed 1906, rehab in 1940**

One-story, five-bay, Classical Revival, brick government building. The building retains much of its historic materials. Six massive Doric columns support a heavy stone entablature with pediment above. The pediment and entablature are

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ornamented with stone brackets, carvings, and an oculus window in the center. The heavy stone entablature wraps the upper portion of the building. A symmetrical façade features large windows with arched segments and a panel detail below. The central door mimics the windows with framing and the arched transom window above. Each window and door opening has decorative brickwork that follows the arch of the window and contains three stone keystones, one on each side and one at the top.

**87 Castle Street – Fairfax Block**  
**Contributing – Constructed 1893**

Four-story, two-bay, Chicago Style, brick commercial building. A simple cornice flanks the top of the building with a simple molding banding beneath. Second through fourth-stories have continuous bay windows featuring two front portion windows and one window at each side. Windows are one-over-one, double-hung, with third story windows also having a transom above. Decorative panels are inset between each story. Above the third story windows are large hooded lintels with end brackets and dentil ornamentation. The storefront has been completely altered and modernized with full-height glass panels and an applied stamped metal bulkhead.

**91-93 Castle Street – Old Fellows Building**  
**Contributing – Constructed 1884-1890**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate / Romanesque, brick commercial building. A large cornice with egg and dart molding detail rests at the top of the building. Decorative brickwork and cast stone detailing is featured between the third-story windows and the cornice. Four cast stone medallions and a cast stone tablet have been inset into the brick façade above the third-story. The third-story has triple one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows with a large tripartite arched transom window above in the west and east bays. The second story has three one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows in each bay with vertical brick lintels and simple stone sills. The center bay windows on both the second and third-stories have a four pane window, the second story window having a vertical brick lintel and stone sill. The storefront has been altered and has carrara glass applied over the storefront and on the bulkhead.

## East Castle Street

**16 East Castle Street**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1900**

Three-story, two-bay, former Italianate, brick commercial building. A metal cornice with fluted end corbels remains. The second and third-stories have continuous bay windows with one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows. The bays have been sided with vinyl siding. The storefront has been completely altered and retains none of its original historic fabric. The transom of the storefront has been sided over and the current storefront is inset from the façade with metal frame windows and doors and vertical wood paneling. (Since first visit, building is currently under construction).

**20 East Castle Street**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1900**

Two-story, five-bay, parged façade, brick commercial building. A simple metal cornice remains. Five, second-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with vinyl shutters and bracketed window boxes. The storefront has been altered and the entire façade has been parged with stucco.

## Exchange Street (West Side)

**396-398 Exchange Street**  
**Parking Lot**

**402 Exchange Street**  
**Non-contributing due to age – Constructed 1950**

One-story, commercial building. A shingled shed roof has a protruding pediment with the business name detailed. The storefront is a center entrance, metal frame, with wood panel bulkhead and paneled end columns.

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**408 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed 1910**

Three-story, brick masonry commercial building. Simple brick cornice with brick brackets sits just below a brick parapet. The cornice does not reach all the way to both sides of the building. The third story has been covered with vertical wood panels. The second-story has six-over-one replacement windows and horizontal wood siding. Storefront has metal frame display windows and a brick bulkhead. A fabric awning overhangs the storefront.

**410-414 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed 1900**

Two-story, seven bay, Colonial Revival, brick commercial building. A large, decorative painted cornice tops the building. Nine-over-nine, double-hung windows with painted stone sills, brick lintels and vinyl shutters flank the second story. The two central bays on feature paired nine-over-nine, double-hung windows with painted stone sills, brick lintels and vinyl shutters. The storefront has been altered with a shingle shed roof, brick columns, and metal frame storefront windows.

**420 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1897**

Three-and-a-half story, brick masonry commercial building. A tall brick parapet with simple stepped brick detailing flanks the upper half story of the building with an egg and dart molded banding. Windows are one-over-one replacement windows with simple stone sills and vertical brick lintels. An altered wood frame storefront with wooden bulkheads and metal frame display windows. A canvas awning runs across the top of the storefronts. Both the façade and storefronts have been altered, but these changes have kept with the overall appearance of the block.

**424 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1884 (rear), rebuilt 1926 (front)**

Two-and-a-half story, four-bay, Gothic Revival ashlar stone commercial building. Slight angled parapet with a simple metal cornice below. One-over-one wood sash and frame windows with painted stone sills. A simple cornice matching the upper sits above the storefront. Facing is smooth ashlar rectangular cut stone. Storefront level windows have a Tudor arch with metal frames. Simple line arched lintels above.

**426 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed 1850s**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. Comprises the two northernmost bays of a ten bay façade. A brick cornice, dentils, and stepped entablature. One third-story window is two-over-one, double-hung and the other is a four-over-one, double-hung. Second-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung. All windows have painted stone sills and lintels. The storefront was altered during the 1960s with a wooden bulkhead and display window frame. A heavy wood door has replaced the original entrance door. A small cast-iron cornice remains above the storefront.

**428-434 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1850s**

Three-story, four-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. Comprised of the center six bays of a ten bay façade. Brick cornice is continuous with the cornice at 426 Exchange Street, but breaks between the second and third southernmost windows, suggesting a different storefront configuration than the current. Second and third story windows are one-over-one replacements with original wooden frames and stone sills. Storefront has been altered and the hood moldings were removed.

**436 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1850s**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. Comprised of the two southernmost bays of a ten bay façade. The brick cornice continues from 434 Exchange Street. The original hood (lintel) molding has been retained above the upper story windows; windows appear to be one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows. The wood storefront is an alteration from the original, alterations taking place during the 1960s.

**438 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1850s**

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Three-story, two-bay, Italianate, wooden structure with brick veneer commercial building. The second and third stories, northern windows, are six-over-six, double-hung with slightly arched openings and brick lintels and sills. The second and third story oriel bay windows were most likely added at a later date, as well as the large, undecorated metal cornice and corbels. The storefront has been altered. Brick veneer was added to the exterior of the wooden structure around 1900.

**440-442 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1850s**

Three-story, three bay, brick commercial building. A metal drainage gutter spans the cornice area of the building with a metal drainpipe running down the southern end of the façade. Third-story window are six-over-six, double-hung window, while second-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung windows. Painted stone sills and lintels. The storefront, which was altered during the 1960s, has a brick bulkhead with metal frame display windows and central entrance. A secondary entrance that leads to the upper floors is at the southernmost end of the first level.

**444-446 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1850s**

Three-story, five bay, Greek Revival style, brick commercial building. The cornice has been modified with a metal drainage gutter and painted drainpipe to match the building at the northernmost end. This building is at the intersection of Exchange and Castle Street, and has an exposed side elevation along Castle Street. Second and third story windows are all one-over-one, double-hung replacements with hooded lintels and stone sills. The storefront was altered in the 1930s and more recently with wood panel bulkheads. An original cast-iron column with a Corinthian capital supports the corner of the building.

**470 Exchange Street – Geneva Federal Savings Bank**

**Non-contributing due to age – Constructed 1968**

**476 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1860s**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. An Italianate cornice with large brackets is original to the building. Third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with hooded lintels and thin sills. Second-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with hooded lintels and thin sills. The storefront has been altered with a wooden panel bulkhead and metal frame display windows.

**480 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1860s**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. An Italianate cornice with large brackets is original to the building. Third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with thin stone lintels. Second-story windows have been modified and are one-over-one, double-hung. A decorative cornice with end corbels has been attached between the second and third stories. The storefront has been altered.

**484 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1860s**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. An Italianate cornice with large brackets is original to the building. The southernmost second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with hooded lintels and a thin stone sill. The central and northernmost portion of the second and third-story have been altered and an oriel bay window installed. The oriel window is wood framed with panels beneath the windows. Side windows are one-over-one, double-hung and the front facing window is a picture window. The storefront has been altered from the original and has a central entrance with decorative transom windows above. An wood entrance door to the upper floors has six panels and a small transom above.

**486-488 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. An Italianate cornice with large brackets is original to the building. The second and third-story windows are two-over-two, double-hung with painted stone lintels and sills. Due to a fire in 1974, the south firewall was rebuilt of concrete block. The storefront was also altered at this time and the transom area above the storefront has been covered in a metal sheet.

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**494 Exchange Street – White Dusenbury Building**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1870s**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate brick and cast stone commercial building. A double pediment parapet adorns the building. In 1936, the façade of the building was altered from the brick masonry to cast stone. At this time the bay windows on the second and third-stories were installed. The wood panel details were added to the bays at a later time. Side windows are six-over-one, double-hug and the front facing windows are ten-over-one, double-hung. Brackets decorate the underside of the bay window roofs. The storefronts were altered in 1936, creating two separate storefronts with a central entrance to the upper floors. Storefronts have wooden bulkheads with large display windows. The transom area above has been in filled.

**500 Exchange Street**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1870**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. The decorative cornice is of stamped metal with large end corbels and four decorative brackets. Second and third-story facades have been altered and bay windows were installed. Bay windows are all one-over-one, double-hung with wood panel bulkheads above and below. The first level has two storefront with a central entrance for the upper floors. Both storefronts have been altered with applied stone bulkheads, metal frame display windows and entrance doors. The entrance door to the upper floors may be the original with two panels under nine lights. The existing glass block transom is somewhat visible on the northern storefront, but completely covered on the southern storefront.

**502 Exchange Street**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1870**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. A simple metal cornice with exaggerated brick corbelling detail below. This is part of the Soverhill Block, and is the two northernmost bays of a nine bay façade. Second and third story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with simple painted lintels and thin sills. The original sashes and frames remain. The storefront has been recently altered with a metal bulkhead and framing. The transom area has been covered with an awning.

**504 Exchange Street**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1870**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. Part of the Soverhill Block, the cornice is a continuation of 502 Exchange Street with exaggerated brick corbelling. The second and third story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with painted lintels and stone sills. The storefront has been altered with a parged bulkhead and metal framed display window.

**514 Exchange Street**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1870**

Three-story, four-bay, Italianate brick commercial building. The cornice is a continuation from 504 Exchange Street. The building is part of the Soverhill Block and is the four southernmost bays of a nine-bay façade. Second and third story windows are one-over-one, double hung. The storefront has been completely altered with a black Carrara glass applied bulkhead, as well as transom. The display windows are metal framed and an awning hangs over the northernmost storefront.

**Exchange Street (East Side)**

**425 Exchange Street**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1910**

Four-and-a-half-story, four-bay, brick commercial building. This building is part of a series of buildings constructed in downtown Geneva prior to WWI. The tall parapet has an applied denticulated cornice set slightly below the roofline and three round windows evenly spaced under the cornice. Windows on the fourth-story are one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows with vertical brick lintels and stone sills. The second and third-stories have bay windows with one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows. The storefront has had minor alterations and remains virtually intact.

