

FEB 6 1987
FEB 27 1987

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received OCT 30 1986

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Somersworth Building Company Mill

and/or common Queensbury Mill (Preferred)

2. Location

street & number 1 Market Street N/A not for publication

city, town Somersworth N/A vicinity of

state New Hampshire code 33 county Strafford code 017

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Queensbury Associates / Phillip Crosier, Jr.

street & number 98 South Main Street

city, town Rochester N/A vicinity of state New Hampshire 03867

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Strafford County Registry of Deeds
Strafford County Courthouse

street & number Country Farm Road

city, town Dover state New Hampshire 03820

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Existing Surveys has this property been determined eligible? yes no

"Downtown Somersworth Cultural Resource Survey"
date (Fall 1982) federal state county local

depository for survey records Somersworth Planning Office, City Hall

city, town Somersworth state New Hampshire 03878

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Built in 1884 and enlarged in 1892, the Somersworth Building Company (Queensbury) Mill is a four story, rectangular, wood-framed structure with three clapboarded stories over a brick foundation. It is 171' long, of which the western 56' represent the 1892 addition which projects on the north facade. Built on an east-west axis, it is adapted to its Prospect Hill site sloping from west to east by the partial exposure of the cellar along one third of its length and fully at the east end of the building facing the Salmon Falls River. The river is located to the east across the north end of Market Street and divides the City of Somersworth, New Hampshire from the town of Berwick, Maine. A tall, tapering, square brick chimney stack (possibly) built before 1884, is located near the middle of the south wall, while a rectangular stair tower projects from the midst of the north side and rises some eight feet above the cornice line. Originally, this tower rose another full story and was capped by a clipped hip roof; it was shortened and given a flat roof sometime after 1914. At the west end of the mill an ell (1892) projects one double-bay to the north. It has a low gable factory roof ending in extended eaves, matching the original roofing system of the main block. Window fenestration is uniformly of six-over-six sash, the wooden frames and muntions overwhelmingly original to the 1800s and 90s, with replicated sash used to replace windows lost in modern changes before the certified historic rehabilitation in 1985. Basement windows are arcuated, unlike those above.

The east elevation consists of the brick basement story with water table above, surmounted by three clapboarded stories, topped by a low gable roof featuring extended eaves with a frieze band; the corners are finished with corner boards. There are six bays on this side, consisting of tall, rectangular windows with double hung six-over-six. The exposed basement window openings are arcuated and those of the two south bays were replaced (c. 1970) by a pair of aluminum and glass doors surmounted by a hip-roofed door hood supported by wrought iron posts. The basement sash has been replaced with similar wooden six-over-six sash (c. 1970). Above, a small square air vent occupies the center of the low gable. The east elevation of the stair tower to the north is unfenestrated, with clapboarding above the brick foundation and trim corresponding to the main block.

The north elevation, bounded by Linden Street sloping down from west to east, is characterized by its 21-bays, the slope of the north roof, the low gable of the ell at its west end, the projection of the stair tower, and the adjustment of basement and second story to the sloping ground. Almost uniformly these bays contain tall rectangular windows with six-over-six wooden sash. Those in the basement are replaced (c. 1970), within their original openings. Those in the tower are blind using original wooden window sash differing in fenestration from the main block by the use of two bays of paired double-hung four-over-four sash. The original basement openings being occupied by original paired doorways separated by a four-over-four window each in arcuated original openings. Adjoining the tower to the east are loading bays in three stories and a wooden loading dock at the basement level (all added c. 1967). The upper wooden double doors now remain fixed with their six-light windows now blinded from within. The five middle bays of the north elevation are evenly spaced with six-over-six sash while the easterly end is the projecting ell of the 1892 addition. There are no basement openings under the ell, except a single horizontal window off-center, due to the rising ground level. From the east corner of the ell, the brick basement steps up between the second and third bays and again between the fifth and sixth bays. Because of this the last three windows of the second story are truncated and contain only double-hung three-over-three sash. At the center of the low gable of the ell are two small, square air vents.

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The rear or western elevation is only of three stories, due to its hillside location. The 1892 addition originally contained triple windows at each floor in the two central bays with two separated single windows in each end bay. In the middle story, one of the middle triple windows has been replaced (1985) by an exit door, and one of the single sash on the lowest rear story was replaced for this purpose as well. The other 27 remaining windows are original (1892) six-over-six wooden sash and modern replicas where the originals had been lost to earlier alterations (c. 1960). A modern simple wooden staircase and platform provides entrance to the middle W elevation story (or interior third floor) entrance.

