

OMB NO. 1010-0018
EPA 1010-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only
received AUG 23 1983
date entered SEP 22 1983

1. Name

historic Addendum to James Street Commons Historic District *Addendum*

and/or common Eagle Fire Insurance Company of Newark

2. Location

street & number 18 Washington Place not for publication

city, town Newark vicinity of congressional district

state New Jersey code 34 county Essex code 013

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name 18 Washington Place Associates (Aspen Group)

street & number 56 Park Place

city, town Newark vicinity of state New Jersey

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Essex County Hall of Records

street & number High Street

city, town Newark vicinity of state New Jersey

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Office of Historic Preservation

city, town Trenton vicinity of state NJ

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair
 deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The James Street Commons Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places on January 9, 1978 has two basic components.

- Urban streetscapes of late 19th century middle class masonry rowhouses representing an era when Newark was a vibrant growing industrial city.
- and, located essentially along Washington Park, a collection of some of the city's most important 20th century institutional and commercial large scale buildings reflecting Newark's statewide prominence as a financial and educational center in the 1910's - 30's.

The Eagle Fire Insurance Company building at 18 Washington Place is opposite Washington Park and the Globe Indemnity Insurance building. Both the park and Globe building are in the original boundaries of the James Street Commons Historic District. This application proposes to append the Eagle Fire Insurance Co. building to that district.

18 Washington Place is a four-story Neoclassical style office building located on the south side of Washington Park, at the southeast corner of Washington Place and Halsey Street in downtown Newark.

The building was constructed in 1931-32, to the designs of Newark architect and mechanical engineer Frederick A. Phelps (1864-1948). It was built as the home office building for the Eagle Fire Insurance Company of Newark, which occupied the building from its completion in 1932 until the company moved due to financial difficulties in the mid-1940's.

Architecturally, 18 Washington Place reflects the restrained, planar approach to Neoclassical design typical of the 1920's and early 1930's. On the north and west facades, the building's brick walls are faced in smooth Indiana limestone above a low, granite-faced base. On the first floor, round-headed door and window openings are framed with simple flat archivolt. The main entrance, on the north facade facing the park, includes Neoclassical/Federal Revival-style ornament of good quality. The doors themselves, the flanking colonettes, and the radiating muntins and Eagle center ornament in the fanlight, are all of bronze.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1931-32

Builder/Architect Frederick A. Phelps

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- ARCHITECTURALLY, 18 Washington Place is a very good example of the restrained, thoughtful Neoclassical/Federal Revival idiom of the 1920's and early 1930's. Its exterior details (in limestone and bronze) and interior details (in marble, mahogany, and molded plaster) are both carefully designed and well executed. In plan, the building follows a scheme common to that found in other insurance buildings of the period in Newark. There are large, open office floors with formal office areas at the front of the building, and the first floor is treated similarly to a banking room, with high, molded ceilings and formal public areas near the entrance.
- URBANISTICALLY, 18 Washington Place is an integral, contributing part of its surroundings on a number of levels. Its design (with limestone exterior wall facing, classical ornament, arcuated ground floor treatment, etc.) closely parallels that of the other major buildings which define the character of the west and south sides of Washington Park.

Its location makes it a significant anchor building for the Washington Park portion of the James Street Commons district: With its much larger but architecturally similar neighbor across Halsey Street, 18 Washington Place forms a strong north-south gateway to Washington Park and the James Street Commons district. Viewed from east to west, the building defines a crucial boundary between the historic portion of the Washington Park institutional/office area and the more open, commercial character of the streetscape along Broad Street. The building and its neighbors to the north and west comprise the historic area, while the scale, function and level of architectural quality and integrity make a decisive change immediately east of 18 Washington Place.

- HISTORICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY, 18 Washington Place is significant as one of the numerous downtown office buildings built for insurance industry in Newark, one of the most important determinants of the city's economic and cultural character through the 19th and 20th centuries. Like other significant insurance buildings of the 1920's and 30's (two of which, the Globe Indemnity Building of 1920 and the American Insurance Company Building of 1930, are its neighbors on Washington Park) 18 Washington Place follows the pattern of restrained but substantial Classically-influenced design as an image of financial responsibility and strength.

9. Major Bibliographical References

The historical information used in preparing this proposal was gathered from the Newark Evening News files of the Newark Public Library's New Jersey Reference Room, and from the National Register Nomination Form for the James Street Commons Historic District.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 1/10th

Quadrangle name Elizabeth

Quadrangle scale 1: 24000

UMT References

A

1	8	5	6	9	9	8	0	4	5	1	0	2	0	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 22, Lots 10&11

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title William J. Higgins, Development Coordinator

organization The Aspen Group

date March, 1982

street & number 56 Park Place

telephone (201) 623-0300

city or town Newark

state New Jersey

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Russell W. Myers August 15, 1983

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature]
Keeper of the National Register

[Signature]
National Register

date 9/22/83

Affect:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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Newark, Essex County, N.J.

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The window openings on the upper three floors are rectangular, and the multi-paned aluminum sash are original on all floors. The first two floors are topped by a simple Doric Entablature, above very severe, flat pilasters placed between the masonry openings. The facade treatments on the third and fourth floors are simple and planar giving an impression of increased height above the somewhat more ornamented lower floors. The wall surfaces on the upper floors are uniformly flat except for very slight recesses around the window openings, and a thin vertical corner recess which accents the intersection of the front and side facades. A simplified entablature marks the division between the fourth floor and the low limestone parapet which tops the facades. The south and east elevations are of brick, strictly functional and devoid of ornament or calculated visual character.

