

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

other names/site number Riverside Academy

2. Location

street & number 238 Ontario Street [] not for publication

city or town Buffalo [] vicinity

state New York code NY county Erie code 029 zip code 14207

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ruth A. Purpura DBAPO

6/19/14

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain) _____

Joe
Edson H. Beall

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

8.18.14

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

HEALTH CARE/sanitarium

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Renaissance

OTHER

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone (granite)

walls brick

roof asphalt, gravel and tar

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60

Name of Property

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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 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 that 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 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 Building Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance:

1898 - 1964

Significant Dates:

1898, 1922

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Carl Schmill

William B. Ittner & the Buffalo Assoc. Architects

John W. Cowper Co. (contractors/engineers)

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other repository: _____

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 2.03 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 181582 4762807
Zone Easting Northing

3 18
Zone Easting Northing

2 18

4 18

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roysin Bennet Younkin and Albert Rex [Edited by Jennifer Walkowski, NY SHPO]

organization MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC date May 6, 2014

street & number 263 Summer Street, 6th Floor telephone (617) 499-4009

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02210

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name DePaul Properties, Inc.

street & number 1931 Buffalo Road telephone (585) 426-8000

city or town Rochester state NY zip code 14624

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. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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Section 7 Page 1

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Narrative Description of Property:

The former elementary school known as Public School #60 (PS 60) is located at 238 Ontario Street in the Riverside neighborhood in the northwest area of Buffalo, New York. The building is located on the west side of Ontario Street. The 2.03 acre property includes a paved playground at the rear of the building and a large triangular-shaped paved parking lot to the south of Troy Place, formerly the location of a school annex from 1914-1920. The setting is primarily residential: single and two-family frame houses interspersed with small businesses line the side streets. Commercial, social, and religious properties are concentrated along Ontario Street and Tonawanda Street to the west.

Constructed in two phases, the school building consists of an original block that faces east onto Ontario Street completed in 1898 with a substantial rear addition extending west along Troy Place and Saratoga Streets completed in 1922. Both the 1898 block and the addition are constructed primarily of red brick and are covered by flat roofs. The 1898 block is I-shaped in plan and rises three stories over a raised basement. The addition, which meets the original building at the rear, is O-shaped in plan, a centrally located auditorium dictating the circulation pattern. The addition also rises three stories but defers to the original block in stature. Drawing from the commonly popular styles of their respective construction eras, the 1898 block references the Renaissance Revival movement in massing and details, namely its polychrome, stepped façade, quoining, and classical entrances. By contrast, the 1922 addition is austere and economical, limiting ornament to its entrances, decorative brick panels, and stone beltcourse, cornice, and coping, as was typical of the standardized, streamlined architecture of the early 1920s.

PS 60 retains its setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, association and feeling that define historic integrity. The massing of the building as well as its architectural ornament remains intact. The building has been converted to accommodate 68 units of affordable housing, with 45 of the units dedicated for individuals diagnosed with mental illness. Original classrooms now house residential apartments. However this conversion was completed without disruption to the original plan, which reflects the building's former use as a school. Historic finishes remain in the corridors, stair halls, and the auditorium, which also retains its original volume, and configuration.

Exterior: 1898 Block

Ontario Street Façade

The principal façade of the school building faces east onto Ontario Street. The polychrome façade extends twelve bays across, with projecting central and terminal pavilions, and rises three stories to a metal cornice and

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PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

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parapet capping a flat roof. The majority of the façade is composed of red brick laid in stretcher bond. The raised basement, classical entry, belt course between the first and second floors, and quoins articulating the pavilions are composed of yellow brick. A rusticated granite water table, second floor sill course, lintel courses at the first and third floors, as well as a metal stringcourse above the third floor further enliven the façade.

The terminal pavilions feature identical fenestration: two windows light each floor. Rusticated granite sills and lintels define the fenestration on all floor levels but the basement. Two-over-two replacement sash light the residential units located at each floor. All windows in the 1898 block were replaced with two-over-two, single-hung, aluminum clad monumental wood windows with insulated glass, spacer bars, and mechanically affixed exterior muntins as part of the conversion of the school to residential use.

The central pavilion sits slightly recessed behind the terminal pavilions. It houses the main entrance to the building at the ground floor level and features a pair of narrow windows with rusticated sills and lintels on the second and third floors. The entrance is reached by a flight of stairs leading to double-leaf wood-paneled doors set within a round arched opening of molded yellow brick with a scrolled keystone. Yellow brick pilasters with stylized capitals frame the arched opening and support a cast stone entablature with the words "Public School No. 60" inscribed in the frieze.

The recessed portion of the façade, located between the projecting pavilions, is organized by brick pilasters into three bays on the south side of the central pavilion and four bays on the north side of the central pavilion. The pilasters begin at the second floor sill level, extend to just below the granite lintel course at the third floor level, and are finished with terra cotta capitals. The southernmost bay of this portion of the façade features narrow windows with two-over-two replacement sash lighting all floor levels but the basement. The second and third bays are lit by pairs of windows on all floor levels, including the basement. The two southernmost bays on the north side of the central pavilion mirror the second and third bays on the south side of the central pavilion. The third and fourth bays on the north side of the central pavilion both feature narrow windows with two-over-two replacement sash on each floor. An entrance into the basement level is located on the ground floor in the northernmost bay of this portion of the facade. On both sides of the central pavilion, rusticated granite sill and lintel courses define the first and third floor fenestration; the second floor windows feature rusticated granite lintels, while the yellow brick and granite beltcourses compose the sills.

Saratoga Street Façade

The secondary façade of the 1898 block faces north onto Saratoga Street. This elevation houses a second entrance to the building, originally designated for girls. This elevation is composed of three bays organized around a central, projecting pavilion. As with the Ontario Street façade, the central pavilion is delineated by

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yellow brick quoins. The rusticated granite water table and second floor beltcourse, as well as the yellow brick beltcourse and the metal stringcourse above the third floor windows, are carried over from the Ontario Street façade. Unlike the organization of the Ontario Street façade, the bays flanking the central pavilion are identical. A pair of small windows flanked by single windows lights the basement level. Ribbon windows in groups of four light the residential units at each floor level. Wood mullions define individual windows in the group. Granite sill and lintel courses define the fenestration. The central pavilion houses the entry at the ground floor level with paired narrow windows divided by brick mullions lighting the floors above. The entry is less ornate than the main entrance on Ontario Street, yet it presents a classical formality, nonetheless. Yellow brick pilasters with cast stone capitals frame the door and support a cast stone entablature inscribed with "Girls" in the frieze. A flight of stairs leads to a recessed entry.

Troy Place Elevation

The final elevation of the 1898 block faces south onto Troy Place. This elevation is identical to its northern counterpart, with the exception of the basement and first floor levels of the central pavilion. Instead of an entrance, a pair of narrow windows lights the first floor, and a pair of small windows directly below lights the basement level.

Exterior: 1922 Addition

The 1922 addition attaches to the rear, or western side of the 1898 block. The addition more than doubled the size of the original building. Stepping forward slightly from the 1898 block, the addition is constructed of red brick laid in six-course Flemish-bond and rises three stories above a concrete base to a flat roof that ends below the cornice line of the original building. The addition extends nine bays west before stepping down in roof height and extending another three bays. It is eight bays wide. The larger portion of the addition housed classrooms arranged around a central auditorium; the last three bays housed gymnasium and cafeteria spaces as well as the boiler and fan rooms. A smokestack rises from the southwest corner of the addition. Typical of institutional and commercial buildings constructed in the 1920s, the addition presents streamlined elevations that emphasize horizontality and devote the majority of the wall to large windows, maximizing the natural light in the original classrooms. Stylistically, the addition reflects the transitional period between the late nineteenth century trend to embrace historic precedent and the promotion of new forms in the Modern Movement in the early twentieth century. In materials and ornament, the addition is compatible with the 1898 block.

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PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

Name of Property

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Saratoga Street (north) and Troy Place (south) Elevations

The north and south elevations of the addition are organized into two major components: a large block of former classrooms that extends nine bays west of the original building (the classroom block) and a smaller block containing the former gymnasium that extends another three bays west and rises to just below the cornice line of the classroom block (the gymnasium block). A concrete base grounds the predominantly red brick elevations, which are laid in six-course Flemish bond. Concrete first floor belt course, sills, and coping enliven the facades, which are otherwise largely devoted to windows. A stone cornice adorns the classroom block but terminates at the gymnasium block.

Moving from east to west, the first eight bays of both the northern and southern elevations of the addition consist of regularly spaced paired windows on all three levels, with the exception of an entrance at the ground floor of each of the first bays. All windows in the classroom block were replaced with six-over-six, single-hung, aluminum clad, monumental wood windows with insulated glass, spacer bars and mechanically affixed exterior muntins as part of the conversion of the school to residential use. The entrance in the first bay of the southern elevation was altered during the building's conversion to meet ADA standards. The new entrance serves as the main entrance to the building and includes a concrete ADA ramp and landing and ADA compliant metal doors. A metal canopy bridges the intersection of the southwest corner of the 1898 block and the addition, marking the entrance.

The ninth bay of the northern and southern elevations terminates the classroom block. It sits slightly recessed behind the classroom and gymnasium blocks and marks the entries and stair towers serving the western end of the addition. The entrance on the northern elevation served boys, while girls entered from Troy Place on the southern elevation. A simple, concrete surround and entablature inscribed with "Boys" and "Girls," respectively, frames each entrance. A handicapped-accessible ramp serves the entrance on the northern elevation; the entrance on the southern elevation is reached by a short flight of steps. These entry bays are distinguished by their nearly full glazing, lighting the interior stair towers on either side of the building. The current glazing pattern replicates those in the original construction drawings for the addition. Prior to the building's conversion, the original windows had been removed and the openings filled with brick.

The northern and southern elevations of the gymnasium block differ in their fenestration. The north side of this portion of the addition served as academic space on the first floor (a cooking room) with the boys gymnasium above. Thus, the first floor of the northern elevation continues the regularly spaced paired window arrangement of the eight bays of classrooms east of the entry bay with three pairs of six-over-six windows. Three decorative brick panels directly above these windows adorn the first floor level of the former two-story gymnasium that occupied the second and third floors. Three groups of paired six-over-six windows originally lit the second

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story of the gymnasium. The central window is currently filled with red brick, while the flanking pairs have been restored with the six-over-six replacement sash introduced throughout the rest of the addition as part of the building's conversion.

The south side of the gymnasium block housed the boiler and fan rooms for the addition. As part of the conversion, a large vent located on the ground floor was in-filled with brick, and a new egress door was installed. Two single windows to the west of the door complete the first floor. As on the north side, two decorative brick panels adorn the first floor level of the former gymnasium above. Two paired windows light the third floor level.

Western Elevation

The rear elevation of the addition faces west. This elevation features a concrete base with eight bays of paired six-over-six windows at the ground floor. The second floor fenestration aligns with the eight bays below; the openings in the first and eighth bay of the second floor are bricked in, with the remaining bays holding paired six-over-six windows. Windows on the ground floor lit the cooking room, cafeteria and upper portion of the boiler room, and those above lit the gymnasium. The windows at the former gymnasium level feature stone sills.

Interior:

The original 1898 portion of PS 60 is I-shaped in plan. Each floor is arranged around a double-loaded corridor, which transects the building from north to south. The majority of the floor area of the school was devoted to classroom space with narrow coatrooms between classrooms serving each. The first floor included administrative offices and the basement housed a combination of classrooms and mechanical and custodial space. The classrooms that originally lined the perimeter of the building have been converted to one-bedroom, residential apartments, including on the basement level. These apartments utilize original classroom doorways. Restrooms that were located along the rear (western) wall of the school have been converted to tenant storage and building management offices in the basement and on the first floor and apartments on the upper floors. Stairs on either side of the restroom stack facilitate circulation within the 1898 portion of the building and lead into the addition. The simple wood chair-rail, painted wood wainscoting, and plaster walls that characterized the historic corridors were retained during the conversion.

The 1922 addition extends west from the 1898 building. Corridors leading from the original building at the historic stairs provide access to the addition. The addition is O-shaped in plan. A central, two-story auditorium lit by a large skylight formed the core of the interior, with classrooms arranged along the building's perimeter

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walls, and a cafeteria and gymnasium spaces located along the rear, western wall, the cafeteria on the ground floor and the gymnasium above. The first floor was the location of the vocational classrooms: art, print, and wood shops, as well as sewing and cooking rooms. Traditional classrooms and the gymnasiums were located on the second floor. The third floor featured a combination of traditional classrooms, laboratories, lecture rooms and commercial rooms. The original classrooms, cafeteria, and gymnasium have been converted to studio, one and two-bedroom apartments. The historic corridors with terrazzo bases remain, and residential units retained historic classroom entrances.