**427 Exchange Street**  
**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1890**

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Four-story, Chicago style, commercial building. The building's façade has been altered to the current triangular bays on the second, third and fourth-stories. A massive metal decorative cornice remains with large brackets and molding detailing just below. Windows are eight-over-one replacements on the third and fourth-stories and large glass panes on the second-story. Currently, the storefront is undergoing renovations and is not visible behind a plywood structure.

#### **435 Exchange Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1870s**

Three-story, twelve-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. The building is situated on the street corner with its main façade along Exchange Street. The original metal cornice wraps the building's exposed elevations and features large brackets. Second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements with metal hooded lintels and thin stone sills. There are four separate storefronts at the first-story. The northernmost is covered, currently going through renovations. All other storefronts have been altered and feature metal framing with some possible original cast iron decorative columns. All exposed storefronts have paneled bulkheads.

#### **459-465 Exchange Street – Dove Block**

##### **Contributing – Constructed 1878; architects Warner & Bocket of Rochester**

Three-story, six-bay, Victorian Gothic, brick commercial building. A simple metal cornice wraps the front façade and north elevation. A small decorative pediment with large fluted corbels displays the building name. A large fluted corbel is at each end of the building. Stepped brick corbelling and cross insets decorate the frieze. Third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with tall arched transoms above. Vertical brick lintels with a stone keystone are above with a simple stone sill below. Beneath each of the third-story window is a rectangular niche in the brick façade. A decorative brick banding spans the building at the window arch and the bottom of all windows. Second-story windows are two-over-two, double-hung, with the exception of the two southern windows. Lintels are vertical brick with three stone keystones. This building is significant because it retains one of the best examples of a cast iron storefront in the district. The original cast iron storefront features a bracketed cornice, decorative columns, and panel effect bulkhead. Original doors remain.

Built for William G. Dove, the building had a public hall in the third floor and store entrances on Castle Street as well as Exchange Street. For several years, a garment factory occupied the second floor.

#### **469-471 Exchange Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed 1885**

Three-story, five-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. Metal coping is the top of a decorative brick cornice, with a brick banding below. Second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements with flush painted brick lintels and stone sills. The storefront has been altered, but likely an early alteration to the building. The first-story consists of two storefronts with a center entrance separating the two. Each storefront also has a center entrance and cast iron storefront, with signboard area spanning the building above.

#### **473-475 Exchange Street – Former Riggs and Jensen Block**

##### **Contributing – Constructed 1905**

Three-story, two-bay, Chicago style, brick commercial building. A metal cornice with bracketing and frieze below spans the building. Second and third-story tripartite windows are one-over-one, double-hung outer windows with a full-light window at the center. Steel beams with simple modillions are inset in the brick façade and act as lintels for the windows. Stone sills span each tripartite window. The storefront has been altered, but likely resembles the original. The storefront is metal framed with a paneled bulkhead and large metal panel above, where a signboard has been placed. The building housed the Chamber of Commerce when it was founded in 1919.

#### **485 Exchange Street – Lynch Brother's Building**

##### **Contributing – Constructed 1915, rehab ca. 1919**

Four-story, three-bay, Chicago style, brick commercial building. A minimal decorated frieze at the top of the building has brick ornamentation. Below this, a thin metal cornice is attached to the façade with four rectangular stone pieces below. The three bays are separated by brick pilasters that run from the second-story to the fourth-story, supporting a stone lintel. Third and fourth-story windows are tripartite with a thin stone sill. Second floor tripartite windows sit atop a thin stone lintel that spans the building. Above these windows are transoms that have been filled with wood panels. The storefront has been altered and now features metal framing and paneled bulkhead. A fabric awning spans the top of the storefront.

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**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1900**

Three-and-one-half-story, three-bay, Renaissance Revival, brick commercial building. The original decorative cornice with small brackets, dentil molding and large end corbels spans the building. The frieze features six small one-over-one, double-hung windows with two obscure shaped windows at the center. Cast ornamentation is also seen on this level. The southern and northern bays feature metal framed bay windows on the second and third-stories with decorative panels between. The center bay on the third-story has two arched, full-pane windows. The second-story, center bay features two one-over-one, double-hung windows. Brick banding and keystone ornamentation details the second and third-stories and the frieze area. A brick arched opening at the center of the first-story is ornamented by brick banding, much like the upper stories. Each storefront to either side of the center entrance has been altered with metal frame storefronts and metal bulkheads.

**499 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1915**

Three-story, three-bay, Chicago style, brick commercial building. Heavy, ornate cornice spans the building with dentil-style brackets and dentil molding. Large support brackets extend past the cornice. Three main bays separated by brick four brick pilasters. The northern and southern bays have one-over-one, double-hung windows inset in the brick masonry with a shared stone sill. A vertical brick lintel banding spans from one pilaster to the next. This banding also happens below the sills. The center bay features paired one-over-one, double-hung windows with stone sills and the same vertical brick banding above and below the windows. Large, protruding theater signs are attached to the building by cables. The center entrance to the theater is metal framed with kiosk windows inset at the sides. Storefronts in the southern and northern bays have been altered.

**505 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed 1875**

Three-story, two-bay, Colonial Revival, brick commercial building. A metal cornice with small bracketing spans flanks the building. Third-story tripartite windows are six-over-six, double-hung replacements with stone sills. Between the third and second-stories is a signboard which reads 'Stivers Enterprises' in three dimensional lettering. Second-story tripartite windows are six-over-one and ten-over-one, double-hung with stone sills. The storefront has been altered with six-over-one replacement windows, vertical wood paneling, and wood paneled storefront.

**507-511 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed 1875**

Three-story, four-bay, Colonial Revival, brick commercial building. A shingled, mansard-style roof meets a large cornice with dentil brackets and large ornate end corbels. The cornice is heavily deteriorated. Second and third-story windows are six-over-one, double-hung with stone sills. A metal fire escape is attached to the third and second story façade. The storefront has been altered with a parged bulkhead and metal framing. At the southern bay, double wood doors are capped with a glass block transom.

**513 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1880s**

Four-story, four-bay, Renaissance Revival / Italianate, brick commercial building. An ornate cornice with large end corbels, decorative bracketing, egg and dart molding and half round cut-outs spans the building. All upper windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements with thin stone sill and stone lintels, which are flush with the façade. At the center of the second and third-story are projecting bay windows with decorative wood paneling. The storefront has been altered. The southern bay of the first-story has a segmented arched opening that projects through the depth of the building. A single, cast iron storefront remains with altered storefront windows. Decorative glass transoms remain above the storefront.

**521 Exchange Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1880s**

Four-story, four-bay, brick commercial building, void of all architectural detailing. Windows on the upper levels have all been bricked in, except for one window on each level, which connect with the metal fire escape. Stone sills remain under all existing and in filled windows. The storefront has been altered to metal framing, center entrance, with applied tile bulkhead and end columns. A large signboard exists just above the storefront and fabric awnings.

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### **Non-contributing due to age – Constructed 1983**

#### **537 South Exchange Street – One Franklin Square (former Dorchester & Rose Building) Contributing – Constructed ca. 1901**

##### **Solomon Persons and Edward Siglar, Contractors & Builders**

Three-story, three-bay, Chicago style, brick commercial building. The brick parapet features pre-cast concrete coping stones and is segmented into three bays by four brick pilasters. A brick pilaster is located at the north and south corners, with two other pilasters evenly spaced on the façade. Each bay features circular brickwork. A projecting cornice wraps the front façade and sides of the building. The cornice features cast iron lion heads and two scroll-like consoles are located at the face of each pilaster beneath the cornice. Five wood dentils are spaced evenly between the scrolls at each bay. Two lead-shaped iron tie plates are center on each bay above one row of brick corbelling and the bay of three double-hung replacements windows. The window openings feature two rows of brick corbelling at the sills. Circular brickwork, identical to the detail at the parapet, is centered on the spandrel at each bay. A row of brick corbelling is below the contrasting design with another bay of three double-hung replacement windows at the second floor. A stone water table with small stone dentils and ornate stone details crowning the pilasters run across the top of the glass storefront. Each column features brick corbelling which emulate quoins at the ground level. The storefronts have been altered.

A 1902 Chamber of Commerce publication described Dorchester and Rose as “a large wholesale and retail trade in Hardware, Agricultural Implements, Carriages and Wagons, Stoves, Hot-Air Furnaces, House-Furnishing Goods, Sporting Goods, Camera Supplies and many lesser specialties.” From 1940 to 1979, the building was the Montgomery Ward Department Store.

#### **551-553 South Exchange Street Contributing – Constructed 1885**

Three-story, five-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. An original decorative metal cornice with ornamental end corbels and bracketing spans the building. Second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung, replacements with hooded metal lintels and simple stone sills. The storefront has been altered and features a parged surround and bulkhead with metal framed display windows and doorways. Above the storefront, mirror tiles have been installed.

#### **555 Exchange Street Contributing – Constructed 1892**

Four-story, four-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A decorative brick cornice with dentil brickwork remains. Fourth-story windows are missing and have been boarded with plywood. Segmental arched brick lintels and stone sills are featured around all front façade windows openings. Second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements. A metal fire escape is attached between the fourth and second floors. Two storefronts have been altered. The northern storefront has a brick bulkhead and vinyl paired windows. The southern storefront has a protruding divided light window and brick bulkhead.

### **Seneca Street (North Side)**

#### **20-24 Seneca Street – Prouty Building Contributing – Constructed ca. 1892**

Four-story, five-bay, Richardson Romanesque, brick commercial building. Designed by prominent Elmira, NY architects Pierce and Bickford. A large metal cornice with fluted end corbels and dentil molding flanks the top of the building. Fourth-story westernmost and easternmost bays have three one-over-one, double-hung, arched windows with rough stone sills and decorative vertical brick arched lintels. Below these three arched windows on the second and third-story are wood framed bay windows protruding the façade with decorative stonework inset in the panels between the two levels. At the top of the bay windows, at the lower fourth-story, are decorative wood railings with turned posts. The center bays of the second, third and fourth-stories are identical with windows inset deep into the façade. Windows at the center are tripartite. All windows on this section are one-over-one, double-hung with transoms above. Heavy stone sills and lintels are features on each window and the third-story windows have stone dentil work at the top of the lintel. The storefront has been altered and features brick columns at the central entrance, wood storefront with vertical wood paneling in the bulkhead. Above the storefront is a wood panel transom with a simple cornice above and dentil molding.

