

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building

Other names/site number: Goodwill Industries; The Brix at 26 Apartments

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 2600 E. Carson Street

City or town: Pittsburgh City State: PA County: Allegheny

Not For Publication: N/A

Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<u>Andrew J. Hasdonald</u>	<u>November 3, 2014</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>PA Historical and Museum Commission</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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

Name of Property

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

for Eason H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

12-29-14
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

Name of Property _____

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE / department store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / multiple dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS / Beaux Arts

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS / Commercial
Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: STONE/granite;

Roof: SYNTHETICS/rubber;

Walls: BRICK; TERRA COTTA;

Other: METAL/steel, METAL/aluminum.

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company department store, now functioning as an apartment building, occupies the southeast corner of S. Twenty-sixth and E. Carson streets in Pittsburgh's South Side neighborhood. The nearly rectangular building is situated in a densely-developed, urban area with a mixture of commercial, residential, and industrial uses. The property consists of one contributing building originally constructed in 1907-1908 and added onto in 1936 and ca. 1950 during the period of significance. The 1907-1908 six-story and mezzanine core of the building measures 108ft wide by 116ft deep, fronting on E. Carson Street. The building is of steel frame construction with concrete floors and roof and exhibits Beaux Arts and Commercial Style stylistic influences. The building is faced in buff colored roman brick and features glazed terra cotta first story wall cladding and classically-inspired trim work on the cornice and window and storefront surrounds. The decorative iron or steel storefront and mezzanine window frames on the building's principal elevation are intact and also feature classically-inspired ornamental motifs.

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A 36ft wide by 116ft deep, three-story and mezzanine addition was appended to the building's east side in 1936; a six story elevator tower is present in the southwest corner of the 1936 addition. The 1936 addition features brick and terra cotta ornament that mimics the design of the original building in a simplified fashion. A one-story and basement rear addition, originally dating to ca. 1950 but substantially rehabilitated in 2012, serves as a parking garage. The two-level garage measures about 144ft wide (inclusive of a 22ft ramp structure) by 113ft deep, and it contains no stylistic articulation. The garage is connected to the south side of the building by a 29ft wide by 60ft long hyphen, which was constructed during the 2012 rehabilitation to replace a ca. 1950 full-width connection. On the building's interior, the first floor contains a lobby, recreation area, and three retail spaces. The mezzanine through sixth floor levels contain apartment units with varying plans that contain both single-level and loft units. The exterior generally retains integrity, as its character-defining stylistic elements, including terra cotta cornice and trim, roman brick cladding, and steel or iron storefront frames are intact. The replacement aluminum sash, one-over-one light, double-hung upper-story windows are similar in appearance to the originals, including the frame profiles, and do not detract substantially from the building's integrity. Character-defining historic-period interior features include the mezzanine and associated railing, remaining sections of terrazzo flooring, storefront casework, wood window moldings, and the one remaining historic staircase and associated railing. These historic-period interior features now complement modern interior fixtures and finishes that were installed in 2012 when the building was rehabilitated as an apartment building (from a Goodwill Industries headquarters).

Narrative Description

The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building is located in Pittsburgh's densely developed South Side neighborhood, which is located on the south side of the Monongahela River about 2.5 miles distant from the city center. E. Carson Street is the South Side's principal arterial roadway, and numbered streets intersect it, forming a regular grid of streets on the river flat that adheres to the curve of the nearby Monongahela River. Two railroads delineate the north and south limits of the river flat known commonly as the South Side Flats: the north line runs along the river bank and the south line runs along the base of the bluff containing the hillside neighborhood known as the South Side Slopes. The neighborhood is characterized by a retail and commercial strip along E. Carson Street, with rowhouses on adjoining streets. Industrial buildings, churches, and social clubs punctuate the residential sections in a rather random manner. The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company building is located on the south side of E. Carson Street, and its lot is bound by S. Twenty-sixth Street on the west, Sarah Street on the south, and an Aldi grocery on the east. On the opposite (north) side of E. Carson Street is the mixed-use South Side Works development, which was constructed ca. 2004 on the former site of the Jones & Laughlin South Side Works steel mill with which the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building was associated.

The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building consists of the original six-story and mezzanine building, a 1936 three-story and mezzanine addition appended to its east façade, and a one-story and basement ca. 1950 addition appended to its south (rear) façade. The original section of the

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former department store was constructed between 1907 and 1908 and is a six-story and mezzanine building measuring 108ft wide and 116ft deep. The building has an abbreviated base-shaft-capital form and exhibits elements of the Commercial and Beaux Arts styles. The building's principal (north) façade (facing E. Carson Street) is symmetrical and is five bays wide. The building's "base" section comprises the first floor and mezzanine, and it is clad in large rectangular cream colored glazed terra cotta blocks with brown speckles (Photos 1-2). The "shaft" section of the building consists of floors two through five, which contains groups of paired and triple window openings with little ornamentation. The "capital" portion of the building consists of the building's sixth floor, which is distinguished by elaborate brick and terra cotta primary and secondary cornices, panels, and corbels. A three-story and mezzanine addition, measuring 36ft wide by 116ft deep, was appended to the east (side) façade in 1936.¹ The addition maintains the same floor heights and base and shaft division as the original section of the building (Photos 1, 10, 14). A one story and basement addition was appended to the south (rear) façade in ca. 1950 over a former alley (Carey Way) and lots occupied by several houses and a brewery. The addition extends to Sarah Street on the south and provides a primary entrance for automobiles on Sarah Street and a primary entrance for apartment residents on S. Twenty-sixth Street. The roofs of the 1908, 1936, and ca. 1950 sections of the building are all flat. The roof on the main (1908) part of the building is a stone-ballasted rubber roof. Centered on the north side of the roof is a flagpole, which may date to the building's original construction. Until 2012, the roof contained a 9,000 gallon water tank. The tank was demolished, and its location is occupied by air conditioning units serving the individual apartments.

The building's north façade consists of the north wall of the original 1907-1908 building and the north wall of the 1936 addition. The first level of the original building consists of two first floor storefront and mezzanine window bays flanking a central entrance. The storefront bays each contain four vertically divided storefront windows with plain glass transoms (Photo 12). A cast iron or steel frame with lozenge decorations separates the storefront windows from the mezzanine windows, which feature four lights similar in size to the lower windows, but lacking transoms (Photo 17). The storefront and mezzanine glazing consists of modern, double-insulated, fixed aluminum sashes set in the original iron or steel storefront frames. The four-light and transom glazing pattern of the storefront windows appears to be a modern configuration, as a sketch of the building from original company letterhead shows a two-light configuration with no transoms (Figure 1). The storefronts formerly contained cloth awnings (removed prior to 1967), as remnants of awning hardware are still attached to the window frames. Ornamental cast iron or steel ventilators with union jack style screens underscore the storefront windows (Photo 20).

The central first floor bay contains the building's original main entrance (Photo 18). This entrance will serve the building's first floor commercial/retail space, which is presently being rehabilitated, in part, as a bakery and restaurant. The original (E. Carson Street) entrance contained three bays, which likely were originally fitted with three pairs of double oak doors; it is likely that the center vestibule bay was enclosed in the 1920s or 1930s with a single pane of

¹ "Real Estate Index Falls." *Pittsburgh Press*, December 15, 1935, sports section, page 9, column 7.

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glass. It appears that the glass enclosed central door bay formerly functioned as a storefront display, as it has a raised floor². The outer entry doors date to the 2012 rehabilitation and have a single-light configuration with black aluminum frames. The two extant pairs of inner (vestibule) doors are original and also have a single-light configuration, but frames are quarter-sawn oak; push plates and other hardware are polished brass (Photo 38). Operable exterior and interior vestibule transoms are present on the outer two bays; the outer transom glass is painted white, while the inner transom glass is clear. The transoms of the center bay are entirely missing; the outer one has been covered with OSB plywood (date unknown), while the inner transom has been left open. A decorative metal canopy with a curved roof profile was once present above the main entrance (removed between 1967 and 1986); remnant decorative anchors are present. The glass-enclosed space above the former location of the canopy's roof is covered by a cast steel screen with three rows of eight squares with union jack and circle designs. Above the door bay is a terra cotta entablature with shallow consoles. The entablature is partly influenced by the Doric order (with its prominent mutules), but it also freely incorporates classically-inspired floral decorative elements (Photo 19).

The upper four floors (second through fifth floors) of the façade have a five-bay fenestration pattern with window groupings of 2-3-3-3-2 (Photo 13). End bays have paired window openings that feature a plain terra cotta sill and terra cotta lintel with a flat arch configuration and decorative floral keystone. The central three bays feature windows in triple groupings with plain terra cotta sills and no visible lintels. Sashes on all upper-story windows are black aluminum with one-over-one-light double glazing. Upper-story window frames are also black aluminum with molding profiles that are similar to that of the original wood frames. The top story (sixth floor) of the building is framed by projecting courses of brick and terra cotta, which include terra cotta window surrounds and terra cotta columns between window pairs, marble panels between window groupings, brick corbels and dentils, ornamental classically-themed terra cotta cornice moldings that include both floral motifs and the visages of male Egyptian figures (except at corners, where classical female heads are used) (Photos 16 and 23; Figure 2).

The north façade of the 1936 addition is located to the left or east of the original building. The storefront and mezzanine levels have terra cotta cladding that harmonizes with the 1907-1908 construction. The storefront contains a single rectangular opening that accommodates a six-light storefront window (with slender metal vertical frame divisions) and a recessed entry door. The upper part of the storefront frame has a decorative ribbed metal band. The mezzanine contains five double-hung windows side by side in the same masonry opening, and there are rectangular vents with decorative metal grilles flanking the mezzanine windows (Photo 15). The second and third floors contain groupings of four double hung windows with plain terra cotta sills; the outer two windows have decorative terra cotta lintels matching those of the original building.

² Note that a 1941 photograph of the entrance of Pittsburgh Mercantile Company's Aliquippa store (also Rutan & Russell, 1910) shows the central door bay as a similar storefront display window. Because the stone base of the Aliquippa display window is constructed of variegated marble commonly seen in storefronts from the 1920s and early 1930s and because the area below other storefront windows is granite, it is reasonable to assume that the center display was not part of the building's original design. A similar conclusion could be drawn for the design of the entry doors of the Pittsburgh store, where the quality of design and materials of the center entry door enclosure is not commensurate with that of the rest of the façade.

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Windows are the same replacement one-over-one light, black aluminum sash and frame type as in the remainder of the building. The molding profile of the terra cotta cornice is much simpler than that of the original section of the building.

The west (side) façade of the property consists of the west wall of the original building and the west wall of the ca. 1950 rear addition. The west (side) elevation of the original part of the building (facing S. Twenty-sixth Street) is similar in design to the principal façade facing E. Carson Street. Because the side elevation is deeper than the front, it contains six rather than five bays. Only the central four bays have windows, and these are fitted with triple sets of double hung windows identical to those on the primary (north) elevation. Storefront windows are omitted from the west elevation. Instead, the central four bays of the first floor are fitted with pairs of double-hung windows, while the central four bays of the mezzanine level have triple sets of double-hung windows. Modern, flush type steel doors without glazing are located in the outer two bays on the first floor. The northwest door has a fixed, single-light transom; the southwest door has no transom (Photo 3). The same ornamental scheme of the north facade is carried out on the west (side) facade because it also faces a public street.

Between the original portion of the building and the rear addition is a hyphen area providing access to the apartment lobby and upper floor living space through a side entrance on S. Twenty-sixth Street. This hyphen area was constructed as part of the 2012 rehabilitation when the ca. 1950 full-width connection between the main building and rear addition was removed. The hyphen's main entrance for residents consists of a recessed entryway with black, aluminum-clad double doors and adjacent aluminum frame window walls. To the right of the doors is a handicap ramp, and to the right of the ramp is a blank wall clad in beige cast concrete (mimicking the size and color of the terra cotta elsewhere on the building). A small planter box is located between the blank wall and the sidewalk, softening its appearance. The hyphen is flanked by black metal posts, which extend several feet above the hyphen's roof to be even in height with the adjacent ca. 1950 addition. A silver, union jack style metal railing decorates the area between the black metal posts, which is occupied by a roof top terrace shared by two apartment units. A glass and metal canopy extends over the sidewalk in front of the hyphen. The ceiling of the adjacent recessed entry porch is clad in silver metal.

With the exception of the 30ft section excised to create the hyphen and patio in the 2012 rehabilitation, the remainder of the ca. 1950 rear addition is intact on the west facade. The west facade consists of a blank wall of buff color, standard-sized brick veneer (Photo 4). A decorative band of red brick covers the upper few feet of the building, and the above-grade part of the foundation is clad in gray granite (similar to the remainder of the building). The southwest corner of the addition formerly contained a wrap-around storefront window the frame of which is outlined in square limestone blocks. The entire window on the west facade was infilled in the 2012 rehabilitation with buff colored brick.

The south (rear) facade of the building consists of the one-story south wall of the ca. 1950 addition, the south wall of the original portion of the building, and the south wall of the 1936 addition. The south façade of the ca. 1950 addition is clad in the same brick color scheme as the addition's west wall as described above (Photo 5). The left half of the storefront window is

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infilled with brick and the right half contains a roll-up metal door associated with an auto entrance to the upper level of the parking garage. Several feet to the right of the garage door is a double set of flush panel metal doors that access a central stairwell. To the right of the stairwell is a second roll-up metal door, also added in the 2012 rehabilitation, providing an auto entrance to the parking garage (Photo 6). The last 18ft of the east end of the south (rear) facade contains a reconstructed brick wall. This 18ft wide area was reconstructed in the 2012 rehabilitation to convert a former loading dock area to an integral part of the parking garage.

The original design of the mezzanine and first floor levels of the original portion of the building's south (rear) facade is not known, but its first floor would have featured loading docks for delivery trucks. Ca. 1950, these levels were obscured by the one-story and basement rear addition. The rear addition originally extended the full 108ft length of the original part of the rear elevation (i.e. excluding the 1936 addition to its east end). In the 2012 rehabilitation, a 108ft wide and 30ft deep section connecting the original part of the building to its rear addition was demolished. A 60ft wide by 30ft deep hyphen was then constructed in 2012 to connect the main section of the building to its rear addition, which was gutted and converted to a two-level parking garage. The hyphen serves as the main entrance for apartment residents (Photo 22). The remaining space east of the hyphen (about 30ft deep and 50ft wide) was converted to an outdoor garden and patio as part of the 2012 rehabilitation (Photo 26). Newly exposed areas on the rear of the 1908 section of the building were clad in cast concrete that matches the color and size of adjacent terra cotta cladding on the first floor and mezzanine levels. The upper floors of the south elevation of the original portion of the building have the same five-bay fenestration pattern as the north (front) elevation, except that the window grouping is 1:3:3:3:2 (rather than 2:3:3:3:2) to accommodate a stair and elevator shaft in the left-most bay (Photos 10 and 24). The south elevation's upper floor window surrounds and cornice above have less ornamental articulation and the top floor exhibits a much simplified ornamental scheme: terra cotta figures at the base of corbels are replaced with plain stepped brickwork; the marble and brick panels between major window groupings are substituted with plain brick panels; terra cotta window surrounds and columns are replaced with plain brickwork; simple terra cotta sills (similar to those on lower floors) are used; and flat-arch brick lintels replace decorative terra cotta lintels (Photos 21 and 24).

The bi-level south (rear) elevation of the 1936 addition contains a six-story and mezzanine stair and elevator tower and a two-story and mezzanine section. The stair and elevator tower contains paired double-hung windows on each of the floors, and the two-story and mezzanine section contains triple double-hung windows on each of the floors (Photo 10). At the southeast corner of the 1936 addition is a rooftop deck that extends along the stair tower (above the third floor). The rooftop deck was constructed as part of the 2012 rehabilitation (Photo 25).

The building's east facade consists of the east wall of the 1936 addition, the east wall of the original building rising above and partly obscured by the addition, and a parking garage ramp fronting a reconstructed wall of the 1950s rear addition. (The ramp and the reconstructed wall were components of the 2012 rehabilitation).

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The first floor of the east (side) elevation of the 1936 addition has no window or door openings. The mezzanine, second, and third floor levels contain four sets of triple windows. These windows date to the 2012 rehabilitation and have one-over-one light, black aluminum sashes and frames that match those in other sections of the building. Each group of three windows has a continuous cast concrete sill (similar in profile to the terra cotta sills in other parts of the building) and brick is present between each window. The triple sets of double-hung windows replaced a slightly larger single rectangular window opening that was probably originally fitted with a multi-light, industrial steel sash window (Photo 11). A three story portion of the rear stair and elevator tower rises from the southwest corner of the 1936 addition. Three single window openings with double-hung windows are present on the east wall of the tower.

Three floors of the original building's east façade are visible above the 1936 addition, and exhibit a similar fenestration pattern to that of the west side (Photos 1 and 10), the only major differences being that the upper floor window surrounds and cornice above have less ornamental articulation and the sixth floor exhibits the same restrained ornamental scheme as the south (rear) façade

The east facade of the ca. 1950 addition is a blank brick wall that has also been reconstructed to match the brick color scheme in the rest of the addition. This 18ft wide area was reconstructed in the 2012 rehabilitation to convert a former loading dock area to an integral part of the parking garage. Adjacent to the garage's east side is a concrete ramp that was constructed in the 2012 rehabilitation to provide vehicular access to the lower level of the parking garage. A poured concrete retaining wall topped with a metal fence is located on the east side of the parking garage ramp, along the property line; the east side of the wall is clad in brick (Photos 7-9).

In the late 1980s a minor one-story L-shaped loading dock addition was built at the southeast corner of the building, at the rear and east sides of the 1936 addition. This addition was demolished when the building was rehabilitated in 2012, and part of the land occupied by it has been sold and is now part of a parking lot for the neighboring Aldi grocery. The land that was sold was not historically associated with the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company.

The interior has relatively few surviving historic features; though as an industrial store it had a captive clientele and may never have had an impressive interior. Blueprints from Rutan and Russell or the Henry Shenk Company were likely lost or destroyed. Plans for proposed building changes dated 1967 by Schmertz and Erwin Architects and 1986 by Lorenzi, Dodds, and Gunnill provide a fairly complete record of changes made to the building by Goodwill Industries³. The 1967 plans provide evidence of the building's original configuration and use. In the original portion of the building, the basement level was dedicated to storage and building mechanicals. The first, mezzanine, second, third, and fourth floors were largely open sales floors until this time. The fifth floor was largely open except for a few relatively large partitioned rooms (perhaps executive offices) along the south and west wall. The sixth floor was nearly entirely subdivided into offices lining the perimeter of the building with a central open area.

³ Drawings are held by TKA Architects for Burns & Scalo Real Estate Services, on behalf of the building's owner, 2600 Southside Associates, LP.

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After 1967-68 renovations, the first floor of the original portion of the building contained a sales area, the first floor of the 1936 addition contained a bailer and a work room, and the first floor of the ca. 1950 addition contained a work room, sales area, furniture sterilization, a paint spray room, and loading docks. The mezzanine level of both the original portion and 1936 addition contained sales areas. The second floor of the original portion of the building was converted to a cafeteria, lounge, and rest rooms, and the 1936 addition contained provisionary room, kitchen, and serving area. The third and fourth floors contained large open work rooms. The fifth floor housed a work room, offices, job training rooms, supply rooms, and other offices of various sizes. The sixth floor contained offices along the perimeter of the building with an open central area for vocational and diagnostic evaluation clinics.

As part of the ca. 1986 renovations, in general, the interior spaces on most floors of the original portion of the building and the 1936 addition continued to be subdivided into smaller, more specialized rooms. Only the third and fourth floors remained largely open. The ca. 1950 addition was enlarged by removing the truck docks and extending the roof over the area to create an additional room. The docks were relocated to an area off of the southeast corner of the building (now demolished). A mezzanine level and a second floor was added to the hyphen area to house a health clinic with a separate nurse station, exam room, recovery room, lobby, and waiting room for men and women.

Presently, the basement level contains poured concrete walls and floors with brick support piers. The basement of the original portion of the building contains the central elevator shafts and stair well. Wrapping the north and east sides of this access area are metal cage storage units for the building's residents. The northwest corner of the building contains partitioned storage areas dedicated for the use of the first floor retail spaces. The southwest corner and south wall are partitioned rooms largely given to the building's utility and mechanical systems. The basement of the 1936 addition is dedicated storage space for the first floor retail unit above. The basement level of the ca. 1950 addition is utilized as a parking garage for the use of the building's residents (Plan Sheet A-1).

On the first floor, originally there was a series of two-story rectangular open spaces that were punctuated by the mezzanine level. The majority of the mezzanine level and its union jack style metal railing is still intact, but the first floor space has been partitioned to create three storefronts and a separate apartment lobby with public and recreation rooms (at the southwest corner) as part of the 2012 rehabilitation (Photos 27, 29, 30, 38, 39). One storefront occupies the 1936 addition, while the other two each occupy half of the original part of the building fronting on E. Carson Street and are accessed by the central doors (Plan Sheet A-2). About half of the flooring in the left storefront (1908 section) is terrazzo that is being restored. The storefront interiors were under construction at the time this form was prepared. The storefront in the 1936 addition is gutted and unfinished. The storefronts in the 1908 section of the building have original wood casing around the storefront windows intact (Photo 39). There is almost no historic plasterwork, column decorations, or capitals, and such features may never have existed. Parts of the mezzanine are enclosed with drywall partitions, and open mezzanine corridors have been enclosed with aluminum framed glass partitions to meet modern building codes; in either case,

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the drywall or glass enclosure has been placed behind the historic metal mezzanine railings (Photo 35). As previously noted, two of the three pairs of original quarter sawn oak vestibule doors are intact (Photo 38). The interior of the rear hyphen contains a lobby, seating area, and wet bar; this area is open to the recreation room at the rear of the main part of the building (Photo 29). A hall connects the recreation room to the two centrally located elevators that serve the upper floor apartments (Photo 27).

Stairs and elevators were previously present in the southwest, southeast, and northwest corners of the building. In the 2012 rehabilitation all three elevators were removed and the northwest stairs were removed. A bank of two new elevators was constructed in the center of the building. The southwest stairwell appears to be the original public stairway; it contains union jack style metal railings and was restored in the 2012 rehabilitation (Photo 34). The southeast stairway dates to 1936, and the northwest stairway (now removed) dated from the late 1960s and was installed after Goodwill of Western Pennsylvania purchased the building from the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company.

The interior of the ca. 1950 addition currently contains garage parking for 88 cars on two levels.

The mezzanine (second) through seventh levels contain a mixture of one and two bedroom apartment units and associated support spaces, such as storage rooms, all constructed as part of the 2012 rehabilitation. The mezzanine level (second floor), third floor, and fourth floor utilize the combined floor space of the original building and the 1936 addition; the 1936 addition does not extend higher than the fourth floor. The corridors on the mezzanine through seventh levels feature modern finishes typical of new construction, including floors covered in carpet tiles, rubber base molding, steel door frames, flush panel wood veneer clad doors, and acoustical drop ceilings (Photo 36). The only historic finishes to survive in some apartment units are wood window casings, which are painted white. Partition walls are constructed of gypsum board with simple wood door casings. Floors are covered with wall-to-wall carpeting and porcelain tile. Suspended air conditioning ductwork and sprinkler systems are exposed. Units are heated by individually controlled electric baseboard units (which replaced an earlier steam system with cast iron radiators). Apartment floor plans typically feature an open living, dining, and kitchen area with partitioned sleeping, bath, and laundry rooms (Photos 31-33).

The mezzanine level contains the central elevator bank and stairwell surrounded by walkways and the open rectangular spaces to the first floor. Apartment units are arranged around this central circulation area along the building's exterior walls. The twelve apartments on this floor are a combination of one- and two-bedroom units with varying floor plans. Two units along the south wall feature roof terraces over the building's hyphen (Plan Sheet A-3).

The third floor (i.e. the level above the mezzanine floor) and the fourth floor contain similar floor plans both in the arrangement of corridors and units. The central elevator and stairwell tower is backed by mechanical rooms and four storage units forming a square in the middle of the building. Sixteen units are arranged around this area along the building's exterior walls. The connecting corridors create the form of a two-rung ladder. The third floor features eight loft units that are not present on the fourth floor (Plan Sheets A-4 and A5).