In accordance with fire-safety mandates that required multiple points of egress in school buildings, three stair halls served the addition. The monumental central stair hall that serves all three floors is located at east end of the addition where it connects to the 1898 block. The stair hall was originally an open stair, but was enclosed with a glass partition for the safety of the new occupants as part of the conversion. Two additional stair towers are located on the north and south sides of the addition adjacent to the former gymnasiums. Both the central stair hall and each of the stair halls at the rear of the building are accessed from entrances on Troy Place and Saratoga Streets. All entrances were originally segregated, with boys entering from Saratoga Street on the north and girls entering from Troy place on the south. Segregated gymnasiums corresponded to this arrangement, with the boys' gymnasium located on the north side of the building and the girls' gymnasium on the south side of the building. Historic terrazzo floors remain in the stair halls.

The centerpiece of the addition, the auditorium, was restored to its original appearance as part of the conversion. Two large hexagonal columns divide the auditorium into two unequal sections: the main orchestra seating at the front, and a smaller section of steeply raked seats at the rear. A series of large skylights make up the ceiling over the orchestra with dentil crown moldings encircling the space, with an inscribed frieze on the sidewalls and above the proscenium that reads, "Freedom Shall not Perish from The Earth/Righteousness Exalteth a Nation/Malice Toward None and Charity for All." The sidewalls below the skylights are divided into five bays, with the central three bays separated by two engaged columns. Each of the three bays has a pair of three-part windows, one set at the first floor level and one at the second floor level. Both sets have three-part sash, with the central sash wider than the sidelights.

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Section 8 Page 1

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

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Statement of Significance:

The former elementary school known as Public School #60 (PS 60) at 238 Ontario Street in Buffalo, NY was constructed in two phases; the original building, designed by Carl Schmill, was completed in 1898 and its substantial addition, designed cooperatively by the Associated Buffalo Architects, Inc. under the direction of its president, Charles Wood, with consulting architect William B. Ittner, was completed in 1922. The prominent local contracting and engineering firm of John W. Cowper Co. undertook construction of the addition. These two periods of construction coincide with an ambitious public school building program undertaken by the city of Buffalo, first in the 1880s and again in 1920s, as well as significant public educational reforms carried out by the State of New York. As a neighborhood school erected and enlarged by the city of Buffalo in response to growing demands to meet public education obligations during both major periods of school construction, PS 60 meets National Register criterion A in the area of Education for its association with the development of Buffalo's public school system in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. PS 60 also meets National Register criterion C in the area of Architecture as a good example of a local school building designed by two prominent local architectural firms, which represents the evolution of school design in Buffalo in response to the educational reforms that marked this period. The period of significance for PS 60 begins with its construction in 1898 and ends in 1964. The building remained an active school until 2005. While the building experienced a period of vacancy beginning in the early twenty-first century, it remained in fair condition and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling, and association.

History of Schools in Buffalo, New York, 1837-1930

The system that produced PS 60 originated in 1837 when the city of Buffalo enacted its first local law that allowed for the operation of a city school system. Prior to that year, Buffalo's public schools were part of a system of common schools established under the general laws of the State of New York. To administer the new city school system, the 1837 act established a superintendent of schools, distinguishing Buffalo as the first city in the United States to create such a position. The year 1839 marked another significant milestone in the development of Buffalo's public school system: in that year the schools of the city were made free to all children residing in the city who were under the age of sixteen. The city's governing body, the Common Council, established a new property tax to support the expense of maintaining the city's existing schools and building new schools across the city. This important step made Buffalo one of the first cities in the State of New York to create a free public school system.¹

¹ Thomas E. Finegan, *Examination of the Public School System of the City of Buffalo*, (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1916) 3-7.

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The establishment of a municipally controlled system led to the steady development of new school buildings in Buffalo. In 1838, six schools served 179 students in Buffalo. By 1852, the number of school districts increased to sixteen, and by 1899, the number of school districts had grown to sixty, with a school population of 56,726.² The growth of Buffalo's public schools reflected the city's growing population. During this period Buffalo grew from a city of just over 18,000 in 1840 to a city of over 352,000 in 1900.³ In addition to population growth, state and local mandates prioritizing public education vastly increased demands on the public system as the nineteenth century drew to a close. In 1894, the State of New York enacted an enforceable compulsory attendance law, which required children between eight and twelve years of age to attend school for a full academic year; children over the age of twelve who were not fully employed were required to attend for part of the school year.⁴ That same year, the city of Buffalo made textbooks free to all of its students, an initiative which Superintendent Henry P. Emerson cited in his annual report as a contributing factor in the unprecedented increase in student registration for the 1893-1894 school year:

*This increase of over 5,000 in the registration has been in part due to this measure. During the season of business depression, when thousands of people have been without employment, the purchase of school books would have been impossible to many parents.*⁵

The combined effect of steady population growth and expanded legislative requirements for public education triggered the first of two major periods of school building construction in Buffalo. This building period extended from 1881-1910, resulting in 43 new elementary schools, including PS 60 in 1898, and twelve additions to pre-existing schools.⁶

Pressure on Buffalo's school plant mounted in the years following the first significant period of school construction. Superintendent Emerson's annual reports between 1910 and 1914 are brimming with land purchased for new schools, additions and annexes completed and under construction, and recommendations for further relief. A report on the Buffalo public schools undertaken by the state Department of Education, published in 1916 at the request of Superintendent Emerson, documents problems facing many schools throughout the city at that time. Of the elementary schools in particular the examination revealed:

² J. Henry Wood, ed., *Schools of Buffalo: A Souvenir History and Description of the Public Schools of Buffalo*, (Buffalo: Mrs. Ida Wood, 1899) 6.

³ Campbell Gibson, "Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States: 1790 to 1990," 21 May 2012, U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. 27 January 2014.
<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/twps0027.html#citypop>>.

⁴ Susanne Warren, *Context Study: The Schools of New York State Development of the School as a Building Type*. Submitted to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, 1990, 110.

⁵ Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education of the City of Buffalo for the year 1893-1894*, (Buffalo: Baker Jones & Co., 1894) 16.

⁶ University of the State of New York., *Buffalo Public Schools in the Mid-Twentieth Century*, (Albany, 1951) 288.

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PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

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...[a] serious lack in number and extent of playgrounds; inadequacy of school accommodations in certain sections of the city, and the deplorable condition of a few buildings; the use of unsuitable rented rooms, and the wide and continued use of annexes intended only for temporary occupation; [and] the failure of at least half of the grade rooms in the city to conform to one or more of the accepted standards of school hygiene.⁷

The demands on Buffalo's public school system were due not only to the city's growing population, which increased by over 70,000 between 1900 and 1910.⁸ The first quarter of the nineteenth century saw a considerable expansion of the school curriculum and the role of schools in their communities, particularly after 1910. Public schools evolved from places of traditional instruction of reading and writing to include manual and domestic training and physical education. New curriculums included sewing, cooking, science, and swimming. New York was among the first states to adopt physical education legislation in 1916, requiring all children over eight years of age to participate in physical activity for an average of twenty minutes a day.⁹ These new courses of study required new spaces to accommodate them: workshops, laboratories, kitchens, and gymnasiums.

Concurrently, schools increasingly adopted the new role of community social centers where neighborhood residents gathered for evening meetings and recreation. Auditoriums emerged as spaces that would accommodate school assemblies during the day and community gatherings at night.¹⁰ As early as 1916-1917 the New York State Education Department specified that schools of eight or more rooms must provide an auditorium or assembly room for community use. Ten years later, New York enacted a statute requiring the availability of schools to the community, rendering auditoriums mandatory for all schools.¹¹

This expansion of curriculum and use placed considerable pressure on Buffalo's public school plant, which largely featured traditional classroom spaces suited to a nineteenth century curriculum and single-use function. Despite the pressure, Buffalo's first major school building campaign came to a halt with the onset of the first World War. It wasn't until the end of the war that many of the concerns raised by the state's 1916 report and the demands for increased infrastructure that could support the expanding educational curriculum and community use could begin to be addressed. A second citywide school building campaign began in earnest in 1921 when Buffalo appropriated \$8,000,000 for the construction of eighteen school buildings, twelve junior high schools,

⁷ Finegan, *Examination of the Public School System*, 48.

⁸ Gibson, "Population of the 100 Largest Cities."

⁹ Warren, *Context Study: The Schools of New York State*, 222.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 153-161, 163-165 .

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 223-224.

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PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

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three elementary schools, and two additions to elementary schools, including PS 60.¹² This marked the commencement of the second significant wave of school building construction in Buffalo, which extended from 1921-1930, resulting in 24 new buildings, and 26 additions erected between 1921 and 1930.¹³

Buffalo's Riverside Neighborhood

PS 60 is located in the Riverside neighborhood of Buffalo, one of the last sections of the city to be developed, due to its distance from downtown Buffalo. Located in the northwest corner of the city, just over five miles from the city's center, Riverside is bounded by the Niagara River to the west, the neighboring town of Tonawanda to the north, a rail corridor to the east and the neighborhood of Black Rock to the south. The area was sparsely populated at the beginning of the nineteenth century, consisting of a handful of farms and homesteads with industry along the river. Riverside is located in what had been the Mile Strip Reserve, a one-mile tract of land along the Niagara River that was withheld by the State of New York from the Holland Land Company, a syndicate of Dutch investors that purchased over 3,000,000 acres of land in Western New York at the close of the eighteenth century. By 1866 the neighborhood's major thoroughfares, Tonawanda and Ontario streets, had been laid out, giving the neighborhood its general form.¹⁴ Yet for most of the second-half of the nineteenth century, Riverside remained apart, serving as a rural retreat to inhabitants of downtown Buffalo. It was inhabited by a few wealthy owners of large estates, such as William A. Bird, president of the Erie Savings Bank, who lived on a large estate between Hertel Avenue and Ontario Street.¹⁵ The majority of the neighborhood contained large tracts of land identified with single property owners with some smaller subdivided lots present along the major thoroughfares of Tonawanda and Ontario through 1880.¹⁶

The introduction of a freight and commuter line known as the Belt Line installed by the New York Central Railroad and opened in 1883 connected Riverside to the rest of the city, with stops every mile along the route. The new rail line included a stop in Black Rock, the neighborhood south of Riverside, one of the mostly heavily industrialized neighborhoods in Buffalo. The Belt Line brought new residents of German, Polish and Eastern European descent to Riverside. In 1888, the passage of the Hertel Avenue Sewer Bill allowed sewer construction to take place in Riverside, further accelerating the rate of development.¹⁷

¹² William B. Ittner, E.C. Hartwell, and Elizabeth L. Cowan, "The Buffalo School Building Program," *School Board Journal*, Vol. 62 (February 1921) 52.

¹³ University of the State of New York, *Buffalo Public Schools*, 288.

¹⁴ "City of Buffalo," *New Topographical Atlas of Erie Co., New York* (Stone and Stewart, 1866) Buffalo Research.Com. 27 January 2014. <<http://www.buffaloresearch.com/maps.html>>.

¹⁵ Mark Goldman, "First There was Black Rock," Buffalo Architecture and History. 27 January 2014. <<http://buffaloah.com/h/br/brgold/index.html>>.

¹⁶ "City of Buffalo," *Illustrated Historic Atlas of Erie Co. New York* (F.W. Beers and Co., 1880) Buffalo Research.Com, 27 January 2014. <<http://www.buffaloresearch.com/maps.html>>.

¹⁷ Goldman, "First There was Black Rock."

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With rail connections and infrastructure in place, real estate development in Riverside began in earnest in 1890 when the North Park Land Company purchased 30 acres of land within view of the Erie Canal and Niagara River. By 1893, most of the streets in the neighborhood were laid out, including Saratoga Street and Troy Alley, between which lay the future site of PS 60.¹⁸ The land was subdivided, and construction of single and two-family homes followed. By 1894, Riverside was largely composed of a grid of streets with evenly subdivided lots, only a handful of which were developed. One-and-a-half and two-story frame dwellings were largely concentrated along Niagara, Tonawanda, and Ontario Streets, with a few dwellings appearing on side streets, including Troy Alley and Saratoga Street.¹⁹ The continued industrialization of Black Rock at the turn of the twentieth century led to the emigration of second and third generation European immigrants to the newly developed Riverside and fostered steady growth of the neighborhood through the first two decades of the twentieth century²⁰.