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**Contributing – Constructed 1928 – Kresge Building**

Two-story, five-bay, Art Deco, brick commercial building. The building features a cast stone parapet, pilasters, and banding on the upper story, typical of the Art Deco style and Kresge Buildings. The second-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung, aluminum recessed into the masonry. The storefront has been altered. A wood frame storefront with double entrance doors, transoms and wood panel bulkhead. An original Kresge Co. sign has been removed and a wood panel now spans the building between the storefront and second-story.

**34-36 Seneca Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1840**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. The original decorative cornice remains with an extended upper portion, brackets, and carvings. Second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements with a transom above, originally there was not a transom window. The thick wood framing and highly ornate hooded lintels with corbels remain, as well as the metal sills. The original signboard has been removed and first-story façade has been parged. The storefront has been altered and features a center entrance, metal frame storefront with parged bulkhead. A metal full-light door leads to the upper stories at the west end. This building retains a high level of historic integrity and material.

**38 Seneca Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1840**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate Revival with some Colonial Revival characteristics. The cornice detail with arches and partial pilasters down the ends of the third-story are characteristic of Italianate detailing. Second-story windows have the characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, with nine-over-nine, double-hung replacement windows. Sills are thin stone and a thin line of vertical bricks comprise the lintels. Second-story windows are wider than the third-story, but remain nine-over-nine, double-hung replacements. Above the windows are inset arches with horizontal brickwork. Flush with the façade are thin, vertical arched brick lintels. Metal sheeting covers the storefront area between the first-story and second-story. The storefront has been altered and features decorative sunbeam detailed transom windows, colored glass pieces in the display windows, and an applied stone bulkhead.

**40-42 Seneca Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1840**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. The cornice and most of the ornamentation and detailing has been removed. Second and third-story windows are all one-over-one, double-hung with a transom above. Segmental arched molded lintels have keystones and fluted pilasters along the sides of the window and simple stone sills below. The storefront has been altered and now features metal framed display windows and entry doors, and panel bulkhead.

**50 Seneca Street**

**Non-contributing due to age – Constructed 1966**

One-story, commercial building. Features a metal frame storefront and parged façade.

**60-66 Seneca Street – Guard Building (former Smith Block)**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1924**

Three-story, seven-bay, Classical Revival, stone façade commercial building. An eave-like cornice sits a few feet below the top of the building and wraps the building. Third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows, which are inset into the masonry façade. A frieze banding spans the façade just below the third-story windows and is supported by six large Corinthian columns. The second-story is inset slightly from the main façade and features seven paired one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows with transoms. Above the windows is a decorative wood paneling. The storefronts have been altered. The building features two separate storefronts with metal framing and block bulkhead.

**68-70 Seneca Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1875**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A decorative cornice with large, fluted end corbels and shallow bracketing spans the top of the building. The western bay features a protruding bay window on the second and third-stories. This features wood paneling details and one-over-one, double-hung wood windows. A single window on the third-story is one-over-one, double-hung, wood frame with a simple stone sill. The lintel is a segmental arch with a decorative keystone. A single second-story window is one-over-one, double-hung with a painted lintel, which is flush with the

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façade. The storefront has been altered with wood framing, wood panel bulkhead, and decorative transom windows above. A bracketed cornice is situated between the storefront and second story.

#### **74 Seneca Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1915**

Two-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. This building was constructed on a much smaller scale than its neighbors. A metal cornice with bracketing and end corbels spans the building. Second-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements with brick lintels. The storefront has been altered with a side entrance and metal frame display windows. Paneling has been installed over the bulkhead. A large signboard reading 'Area Records and Music' spans the building just above the storefront and a metal sign protrudes perpendicular from the building.

#### **82 Seneca Street – Smith's Opera House (former Geneva Theater), NR listed 1979**

##### **Contributing – Constructed 1894**

##### **Architect: Pierce and Bickford – Elmira, NY.**

Three-and-a-half-story, five-bay, Richardson Romanesque, brick and stone building. Above the roofline is a decorative stone railing and frontispiece that features a niche over the center bay. Globes sit atop the pedestals along the railing. The projecting cornice features short brackets. The frieze featuring triple arched windows in each of the four outer bays sits above a corbelled architrave. Each bay on the second and third-stories are divided by brick pilasters, which support the corbelling above. Two central bay windows are crowned by a half round window with decorative glass. On the second-story, the two outer bays on each side consist of bay windows, which support decorative balustrades above. The third-story outer bays feature paired arched one-over-one windows with transom below a centered ocular window. Bay window frames, decorative detailing and balustrades are metal. The detailing around the third-story oculus windows are of terra-cotta. The first-story features two separate storefronts on either side of a central entrance into the theater. The original stone archway has been retained with terra-cotta detailing. The first-story has been altered with stone storefronts and metal display window framing.

#### **92 Seneca Street – former Schnirel Building**

##### **Contributing – Constructed 1899**

Five-story, five-bay, Chicago style, brick commercial building. This building is a forerunner to the contemporary skyscraper design and is considered one of the first "skyscrapers" in Geneva. The façade is symmetrical with a central entrance and identical storefronts to either side. The upper stories windows are lined up both in rows and columns. Each column of windows from the second to fifth-story is slightly recessed with the surrounding brick. A large cornice with triangular shaped dentil ornamentation spans the building and overhangs on each side. Windows on the upper floors are all one-over-one, double-hung. The identical storefronts are cast iron with some wood detailing. At the center, double entrance doors lead into the building with a large transom window above.

#### **100 Seneca Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1860s**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A simple cornice with large brick dentil ornamentation flanks the upper portion of the building. Second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements with wood shutters and painted stone sills and lintels. The storefront has been altered and features a center entrance. A porch provides a sitting area outside the restaurant and a fabric awning obscures the upper portion of the storefront. A metal sign protrudes perpendicularly from the building's western bay.

#### **106 Seneca Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1857**

Two-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building with addition one-story eastern wing. An original large cornice spans the building with large support brackets. Second-story windows are divided light with pedimented lintels and stone sills. Fabric awnings obscure the upper windows. The storefront is wood framed and extends beyond the main building block to the east into a one-story building. This one-story section has a matching cornice and storefront. The display windows are divided light panes with an entrance at the one-story extension and at the main storefront. Centrally located above the storefront on the main block is a simple pediment.

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**110-112 Seneca Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1860s**

Three-story, four-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. Most of the original ornamentation is no longer in existence. Decorative stepped brick corbelling acts as the building's cornice. Third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements with simple pediment lintels and thin stone sills. The second-story windows are also one-over-one, double-hung with pediment lintels and a thin stone sill and also have vinyl shutters. The storefront has been altered and features only one storefront to the eastern side of the first-story. The storefront features a brick veneer bulkhead and metal frame storefront windows. Transoms above are decorative glass panels. A centered entrance door leads to the upper floors with a transom window above. The western section of the first-story has been in filled with brick and contains a one-over-one, non-original widow with shutters. .

**114 Seneca Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1840s**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A metal cornice with large supporting brackets spans the building. Three decorative insets in the frieze line up with the windows on the third-story below. Second and third-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacements with painted stone sills and lintels. The storefront has been altered and features a centered entrance and display windows to either side that are flush with the façade. Transoms have been in filled with wood panels and the bulkhead has been parged.

**118-120 Seneca Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1840s**

Four-story, six-bay, former Italianate, brick commercial building. The building has been stripped of original detailing and ornamentation. The segmental arched windows on the fourth-story point to original Italianate features. Second, third and fourth-story windows are all one-over-one, double-hung replacements with painted stone sills and lintels. A metal fire escape has been attached to the front of the building from the fourth-story to the second-story. The storefronts have been altered and now feature two separate storefronts with paneled bulkheads. The transoms above have been covered over with sign boards.

**Linden Street (West Side)**

**24-26 Linden Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1914 – former Farmers and Merchants Bank (Geneva Savings Bank), NR listed 2008**

Two and one-half story, three-bay, Greek Revival, brick building with a cast stone façade. Two large Ionic columns within a pedimented portico support a full entablature with the bank's original name inscribed, with a denticular cornice. A massive cast-stone eagle dominates the denticulated tympanum. A cast-stone parapet rises behind the pediment, giving the building the appearance of a full third story in keeping with the rooflines of several other buildings on the block. The centrally placed front entrance, which once contained a pair of wood and glass doors, now contains a modern metal door, installed during the 1940s. Above the door is a projecting cast-stone lintel, boldly embellished with anthemion-inspired ornaments. A four-part, second-story casement window surmounts the entrance and tall, narrow, paired casement windows flank the columns on both the first and second stories.

**28-34 Linden Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1875**

Three-story, five-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A simple molded eave off of a slanted roof above features wood bracketing. Second and third-story windows are all six-over-six, double-hung windows with vinyl shutters. The second-story has a sixth window at the southern end, matching all other upper windows, but does not have shutters. Windows have simple stone sills with no lintels. Three separate storefront flank the first-story. The northernmost storefront appears to have been altered, but likely taken on a similar configuration as the original with large, divided display windows, wood bulkhead, and transom windows above. A metal cornice rests above this storefront. The central and southernmost storefronts have been completely altered from the original configuration.

**38 Linden Street**

**Contributing – Constructed 1868**

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Four-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A decorative brick cornice flanks the top of the building with egg and dart-style brickwork below. Fourth-story windows are two-over-two, double-hung arched windows. Second and third-story windows are two-over-two, double-hung with no arch. All windows have simple stone sills with brick lintels that are flush to the façade. A metal cornice with decorative bracketing rests above the storefront. The storefront has been somewhat altered and has large one-over-one, double-hung windows where display windows once were. The storefront is wood framed with a wood panel bulkhead. A side entrance door with transom above leads to the upper floors.

#### **40-42 Linden Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1885**

Two-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. This building consists of the three northernmost bays on a ten-bay façade. An extended eave overhangs the building; however, brackets have been removed. Second-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with arched transoms above and simple stone sills. A decorative cornice with bracketing and frieze sits above the storefront. The storefront has been altered, but has a similar configuration to the original with large transoms, center entrance, and wood panel bulkhead. An arched opening at the southernmost bay of this building features an early door that leads to the upper floors. There are steps up to the main storefront entrance.

#### **44-52 Linden Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1885**

Two-story, seven-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. This building consists of the seven southern bays on a ten-bay façade. An extended eave overhangs the building; however, there are only brackets over the three southernmost bays, which retain the most historic material on the second-story and cornice area. The three northernmost windows on this building are one-over-one, double-hung with arched transoms and simple stone sills. A centered window opening has been in filled and a partial size, non-original bay window has been installed. The three southernmost windows are one-over-one, double-hung with arched transoms, simple stone sills and extruded arched lintels, which do not remain on any of the other windows on this façade. Two storefronts flank the first-story of this building, both of which have been altered, but are similar to the storefront at 40-42 with transoms and wood panel bulkheads. Both storefronts have detached decorative cornices with brackets and frieze that match the one at 40-42. The southernmost first-story bay has been altered, but retains the arched lintel that would have been over an original door opening to the upper floors.