The south elevation is composed of typical six-over-six sash, evenly spaced within the two nineteenth century components of the mill but remaining unfenestrated where the western ell joins the plane of the original structure. Nine windows occupy the eastern end of this wall before the brick chimney stack interrupts the even fenestration of the upper three floors. To the west of the stack are five windows on the upper two stories and a new wooden double door (1985) occupying a position where modern freight doors had replaced the original windows (c. 1967). The evenly spaced six-over-six windows of the western ell are largely original (1892), although those at the far western corner are reproductions replacing modern loading doors (c. 1967) and returning the historic fenestration pattern to the mill.

There are no other buildings on the property. (A one story office once located off the southeast corner was removed in the 1920s or 30s.) The remaining land of the parcel consists of a modern parking lot on the southern part of the hillside lot, partially screened from view by buildings along Market Street. There are no other contributing resources.

The nominated property represents one contributing building.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1884, 1892 **Builder/Architect** Isaac Fellows

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Somersworth Building Company (later Queensbury) Mill retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It meets National Register criteria A for its association with the introduction of the century-long history of the shoe industry in this 19th century-mill city, as well as for the specific manner in which the structure was financed and built in an effort to attract new industry. It also meets criteria A for its association with local Somersworth business and civic leaders of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Built in 1884 and enlarged in 1892, the shoe factory was financed and built by a stock company formed by local business and civic leaders known as the Somersworth Building Company. It was erected on the site of the Union Planning Mill (also called the Hubbard and Canney Steam Mill), which was partially demolished and partially moved across the river into Berwick, Maine at this time. The square brick chimney stack on the 1884 mill may actually have been built for this earlier industrial building. (1)

*The new building constituted an effort to increase local economic activity both during construction and thereafter to compensate for the cyclical economy of the textile industry, the major employer of the town since the 1820s being the Great Falls Manufacturing Company, a cotton mill. The Somersworth (or Great Falls, as it was called before incorporating as a city in 1893) effort was part of a region-wide phenomenon of the 1880s and 1890s. Local communities, especially in northern New England, sought to capitalize on the growth of the shoe industry as well as the labor unrest in Lynn, Massachusetts, its major center, by offering buildings leased at low rates by locally-financed stock companies and tax abatements for a period of years by the local government. Two such companies were formed in Somersworth; the Somersworth Building Company in 1884 being the earlier and constructing the building for the C.E. Pecker Company of Lynn. The Somersworth Improvement Association also constructed a shoe factory in 1893 for the Houghton, Hubbard & Warren Company, also from Lynn. Tax abatements were offered by the town by 1892, and possibly earlier.

Industrially, the 1884 building represents Somersworth's first large-scale entry into the shoe industry, which had flourished in the other Strafford County towns of Farmington and Dover since the 1840s. In 1880 a group of investors led by Frank Jones, the brewing and railroad magnate, formed the Portsmouth Shoe Company in the nearby seacoast town of that name. (2) While Jones' group undoubtedly sought to benefit from the expansion of the industry in the post-Civil War period, the Somersworth venture, in addition, sought to take advantage of the labor unrest endemic in Lynn shoe factories in the mid-1880s. In seizing this opportunity, the Somersworth Building Company began a long association of the town with the industry which only ended in the summer of 1984 when the Somersworth Shoe Company went bankrupt putting some 200 people out of work.

- (1) Strafford County, N.H., Deeds: Bk. 278, p. 347: This 1884 deed included the "Steam Engine, Boiler, Chimney and Steam Mill..." The Great Falls Free Press and Journal for September 5, 1884, records the sale and removal of the old building.
- (2) Raymond A. Brighton, They Came to Fish, (2 Vols.; Portsmouth, N.H.; Portsmouth 350, Inc., 1973) Vol.2, p. 264.

9. Major Bibliographical References

The Great Falls Free Press, Sept. 1884-Dec. 1884, July 1892; Leading Businessmen of Great Falls, (copies N.H. Historical Society) no title or authors (Boston: no publ., 1890); Edward O. Lord, "A Sketch of Somersworth," Granite Monthly, 18 (1895), p.23; Sanborn Map Company, Map of Somersworth 1893, 1898 (Library of Congress); Richard Candee & Martha Fuller Clark, Cultural Resource Inventory, Downtown Somersworth (Somersworth: Somersworth Planning Office 1982), Inventory no. 23.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property under 1 acre

Quadrangle name Somersworth, Maine - New Hampshire

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification Somersworth Tax Assessor's Map Number 11, parcels 96 and 97; bounded N by Linden Street, E by Market Streets, S by lines established by the Somersworth Housing Authority, and W by land of Charles Meserve as shown on accompanying site plan. Property is highlighted in yellow on the attached sketch map.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
N/A			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard M. Candee

organization Preservation Consultant

date March 1, 1986

street & number RR-2, Box 219

telephone (207) 363-6635

city or town York

state Maine 03909

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Phileas G. Adamarch

title New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer

date 10/23/86

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

William B. Bushong

date 4/10/87

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Beth A. Savage*

date 4-10-87

Chief of Registration

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It should be noted, however, that the Somersworth Building Company structure only housed a shoe company until 1902, after which it became a branch of Queensbury Mills of Worcester, Massachusetts, producing yarns; it is by that name that it is popularly known.

