

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Franklin Carpet Mill

Other names/site number: Robert Carson & Sons Mill

Name of related multiple property listing: Industrial and Commercial Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia

2. Location

Street & number: 2141-2145 East Huntingdon Street

City or town: Philadelphia State: PA County: Philadelphia

Not For Publication: NA Vicinity: NA

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

___ national ___ statewide local Applicable National Register Criteria: A ___ B ___ C ___ D

<p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">Andrew J. McDonald</p>	<p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">3/7/2018</p>
<p>Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date</p>	
<p><u>Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission</u></p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	
<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>Signature of commenting official/Title: _____ Date</p>	
<p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Patrick Anderson

Signature of the Keeper

4/17/2018

Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION – Manufacturing Facility

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION - Warehouse

Current Functions

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification: None (Industrial Vernacular)

Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Concrete

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Franklin Carpet Mill is located at the northwest corner of East Huntingdon Street and Trenton Avenue in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia. The mill complex, which stands on a site measuring approximately 100' by 196', consists of two resources: Building 1, a three-story, heavy timber framed brick carpet mill built on the eastern portion of the site in 1879 (as explained below, the building was enlarged in the 1880s and 1890s); and Building 2, a five-story reinforced concrete mill building built on the western portion of the site in 1909 (designed by William Steele & Sons). A one-story c.1960 addition to Building 1 appears to connect the two buildings at the north side of the site, but there are no internal openings between the one-story addition and Building 2. A metal truss bridge structure connects Buildings 1 and 2 at the third floor level, across the courtyard and one-story addition below. At the center of the site, there is an open "courtyard" area, which is mostly paved in concrete but contains a small grassy area at the northeast corner (along the west elevation of Building 1) and a depressed concrete ramp leading down to a first floor opening on the east elevation of Building 2. There are also elevated concrete loading docks on the east side of the courtyard (within the recessed portion of Building 1) and along the south elevation of the 1960 addition. On the south side of the courtyard, along Huntingdon Street, there is a corrugated metal and chain-link fence with a gate, which is the only point of access to the courtyard from the exterior of the site. The area surrounding the site is urban in character, containing blocks of two- and three-story brick rowhouses as well as other industrial buildings and vacant lots. East Harold Street forms the northern boundary of the property. The site is bordered by concrete sidewalks on the north, east and south. Along the west side of the site there is a vacant lot, 2139 E. Huntingdon Street, which formerly contained a rowhouse.

Narrative Description

Building 1 is three-stories tall, constructed of heavy timber framing and is faced in red brick, portions of which are painted on the first floor on all sides. (Photo 1) There is a shallow gabled roof, expressed on the north and west elevations by gabled end walls. The first section of Building 1, comprising the first six bays west of Trenton Avenue and the first nine bays north of East Huntingdon Street, was built at the southeast corner of the site in 1879. (Photo 2) In 1883, an additional three bays were added to the north elevation of the 1879 building, which extended the building fully to East Harold Street. (Photo 3) In 1890, a small one-story addition fronting on Huntingdon Street was built from the west elevation of the original 1879 building. (Photo 1) Next, in 1892, a three-story, four-bay wide addition was built from the west elevation of the 1883 addition along East Harold Street. (Photo 4) Finally, around 1960, a one-story

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concrete block addition of undetermined function was built to fill in the gap between Buildings 1 and 2 along E. Harold Street. (Photos 5 and 8) Because there are no interior openings between this addition and Building 2, only between it and Building 1, it is considered an addition to Building 1, and Buildings 1 and 2 are counted independently as separate resources. The c.1960 addition was constructed beyond the period of significance (1879-1932), and therefore is not considered to be character defining.

On the south elevation there are several short window openings with segmental arched heads at the basement level, but they are currently infilled with concrete block. On the first floor, the three westernmost bays, which comprise the south elevation of the one-story 1890 addition, contain three tall window openings with 1/1 vinyl replacement windows. The center window appears to fill the entire opening while the two flanking openings are largely infilled with concrete block below the existing windows. In the next bay to the east, which is part of the original 1879 building, there is an elevated entrance with a modern, single-leaf metal door and single-light transom. This door appears to have been installed within the past 30 to 40 years. The entrance is reached by concrete steps with a simple metal railing that runs parallel to the building. All other bays on the first floor except the second bay west of Trenton Avenue, which contains a loft door opening with a segmental arched head (this opening is currently infilled with concrete block), contain 12/12 double-hung wood windows with segmental arched heads and stone sills. The windows are covered by metal mesh screens. The fenestration pattern, including the loft door openings, is repeated on the second and third floors, but all of the openings have been covered by corrugated fiberglass panels. Each loft door is lower and wider than the window openings. Unlike the first floor, the upper loft doors remain in place behind the corrugated panels on the second and third floors (see photo #23). Despite being covered by the panels, the vast majority of the original windows here and throughout Building 1, which are 12/12 double-hung units matching the uncovered windows on the first floor of the east elevation (see photos #2 and 3), remain and are visible from the interior (see photos #17, 18 and 22-27). Above the third floor windows, there is a corbelled brick cornice that extends the length of the east elevation.

The east elevation is treated in much the same way as the south, with infilled basement-level windows, 12/12 wood windows with metal screens on the first floor, corrugated fiberglass panels covered windows on the second and third floors, and a corbelled brick cornice above the third floor. All window openings have stone sills and segmental arched heads. The only exception is in the fifth bay north of Huntingdon Street on the first floor, where there is a modern overhead metal door (see photo #2), which covers the original paneled wood loft doors that remain in place and are visible on the interior (see photo #16, far right). Additionally, there are ten evenly-spaced iron star bolts attached to the façade between the first and second, repeated between the second and third floor levels.

The north elevation also contains infilled basement-level windows, as in the south and east elevations. All of the windows above, including those on the first floor, are covered by corrugated fiberglass panels. There are minor distinctions between the 1883 and 1892 building campaigns reflected in the north elevation. The first four bays west of Trenton Avenue, which form the north elevation of the 1883 addition, consist of a gabled end with no cornice. The next four bays, which form the north elevation of the 1892 addition, do contain a corbelled brick cornice. The height of the windows on the first floor varies between the 1883 and 1892 sections.

On the west elevation, the one-story 1890 addition contains infilled window openings with segmental arched heads at the basement level and modern two-light aluminum windows on the first floor (see photo #7). Since the one-story addition blocks the first floor of the original 1879 building, only the second and

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third floors of that section are visible. Both floors have three corrugated fiberglass panels covering window openings with segmental arched heads. Moving north, the next four bays, which are recessed by one bay, are partially blocked by the one-story former engine room, which dates to the original 1879 building. Only the two southernmost bays in this recessed area are therefore visible on the first floor, containing one corrugated fiberglass panels covered window and one roll-down paneled wood garage door (see photo #6). The second and third floors in this recessed area each contain four covered window openings similar to those in the first three bays and elsewhere in the building (the north side of the recessed area, which is technically the south elevation of the 1885 addition, is also blocked by the engine room on the first floor and contains four covered window openings on the second and third floors). There also is an iron fire escape leading from the third floor down to the first floor in this recessed part of the west elevation. Finally, an exposed iron truss bridge, which was built in 1909 along with Building 2, once served as covered walkway between the west elevation of Building 1 (1892 section) and east elevation of Building 2 on the third floor (see photos #5, 7 and 8). As illustrated in a 1910 fire insurance survey (Figure 16) the bridge once contained an exterior cladding material, windows (four square framed openings still exist on each side of the bridge) and a roof. The bridge is separately counted as a structure.

All sections of Building 1 have a shallow gabled roof with modern asphalt roll sheathing except the one-story 1890 section, which has a pitched roof with the same sheathing material. There are several major rooftop features. First, there is an L-shaped, wood framed rooftop monitor with rows of 6/6 double-hung wood windows on all sides above the original 1879 section (the monitor is not visible from the ground, but can be seen on the third floor as in photo #26, in the 1910 fire insurance survey as illustrated in Figure 16, and in the recent aerial views as shown in Figures 20 and 21). There is also a stucco-coated square brick chimney that rises from the party wall between the 1883 and 1892 sections (the chimney is visible in photo #7). Finally, there is an L-shaped brick wall that rises from the southwest corner of the 1892 section (also visible in photo #7 and in photos #8 and 10). According to the 1910 fire insurance survey the brick wall once supported a cylindrical water tank that has since been removed (see Figure 16). Minor rooftop features include metal exhaust vents in several locations on the roof.

Facing the open courtyard in the center of the site, the south elevation of the one story c.1960 addition, which is constructed of painted concrete block, is five bays wide. The first, third and fifth bays contain roll-down wood garage doors while the other two bays contain eight-light steel windows with operable hopper sash. A concrete loading dock extends out from the south elevation. The north elevation (facing Harold Street) contains three openings covered with corrugated fiberglass panels, although the multi-light steel windows remain and are visible from the interior. The building has a flat roof with asphalt roll sheathing.

Interior

On the interior, the building is largely open plan with a row of heavy timber columns running down the center of the 1879 and 1883 sections, parallel to Trenton Avenue. There are bolster blocks between the tops of the columns and the heavy timber joists that they support. There is also a row of three cast iron columns running down the center of the 1892 section on the first floor, parallel to Harold Street (see photo #18). The floors are wood throughout the 1879, 1883, and 1892 sections, however due to deterioration, some areas on the first floor have been covered by large metal plates for safety reasons (see photo #16). These three sections also contain painted brick perimeter walls and exposed heavy timber joists with wood decking in between on the first and second floors (see photos #16-18 and 22-27) and an open gabled roof structure with visible trusses and rooftop monitor (with 6/6 double-hung wood windows

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on all sides) on the third floor (see photo #26). The one-story 1890 section contains modern finishes such as vinyl tile floors, drywall perimeter walls, and dropped acoustical tile ceilings, all of which suggest a more recent use as an office (see photo #15).

There are two utilitarian, straight-run wood stairs in the building: one at the southwest corner of the 1879 section that provides access from the basement to the third floor and one along the north side of the 1892 section, which provides access only between the second and third floors. The stairs are enclosed by painted brick walls on the exterior side and painted wood slat partitions facing the interior of the building. North of the stair in the 1879 section, there is a small freight elevator that may date to the original period of construction (as seen in Figure 11, an 1885 Hexamer fire insurance survey shows a freight elevator existing in the same location that year). Vertical movement of raw materials and finished product was also made possible through an exterior hoist system at the south elevation of the original 1879 section (goods were moved in and out through the loft doors described above).

The transitions between the various sections of Building 1 are more or less distinct. Between the 1879 and 1890 sections and between the 1883 and 1892 sections, there are brick party walls. On the first floor, there are two single-leaf metal doors (one is glazed) between the 1879 and 1890 sections that appear to have been installed within the past 30 to 40 years (see photo #15). There are no openings between the 1883 and 1892 sections on the first floor. On the second and third floors, there are simple punched openings without doors between the 1883 and 1892 sections. The only discernible transition between the 1879 and 1883 sections is that the center line of the heavy timber columns in the 1883 section shifts slightly to the west of that within the 1879 section (see photo #17 and the first and second floor plans in Figures 5 and 6).

Although the 1885 Hexamer survey describes how the various spaces in Building 1 functioned (see Figure 11), these uses are not immediately apparent inside. However, due to the space requirements of carpet weaving machinery during this period, most of the mill would have had exactly the type of open floor plans and exposed heavy timber structure and exposed brick finishes that remain intact throughout the building and that are so characteristic of industrial architecture of this period.¹

Finishes within the one-story, c.1960 addition include concrete floors, and painted concrete block perimeter walls except on the east side where the original west elevation of the 1892 section (with square opening in the center flanked by 12/12 double-hung wood windows) is visible (see photo #20). There are four slender steel columns within the space that support the exposed wood roof structure above.

Building 2 is a five-story, reinforced concrete building built in 1909.² The concrete structure is expressed on all four elevations. Above the fifth floor, there is a simple brick parapet with terra cotta coping on all sides. On the south elevation (facing Huntingdon Street), which is five bays wide, the easternmost bay on the first floor contains a door opening covered by corrugated fiberglass panels. The other four openings, which are larger, are infilled with painted concrete block. On the second through fifth floors, the easternmost bays contain fire balconies with simple metal railings while the other four bays contain large window openings covered with corrugated fiberglass panels. As in all remaining openings that are

¹ It is unclear, for example, what purpose the wood slat partitions on the third floor of the 1892 section served (see photo #24) since this section of the building postdated the detailed information provided in the 1885 survey.

² In a 1910 fire insurance survey (see Figure 15), Building 2 is referred to as Building 5. This early survey counted each section of Building 1 (#1-4) as a separate "building".