### **Linden Street (East Side)**

#### **25 Linden Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1880s**

Three-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A highly ornate cornice flanks the top of the building, featuring decorative corbels and brackets. Second and third-stories have one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows with thick stone sills and lintels, in which the lintels are flush with the façade. The paired center windows on each level are larger than the northern and southernmost windows. A simple metal cornice sits above the storefront. The storefront extends past the three-story building block. The storefront retains a high level of historic integrity and material with an ornate wood panel column to the northern end, original or early wood panel doors and transoms above. Wood framed display windows with a paneled wood bulkhead appears to be original or an early alteration. Parts of the storefront have been altered, such as the transoms above the storefronts. The storefront extension does not appear to be consistent or original to the main building's storefront.

#### **29 Linden Street**

##### **Contributing – Constructed ca. 1880s**

Two-story, three-bay, Italianate, brick commercial building. A tall parapet that gives the allusion of another half-story rises above the roof of the building with a decorative brick banding just above the second-story. Second-story windows are two-over-two, double-hung replacements with simple stone sills and simple two-tier brick lintels. A metal cornice sits above the storefront. The storefront appears to original or an early alteration and is supported at the center by two cast-iron columns. The storefront has tall display windows with transoms above and wood paneled bulkhead. An early door at the southern end of the building has a transom above.

### **Main Street (East Side)**

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**317 Main Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1850**

Two-story, two-bay, commercial building. This building retains little historic material or integrity. The second-story has been covered in vinyl siding. Paired one-over-one, double-hung windows with vinyl shutters and a single one-over-one, double-hung window with vinyl shutters are not original to the building. The storefront has been severely altered and retains no historic material. Display windows are metal framed and the bulkhead, storefront, and even side of the building have been parged over. A large metal frame with corrugated metal inside spans the width of the building between the storefront and second-story.

**319 Main Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1850**

Two-story, two-bay, commercial building. The roof overhangs with a metal storm gutter. The second-story has been covered in vinyl siding and features non-original windows. Paired one-over-one, double-hung windows with vinyl shutters and a single one-over-one, double-hung window with vinyl shutters are not original to the building. The storefront has been completely altered and covered in vertical wood paneling with an applied bulkhead with the appearance of stone. A large display window and full-light doors are not original.

**325 Main Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1880s**

Three-story, two-bay, Italianate, commercial building. A simple cornice with end corbels flanks the top of the building. A bay window extrudes the northern portion of the façade on the second and third-stories and has been covered in wood paneling. Windows on the southern portion of the façade are one-over-one; double-hung vinyl replacement windows inset into segmental arched openings. All other windows are one-over-one, double-hung replacement windows. The storefront has been altered and now features metal framed display windows and metal doors. The storefront surround, bulkhead and transom area are covered with black carrara glass. A metal fire escape has been installed on the front of the building. Little historic material remains on this building.

**329 Main Street**

**Contributing – Constructed ca. 1840**

Three-story, three-bay, former Italianate, brick commercial building. A simple metal cornice spans the top of the building. The third-story has a single, one-over-one, double-hung window with a painted stone sill and brick lintel. This story also features a bay window, which is supported by two large, decorative brackets. Three second-story windows are one-over-one, double-hung with painted stone sills and painted brick lintels that are flush with the façade. A metal fire escape from the building to the south connects with the two southernmost windows on the third and second-stories of the building. The storefront appears to be original or an early alteration with transom windows, a central entrance, large display windows, and a decorative paneled wood bulkhead. An original arched opening with decorative dentil brickwork and banding is retained at the northern end of the first-story. This opening leads to a door to the upper stories.

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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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce
- Transportation
- Architecture
- 
- 
- 

**Period of Significance**

1840 - 1940

**Significant Dates**

1840, 1897, 1940

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Pierce & Bickford; Lloyd Philo Adams;  
Solomon Persons and Edward Siglar, Contractors  
& Builders

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance 1840-1940 encompasses the years in which contributing historic commercial buildings within the district were constructed. The determined dates mark the development of commercial business within the current downtown district and the eras of growth and success reflected by commerce and transportation. These dates also reflect the height and popularity of the commercial architectural styles found within the district.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A**

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

The Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District is significant under Criterion A in the areas of commerce and transportation as the historic commercial epicenter for the city of Geneva, Ontario County, New York. Transportation was the leading factor in the establishment of the commercial downtown, which became an integral part of a transportation network that began with Geneva's founding (ca. 1806) and continued well into the twentieth century. The location of the commercial district along Exchange Street was the result of entrepreneurs utilizing opportunities for shipping goods due to its close proximity to the lake shore and eventually rail lines. Seneca Lake connected to feeder canals that joined to the Erie Canal, allowing affordable and efficient shipping to markets beyond Geneva and the surrounding communities and villages. By the mid nineteenth century (1841), this network was enhanced and expanded with introduction of the railroad in Geneva. The first railroads ran along the lake shore, which made Exchange and the eastern ends of Castle and Seneca ideal locations for business and industry, reaching its peak of nine railroads converging in the city from multiple directions. Businesses had the option of transporting goods by train, which had the capability of operating year round rather than the seasonal waterways. This directly stimulated commercial growth to expand beyond Exchange Street to the rest of Castle and Seneca Streets, which gradually sloped uphill towards the residential areas. These streets were also part of a road system that further enhanced the transportation network and the development of the downtown commercial district as they connected to Routes 5 and 20 running east to west, and Route 14 that was built along an old Indian trail running north to south along the lake. The roadways traveled directly through the heart of the downtown along Main, Seneca, and Exchange Streets, bringing increased traffic and the demand for more goods and services as more people settled in or passed through Geneva. As industries and technologies changed, a wider variety of businesses located in the district that included grocers, hardware stores, banks, clothiers, an optical company, taverns, and pharmacies. The district also became the center of social activity with the opening of theaters such as Smith's Opera House and social service organizations that included the YMCA. As a tourism industry developed, hotels also located in Geneva's commercial district to meet the needs of a growing number of seasonal visitors taking advantage of the beautiful lake and recreational activities and the local services offered in Geneva.

The commercial historic district is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture for its collection of intact late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. It developed mainly between the 1840s and 1940s, as evident by the various extant architectural styles that range from late Greek Revival to early twentieth century Art Deco and include Italianate, Colonial Revival, Romanesque and Chicago style buildings. The majority of contributing buildings are three to five-story brick commercial blocks, with a handful of examples of stone construction. The buildings in the district share characteristics such as decorative cornices, corbelling and brackets, stone lintels, and several retain the original wood and cast iron storefronts. In more recent years, parts of the commercial downtown have experienced some demolition for scattered parking lots or new construction. This fortunately has been kept to a minimum. The oldest commercial buildings in the district were constructed ca. 1840 and a great majority of the contributing buildings retain their historic features resulting in a high degree of integrity, especially in terms of feeling and association.



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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

## EARLY HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT OF GENEVA

Conflicting accounts debate how Geneva got its name, but what is known is that the village (later city) was one of the first to be settled west of Utica after the end of the American Revolution. The person attributed with the early planning and growth of Geneva was Captain Charles Williamson, the agent for the Pulteney Associates that controlled the lands in and around Geneva. It was thought that Williamson named Geneva for Geneva, Switzerland after he surveyed the area and thought the region resembled what he saw in Europe. This proved to be false, since a letter dated July 5, 1789, referred to the area as Geneva, three years prior to Williamson's arrival. Another account stated that the name was given to differentiate it from other trading posts in the region, but no clear significance for the name Geneva was stated.<sup>1</sup>

Putting discussions of the name aside, the first plans for a village that was located on the site of the city of Geneva were drawn around 1787. That same year, two land companies were established: the New York Genesee Land Company and the Niagara Genesee Land Company with plans to purchase territory from the Seneca Nation, which included a large settlement at Kanadesaga (Geneva). The two companies leased 2,400 acres of land from the Seneca Indians, but this lease agreement was declared null and void as an illegal land acquisition by the New York State Legislature which maintained jurisdiction over the lands even though Massachusetts held the legal title to the land. In 1788, an agreement between New York and Massachusetts granted all land rights in Western New York to Massachusetts, giving it the right to purchase the land outright or sell the rights.<sup>2</sup> Once the land claims were settled between Massachusetts and New York, several land speculators came forward to take advantage of this opportunity by forming land companies to buy large tracts of land. One of these land companies was the Phelps and Gorham Purchase, which after several years of promoting land sales in Western New York, sold the rights in 1790 to a large portion of its holdings to Robert Morris of Philadelphia. He then sold the same rights to a group of investors in London known as the Pulteney Associates.

In 1792, Captain Charles Williamson, a land agent for the Pulteney Associates, arrived in what was known as the Genesee country with the intent to develop the lands and promote settlement by establishing villages and roads. After encountering conflicts with land agreements sold to Colonel Seth Reed and Peter Ryckman, Williamson took over responsibilities of all of the Pulteney Associates affairs in Western New York.<sup>3</sup> He began surveying the area and planning the location of villages, laying out the first street plans for Geneva in 1793. The plans included Broadway (later known as Main), Lake (Washington), Front (Exchange), and Genesee (Seneca) Streets, all of which are still prominent streets in the current city of Geneva. The layout of these streets roughly followed a grid pattern with the center at a village square, named Pulteney Park. Broadway (Main) was located at the top of the hill overlooking Seneca Lake.<sup>4</sup> Under Williamson's direction, no buildings were to be constructed on the east, or lake side of the square. Property owners on the west side of the square owned the land to the east all the way down to the lake; however, they were to use only that portion of land for

<sup>1</sup> E.T. Emmons, *The story of Geneva*. (Geneva, N.Y. The Finger Lake Times, 1982), 63.

<sup>2</sup> G. David Brumberg, *The Making of An Upstate Community, Geneva, New York: 1750-1920* (Geneva, N.Y. Humphrey Press, 1976), 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 34.

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farming or gardening. Pulteney Park became the center of business and social occasions during the early years of Geneva's development. To assist in promoting the village, Williamson built the Geneva Hotel at Pulteney Park in 1796 to accommodate travelers.