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The fifth, sixth, and seventh floors contain similar floor plans. The connecting corridors on these floors create the form of an "H". Fourteen units are arranged along the building's exterior walls (Plan Sheets A-6, A-7, A-8). The only difference in the floors is that the fifth floor features a small public roof terrace at the southeast corner of the building, and three adjacent units (on the east side of the building) that feature private roof terraces (Photo 25). These terraces are atop the 1936 addition.

Integrity:

Overall, the former Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building retains integrity. The property retains integrity of location, as it occupies its original site at the corner of E. Carson and S. Twenty-sixth Street. The property's integrity of setting, feeling, and association is also retained. E. Carson, S. Twenty-sixth, and Sarah streets have a number of late-nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that retain their historic commercial and residential functions and provide a historic context for the setting of the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building. However, integrity of setting and association are reduced by the loss of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company mill (of which the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company was a subsidiary) directly across E. Carson Street from the subject building. The loss of the steel mill reduces the building's integrity of setting and association, as the industrial context of the neighborhood has been obliterated and the direct link with the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company is no longer apparent to the casual observer. Overall, the character-defining features of the original portion of the building's exterior are remarkably intact and thus it possesses integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. In particular, the terra cotta ornamentation and steel or iron storefronts are in excellent condition and exhibit few repairs or modifications. Likewise, the exteriors of the 1936 addition and ca. 1950 addition generally retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The major exterior change to the 1936 addition is a new fenestration pattern on the east (side) elevation, which is reminiscent of the fenestration of the 1908 section of the building. Major changes to the ca. 1950 rear addition include the brick infill of the storefront window at the southwest corner, the installation of two garage doors on the south elevation, and the removal of a loading dock and construction of a vehicular ramp on the east elevation. The interior of the first floor of the 1936 addition is now a single gutted and unfinished space (awaiting conversion to retail space) and the interior of the ca. 1950 rear addition was gutted in 2012 and converted to a parking garage. Neither of these spaces can convey an association with the grocery counter, warehouse, and loading dock functions historically associated with them, but the losses of these interior spaces is mitigated by the fact that they are in additions that are of secondary importance when compared with the 1908 core of the building.

On the interior, integrity of design, materials, and workmanship of the first floor and mezzanine levels has been somewhat compromised. Some character defining features, such as the open first floor plan, mezzanine level space division and historic railings, and the wood casework associated with the storefront windows do remain. In particular, the mezzanine level itself, being a common feature of early twentieth century retail space, provides a tangible association with the building's historic function as a department store. It is difficult to evaluate the degree to which the interior of the building possesses integrity of materials and workmanship as historic documentation is not available to determine what the historic finishes were and the degree of

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stylistic articulation of the original design, particularly on the first and mezzanine levels, which were typically the most ornate in stores of the period. Nevertheless, a casual observer could deduce from the existing plan, storefront windows, and surviving finishes that the first floor and mezzanine levels of the building are an early twentieth century retail space. The integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association of the third through seventh levels has been compromised as the internal division of space and historic finishes (except some surviving window trim) has been obliterated. The loss of integrity in the building's upper floors is mitigated by the fact that these floors have the least character-defining features and are most likely to contain mundane open retail space and non-public office and administrative space. In sum, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building is clearly discernable as an early twentieth century retail building and surviving character-defining features were carefully preserved in the 2012 rehabilitation. The building possesses sufficient integrity to convey its historical significance in the area of Commerce.

Name of Property

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

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

Name of Property

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1907-1958

Significant Dates

1907

1936

ca. 1950

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Rutan & Russell

Henry Shenk Company

Name of Property

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

The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building meets National Register Criterion A for Commerce as a significant industrial, or company, store in Pittsburgh. Serving as the main store for the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation, the building's significance lies in its scale, both physically and in terms of its size and customer base, drawn from the thousands of employees at Jones & Laughlin's nearby steel mills. In addition, the store was an important symbol to opponents of industrial, or company, stores and the system of payment in scrip; however, it also provided its staff with training programs, provided opportunities for advancement for employees, and provided opportunities for women to earn wages. The period of significance begins in 1907, with construction of the original section of the building, and ends in 1958, when declining business led to an attempted sales-leaseback arrangement intended to raise money for modernization, an arrangement which fell through. In addition, the 1950s marks the end of Jones & Laughlin's use of payment in scrip.

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

Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation

The Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation's massive steel mill on Pittsburgh's south side, known commonly as the South Side Works, began when brothers John and Bernard Lauth founded the American Iron Company (later American Iron Works) in 1853.⁴ Shortly thereafter, western Pennsylvania native Benjamin Franklin Jones acquired a 25 percent interest in the firm. In 1854, banker James H. Laughlin purchased an interest in the American Iron Company, as well. Laughlin also controlled a separate firm, Laughlin & Company, which constructed the Eliza Furnace in 1859 on the north side of the Monongahela River, opposite the American Iron Company site. In 1861, the American Iron Company was reorganized as a partnership, Jones & Laughlin, Ltd., and the south side mill became known as J&L's American Iron Works. The company initially operated from a location on the south side of the Monongahela River, between present S. 27th and S. 29th streets, in Ormsby Borough, which was annexed by the City of Pittsburgh in 1872. Coal for the furnaces came in part from mines in the hillside south of the facility in what is known as the South Side Slopes. In 1886, Jones & Laughlin began producing steel and became a major competitor of the Carnegie Steel Company. In 1902, following the creation of Carnegie's United States Steel, the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company (J&L), a privately-held family company, was formed to acquire the partnership Jones & Laughlin, Ltd. and to form a conglomeration with other mills Jones and Laughlin had purchased, such as Moorhead & Co.'s Soho Iron Mills and Wilson, Glass & Co.'s Keystone Rolling Mill. The company's furnaces and mills sprawled along both sides of the Monongahela just east of Pittsburgh's "Golden Triangle" central business district, and they were connected by two parallel

⁴ The following sections on the history of Pittsburgh Mercantile Company and company stores are largely extracted from a manuscript prepared by Charles Uhl Historic Preservation Services, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with supplemental material provided by Jesse A. Belfast of Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

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railroad bridges (constructed in 1887 and 1900, respectively), commonly known as the "hot metal bridge." In 1905, J&L received building permits for two new rolling mills in the South Side Works, which grew to occupy the river flat north of E. Carson Street between S. 25th and S. 34th streets. Realizing that there was little property for further expansion available within Pittsburgh, the company constructed a new, fully-integrated steel mill in Aliquippa, Beaver County, Pennsylvania, between 1905 and 1909.⁵ J&L employed well over 10,000 people in Pittsburgh alone and had coal mines and smaller operations throughout southwest Pennsylvania. In December 1922, the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company was reorganized as a public corporation, the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation. The last major expansion of the South Side Works occurred ca. 1950, when J&L expanded to subsume several blocks of worker housing between S. 30th and S. 33rd streets. The plant was also modernized at this time, as much equipment suffered from heavy use during WWII. In 1963, Ling-Temco-Vought of Texas purchased a controlling (63 percent) interest in J&L. That firm later merged with J&L in 1974 to form LTV Corporation. LTV merged with Republic Steel in 1984 to form the LTV Steel Corporation. Shortly thereafter the South Side Works was closed and dismantled. Ca. 2005 the South Side Works site was redeveloped with a mixture of commercial, retail, and residential buildings.

Pittsburgh Mercantile Company

On November 19, 1903, Pennsylvania's Secretary of the Commonwealth issued a corporate charter to the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company "For the purpose of establishing and conducting a general store for the purchase and sale of groceries, dry goods, farm products, hardware, queensware, boots, shoes and all other such articles usually bought and sold in a general store." The company was capitalized with \$200,000.⁶ The original officers, including President, Secretary, and Treasurer, were identical to those of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company, and most shareholders also owned shares of J&L (after the steel company became publically traded in 1922). The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company was a successor to Jones & Laughlin Ltd.'s American Iron Works company store, which began in 1868. The earlier store is depicted on an 1882 map as brick building on S. 27th Street about a block south of the Monongahela River, at what was then the western edge of the plant. It is likely that the organization of the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company was most directly a result of 1891 and 1901 Pennsylvania laws that prohibited industrial firms from owning company stores. But, a secondary reason for the formation of Pittsburgh Mercantile Company was that its officers were planning to expand the firm's network of locations beyond the vicinity of Pittsburgh's South Side, and a suitable parent corporation was required. The first branch store was constructed in California, Pennsylvania, in 1904-05. After the westward expansion of the South Side Works to S. 25th Street in 1906, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company moved the American Iron Works store to the subject building at 2600 E. Carson Street in 1908. (After the move the name "American Iron Works" was dropped and the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company's flagship store was commonly referred to as the

⁵ Aliquippa would be lauded as a carefully-planned industrial community.

⁶ List of Charters of Corporations Enrolled in the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, p. 140. Note that Pittsburgh Mercantile Company ledgers state the initial amount of capital stock to be \$208,646.54.

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Pittsburgh or South Side store.)⁷ A Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Private Journal entry dated April 1908 notes that the company's previous Pittsburgh store (at S. 27th Street) was sold to the Jones and Laughlin Steel Company for \$25,000.

On June 27, 1907, the City of Pittsburgh issued a building permit to the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company for the construction of a six-story, brick general store with an estimated cost of \$230,000.⁸ The architect (Rutan & Russell) was not indicated in the building permit, but the builder is noted as Henry Shenk Company. Shenk founded the company in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1858, subsequently opened a Pittsburgh office, and incorporated the firm in 1901. Shenk built the Erie County Courthouse, library, and many of Erie's larger downtown buildings. In Pittsburgh, Shenk built the main branch of the Carnegie Library in the early 1890s, the Pittsburgh Athletic Association, and other important buildings, several of which are listed in the National Register. In 1904, Shenk built the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company store at California, Pennsylvania. The Henry Shenk Company survived into the 1940s. Other firms involved with the construction of the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company's Pittsburgh Store included the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company of Chicago; Iron City Heating Company of Pittsburgh (steam heating system); and the Smyser-Royer Company of York, Pennsylvania (ornamental metal).⁹

The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company operated J&L's company (or more properly "industrial") stores from late 1903 to 1961. In addition to the main Pittsburgh store sited immediately across E. Carson Street from J&L's South Side Works, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company operated stores at California, Pennsylvania (three-story, ca. 1904-05); Aliquippa (formerly Woodlawn; five-story, ca. 1910-11); and Vestaburg. In 1911, the company also noted store locations at Eliza [J&L's Eliza Furnace (Pittsburgh)], Soho [J&L's Soho Iron Works (Pittsburgh)], Keystone [J&L's Keystone Rolling Mill (Pittsburgh)], and "city office" (presumably downtown Pittsburgh, though it is possible that city office may refer to its "sub office" in the J&L headquarters at 200 Ross Street, which was reportedly maintained to facilitate bank deposits between J&L and its company stores).¹⁰ The California, Pennsylvania, store burned in the late 1940s and was not rebuilt.

The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company's E. Carson Street flagship store functioned as a comprehensive grocer/dry goods store and department store featuring a wide range of clothing and home furnishings. One could furnish an entire home with goods from the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company, and an ad from 1952 notes that the firm did indeed furnish a model home to prove the point. The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company also did much business in the wholesale

⁷ Pittsburgh Pioneers in Progress: Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce 8th Anniversary Dinner, December 6, 1956. J&L Vertical File, Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch.

⁸ City of Pittsburgh Building Permits, Archives Service Center, University of Pittsburgh. Note that the trade publication *Construction News* (June 22, 1907: 23, 25, p. 450) reports the cost of the building as both \$250,000 and \$300,000 (in successive paragraphs) in an announcement stating that architects Rutan & Russell had awarded a building contract to Henry Shenk Company.

⁹ "Beauty in Architectural Terra Cotta," *Brick*, 28, 1, January 1, 1908, p. 29; Pittsburgh Gazette Times, editor, *The Story of Pittsburgh and Vicinity*, Pittsburgh Gazette Times, 1908, p. 282; *Sweet's Indexed Catalogue of Building Construction*, Architectural Record Company, New York and Chicago, 1913, p. 466.

¹⁰ Note that the Soho, Keystone, and Eliza works were all adjacent to each other on the north side of the Monongahela River, opposite J&L's South Side Works.

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trade to other companies and businesses, which was reportedly one of its most profitable divisions. The store had a reputation for offering high quality foods and home goods, though its prices, in spite of management's claims to the contrary, were noted by J&L employees to be higher than competing stores in Pittsburgh. The full range of departments at the Pittsburgh store is not known, but it is known that the company's five-story Aliquippa Store contained foodstuffs, men's clothes, accessories, hosiery, drugs, bedding, and domestics (first floor); women's clothes, jackets, shoes (second floor); toys china (third floor); furniture, lamps (fourth floor); floor coverings, vacuums, drapes (fourth floor); and other offerings such as large appliances and sporting goods. The larger, six-story Pittsburgh store would have had at least as many offerings and may have had a similar floor configuration. The Pittsburgh store did not have a large dedicated parking lot and it probably did not need one, as most mills workers lived within walking distance or an easy commute by streetcar. Moreover, the store maintained a telephone ordering department and offered free home delivery, even into the 1950s, a point that store owners often brought up to refute accusations of high prices. The Pittsburgh store's first expansion took place between 1916 and 1924, when it purchased and occupied an adjacent building to the south that was formerly a brewery. The store modernized and built additions in 1936 (three-story east side addition) and ca. 1950 (one-story and basement rear addition). It is likely that the 1936 addition may have been originally used for foods, though a service wing with a new freight elevator was also added at that time. The ca. 1950 addition was built specifically in response to the development of and competition from supermarkets. In 1952, it was reported that the South Side store was "one of the finest and most modern food markets in Pittsburgh," with the largest open-top refrigerated meat counter in the area. The store's annual food sales were over \$2 million. The six-story and mezzanine department store was also remodeled ca. 1950, when the grocery addition was constructed.¹¹ Changes to the original core of the building were likely to have been cosmetic, except for the reconfiguration of space on the south elevation to accommodate a connection with the rear addition. The rear addition was air conditioned, and it is likely that the lower level of the 1907 building was also air conditioned at this time. The east side of the ca. 1950 addition also contained enlarged truck docks. The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company's other urban store, at Aliquippa, also upgraded its grocery retail space by the 1950s by building two markets, one in West Aliquippa and the other in Aliquippa (which was separate from the department store).

The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company's South Side building dwarfed its surroundings on E. Carson Street, and it would have stood in sharp contrast with J&L's drab corrugated steel mill buildings on the north side of the street. The captive market that the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company enjoyed by J&L issuing wages in scrip redeemable at the company store rather than in cash reduced the need for the store to compete with Pittsburgh's large downtown department stores (particular in its early years). Scrip payments also ensured that the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company would have a smaller percentage of payment defaults and bad debts than an independent store. In 1913, officers of the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company reported that approximately 2,700 employees and 700 non-employees had credit accounts with the company. A rare ad for the store appears in the *Catholic Yearbook and Directory of Pittsburgh Diocese, 1910*, and it may be more of a charitable contribution rather than a marketing device. The all-

¹¹ Johnson, *The Industrial Store*, p. 114.

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text ad proclaims the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company store as “A Helpful Department Store” explaining “Helpful because back of every effort is the well founded principle that **Private business is Public service.**” (boldface original). The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company’s 1917 tax return states that the firm contributed \$1178.92 to local charitable causes on behalf of its four stores (Pittsburgh, Aliquippa, Vestaburg, and California). Of this total, \$711.15 was associated with the Pittsburgh store, with the majority of the amount going to support the war effort through red cross donations; lesser amounts were given to the local YMCA and community churches for the support of bazaars.¹²

The Russell Sage Foundation’s “Pittsburgh Survey” was a multi-volume critical sociological examination of the industrial city. Photographs in *Wage Earning Pittsburgh* (1914), the last volume of the study, include an exterior and interior shot of the modern five-story Pittsburgh Mercantile Company store in Woodlawn (Aliquippa), Pennsylvania at the site of J&L’s then-new fully-integrated steel mill. The caption of the interior photo reads:

Sharp criticisms have been leveled at the system of deducting purchases from pay. But the public has not yet matched through collective action the organized efficiency with which the company keeps food prices down for its employees.¹³

J&L and the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company had its share of detractors. In April 1912, the *Pittsburgh Leader* newspaper launched a front-page editorial crusade against J&L and the Oliver Iron and Steel Company [n.b. Oliver Iron and Steel did not operate company stores], which were the major industrial employers on Pittsburgh’s South Side. According to the *Pittsburgh Leader*, J&L and Oliver Steel paid their employees less, offered fewer of what passed for benefits, and had less safe working conditions than rival industrial corporations. The articles allegedly were written by an industrial worker “...not an ‘uplifter,’ or a theoretical investigator [presumably a contrast with the Russell Sage sociologists], but one who has passed through some of the experiences that are an affliction to so many others.” Much of the text of the series of articles chronicles the alleged abuses of the J&L’s company store, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company:

There are men who have spent their lives in the steel plant of the Jones & Laughlin Steel company and received cash only at long intervals, one man three times in five years. They eat a little, they sleep a little and they work much, but they never get any money. Another man drew less than \$50 in cash in the last two years.

The reason is that the Jones & Laughlin Steel company has a large department store at South Twenty-sixth and Carson streets. There the approximately 11,000 workers in the big plant buy what takes up their earnings in the mill, so they have no actual use for money as a means of supporting life.

The company store, the “Pluck Me,” is against the laws of Pennsylvania, so this big six-storied, massive brick building is not in the name of the Jones & Laughlin Steel company. Far from it. The big bronze plates at each corner of the front on Carson street vouch for the ownership of the Pittsburg [*sic.*] Mercantile company. Jones & Laughlin have nothing to do with it. Of course not. Doesn’t the sign show that! ...

¹² Tax Records, Treasury Department Audits (1903-23), Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Records, AIS 1965.06, University of Pittsburgh, Archives of Industrial Society.

¹³ Paul Underwood Kellogg, editor, *Wage Earning Pittsburgh*, The Pittsburgh Survey, Russell Sage Foundation, Philadelphia, 1915, p. 264.

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The Jones slave who must have cash to get medicine for a sick wife or child, or to pay his gas bill or get his hair cut or face shaved, goes to the "Pluck Me" store, buys, say, a ham, for which he is charged \$2.65. This he takes to a grocery store, a saloon, or some other place until he finds a buyer for say \$1 or \$1.25. ...

The English speaking mill worker has almost disappeared. ... The English speaking man wants a little more on which to live; he is what the slave owner calls finicky, and he may belong to some labor organization or want to belong to one. ... That's why perhaps 85 per cent of all the Jones slaves are non-English speaking.¹⁴

The *Pittsburg Leader* continued the series of muck-raking style articles for a week. The articles allude to pending future legislation that would prohibit scrip payment.¹⁵ The "Pluck Me"¹⁶ store was mentioned in every piece. The articles are very large by newspaper standards, most exceeding 5,000 words, and some are illustrated.¹⁷ However, all of the articles lapse into redundancy, restating the issues with different shadings of hyperbole, while inserting occasional anecdotes about the lives of mill workers. In spite of the criticism in the press that J&L received for its treatment of workers, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company promoted its liberal training programs, policy of promoting from within, and opportunities for career advancement in its newspaper employment ads from the 1940s. The south side store would also have been an important source of employment for women living on Pittsburgh's south side—both for wives of mill workers and for single or widowed women young and old. In the early part of the twentieth century, English language skills were likely a barrier to sales and management positions at the store, but this would have been less true for the next generation of workers following the Depression. The neighborhood closest to the South Side Works contained Irish and Eastern European enclaves.

One repeated error in the *Pittsburg Leader* articles is the statement that J&L was the only major industrial company that operated company stores. A more accurate statement would be that J&L was the only major steel company in Pittsburgh to operate company stores, as its two major competitors, U.S. Steel and Oliver Iron and Steel, did not operate them in connection with their steel mills. J&L may have been the only industrial employer in Pittsburgh that built a six-story department store near one of its plant's gates, but many companies owned stores. The coal mining subsidiary of United States Steel, the H.C. Frick Coke Company, operated Union Supply Company stores (including at least nine Pittsburgh locations and dozens of additional stores in southwestern Pennsylvania), and Pittsburgh's Koppers Company ran General Department Stores. Apparently some of these stores were commercially viable and remained open after the parent company's local mine or mill closed. Interestingly, one of the Union Supply Company's warehouses was at 1509 Muriel Street, which happens to be adjacent to the Oliver Iron and Steel Company's south side mill.

¹⁴ "South Side: The Sad Story of Industrial Oppression In Darkest Pittsburg Where Hordes Toil to Enrich the Few," *Pittsburg Leader*, April 3, 1912. The articles ran for a week until displaced by the *Titanic* sinking.

¹⁵ A year after the *Pittsburg Leader* articles, the following was published: Charles P. Neil, Bureau of Labor, *Report on Conditions of Employment in the Iron and Steel Industry of the United States*, Washington, D.C., Senate Documents, Volume 21, 1913. Company stores are discussed—unfavorably—but it is not clear that any national legislation resulted from the report. J&L continued to pay in scrip.

¹⁶ "Pick Me" also was a term for the company store, as were many less polite terms.

¹⁷ The *Pittsburg Leader*, April 8, 1912. The front page featured two facsimiles of alleged J&L pay envelopes showing deductions "To store acct." One of the *Leader* articles suggested that the Mercantile Company was connected directly to the J&L payroll office by telephone or telegraph.

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In 1913, the Allegheny County Court investigated whether Jones & Laughlin Steel Company and the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company were the “same thing” and whether the steel manufacturer operated company stores in violation of Pennsylvania’s Company Store Act of 1891, as had been asserted by “sensational allegations” (which may be a reference to the *Pittsburgh Leader* article of the preceding year).¹⁸ In spite of testimony by former J&L employees that they were coerced to shop at the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Store (those who shopped elsewhere had such actions reported to bosses by informants with the implication that they would be the first to be laid off in slow times), nothing came of the 1913 suit and the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company was allowed to continue its usual business practices. The Depression brought renewed and finally successful efforts to unionize the steel industry. In 1937, J&L lost a landmark case before the Supreme Court, *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation*. The case decided the legality of the National Labor Act of 1935 (also known as the Wagner Act), which prohibited a company from discriminating against workers based on their desire to unionize.

Unionization did not bring the end of scrip payment and the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company store. Apparently J&L’s payment in scrip ended around 1950. It is not clear whether ending scrip payment was negotiated by a union contract or whether J&L stopped scrip because it was an anachronism in post-WWII America. By 1957, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company had discontinued the practice of offering J&L credit (i.e. payroll deductions) at some of its stores. At the Aliquippa store, where such deductions were discontinued, the result was a drop in business because of the lack of available credit. In the 1950s, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company had about 400 stockholders, and it did not immediately close or fade away. In fact, the company’s sales increased between 1954 and 1957, and in 1958 the company had a net income of \$237,356 on sales of \$14,668,797. The owners of the business saw opportunity for expansion, and in 1955 Pittsburgh Mercantile bought and remodeled “The Famous,” a McKeesport, Pennsylvania, department store.

In the era of rapid suburbanization, the location of the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company store—once its greatest strength—became a liability. In the prosperous years following WWII, mill workers gradually left the crowded neighborhood surrounding the South Side Works for the suburbs, where they could enjoy luxuries such as a yard, bathtub, indoor toilet, and a place to park a car. After Pittsburgh Mercantile Company directors rejected a 1958 corporate buyout offer (which, at \$19 a share, would have given shareholders little more than half of the stock’s appraised value), a Mercantile Company official authorized an attempt to raise money for modernization by the then-novel sales-leaseback idea. The company real estate was valued at \$1.5 million and would be sold to investors, the property leased back to the Mercantile Company, and the funds used to make the Mercantile Company stores competitive with more modern retailers.¹⁹ In the end, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Board of Directors rejected

¹⁸ “Would have state bring suit against “Pluck Me” stores.” *Daily Times* [Beaver, PA], March 19, 1913.

¹⁹ Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, *Jennings v. Pittsburgh Mercantile Company*, Appeal #122, April 1964. A real estate broker arranged a sales-leaseback of the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company stores, but the Board of Directors decided the store official who authorized the deal had exceeded his authority and cancelled the deal. The broker sued. The case offers a little insight into the last years of the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company.