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currently covered by corrugated fiberglass panels, the vast majority of the original windows remain behind the panels on all four elevations and are visible from the interior (see photos #27, 28 and 30-34). All openings on the second, third and fourth floors on all four elevations contain pairs or tripartite groups of 9/9 double-hung wood windows with six-light wood transoms separated by wide wood mullions. The fifth floor window openings on all elevations contain similar 9/9 windows, but without transoms. There are brick spandrels below the windows, which are painted on the second floor and covered by stucco on the third through fifth floors.

On the east elevation (facing into the courtyard), which is ten bays wide, the first two bays north of Huntingdon Street contain red brick within the concrete frame (these bays correspond to an interior fire stair and therefore were intentionally left blind without windows). The next two bays to the north, which are recessed from the stair tower by one bay, contain a below grade door opening (accessed by the depressed concrete ramp described above) and a pair of heavily damaged 9/9 double-hung wood windows on the first floor, and corrugated fiberglass-covered windows on the second through fifth floors. On the north and south sides of this “notched” area, there are smaller window openings with segmental arched brick heads surrounded by brick infill on each floor. The next two bays, like the first two, contain only brick infill on each floor (like the first two bays, these bays were intentionally left blind, but in this case because they correspond to the bathrooms on the interior). This bathroom “tower” rises an additional story above the roof, where it contains a small mechanical space that once supported a water tank (see Figure 16). The next three bays, which are recessed like the third and fourth bays, contain additional window openings covered by corrugated fiberglass panels. An iron truss bridge, which is described in the description for Building 1, extends out from the second bay south of Harold Street on the third floor (see photos #5, 7 and 8). The northernmost bay consists of a brick elevator shaft, which protrudes from the façade like the stair tower and bathroom “tower” and never had windows.

On the west elevation, which is ten bays wide, all ten window openings on the first floor are infilled with concrete block, as are the five southernmost openings on the second floor. Despite the proximity of the former rowhouse at 2139 E. Huntingdon to Building 2 – as illustrated in the 1929 Sanborn map (Figure 18), there was a gap of only a few feet between the two buildings – the first and second floors of Building 2 most likely contained windows as elsewhere on the building and not blind openings.³ Had these openings been intentionally left blind, they would likely contain brick and not concrete block infill based on the fact that other intentionally blind openings around the building contain brick (as described above on the east elevation and as seen in photo #9). It is unknown when the windows were removed and replaced by concrete block, but this likely occurred within the past 40 to 50 years. The other five window openings on the second floor and all ten on the third, fourth and fifth floors are covered by corrugated fiberglass panels. There are brick spandrels beneath the windows in all bays.

On the north elevation (facing Harold Street), which is four bays wide, all four window openings on the first floor are infilled with concrete block. On the second through fifth floors, all of the window openings are covered by corrugated fiberglass panels and have brick spandrels as on the other elevations. In the second bay from the east, it appears that there were originally loft doors on each floor since the center part of the opening continues down through the brick spandrel.

³ Refer to the Boundary Justification on Page 20 for more information regarding the rowhouse at 2139 E. Huntingdon Street.

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The roof of Building 2 is flat and contains a modern rolled asphalt sheathing material. There are no major rooftop features.

Interior

On the interior, Building 2 is entirely open in plan with regularly spaced square concrete columns on all floors. Moving up from the first to the fifth floors, the columns, which tie into the substantial concrete beams above, become progressively more slender on each floor. There are also concrete slab floors throughout Building 2, and the perimeter walls are exposed brick below the windows. At the center of the east wall on each floor, there are two paneled metal doors that open into two small bathrooms, one for men and one for women (see photo #31). The doors appear to be original. On the exterior, the bathrooms form the bathroom “tower,” described in more detail above, at the center of the east elevation. There is one U-return concrete stair at the southeast corner that provides access from the basement to the roof and one freight elevator at the northeast corner that provides access from the basement to the fifth floor. There are no openings between Building 2 and the c.1960 addition to Building 1.

Integrity

The Franklin Carpet Mill complex retains integrity. Although the equipment, furnishings and people have long since departed, the aspect of feeling is retained in the intact finishes, voluminous spaces, and the periodic building campaigns. These features and characteristics effectively relay the sense of place and the notable industrial history of the once prominent manufacturer who occupied this building.

Additionally, the aspect of design is retained in the distinct industrial form of the building. Most notably, the complex presents an interesting case study in the evolution of industrial architecture over a more than thirty year period. The earliest section in Building 1 displays traditional load-bearing brick construction with arched window openings characteristic of the late nineteenth and very early twentieth centuries, while Building 2 demonstrates a growing reliance on reinforced concrete construction, which by its nature had an increasingly streamlined aesthetic, larger window openings, and more open floor plans. These innovations are consistent with the development of the reinforced concrete structure typical of many industrial buildings in the United States after c.1910. Although nearly all windows in both buildings have been covered by corrugated fiberglass panels on the exterior, the vast majority of the original double-hung wood windows remain and are fully visible on the interior.

Since the end of the period of significance, several relatively minor changes have occurred on the site. A one-story addition was built between Buildings 1 and 2 at the north end of the courtyard (along Harold Street) around 1960 and two small, one-story shed and roof structures (described below) were removed in 2016. Despite the loss of the one-story shed shown in the 1929 and 1951 Sanborn maps (Figures 18 and 19) on the south side of the courtyard (adjacent to the stair tower on the east elevation of Building 2), the complex remains virtually intact. Just north of the shed, the removal of another one-story structure, which was essentially just a roof over the concrete ramp that slopes down from the courtyard into Building 2 also has little impact on property. This second structure first appears in the 1951 Sanborn map (Figure 19), therefore it was likely built by the Printz Leather Company, a later occupant of the property. The demolition of these small structures, which occurred in 2016 due to safety concerns, only minimally affects the integrity of the property. Likewise, the construction of the c.1960 addition, which is a low, one-story building, is complementary in its materiality and industrial appearance and does not impact the property’s overall integrity. This addition did not replace any pre-1932 resources. In fact, according to the 1929 and 1951 Sanborn maps (Figures 18 and 19), there were no structures on this portion of the property

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for decades prior to the construction of the addition. In short, these relatively minor changes have not detracted from the complex's ability to convey its significance as the Franklin Carpet Mill.

Lastly, the aspect of setting is retained in the surrounding neighborhood's largely intact industrial and residential fabric. The Franklin Carpet Mill stands on its original site among a mixed industrial and residential area that has changed very little over the last century. Although a small number of industrial sites have been demolished, the complex remains surrounded by many of the same rowhouses that have stood since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Areas of Significance

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1879-1932

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

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Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

William Steele & Sons, Architects

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

The Franklin Carpet Mill was founded by Robert J. Carson in Philadelphia in 1872 and moved to its present location at 2141-2145 E. Huntingdon Street in the Kensington neighborhood in 1879. Expanding continuously over the next 30 years, this prominent manufacturer of ingrain and later Wilton carpets not only maintained a prominent position within Philadelphia's massive carpet industry during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, but was actively involved in weavers' strikes that led to their formal organization under the Knights of Labor in the mid-1880s. After 1900, the Franklin Carpet Mill successfully transitioned to Wilton carpets as ingrains began to lose favor, enabling the company to flourish longer than most carpet mills of similar size in Philadelphia. During the early twentieth century, carpets produced by the Franklin Carpet Mill were advertised by name by department stores around the United States, and often connoted quality and durability. For its leading position within Philadelphia's carpet industry and its successful shift in production after 1900, the Franklin Carpet Mill is significant under Criterion A, Industry. Although the mill also became involved in the tumultuous labor history of Philadelphia carpet mills, experiencing numerous strikes between 1879 and 1903, its role in the eventual unionization of carpet weavers was not a pivotal one and therefore the property's National Register significance is limited to industry. The period of significance of the Franklin Carpet Mill begins in 1879, when the first section of the mill was completed, and ends in 1932, when the business dissolved and the property was sold.

The significance of the Franklin Carpet Mill should be evaluated within the historical context established by the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF), *Industrial and Commercial Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia*. The building is located in the north-central portion of the boundary established in the MPDF, which includes the Franklin Carpet Mill as one of 38 identified factories, the MPDF's primary building type (the Franklin Carpet Mill is listed as resource #28 in the MPDF inventory). As defined by the MPDF, the factory is a manufacturing space associated with the textile industry. The Franklin Carpet Mill exemplifies the single-tenant subtype in which the factory was constructed by (or for) a manufacturer for its exclusive use, often in stages as the company grew. This is the most common factory subtype within the area covered by the MPDF.

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

Robert Carson and Philadelphia's Carpet Industry

Born in 1848 in Ballymena, Ireland, Robert J. Carson immigrated to the United States in the early 1860s, immediately enlisting in the Union Army and serving for the duration of the Civil War. At the end of the conflict, Carson entered the textile trade in Philadelphia. Although little is known of his activities or

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business pursuits during this period, like other Irish and English immigrants to Philadelphia, Carson likely had experience in carpet weaving. In 1872, he founded the Franklin Carpet Mill on Hope Street north of West Norris Street in the Kensington neighborhood, approximately two-thirds of a mile southwest of the nominated property. For much of its early history, Carson's mills specialized in ingrain carpets. Like many other Philadelphia textile firms, the Franklin Carpet Mill "sprang from a proprietary base," in the words of Philip Scranton, "when an entrepreneur commenced production on 'his own account' in rented premises, often with both used machinery and the aid of kinfolk."⁴

As early as the late-eighteenth century, Philadelphia had become a center of carpet manufacturing. Although the weaving of carpets had taken place in the Germantown area of Philadelphia as early as 1760, the first true carpet factory in the city (and the United States) was opened by William Peter Sprague on North 2nd Street in Kensington in 1791. "As if by clannish common consent," the *History of American Textiles* points out, nearly all subsequent carpet manufacturers also set up shop in the Kensington area, including Isaac McCauley, who opened a carpet mill near Sprague's in 1810. Ingrain carpets were the predominant weaving style in this early period, although McCauley is credited with weaving the first Brussels carpet, a type of looped pile weave, in the United States.⁵

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the number of Philadelphia carpet mills grew significantly even as the city faced increasing competition in Lowell, Massachusetts and several Connecticut towns and cities. But the arrival of the power loom in the late 1860s would soon secure Philadelphia's position as the largest carpet manufacturing center in the United States. Although many of city's "wily" New England competitors had already been using power loom technology developed by Erastus B. Bigelow in 1839, many of the larger Philadelphia mills voraciously began importing a new type of power loom from England beginning in 1868. Known as the Murkland Loom, invented by Englishman William Murkland, this new technology created a new boom in ingrain carpets. Unlike the power looms used at that time in New England, the "shading qualities of the Murkland loom were magical, and a fabric of great beauty and excellence was turned out without the aid of skilled labor."⁶

In its most common form during the nineteenth century, the ingrain carpet had a flat weave, was produced in wool, cotton, or a combination of the two, and was reversible – the ground color on the face of the carpet served as the figure color on the other side. This form of carpet generally consisted of two plies, sometimes three, and was called *ingrain* due to the fact that the various colors of yarn, which were dyed before weaving, were intermixed and interwoven. The ingrain weave produced a fairly durable floor covering, especially when produced with all wool yarn. During this period, ingrain carpets were one of the most popular forms of floor covering in the United States. Due to their low cost in comparison to plush, higher grade forms of pile carpet, such as Brussels, Wilton or Axminster, ingrains were affordable to a large share of the population.⁷

⁴ "Robert J. Carson Dies at Age of 94," Philadelphia Inquirer, January 10, 1943; Philip Scranton, "Build a Firm, Start Another: The Bromleys and Family Firm Entrepreneurship in the Philadelphia Region," in *Family Capitalism*, edited by Geoffrey Jones and Mary Rose (London: Frank Cass, 1993): 115.

⁵ *History of American Textiles* (American Wool and Cotton Reporter, 1922): 90. The history of the carpet industry in Kensington is further explained in pages 15-17 in the MPDF.

⁶ Philip S. Klein and Ari Hoogenboom, *A History of Pennsylvania* (Pennsylvania State University, 1980): 345; *Annual Report of the Secretary of Internal Affairs of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Part III: Industrial Statistics, Volume XVII, 1889* (Harrisburg, PA, 1890), 16D.

⁷ Arthur Harrison Cole, *The American Carpet Manufacture: A History and an Analysis* (Harvard University Press, 1941): 31.

