

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

OMB NO. 1024-0018, NPS FORM

RECEIVED  
MAY 01 1991  
6664

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility of individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets. Type all entries.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name FOSTER BUILDING  
other names/site number HOTEL FOSTER

**2. Location**

street & number 508 STATE STREET | | not for publication N/A  
city, town SCHENECTADY | | vicinity N/A  
state NY code 036 county SCHENECTADY code 903 zip code 12305

**3. Classification**

Ownership of property	Category	Number of resources within property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	0 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	0	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listings: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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, this property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

*Julia S. Stohr*  
Signature of certifying official  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
State or Federal agency and bureau  
Date 4/24/91

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

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  see continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:)

*Melrose Byers*  
Signature of keeper  
Date of Action 6/3/91

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Function  
(enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/hotel and  
COMMERCE/retail stores  

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Current Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling and  
COMMERCE/retail stores  

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
enter categories from instructions)

Beaux-Arts  

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Materials(enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE  
walls BRICK/TERRA COTTA  
STONE/limestone  
roof ASPHALT  
other METAL/GLASS  

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Foster Building is a six-story commercial/residential structure located on the south side of State Street within a commercial block in downtown Schenectady. Built in 1907 as a hotel, it towers above adjacent buildings, most of which are three stories high. Its presence within the commercial block is accentuated by its highly ornate Beaux Arts facade executed in glazed white terra-cotta. Side and rear elevations of this rectangular steel-framed building are of yellow brick. Commercial space occupies the first two floors while the upper floors are devoted to rental/apartment units.

The Foster Building's Beaux-Arts facade is its most outstanding feature. A prominent metal cornice caps the facade while layers of ornamented and oversized, paired brackets disguise the presence of the smaller sixth floor. Below the cornice, a trio of pedimented Roman arches rests on three-story-high engaged pillars. The outer pair are rectangular pilasters with Corinthian capitals and the interior pair are fluted, half-round, engaged columns with elaborate Ionic capitals. Garlands entwine the lower third of the two interior columns. Between the columns, the facade is recessed with three bays of paired double hung wood windows of 1/1 sash and decorative panels. A central panel between the fourth and fifth floor bears the legend, "Foster Building". Windows on the fifth floor, under the arches, consist of round-arched openings with small roundels centered between each pair. The two-story storefront space is framed with bands of acanthus leaves and floral garlands bound together with mock keystones and horizontal blocks. The original storefront consisted of two-story bays containing plate glass windows flanking a central recessed entrance, with access to the hotel located to the extreme right. Renovation undertaken during the late 1920's included moving the central recessed entrance forward, encasing the first floor storefronts in marble with brass framing, inserting a panel of blind arches between the floors, and replacing the large plate glass windows on the second floor with individual fixed panel windows set below smaller fixed pane windows. A metal cresting on the top of the cornice was also removed at this time.

The exposed side and rear walls of the building are constructed of yellow brick with single and paired double hung wood windows of either 1/1 or 2/2 sash set into semi-elliptical arched openings. Original shutter hardware still exists on most windows. The flat roof is built-up asphalt with metal flashing to a brick parapet and metal copings; at the chimney the coping is a stone cap.

The interior of the first floor features steel columns and a pressed metal ceiling fourteen feet high. The entrance for the upper floors has a mosaic tile floor with the monogram "FB" surrounded by a geometric tile border. This entrance retains much of the original interior detail which first greeted visitors to the Hotel Foster; white and black travertine marble wainscot and plaster walls, a coffered wood ceiling, and a stairwell where a monumental marble faced staircase provides the main access to the upper floors. Light pink marble wainscot with pink marble trim lines the staircase.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Foster Building  
Schenectady  
Schenectady County

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A large wooden doorway with a semi-elliptical arched transom demarks the second floor landing. The second floor features various pressed metal ceilings, Classically-detailed wood trim, embossed wainscoting, and pressed glass room dividers. An oak staircase with oak railings and wainscot leads to the upper floors and encircles the elevator shaft, which was added in 1914. A large brass skylight provides natural light to the stairhall and floors below.

The remaining floors of the building were laid out with individual hotel-sized rooms on a double-loaded corridor. In 1985 these floors were renovated for use as individual apartments. Apartments were created by combining individual hotel rooms. Features of the upper floors include plaster walls and ceilings, hardwood flooring, wide moldings with corner blocks, and paneled doors with a transom lights onto the corridor. The sixth floor, which originally contained servants' rooms and storage space, has also been remodeled to function as additional rental space.

The Foster Building is an outstanding example of early twentieth century Beaux-Arts commercial architecture in the region. With the exception of the ca. 1920 renovations, which altered the original commercial storefront space, and the adaptation of the hotel rooms to rental units in 1985, the building remains substantially as built.

### 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:         nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations                     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of significance	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>ARCHITECTURE</u>	<u>1907</u>	<u>N/A</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Cultural Affiliation
<u>N/A</u>
_____
_____

Significant Person	Architect/Builder
<u>N/A</u>	<u>PENN VARNEY/Architect</u>
	<u>HANRAHAN BROTHERS/Builders</u>

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Foster Building is architecturally significant a distinguished example of early-twentieth century Beaux-Arts commercial architecture in the region. Built in 1907, this six-story building, which features one of the most highly decorated terra-cotta facades in the region, reflects the widespread influence of the City Beautiful movement popularized by the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, as well as the cosmopolitan aspirations of Schenectady during its boom years at the turn of the century. The quality of the original interior materials and workmanship reinforces the overall elegance of the building.

The Foster Building was built during a period of massive growth in the city of Schenectady, after the 1892 consolidation of the Edison Machine Works with other companies to form the General Electric Company (GE). Between 1880 and 1910, the city's population quadrupled. Trolley lines, electrified by GE in 1891, connected the sprawling GE complex with downtown and a growing network of streetcar suburbs. Local entrepreneur Charles Brown, owner of Schenectady's pre-eminent Edison Hotel (built in 1900), was quick to respond to the growing need for transient housing to accommodate GE employees in need of bachelor quarters, traveling salesmen, and tourists visiting the city. He commissioned architect Penn Varney of Lynn, Massachusetts, to design the Foster Building. Local general contractors, the Hanrahan Brothers, were then engaged to build the structure without delay at a cost of \$50,000.

The Foster Building's elaborate Beaux-Arts facade, executed in white glazed terra-cotta, was (and still is) an anomaly in Schenectady's turn-of-the-century downtown streetscape, which previously had been characterized by typical late-nineteenth century brick commercial buildings. Its well-preserved facade, which features Classically-inspired decorative detail, a bold metal cornice, prominent Roman arches and multi-storied, engaged columns and pilasters, is outstanding for the sculptural quality of its eclectic ornamentation and the complex layering of its wall surfaces which create an unusually intricate composition of great vigor typical of the Beaux-Arts style. The inspiration for this bold, eclectic style is attributable to the era's premier school of architecture, France's Ecole des Beaux-Arts, which greatly influenced the genre of late nineteenth and early-twentieth century architecture.