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the sales-leaseback plan, and its stores were sold to the Mutual Industrial Sales Company (MISCO) in May 1962. MISCO was a membership-only discount store. At the time of the sale, Pittsburgh Mercantile Company operated stores at Pittsburgh's South Side, Aliquippa, Bobtown, Vestaburg, and on the National Pike (U.S. Route 40).²⁰ MISCO went out of business in 1965.

In 1967, the former Pittsburgh Mercantile Company store on E. Carson Street was purchased by the human service agency, Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh. After a year-long, million dollar renovation, Goodwill moved its headquarters from Pittsburgh's Strip District (at Twenty-eighth Street and Liberty Avenue) to the South Side in late January 1968. Principal changes to the building at that time include the construction of a cafeteria and lounge on the second floor and the subdivision of the fifth floor for offices and job training rooms. The rear (ca. 1950) addition formerly used for food sales was remodeled to house a work room, sales area, furniture sterilization room, and paint spray room. First floor and mezzanine sales areas and the truck loading docks were retained. At that time, Goodwill employed 475 physically and mentally handicapped persons.²¹ In the late 1980s, Goodwill added a second floor to the building's hyphen (Twenty-sixth Street entrance) and converted that area to a health clinic, converted the old loading docks to additional workspace (the roof of the ca. 1950 addition was extended over the docks), and constructed a new loading dock at the building's southeast corner, which extended to an adjacent parcel that Goodwill had purchased for parking. The 1980s loading dock addition was removed when the building was converted to The Brix at 26 Apartments in 2012 by SouthSide Associates, LP, which purchased the building and parking lot from Goodwill in February 2010. The adjacent parking lot (occupying Allegheny County Tax Parcel 12-M-98) was sold by Southside Associates, LP to Aldi, Incorporated in December 2010, which subsequently constructed a grocery store on the lot.

Company Stores

Company Stores are associated with payment in scrip, debt bondage, and the worst abuses of pre-Progressive era industrializing America.²² Nevertheless, there were arguments in favor of company stores and payment in scrip. From a legal and constitutional perspective, proponents of payment in specie had difficulty countering the argument that individuals have the right to enter into a contract on whatever terms the contracting parties agree. The United States Congress held hearings into company store abuses in 1901 and on several later occasions. Pennsylvania passed laws in 1874, 1891, and 1901 aimed at limiting company stores and payment in scrip.²³ None of these laws or hearings was effective. Industrial firms were banned from owning company stores directly, but the laws were easily evaded by setting up a separate corporation to "own" the stores—as J&L did with the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company.

²⁰ "Pittsburgh Mercantile Becomes MISCO," *Pittsburgh Press*, May 13, 1962.

²¹ "Move Is Set By Goodwill," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 3, 1968.

²² Payment for labor in goods, or in scrip redeemable only at a company store, is termed the "truck" system in Britain, where legislative attempts to limit truck abuses date back to 1464.

²³ Jasper Yeates Brinton, Esq., compiler, *Labor Laws of Pennsylvania*, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Printed by the State, 1914, pp. 324-333.

Name of Property

A more practical issue favoring company stores and payment in scrip was the large number of recent immigrants employed in American heavy industry in the early twentieth century. Most of the immigrants did not speak English well or at all, many were illiterate, and many had arrived so recently that they were unfamiliar with American currency, food, clothing, housing, and other customs. Company-owned housing, a company store, and payment in scrip were seen as necessary and even benevolent by many industrialists. Given weak industrial safety laws and 12-hour, 6-½ day work weeks in the early twentieth century steel industry, company stores and scrip payment may not have been the most important issues on reformers' agendas.

Although many company stores provided another profit center for large corporations, some were specifically not exploitative. A few company stores were cooperatives, where wholesale prices were passed on to members with minimal mark-up. A further factor favoring company stores was geographical isolation, particularly of coal mining communities. The housing and infrastructure in many of the "patch" and company towns was constructed by the firm that owned the mine or mill, or a subsidiary. Company stores were a part of the company-town equation.

The rural company or industrial store was most commonly associated with extractive industries, such as mining and timber harvesting, which by necessity operated in rural areas. In such cases, the company store typically operated without competition and was a general store offering a full range of food, clothing, hardware, and home goods. Even in rural areas, housewives expected to have free home delivery from the company store.²⁴ With the exception of the few company stores that were true cooperatives, there were likely few differences between rural company stores in different industries, with the possible exception that industrial stores connected with larger (often national) company chains may have had greater selection of merchandise and more bargaining power with suppliers. One advantage of the rural company store was that it provided workers in remote areas access to a range of foods and manufactured goods that may not otherwise have been available or affordable. For instance, miners in remote areas ordered unusually large numbers of custom tailored suits from company stores (presumably because they had broad shoulders and small waists), and they were able to do so affordably because the stores had negotiated generous terms though bulk order from urban tailors.²⁵ Because of the limited employment pool available in remote areas, the rural company store was more likely to be a source of employment for the wives and family members of industrial workers than in urban areas where the employment pool was larger and population more ethnically diverse (and thus one's ethnicity could be either a boon or a barrier to employment).

In urban areas, the company store appears to have, at least initially, been most common in labor intensive industries that relied upon a large number of unskilled and immigrant laborers. In the Pittsburgh region, such stores were typically operated by very large employers in the metals or extractive industries (coal mining, coke production, iron and steel production). Such industries were also those that were pursuing vertical integration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Because competing firms like U.S. Steel Corporation and Jones & Laughlin Steel

²⁴ Johnson, *The Industrial Store*, p. 60.

²⁵ Johnson, *The Industrial Store*, p. 124.

Name of Property

Company differed in their use of company stores (the former did not use them while the latter did), it appears that the personal convictions of a company's owners or directors may have played a large part in determining whether a company store was organized in an urban area. It is not clear what percentage of urban company stores used the scrip system of payment, but the percentage would likely have been high because in urban areas retail competition is much greater than in rural areas, and because industrial employers benefit during slow times by payment in scrip, as it does not have an immediate negative impact on the company's bottom line like payment in cash would. In urban areas, company stores would have had a much larger pool of potential employees than in rural areas. Thus, there would be much more competition for higher status sales and managerial positions than in rural areas, and such positions would less likely be filled by the wives or daughters of mill workers, particularly if the worker was from southern or eastern Europe. Because urban company stores were typically larger than rural company stores, they offered more "white collar" sales and managerial positions. The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company boasted of its job training and policy of promoting from within in its newspaper ads, but statistics are not available to confirm such claims. Urban company stores offered a wide range of quality foods, clothing, and housewares that was on par with the best supermarket and department store offerings in town, in part because of the higher level of retail competition in urban markets, and in part because such stores wanted to increase sales by marketing to the general public and not just their "captive" industrial employee clientele. As a result, it was common for urban company stores to open branch locations throughout a metropolitan area—even in downtowns and upper class neighborhoods. For example, the Union Supply Company had a branch in the Oakland suburb of Pittsburgh in the Iroquois Apartments, which was then one of the most exclusive apartment buildings in town.

A 1952 study of the nation's industrial stores by Ole S. Johnson notes that Pittsburgh-based Henry C. Frick's Union Supply Company operated the largest single group of industrial stores in the country. In Pittsburgh, the Union Supply Company then operated nine stores, including three located on the first floor of apartment buildings, a downtown sporting goods store, and a highway shopping center. It is clear from Johnson's study that company stores in Pittsburgh did not rely on or exclusively market to their "captive audience" of mill workers. The Union Supply Company sold a large volume of fine and specialty foods and drew a large proportion of its orders from the well-to-do Pittsburgh suburb of Mt. Lebanon, which it served with regular deliveries twice a week. It is likely that J&L's Pittsburgh store and other urban stores would have had similar offerings, particularly in the post-WWII era. One unnamed Pittsburgh company store maintained a complete coffee roasting department, which roasted, packaged, and blended three brands of coffee for the Pittsburgh market.²⁶ Some stores operated automobile service stations as well.

Company stores came under scrutiny throughout the 1920s and 1930s as part of the government's examination of the coal industry. Coal mining grew enormously during World War I and essentially collapsed in the 1920s with reduction in demand. Miners were stranded in remote locations and were willing to work for little pay and under nearly any terms and

²⁶ Ole S. Johnson, *The Industrial Store: Its History, Operations and Economic Significance*, School of Business Administration, University of Georgia, Atlanta, 1952, pp. 110, 123-24.

Name of Property

conditions.²⁷ The Great Depression worsened the situation. Special commissions and government hearings surveyed the worst practices in the coal industry, and lurid stories of exploitation and abuse were widely publicized. At the same time, the United Mine Workers of America was attempting to unionize the Appalachian coal mines and actively participated in the investigation of coal company abuses.

In 1927, the National Industrial Stores Association was formed in Cincinnati, Ohio. It worked to counter the bad press company stores received, and within a few years it moved to Washington, D.C., to focus on lobbying Congress. The group conducted its own surveys and arrived at different conclusions from many of the government investigations. The organization counted 961 company stores in 1934, about 70 percent associated with the coal industry. Twenty-four stores were listed as serving iron and steel companies; most of these were in the southern United States.²⁸

Despite hearings, investigations, and legislation, company stores and payment in scrip survived through the Depression years. In fact, the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 defined "wage" as including the "reasonable" cost to the employer of furnishing housing, board, and things like groceries at the company store. National Recovery Act studies showed company store prices to be 2.1 to 10.4 percent higher than in neighboring independent stores. When adjustments are made for credit and delivery costs, it was claimed by company stores that their average prices were not significantly higher. Company stores did incur significant accounting costs for scrip or payroll deduction items.²⁹ In 1952, company stores amounted to 1 percent of total retail sales volume in the United States (over \$1 billion). In 40 percent of communities with company stores, they were the only stores in town. One-half of sales at industrial stores were for foodstuffs, which comprised about 2 percent of the nation's food sales in 1952.³⁰

Under Criterion A, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company's E. Carson Street store is eligible for the National Register in the area of commerce as a significant large, urban company store. Although there are numerous surviving examples of the rural company store, the large urban company store, analogous to the department store, is a much rarer property type. Though it is possible that a competing firm might have had a similar type of flagship company store in Pittsburgh, research has not positively identified any surviving buildings as such. The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company did construct analogous large, urban stores at California, Pennsylvania (1904) and Aliquippa, Pennsylvania (1910), but the California store burned in the late 1940s and the Aliquippa store, which was similar in scale, design, and operation, has received major unsympathetic exterior alterations. Though J&L's adjacent South Side Works steel mill does not survive, the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company's store provides a tangible link to the socio-economic conditions under which immigrant laborers worked in Pittsburgh in the early twentieth century. The company store is also associated with worker ethnicity, as J&L's was reputed to

²⁷ In 1923, then United States Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, described coal as "...the worst functioning industry in the country." Johnson, *The Industrial Store*, p. 60.

²⁸ Johnson, *The Industrial Store*, p. 76.

²⁹ Johnson, *The Industrial Store*, pp. 60, 92.

³⁰ Johnson, *The Industrial Store*, p. 95.

Name of Property

employ a particularly high percentage of largely illiterate southern and eastern European immigrants. In this regard, the company store and the practice of payment of wages in scrip were widely criticized as a means of worker suppression and debt bondage. From the perspective of the employer, the company store provided a means of exchange of goods that was simple for immigrants unfamiliar with American customs and it also enabled workers to purchase goods on credit during layoffs, when credit might otherwise not have been available.

The Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building is significant chiefly because of its size and scale, both physically and in terms of its customer base. The store's imposing, six-story Beaux Arts and Commercial Style brick and terra cotta façade towered above the nearby mills and modest rowhouses inhabited by workers of Pittsburgh's South Side, and its fine ornamentation still speaks to the dignity and gravitas accorded the flagship retail building of one of the nation's largest steel producers. The store maintained accounts with thousands of J&L employees and likely also included thousands more among Pittsburgh's general population. Because of the store's prominence, it was a target in the first third of the twentieth century for opponents of payment in scrip and of the company or industrial store system in general. The store was repeatedly criticized by opponents of J&L Steel for its use of scrip and credit based on payroll deductions, as well as for its use of coercion by cooperating with company informants to threaten J&L employees who shopped at competing stores. J&L Steel and the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company were accused in the courts of violating Pennsylvania's Company Store Act of 1891, but no convictions or corporate restructuring resulted.

In spite of the negative press that the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company received, its Pittsburgh store survived, was expanded, and remained profitable for a decade following the end of the scrip system around 1950. The store also was a significant source of employment for women on Pittsburgh's South Side and through job training and promotion from within was a significant source of white collar sales and managerial employment positions.

Name of Property

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1890 Atlas of the City of Pittsburgh, Volume 5. Plate 6.

Name of Property

- 1901 Real Estate Plat-book of the City of Pittsburgh, Volume 4. Plate 11.
- 1910 Atlas of Greater Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Plate 26.
- 1916 Plat-book of the City of Pittsburgh, Volume 6. Plate 4.

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- 1938 Aerial photograph of Pittsburgh vicinity, October 25, 1938.
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- 1960 Pittsburgh East, PA 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle.
- 1993 Pittsburgh East, PA 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle.

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 Property

Name of repository: University of Pittsburgh, Archives Service Center (holds corporate records of Pittsburgh Mercantile Company).

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than 1 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 40.426913 | Longitude: -79.968281 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

All that certain piece of ground situate in the Sixteenth Ward of the City of Pittsburgh, County of Allegheny and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, being designated as: Block 12-M-36 in the Deed Registry Office of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The nominated property is bounded on the north by E. Carson Street, on the east by tax parcel 12-M-98, on the south by Sarah Street, and on the west by S. Twenty-sixth Street. The National Register boundary encompasses three-quarters of an acre, more or less.

Name of Property

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property contains all the real estate historically associated with the Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building. The boundary also conforms to that of the property's present tax parcel.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jesse Belfast / Architectural Historian
organization: Michael Baker International
street & number: 100 Airside Drive
city or town: Moon Township state: PA zip code: 15108
e-mail jbelfast@mbakerintl.com
telephone: 412-269-7908
date: July 2014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Name of Property

Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property:	Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building
City:	Pittsburgh City
County:	Allegheny
State:	PA
Name of Photographer:	Charles Uhl
Date of Photographs:	2* and 22** November 2013
Location of Original Digital Files:	6711 Stanton Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Number of Photographs:	39

Index to Photo Direction Sheets

Photo Key: Photos 1-26
Floor Plan Sheet A2: Photos 27-30, 37-39
Floor Plan Sheet A3: Photos 34-35
Floor Plan Sheet A5: Photo 36
Floor Plan Sheet A8: Photos 31-33

Photo 1 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0001)**
East (side) and north (front) elevations, camera facing southwest. 1936 addition is at left.

Photo 2 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0002)*
North (front) and west (side) elevations, camera facing southeast.

Photo 3 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0003)*
West (side) elevation, camera facing east.

Photo 4 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0004)**
West (side) elevation of rear addition, camera facing northeast.

Photo 5 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0005)*
South elevation of rear addition, camera facing northeast.

Name of Property

Photo 6 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0006)*
South and east elevations of rear addition, camera facing north.

Photo 7 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0007)*
Garage entrance ramp, camera facing north.

Photo 8 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0008)*
Detail: garage entrance ramp, camera facing north.

Photo 9 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0009)*
Rear addition east elevation, camera facing west.

Photo 10 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0010)**
South (rear) and east (side) elevations, camera facing northwest.

Photo 11 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0011)*
East (side) elevation, camera facing west.

Photo 12 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0012)**
Detail: lower part of façade, north (front) elevation, camera facing south.

Photo 13 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0013)**
Detail: upper part of façade, north (front) elevation, camera facing south.

Photo 14 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0014)**
Detail: north (front) elevation of 1936 addition, camera facing south.

Photo 15 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0015)**
Detail: storefront on north (front) elevation of 1936 addition, camera facing south.

Photo 16 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0016)**
Detail: cornice at northeast corner of building, east (side) and north (front) elevations, camera facing south.

Photo 17 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0017)*
Detail: storefronts on north (front) elevation, camera facing west.

Photo 18 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0018)*
Detail: main door, north (front) elevation, camera facing south.

Photo 19 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0019)**
Detail: main door surround, north (front) elevation, camera facing south.

Name of Property

Photo 20 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0020)**

Detail: storefront window ventilator, north (front) elevation, camera facing south.

Photo 21 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0021)**

Detail: cornice at southwest corner of building, west (side) and south (rear) elevations, camera facing northeast.

Photo 22 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0022)**

Detail: new side entrance, west elevation, camera facing east.

Photo 23 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0023)**

Detail: upper windows, west (side) elevation, camera facing northeast.

Photo 24 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0024)**

Detail: upper floors, south (rear) elevation, facing north.

Photo 25 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0025)*

Patio on roof of 1936 (east side) addition, camera facing south.

Photo 26 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0026)*

Courtyard between main building and parking garage, camera facing east.

Photo 27 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0027)*

Interior: first floor main lobby, camera facing southeast.

Photo 28 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0028)*

Interior: rear hyphen, lobby and recreation room, camera facing east.

Photo 29 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0029)*

Interior: rear part of first floor, showing recreation space and hyphen, camera facing south.

Photo 30 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0030)*

Interior: first floor lobby showing mezzanine (second floor), camera facing south.

Photo 31 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0031)**

Interior: seventh floor Suite H, typical rental unit living area and kitchen, camera facing south.

Photo 32 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0032)**

Interior: seventh floor Suite H, typical rental unit bedroom, camera facing south.

Photo 33 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0033)**

Interior: seventh floor Suite H, typical rental unit living room, camera facing west.

Name of Property

Photo 34 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0034)**

Interior: detail of surviving original staircase at southwest corner of building, camera facing west.

Photo 35 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0035)*

Interior: mezzanine level (second floor) showing modern enclosure, camera facing northwest.

Photo 36 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0036)*

Interior: typical corridor finishes, fourth floor, camera facing west.

Photo 37 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0037)**

Interior: parking garage, upper floor, camera facing southeast.

Photo 38 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0038)*

Interior: showing original main entry doors, camera facing north.

Photo 39 (PA_Allegheny County_Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building_0039)*

Interior: showing unfinished first floor retail space, camera facing northwest.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building
Name of Property
Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
County and State
n/a
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 1



Google Earth base aerial image, August 29, 2012.

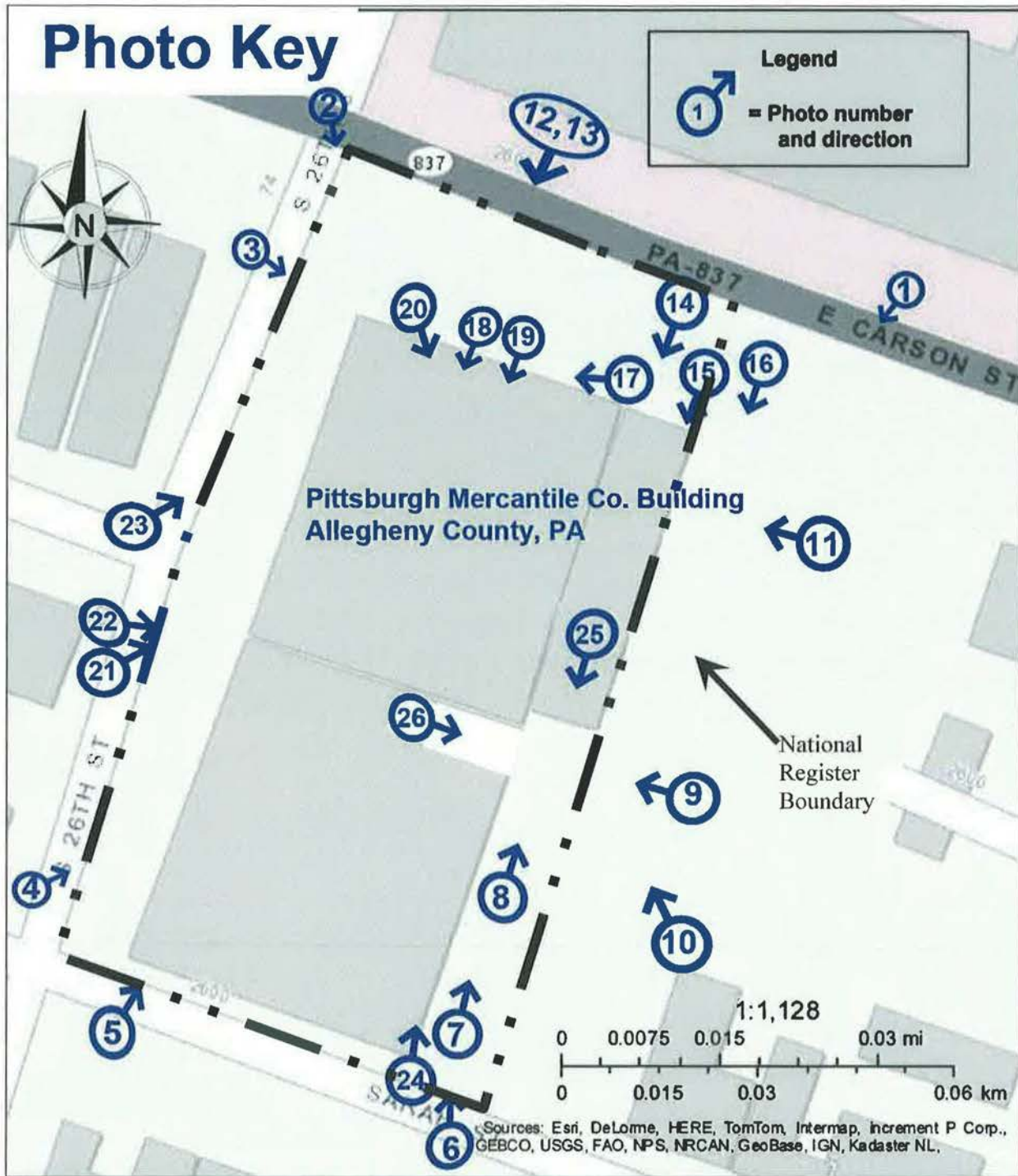
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building
Name of Property
Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
County and State
n/a
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 2



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation

2600 EAST CARSON STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA 15203



TMA Architects
Planners & Interior Designers
405 Cook Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15211
P. 412.441.2262
F. 412.441.8817

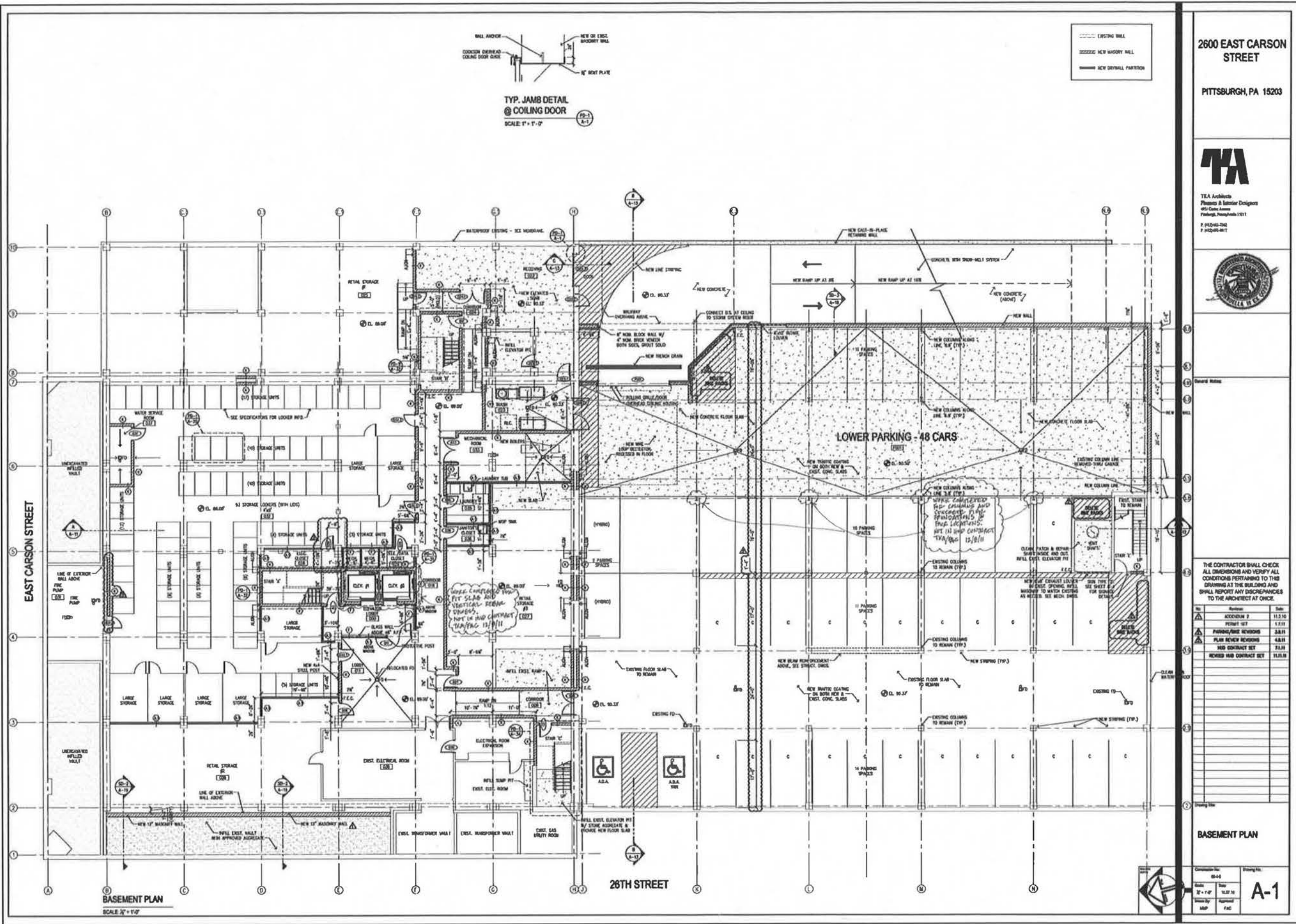
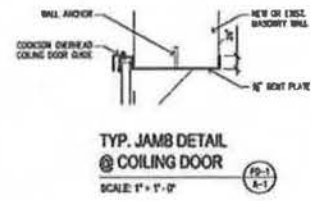


THE CONTRACTOR SHALL CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS AND VERIFY ALL CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO THE DRAWING AT THE BUILDING AND SHALL REPORT ANY DISCREPANCIES TO THE ARCHITECT AT ONCE.