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By 1879, Carson, like many of his competitors, had been prosperous enough to require an entire new mill, construction on which began in August of 1879 at the northwest corner of East Huntingdon Street and Trenton Avenue.⁸ The three-story, approximately 50' by 72' building was likely operational by October of that year, when Carson took delivery of ten new power looms. It is likely that Carson's former Hope Street mill had been operated predominantly on the hand loom, however the speed with which the Franklin Carpet Mill expanded suggests that Carson had purchased some power looms prior to the construction of the new mill in 1879. Carson's power looms were almost definitely Murkland looms since other types of power ingrain looms did not become available until 1886.⁹

The construction of Carson's new Franklin Carpet Mill in 1879 coincided with a tremendous expansion in Philadelphia's ingrain carpet industry. Reporting on the Kensington "loom boom" in October of that year, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* noted that "the carpet manufacturers now find themselves pushed to their utmost capacity, and are crowded with orders which they are trying to fill for the season's trade." The following year, a *Philadelphia Textile Record* report showed that Philadelphia had by 1880 definitively established its dominance in carpet manufacturing – of many types, not just ingrains – and was home to 216 of the 340 carpet mills located in the United States. Philadelphia's share of the market grew exponentially over the following years. In 1883, another publication, Lorin Blodget's *Census of Manufactures of Philadelphia*, reported a significantly larger total of 286 Philadelphia carpet manufacturers, the majority of which, over 170 in all, produced ingrains exclusively (others produced ingrains in addition to other carpet types). Blodget's Census listed manufacturers by ward, indicating that there were 182 ingrain carpet operations in the 18th, 19th, 25th and 31st wards, those that comprised the greater Kensington neighborhood, a figure that made that neighborhood home to very likely the largest concentration of carpet mills in the city, state and nation.¹⁰

In the decade after the first section of the Franklin Carpet Mill was constructed, Carson's business grew quickly. By 1882, he had 110 employees working on 67 looms, which were a combination of hand looms and power looms. Only four years later, in 1886, there are 125 employees operating 85 looms, 45 of which were power ingrain looms and the remainder of which were hand looms. Although not the largest ingrain mill in Philadelphia – Bromley Brothers had 70 looms and 170 employees, Ivins, Dietz & Magee had 155 looms and 202 employees, and the Albion Mill had 180 looms and 300 employees – the Franklin Carpet Mill still maintained a prominent position within this sector. In the approximately 182 carpet mills throughout greater Kensington during the early to mid-1880s, for example, the average number of looms was between 20 and 40, making the Franklin Carpet Mills among the leading ingrain firms in Philadelphia. Although little information is available in regard to the business side of Carson's mill during its first two decades, it is likely that he sold his carpets wholesale to large retailers. In Philadelphia, John Wanamaker opened a large carpet department in his Grand Depot at the corner of 13th and Market Streets in the early 1880s. It is possible that Franklin carpets were sold there.¹¹

⁸ "Permits for New Buildings," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 15, 1879.

⁹ "The Loom Boom," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 9, 1879.

¹⁰ *Stoddart's Encyclopædia Americana, Volume 1* (Philadelphia: J.M. Stoddart, 1883): 733; Lorin Blodget, *Census of Manufactures of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Dickson & Gilling, 1883): 159-163. The discrepancy in the number of carpet mills between the *Textile Record* report and Blodget's *Census* may be due to the fact that Blodget included many cottage industry carpet makers with as few as two employees, while *Textile Record* did not.

¹¹ Blodget, 160; "A Mass of Mills," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 18, 1886.

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As Carson's business grew during the 1880s and 1890s, so did his mill. In 1883, he built a three-story expansion on the north side of the original 1879 building, which extended the mill all the way to Wrekin Street (later renamed Harold Street). An 1885 survey by Ernest Hexamer (Figures 11 and 12) provides detailed information as to how the mill functioned: much of the first floor was devoted to the preparation of yarns, which would be brought up from storage in the basement, for the weaving process (the southernmost portion of the first floor also contained an office and wareroom), the second floor contained additional yarn winding space and also some power looms, and the third floor contained a combination of hand and power looms. A small, one-story engine room, which contained a 40 horsepower steam engine, extended from the west elevation to power the entire process (this space survives today). In 1890, the offices were expanded into a new one-story brick addition, which was added to the west elevation and fronted on Huntingdon Street. Finally, in 1892, another three-story brick addition built from the west elevation along Wrekin Street (now Harold Street), probably to house additional power looms. Unfortunately, there is no later Hexamer survey to indicate the floor-by-floor function of the 1892 addition.

In its phased construction over the course of more than a decade, the Franklin Carpet Mill is highly characteristic of textile mills throughout the Kensington area during the late nineteenth century. A number of similarly constructed mill complexes within the MPDF boundary have already been individually listed on the National Register, including the Quaker City Dye Works (NR 2012) at 100-118 W. Oxford Street, which is composed of numerous buildings constructed between 1873 and 1913, and the Albion Carpet Mill (NR 2016) at 1821-1845 E. Hagert Street, which underwent at least three stages of construction and expansion during the 1880s. Like the Franklin Carpet Mill, Albion was home to a prominent ingrain carpet manufacturing company, which in this case was the James & George D. Bromley Company. The Oxford and Albion complexes consist largely of the same heavy-timber and brick construction that so defined industrial architecture in Kensington and throughout Philadelphia during the late nineteenth century and that is exemplified in Building 1 at the Franklin Carpet Mill.

Labor Troubles at the Franklin Carpet Mill

Despite Carson's success in the ingrain carpet trade, the Franklin Carpet Mill experienced labor strife from the outset. During a tumultuous period of more than two decades, from 1879 to 1903, strikes and riots were regular occurrences at Carson's mill as they were in textile mills throughout Kensington. Beginning in the late 1870s carpet weavers typically worked under agreements whereby wages and terms would be set for each half year. Almost invariably, at the end of each six-month period, a succession of strikes, negotiations and final compromises characterized life for those associated with mill for days, weeks, or even months at a time. Major strikes took place in 1879, 1881, 1885, 1895, and 1903. Robert Carson himself, as the proprietor of one of the leading ingrain mills, frequently played a direct role in negotiations between the weavers and company leaders.

The most consequential strike affecting the Franklin Carpet Mill began in the fall of 1884 and lasted well into the spring of 1885. On November 19, 1884, the Power Loom Ingrain Carpet Manufacturers Association, an assembly of company directors in Philadelphia, met to discuss the issue of workers' wages. At the time, the standard city wage for ingrain weavers, specifically the operators of power looms, was six cents per yard. Because many of Philadelphia's ingrain manufacturers had steadily been investing in new, more efficient loom equipment for several years, they faced a "classic crisis of overproduction," as historian Susan Levine explains. The market was becoming flooded with ingrain carpets, driving down

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prices by as much as fifty percent in some cases. To mitigate their losses, the manufacturers agreed on November 19 to decrease the standard wage for loom operators from six cents to five cents per yard.¹²

Deeply angered by the proposed wage cut, an informal body of over one thousand ingrain weavers, over two thirds of which were women, gathered three days later on November 22. The weavers formed a temporary organization to represent their interests, electing a president and secretary, and voted in favor of a general strike to begin that day. As a result, nearly every ingrain carpet mill in the city, including the Franklin Carpet Mill, was shut down. By November 26, the Philadelphia-based Knights of Labor, a rapidly growing national labor organization founded in 1869, encouraged most of the ingrain strikers to join its ranks, promising protections that their informal body could not offer. Both the weavers and the manufacturers, including Robert Carson, stood firm over the following weeks.¹³

As the strike extended into January, roughly two hundred weavers renounced their membership in the Knights of Labor and went back to work at the reduced wage. Some manufacturers, most prominently Robert Carson, even hired non-union hands or “skunk” weavers to work at the reduced rate. Both of these developments enraged the remainder of the weavers who were determined not to accept the five cent wage, and led to violent protests involving thousands of strikers who surrounded many of the Kensington ingrain mills between January 14 and 17, 1885. Increasing in violence, additional protests on February 26 and 27 resulted in the clubbing of strikers by the police, who were called in to quell the newest “uprising,” as termed by the *Inquirer*.¹⁴ At the Franklin Carpet Mill, police were dispatched to surround the building in order to protect it from the rioters, who singled out Robert Carson for his employment of non-union hands. The rioting weavers even published circulars with the names and addresses of those non-union weavers who were currently employed in the Franklin mill.¹⁵

The violence subsided by the end of February, but the strike continued through March with both the weavers and the manufacturers still standing strong in opposition to any compromise. By April, however, both sides were weary and anxious for a settlement. On the weavers’ side, many had not had a steady income in months and were ready to get back to work, while on the manufacturers’ side, many had not been operating their mills at full capacity even with the employment of “skunk” weavers. On April 17, 1885, the Manufacturers Association and the strikers’ Executive Committee finally came to an agreement. The manufacturers offered a five-and-a-half cent wage through 1885, which the weavers accepted. Both sides also agreed that the weavers would not be required to renounce membership in the Knights of Labor, a major victory for the workers. “The news of the settlement was received with great rejoicing in Kensington last evening,” the *Philadelphia Inquirer* noted the next day, “both by the strikers, their friends and the many shop-keepers, who have in many ways felt the hardships of the bitter struggle.” The

¹² “Thousands Out of Work,” *The Times* (Philadelphia, PA), November 13, 1884; Susan Levine, *Labor’s True Woman: Carpet Weavers, Industrialization, and Labor Reform in the Gilded Age* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984): 65.

¹³ “Employers Confer. They Declare War Against the Knights of Labor,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (26 Nov 1884): 8. More information on the Knights of Labor and their relationship to Kensington’s textile industry is provided on page 22 of the MPDF.

¹⁴ “Desperate Strikers,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 14, 1885; “Clubbing Rioters, Policemen Quelling Another Uprising in Kensington,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 27, 1885; “10,000 Rioters, Philadelphia Inquirer, February 28, 1885.

¹⁵ “More Trouble Brewing: Excitement on the Increase in the Kensington Mill District,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (11 Apr 1885), 3

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newspaper also estimated the loss to manufacturers and employees over the five-month strike to be in the range of \$2 million.¹⁶

Although the strikers eventually accepted a lower wage than they had in November of the previous year, their ability to remain as members in the Knights of Labor was considered a major victory, even as the organization was declining in power nationally. They also won a partial victory in gaining any concession from the manufacturers to pay a wage above five cents, which they had steadfastly refused to do over the previous twenty-one weeks. Although the ingrain weavers strike was not the first among Philadelphia's carpet mill workers, it is notable due to its length, over eight months, and because a majority of the strikers, roughly two thirds, were women.

The Franklin Carpet Mill after 1900: Shifts in Taste and Production

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the popularity of ingrain carpets was beginning to decline. Consumers increasingly demanded higher grades of carpeting, and the Franklin Carpet Mill's traditional ingrains could not satisfy this need. As ingrains continued to lose favor and command a lower price, Robert Carson and several of his five sons, who entered into a partnership with their father as Robert Carson & Sons sometime around the turn of the century, knew they needed to transition to other forms of carpet, particularly the Wilton, to remain competitive. Carson himself wrote in 1903 that "the outlook for the [ingrain] industry un the United States is not a very bright one."¹⁷

The Wilton, along with its counterpart the Brussels, was a plush form of carpet and "among the best made by machinery." Named for the city in which it was first woven, Wilton, England, it became one of the most sought-after types of carpet, particularly after 1900 as prices began to fall. Consisting of a vegetable fiber backing with straight worsted pile (the Brussels was structurally the same, but had a looped pile), the Wilton had a deep, "soft and luxurious" surface and was more durable than other types of carpet.¹⁸ By 1909, Philadelphia mills were producing less than half of the quantity of ingrain carpets that they had in 1899, and were now turning out 78% of the total production of Wilton carpets in the United States.¹⁹

The expansion of Wilton industry in Philadelphia after 1900 was generally credited with saving the city's position as the leading carpet manufacturing center in the United States, at least temporarily. The *American Carpet and Upholstery Journal (ACUJ)* reported in December of 1909 that the city, with the decline of ingrains, had been in danger of losing its position, but that its revival was assured by the growing number of firms that had transitioned into Wiltons. "It is a safe venture to say," the publication proclaimed, "that with the mills now running, and the new plants contemplated, Philadelphia will, within two or three years, be the unchallenged largest producer of Wiltons in the country." One such mill, *ACUJ* reported, was that of Robert Carson & Sons.²⁰

¹⁶ "The Strike Ended. A Compromise Effected After Twenty-One Weeks' Idleness," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (18 Apr 1885): 2.

¹⁷ Philip Scranton, *Figured Tapestry: Production, Markets, and Power in Philadelphia Textiles, 1885-1941* (Cambridge University Press, 1989): 239; Robert J. Carson, "Ingrain Carpet Industry," *Second Annual Report (1903)*, Alumni Association of the Philadelphia Textile School, 54-55.

¹⁸ United States Tariff Board, *Wool and Manufactures of Wool, Volume 1, Part 1* (Washington, DC, 1912): 176-177.