The lavishness of the Foster Building's Beaux-Arts facade is accentuated by the medium of white glazed terra cotta. Although the use of terra cotta in architecture dates back to ancient Greek and Roman times, architectural terra cotta was not generally accepted in the United States until the mid 1870's when it gained popularity for its comparative low cost over stone, its ornamental possibilities, and, after the Chicago

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEETFoster Building  
Schenectady  
Schenectady County

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fire of 1871, for its fireproof properties. Prior to 1890, terra cotta was primarily used in conjunction with brick to highlight and emphasize architectural detail, after that it became commonly used for exterior cladding over steel-frame structures such as the Foster Building. While terra-cotta was a material in great use during this time, the level of intricate detailing found on the Foster Building places it outside the norm for the region. The only comparable example of such intricate work in the area is the McCarthy Building in Troy (also National Register listed).

The significance of the Foster Building's Beaux-Arts design in white glazed terra cotta, however, reaches even beyond its physical attributes as a distinct example of its style. It also reflects the turn of the century fashion often referred to as the City Beautiful movement. This movement, an outgrowth of the 1893 Columbian Exposition, advocated monumental, luxuriously appointed architecture in light and bright hues, reminiscent of Imperial Rome. Its influence primarily manifested itself in prosperous urban centers where turn-of-the-century wealth was concentrated and the construction of these lavishly appointed civic and commercial monuments was economically feasible. The presence of such a structure in downtown Schenectady indicates the surge of prosperity ushered into the city by General Electric during the latter part of the Nineteenth century as well as Schenectady's cosmopolitan aspirations in keeping pace with major metropolises of the period.

Of added significance is the Foster Building's continuity of historic use. The lower two floors have functioned as retail space since the building's construction, while the upper floors have consistently been occupied either as a hotel, or more recently as apartment units. Cluett and Sons, a sheet music and piano store, was the principal occupant of the retail space from 1910 until the mid-1970's. Since that time, a series of businesses have occupied the retail space of the building's lower floors.

The Hotel Foster, which was located on the upper floors, was considered to be one of the finest and largest hotels in Schenectady. When the hotel opened, it offered sixty furnished rooms with a bathroom and separate toilet on each floor, hot and cold water in every room, and all other modern conveniences, including an elevator, for one dollar a day. An advertisement in the 1911 City Directory called the Hotel Foster "...an up-to-date clean, quiet and comfortable place for tourists and traveling men." A later ad in the 1915 directory pointed out the hotel's location "...two doors from new Waiting Room...In the heart of the business section." The "Waiting Room" (at State and Lafayette Streets) was the central waiting room for Schenectady's trolley systems, which opened in 1913 after protracted and well publicized negotiations for its site. Thus, centrally located in a booming downtown, the Hotel Foster thrived, offering both daily and weekly rates. A 1938 photograph advertising special weekly rates suggests a slightly declining clientele, as the weekly rates had only risen fifty cents since 1911.

Today, the Foster Building remains an architectural landmark in downtown Schenectady. Its remarkably intact terra cotta Beaux-Arts facade overwhelms the streetscape now as it did at the turn of the century. The design of the building not only reflects adherence to the dictates of a popular architectural style of the period; it also reflects the era's underlying national sentiment concerning urban design. Further, the Foster Building marks an important epoch in Schenectady's history, the establishment of GE within the city and the ensuing population growth and economic prosperity generated by the activities of this corporation. The highly intact, distinguished interior and exterior features of this building recall the grandeur of Schenectady's heyday and continue to contribute to the city today. The Foster Building remains a significant reflection of Schenectady's architectural and historical past.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:  
 State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property LESS THAN ONE ACRE

UTM References

<b>A</b>  1 8   5 8 6 6 0 0   4 7 4 0 2 2 0	<b>B</b>
Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property corresponds with the legal property lines as identified on the attached City of Schenectady Tax Map (1975).

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The current boundaries are the same as those historically associated with the nominated property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Linda M. Garofalini  
organization NYSOPRHP date April 18, 1991  
street & number Empire State Plaza, Bldg. #1 telephone (518) 474-0479  
city or town Albany state NY zip code 12238

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Foster Building  
Schenectady  
Schenectady County

Section number 9 Page 2

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REFERENCES

INTERVIEWS WITH:

Mr. Larry Hart. City/County Historian, Schenectady Gazette Editor.  
October 18, 1985.

Mr. Francis Poulin. Resident Historian of Schenectady,  
October, 18 and 21, 1985.

RESEARCH INFORMATION:

Albany, New York. Division for Historic Preservation. Research Files.

Lynn, Massachusetts. Lynn Historical Society. Research Files on Penn Varney.

Schenectady, New York. office of the City Historian, City Hall.  
Research Files including Dorp Scrapbooks, building permit ledges, and city directories.

Schenectady, New York. Schenectady County Historical Society. Research Files including photo files and BROWN genealogy file.

Schenectady Daily Union. March 14, 1910 pg.10.

Schenectady Evening Star. March 14, 1910 pg.2.

Schenectady Gazette, July 24, 1907 pg.10; January 1, 1908 pg. 6; March 15, 1910 pg. 6

National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Foster Building  
Schenectady  
Schenectady County