With the continued development of the neighborhood came additional public improvements. In 1897, after Olmsted Sr.'s death, the firm of Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. designed the last of six major parks in Buffalo, in the northwest section of Riverside. The 22-acre Riverside Park included minnow pools, a romantic stream with waterfalls and a formal concourse across a footbridge over the Erie Canal. In 1912, an additional 12 acres were added to the south end of the park and laid out for active recreation.²¹

PS 60

Recognizing the growth of Riverside, Superintendent of Education Henry P. Emerson recommended a neighborhood school beginning in 1893, a year of exceptional growth and expansion of the public school system citywide. In his annual report for the 1893-1894 school year, Emerson emphasized an "unprecedented increase in registration and attendance" in Buffalo and declared, "This sudden and, to some extent, unexpected expansion of the school system found the city unable to meet the demand made upon it for proper accommodation."²² In response to the increased demand that year, Buffalo initiated construction of seven new school buildings all south of Hertel Avenue: PS 44, PS 50, PS 51, PS 52, PS 53, PS 54, PS 55, as well as additions to PS 17 and PS 38. Of these, only PS 51 at the corner of Hertel Avenue and Niagara Street

¹⁸ "Map of the City of Buffalo, NY," *Atlas of the Vicinities of the cities Niagara Falls, North Tonawanda and Buffalo, New York* (Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins, 1893). 27 January 2014. <<http://buffaloah.com/h/br/brgold/index.html>>.

¹⁹ "1894 City of Buffalo Atlas" *Atlas of the City of Buffalo, New York* (New York: American Atlas Co., 1894). 5 May 2014. <<http://www2.erie.gov/atlas/index.php>>

²⁰ Goldman, "First There was Black Rock."

²¹ Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, "Riverside Park" 2013, Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, 27 January 2014. <www.bfloparks.org>.

²² Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report 1893-1894*, 11-12.

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approached the Riverside neighborhood. As a temporary means of accommodating the school population while the new schools were being built, the city rented an additional 37 rooms for a total of 92 rooms in 28 rented buildings.²³ One of these rented buildings was located on Ontario Street at the corner of Mayer Avenue, less than one city block west of the future site of PS 60.²⁴ The first mention of a permanent school for Riverside came on a list of the superintendent's recommendations for that year:

*We should not delay until the present buildings are completed before considering plans for further relief. I would therefore make the following recommendations: 1. That a lot be purchased in the vicinity of Ontario Street, east of Tonawanda Street, and that a four room frame building to cost about \$3000 be erected upon it.*²⁵

The city purchased a lot for the school in 1896, and Superintendent Emerson reiterated the neighborhood's need for a school in his annual report for that year:

*I have recommended at various times over the last three years that a site be secured in the rapidly growing part of the city at Ontario and Tonawanda streets. I am pleased to report that a lot has recently been purchased. The city rents a building there and the neighborhood ought to have a school house.*²⁶

Construction of PS 60 was underway by 1897 and the school welcomed its first students in September of 1898. The school proved to be a much more substantial building than the four room, \$3,000 frame structure called for in 1893. The three-story masonry building was constructed at a cost of \$52,280.95. The site included a janitor's cottage constructed behind the building (not extant). At its opening, the school served about 400 students in the first through the eighth grades, with Elmer J. Cobb as its principal.²⁷

Two other schools opened with PS 60 in the fall of 1898: PS 12 and PS 59. The *Buffalo Evening News* described the new school buildings as "commodious," "well lighted," and "provided with all modern improvements."²⁸ Each of the new schools consisted of seventeen rooms and were the first schools in the city

²³ Ibid., 13.

²⁴ The Buffalo School Association, *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Public Schools of Buffalo*, (Buffalo: Matthews-Northrup Co., 1898) 19.

²⁵ Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report 1893-1894*, 13-14.

²⁶ Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education of the City of Buffalo for the year 1895-1896* (Buffalo: The Wenborne-Sumner Co., 1897) 19.

²⁷ Principal Cobb recalled the earliest days of the school when he had a teaching force of nine for 400 students. "Elmer J. Cobb, 25 Years at Public School 60, Honored in Riverside," *Buffalo Evening News*, October 26, 1921; Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education of the City of Buffalo for the year 1897-1898* (Buffalo: The Wenborne-Sumner Co., 1899) 32, 238.

²⁸ "Schools all Ready for the Pupils," *Buffalo Evening News*, September 5, 1898.

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constructed to be fireproof. Superintendent of Buildings John Reimann lauded the new buildings as models to be replicated: "These are buildings of modern fire-proof construction, and are excellent examples of that class. I believe that this form of construction should be employed exclusively hereafter when school buildings are to be erected."²⁹

Just over a decade after PS 60 opened, the school was already in need of expansion. By 1912, the student population of the school had grown from 400 to 900 pupils, Kindergarten and ninth grade had been added, and the teaching staff had more than doubled that of its opening.³⁰ Among a list of buildings ordered by Superintendent Emerson at the close of the 1911 school year was an eighteen-room addition to PS 60.³¹ The report for the following year reiterates the need for the addition, explicitly calling for an assembly room and places the addition on a list of projects with which the city should "proceed immediately."³² Emerson reported, "The new building authorized for this district [PS 60] is badly needed for the proper accommodation of the pupils. We urge that it be rushed to completion as soon as possible."³³ The pleas for more space continued over the next several years with accounts of classes being held in basement rooms, accommodating overflow with the construction of a two-room portable annex on Troy Place in 1914, and routine appearances of PS 60 among lists of schools with severe overcrowding.³⁴

Promise of the long-awaited addition to PS 60 returned in 1918. In a two-page feature on the school, the *Buffalo Evening News* reported that the Board of Education recommended the appropriation of \$200,000 for construction of the addition and that architectural plans had been produced and were available for public viewing. The feature explained that the original building could no longer meet the needs of the district in its capacity, citing the use of four exterior annexes and several classes on part-time instruction, nor could it meet the standards of an expanded educational curriculum:

The school was erected to take care of the fast-growing population of the Riverside district and 20 years ago was considered an up-to-date building. However, in these days when education has been extended to include so many practical vocational subjects and the state is requiring so much physical training, it is sadly deficient in its facilities for manual training, domestic art, cooking, physical training, and

²⁹ City of Buffalo Department of Public Works, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Works of the City of Buffalo for the Year Ending December 31, 1897* (Buffalo: The Wenborne-Sumner Co., 1898) 442.

³⁰ Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education of the City of Buffalo 1912-1913* (Buffalo: James D. Warren's Sons Co., 1913) 59, 174.

³¹ Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education of the City of Buffalo 1910-1911* (Buffalo: James D. Warren's Sons Co., 1911) 10.

³² Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report 1912-1913*, 35.

³³ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁴ Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education of the City of Buffalo 1913-1914* (Buffalo: James D. Warren's Sons Co., 1914) 12; Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education of the City of Buffalo 1914-1915*, (Buffalo: James D. Warren's Sons Co., 1915) 12-13.

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recreational education...[it is] without an assembly room, without a domestic science room, without a gym, without a playground, without a domestic art room, without a lunch or recreation room, without sanitary drinking fountains.³⁵

Despite the announcement of the appropriation and development of plans for the addition, the Riverside community had to wait another four years before the completion of the expanded building. As anticipated, when the addition was finally complete, it included eighteen new classrooms, including sewing and cooking rooms, laboratories, and commercial rooms, as well as traditional classrooms. It also featured a large assembly room and boys and girls gymnasiums. It was constructed at a cost of approximately 250,000.³⁶ The remarks of Superintendent E.C. Hartwell at the dedication of the newly expanded building in 1923 reflect the aspirations of Buffalo in meeting the broadened expectations of public schools:

There has been a very bitter struggle waged in this city to provide educational facilities for the boys and girls of this city. There is absolutely nothing in this building that needs to be apologized for from the standpoint of cost. Manual training, kindergartens, domestic science, music, gymnasiums and auditoriums are the result of public demands. I know the shout that would be put up in any community if we attempted to build a school that did not possess these features. Each of these has its place in the training for the youth, and is necessary. This building is not only going to be a day school but it is also going to be a community center.³⁷

The dedication culminated in a tour of the new building where the manual training and domestic science departments were particularly emphasized by showing them in operation, including demonstrations of the “modern equipment of a model kitchen and cafeteria.”³⁸

School Design and the Architects of PS 60: Carl Schmill, William B. Ittner and the Associated Buffalo Architects

The great number of schools under construction in Buffalo in the late nineteenth century were designed by individual local architects. The seven new school buildings begun in 1894 mentioned above were designed by six different architects.³⁹ Likewise, three separate architects designed PS 12, PS 59, and PS 60, which opened together in 1898.⁴⁰ PS 60 was designed by local architect Carl Schmill. According to his obituary, Schmill

³⁵ “School 60 Edition,” *Buffalo Evening News*, Saturday April 20, 1918.

³⁶ “Buffalo, N.Y.,” *The American Contractor* Vol. 41 (April 17, 1920): 55.

³⁷ “Says Hope of Democracy is in Education,” *Buffalo Evening News*, Thursday, May 17, 1923.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ City of Buffalo Department of Public Works, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Works of the City of Buffalo for the Year Ending December 31, 1894* (Buffalo: C.E. Northrop, 1895) 380, 388-390.

⁴⁰ City of Buffalo Department of Public Works, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Works of the City of Buffalo for the Year Ending December 31, 1898* (Buffalo: The Wenborne-Sumner Co., 1899) 479, 533-536.

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came to Buffalo from Germany in 1880. For several years he worked in connection with the architectural office of Henry H. Little, before opening his own office in 1889.⁴¹ At the time of his death in 1914, he was remembered as a designer of churches and schools.⁴² In the years following his PS 60 commission, he became one of Buffalo's premier ecclesiastical architects, both individually and as a partner in the firm of Schmill and Gould, designing largely in the Gothic Revival style. Schmill was associated with the design of the Transfiguration Roman Catholic Church, the Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church (1907, NR Listed 2007), Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic Church (1907, altered to a school, NR listed 1979), Holy Apostles Peter and Paul Church (1909, burned and rebuilt), Saint Gerard's Church (1911), Sacred Heart Church (1913), and Assumption Church (1914). After his death, his sons continued their father's practice under the name Carl Schmill and Sons, designing schools, churches, convents, and rectories until the eldest son died in 1967.

Schmill's design for PS 60 is reflective of school buildings of the period, which were heavily influenced by available literature pertaining to school building. As Susanne Warren describes in her study of New York State schools, period literature provided a framework for school boards and architects to follow in the design of local schools. Gurdon Randall's *Practical Illustrations of the Principles of School Architecture* published in 1884, Eugene Gardener's book *Town and Country School Buildings*, published in 1888, and George and Charles Paliser's *Common Sense School Architecture* published in 1889 were among the most influential publications, covering all aspects of design, including plan, heating, sanitation, lighting, and ventilation. With some variation, the authors present the 1890s schoolhouse as a collection of classrooms under a single roof, with no other functional division of space, but for circulation and storage. Classrooms are arranged around corridors running the length or width of the building with a central stair, stairs at the ends, or at the front and rear of the building. Cloak rooms, classrooms lit by evenly spaced or grouped windows, usually on two sides, and separate entrances for boys and girls were all common features of the elementary schools presented in these publications.

Schmill's plan for PS 60 closely aligns with the concepts presented in these books. He designed separate entrances for girls and boys that lead to a central hall that runs the length of the building. Classrooms divided by cloakrooms on all three floors accounted for the majority of the floor area, with administrative space being limited to a small office on the first floor and storage and mechanical systems located in the basement. The classrooms were lit by paired and grouped windows with corner rooms lit on two sides. Since the school was designed to be one of the first fire-proof school buildings Buffalo, it is not surprising that Schmill's plan provided two sets of stairs at the rear of the building rather than having a central stair that was less suited to emergency egress found in many school buildings constructed earlier in the decade. The Renaissance Revival massing Schmill chose for PS 60, with its polychrome, stepped façade, quoins, and classical entrances deviates

⁴¹ Public School #15, the oldest extant school building in the City of Buffalo, was designed by Little in 1884. Schmill was likely in his office at this time.

⁴² "Schmill Funeral Will Be Held Tomorrow," *Buffalo Evening News*, January 14, 1914.

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from the forms illustrated in the period literature, which favored medieval forms and asymmetrical massing predominant during Victorian era. Schmill's choice reflects the influence of the 1893 Worlds Columbian Exposition in Chicago, which heralded a new trend in American architecture of embracing the classical form, especially for public buildings.