¹⁹ John J. MacFarlane, *Manufacturing in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Commercial Museum, 1912): 24.

²⁰ Scranton, *Figured Tapestry*, 239-240; "Expansion of the Wilton Industry in Philadelphia," *American Carpet and Upholstery Journal*, Vol. 27, no. 12 (December 1909): 53.

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Like other ingrain firms that had transitioned into Wiltons, including Ivins, Dietz & Metzgar (formerly Ivins, Dietz and Magee and Thomas Boggs & Sons, Robert Carson began construction on an “enormous” new building, Building 2, at the Franklin Carpet Mill toward the end of 1909 to house its rapidly growing Wilton operation (see figures 15 and 16). Carson hired William Steele & Sons of Philadelphia, pioneers in the development of reinforced concrete construction in factories, to design and construct the new building. The five-story building, which cost \$44,500, is an early example of Steele’s industrial work. Around the turn of the twentieth century, the Steele firm had “perfected” a method of reinforcing concrete with iron bars, which allowed the structure to handle much greater loads. In almost all Steele buildings, concrete slab floors were supported by concrete columns, which were square initially (as in the case of the Franklin Carpet Mill), but became cylindrical with “mushroom” capitals in later applications. Due to the strength of the columns and the slab floors, the columns could be spaced farther apart to allow for more usable floor space. It is likely that Carson was attracted to the “Steele Idea,” as marketed by the firm, because it would produce a building able to support the weight of new Wilton power looms, not to mention that it would be virtually fireproof.²¹

The Franklin Carpet Mill’s new reinforced concrete building made the complex somewhat of an outlier among its peers in Kensington during the early twentieth century. Due to the decline in ingrain, carpet manufacturers pursued little if any physical expansion after 1900. Although Ivins, Dietz and Metzgar and Thomas Boggs & Sons constructed similar reinforced concrete buildings around 1910, most of the remaining carpet mills in the MPDF area consist of pre-1900 heavy timber and brick construction. Unfortunately, Ivins, Dietz and Metzgar’s large complex of mill buildings, which were located at the southeast corner of 7th Street and West Lehigh Avenue (within the MPDF boundary), were demolished in the 1980s for a housing project. Likewise, the Thomas Boggs’ Model Mills complex, which was located at the northeast corner of North 2nd and West Allegheny Avenue was demolished in recent decades.²²

With the completion of Building 2 in 1910, the number of employees at the Franklin Carpet Mill increased to 170 and yet again to 200 by 1913 after holding steady at around 130 to 140 during the 1890s. The building also housed an additional twelve looms, bringing the mill’s total to 90. Eight of the new looms were broad looms, which, as the name suggests, allowed for much wider rolls of carpeting as great as twelve-feet wide. Broadloom carpets were typically used in wall-to-wall installations, which were becoming more common in the early twentieth century. It is possible that the more expansive floor plates of Building 2 precipitated the adoption of this type of larger loom. Both broad and narrow loom Wiltons were now the focus of the Franklin Carpet Mill’s operation, but the mill continued to turn out ingrain, though in much smaller quantities.²³

²¹ “Building Work is on in Earnest,” Philadelphia Inquirer, May 19, 1909; Sheryl Jaslow, “The Harris Building,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (NR# 01000928), 2001. Other Steele-designed industrial buildings in Philadelphia have been individually listed on the National Register, including the Terminal Commerce Building (NR 1996), built in 1929 at 401 N. Broad Street, the Harris Building (NR 2001), built in 1914 at 2121-41 Market Street, and the Brownhill & Kramer Hosiery Mill (NR 2014), built in 1921 at 406 E. Memphis Street.

²² Unlike the carpet industry, other types of textile companies in Kensington, especially hosiery manufacturers, prospered and built several large reinforced concrete factories similar to Building 2 within the MPDF boundary during the 1910s and 1920s.

²³ Office Edition of “The Blue Book” Textile Directory of the United States and Canada, Fourteenth Annual Edition 1901-1902 (New York: Davison Publishing Co., 1901), 291; Pocket Edition of “The Blue Book” Textile Directory of the United States and Canada, Twenty-Third Annual Edition (New York: Davison Publishing Co. 1910), 276; Office Edition, Davison’s Textile ‘Blue Book’ United States and Canada, Twenty-Sixth Annual Edition 1913-1914 (New York: Davison Publishing Co., 1913), 298.

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Unlike the Franklin Carpet Mill's ingrain, numerous newspaper advertisements provide a picture of how its Wiltons were marketed and sold after 1900. In 1914, Snellenburgs, one of the largest department stores in downtown Philadelphia, had a special sale on Franklin carpets. An 8x10 Wilton, which regularly went for \$42.50 was on sale for \$25, and a 9x12 Wilton, normally \$45.00, went for \$29.50. But Franklin carpets were not only available in Philadelphia. Department stores and furniture stores in locations as varied as Asbury Park, NJ, Bridgeport, CT, Lansing, MI, and Muskogee, OK, among many others, advertised Franklin carpets by name throughout the 1910s and 1920s. In one 1927 ad, the Stoehr & Fister furniture store in Scranton, PA claimed that they had for sale the "entire mill surplus" from Robert Carson & Sons. In these advertisements, "Robert Carson & Sons" and "Franklin Carpet Mill" were used interchangeably, and sometimes together. Numerous ads touted the "high quality" and "durability" of the Franklin Carpet Mills' Wiltons, and occasionally they were the only type of Wiltons available in certain stores.

Not all Kensington ingrain mills successfully transitioned into other forms of carpet after 1900. Thomas Bromley, proprietor of Bromley Brothers, went bankrupt in 1906. His brother, George D. Bromley, owner of the Albion Carpet Mill, which was one of the Franklin Carpet Mill's largest competitors, did attempt to make a shift to Scotch rugs, a flat, reversible ingrain with a tighter weave, around the same time that Carson began weaving Wiltons. But it was an ingrain nonetheless, and Bromley was unable to fully recover his business, closing it by 1912. Yet another, Charles Porter & Son, which had been in operation at the Park Mill since 1868 and had about 300 employees, folded in 1916. And finally, on the closing of John Gay's Sons in 1916, the *American Carpet and Upholstery Trade Journal* remarked that "about the last Murkland looms in Philadelphia have disappeared with the scrapping of 100 of these worn out veterans by the John Gay's Sons Company...and their disappearance virtually brings to an end what once was a thriving branch of the carpet industry in Philadelphia."²⁴

Although the Franklin Carpet Mill successfully weathered the decline of the once powerful ingrain industry, it could not escape much larger economic forces that came in the 1920s and 1930s. First, the industry peaked during the early 1920s, producing upwards of 83 million yards of carpet nationally, a figure that fell precipitously over the following years. During much of the 1930s, annual output typically remained only around 60 million yards nationally. The Franklin Carpet Mill appears to have suffered greatly from this trend, recording only 85 employees in 1922 after a high of 200 only nine years before. The crisis within the industry during the 1920s was greatly exacerbated by the Great Depression, leading to years of contraction within the industry in northern states. In addition, an increasing number of carpet mills, not to mention textile firms of many other types, began to move to southern states. Attracted by open-shop laws, lower taxes and labor costs, as well as attractive incentives offered by state and local governments, the South began to lure textile firms from the north in the late 1920s, a trend which accelerated during and after the Depression. Although the precise circumstances of the Franklin Carpet Mill's decline are unknown, it is a reasonable assumption that these factors played a role in declining sales. In early 1932, conditions led Robert Carson to close the mill. The property was leased in June of 1932 to the Printz Leather Company.²⁵

²⁴ Scranton, 239-240; *American Carpet and Upholstery Trade Journal* 34 (June 1916): 32.

²⁵ Randall L. Patton, "A History of the U.S. Carpet Industry." EH.net, Economic History Association, 22 Sept. 2006, eh.net/encyclopedia/a-history-of-the-u-s-carpet-industry/. Accessed 28 Sept. 2017; Pennsylvania Department of Internal Affairs, *Fourth Industrial Directory of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA, 1922): 1128.

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The Printz Leather Company, which appears to have been founded around 1905, was initially located at 1305 N. 27th Street in North Philadelphia. After leasing the property for four years, Printz purchased the former Franklin Carpet Mill from the Carsons in 1936. The leather company occupied the building, manufacturing primarily leather jackets until 1954, when they folded. Little else is known about Printz during the period from 1932-1954. Besides the construction of a roof structure over the concrete ramp leading into Building 2 (see the 1951 Sanborn map in Figure 19), there is also no obvious physical evidence that Printz made major changes to the property. Some functions, such as tanning, would have differed from those performed in the former carpet mill. The Franklin Carpet Mill did not do its own dyeing, so the introduction of tanning would probably have precipitated some changes – such as increased water supply and drainage – due to the amount of water required by this process. After the departure of Printz Leather in 1954, the complex was purchased by Edwin Borgh, a manufacturer of “textile fibers” in wool and synthetics. Borgh founded his company around 1920, but no other information is currently available. The Borgh family continued to own the property until 2016, when it was sold to the current owner, but it cannot be determined when manufacturing activity ceased or which parts of the complex were used by the company. Due to a lack of information, the importance of the Printz Leather Company and Edwin Borgh within the leather, apparel and textile industries cannot currently be established. Therefore, while it may be possible to extend the period of significance beyond 1932 in the future, for the purposes of this nomination the areas and period of significance are limited by association with the Franklin Carpet Mill.²⁶

²⁶ “Activities of Day in Real Estate,” Philadelphia Inquirer, June 10, 1932; “Activities of Day in Real Estate,” Philadelphia Inquirer, December 19, 1936; *Journal of Commerce Business Directory*, 1967, p. 546.

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Newspapers and Periodicals*:

American Carpet and Upholstery Trade Journal

Philadelphia Inquirer

Directories*:

Davison's Textile Blue Book

*see footnotes for specific citations

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
Name of repository: Free Library of Philadelphia

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: less than one acre (~0.45 acres)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 39.998095 Longitude: -75.156714

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the property is shown on the accompanying map entitled "Site Plan with National Register Boundary" (Figure 2).

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel on which the present complex is situated, which matches its historic delineation. No manufacturing or warehousing resources historically associated with the operation of this complex have been excluded. As mentioned in the summary paragraph, there is a vacant lot along the west elevation (this lot is and always has been a separate parcel with the address of 2139 E. Huntingdon Avenue). Until as late as 1929, the lot contained a three-story rowhouse that does not appear to have been associated with the Franklin Carpet Mill (see the 1929 Sanborn map in Figure 18). By 1951, the house was being used as offices, probably by the Printz Leather Company, which took over the Franklin Carpet Mill after the company dissolved in 1932 (see the 1951 Sanborn map in Figure 19). A 1962 land use map appears to confirm the Printz association (see Figure 20). Records are sparse, but a 1971 zoning permit indicates that the building had already

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been demolished by that year.²⁷ Although 2139 E. Huntingdon Street was associated with a later owner of the Franklin Carpet Mill, this association occurred after the end of the period of significance, therefore this property has been excluded from the National Register Boundary.

Form Prepared By

name/title: Kevin McMahon, Associate
 organization: Powers & Company, Inc.
 street & number: 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1717
 city or town: Philadelphia state: PA zip code: 19107
 e-mail: kevin@powersco.net telephone: (215) 636-0192 date: December 1, 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Franklin Carpet Mill
 City or Vicinity: Philadelphia
 County: Philadelphia State: PA
 Photographer: Robert Powers
 Date Photographed: September 25, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

<i>Photograph #</i>	<i>Description of Photograph</i>
1.	Building 1, west and south elevations, view northeast
2.	Building 1, south and east elevations, view northwest
3.	Building 1, east and north elevations, view southwest
4.	Building 1, north elevation, view southwest
5.	Building 1, c. 1960 addition, north elevation, view southwest
6.	Building 1, west elevation, view southeast
7.	Building 1, west elevation, view east
8.	Building 1, c. 1960 addition, view north
9.	Building 2, east elevation, view west
10.	Open area between Buildings 1 and 2, view north

²⁷ Philadelphia Zoning Application #28930 (Permit issued 9/15/1971).