The early 1800s brought about changes in the layout of Geneva, which was part of the Town of Seneca, established in 1789. Although settlement began around that time, it wasn't until June 8, 1812 when the Village of Geneva was incorporated. The village at this time extended one-half mile from the village square on all sides. On May 6, 1837 the boundary of the village was increased under a legislative amended charter, which specified:

"The tract of territory at the foot of Seneca Lake, comprised within a square, bounded on the east by the new Pre-emption line, on the north by the center of the turnpike road and the center of the road passing in front of the dwelling of Thomas D. Burrall; on the west by the west line of the eight area lots, and on the south by a line running east and west at a distance of one mile south of the public square in Geneva, shall hereafter be known by the name of "The Village of Geneva."<sup>5</sup>

Geneva remained a village for another sixty years. A history of the village published in 1862 stated that the village grew from 325 people in 1806 to 3,029 by 1833. As the population continued to grow, the residential areas remained on the hill while more stores and businesses located on Seneca, Castle and along the shore on Exchange Street, extending the village boundaries to the east. On April 23, 1897, a charter created the City of Geneva and the incorporation of the city enlarged its boundary to the north, west and south.

## **Criterion A: Transportation and Commerce**

Geneva's earliest commercial establishments were located near the lakefront to be near a convenient water source. The first settlers to the area were farmers, mostly from New England and Virginia, who were attracted to the relatively inexpensive fertile lands as advertised by the Phelps and Gorham Purchase and later by Williamson. The log cabin of Horatio Jones was believed to be the first commercial establishment in Geneva (ca. 1788), used as a trading post. Around the same time, Lark Jennings opened a tavern near the lake and soon after, a cluster of log cabins was located near it. With Williamson's arrival in 1793, the focus of settlement shifted from lakeside to developing along the top of the hill to capitalize on the views of the lake, where he laid out a village square and roads to establish Geneva as a permanent village with room for expansion. Williamson's goal was to make Geneva a showcase community and entice new settlers with an array of amenities, entertainment, and businesses. He envisioned a commercial district around Pulteney Park that would be far superior to the marsh lands that lay at the bottom of the hill where the first businesses were located.<sup>6</sup> Under his direction, Williamson located residences, churches, and businesses around Pulteney Park (the square) and had the Geneva Hotel constructed in 1796 at the top of the hill near the center of the Park. The hotel's fashionable appearance and the allure of the lake made it a sought after stop for stage lines and traveling throughout the region. It also became the hub of social life as a popular gathering place for locals to enjoy entertainment, as well as hosting traveling dignitaries and public officials.

<sup>5</sup> Emmons, *Story of Geneva*, 96.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 174.

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To enhance the development of Geneva, the settlement gained access to a steady supply of clean water with the formation of the Geneva Waterworks Company in 1796. As Pulteney Park developed, its stores, shops, and residences had ready access to clean water from the pumps near their properties. For Williamson, this was an asset that made Geneva more than a mere frontier town. The source of the water was roughly one and one-half miles away at White Springs, brought to the village through wooden pipes. Williamson stated that “each house is plentifully supplied at the door, and a number of farmers in the adjoining country bring water into their farmyards and kitchens. These conveniences show the comfort in which they live.”<sup>7</sup> In 1846, these wood pipes were replaced with iron pipes, which was a technological achievement that propelled Geneva beyond other villages as a desirable location to live and work.

Although early village growth seemed to turn its back on the lake, new methods of transportation were being explored that linked various settlements along the lake with each other. Water was the first and remained the most expedient form of transportation in the area during the settlement period and, in 1796, the first regular navigation of Seneca Lake between Geneva and Montour Falls was established, resulting in daily transportation services up and down the lake. The close proximity to Seneca Lake and the Seneca River offered new opportunities for shipping and transportation other than overland travel. This brought new opportunities for related trade and travel, and a year later (1797), Geneva began to see roadway improvements that linked to lake transportation, one of them being the building of the Utica Road which set up regular stage service between Geneva and Utica.

As more forms of transportation were established, Geneva saw an increase in population, commerce, and tourism, much of it related to the areas along the lake, resulting in a resurgence of the importance of the lands at the bottom of the hill. This directly affected the commercial development of the city. Water transportation improved during the mid-1800s with the creation of a series of outlets and canals, most important being the Erie Canal, which officially opened in 1825, connecting the Great Lakes to the Hudson River and New York Harbor. This great waterway bypassed Geneva to the north, but a few years later, the Cayuga and Seneca Canal was built to connect the Erie Canal with Seneca Lake at the northeast end. This allowed Geneva to participate in canal trade and expand its trading abilities. In 1828, the Outlet of Seneca, now known as the Seneca River, was completed in 1828, which went from Geneva north to Waterloo and Seneca Falls and eventually connected to part of the Erie Canal.<sup>8</sup>

As a result of the expanding water transportation opportunities, commercial development grew along Exchange Street, which was known as “the Bottom” and quickly became an industrial and business district along the waterfront to maximize use of water transportation for goods and services. Lumbering was one of the first major businesses in Geneva that cleared the lowlands that the commercial district would develop on and used the waterways for exporting the lumber and other related goods (potash, etc.) and large lumber yards were still located along the east side of Exchange Street as late as 1909. Tourism in Geneva also expanded, and as a direct result hotels and boarding houses located near the lake. In 1825, the Franklin Hotel was built at the corner of Exchange and Seneca Streets in time to host a visit from General Lafayette and it immediately became the preferred tourist spot in Geneva, creating competition with the Geneva Hotel up

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 120.

<sup>8</sup> Emmons, *The Story of Geneva*, 66.

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on the hill. The transition between these hotels also marked the shift of business from the “hill to the bottom.”<sup>9</sup> Locals began to view “the Hill,” which was where Main Street ran along the top of the hill in Geneva, as a location for higher learning and fashionable residences along South Main Street, while “the Bottom” became the industrial and commercial business district along Exchange Street. The Franklin Hotel was replaced in 1902 by a hardware store and factory (Dorchester & Rose), but Exchange continued to feature hotels interspersed by shops and small manufacturing. By the mid-nineteenth century, the hill section of Geneva was becoming well known for its educational institutions, which including Hobart College, (established in 1822) and the Geneva Medical College (1834). In 1908, William Smith College was established adjacent to Hobart at the top of the hill as a women’s college counterpart to the all-male Hobart College.

By the late nineteenth century Geneva developed as an important nursery center and location for agricultural research. In 1880, a New York State Experimental Agricultural Station was established in the village, to promote improvements and scientific research in agriculture and horticulture, and became affiliated with Cornell University in 1923. Several businesses located in the Seneca, Castle and Exchange street area that were directly related to the agricultural industry and included feed and hardware stores along with grocers and butcher shops that were supplied by the local farms. Education was also well serviced with book, printers and stationery stores locating on Seneca Street near the top of the hill. As the population grew and more people came to Geneva, there was a need and demand for goods and services that not only related to the industry, but also to everyday living and well-being. Seneca, Castle and Exchange streets were the location of many businesses, such as pharmacies, clothing stores, restaurants, and entertainment, with Smith’s Opera House being the largest and most elegant.

As lake trade and transportation expanded beginning in the 1840s and 1850s, so did the need for housing for workers and travelers to the commercial district. Throughout the late nineteenth century, larger commercial buildings constructed along Seneca, Castle and Exchange Streets had retail space on the first floors and residential apartments on the upper floors. Maps from this period indicate a number of boarding houses, tenements and large hotels appearing on the east side of the village. Major industries, such as the Nestor Malt House complex, located along the lake, but a few located within the Seneca-Castle-Exchange area. Geneva Optical was located on Linden Street, which ran between Seneca and Castle. Other industries maintained headquarters in the district and included the Geneva Waterworks and the telephone company. Banks also built in the district or located in existing buildings to be closer to their business clients. The first was the Bank of Geneva, established in 1817.

When the railroad arrived in Geneva in the mid nineteenth century, it became an integral part of the transportation network of roads and waterways, which was directly connected to the growth of the commercial district between Main and Exchange Streets. Geneva saw its first railroad in 1841, when the Rochester and Auburn Railroad was built through the city. In 1853, the rail line became a part of the New York Central system. The Geneva and Ithaca Railroad Company was established in 1870, which later became part of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Another railroad that reached Geneva in 1875 was the Syracuse, Geneva and Corning Railroad, also a division of the New York Central system. This line connected Geneva to other small cities, such as Corning, as well as large cities like Syracuse. A train station for the Lehigh Valley

<sup>9</sup> Geneva Historical Society, *Images of America: Geneva* (2003), 15.

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Railroad was constructed in Geneva around 1892 and made headlines as the line's largest and most ornate station. This train station was one of only three that incorporated a restaurant.<sup>10</sup> This was a major draw on tourism for Geneva. Not only did travelers passing through the city by rail stop for something to eat at the station, but were drawn into the city by the array of hotel options, Seneca Lake, and the variety of businesses within the district. Railroads provided the ability to transport goods, services, and people further and faster than ever before, reaching new markets and increasing local economy.

By 1902, 48 trains arrived and departed daily, providing service to three of the city's active stations. According to a Chamber of Commerce publication (1902), "All stations are connected with the hotel section of the city by both electric cars and busses, which also connect with the wharf of the Seneca Lake Steam Navigation Co." The same publication declared that Geneva's transportation facilities were "unrivalled" and that "highways by rail and water radiate from Geneva like the spokes of a wheel...Geneva has always enjoyed a good local trade, a fact evidenced by its many large and long established stores in varied lines."<sup>11</sup> Sanborn maps from the same period show a number of small, densely packed stores along Exchange, Castle and Seneca Streets dealing in everything from hardware, furniture, food goods and clothing to services such as barbers, banks, tailors and shoe repair. The 1902 publication stated:

"Perhaps the most salient characteristics of Geneva to strike the observant stranger upon arrival, aside from its picturesque location, are its general appearance of neatness and thrift and the attractiveness of its stores. The several hotels are usually well filled with business and pleasure sojourners and many handsome equipages are seen upon the streets. In the down-town section business offices are open early, and there is an atmosphere of abundant occupation."<sup>12</sup>

With the buildup of multiple rail lines, water transportation around Geneva rapidly declined, which had little effect on travel and transshipment in Geneva, as trains made it possible to get goods and people to many more places than was ever possible by waterway.

By 1893, Geneva was clearly an urban center in eastern Ontario County. Downtown streets started to be paved and furniture and lighting were added along the commercial streets. In 1894, a streetcar system was established in Geneva, Waterloo, Seneca Falls, and Cayuga.<sup>13</sup> Streetcars provided transportation around Geneva's commercial and portions of the residential area on the Hill, which encouraged locals to make use of businesses and services by providing faster and easier access around town. Streetcars helped increase activity around the district, but faced competition in 1908 when the state began to make road improvements throughout New York State that made it easier to get from east to west and north to south.

New York State Route 14 was constructed in 1924 and traveled north and south between the Pennsylvania border and Lake Ontario. This was, and remains, an important route through Geneva as it connects to every major east-west highway in Western New York. It was, and remains, an important link between Elmira and Geneva. In 1926, Routes 5 and 20, which run east to west across the country, were constructed. These routes crossed through Geneva's residential

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 54.