Architecturally, the building is highly unusual in the local industrial context of the 1880s. Unlike the Great Falls Manufacturing Company of Somersworth, which could call on in-house engineering talent familiar with the latest mill designs, the building for the Somersworth Building Company was constructed by a local builder, Isaac Fellows of Farmington, helped by local craftsmen. (3) The 1892 addition was constructed under the supervision of Hiram Horne, a local sawmill operator, with Horace B. Tibbetts, also a local man, in charge of the carpenter work. (4) As a result, the structure displays the old-fashioned features of closely-spaced joists of uniform size as opposed to the more modern use of widely spaced massive beams, and the boarding-in of the fourth-story ceiling to create a low attic in contrast to the exposed roofs of up-to-date mills. Both of these modern features, intended to preserve the structure in case of a serious fire, were apparently unknown to the local builders. The 1892 addition to the building was structurally similar to the earlier part in every respect. The use of wood, rather than masonry, for the upper exterior walls, was also unusual in a large mill of that period, and was probably due to the limited economic resources of the Building Company.

The Somersworth Building Company was formed by twenty-four local stockholders in August 1884; these display a variety of professions including banking and the law, and tradesmen of every description including some who would benefit directly from a local building campaign. William D. Knapp, the president, was a prominent local attorney, Judge of the Police and (in 1894) author of a short history of Somersworth; H.C. Gilpatrick, the treasurer, was cashier of the Somersworth National Bank for many years; and Christopher H. Wells, the chairman of the 1892 Building Committee, was a lawyer who became the owner and editor of the Great Falls Free Press in 1883 and would serve three terms as Mayor of Somersworth (1884-7). Thus, the building put up the Somersworth Building Company for a shoe factory, represents a unique physical reminder of a cross section of Somersworth business and civic leaders cooperating in the last two decades of the nineteenth century to attract a new industry to Somersworth. (5) Men such as Knapp and Wells were instrumental in the movement which led to Somersworth incorporating as a city in 1893, and undoubtedly, in the town's offer of tax abatements to new industry. The formation of stock companies to construct mills, along with the offer of tax abatements to new industries by local governments, was a northern New England phenomenon of the 1880s. (6)

The Somersworth Building Company structure (Queensbury Mill) is the earliest building in Somersworth constructed specifically for the shoe industry and the only one which remains essentially intact. The Somersworth Improvement Association building constructed for the Houghton, Hubbard and Warren Company on South Main Street in 1893 still exists but has recently been completely denatured by the covering of all its window openings on the Main Street side. The Somersworth Shoe Company, mentioned above, was housed in buildings originally constructed for the Great Falls Manufacturing Company.

(3) Great Falls Free Press, December 5, 1884

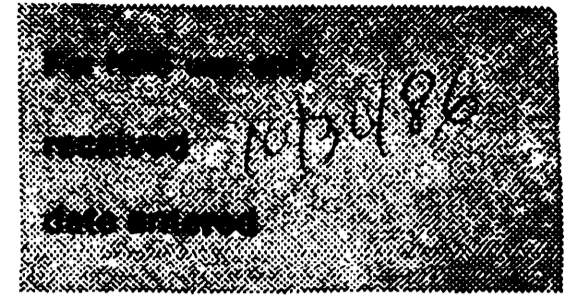
(4) Great Falls Free Press, July 29, 1892

(5) The Great Fall Free Press Souvenir Supplement of August 1892 entitled "Somersworth and its Business Advantages."

(6) Shoe and Leather Reporter, "A New Hampshire Factory," Vol. 40, (Sept. 17, 1885) p. 475.

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The Somersworth Building Company (Queensbury) Mill is unique in its combination of economic significance (financing and construction by a local stock company), industrial significance (the earliest building constructed to bring the shoe industry to Somersworth), association with local business and civic leaders representing their efforts to use regional economic conditions to local advantage, and preservation of architectural features unusual in mill buildings of its day and thereby showing the particular circumstances of its construction. Moreover, the Queensbury Mill is virtually intact and therefore unique in southeastern New Hampshire as a wooden mill building of the last two decades of the nineteenth century, a period not noted for wooden industrial construction. The building has regional economic significance as a rare survival of northern New England's response to upheaval and change in the shoe industry in the 1880s as part of its attempt to compensate for the decline of New England agriculture after the Civil War and the cyclical nature of the mature textile industry.