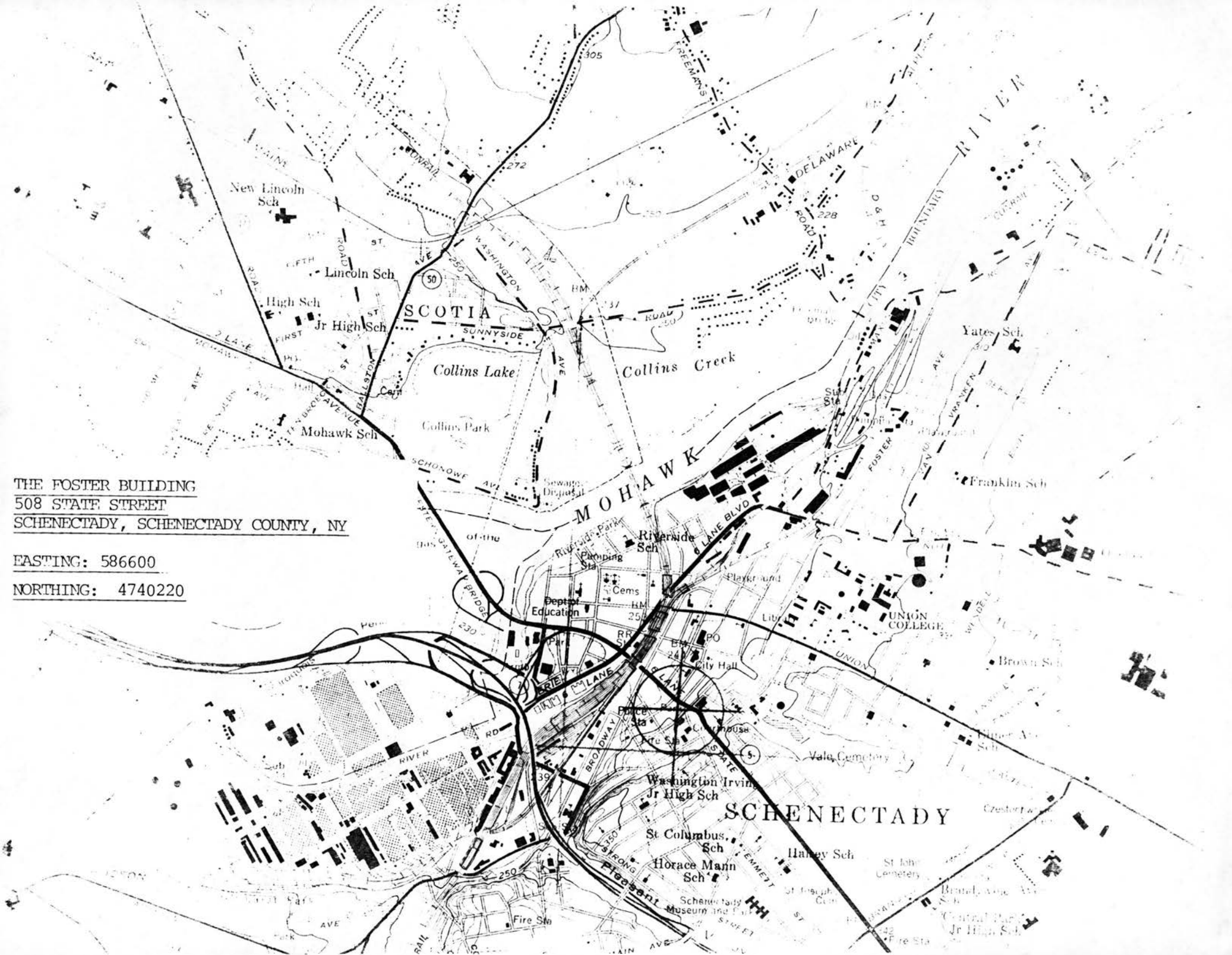
Section number 11 Page 2

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Research and documentation submitted by:

Mark Besse  
Cornerstone Architectural Services  
5 Broadway  
Suite 204  
Troy, New York 12180  
(518) 274-1102





THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE STREET  
SCHENECTADY, SCHENECTADY COUNTY, NY

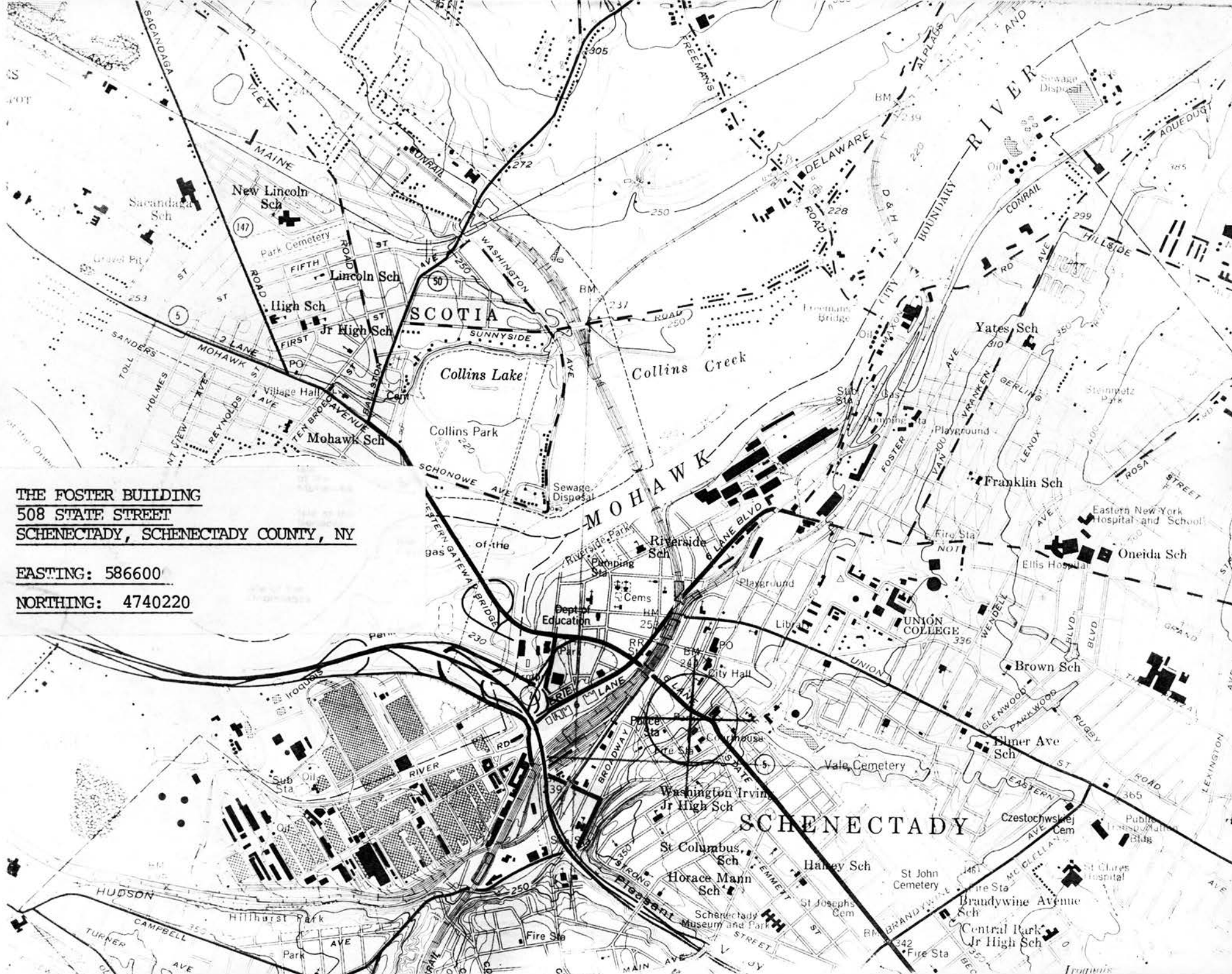
EASTING: 586600

NORTHING: 4740220

THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE STREET  
SCHEENECTADY, SCHEENECTADY COUNTY, NY

EASTING: 586600

NORTHING: 4740220



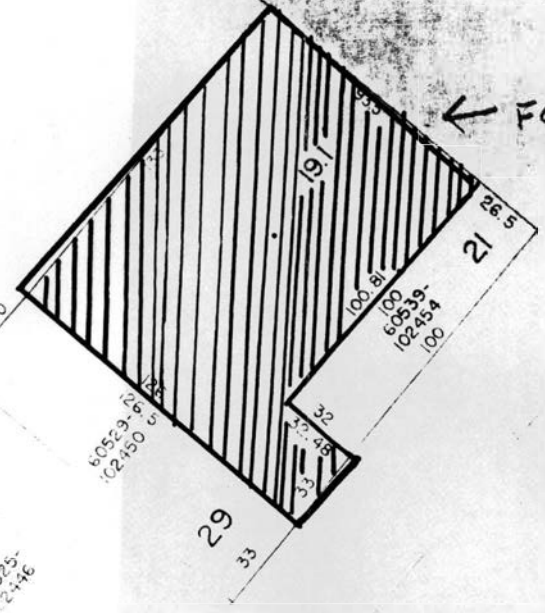


TAX MAP  
CITY OF SCHENECTADY  
SCHENECTADY COUNTY, NEW YORK

039.80

GRAPHIC SCALE  
MAP DATE DEC 17, 1975

2



FOSTER BLDG

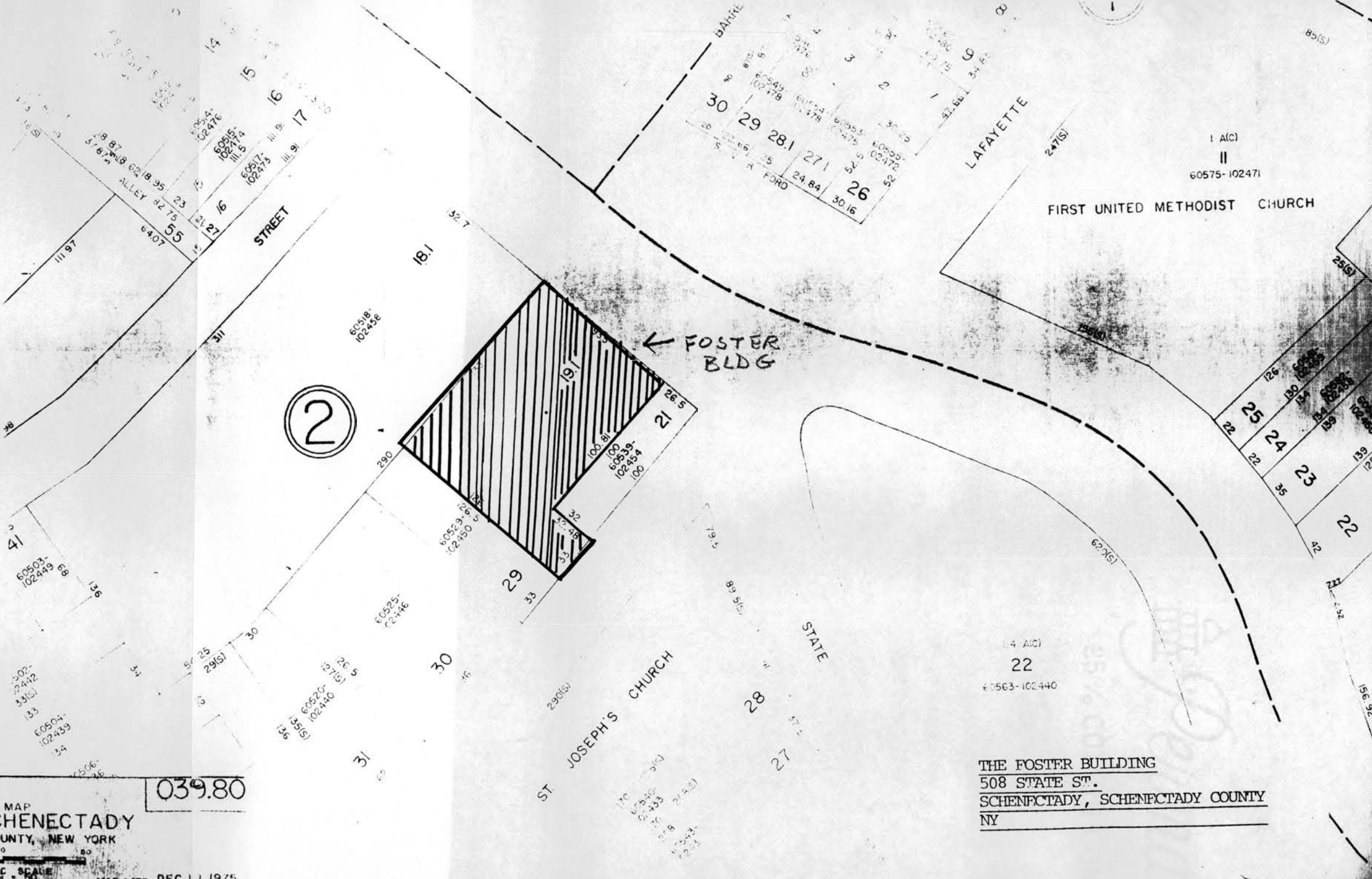
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH

THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE ST.  
SCHENECTADY, SCHENECTADY COUNTY  
NY

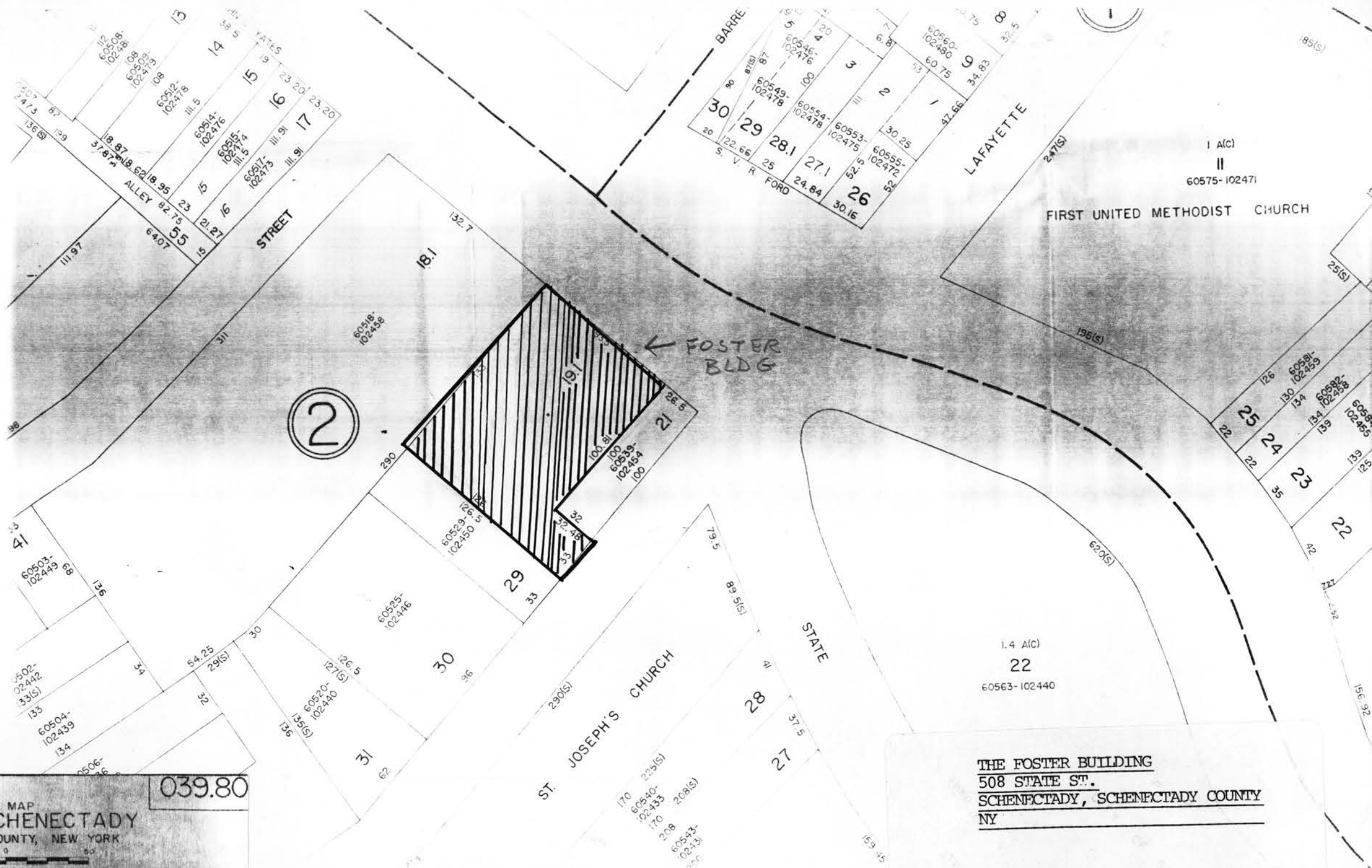
I A(C)  
II  
60575-102471

4 A(C)  
22  
60563-102440



Foster Building  
Schenectady Co. NY

Foster Building  
Scheneectady Co NY



039.80

TAX MAP  
CITY OF SCHENECTADY  
SCHENECTADY COUNTY, NEW YORK



MAP DATE DEC. 19, 1975

THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE ST.  
SCHENECTADY, SCHENECTADY COUNTY  
NY



OPEN

Handmade Sourdough  
Loaves  
\$1.49

Self-Serve  
YOGURT

COFFEE  
10¢

Hardens

COFFEE  
10¢

THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE ST.

Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

Photographer: Cornerstone Architectural Services  
5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. AT: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: DETAIL OF STOREFRONT - RETAIL SPACE  
FRONT FACADE





THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE STREET  
Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

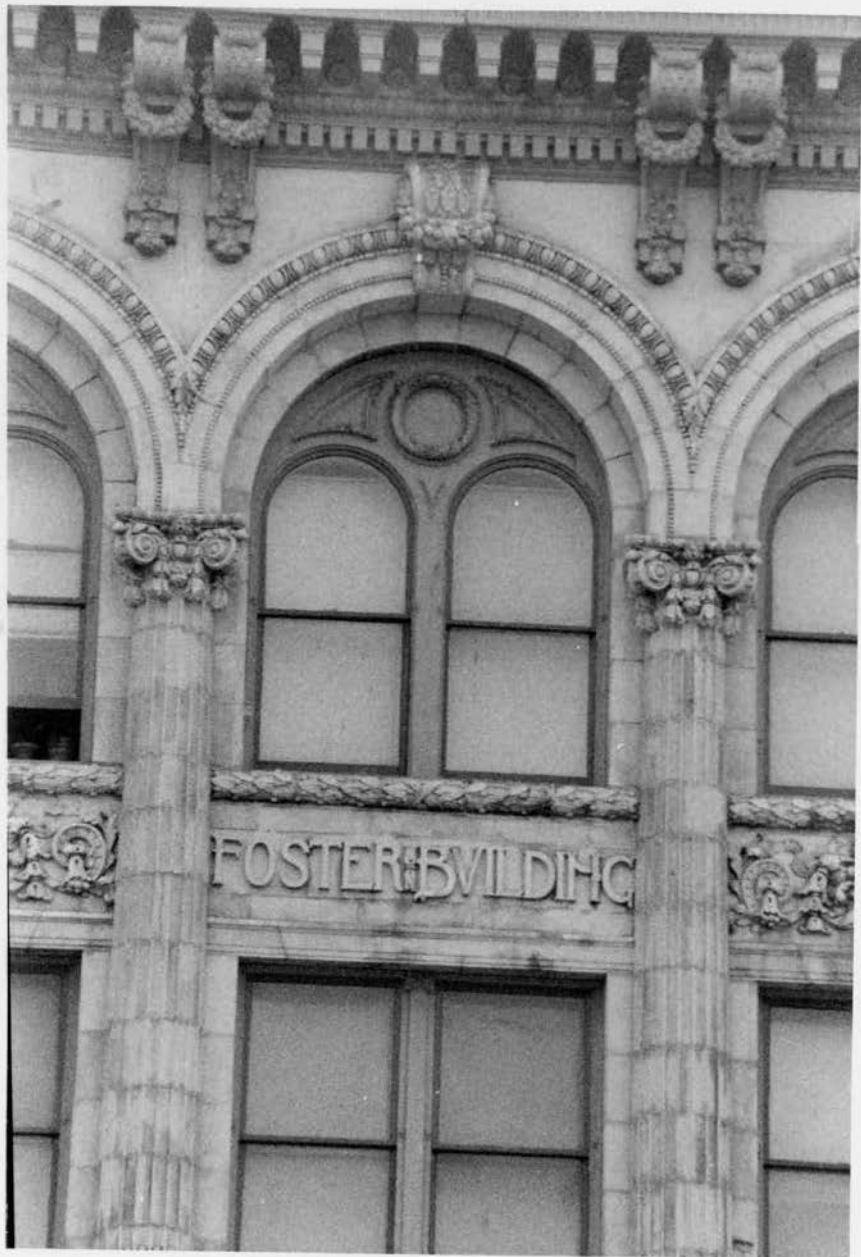
Photographer: Cornerstone Architectural  
Services

5 Broadway  
~~Schenectady, NY~~  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. AT: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: DETAIL OF TERRA-COTTA / FRONT FACADE



THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE ST.  
Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

Photographer: Cornerstone Architectural  
Service  
5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. AT: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: DETAIL / FRONT FACADE



THE FOSTER BUILDING

508 STATE ST.

Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

Photographer: Cornerstone Architectural  
Services

5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. AT: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: INTERIOR PRESSED TIN CEILING - 1<sup>ST</sup>  
FLOOR



THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE ST.  
SCHENECTADY, SCHENECTADY COUNTY, NY

Photographer: Cornerstone Architectural Services  
5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. AT: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: FRONT FACADE / NORTH ELEVATION





THE FOSTER BUILDING

508 STATE ST.

Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

Photographer: Cobblestone Architectural Services  
5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG AT: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: SOUTH + WEST ELEVATIONS



THE FOSTER BUILDING

508 STATE ST.

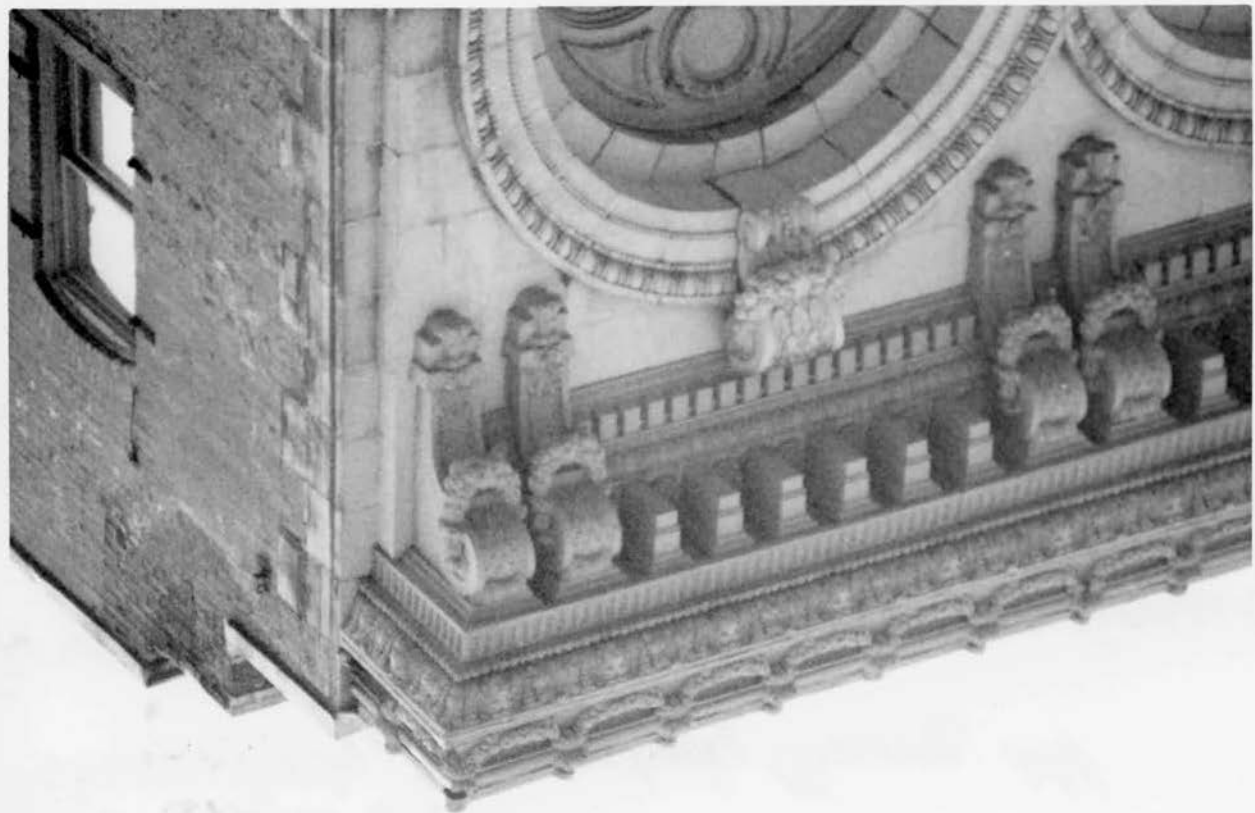
Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

