

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE SURVEY FORM

HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY NO.

HISTORIC NAME: Engine House #3, Truck #2
 LOCATION: 501 Observer Highway
 MUNICIPALITY: Hoboken
 USGS QUAD:
 OWNER/ADDRESS: City of Hoboken, N.J. 07030

COMMON NAME: Engine Co. #1, Truck Co. #2
 BLOCK/LOT 8A/1
 COUNTY: Hudson
 UTM REFERENCES:
 Zone/Easting/Northing

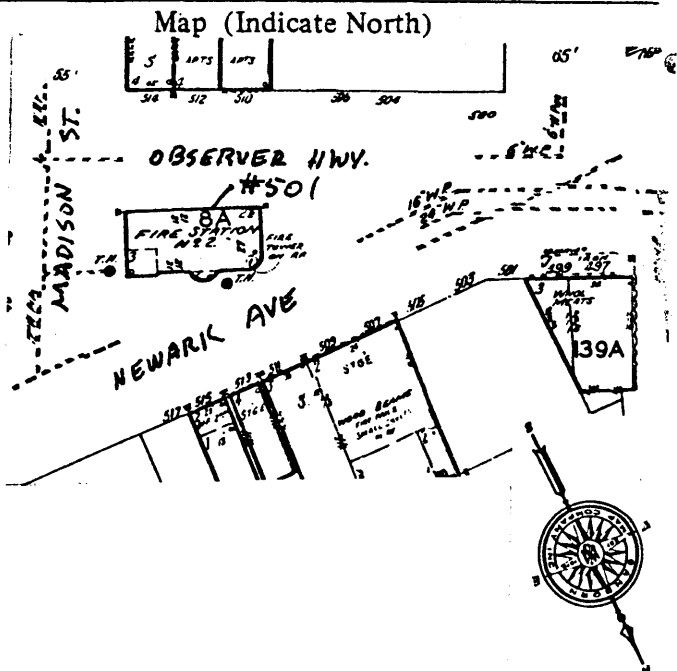
DESCRIPTION

Construction Date: 1892
 Architect: Charles Fall
 Style: Romanesque Revival
 Number of Stories: 2, with tower
 Foundation: fieldstone
 Exterior Wall Fabric: brick with sandstone trim
 Fenestration: (var. on each facade): 1 over 1 on 1st floor; 1 over 1 on 2nd fl., with arched transoms.
 Roof/Chimneys: central pitched roof on east/west axis; chimneys at central
 Additional Architectural Description: Parapets of each facade.

Source of Date: plaque on western facade
 Builder: M. Foley & Son, masons; A.W. Clayton, carpenter
 Form/Plan Type: rectangular

The rectangular firehouse is on a triangular site at a major intersection and has a rectangular fire tower at its southeast corner. The building is of an orange-brown brick with brownstone trim and a fieldstone foundation. Its four sides featured moulded brick, carved decorative bandings, and a pleasing variety of materials. The rectangular tower originally terminated in a pyramidal slate roof. The area between the third storey level and the roof was filled in with a Romanesque arcade to suggest a belvedere. The rounded southeast corner featured a conical roof which rose to third storey level and was also presumably of slate. Although it is a visually prominent building, the exterior changes detract from its importance as an architectural achievement.

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This firehouse is the southernmost one in the city, and is built on a triangular site at the intersection of Newark and Madison Sts.

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Urban Suburban Scattered Buildings
 Open Space Woodland Residential Agricultural Village
 Industrial Downtown Commerical Highway Commercial Other

SIGNIFICANCE:

As the only free-standing firehouse built by the city until the yr. 1898, Engine Co. #1 was the grandest and most impressively-scaled of the Hoboken firehouses. Designed by Hoboken architect Charles Fall, the building featured the use of rectangular and circular towers at the corners of its southern facade. The laterally-oriented engine area provided maximum accessibility to all locations in the city. Its prominent corner location, apart from its functional aspects, also underscores the importance of the firehouse--a symbol of security and municipal planning--placed at a gateway area of the city. The alterations described the the reverse side are major ones that detract and obliterate the original architectural intent of a richly-ornamented structure. The historical importance of the building, however, remains intact.

ORIGINAL USE: firehouse PRESENT USE: same
 PHYSICAL CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Poor
 REGISTER ELIGIBILITY: Yes Possible No Part of District
 THREATS TO SITE: Roads Development Zoning Deterioration
 No Threat Other

COMMENTS. This building represents a tangible link to the fire-fighting history of the city, but alterations have severely compromised its architectural integrity. The finding of National Register eligibility for the structure would hold out the possibility of its future restoration, and would enhance the proposed Thematic Nomination of Hoboken firehouses by offering a developmental context within which to view the other houses.

REFERENCES:

Hoboken Board of Trade, Bulletin, Vol. III, Nov. 1912, "Hoboken's Firefighters," pp. 91-95.
 Hoboken Board of Trade, Bulletin, Vol. III, March 1913, "Hoboken's Progress," pp.149.

RECORDED BY: Patricia Florio
 ORGANIZATION: ---

DATE: February, 1983