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11.	Building 2, south and east elevations, view northwest
12.	Building 2, west and south elevations, view northeast
13.	Open area west of Building 2, view south
14.	Building 2, north elevation, view southeast
15.	Building 1, first floor of 1890 section, view south
16.	Building 1, first floor of 1879 section, view north
17.	Building 1, first floor of 1883 section, view south
18.	Building 1, first floor of 1892 section, view west
19.	Building 1, first floor of 1879 section, engine room, view east
20.	Building 1, first floor of c. 1960 addition, view east
21.	Building 1, second floor of 1879 section, stair, view north
22.	Building 1, second floor of 1879 section, view north
23.	Building 1, second floor of 1879 section, loft door on south elevation, view south
24.	Building 1, second floor of 1892 section, view west
25.	Building 1, third floor of 1879 section, view northeast
26.	Building 1, third floor of 1879 section, rooftop monitor, view west
27.	Building 1, third floor of 1892 section, view west
28.	Building 2, first floor, view north
29.	Building 2, second floor, view north
30.	Building 2, second floor, view south
31.	Building 2, second floor, bathroom doors, view east
32.	Building 2, third floor, stairway, view north
33.	Building 2, third floor, view south
34.	Building 2, fourth floor, view northeast
35.	Building 2, fourth floor, view southwest
36.	Building 2, fifth floor, view north
37.	Building 2, fifth floor, view south

Franklin Carpet Mill
Name of Property

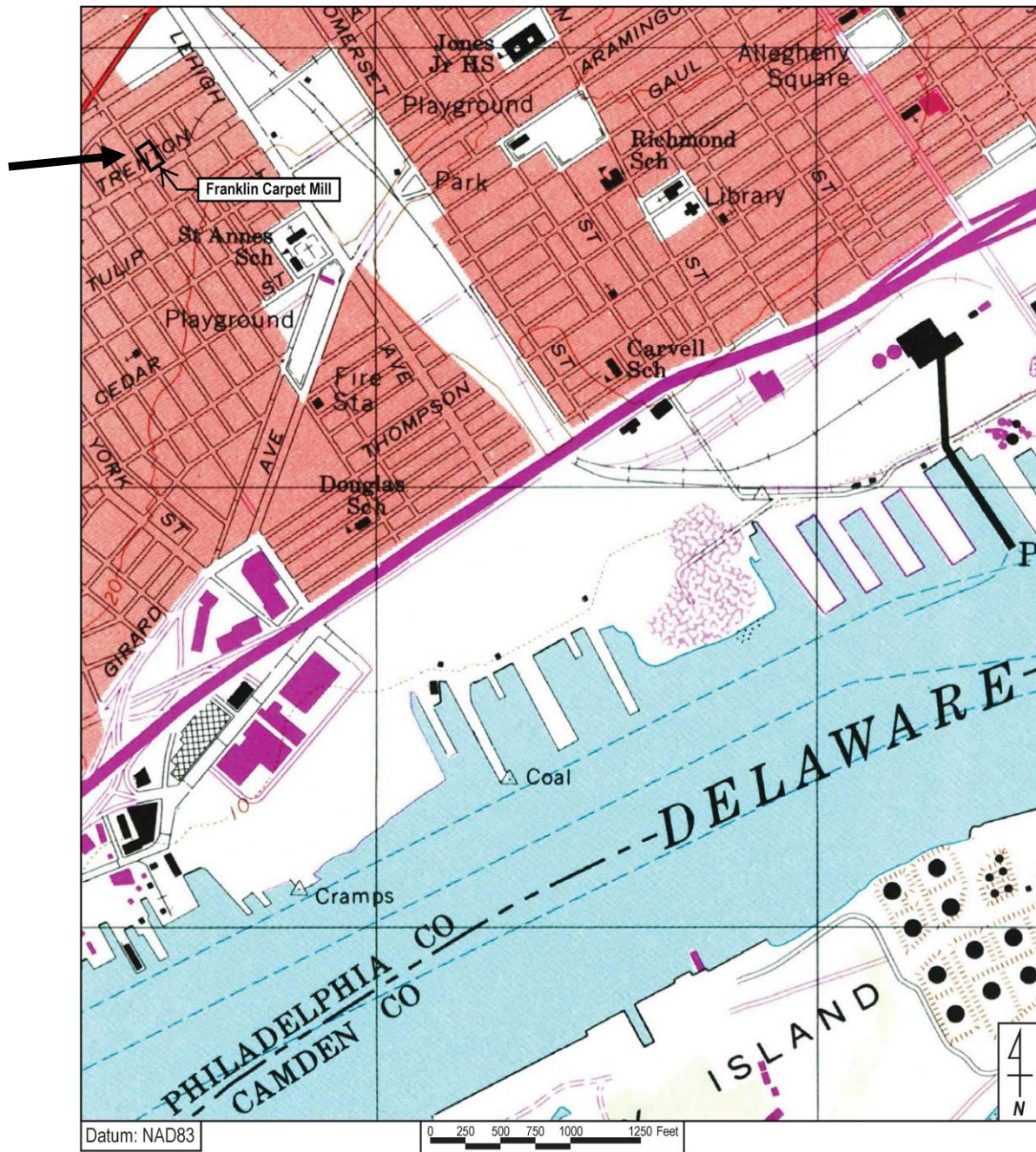
Philadelphia, PA
County and State

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USGS Map - Camden Quadrangle - New Jersey-Pennsylvania (1995)

Franklin Carpet Mill
2139-2145 E. Huntingdon Street
Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, PA

Latitude, Longitude
39.983945, -75.122712

Figure 1 – USGS Map

Franklin Carpet Mill
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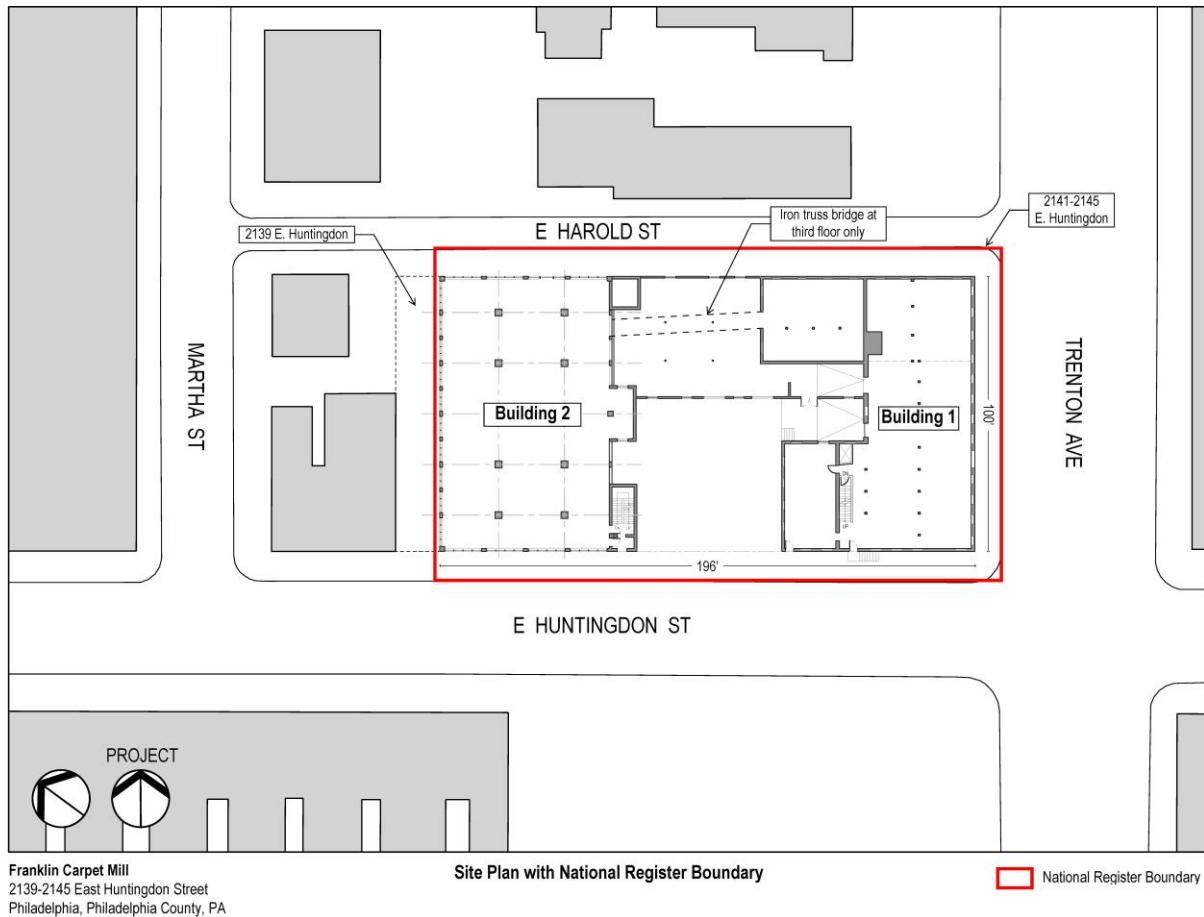


Figure 2 – Site Plan with National Register Boundary

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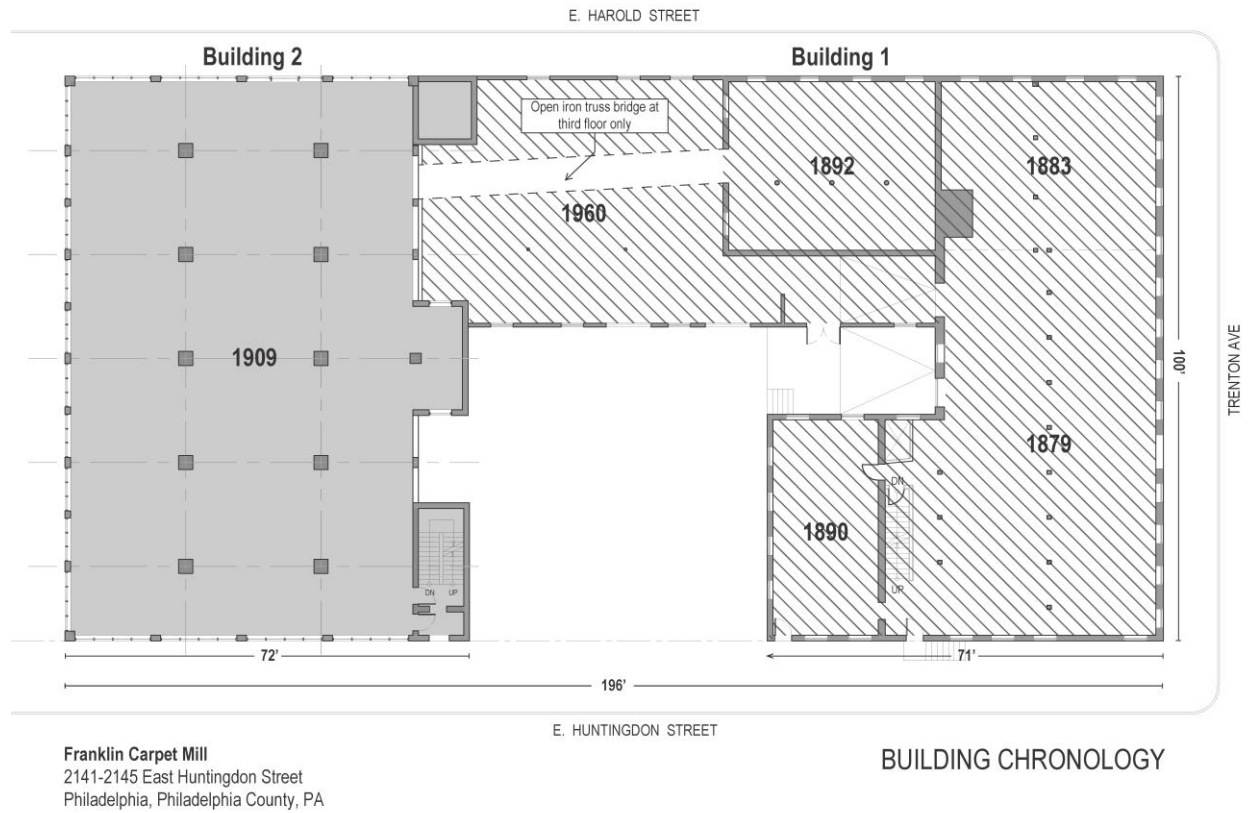