Unlike the first school building boom in Buffalo at the end of the nineteenth century when individual architects designed schools of varying shape and form, the second period of growth was characterized by a unified system of design and execution that yielded a standardization of form. As Warren details in her study of New York Schools, the move towards standardization in school building took hold nationally in 1917, when the National Education Association formed the Committee on Standardization of Schoolhouse Planning, a group whose aim was to establish minimum standards for all aspects of design including lighting, function of spaces, and safety standards with very specific measurements and ratios for maximum efficiency. Expanded legislation governing health and safety in the teens and twenties further codified the school building form. Between 1910 and 1920, New York State implemented twenty-five new requirements pertaining to school building construction for a total of 42 mandated standards. Some of these standards included: ideal lighting conditions, with light coming exclusively from the left in a block of grouped, square-headed windows at the center of a long wall; building height being limited two stories above the basement; building materials, requiring fireproof materials for halls, stairs, and basements; adequate space for physical education, and provision for assembly rooms for community gatherings.⁴³

Buffalo embraced the move towards standardization in its renewed building campaign. In 1919, Buffalo retained St. Louis-based architect William B. Ittner to consult and supervise the first wave of new school construction since the end of the war. Ittner was a graduate of the Cornell School of Architecture and was considered a leader in the field of school design, having held the position of commissioner of school buildings for the Board of Education in St. Louis, Missouri for thirteen years, himself associated with the construction of hundreds of schools. Ittner worked in collaboration with a unique collective of prominent local architects, known as Associated Buffalo Architects, Incorporated, which was organized in 1920 to provide the Board of Education a convenient means of using local talent in the execution of its ambitious school building program. Charles S. Wood served as the association's president, and its members included prominent Buffalo architects Edward B. Green, Duane Lyman, Frederick Backus, and Max Beierl. Secretary of the Associated Buffalo Architects, Duane Lyman, described the merits of organization thus:

The architects of the city were of the opinion that an organization of the local profession, which would indicate a real capacity for a sympathetic and intelligent interpretation of the policy of the Board of Education as well as insure a well considered application of the best experience among them would lend

⁴³ Warren, *Context Study: The Schools of New York State*, 201-203, 209, 210, 219, 222-223.

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*itself to an effective and creditable execution of this school program...and that the use of such an organization would eliminate much waste motion when compared with the execution of many individual architects.*⁴⁴

Ittner provided preliminary drawings for a group of similar buildings, and the Associated Buffalo Architects produced standardized construction drawings and supervised construction. Regardless of individual effort, all finished plans were the product of the association. In line with state regulations, Ittner's standard elementary school plan was limited to two stories above the ground floor with a maximum penetration of sunlight and included twelve classrooms, with the possibility of expanding to thirty, an auditorium with seating for 500, and a gymnasium equipped with folding partitions.⁴⁵ The result of this approach was a largely standardized form in school buildings that adhered to the state's mandates and was desirable for its efficiency and minimization building cost.⁴⁶ Working collaboratively, Ittner and The Associated Buffalo Architects designed ten schools, as well as the addition to PS 60, between 1921 and 1925.⁴⁷ Historic images indicate that the contractors and engineers for the construction of the addition was the local company of John W. Cowper Co., a prominent local firm that would oversee the construction of numerous large scale works throughout Buffalo in the early and mid-twentieth century, including construction of Buffalo City Hall in 1929-31 (NR listed). Ittner and the Associated Buffalo Architects were one of the last private firms to design school buildings during this period, as in 1923 the Board of Education retained Earnest Crimi as their in-house architect.⁴⁸

Like the original building, the addition to PS 60 reflects the trends of the period. The addition conforms to the height limitation of two floors above the ground level, and classrooms were arranged along exterior walls so as to be lit from a single side by large, paired, square-headed windows. The few classrooms located in the building's interior on the second floor abutted the skylight above the auditorium, so they too received natural light from a single side. Natural light also floods the central stair by virtue of its placement beside a light court between the original building and the addition. Stairs leading directly to exits on the west side of the addition provided necessary supplementary egress in the event of fire. The inclusion of vocational classrooms, a central auditorium, gymnasium space separated by folding partitions, and a cafeteria all speak to expansion of the curriculum and the function of the school building in its extension to the community. As for the exterior of the addition, the limited ornament, emphasis on horizontality in its belt course and coping, and overall streamlined appearance were stylistic features typical of civic buildings in the 1920s, including the ten other school buildings executed by Ittner and the Associated Buffalo Architects. The standardization of school building form during this period limited architectural expression to often perfunctory application of details to the standard

⁴⁴ "Architects of Buffalo," *Engineering News Record* Vol. 83. No. 20 (1919): 910-911.

⁴⁵ Ittner, Hartwell, and Cowan, "The Buffalo School Building Program," 55.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁴⁷ PS 3, PS 11, PS 31, PS 45, PS 64, PS 65, PS 66, PS 68, PS 70 and PS 200

⁴⁸ Crimi designed public schools no. 6, 17, 28, 39, 53, 71, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 73, 30, and 81.

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form: a horizontal, flat-roofed block with large banks of windows. PS 60 followed suit with embellishment limited to entries and blank walls around the gymnasium, the remainder of the walls being devoted to windows. This architectural restraint was especially suited to public school buildings designed and constructed on a limited budget.

Recent History of Riverside and PS 60

The continued growth of Riverside in the 1920s led to the construction of Riverside High School in 1928. Riverside continued its expansion through the 1930s fueled by construction of Chevrolet's GM Powertrain Tonawanda Engine Plant in the neighboring town of Tonawanda, to the north. However, like many neighborhoods in urban centers across the country, Riverside began to decline in the years following the second World War. The decline was heightened by the extension of the New York State Thruway in 1958, which cut off access to the Niagara River. The neighborhood suffered further in the coming decades with the loss of industry and ultimately the flight of many of its residents to more suburban settings. Despite this flight, the physical character of the neighborhood remains relatively intact, especially in the residential portions that surround the PS 60 property.

PS 60 became Riverside Academy around 1984 and continued to serve the community as a public elementary school. The school was taken out of service in 2005. Over the years portions of the building were altered to accommodate modern usage. The original building underwent changes to the basement level. The 1922 addition had some classroom partitions altered, lockers added to the hallways, and flooring replacement. Both portions of the building had windows removed and experienced some change in wall finishes, including the removal of blackboards. Despite these changes, and a period of vacancy, the school retained a high level of historic integrity.

In 2012, DePaul Properties, Inc., a private, non-profit organization based in Rochester, NY, that is committed to providing quality affordable housing for seniors and persons diagnosed with mental health issues, among others, purchased PS 60 from the City of Buffalo. DePaul Properties has converted the school building into a residence with 68 units of affordable housing, 45 of which are designated for individuals diagnosed with mental illness. Original classrooms now house residential apartments. However this conversion was completed without disruption to the original plan of the building, which reflects its former use as a school. Historic finishes remain in the corridors, stair halls, and the auditorium, which, in addition to retaining its original volume and configuration, has been restored to its original appearance.

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PS 60 represents the evolution of the Buffalo public school system from the late nineteenth century through the first quarter of the twentieth century, as a neighborhood elementary school erected and expanded during the two defining periods of school building construction in the City of Buffalo. PS 60 is also illustrative of the evolution of school design from the nineteenth-century schoolhouse to the twentieth-century vocational training and community center. Further, it is a well-preserved example of the work of notable Buffalo architects Carl Schmill and the noteworthy collaborative effort between William B. Ittner and the Associated Buffalo Architects. Its recent conversion to residential apartments has preserved the historic exterior and retained an integrity of plan that speaks to the building's former use. The conversion has also ensured the building's continued presence in the Riverside neighborhood.

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"School 60 Edition." *Buffalo Evening News*, Saturday April 20, 1918.

"Schools all Ready for the Pupils." *Buffalo Evening News*. September 5, 1898.

University of the State of New York. *Buffalo Public Schools in the Mid-Twentieth Century*. Albany: University of the State of New York, 1951.

Warren, Susanne. *Context Study: The Schools of New York State; Development of the School as a Building Type*. Submitted to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, 1990.

Wood, Henry J., ed. *Schools of Buffalo: A Souvenir History and Description of the Public Schools of Buffalo*. Buffalo: Mrs. Ida Wood, 1899.

"1894 City of Buffalo Atlas" *Atlas of the City of Buffalo, New York* (New York: American Atlas Co., 1894). 5 May 2014. <<http://www2.erie.gov/atlasses/index.php>>

1920 Architectural Drawings, Buffalo Public School Department.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 3

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

1921 Construction Photos, BUILDINGS: Educational/Schools Collection, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Verbal Boundary Description

See attached map with scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundary represents the current lot for the building and encompasses the historic boundary of the building, from 1898 through the present.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 2

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Public School No. 60 (PS #60)
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

238 Ontario Street
Buffalo, NY 14207



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Tax Parcel Data:
Erie Co. RPS
gis1.erie.gov/GC



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 3

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

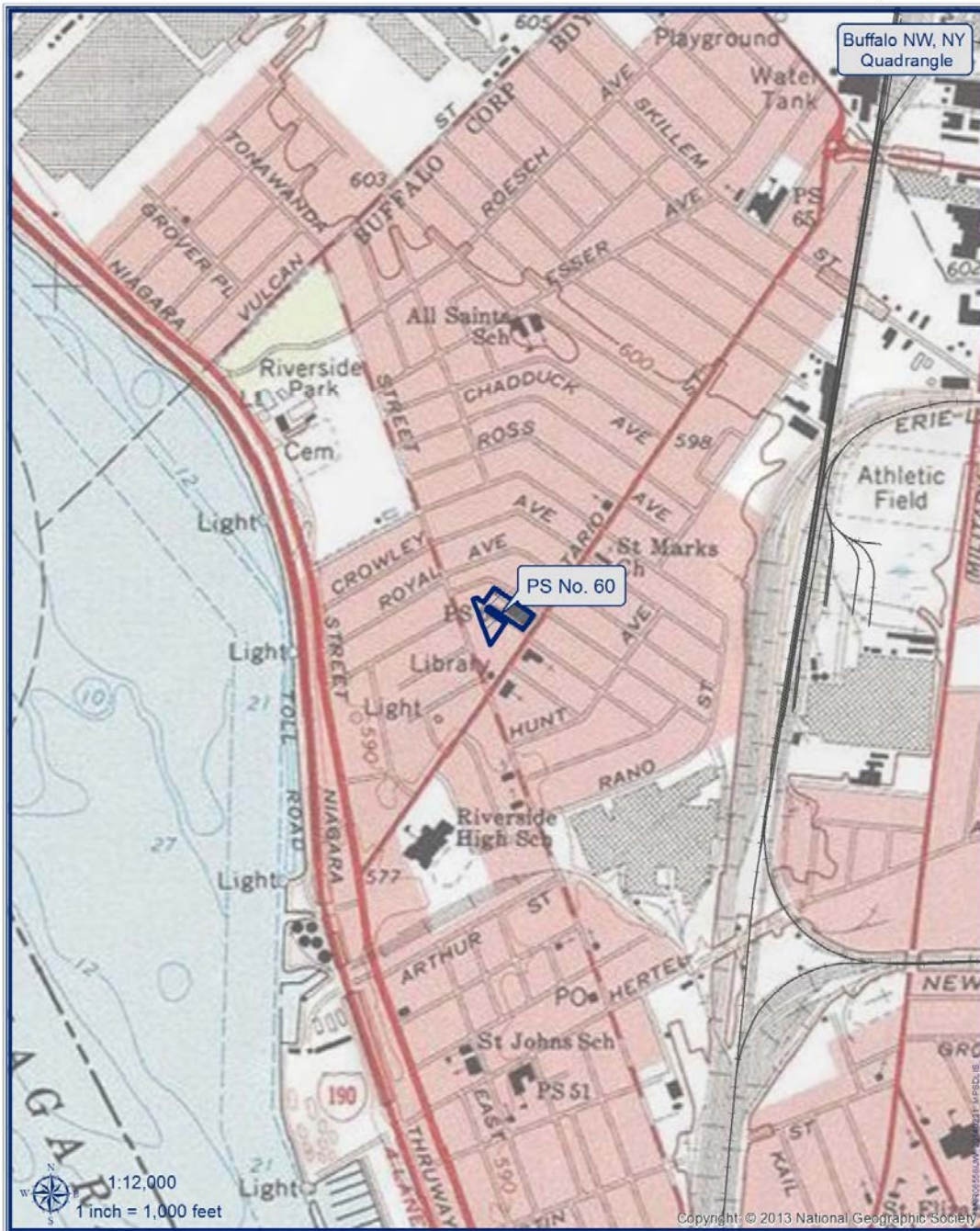
Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Public School No. 60 (PS #60)
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