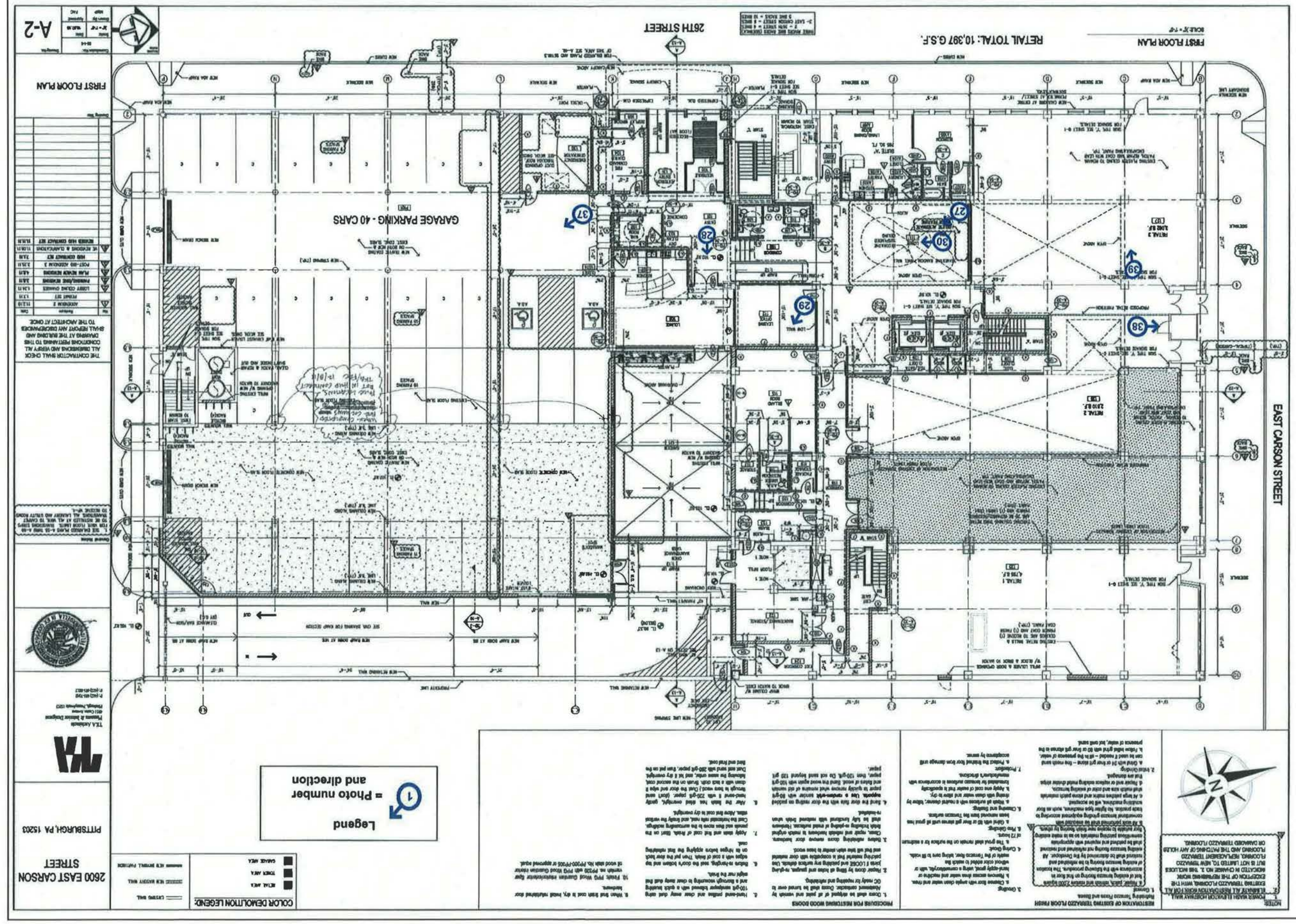
No.	Revision	Date
1	ADDITION #2	11.13.10
2	PERMIT SET	1.15.11
3	PARKING/REVISIONS	2.8.11
4	PLAN REVIEW REVISIONS	4.8.11
5	ISS CONTRACT SET	7.8.11
6	REVISION CONTRACT SET	12.18.11

BASEMENT PLAN

Scale:	1/4" = 1'-0"	Sheet No.:	A-1
Drawn by:	MAP	Approved:	TAC



Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building
 Name of Property
 Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
 County and State
 n/a
 Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



PITTSBURGH, PA 15203
 STREET
 2600 EAST CARSON



TEA Architects
 Architects & Interior Designers
 4011 Main Avenue
 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15217
 P-1024-0018



1. SEE EXISTING FLOOR PLAN FOR ALL DIMENSIONS AND VERTICAL CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO THIS DRAWING AT THE BUILDING AND TO THE ARCHITECT AT ONCE.
 THE CONTRACTOR SHALL CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS AND VERTICAL CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO THIS DRAWING AT THE BUILDING AND TO THE ARCHITECT AT ONCE.
 2. SEE EXISTING FLOOR PLAN FOR ALL DIMENSIONS AND VERTICAL CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO THIS DRAWING AT THE BUILDING AND TO THE ARCHITECT AT ONCE.
 THE CONTRACTOR SHALL CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS AND VERTICAL CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO THIS DRAWING AT THE BUILDING AND TO THE ARCHITECT AT ONCE.

REVISIONS AND COMMENTS SET:

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	11.19.11	ISSUE FOR PERMIT
2	12.11.11	ISSUE FOR PERMIT
3	12.11.11	ISSUE FOR PERMIT
4	12.11.11	ISSUE FOR PERMIT
5	12.11.11	ISSUE FOR PERMIT
6	12.11.11	ISSUE FOR PERMIT
7	12.11.11	ISSUE FOR PERMIT
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9	12.11.11	ISSUE FOR PERMIT
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN

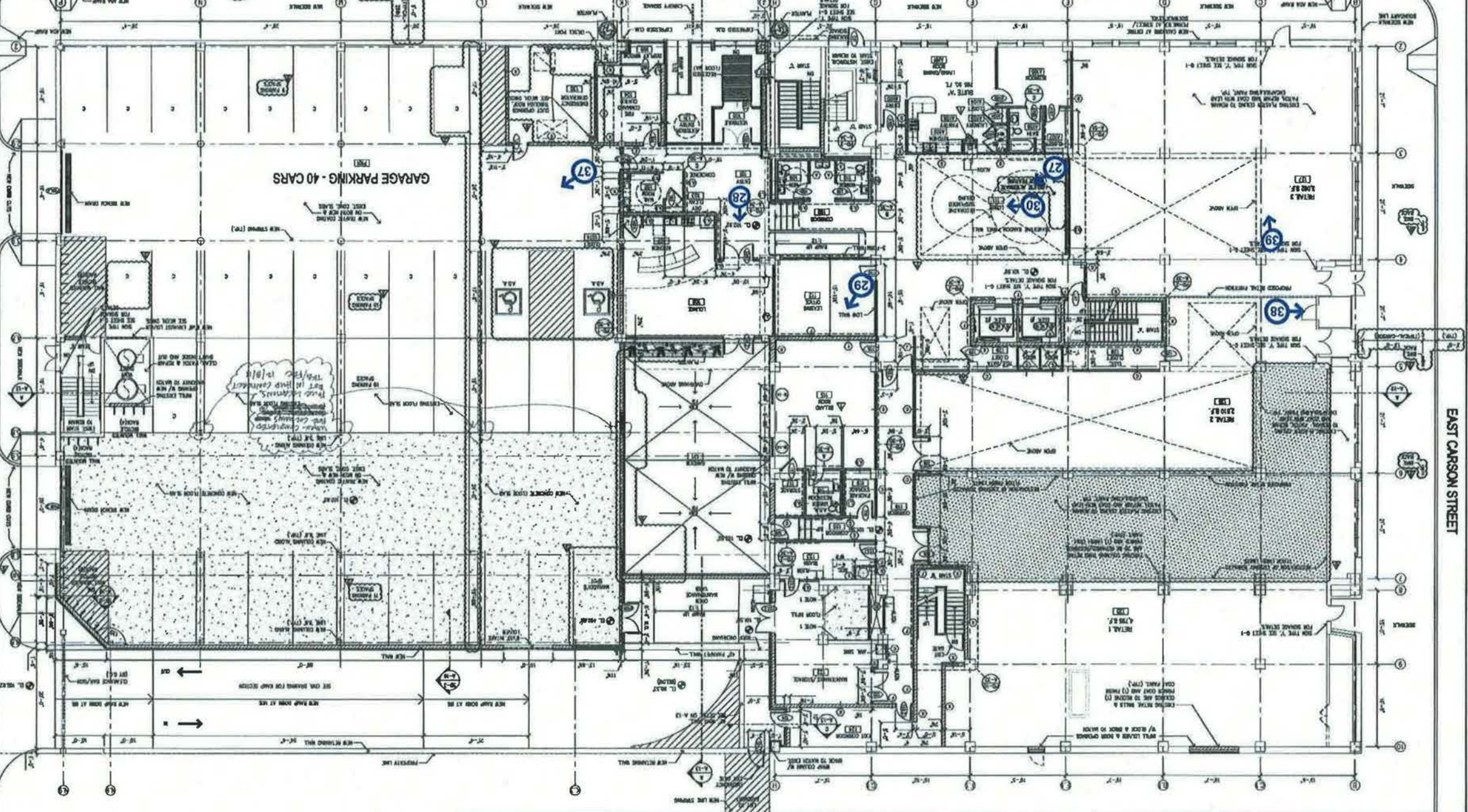
A-2

NOTES:
 1. REFER TO ALL RESTORATION SHEETS FOR ALL EXISTING TERRAZZO FLOOR FINISH.
 2. REFER TO ALL RESTORATION SHEETS FOR ALL EXISTING TERRAZZO FLOOR FINISH.
 3. REFER TO ALL RESTORATION SHEETS FOR ALL EXISTING TERRAZZO FLOOR FINISH.
 4. REFER TO ALL RESTORATION SHEETS FOR ALL EXISTING TERRAZZO FLOOR FINISH.



1. Change floor with maple floor over new and repair.
 2. Change floor with maple floor over new and repair.
 3. Change floor with maple floor over new and repair.
 4. Change floor with maple floor over new and repair.
 5. Change floor with maple floor over new and repair.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"
 RETAIL TOTAL: 10,397 G.S.F.



26TH STREET

EAST CARSON STREET

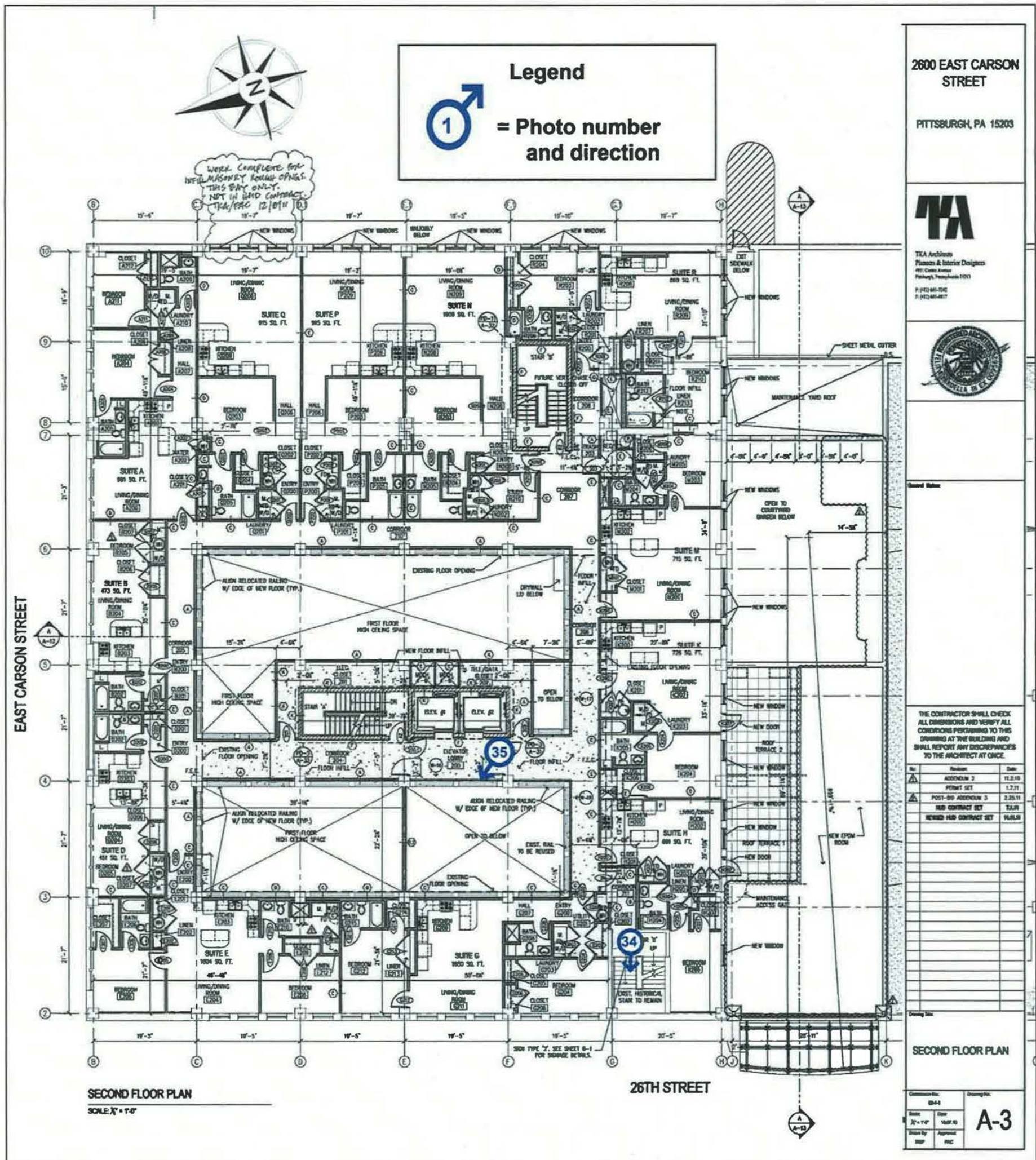
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County and State
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2600 EAST CARSON STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA 15203



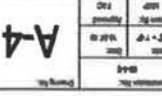
TKA Architects
Planners & Interior Designers
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (412) 734-2400
7/24/2011

Special Notes
1. SEE EXHIBIT PLANS A-10 THRU A-13 FOR NEW FLOOR LAYOUT. DIMENSIONS SHOWN TO CENTER OF ALL WALLS TO CENTER TO CENTER. ALL LAYOUTS AND VERTICAL DIMENSIONS TO THE ARCHITECT AT ONCE.

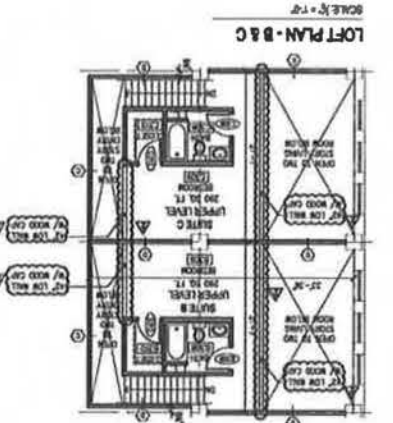
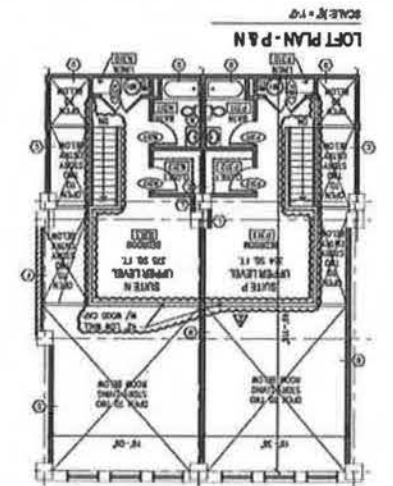
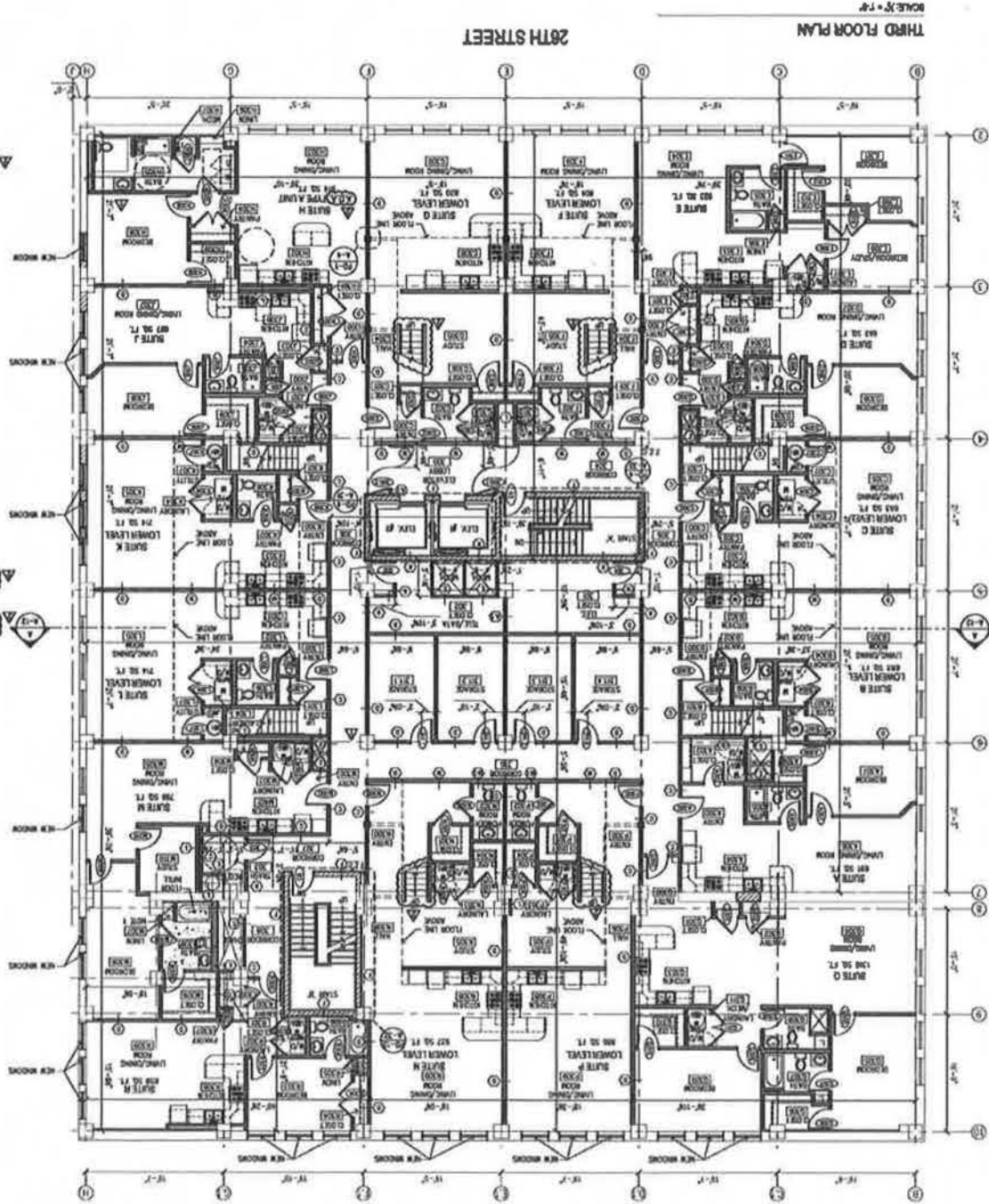
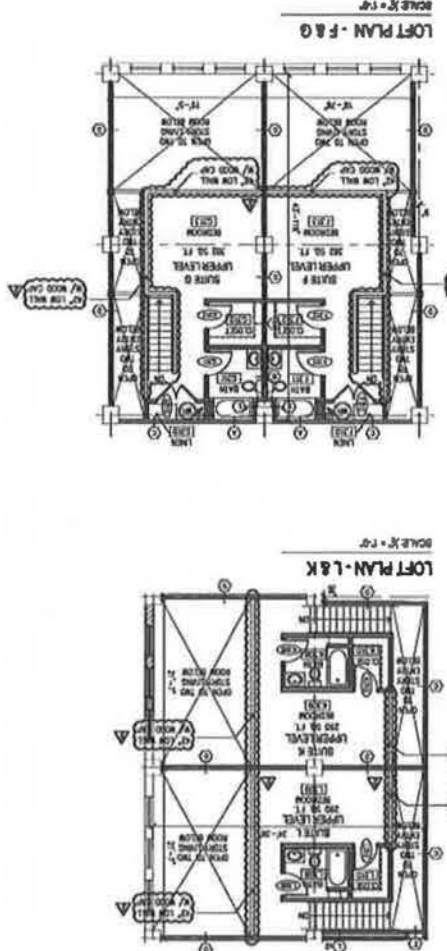
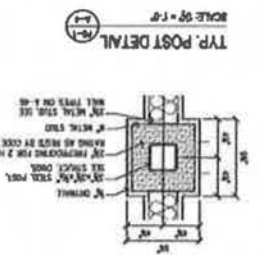
THE CONTRACTOR SHALL CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS AGAINST THE CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO THIS SHALL VERIFY ANY DISCREPANCIES TO THE ARCHITECT AT ONCE.