Figure 3 – Site Plan with Building Chronology

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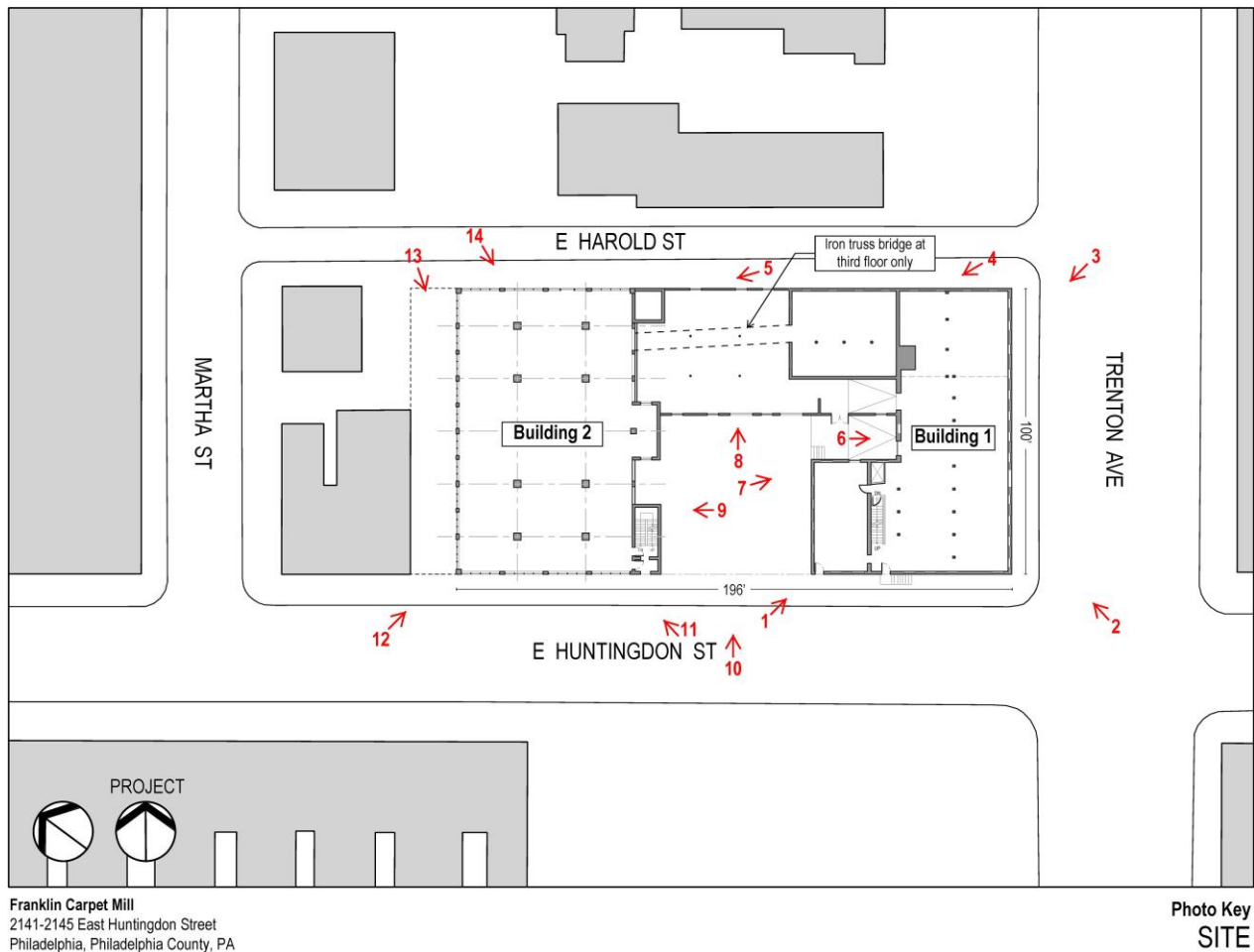
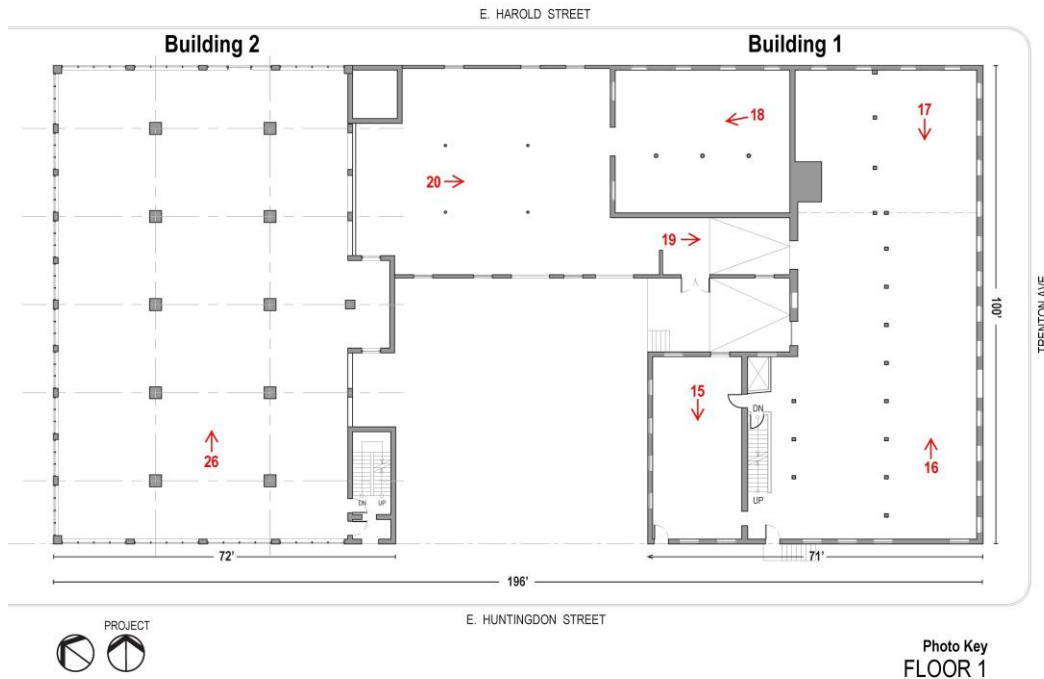


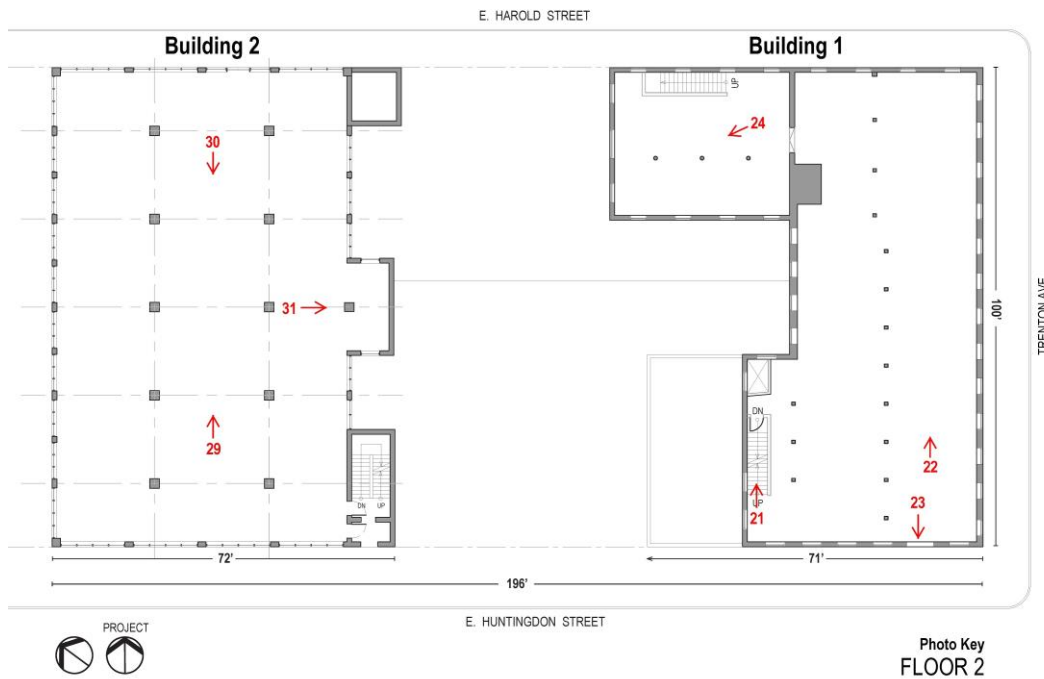
Figure 4 – Photograph Key, Site

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Figures 5 and 6 – Photograph Key, First and Second Floors



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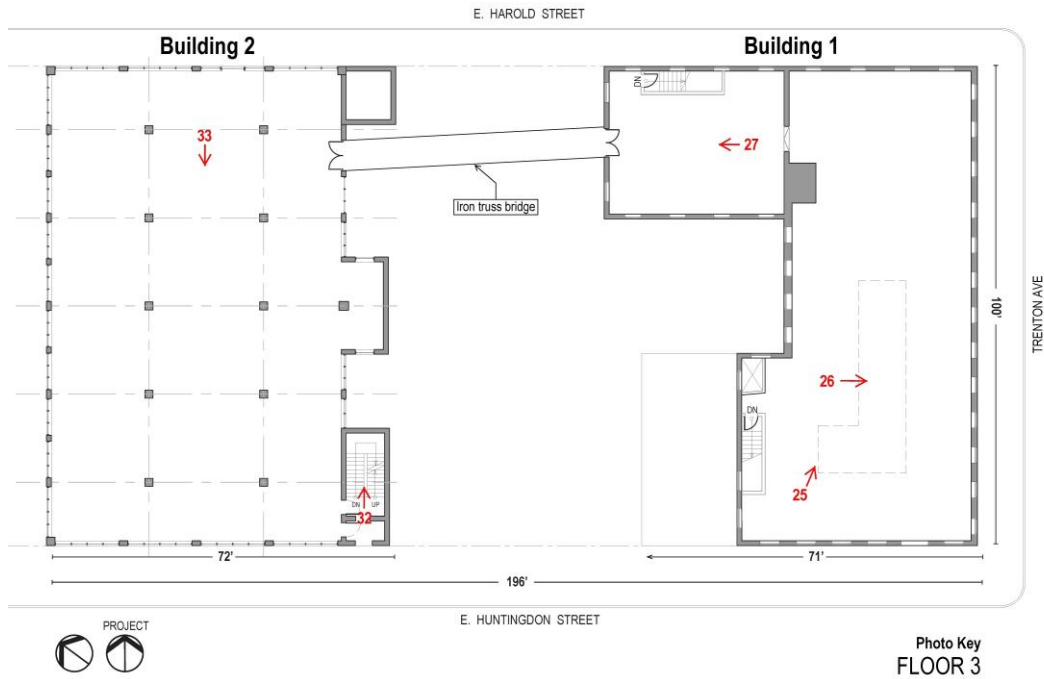
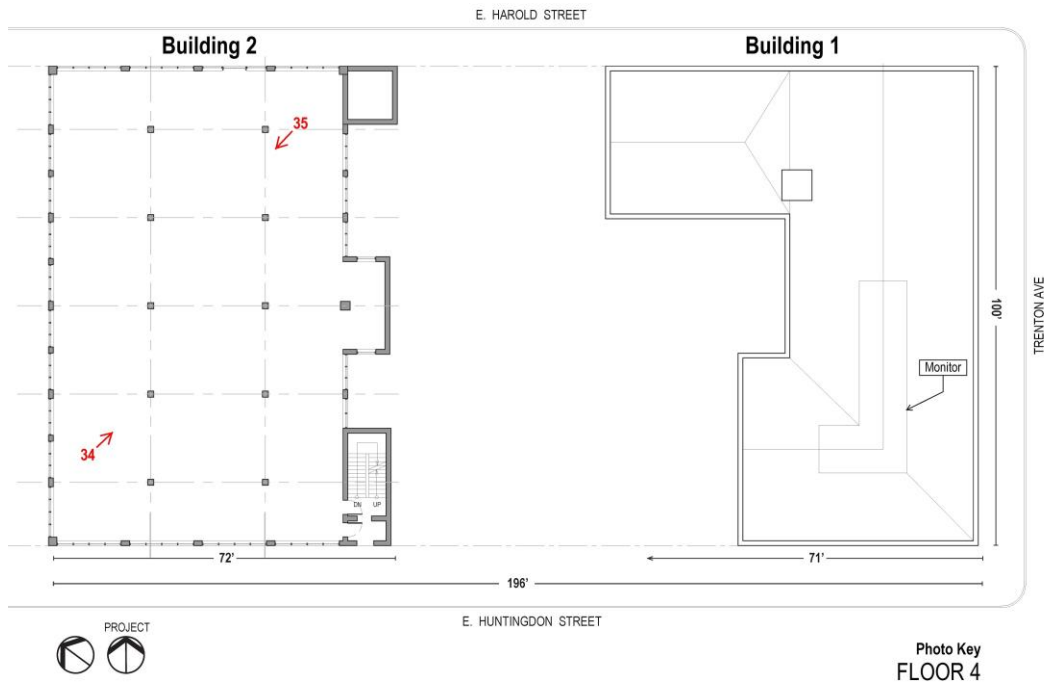