238 Ontario Street
Buffalo, NY 14207



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



PS #60

Tax Parcel Data:
Erie Co. RPS
gis1.erie.gov/GC



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 4

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

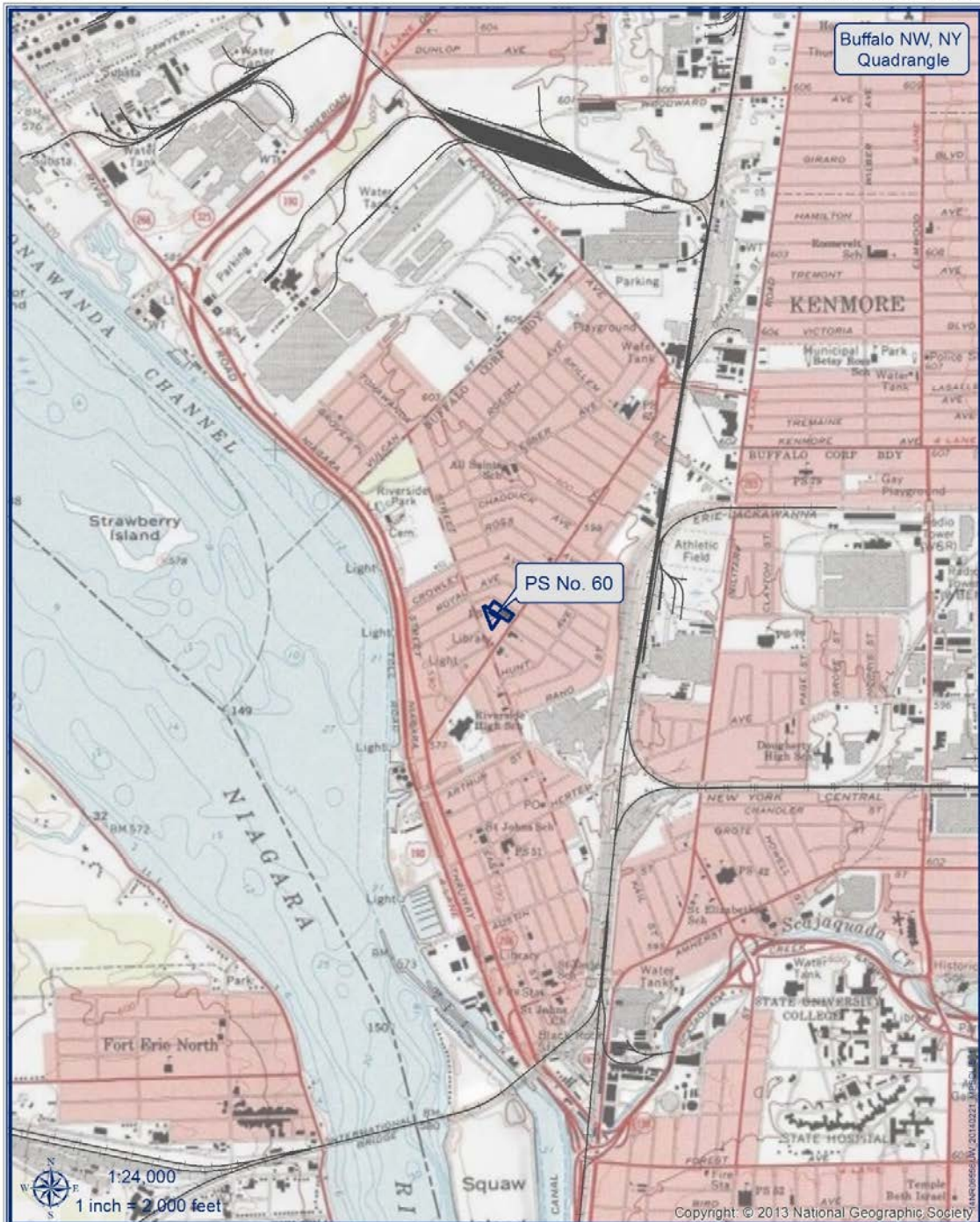
Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Public School No. 60 (PS #60)
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

238 Ontario Street
Buffalo, NY 14207



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



 PS #60

Tax Parcel Data:
Erie Co. RPS
gis1.erie.gov/GC



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 11 Page 1

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

Additional Information

Photo Log

Name of Property: Public School #60 (PS 60)
City or Vicinity: Buffalo
County: Erie
State: NY
Photographer: Mary Nastasi
Date Photographed: 2/12/2014
Location of Original Digital Files: 263 Summer Street, 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02210

Photo 1 of 16
East elevation, 1898 portion, camera facing southwest

Photo 2 of 16
North elevation, 1898 portion, camera facing southwest

Photo 3 of 16
South elevation, 1922 portion (left) and 1898 portion (right), camera facing northwest

Photo 4 of 16
North elevation, 1922 portion, camera facing south

Photo 5 of 16
North elevation, 1922 portion, camera facing southwest

Photo 6 of 16
North elevation, 1898 portion (left) and 1922 portion (right), camera facing southwest

Photo 7 of 16
South elevation, 1922 portion (left) and 1898 portion (right), camera facing northwest

Photo 8 of 16
South elevation, 1922 portion (left) and 1898 portion (right), camera facing north

Photo 9 of 16
South elevation, 1922 portion, camera facing north

Photo 10 of 16
West elevation, 1922 portion, camera facing northeast

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 11 Page 2

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

Photo 11 of 16
First floor corridor, 1898 portion, camera facing north

Photo 12 of 16
First floor unit, 1898 portion, camera facing east

Photo 13 of 16
First floor corridor, 1922 portion, camera facing north

Photo 14 of 16
First floor stairs, 1922 portion, camera facing south

Photo 15 of 16
Auditorium, 1922 portion, camera facing northeast

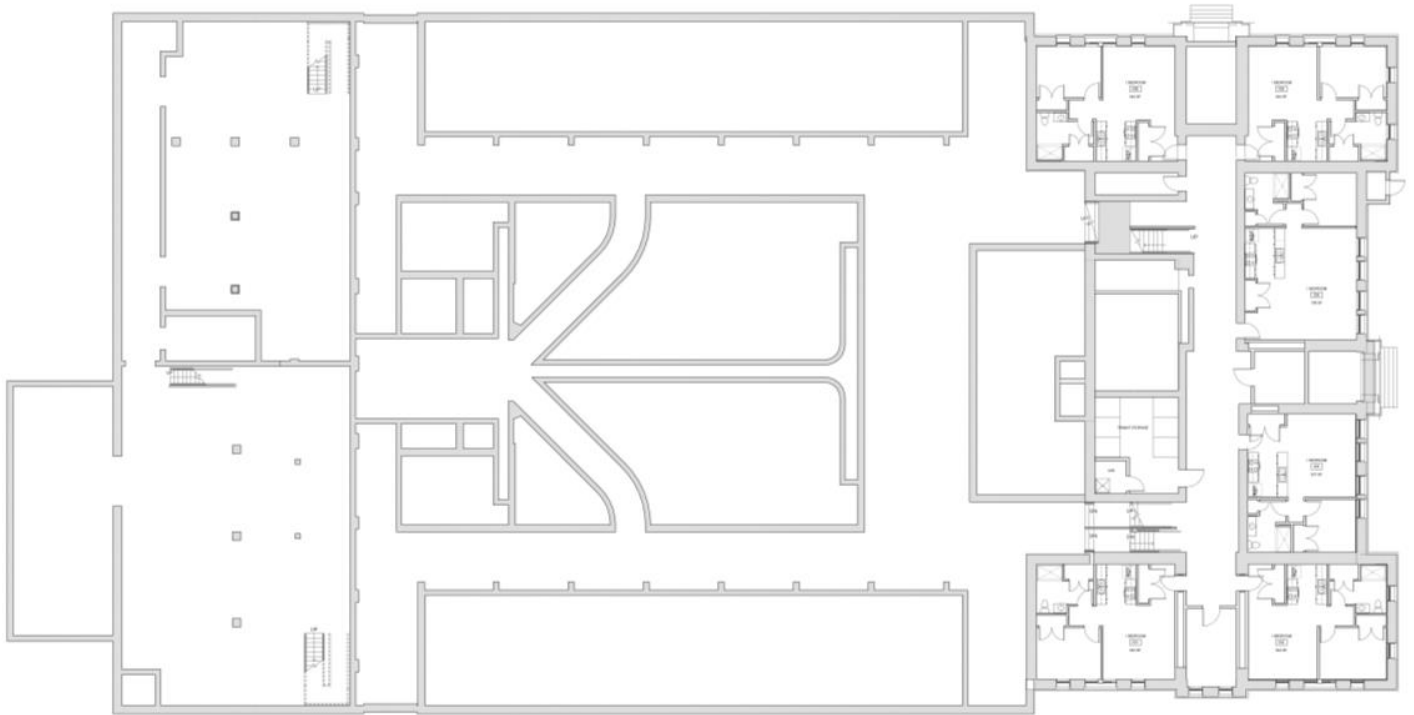
Photo 16 of 16
First floor stair, 1922 portion, camera facing south

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 3

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



1 BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

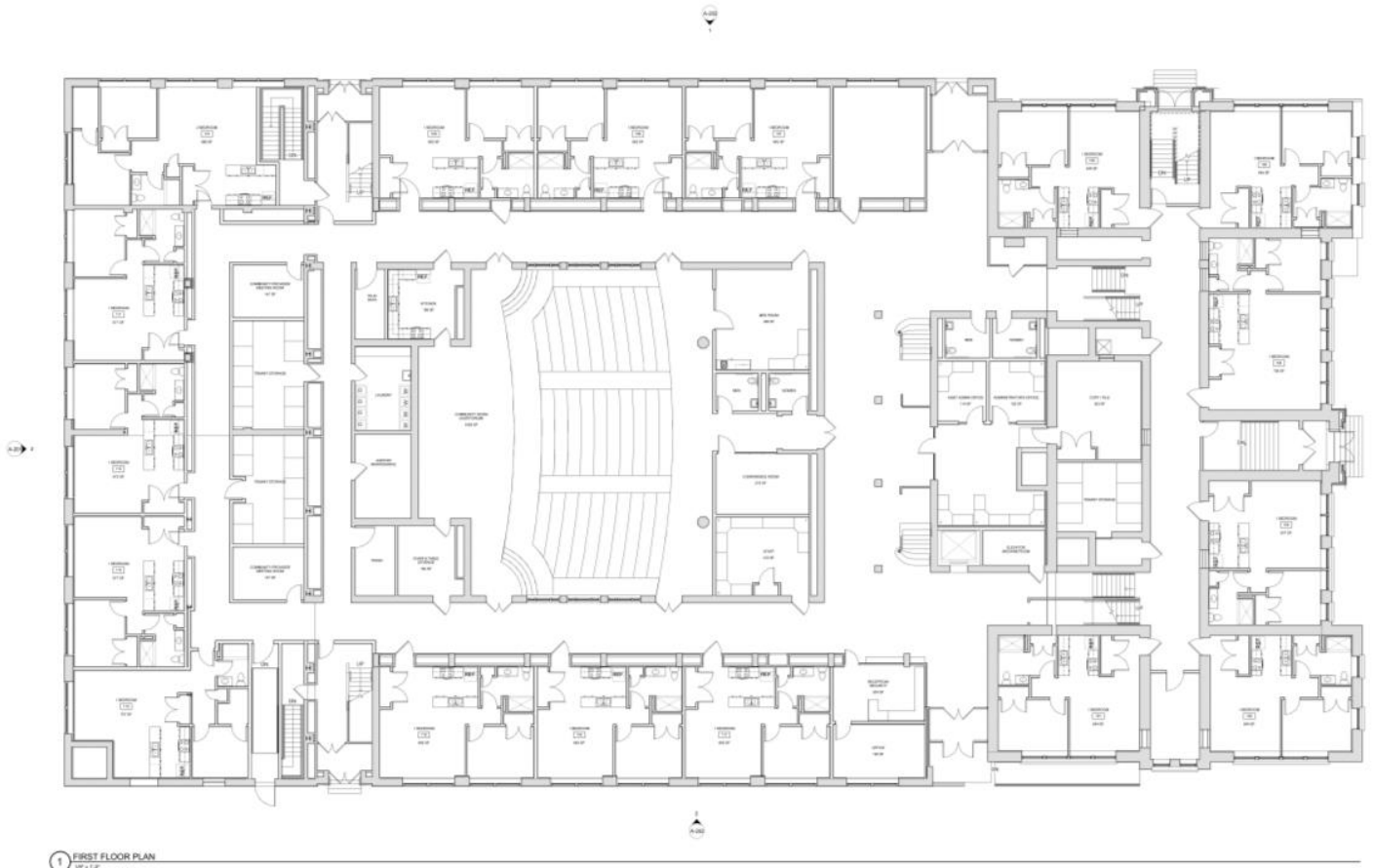
Current Basement Floor Plan
Not to scale