NO.	REVISION	DATE
1	ISSUED	11.18.11
2	PERMIT SET	1.21.12
3	POST-NO ANSWERS	3.23.12
4	FOR PERMIT	4.26.12
5	FOR CONTRACT SET	7.17.12

THIRD & LOFT FLOOR PLANS



SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
[Solid black square]	EXIST. WALL
[Dashed line]	EXIST. WALL TO REMAIN
[Dotted line]	NEW WALL
[Dashed line with dots]	NEW WALL TO REMAIN
[Dotted line with dots]	NEW WALL TO DEMOLISH



2. VERIFY 25% COMPLETE THE EXISTING CONCRETE FLOOR IN EAST CORNER. LET IN NEW CONCRETE. TYPICAL DETAIL 12/8/11

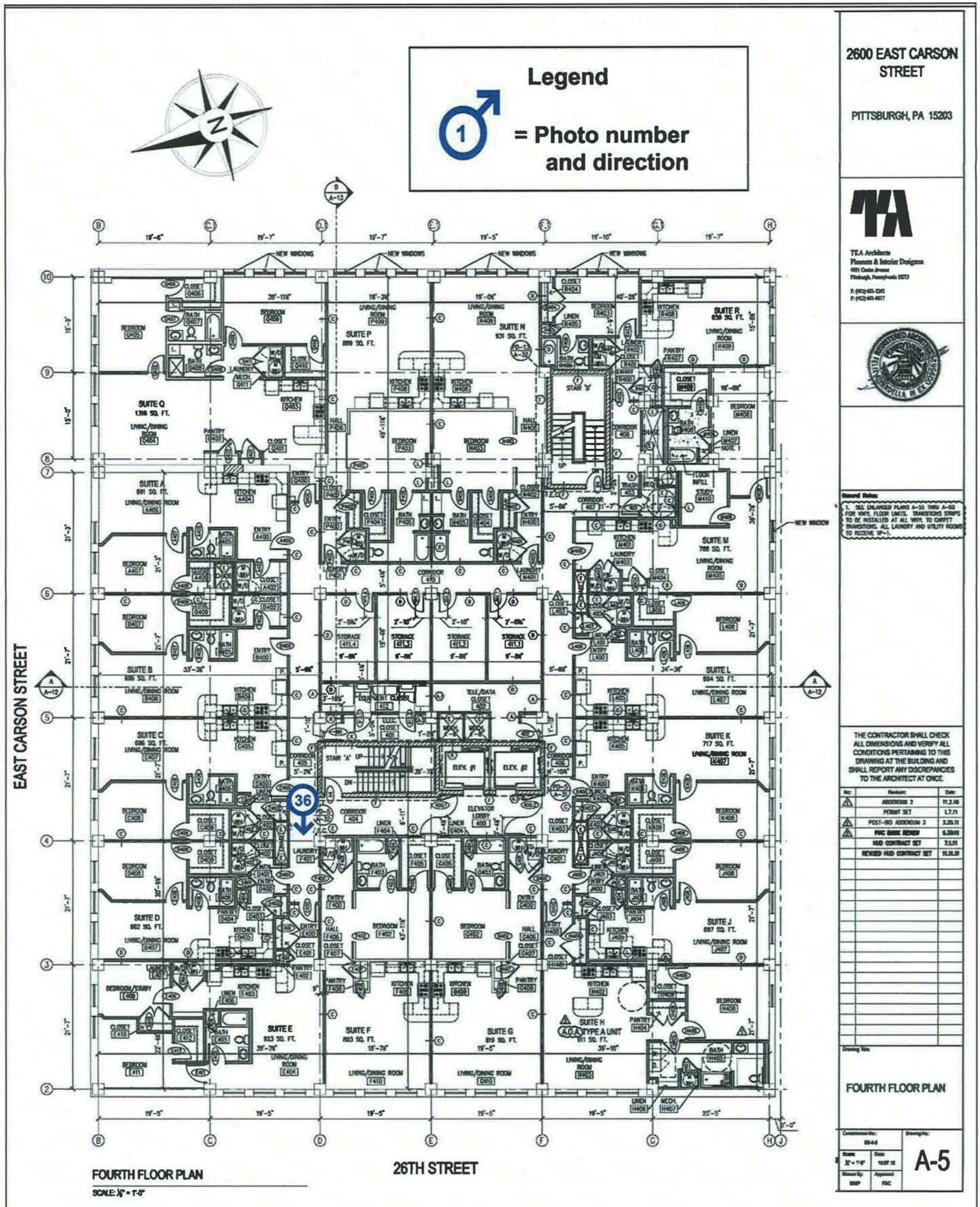
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2600 EAST CARSON STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA 15203

TA
T.A. Architects
Planners & Interior Designers
4801 Centre Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15207
P: (412) 481-1201
F: (412) 481-8877



General Notes:

1. SEE ENLARGED PLANS A-20 1980 A-60 FOR VINYL FLOOR LIMITS. TRANSITION STRIPS TO BE INSTALLED AT ALL VINYL TO CARPET TRANSITIONS. ALL LAUNDRY AND UTILITY ROOMS TO RECEIVE VP-1.

THE CONTRACTOR SHALL CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS AND VERIFY ALL CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO THE DRAWING AT THE BUILDING AND SHALL REPORT ANY DISCREPANCIES TO THE ARCHITECT AT ONCE.

No.	Revision	Date
1	ADDITION 2	11.2.10
2	PERMIT SET	1.7.11
3	POST-NO ADDENDUM 3	2.20.11
4	PWC BANK REVIEW	6.20.11
5	HAD CONTRACT SET	7.1.11
6	REVISED HAD CONTRACT SET	10.18.11

Drawing No.	
FOURTH FLOOR PLAN	

Commission No. 89-48	Drawing No. A-5
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"	Date: 10/27/11
Drawn By: BWP	Approved: PJC

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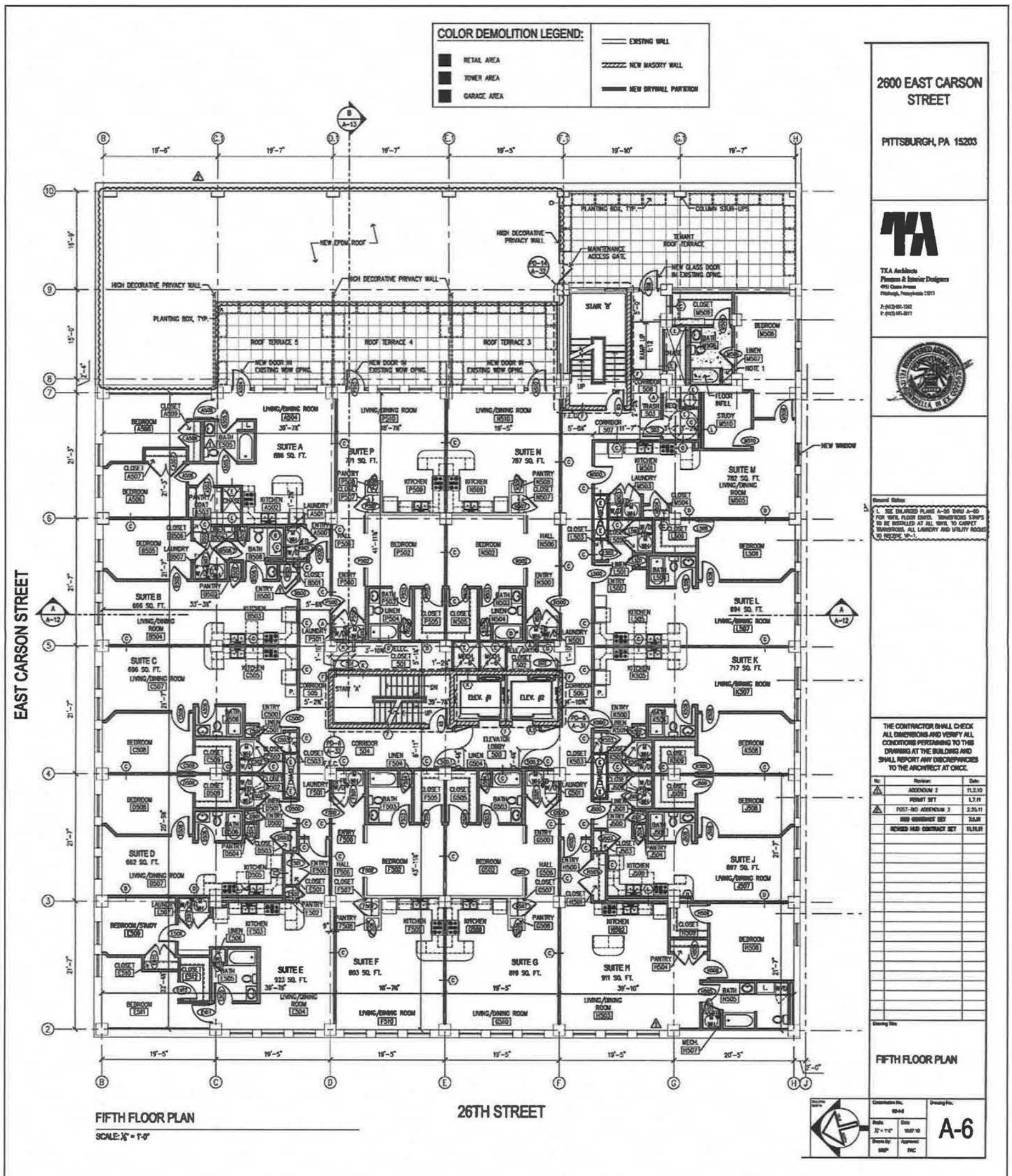
County and State

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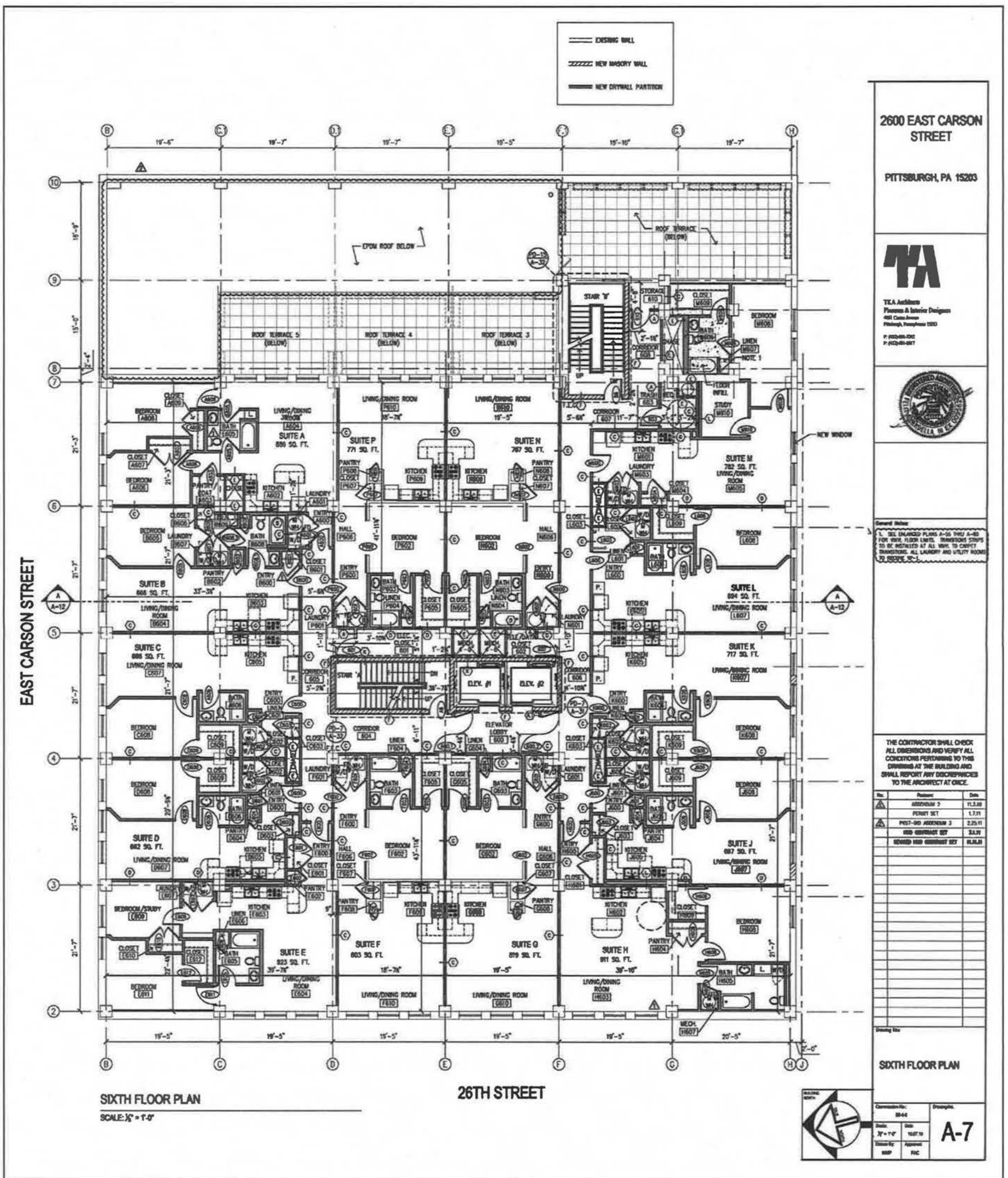
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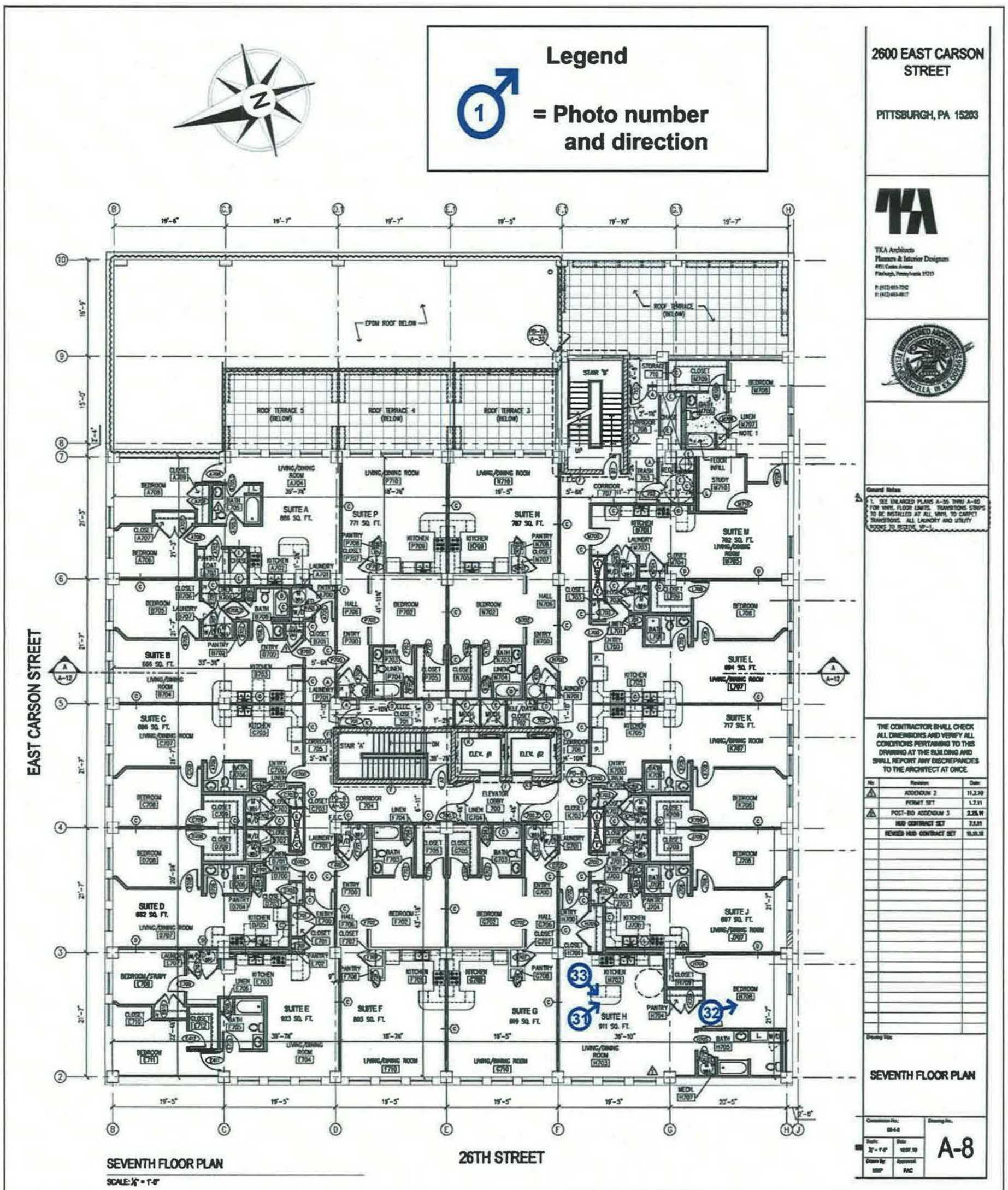
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Figure 1: Reproduction of Pittsburgh Mercantile Company letterhead showing illustrations of three stores.



Figure 2: Detail of Egyptian terra cotta cornice ornament, from the January 1, 1908 issue of *Brick*.

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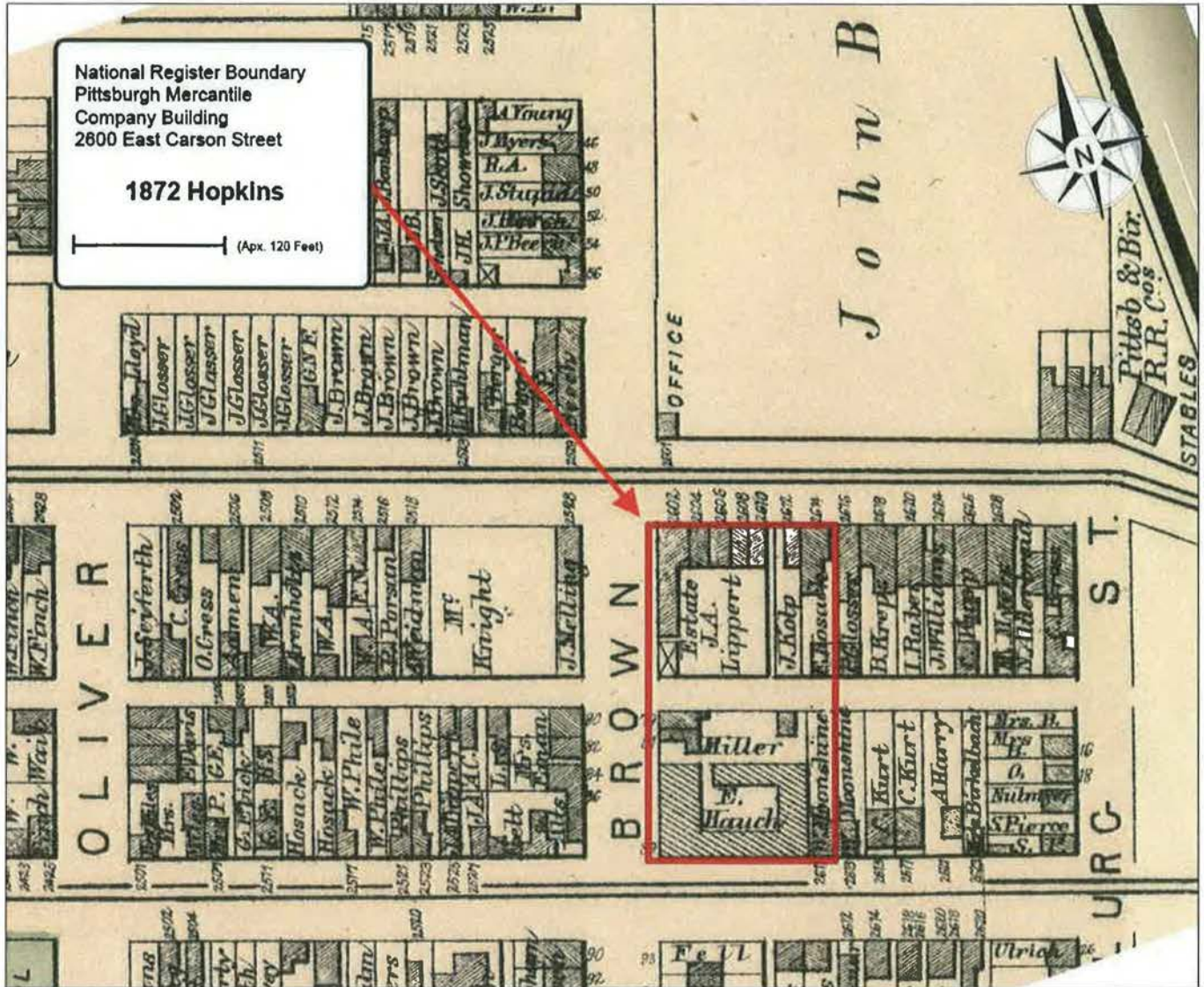


Figure 3: National Register Boundary shown on 1872 Hopkins map.

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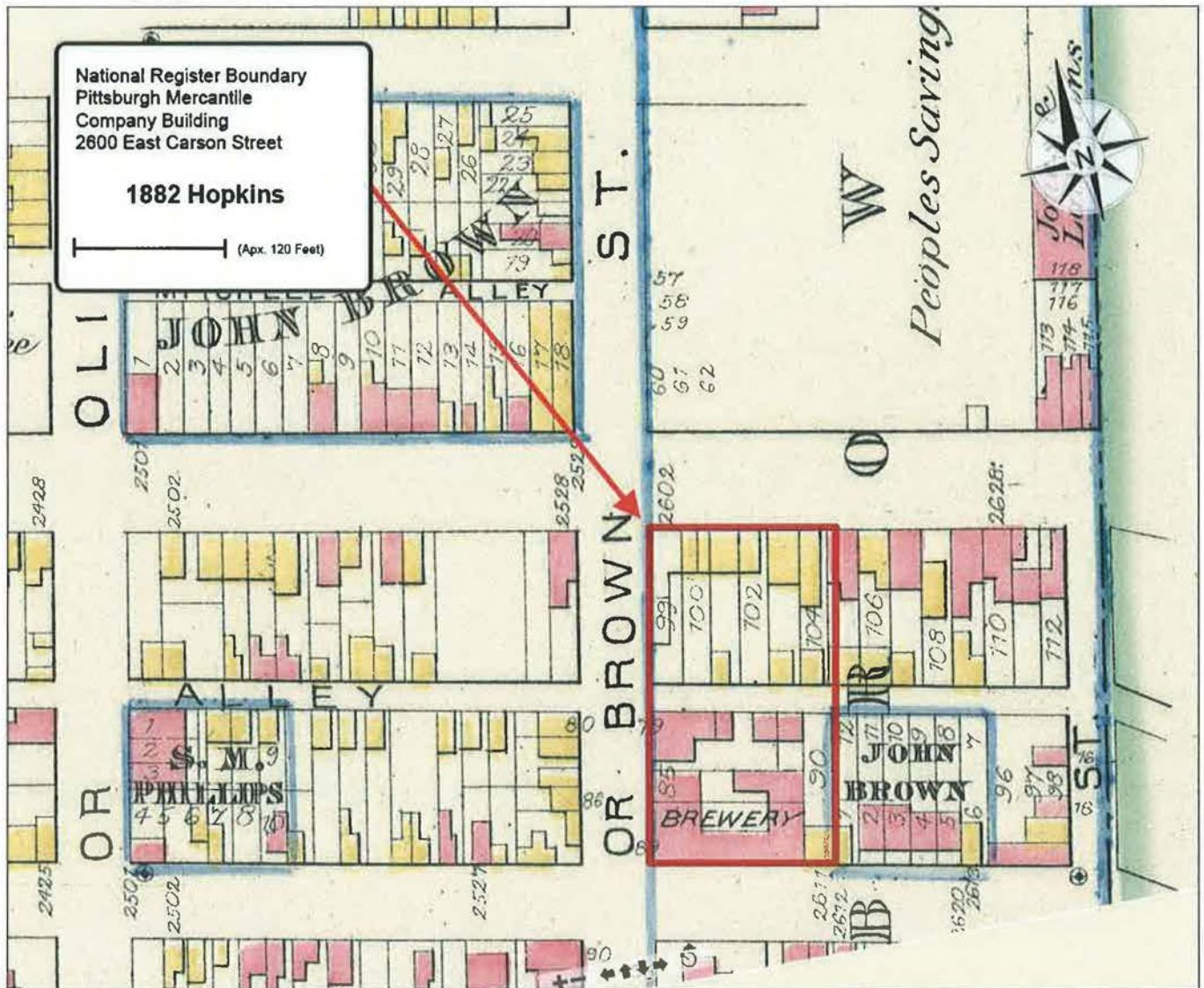


Figure 4: National Register Boundary shown on 1882 Hopkins map.