Photographer: CORNERSTONE ARCHITECTURAL  
SERVICES  
5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. #1: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: EAST ELEVATION



THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE ST.  
Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

Photographer: Cornerstone Architectural Services  
5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. AT. SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: DETAIL OF CORNICE / FRONT FACADE



THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE ST.  
Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

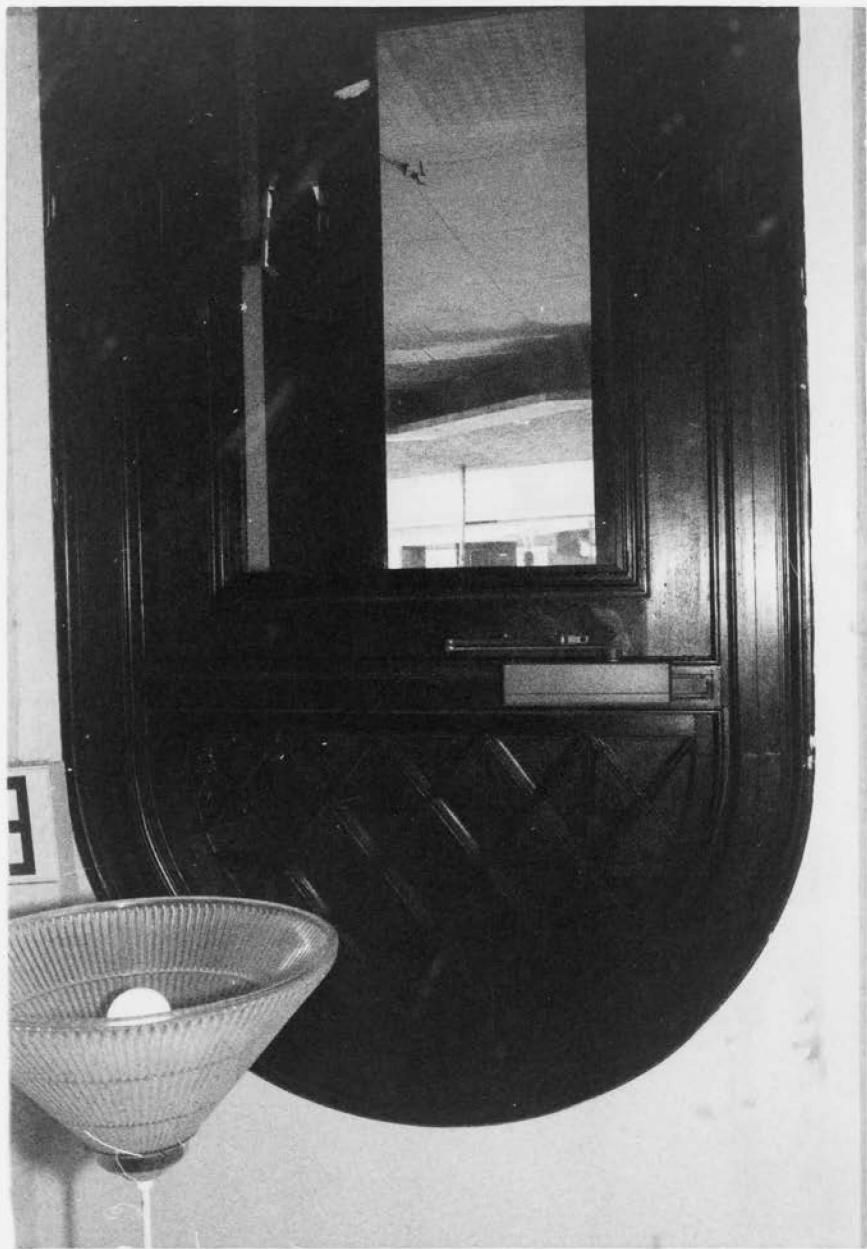
Photographer: CRANSTONE ARCHITECTURAL  
SERVICES

5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. W/: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: INTERIOR EMBOSSED WAINSCOTING -  
2nd FLOOR