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 4

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



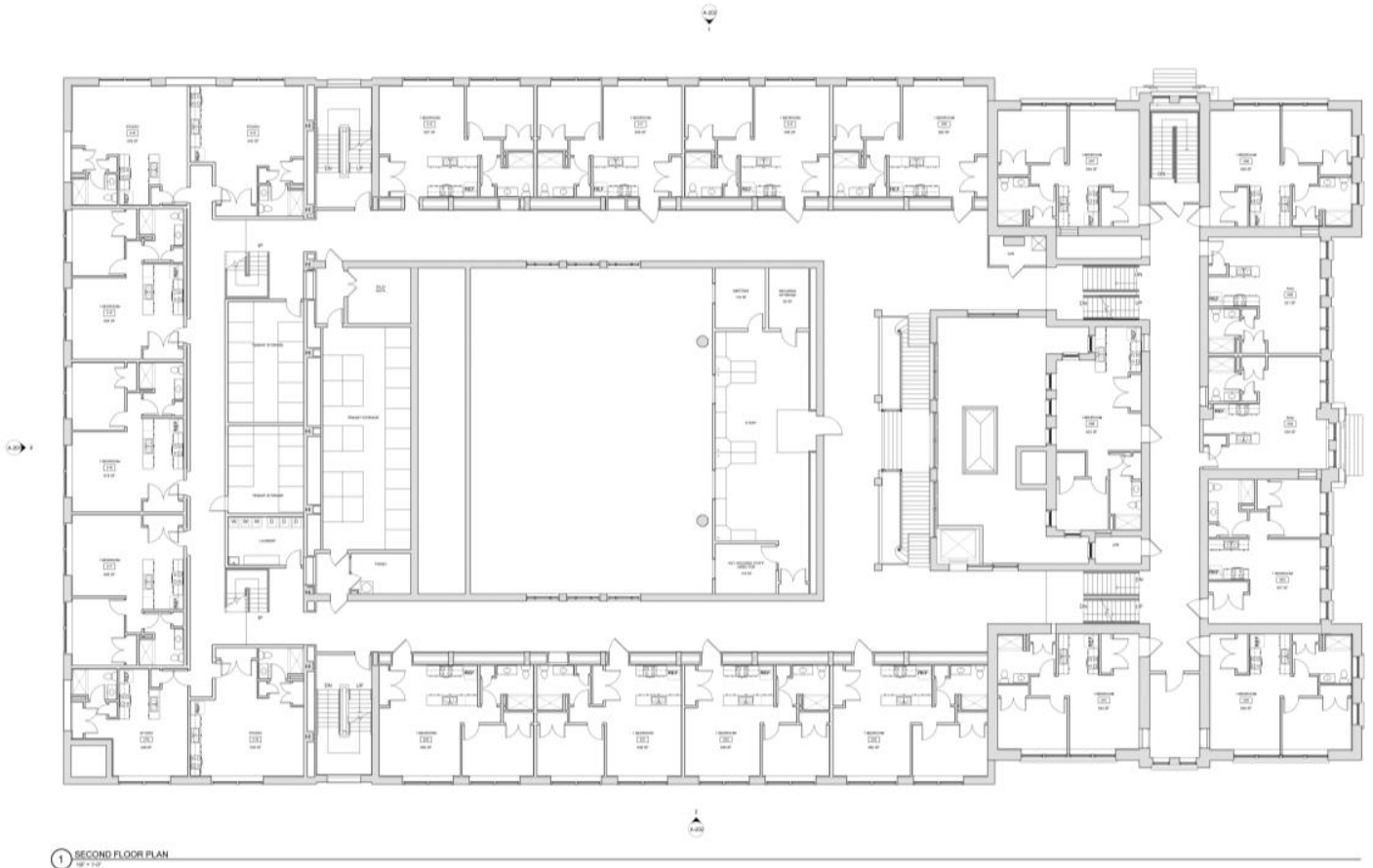
Current First Floor Plan
Not to scale

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 5

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



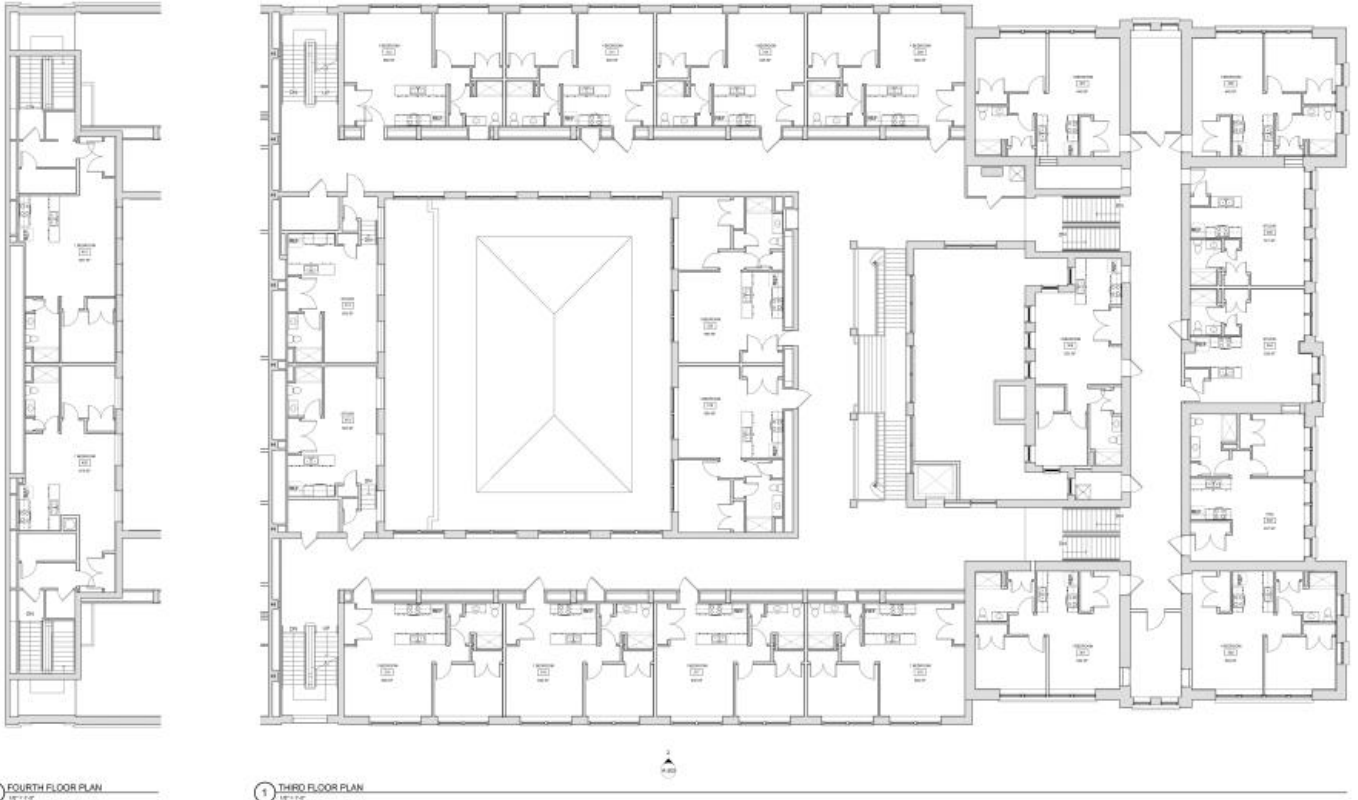
Current Second Floor Plan
Not to scale

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 6

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



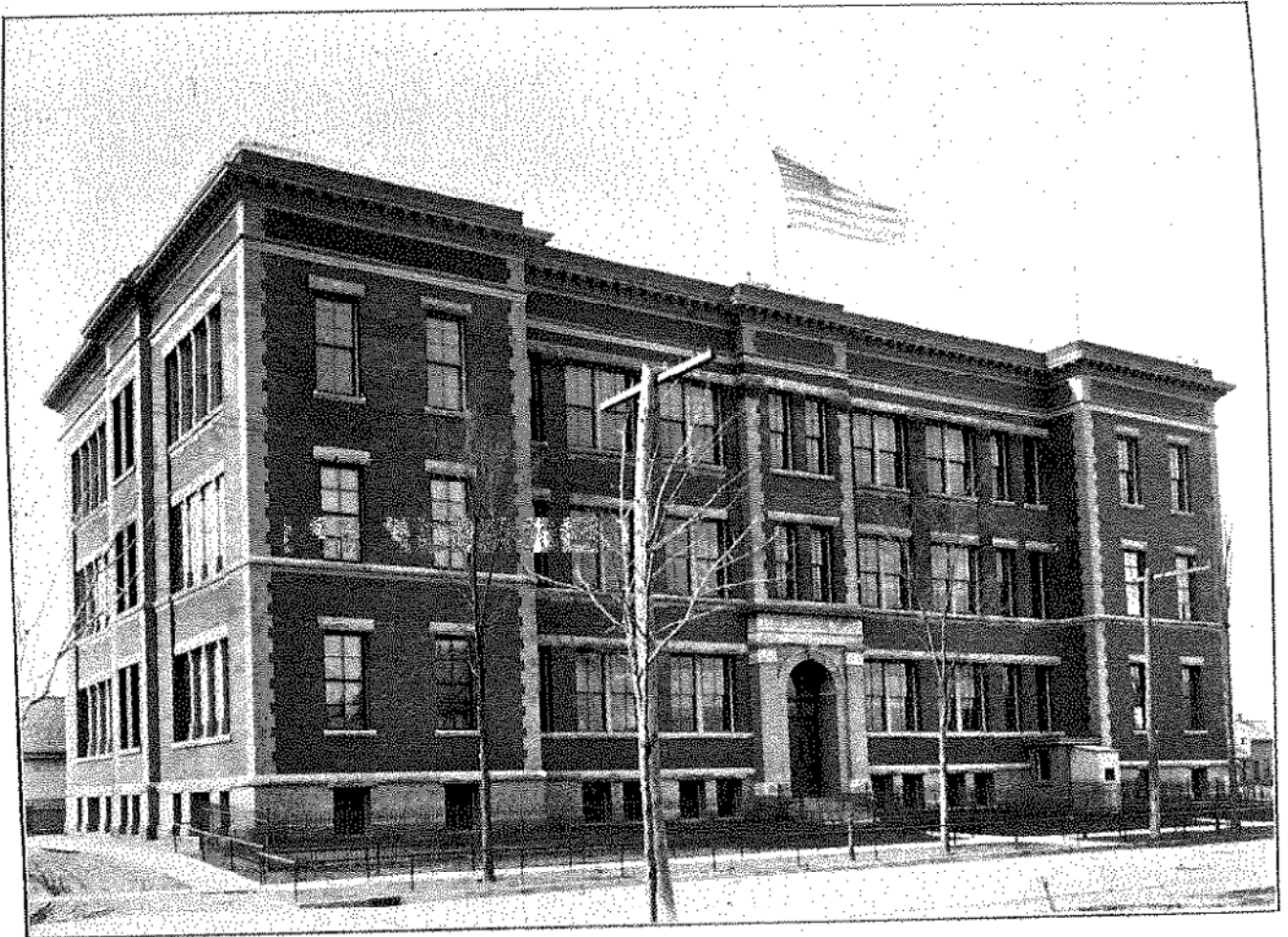
Current Third & Fourth Floor Plans
Not to scale

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 7

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



PUBLIC SCHOOL No. 60—Ontario, near Saratoga Street.

Public School No. 60 (pre-1920s)

This undated image shows the school as it originally appeared before the addition.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 8

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



Construction of the addition to PS 60 (Sept. 28, 1921)

This view shows excavation and construction of the basement of the addition, looking towards the rear elevation of the original school.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 9

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



Site photo during construction of the addition to PS 60 (Nov. 29, 1921)