Figure 7 and 8 – Photograph Key, Third and Fourth Floors



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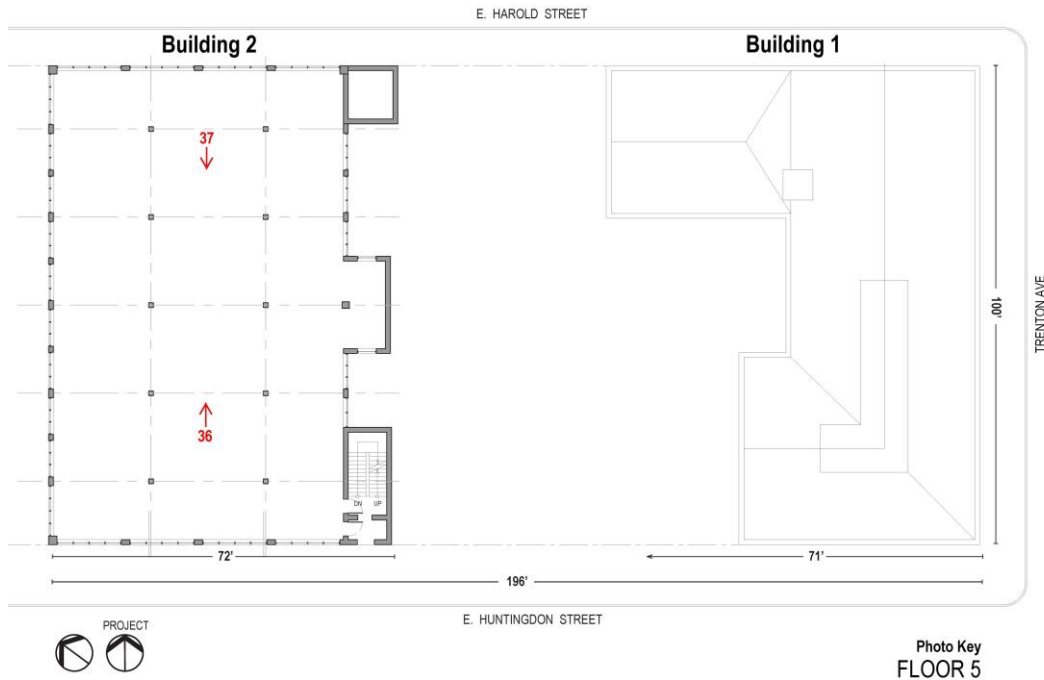


Figure 9 – Photograph Key, Fifth Floor

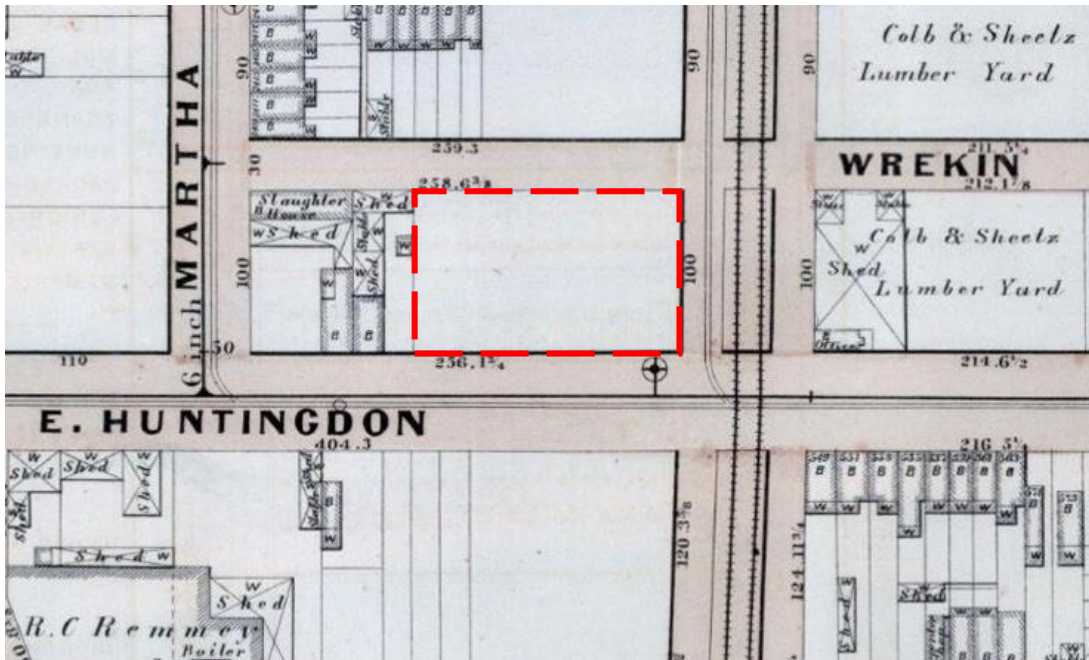
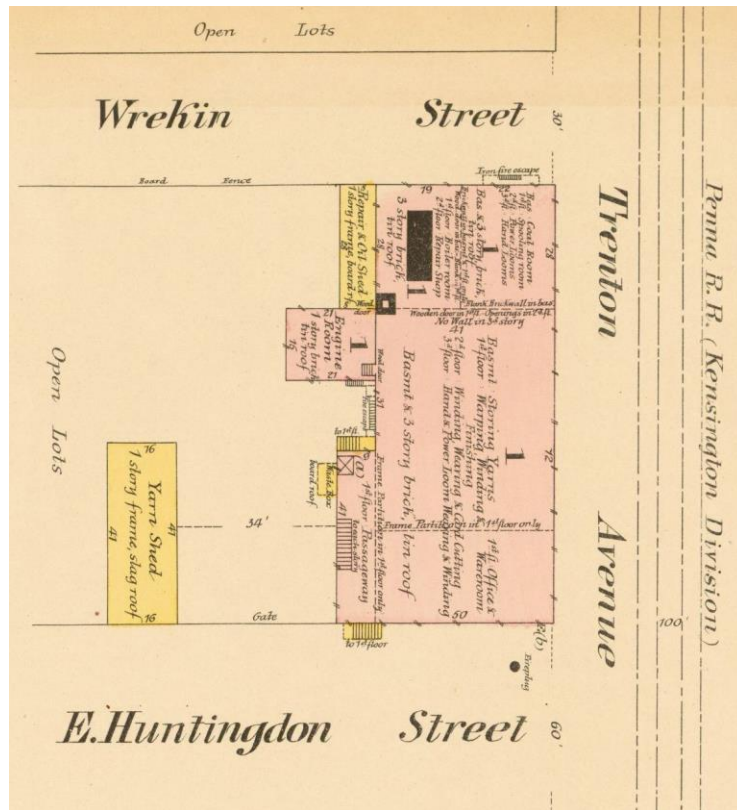


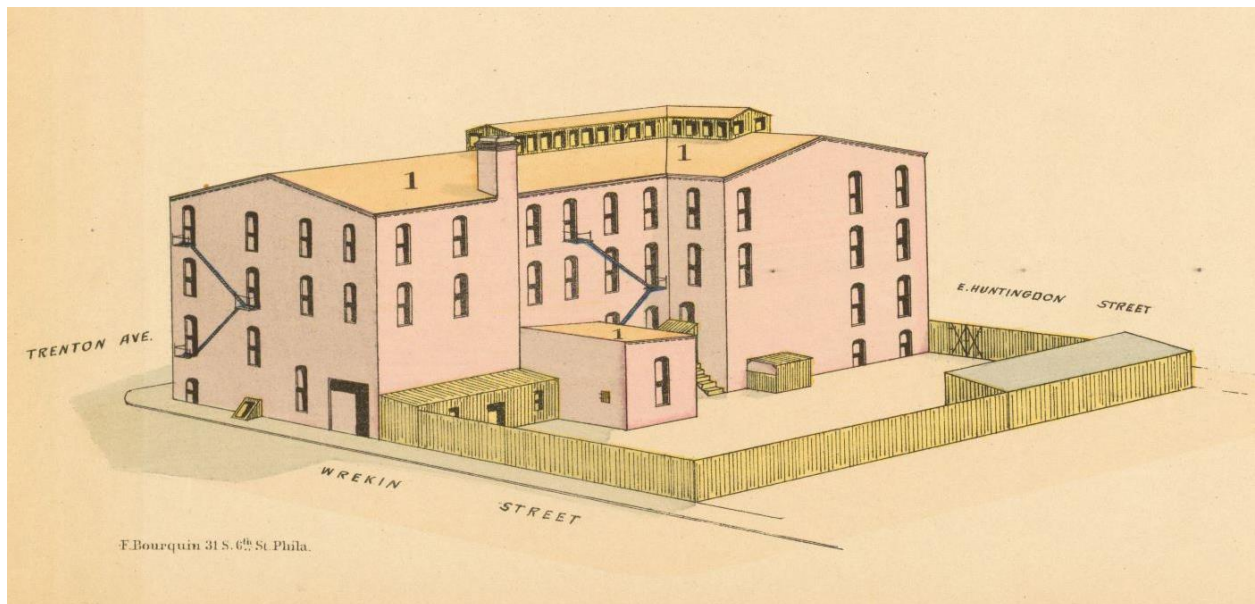
Figure 10 – Jones Atlas, 1874. This atlas shows the property before the Franklin Carpet Mill was built. The current site is outlined in the dashed red line.

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Figures 11 and 12 – Hexamer General Survey, Volume 20, Plate 38, 1885. The plan and axonometric views show Building 1, including the original 1879 section and the 1883 addition.



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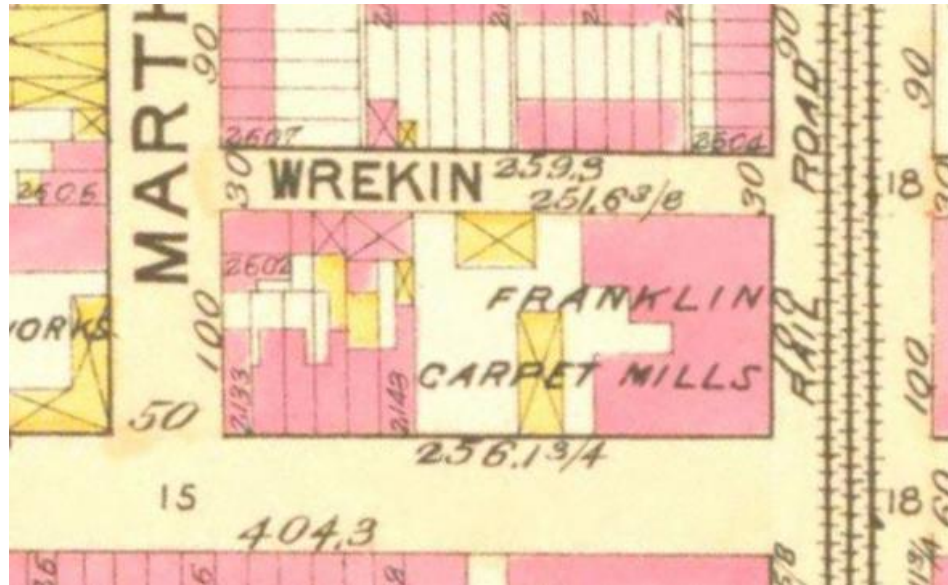


Figure 13 – Bromley Atlas, 1895. This atlas shows Building 1 largely as it exists today, including the 1883, 1890 and 1892 additions.