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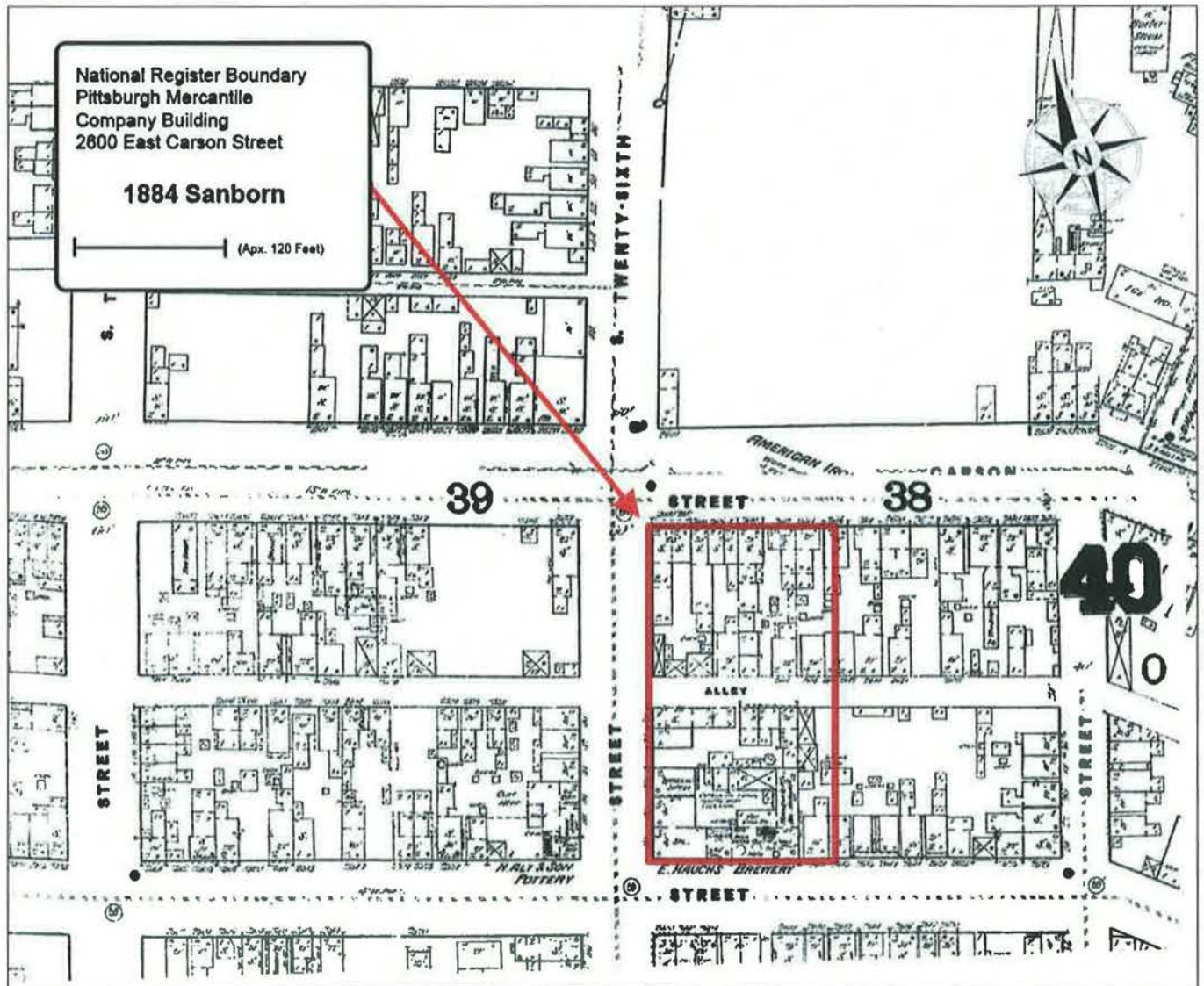


Figure 5: National Register Boundary shown on 1884 Sanborn map.

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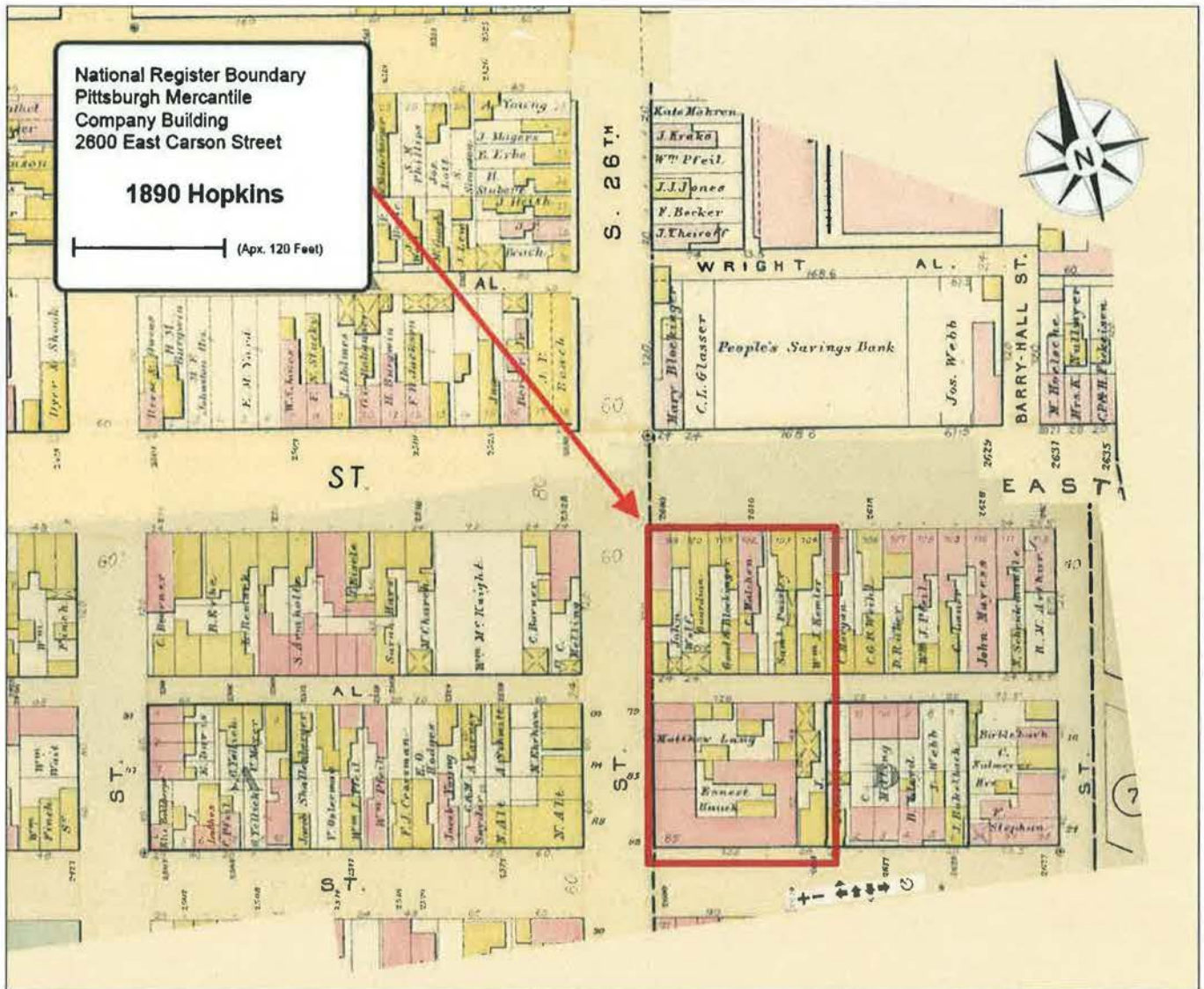


Figure 6: National Register Boundary shown on 1890 Hopkins map.

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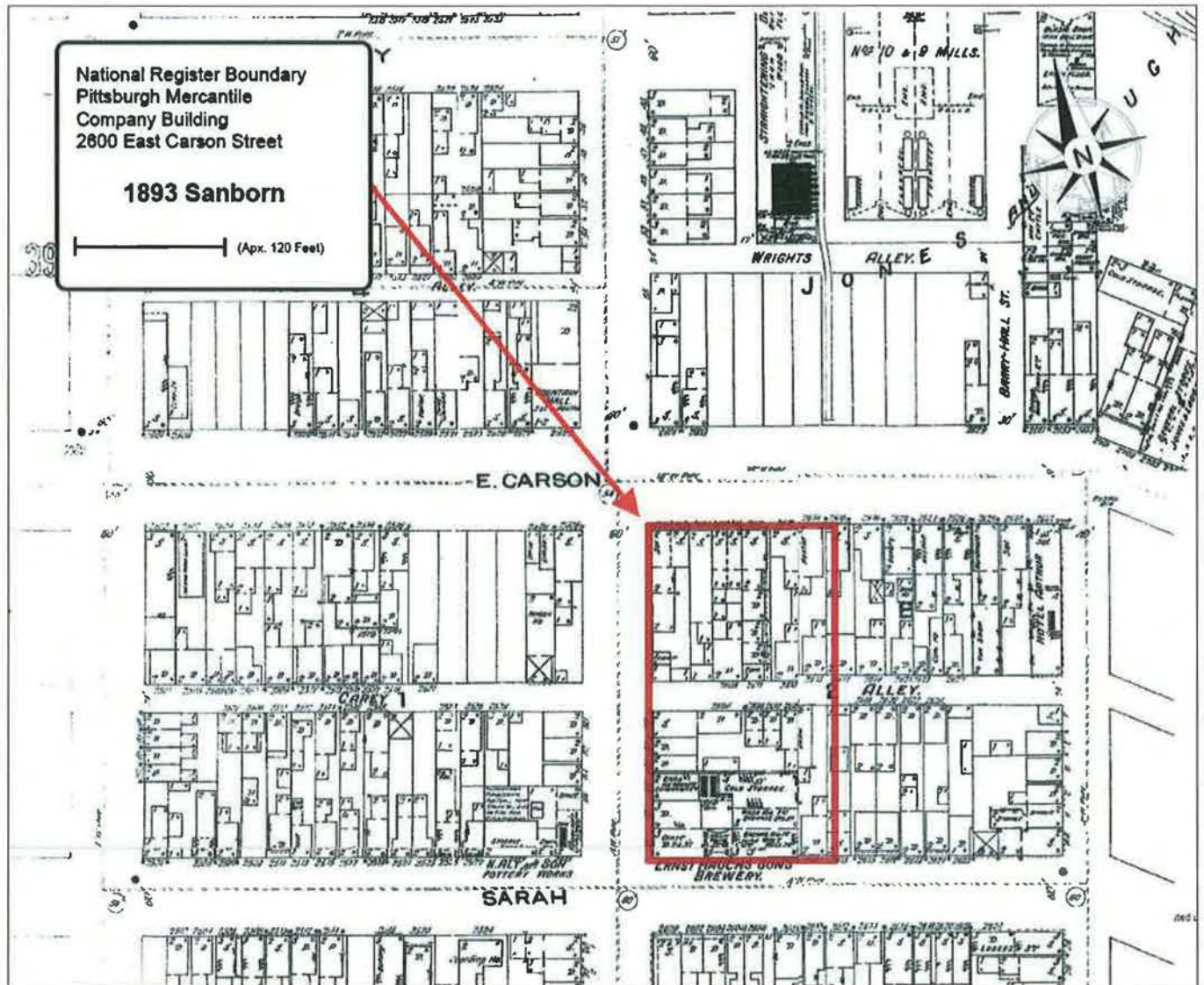


Figure 7: National Register Boundary shown on 1893 Sanborn map.

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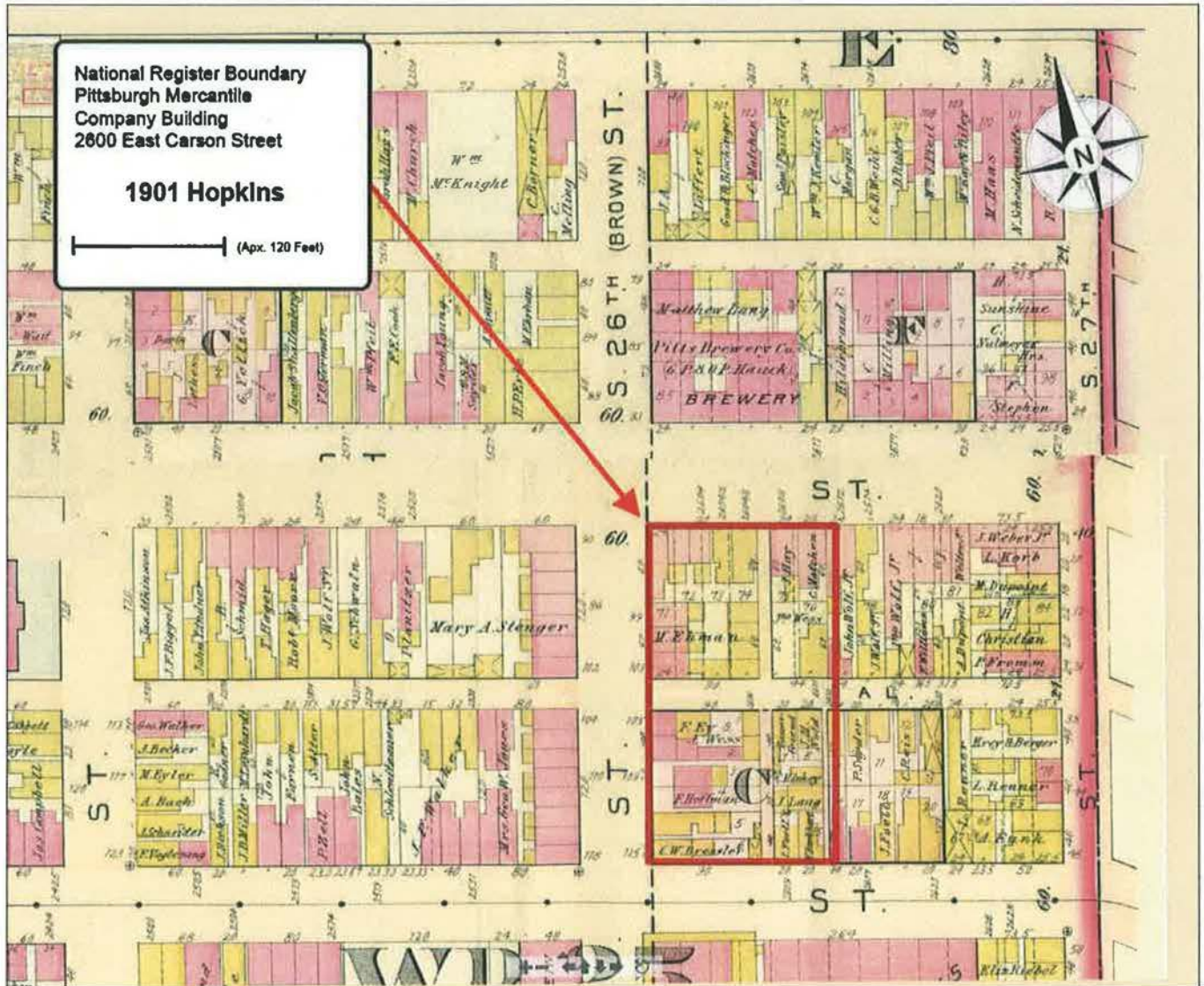


Figure 8: National Register Boundary shown on 1901 Hopkins map.

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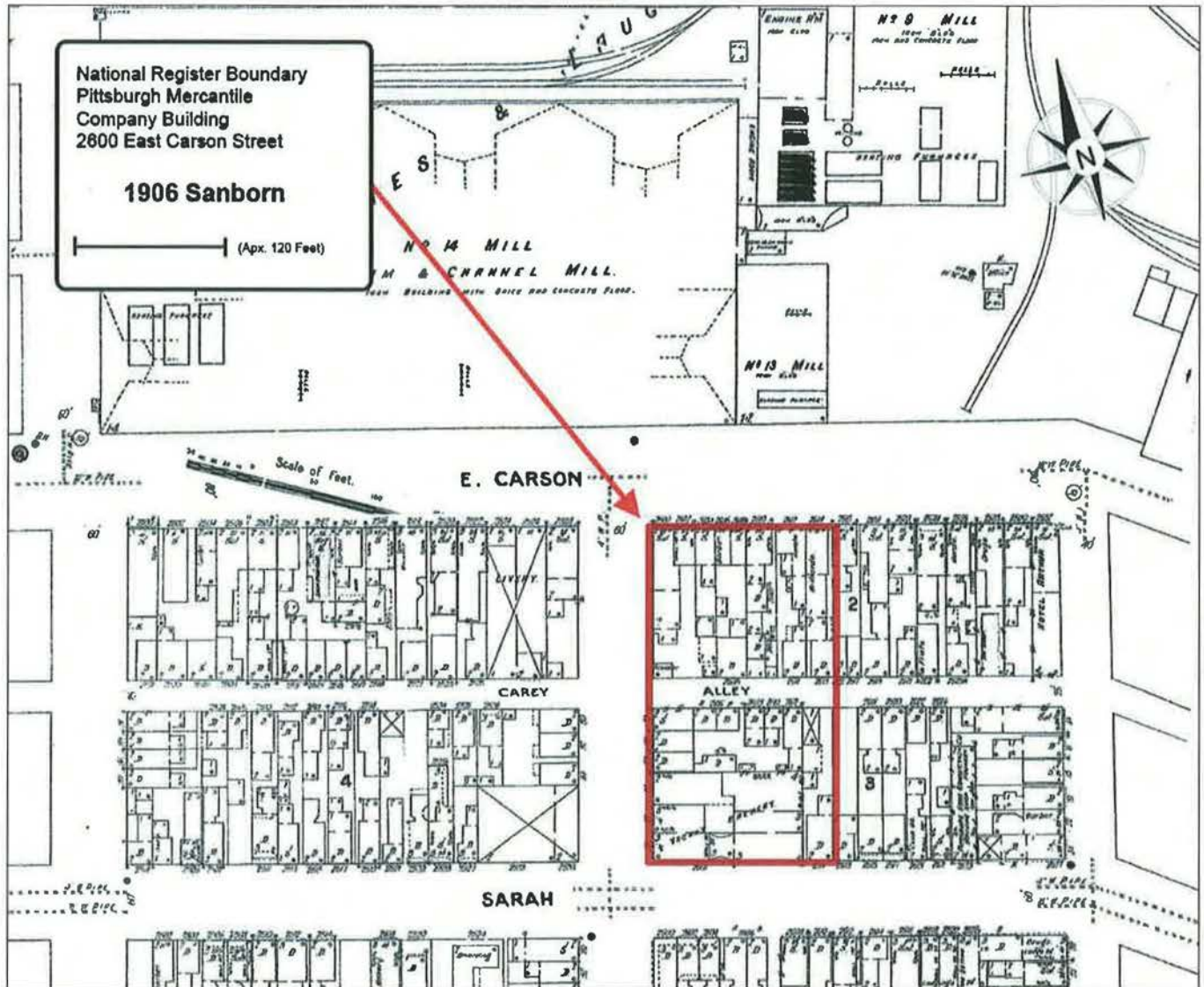


Figure 9: National Register Boundary shown on 1906 Sanborn map.

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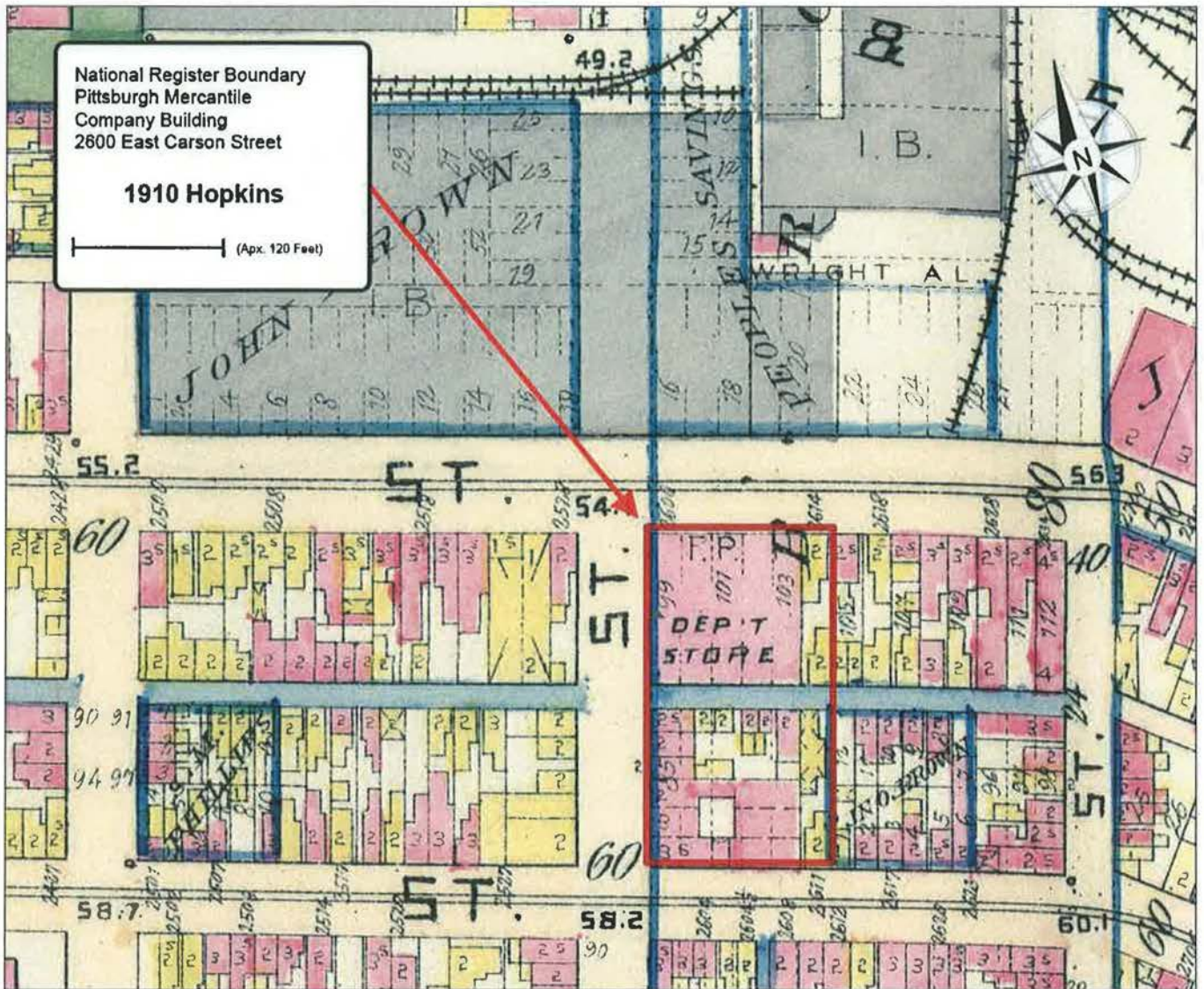


Figure 10: National Register Boundary shown on 1910 Hopkins map.