<sup>11</sup> Frank H. Taylor, *Geneva on Seneca Lake* (Geneva, NY: W. F. Humphrey, 1902), 31-33.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 76.

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area, through the downtown, and continued on. This road was a divide between Canandaigua Lake and Seneca Lake and became important to transportation nationwide. When it was first finished, these were the main routes of land transportation through to the mid-twentieth century; however, as more recent times brought about four lane highways such as Interstate 90, use of these off-the-path routes diminished. Geneva lost some of its vibrancy, which initially had a negative impact on Geneva's commercial core. State Route 14 connected travel to Interstate 90 and ran along Exchange and Seneca Streets, continuing to be a main thoroughfare through Geneva.

As with most of the country, the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 quickly decreased manufacturing and commercial activity in Geneva, which in turn led to a decrease in population and downtown activity. By the 1950s, commercial spaces and their residential apartments were vacated as suburban neighborhoods and strip malls became popular with the rise in automobiles. Starting in the 1960s, many of the great historic commercial buildings and hotels were closed, and some have even been demolished for new, modern structures. A city staple, Hobart and William Smith College, has continuously been a core ingredient in Geneva's existence. In addition to the college, Geneva gets much of its present day commercial and social traffic from both residents and tourism. Vacationers travel to Geneva's west side along Seneca Lake as it now forms one of the two main hubs for leisure activity along the western "wine trail" side of the lake, the other hub being Watkins Glen at the south end.

## **Criterion C: Architecture**

### **Late 19th and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial Architecture**

Commercial style architecture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries reflected popular trends in residential architecture. Common nineteenth-century styles typically found across the nation's main streets and downtowns included Italianate, Romanesque, Greek and Gothic Revivals. After 1900, these styles were joined by the Colonial and Neoclassical Revivals and the later Chicago and Art Deco styles. Builders commonly used pattern books of the time, often written by architects, to follow trends in design and guidance on ornamentation and detail. In the beginning of the development of the commercial district, the main block of a commercial building was typically wood framed with wood facades, but due to the common occurrence of fires that devastated practically every Main Street and downtown block across the country, it was common for the commercial blocks to be rebuilt of masonry to avoid the catastrophic fires which lead to the demise of so many downtown commercial centers. Beginning in the mid-late nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth century, commercial buildings were constructed with brick, often made locally. Distinction between buildings came in the form of ornamentation that reflected the architectural style of a commercial building. Common features among buildings were cornices, corbelling, bracketing, window lintels, storefront details, and decorative brickwork that varied according to style.

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<sup>13</sup> Geneva Historical Society, *Images of America: Geneva (2003)*, 57.

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### **Geneva's Commercial Architecture**

Geneva's historic commercial district comprises an eclectic variety of buildings and architectural styles of the mid nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries. These styles include a majority of Italianate structures, revival styles including Colonial, Greek, Gothic, Classical, and Romanesque and a few examples of Chicago style. Builders of these commercial structures were often local brick makers and masons; however, some of the more significant buildings, such as the YMCA and Smith Opera House, were designed by the well-known regional architectural firm of Pierce and Bickford from Elmira, NY. Several of the buildings were constructed by the local firm of Persons and Sigler. As previously stated, Geneva's commercial downtown began in the mid-1800s when the central business district shifted from the top of the hill to the bottom of the hill. The period between 1840 and 1890 brought the rapid and steady growth to what became the downtown as a combination of wealth, transportation, economic success, and a steadily growing population located in Geneva. The result was a large commercial district of large brick and masonry buildings, densely packed along the streets between the hill, lake and railroad. Many buildings, especially along Exchange Street, shared common architectural styles and blended well with their neighbors with similar details such as building profiles, height, cornices and fenestration. The vast majority of the historic buildings included in the historic commercial district were typically three-story brick structures; however, the district also featured buildings of concrete block and cast stone. Wood frame buildings were common early in the district's development but were increasingly rare due to fire and new construction.

Many of Geneva's commercial buildings suffered from fires throughout the nineteenth century and were rebuilt to have the appearance of the original, while some added additional stories, changed rooflines, and changed window and storefront configurations. These changes made throughout the historic period of the district were all examples of Geneva's push to keep up with the pressure to follow the popular trends of the time. What may have started out as a simple wood frame and façade building, became brick masonry with embellished cornices, ornamental corbelling and brackets, decorative lintels, cast iron or wood paneled storefronts, hooded or decorative window lintels, arched window and door openings, and molding details. Construction of the buildings was often described in the local newspapers and a building's opening often became a social event. The details and ornamentation on a building was the owner's way of expressing wealth, business success, and a social status and the architecture itself was often a way of catching the attention of passersby and drawing them inside.

### **Significant Buildings in Geneva**

All of the buildings within Geneva's commercial district are significant, retaining architectural detailing that has been held for well over 100 years. Some buildings of exceptional significance are the Young Men's Christian Association on Castle Street, Smith's Opera House on Seneca Street and the Dove Block on Exchange. The original YMCA was constructed in downtown Geneva in 1894. The building opened on June 12, 1894 at a cost of \$30,399. This building is significant to the history of Geneva as it was utilized for men's social activities and meetings. Designed by Pierce and Bickford from Elmira, the building is noticeable among the commercial buildings along Castle Street for being one of the first in the city to be built of metal steel girder construction. The exterior of the building is remarkable in detail with a brick and stone façade that distinguishes this building from any other on the block. The Romanesque features of the building's first floor are of

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pink rusticated stone, and the upper floors are brick. The YMCA's interior was gutted by fire in 1902, but it was considered important enough to rebuild the following year and to have a few other details added that were sympathetic to the existing structure while in keeping with newer trends.

Another architecturally significant building is the Smith's Opera House, located on Seneca Street, constructed in 1894, the same year as the YMCA. Both buildings shared Romanesque Revival details, but the opera house was clearly inspired by Richardson Romanesque design, which was a hallmark of architects Piece and Bickford. They designed the Opera House for a local philanthropist, William Smith and it immediately became the theatrical and musical center of Geneva. During the 1930's, the Schine's Amusement Company renovated the interior of the opera house. The interior has since been completely restored, and of the nation's three hundred remaining original "movie palaces," the Smith's Opera House is one fourteen in New York State.<sup>14</sup>

Geneva's retail commercial buildings are all also significant in their rich history, but the Dove Block, located at the corner of Exchange and East Castle Streets was one of the first that transformed the district from merely a business and commercial center to a gathering place for the visitors and the local community. Constructed in 1878, it was described in the local newspaper as "imposing," being "three stories high, of stained brick, arched windows on all sides and cap stones over each of a beautiful light gray stone." The article reported that the ground floor was to contain three large stores, the second floor rooms for offices and the third floor was to have "a large hall for public purposes, such as concerts, balls, festivals, etc. This hall has thirteen windows; the ceiling will be hard-finished, the wall kalsomined. It will be conveniently lighted and thoroughly ventilated, and have White Spring water and hose attached, for all uses."<sup>15</sup>

The Dove Block is still one of the focal points in the downtown architectural display and is one of the city's most intact structures, showcasing one of the best examples of a cast iron storefront, and contrasts to the surrounding buildings by its height and Victorian Gothic style. It has been a center of social and commercial activity within Geneva since its conception. The building was built for W.G. Dove & Son Brick Works, a local company that made and supplied building materials. This building is also significant because it is one of the few that was constructed by its owner. In addition to housing stores and a public hall, for a short time it was the location of a clothing manufacturer. The auditorium hall was converted into a roller-skating rink around 1908, but was converted back into a multi-use facility around World War I. After World War II, the upper stories of the building, including the hall, were turned into apartments to help with the housing shortage. Other businesses that used the Dove Building included a wagon and carriage maker, a paper company, hatter, tailor, pool hall, and a farming supply store.

## **Conclusion: Geneva in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Transportation was a leading factor in how the commercial center of Geneva evolved. Waterways, roads and eventually with the introduction of the first railroad to Geneva in 1841, the commercial core saw a steady increase in growth as

<sup>14</sup> Smith Center for the Arts (2011). *History of the Smith Opera House*. Geneva, N.Y.: Smith Center for the Arts. On line at <http://www.thesmith.org/smith-opera-house/history>. Retrieved September 16, 2013.

<sup>15</sup> "An Imposing Structure," *Geneva Gazette*, 23 November 1877.



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methods of travel converged near the lake. By the late nineteenth century, nine different railroads converged in Geneva, connecting to steamboats and the major road network that ran through the city. The location of the commercial center along a waterway and railways allowed Geneva to surpass other neighboring communities to become the transportation hub in the area. Many of the railroads passed through Geneva along the lakefront on the eastern edge of the commercial district, which again made the slope and bottom of the hill the ideal location for businesses.

The opening of an east to west turnpike that ran from Albany to the Cumberland Pike brought new settlers from New England, eastern New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The increase in population directly increased the commercial activity of Geneva. A flow of immigrants from the Middle East and Southern Europe came to Geneva during the last decade of the nineteenth century. As a result, Geneva's cultural diversity grew, along with new employment opportunities and businesses, many being local ethnic restaurants. The industry and agricultural work attracted others, which established new businesses both in the commercial district and in the county settings surrounding Geneva. With the influx of new settlers and rapid population growth, Geneva's economy flourished until the Great Depression.

Commercial development of Geneva's downtown significantly decreased around the early 1930s. One major factor was the push to support war efforts during WWII, and the focus transferred from local commercial endeavors to the Sampson Naval Training Station. The Naval military base was acquired in 1942 from former farmland and vineyards along the eastern shore of Seneca Lake. After the war, commercial development once again came to a more permanent halt with the development of strip malls. This new development stemmed from an increase in automobile ownership and the suburban residential development, seen across the country as well as Geneva. In Geneva, new development and strip malls were built up along Routes 5 and 20 to the west of what is now the Main Street Historic District, drawing the commercial focus and business away from the downtown.

In the early twenty-first century, commercial traffic began to return to the downtown. Today, a great majority of Geneva's historic commercial buildings remain, although threats of modernization and vacant spaces have resulted in a few unfortunate intrusions. With such a rich history, the city of Geneva is committed to supporting and re-energizing its historic downtown commercial district. While storefronts and some facades have been altered from their original configurations, many more retain their historic features or with time have become historically significant in and of themselves. Geneva's varying and large selection of historic building stock downtown is attracting new businesses and redevelopment, especially with owners who are intent on retaining the historic character of the district. Geneva has shown a great interest in its history and historic buildings, and the size of the district, as well as the wide variety of architectural styles found within, are proof of just how significant this commercial district was, is, and will continue to be to the success and independence of Geneva as life in the downtown streets and commercial buildings returns once again.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Taylor, Frank H. *Geneva on Seneca Lake*. Geneva, NY: W. F. Humphrey, 1902.