The original interior office spaces were mostly open except for formal, wood-paneled front offices on each floor. The formal offices have remained unchanged, but the open spaces were partitioned into classrooms and smaller office spaces in 1948, when Rutgers University acquired the building as part of its expanded downtown Newark campus. In addition to the office spaces, the interior includes a formal first floor lobby with molded plaster ceiling ornament, terrazzo floors, marble wainscots and door enframements, and an elaborate bronze revolving door enclosure. There are also small elevator lobbies on each of the upper floors with ornamental finishes of marble and molded plaster. The building also contains a high basement space, partly encircled by an open mezzanine. Both of these below grade spaces are treated in a simple, functional fashion, with no significant or ornamental details.

Rutgers University vacated 18 Washington Place in 1981, and has recently entered into a contract to sell the building. Subsequent to sale, the building's 21,000 square feet of floor space will be rehabilitated for modern office use, with appropriate preservation of its historic character and significant architectural features.

Note that the proposed extension includes only 18 Washington Place, and no other additional buildings. The supplemental photos and information indicate that the buildings to the east and south of 18 Washington Place represent a distinct change in character and significance, and therefore do not warrant inclusion in the James Street Commons Historic District.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

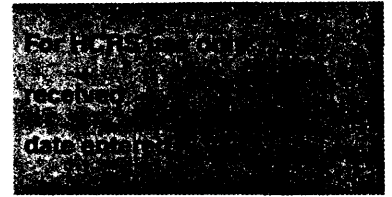
**National Register of Historic Places
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James Street Historic District Addendum
Newark, Essex County, N.J.

Continuation sheet

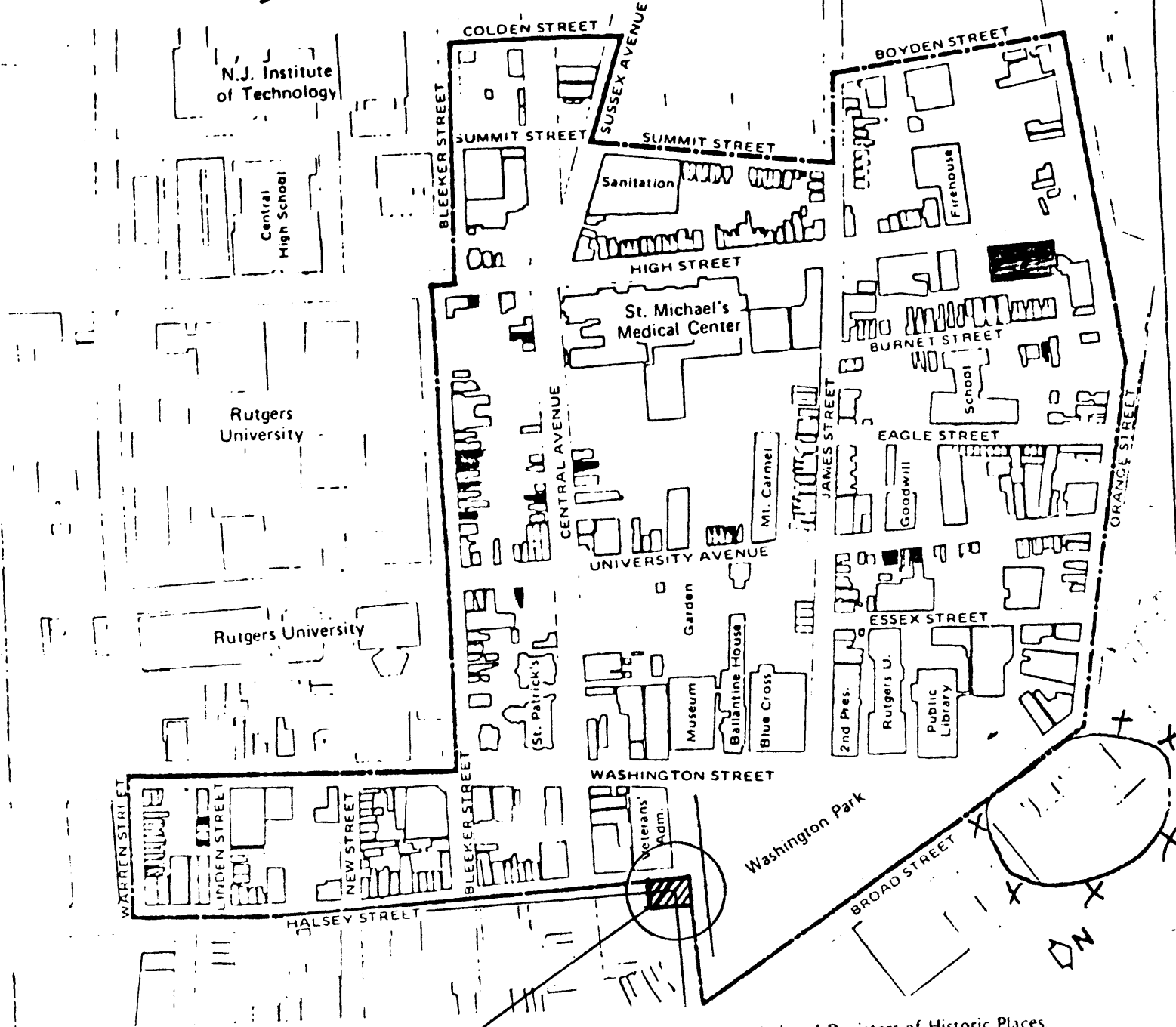
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Based on its significance in all of these categories, we believe that 18 Washington Place warrants listing on the National Register. Specifically, we propose that the boundaries of the James Street Commons Historic District be extended to include 18 Washington Place as an additional building.

THE JAMES STREET COMMONS



Heavy border encloses the 20 blocks that have been placed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

ADDENDUM TO THE JAMES STREET COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT - EAGLE
 FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY OF NEWARK, 18 Washington Place
 Newark City, Essex County, NJ