THE FOSTER BUILDING

508 STATE ST.

Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

Photographer: Cornerstone Architectural  
Services  
5 Broadway  
Troy, NY 12180

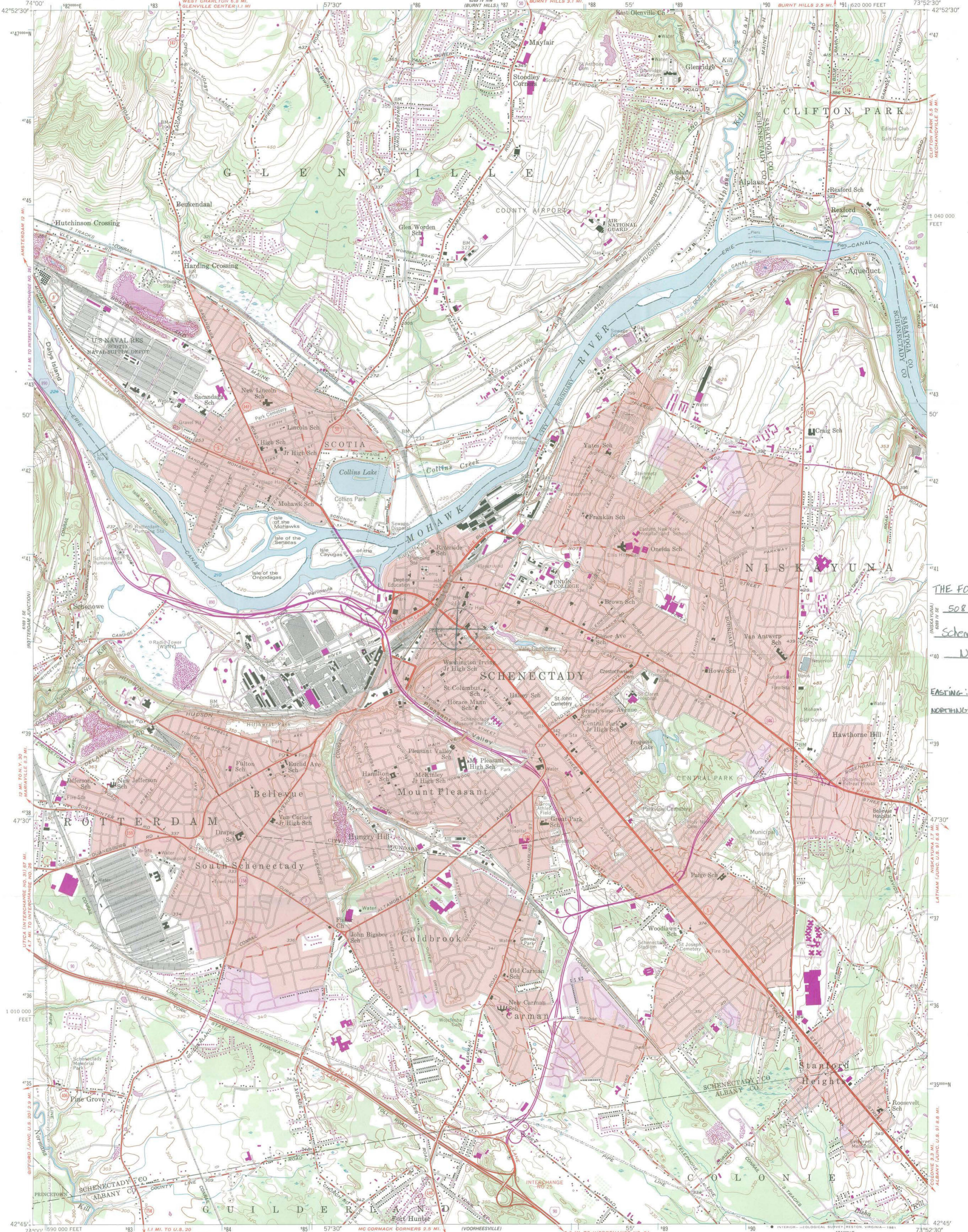
DATE: 1990

ORIG. NEG. AT: SAME AS ABOVE

VIEW: MAIN  
ENTRANCE TO HOTEL PORTION OF  
BLDG.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

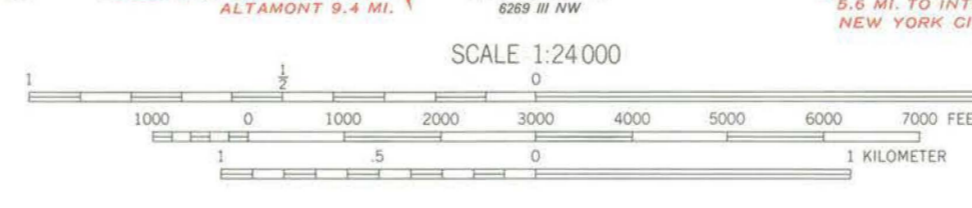
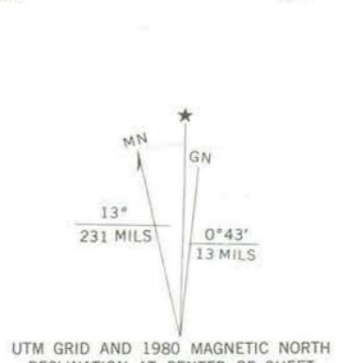
SCHENECTADY QUADRANGLE  
NEW YORK  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
SW/4 SCHENECTADY 15' QUADRANGLE



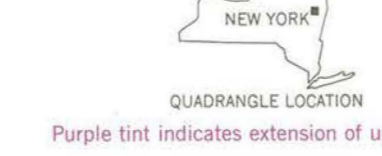
THE FOSTER BUILDING  
508 STATE ST.  
Schenectady, Schenectady  
COUNTY  
NEW YORK

EASTING: 866000  
NORTHING: 4740220

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric  
methods. Aerial photographs taken 1952. Field check 1954  
Polyconic projection  
10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system, east zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks  
zone 18, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983  
move the projection lines 4 meters south and  
34 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Unchecked elevations are shown in brown  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries  
of the National or State reservations shown on this map



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC DATUM OF 1929  
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



SCHENECTADY, N. Y.  
SW/4 SCHENECTADY 15' QUADRANGLE  
N4245-W7352.5/7.5  
1954  
PHOTOREVISED 1980  
DMA 6269 IV SW-SERIES 7821

TAYLOR & VADEMY SPORTING GOODS  
303 Central Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12205  
(518) 472-9183

# National Register of Historic Places

## Note to the record

Additional Documentation: 2014

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY Foster Building  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Schenectady

DATE RECEIVED: 5/30/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/16/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 91000664

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 7/14/14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Additional documentation accepted per  
discussion w/ SHPO office*

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

REVIEWER *[Signature]* 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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Foster Building  
Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number    Add.    Page    1  
                          Doc                                   

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This submission provides additional documentation for the Foster Building, listed on the National Register in 1991.

First, we are clarifying the number of contributing features within the boundary. The National Register nomination discussed only the five-story hotel building at 508 State Street, while the boundary, a single lot, also encompassed 510 and 512 State and 214 Lafayette. While it is not possible to know the intent of the SHPO in nominating the complex in 1991, new research supports the conclusion that all four buildings are appropriately included in National Register nomination.

-A 1914 Sanborn map (enclosed) reveals that 512 State and 214 Lafayette were apparently constructed at the same time and both were constructed for the use of the Schenectady Railway Company. Thus, they were connected historically.

-A comparison of historic and current photos suggests that all three attached components might be early twentieth century buildings. For 510 and 512, the facades are altered but recognizable in their form and in certain characteristics. The section attached to 512, known as 214 Lafayette, retains good exterior integrity.

-A thorough report by consultant Patricia Altman has documented that all four buildings were internally connected before the nomination was submitted in 1991. Buildings at 512 State and 214 Lafayette were connected historically; buildings at 510 and 512 were connected since at least 1961, and buildings at 508 and 510 were connected in 1985 as part of the "Charles Court Renovations." This report is enclosed.

Second, we are adding industry and commerce as areas of significance. In the early twentieth century, Schenectady enjoyed a thriving economy as home to major advancements in engineering and technology. The city experienced a period of massive growth after the 1892 consolidation of the Edison Machine Works and several other companies to form the General Electric Company. In addition, the city's role as a transportation center, which had emerged after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, only grew with the coming of the railroad, making Schenectady the center of a wide-ranging transportation network. Locomotive manufacturing became the city's second largest industry,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Foster Building  
Schenectady, Schenectady County, NY

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number    Add.    Page    2  
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after electricity, and together these two industries had an almost immeasurable effect on the city's growth and development.

The Foster Building and its attached components are related to the city's booming development in these years. The Foster Building was a hotel that provided shelter for traveling salesmen, transient housing for new employees, and accommodations for tourists. The building at 512 State/214 Lafayette was constructed in 1913 for the Schenectady Railway Company and appears to have served as shops and offices. The building at 510 State, labeled "laundry" in 1914, may have been related either to the hotel or to the railway building.

lafayette st.

state st.