Others:

- City of Geneva Sanborn Maps (1867-1968 update)
- Historic Photographs courtesy of the Geneva Historical Society.
- City of Geneva City Directories (1901-1938)

**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: Geneva Historical Society

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** ±14.54 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>338168</u> Easting	<u>4748171</u> Northing	2	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>338225</u> Easting	<u>4748095</u> Northing
3	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>338218</u> Easting	<u>4748043</u> Northing	4	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>338214</u> Easting	<u>4747972</u> Northing
5	18N Zone	338206 Easting	4747907 Northing	6	18N Zone	338159 Easting	4747818 Northing
7	18N Zone	338123 Easting	4747830 Northing	8	18N Zone	338090 Easting	4747867 Northing
9	18N Zone	337858 Easting	4747939 Northing	10	18N Zone	337848 Easting	4747976 Northing
11	18N Zone	337839 Easting	4748077 Northing	12	18N Zone	337835 Easting	4748101 Northing
13	18N Zone	338132 Easting	4748172 Northing				

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

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

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the highest concentration of buildings reflecting the period of significance and the historic development of commerce in the section of the city between the hill (mostly residential) and Seneca Lake. The boundary also contains the major roads that developed through the city linking the district to lake and rail transportation and consequently connecting the city to populations and markets in the region. The boundary also reflects a substantial degree of historic and architectural integrity with minimal non historic intrusion.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Megan Klem

organization Johnson-Schmidt Architects & Associates

date December 2013

street & number 15 E Market St #202

telephone 607-9371946

Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Ontario County, NY  
County and State

city or town Corning state NY zip code 14830

e-mail [Megan@PreservationArchitects.com](mailto:Megan@PreservationArchitects.com)

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

---

### Photographs:

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Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 2000x 3000 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District

City or Vicinity: Geneva

County: Ontario State: New York

Photographer: Megan Klem

Date Photographed: 20 July 2013 and 12 September 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

0001 of 0025. Looking northeast at the east side of Exchange Street at the intersection of Exchange and Castle Streets.

0002 of 0025. Looking northwest at the west side of Exchange Street at the intersection of Exchange and Castle Streets.

0003 of 0025. Looking west at a section of buildings on Exchange Street.

0004 of 0025. Looking west at a section of buildings on Exchange Street.

0005 of 0025. Looking southeast at the east side of Exchange Street at the intersection of Exchange and Castle Streets.

0006 of 0025. Looking east at the Dove Block building at the corner of Exchange and Castle Streets.

0007 of 0025. Looking east at a section of buildings on Exchange Street.

0008 of 0025. Looking northeast at a section of buildings on South Exchange Street.

0009 of 0025. Looking northwest at the north side of Castle Street from the intersection of Castle and Exchange Streets.

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- 0010 of 0025. Looking northwest from Exchange at the north side of Castle Street.
- 0011 of 0025. Looking northwest at the north side of Castle Street from Genesee Street.
- 0012 of 0025. Looking north at a section of buildings along the north side of Castle Street, including the historic YMCA.
- 0013 of 0025. Looking north at the main façade of the historic YMCA building.
- 0014 of 0025. Looking northwest along the north side of Castle Street.
- 0015 of 0025. Looking north at a section of buildings on the north side of Castle Street.
- 0016 of 0025. City hall building, view looking southeast.
- 0017 of 0025. US Post Office, view looking northeast.
- 0018 of 0025. Looking southwest at a section of building on the west side of Linden Street.
- 0019 of 0025. Looking northwest at the north side of Seneca Street from the intersection of Seneca and Exchange Streets.
- 0020 of 0025. Looking northwest down Seneca Street.
- 0021 of 0025. Looking northwest along Seneca Street.
- 0022 of 0025. Looking northwest at the historic Smith Opera House and other historic buildings along the north side of Seneca Street.
- 0023 of 0025. Looking northeast at a group of historic buildings, including the Smith Opera House, along Seneca Street.
- 0024 of 0025. Looking northeast at a group of historic buildings, including the Smith Opera House, along Seneca Street.
- 0025 of 0025. Looking northeast along the east side of Main Street from the intersection of Seneca and Main Streets.

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**Property Owner:**

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

name N/A

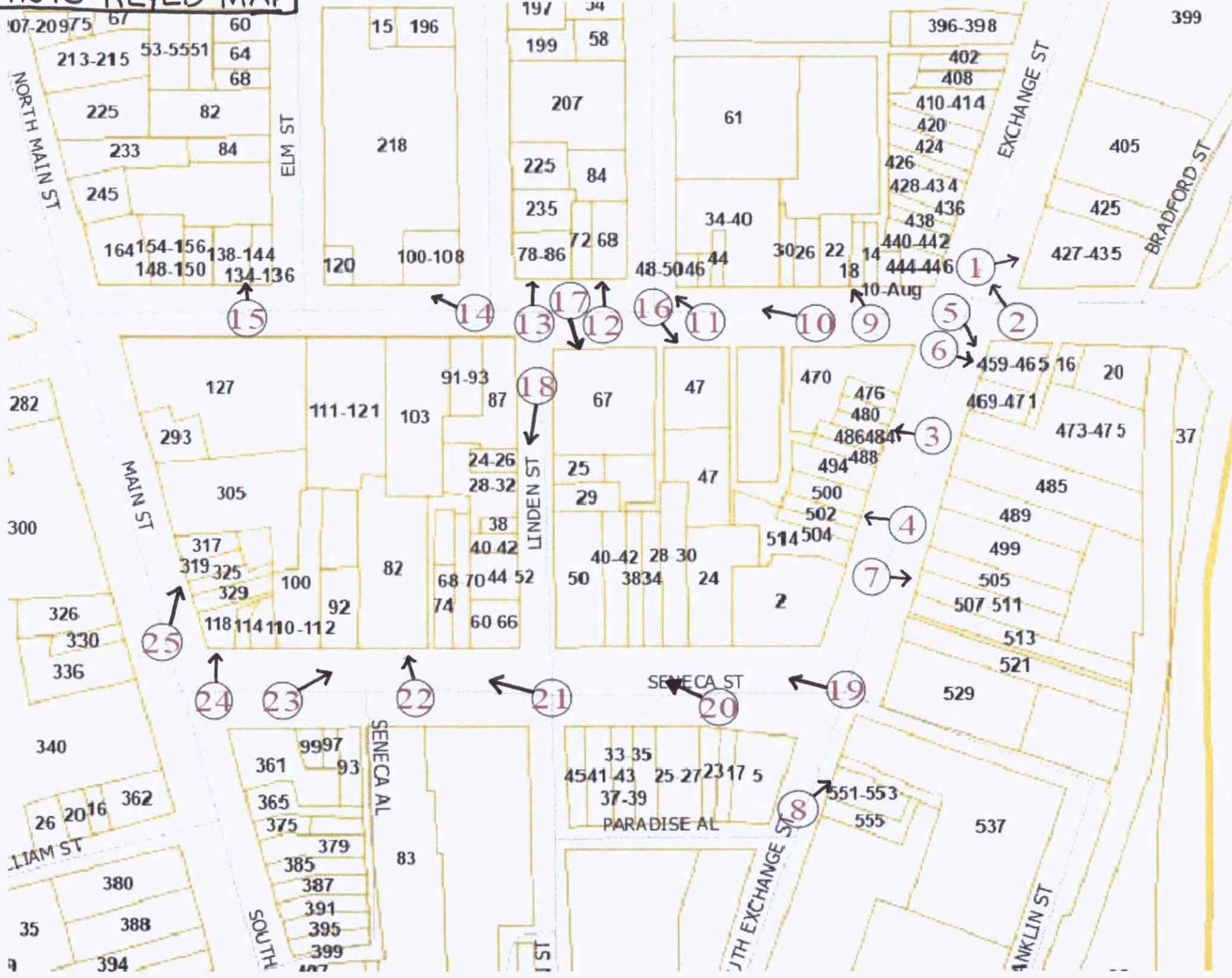
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

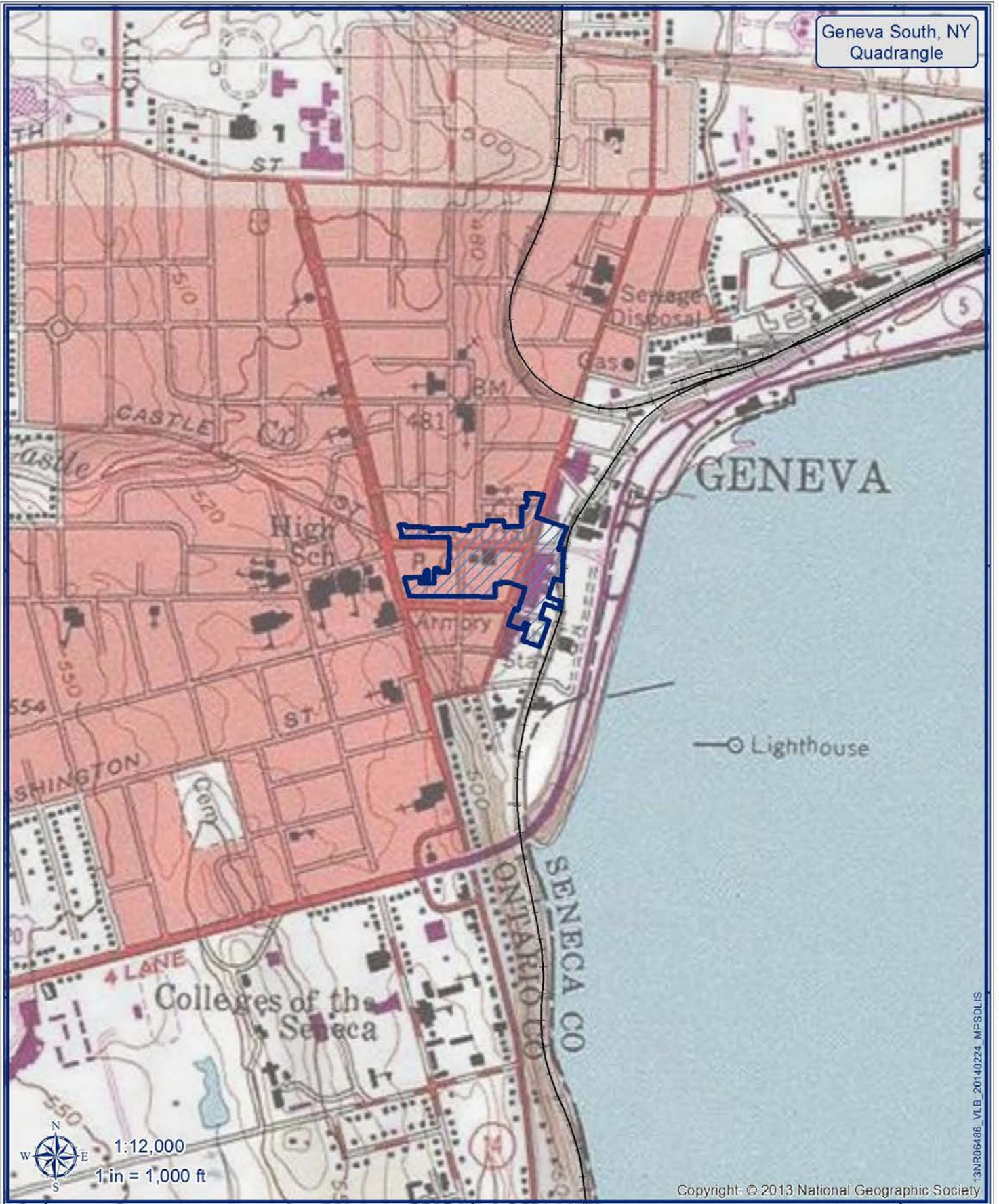
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to 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 18 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.