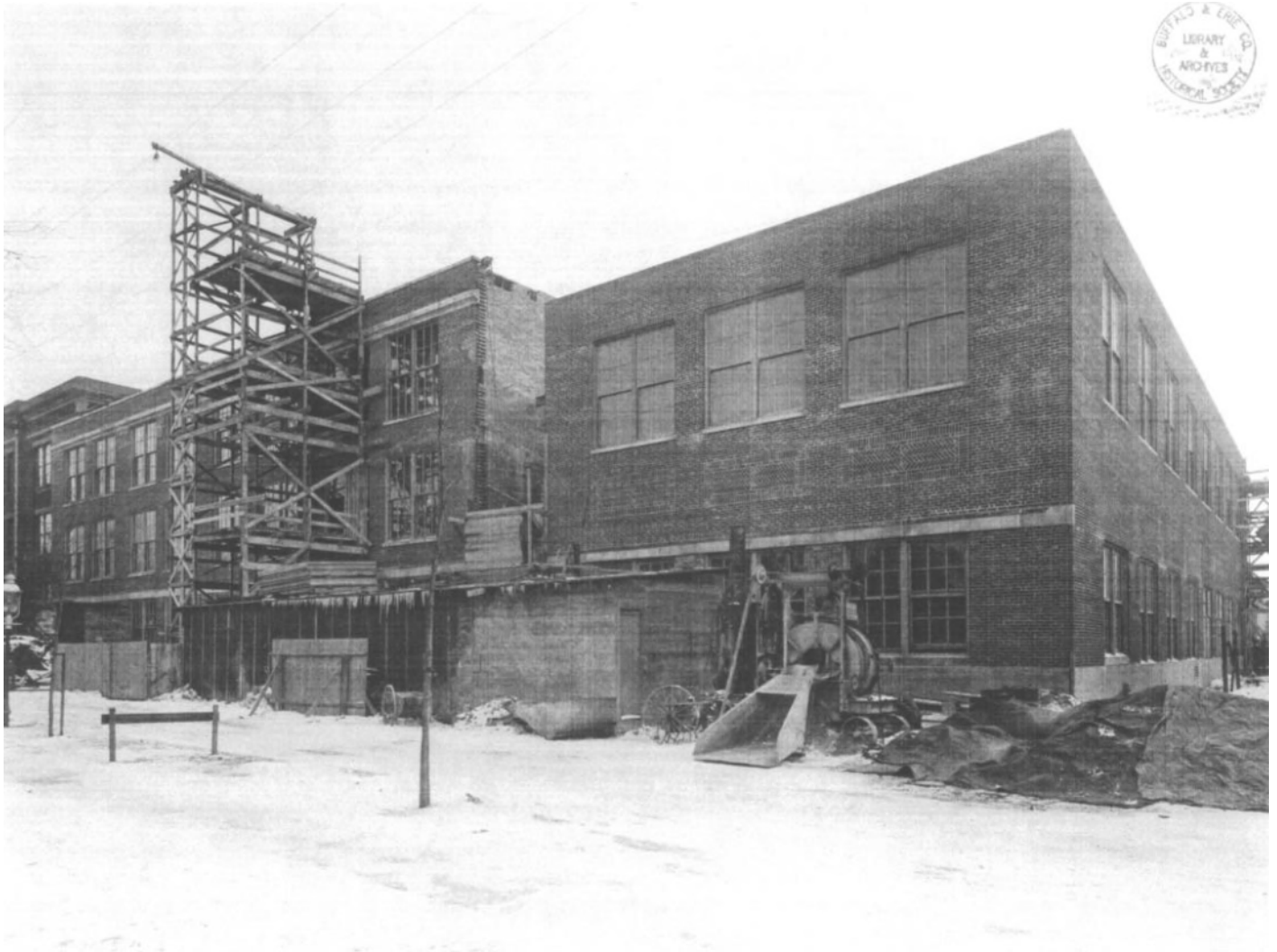
The first level of the addition is just visible behind this temporary construction shed erected by the prominent contracting firm of John W. Cowper Co.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 10

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



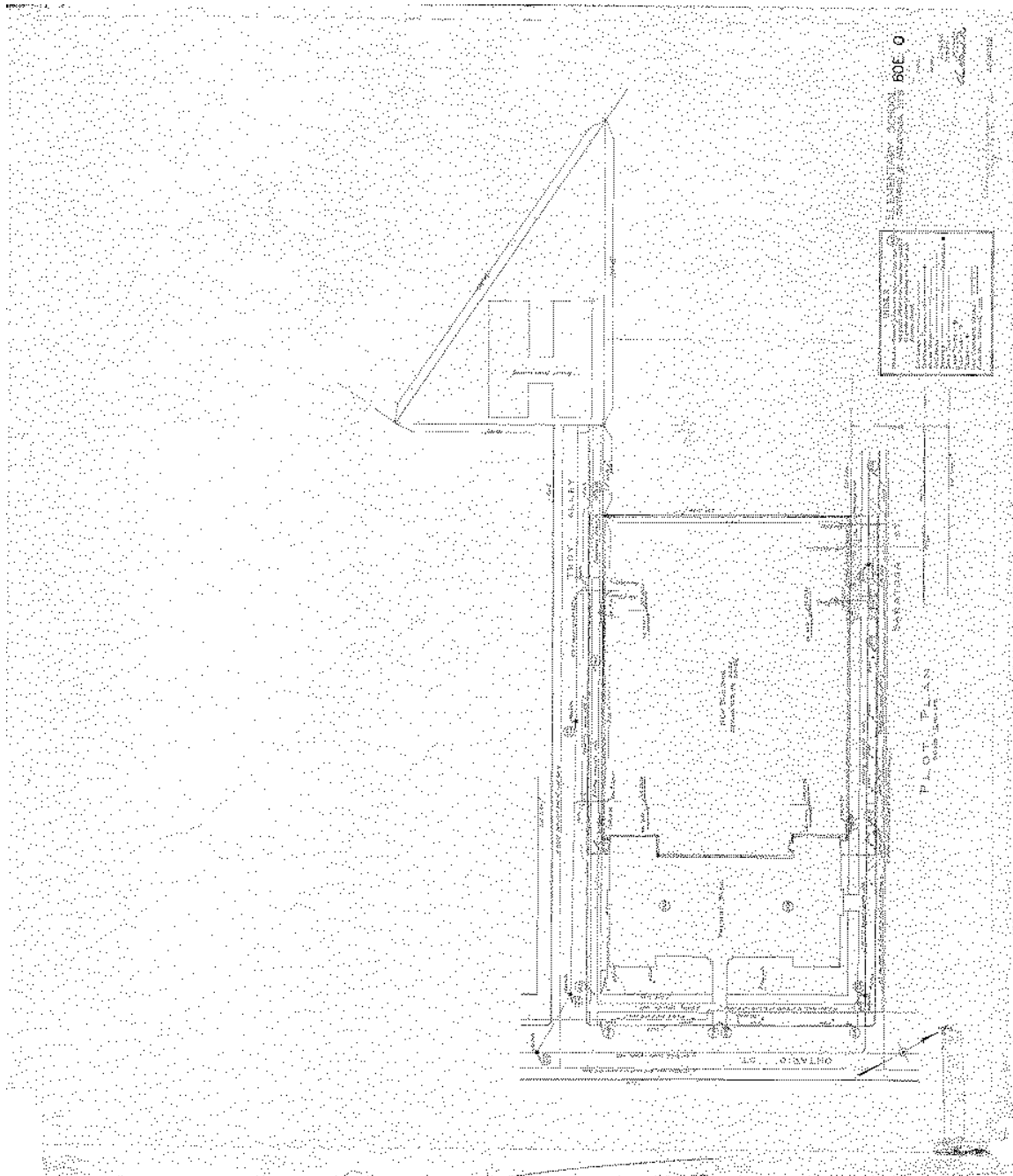
Construction of the addition to PS 60 (ca. winter 1921/spring 1922)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 11

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



Historic Site Plan (1921)

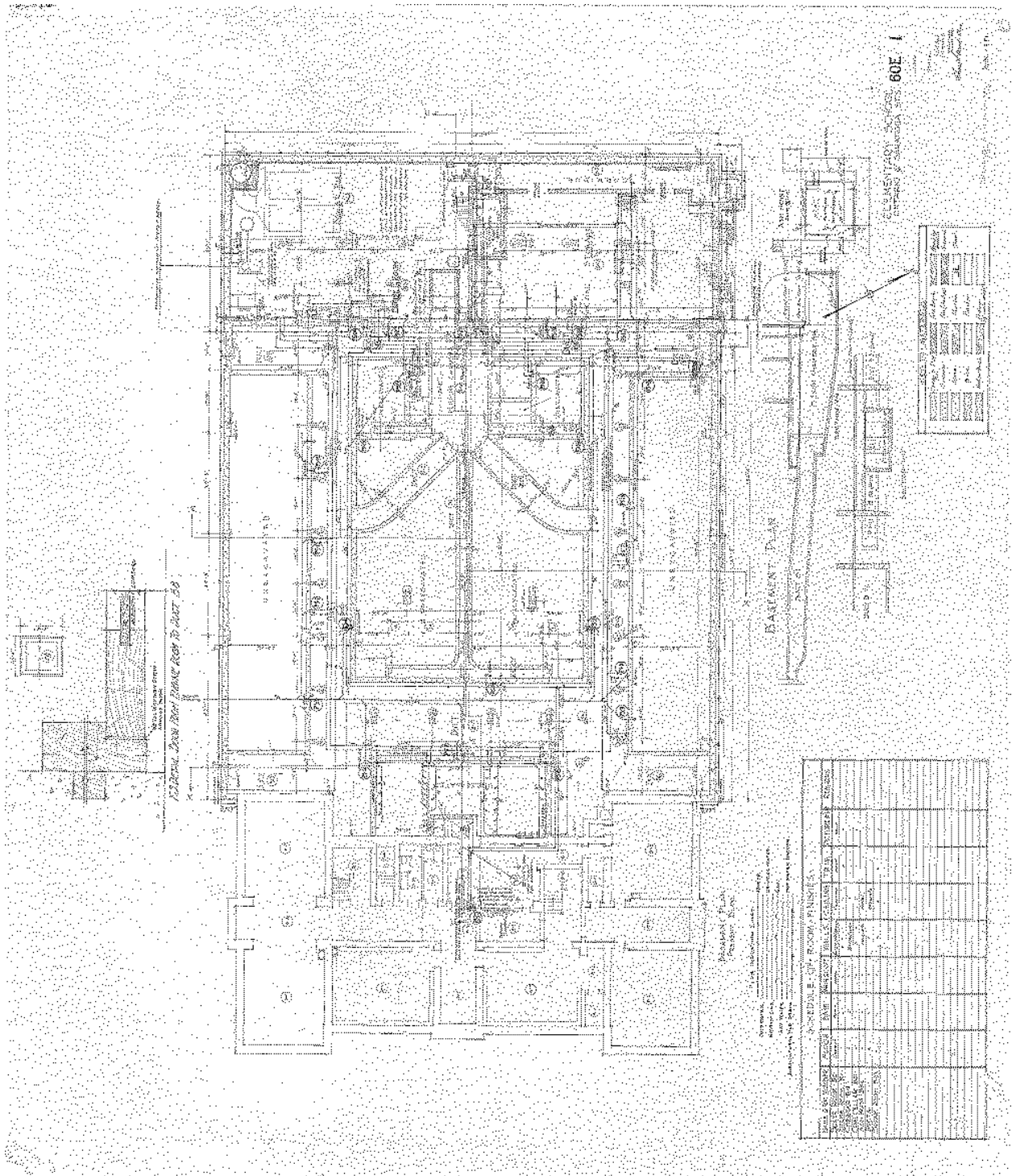
The H-shaped structure in the center of this image was a temporary wood frame annex that housed school activities prior to construction of the addition. It was later torn down.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 12

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



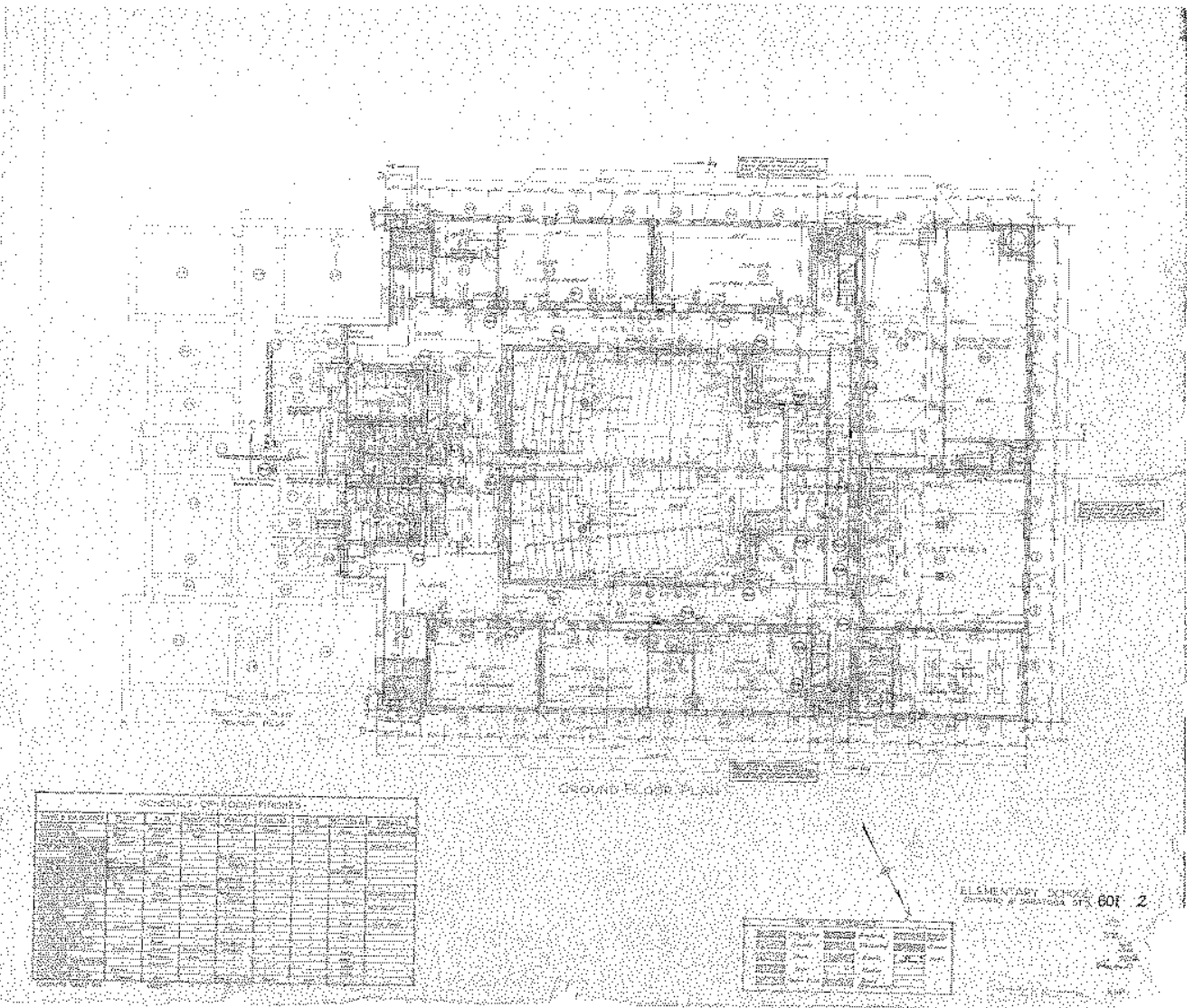
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 13