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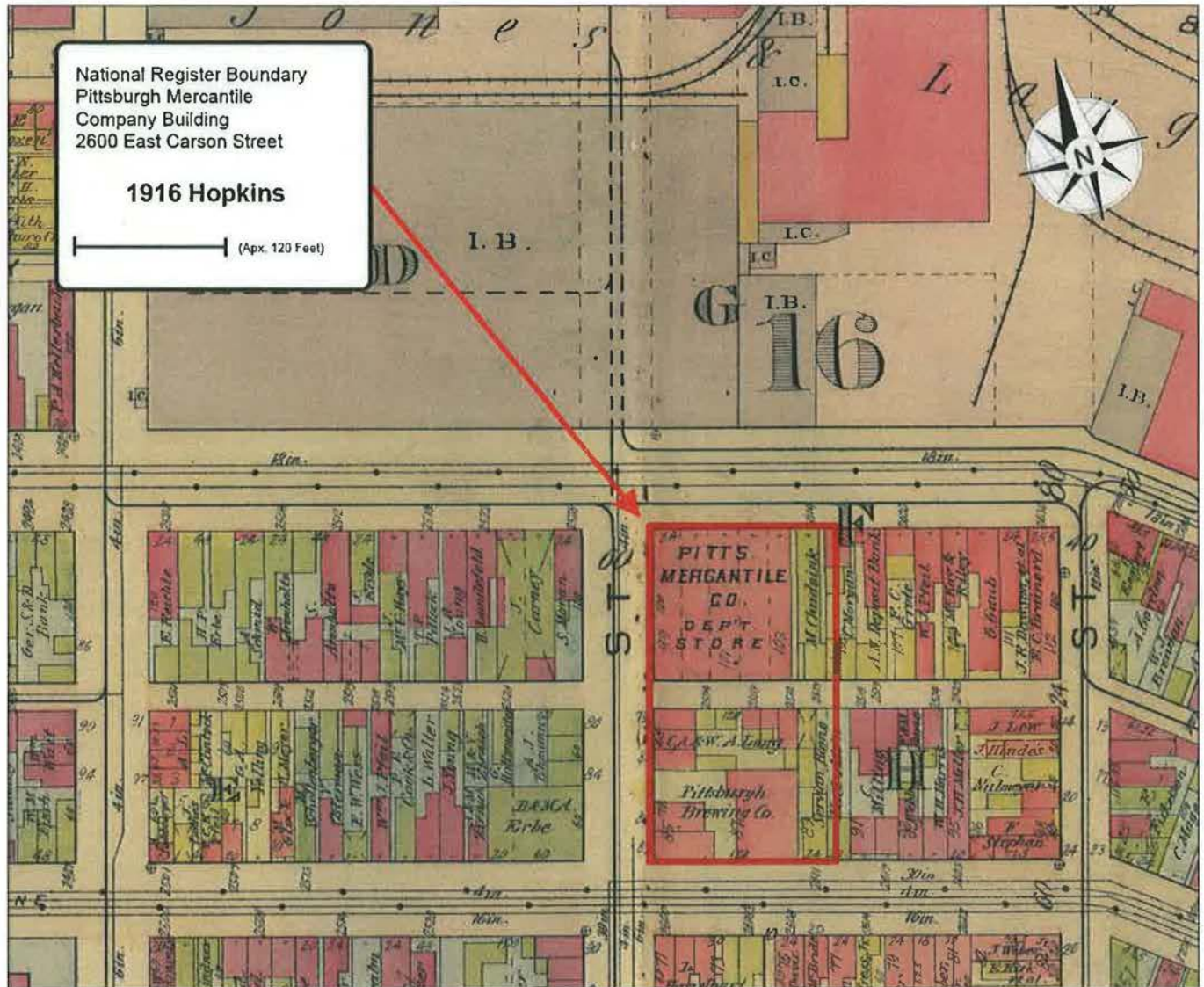


Figure 11: National Register Boundary shown on 1916 Hopkins map.

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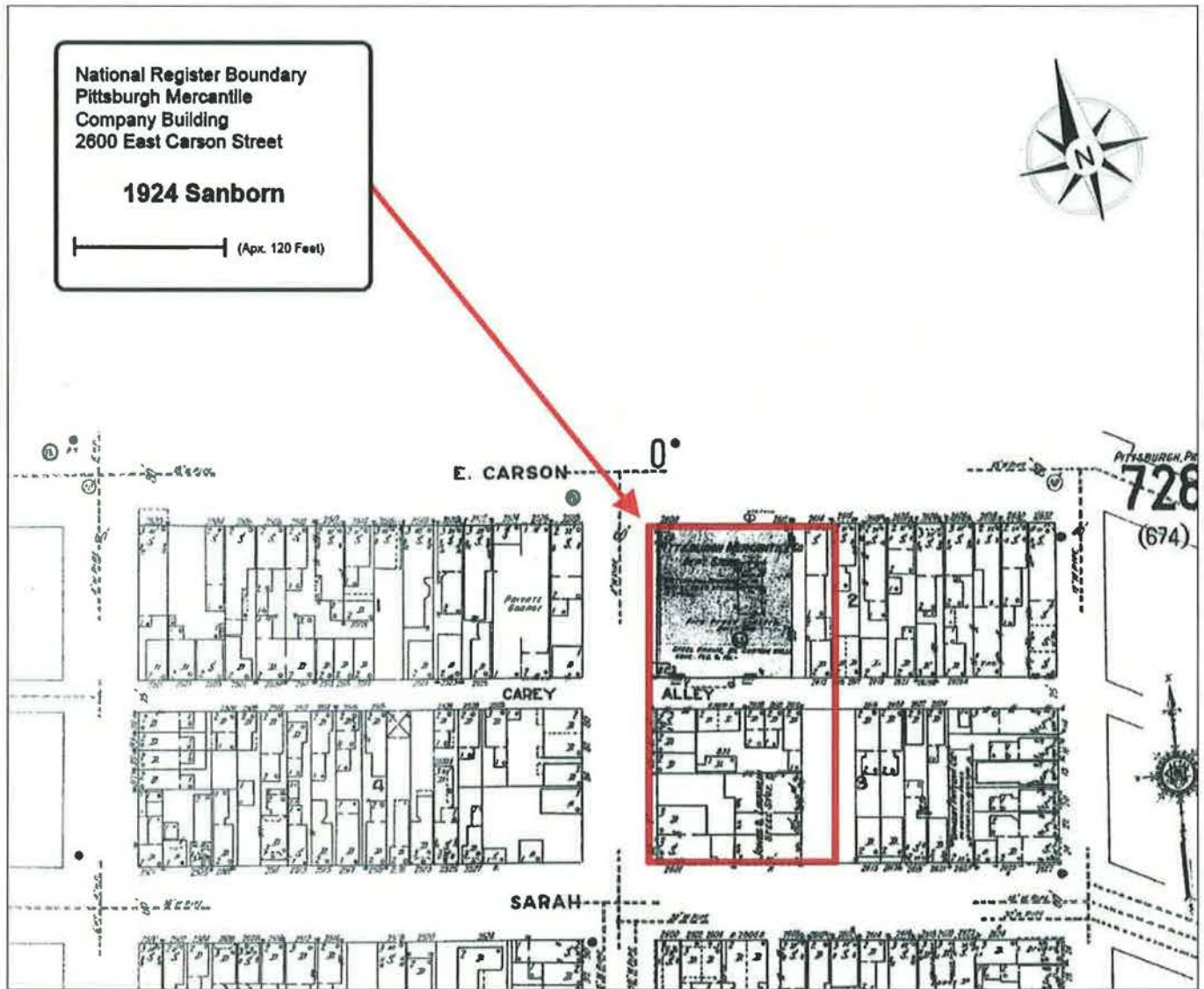


Figure 12: National Register Boundary shown on 1924 Sanborn map.

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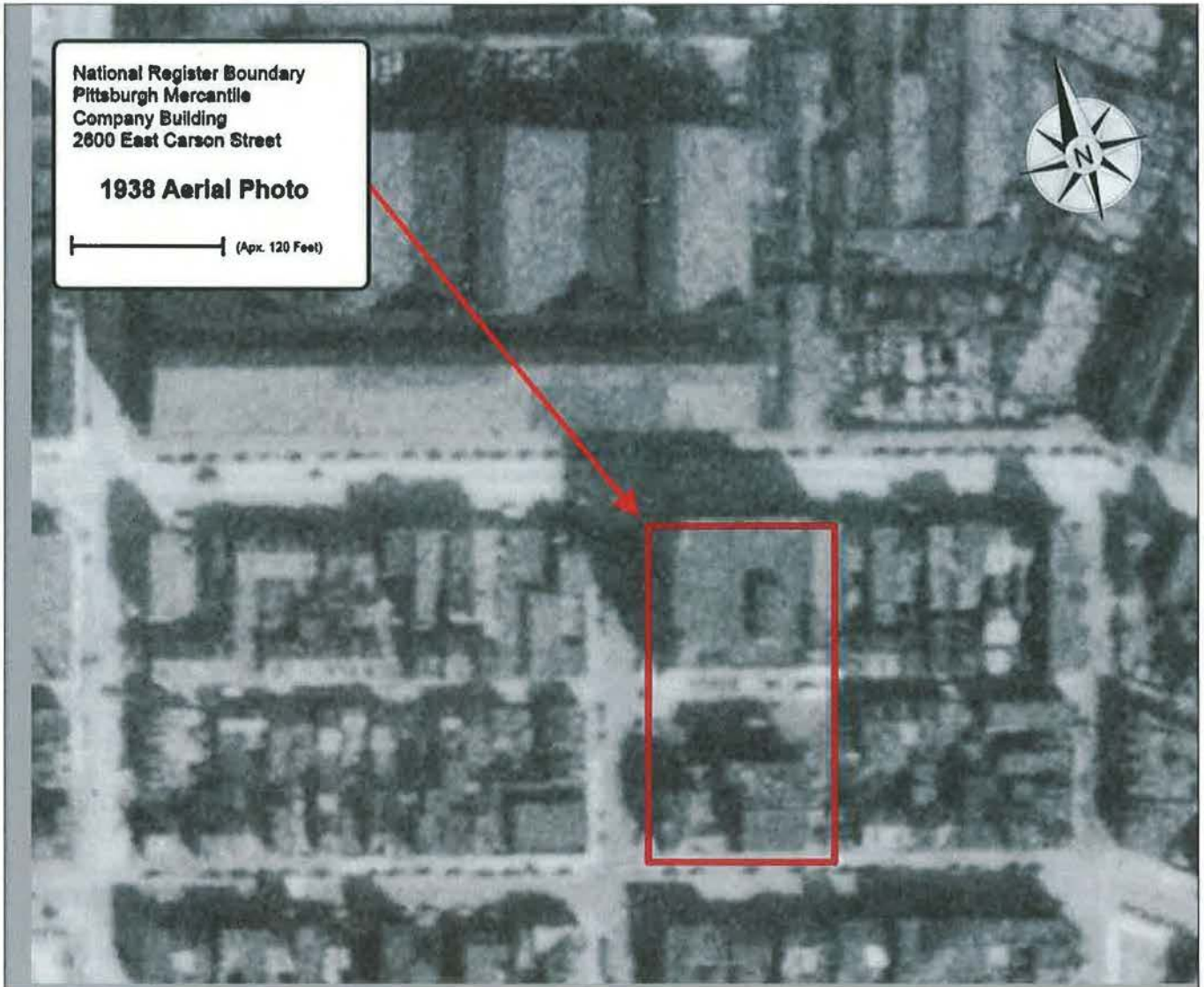


Figure 13: National Register Boundary shown on 1938 aerial photo.

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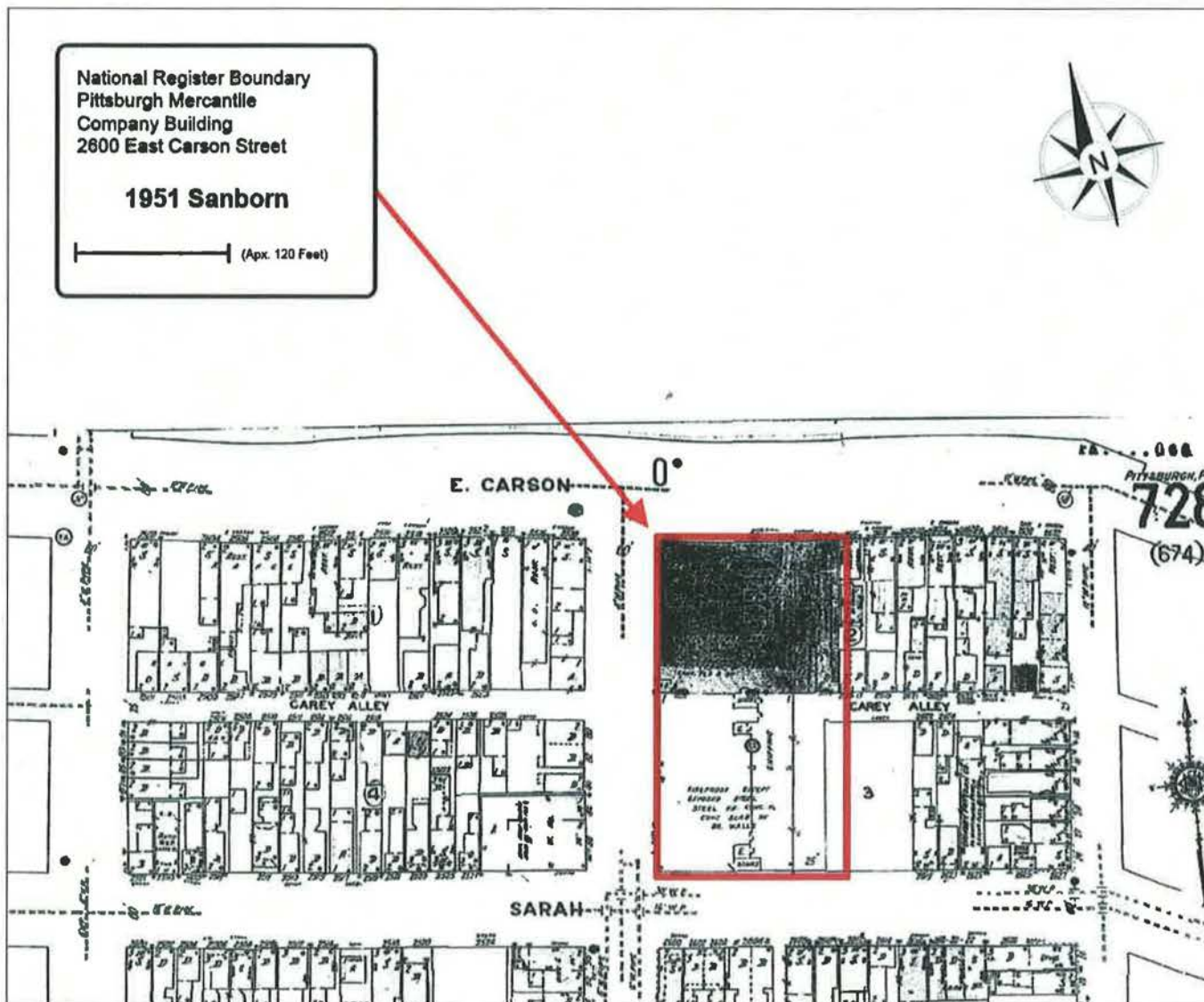


Figure 14: National Register Boundary shown on 1951 Sanborn map.

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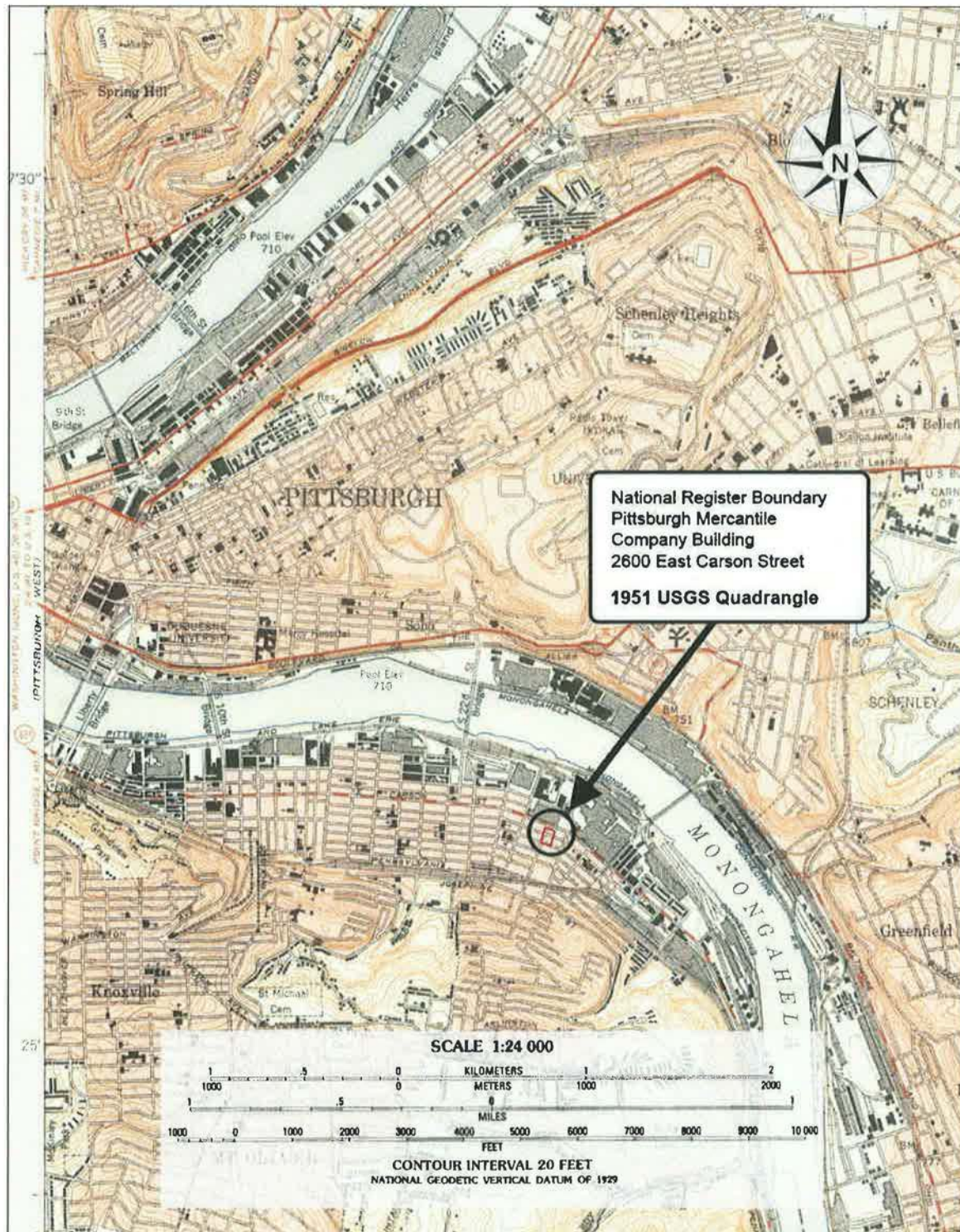


Figure 15: National Register Boundary shown on 1951 USGS topographic map.

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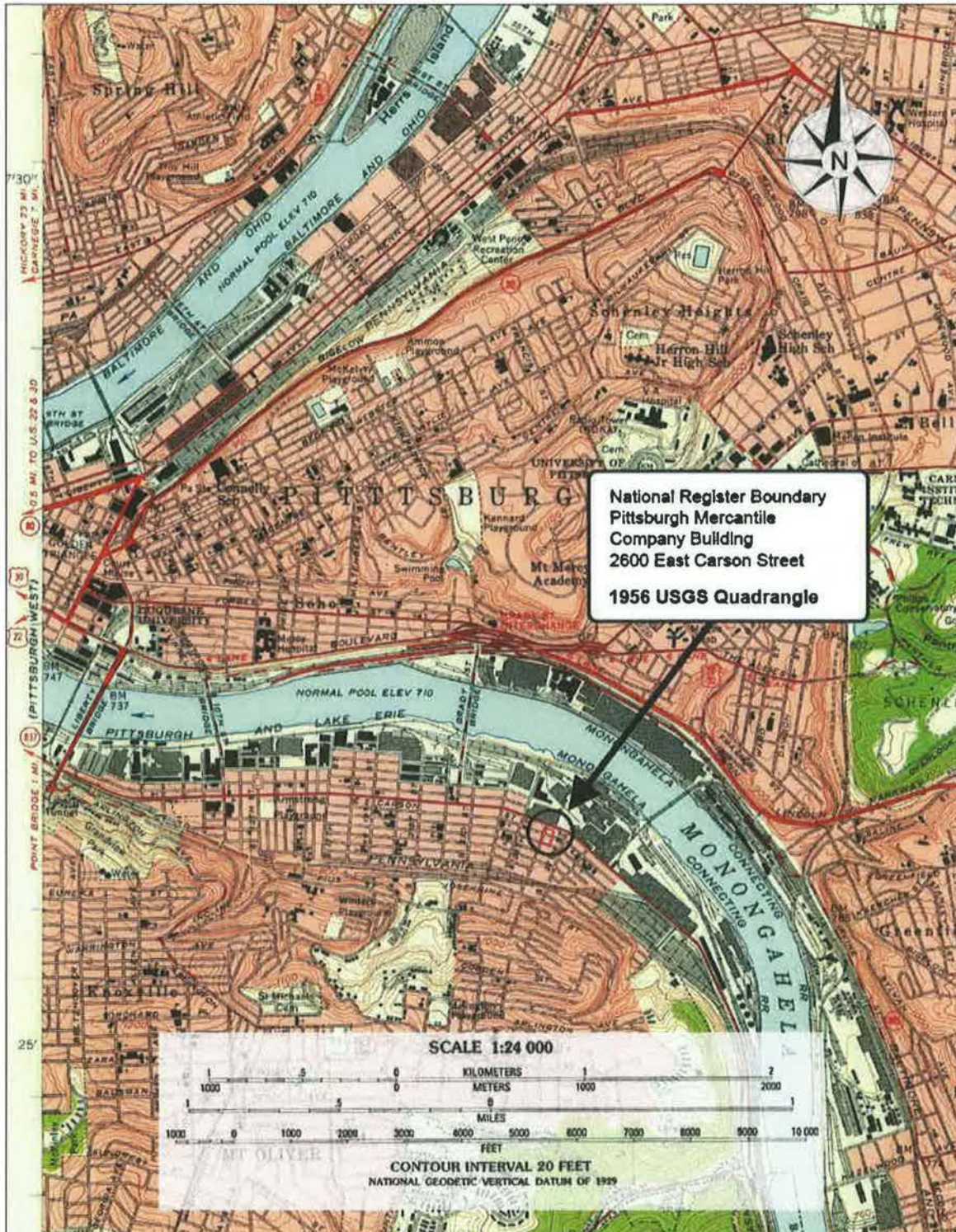


Figure 16: National Register Boundary shown on 1956 USGS topographic map.

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Figure 17: National Register Boundary shown on 1957 aerial photo.

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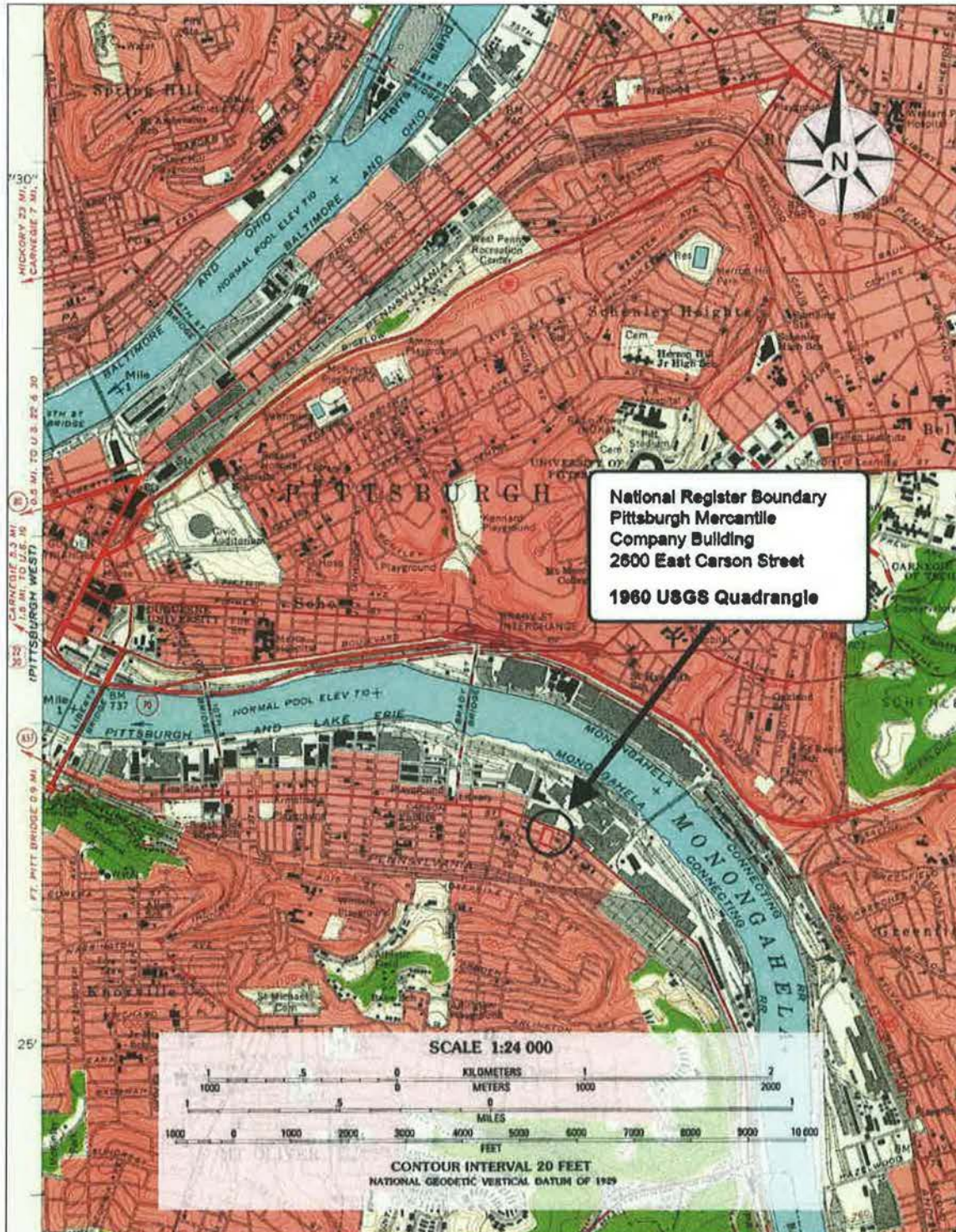


Figure 18: National Register Boundary shown on 1960 USGS topographic map.