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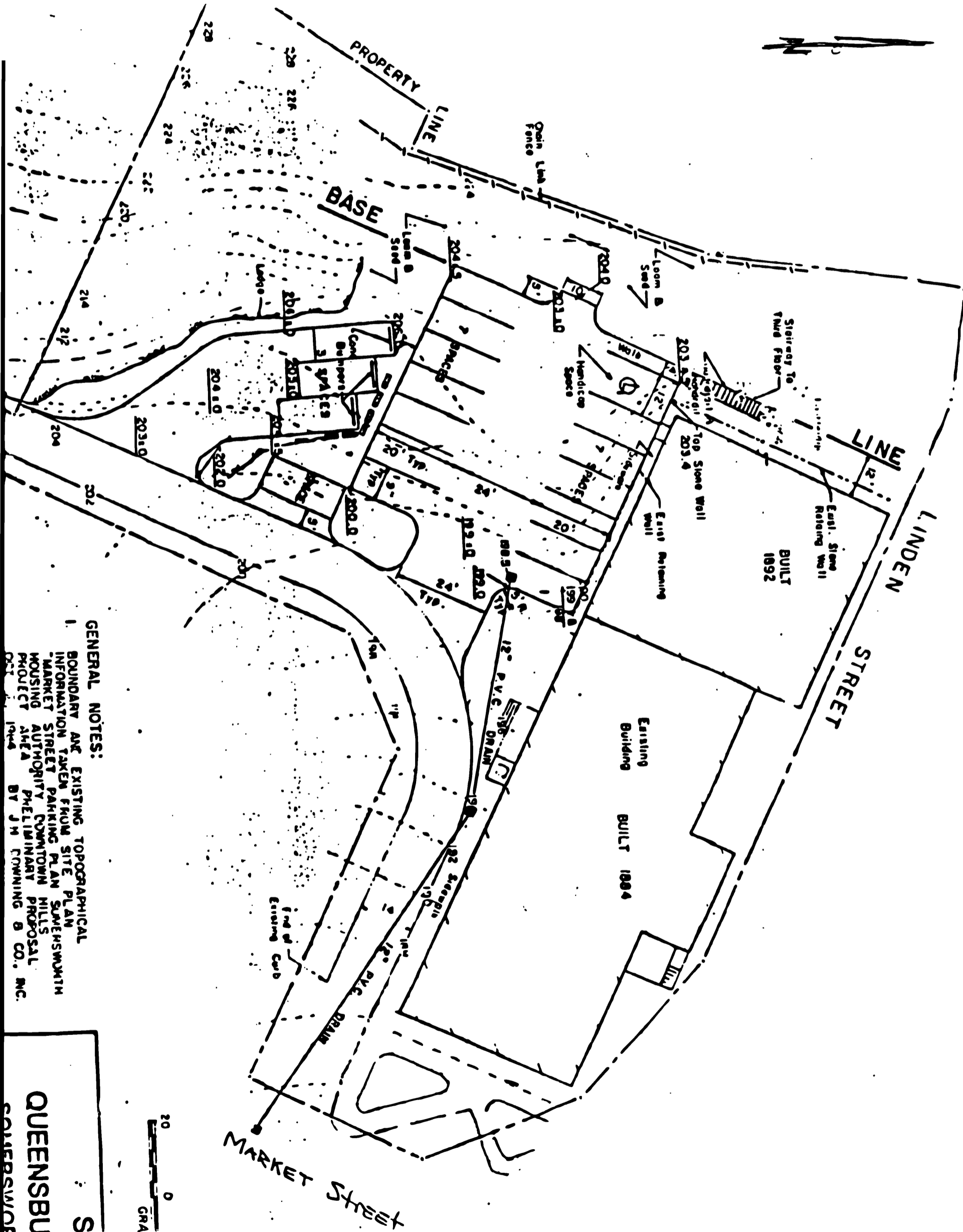
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GENERAL NOTES:

- 1. BOUNDARY AND EXISTING TOPOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION TAKEN FROM SITE PLAN
- 2. MARKET STREET PARKING PLAN SUMMERSWORTH HOUSING AUTHORITY COUNDTOWN HILLS PROJECT AREA
- 3. PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL BY J.M. LOWMING & CO., INC. OCT. 1964

QUEENSBURG COLLEGE/NOE

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This certifies that the appearance has not changed since these photographs were taken.