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

Historic Basement Plan (1921)



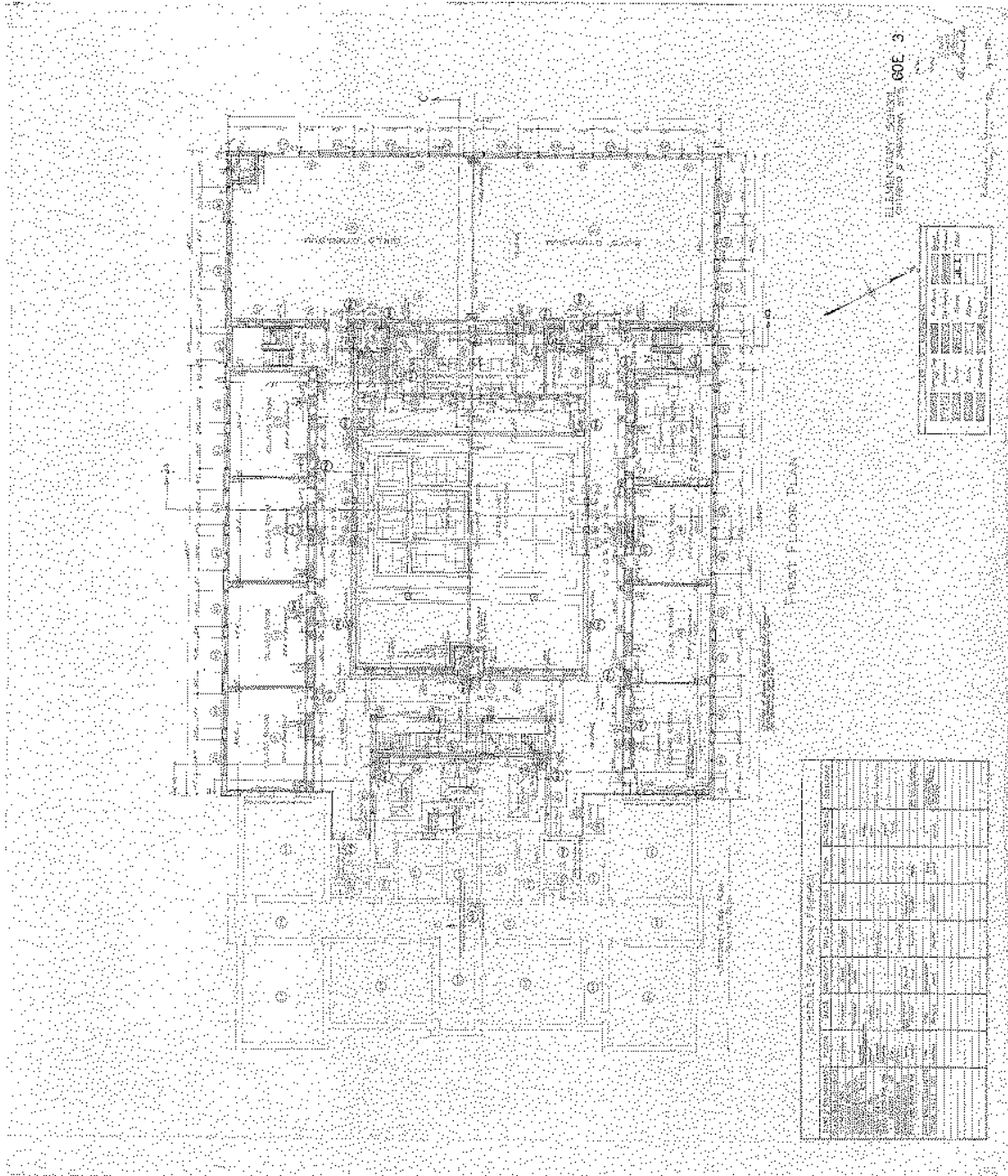
Historic Ground Floor Plan (1921)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 14

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



Historic First Floor Plan (1921)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

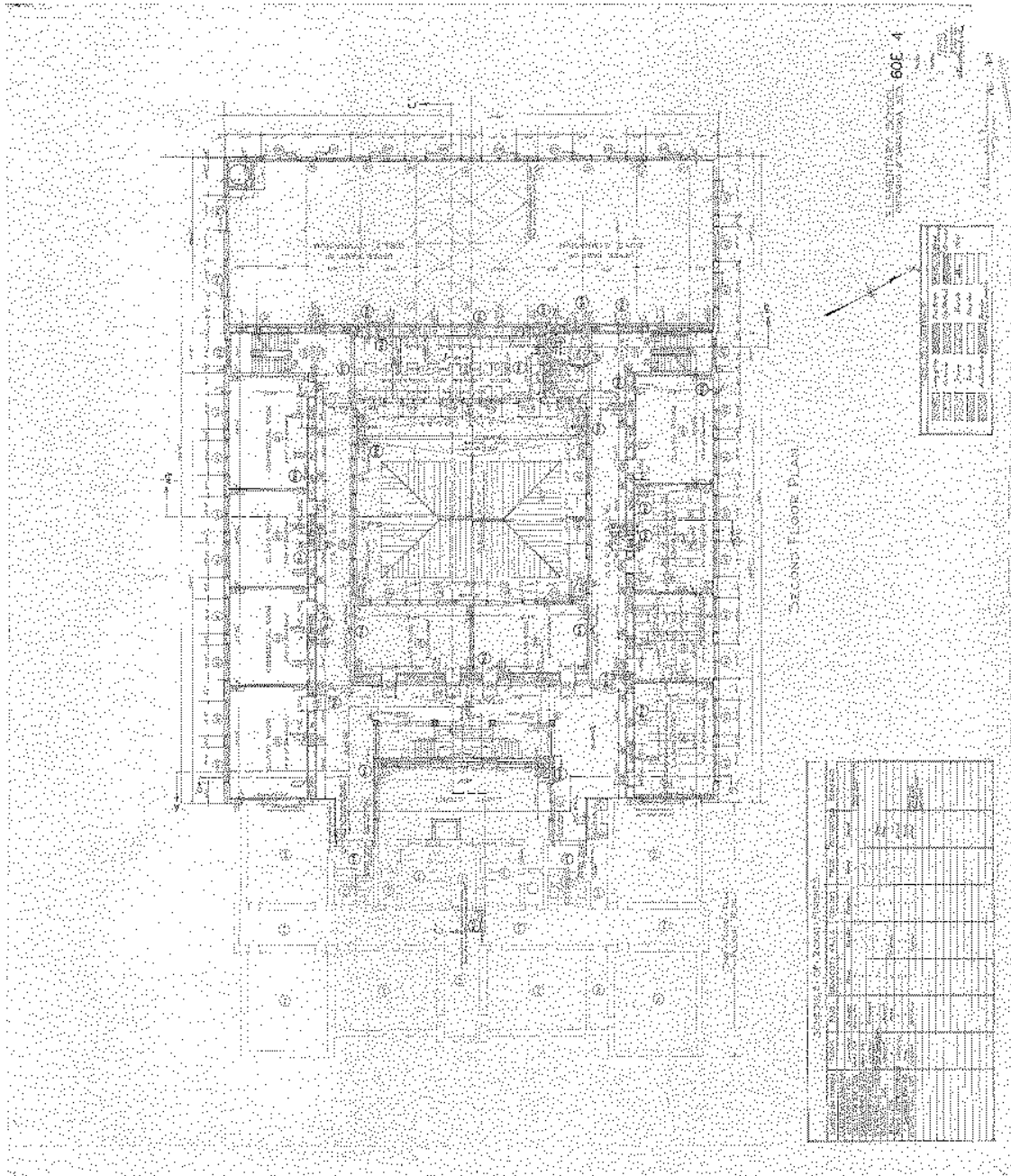
Section 11 Page 15

PUBLIC SCHOOL #60 (PS 60)

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State



Historic Second Floor Plan (1921)



PUBLIC SCHOOL #100

Alverno 31
Academics

Alverno College

Alverno College

Public School #100



GIRLS

White
Army

2





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15800











TOWARD NONE AND CHARITY FOR ALL

Person standing near scaffolding on the left side of the image.

Person standing near a doorway in the center of the image.





S &
DEVEL
FIELD

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Public School No. 60
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Erie

DATE RECEIVED: 6/30/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/04/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/19/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/16/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000489

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 8.18.14 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.



Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643

20 June 2014

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to enclose the following four National Register nominations, all on discs, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Public School 60, Erie County
William Landsberg House, Nassau County
Violet Avenue School, Dutchess County
Philip Livingston Junior High School, Albany County

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

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office



Joeckel, Jeffery <jeff_joeckel@nps.gov>

Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: Old nomination with photo issue

1 message

Abernathy, Alexis <alexis_abernathy@nps.gov>
To: "LaFrank, Kathleen (PARKS)" <Kathleen.LaFrank@parks.ny.gov>
Cc: "Joeckel, Jeffery" <jeff_joeckel@nps.gov>

Tue, Jun 12, 2018 at 2:33 PM

OK, Jeff,

We will document it as a bad image.

Thank you Kath for checking.

Alexis

Alexis Abernathy
alexis_abernathy@nps.gov
202-354-2236

On Tue, Jun 12, 2018 at 2:31 PM, LaFrank, Kathleen (PARKS) <Kathleen.LaFrank@parks.ny.gov> wrote:

Something is wrong – the photo appear to be there and is labeled, but it says it's empty and has 0 bytes - so I would just say it's bad – It appears to be well documented

Kathleen LaFrank

National Register Coordinator

New York State Historic Preservation Office

New York State Parks, Recreation and

Historic Preservation

Peebles Island State Park, Box 189, Waterford, NY 12188

518.268.2165

Are you registered to vote? [Register to vote online today](#). Moved recently? Update your information with the NYS Board of Elections. Not sure if you're registered to vote? [Search your voter registration status](#)

From: Abernathy, Alexis [mailto:alexis_abernathy@nps.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, June 12, 2018 2:24 PM
To: LaFrank, Kathleen (PARKS) <Kathleen.LaFrank@parks.ny.gov>
Cc: Joeckel, Jeffery <jeff_joeckel@nps.gov>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: Old nominaon with phot o issue

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Thank you

Alexis

Alexis Abernathy

alexis_abernathy@nps.gov

202-354-2236

On Tue, Jun 12, 2018 at 2:20 PM, LaFrank, Kathleen (PARKS) <Kathleen.LaFrank@parks.ny.gov> wrote:

I will check – the person who used to put them on the website wasn't scanning them all for some reason; but, we should have a second copy of the disc

Kathleen LaFrank

National Register Coordinator

New York State Historic Preservation Office

New York State Parks, Recreation and

Historic Preservation

Peebles Island State Park, Box 189, Waterford, NY 12188

518.268.2165

Are you registered to vote? [Register to vote online today](#). Moved recently? Update your information with the NYS Board of Elections. Not sure if you're registered to vote? [Search your voter registration status](#)

From: Abernathy, Alexis [mailto:alexis_abernathy@nps.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, June 12, 2018 2:03 PM

To: LaFrank, Kathleen (PARKS) <Kathleen.LaFrank@parks.ny.gov>; Joeckel, Jeffery <jeff_joeckel@nps.gov>

Subject: Old nomination with photo issue

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Hello Kath,

6/12/2018

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Mail - Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: Old nomination with photo issue

Our Archivist, aka the troublemaker, is going through some older files and found that image number 10 of the Public School No. 60, Erie County, is bad.

Jeff went to your website and found there was no photo 10 there.

2 options: 1) if you have a good copy please send it along or 2) we will make a note in the file that photo 10 is bad.

Let me know how you want us to proceed.

Thank you

Alexis

Alexis Abernathy

alexis_abernathy@nps.gov

202-354-2236