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Figure 19: National Register Boundary shown on 1967 aerial photo.

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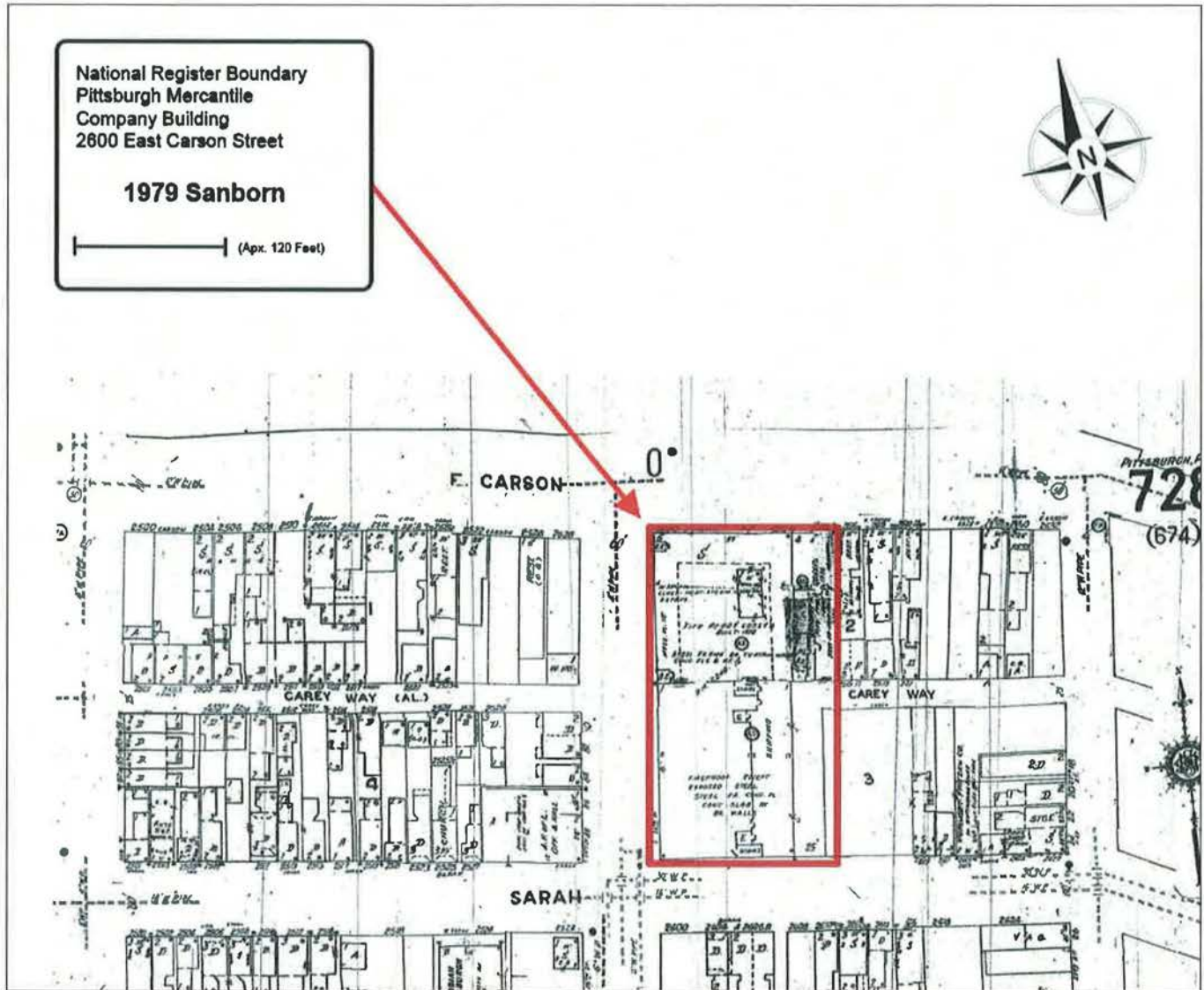


Figure 20: National Register Boundary shown on 1979 Sanborn map.

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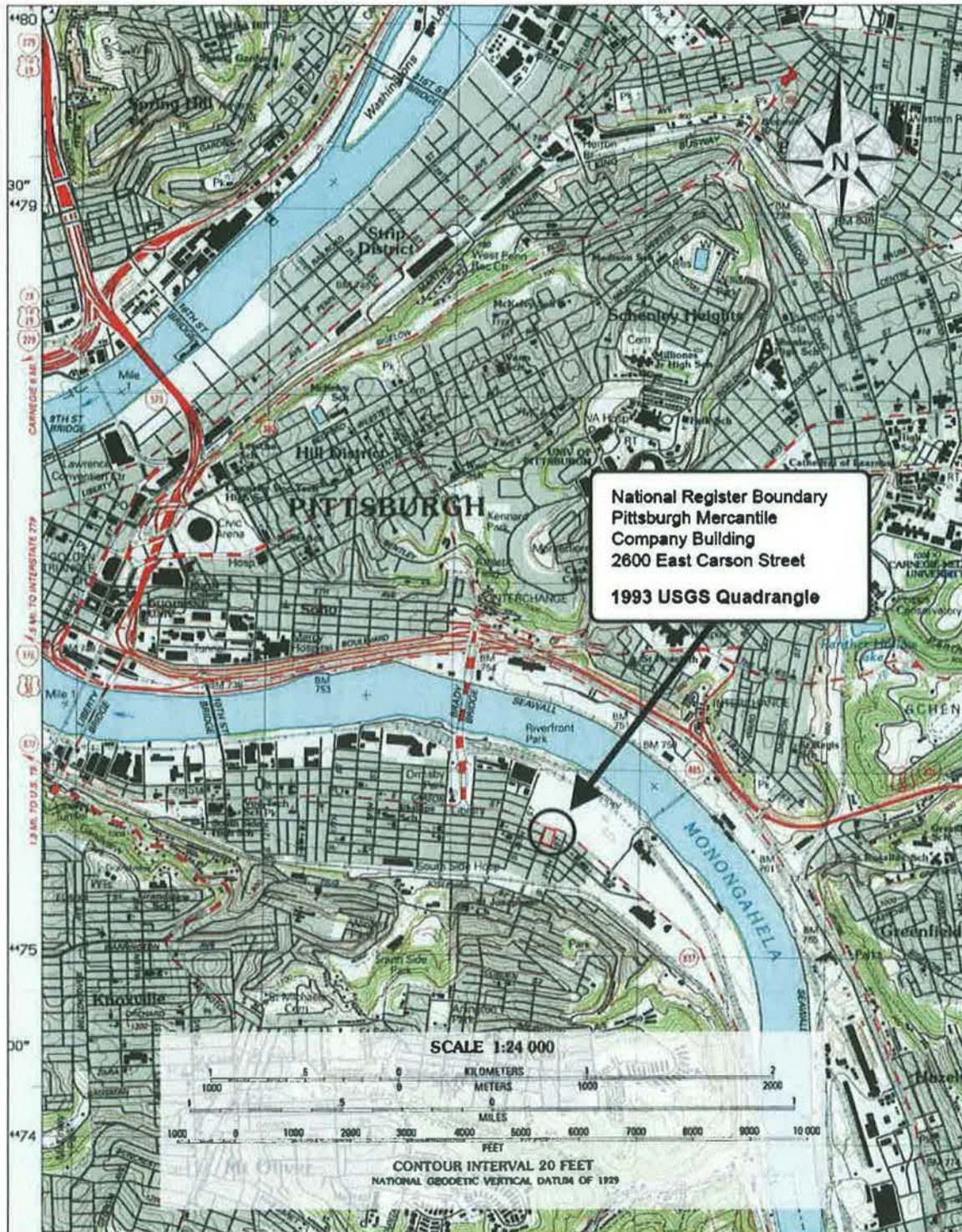


Figure 21: National Register Boundary shown on 1993 USGS topographic map.

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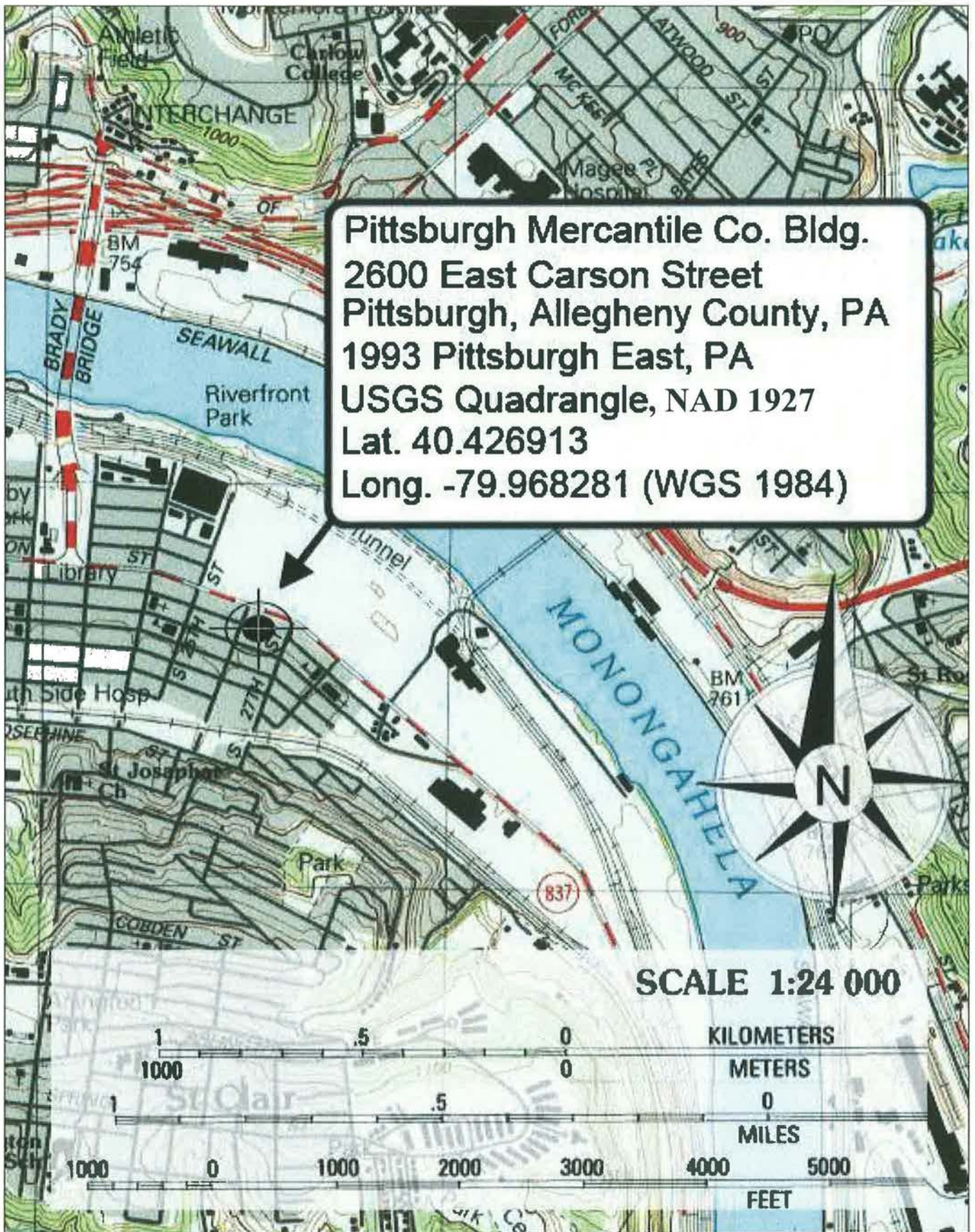
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Figure 22: National Register Boundary shown on 2012 Google Earth aerial photo.

Pittsburgh Mercantile Co. Bldg.
2600 East Carson Street
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1993 Pittsburgh East, PA
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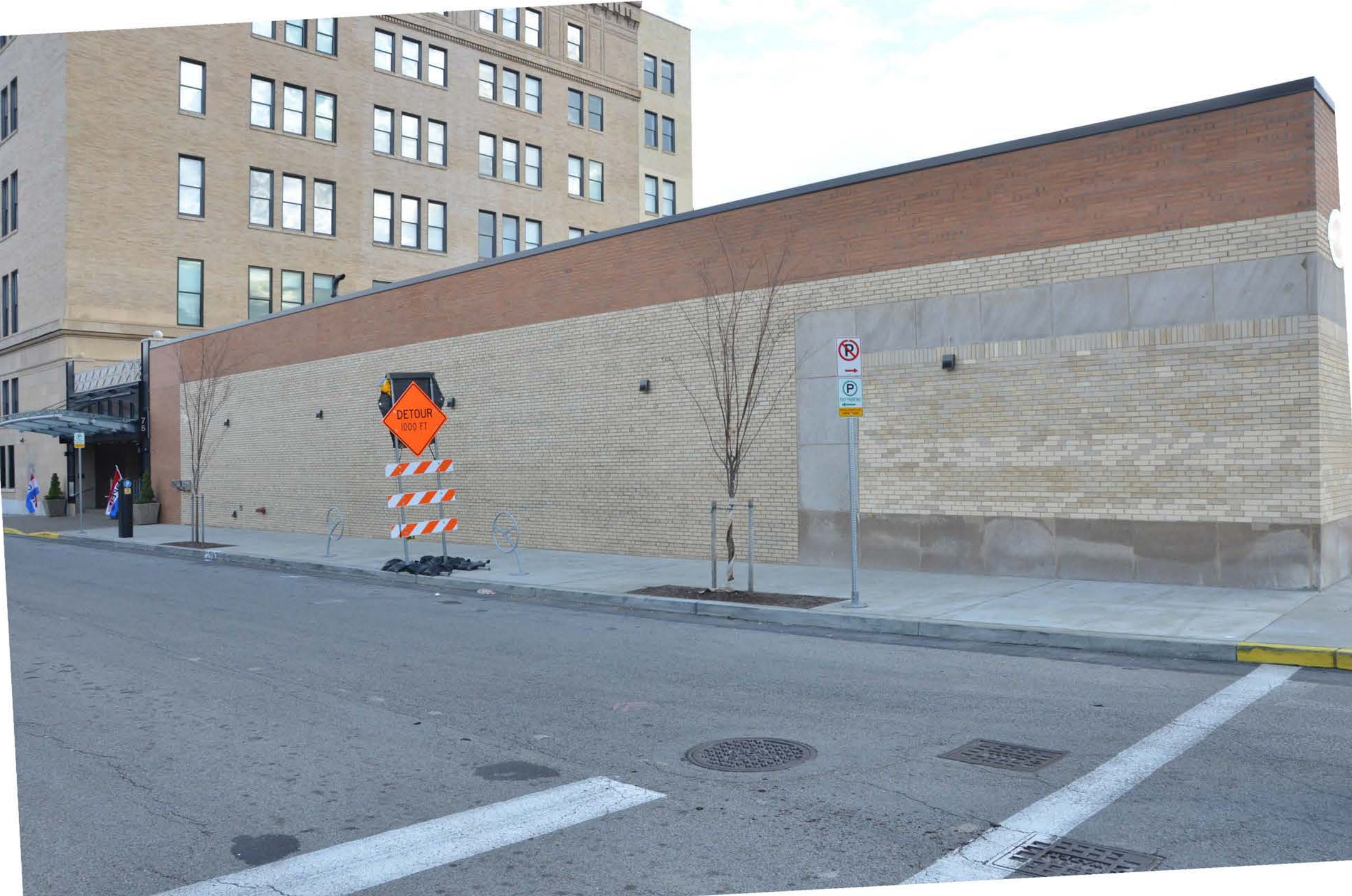
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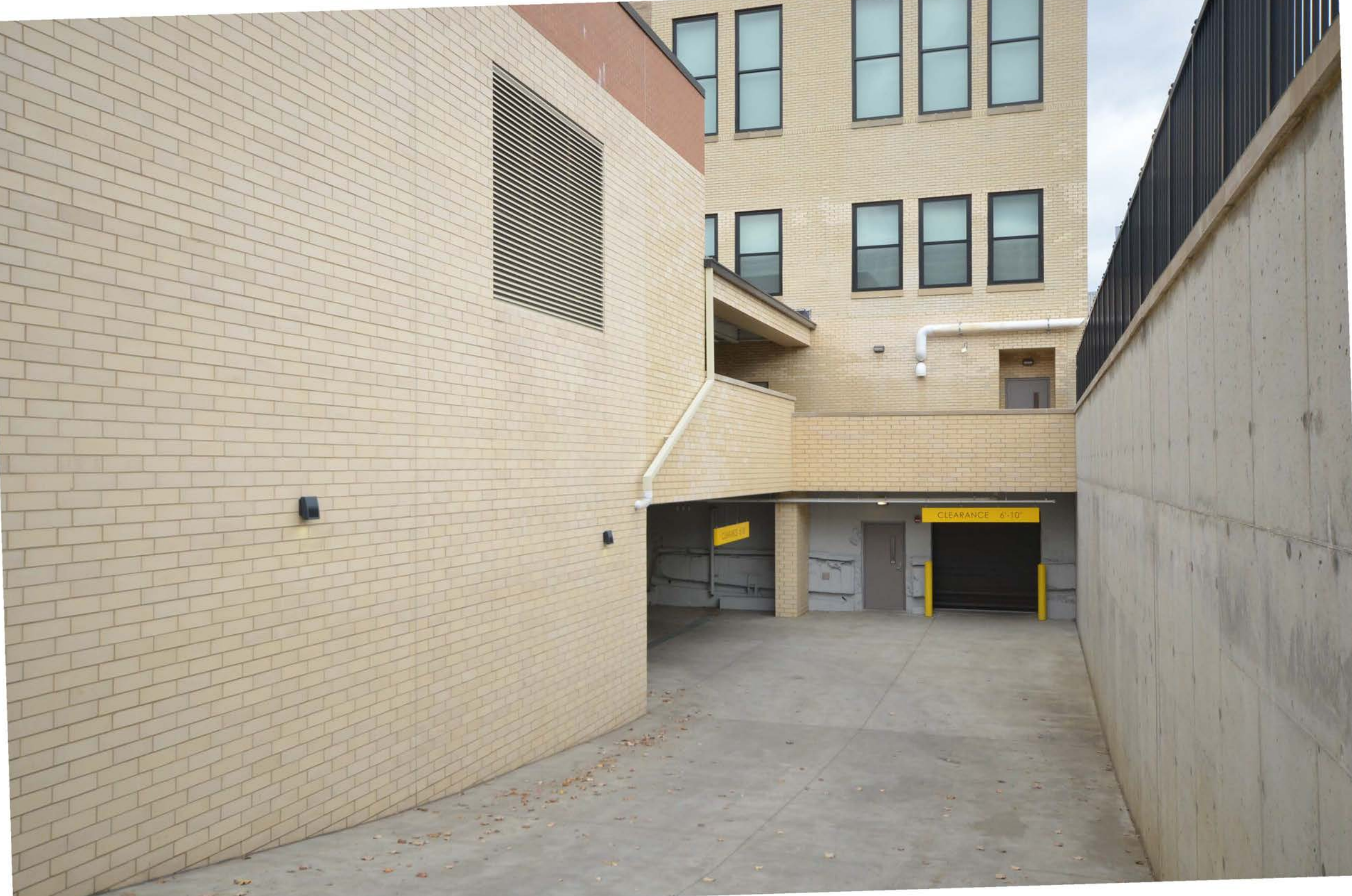
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Allegheny

DATE RECEIVED: 11/14/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/11/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/26/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/31/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14001099

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 12-29-14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ 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.



September 4, 2014

Keith Heinrich
National Register and Survey
Bureau for Historic Preservation
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2nd Floor
400 North Street
Harrisburg, Pa 17120-0093



RE: Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building, Pittsburgh City, Allegheny County, Key #007753

Dear Mr. Heinrich:

As requested in your letter dated August 5, 2014; the following is meant to fulfill the City of Pittsburgh's obligations as a Certified Local Government for providing comment on National Register Nominations.

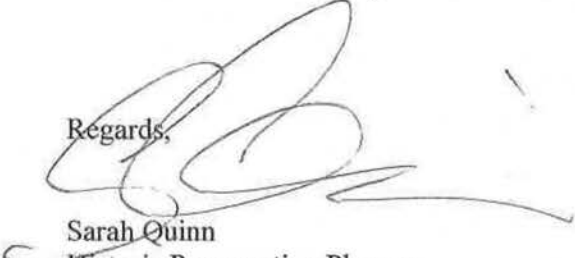
The public involvement process included emailing notices to interested parties of both the Historic Review Commission and the Planning Commission of the City of Pittsburgh, including members of the press. Written comments from the public were requested at that time. The nomination was also posted on the City's website on August 20, 2014. The City's position on the nomination is outlined below.

Pittsburgh Mercantile Company Building, Pittsburgh City, Allegheny County

The City of Pittsburgh supports this nomination because the property meets the requirements of National Register Criterion A for Commerce. We agree that it played an important role in the industrial and labor history of Pittsburgh in its service as the company store for the nearby Jones & Laughlin steel mill. In addition, we agree that the property retains sufficient integrity to reflect its historical significance and should be protected and preserved. This property is already part of the local East Carson Street City Designated Historic District, and one of the goals of the City's preservation plan is to list additional properties on the National Register as well.

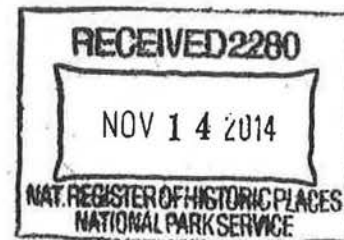
I can be contacted at (412)255-2243 or via email at Sarah.Quinn@pittsburghpa.gov.

Regards,


Sarah Quinn
Historic Preservation Planner
City of Pittsburgh



Pennsylvania
Historical & Museum
Commission



November 5, 2014

Carol Shull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service, US Department of Interior
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms Shull:

The following National Register nominations are being submitted for your review:

1. **Edwin J. Schoettle Company Building**, Philadelphia Co., PA. Enclosed please find a signed first page, a CD containing the true and correct copy of the nomination, two CDs with tif images, and copies of correspondence.
2. **Franklinville School**, Montgomery Co., PA. Enclosed please find a signed first page, a CD containing the true and correct copy of the nomination, a second CD with tif images, and copies of correspondence.
3. **Hotel Altamont**, Luzerne Co., PA. Enclosed please find a signed first page, a CD containing the true and correct copy of the nomination, two CDs with tif images, and copies of correspondence.
4. **Jenkintown Wyncote Train Station**, Montgomery County, PA. Enclosed please find a signed first page, a CD containing the true and correct copy of the nomination, a second CD with tif images, and copies of correspondence.
5. **Manchester School #3**, Erie Co., PA. Enclosed please find a complete paper version of the nomination with a signed first page, and a CD containing tif images.
6. **Pittsburgh Mercantile**, Allegheny Co., PA. Enclosed please find a complete paper version of the nomination with a signed first page, correspondence, and a CD containing tif images.
7. **R&H Simon Silk Mill Complex**, Northampton Co., PA. Enclosed please find a signed first page, a CD containing the true and correct copy of the nomination, and a second CD with tif images, and copies of correspondence.

Historic Preservation Services
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093
www.phmc.state.pa.us
The Commonwealth's Official History Agency