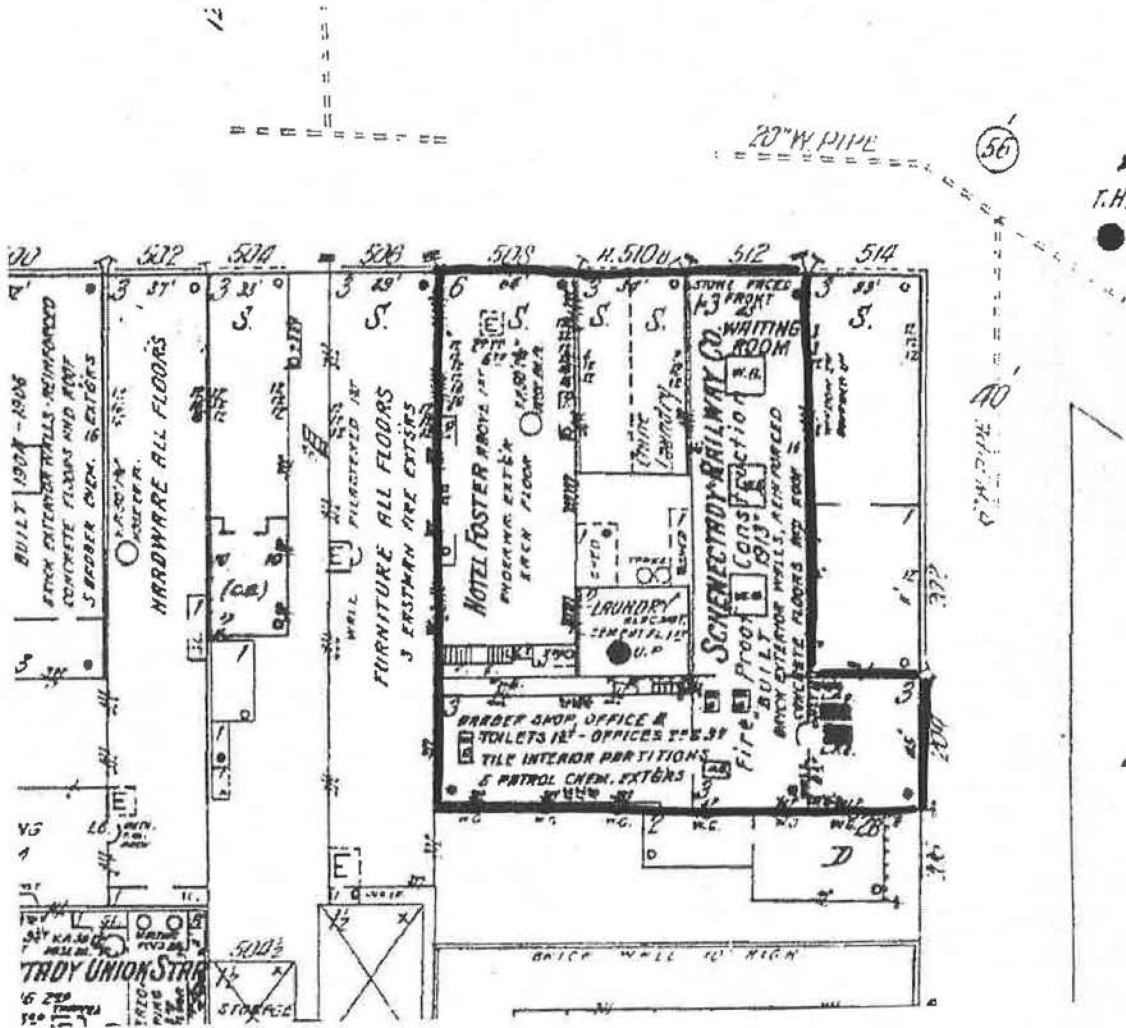


original nomination boundary  
(not to scale)

Site Plan

FOSTER BUILDING

# FOSTER Building, Schenectady NY



1914  
Sanborn



National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Foster Building  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Schenectady

DATE RECEIVED: 5/01/91 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/14/91  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/30/91 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/15/91  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 91000664

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 6/3/91 DATE **Entered in the  
National Register**

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*The Hon. Michael F. McNulty  
414 Canon Hob Atn Jim Glenn  
W. DC 20515*

*Foster Bldg  
508 State St. Schenectady, NY  
Send SHPO address*

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Foster Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Schenectady

DATE RECEIVED: 5/01/91      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/14/91  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/30/91      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/15/91  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 91000664

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    6/3/91 DATE    Entered in the  
**National Register**

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

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CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

---

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

---

FUNCTION

historic       current

---

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

---

SIGNIFICANCE

Period              Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates                      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph  
 completeness  
 clarity  
 applicable criteria  
 justification of areas checked  
 relating significance to the resource  
 context  
 relationship of integrity to significance  
 justification of exception  
 other

---

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage               verbal boundary description  
 UTM's               boundary justification

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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps       USGS maps       photographs       presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PACA PRESERVATION, LLC**

POST OFFICE BOX 649  
13 HUDSON STREET  
KINDERHOOK, NEW YORK 12106  
518.821.2575



**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** 8 May 2014  
**TO:** Travis Bowman, NYS Division for Historic Preservation  
**FROM:** Patricia Altman  
**RE:** Foster Building, Schenectady

The Foster Building at 508 State Street in Schenectady, New York was listed on the National Register in 1991. The nomination stated that the boundaries of the resource corresponded with the property lines as identified on the city tax map. The tax map attached to the nomination showed all of Lot 19.1 shaded, indicating that the entire lot was within the boundaries of the nominated resource. This L-shaped lot includes 508 State Street, 510 State Street, 512 State Street, and 204 Lafayette Street.

Per SHPO's request, PACA Preservation LLC undertook research to document that all four buildings were internally connected prior to the nomination and, thus, the nomination correctly defined the property boundary and included all four buildings as one resource.

Sanborn maps show that door openings have existed between 510 and 512 State and between 512 State and 204 Lafayette since at least 1961. 508 and 510 State were connected later, in 1985, as part of the "Charles Court Renovations." The permit drawings for this project more fully document the door openings among the four buildings. The drawings show that most of the existing openings at that time were retained between 510 and 512 State and between 512 State and 204 Lafayette and, importantly, that a new door opening was introduced between 508 State (Hotel Foster) and 510 State. The buildings were, therefore, all connected internally prior to National Register listing in 1991.

Today, the buildings appear to be connected as they were in 1985. This includes openings at the following locations:

- 508 State and 510 State – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- 510 State and 512 State – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and likely the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (the area was not accessible during the site visit)
- 512 State and 204 Lafayette – ground, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> floors

The attached documentation includes detail images from the 1961 and 1974 Sanborn maps and the 1985 permit drawings, as well as photographs of the door openings.

Thanks again for your assistance. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.



## 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

23 May 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: Foster Building *910000664*  
Schenectady, Schenectady County

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

Enclosed is additional documentation for the Foster Building, Schenectady, Schenectady County, New York. We appreciate your prompt attention to this, as the owner is waiting to submit a part 1 application for the Investment Tax Credit.

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

Sincerely:

Ruth Pierpont  
Deputy SHPO  
New York State Historic Preservation Office