# PHOTO KEYED MAP







Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter



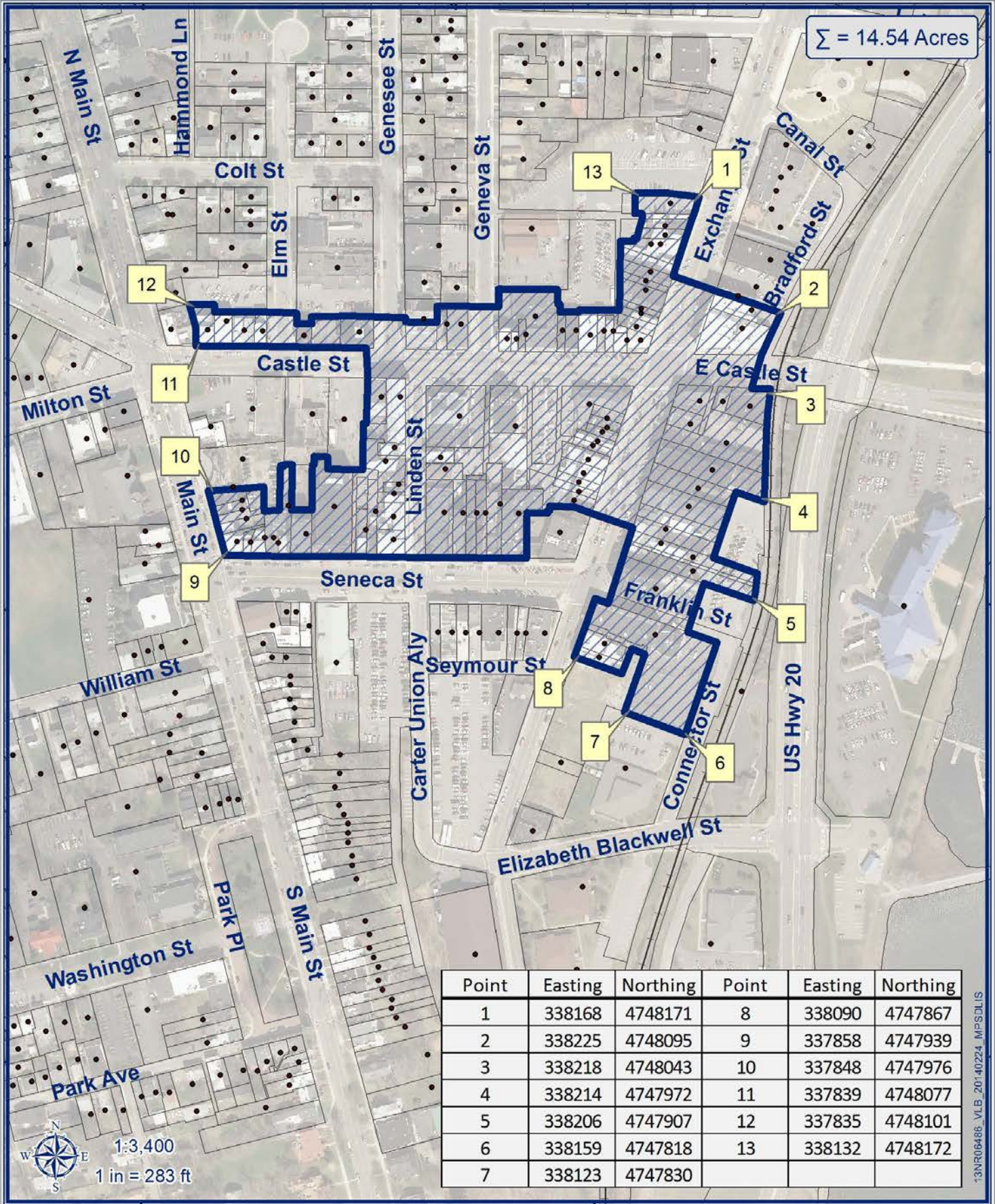
 Commercial HD

Tax Parcel Data:  
Ontario Co. RPS  
<http://oncor.co.ontario.ny.us>





Σ = 14.54 Acres



Point	Easting	Northing	Point	Easting	Northing
1	338168	4748171	8	338090	4747867
2	338225	4748095	9	337858	4747939
3	338218	4748043	10	337848	4747976
4	338214	4747972	11	337839	4748077
5	338206	4747907	12	337835	4748101
6	338159	4747818	13	338132	4748172
7	338123	4747830			

4748200

4748200

4747900

4747900

4747600

4747600

337800

338100

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter



Tax Parcel Data:  
Ontario Co. RPS  
<http://oncor.co.ontario.ny.us>











Whisper Chocolate

Whisper Chocolate

MOTHER EARTH  
NATURAL FOODS

POWER UP

Whisper Chocolate

Whisper Chocolate





OPUS

TRAVEL PORT

CAM'S NEW YORK PIZZERIA 789-6297

OPEN

月





THE  
YARN SHOP

SIDE SHOW

BASE LINE

Gallagher's Irish Pub

STOMPING GROUNDS  
ART - BOOKS - GIFTS

STOMPING GROUNDS  
ART - BOOKS - GIFTS









DOVE BLOCK

WATER T. C. F.

EXCHANGE ST

ONE WAY

R X R





GENEVA

Rugs Furniture Bedding

Lynch's

GENEVA BICYCLE CENTER

Kid Venture Bank

STI

ACQUA VIVA





ONE FRANKLIN SQUARE

THE  
HOLIDAY  
Saloon

STOP







CASTLE ST.

EXCHANGE ST.

PANTRY

G-TOWN PHILLY'S

Amoroso's

(whisper) chocolate

FLORISSIMO  
FLOWERS & GIFTS













MEMBER CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

THE CENTENNIAL



68  
CASTLE STREET

CASTLE ST





YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

CASTLE  
STREET











FOR SALE  
Century 21  
Steve Crowl Real Estate  
(315) 789-4569

CLOSED

DiDURO'S SHOES

131

134







CITY HALL



NO PARKING  
IN FRONT OF  
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EXCEPT FOR  
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BY  
Ned Spelman















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LOUNGE

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SENECA  
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Geneva Downtown Commercial Historic District

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Ontario

DATE RECEIVED: 4/02/14      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/25/14  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/12/14      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/19/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000225

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: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT 5/13/19 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER *Amenty* DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



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

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



**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
Governor

**Rose Harvey**  
Commissioner

28 March 2014

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

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

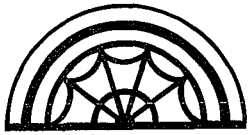
I am pleased to enclose the following four National Register nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Bangall Post Office, Dutchess County  
Glenville District No. 5 Schoolhouse, Schenectady County  
Frank and Eliza Tryon House, Cayuga County  
Geneva Downtown Historic District, Ontario County

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

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank  
National Register Coordinator  
New York State Historic Preservation Office



# Geneva Historical Society

543 South Main St.  
Geneva, NY 14456

(315) 789-5151  
Fax: (315) 789-0314

*Geneva Historical  
Society Museum*

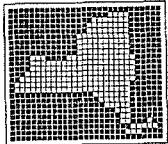
*Balmanno Cottage*

*Rose Hill Mansion*

*John Johnston Farm*

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November 26, 2013

Ruth Pierpont, Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation  
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau  
Peebles Island, PO Box 189  
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Dear Ms. Pierpont,

Thank you for offering me the opportunity to comment on the Geneva Commercial Historic District's consideration for nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places. I feel that our Commercial Historic District is deserving of nomination as the area has many different architectural styles with buildings constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Seneca Street has several major buildings in a variety of styles.

The Schnirel Building at 96 Seneca Street was built in 1899 in the Chicago Style of Architecture and was Geneva's first "skyscraper" at 5 stories high. The Smith Opera House, a nice example of Richardsonian Romanesque style, at 82 Seneca Street was built for the City by William Smith, founder of William Smith College. 93 Seneca St. (c.1897) is Federal Style and\* the Guard Building at 64 Seneca has Classical Revival details.

J. W. Smith Dry Goods was housed in 40-42 Seneca Street; it was the oldest dry goods company in America at the time it closed in 1975. The building at 28 Seneca St. was built in 1928, and while a plain yellow brick, it was built to be fireproof with many innovations for its time.

In the downtown area bounded by Castle, Exchange, Seneca and Linden Streets there are at least 2 companies that have been in business for over 100 years, Lynch's Furniture on Exchange Street and C. S. Burrall on Lyndon Street.

Exchange Street is historic for what it adds to the history of the City. Once named Water Street, the name was changed to Exchange St. to reflect the amount of business transacted on the street. Buildings of the Chicago School of Architecture (with a local interpretation), Italianate Style, and High Victorian Italianate Style can be found on Exchange St. 441-465 Exchange was built by Wm. Dove in 1878. Dove was a brick maker and contractor who constructed Belhurst Castle on Lochland Road. He was also the father of Arthur Dove a famous modern painter who

used the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the building as his studio during less prosperous times in the 1930s.

On Castle Street both City Hall and the Post Office are approaching 100 year anniversaries. The City encourages restorations of building facades and the Historical Society has begun seasonal walking tours of the area to promote knowledge and an appreciation of the commercial history that\* took place in this area.

I have only touched on the history, architecture and stories embodied in the Geneva Commercial Historic District. It would require many pages to go into detail about the importance of this area to our city. I hope this letter will enable the Review Board to get a sense of the value of this collection of buildings to Geneva's History.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen D. Osburn".

Karen D. Osburn,  
City of Geneva Historian