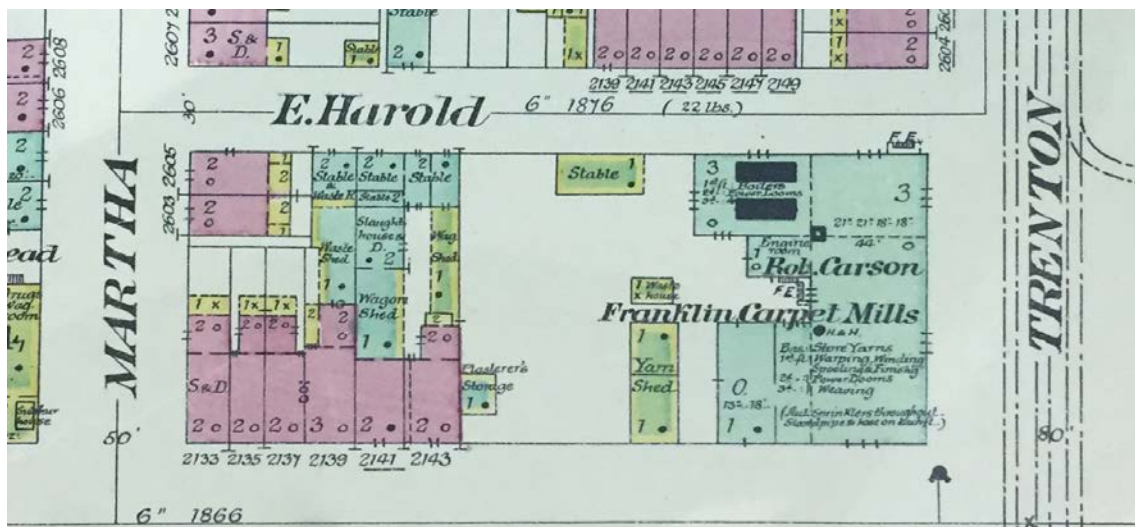
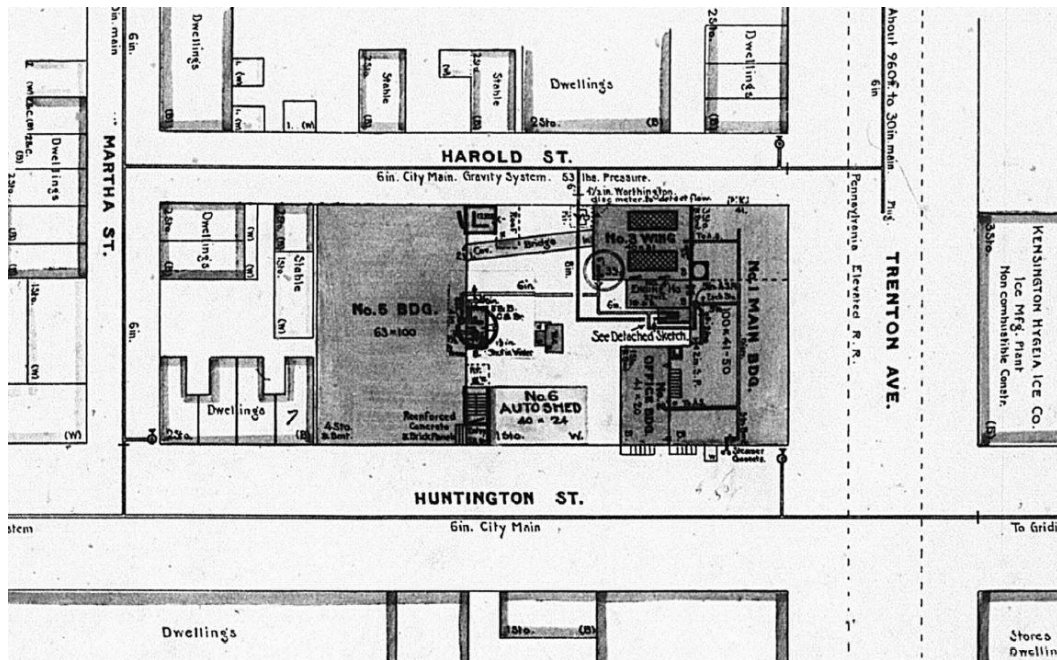


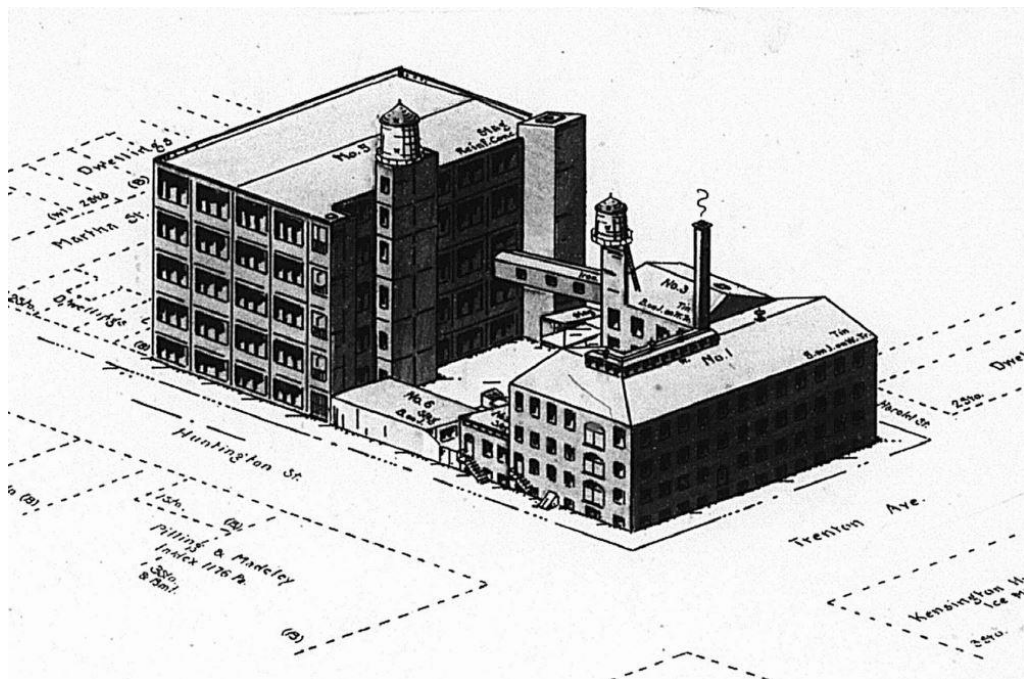
Figure 14 – Hexamer Insurance Map, 1902. This map shows Building 1 largely as it exists today, including the 1883, 1890 and 1892 additions.

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Figures 15 and 16 – Associated Mutual Insurance Company Survey, 1910. This survey shows Building 2, which was recently completed, at left in both the plan view (above) and axonometric view (below).



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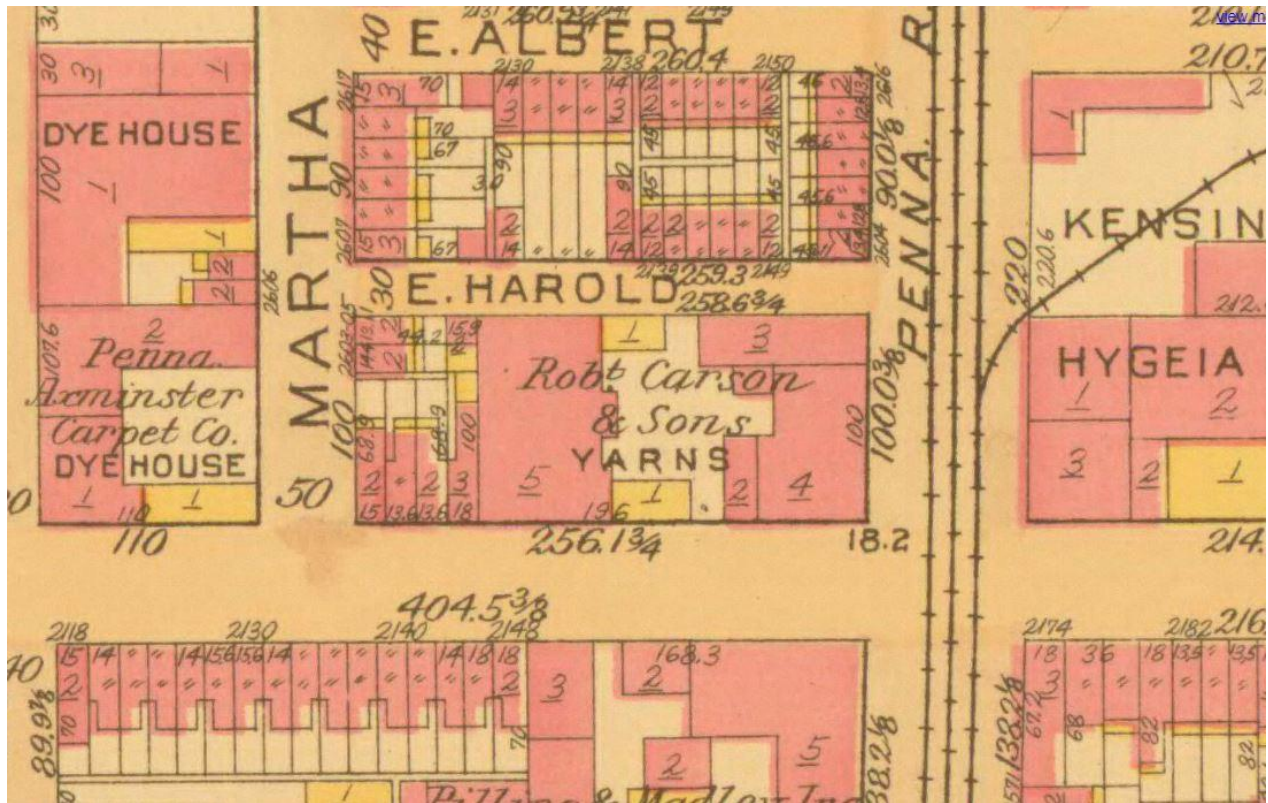


Figure 17 – Bromley Atlas, 1922. This atlas shows the site largely as it exists today, minus the c. 1960 addition. The two one-story additions (shown as the yellow boxes on the east side of Building 2), no longer exist.

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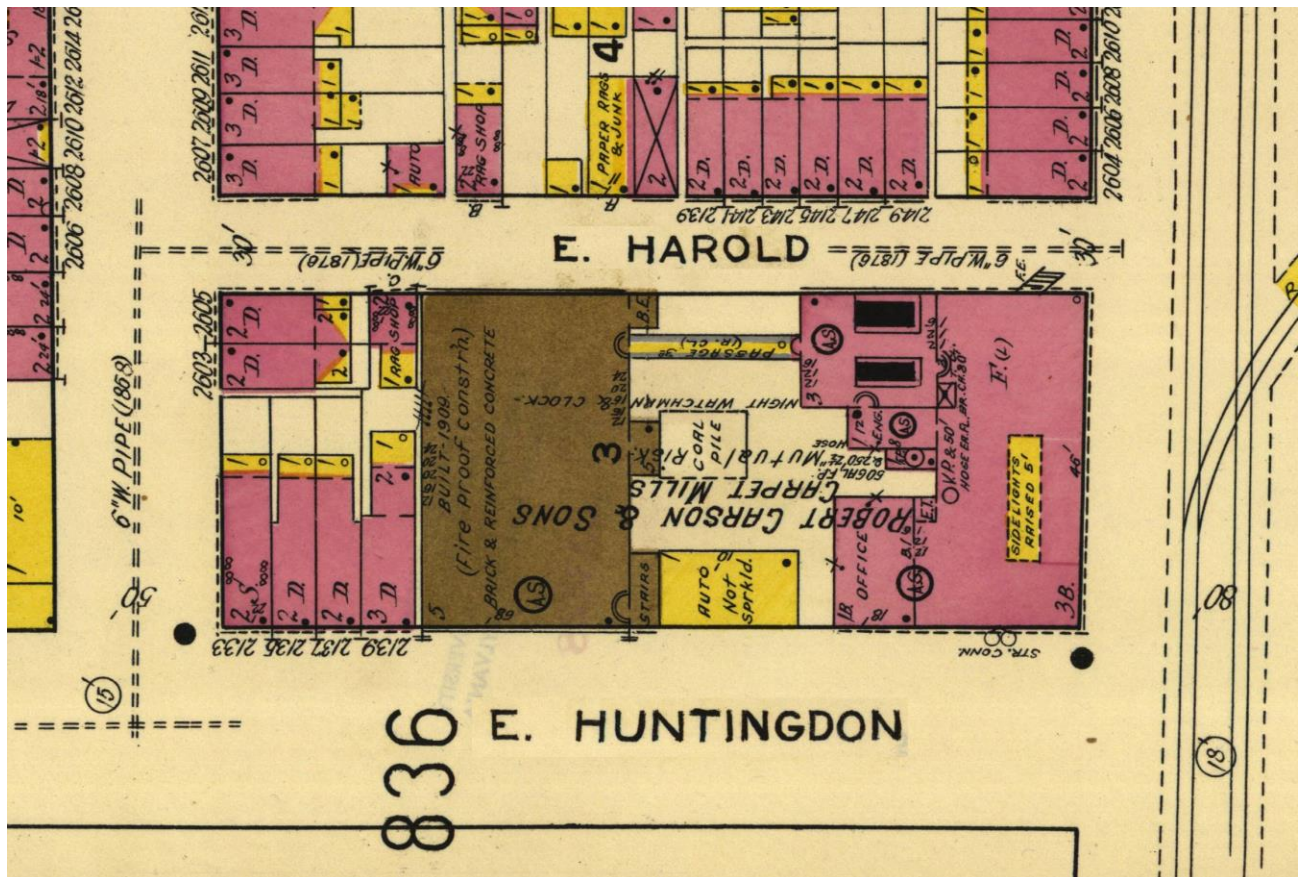


Figure 18 – Sanborn Map, 1929. This atlas shows the site largely as it exists today, minus the c. 1960 addition. The bridge between Buildings 1 and 2 has been added. The one-story addition, shown as the yellow box on the east side of Building 2 in the prior image (Figure 18) under the bridge, adjacent to Harold Street, no longer exists by 1929, although the one-story auto shed along Huntington Street does still exist. As illustrated on this map, it appears that after 1929 no structures existed on the portion of the site where the c.1960 addition was eventually built.

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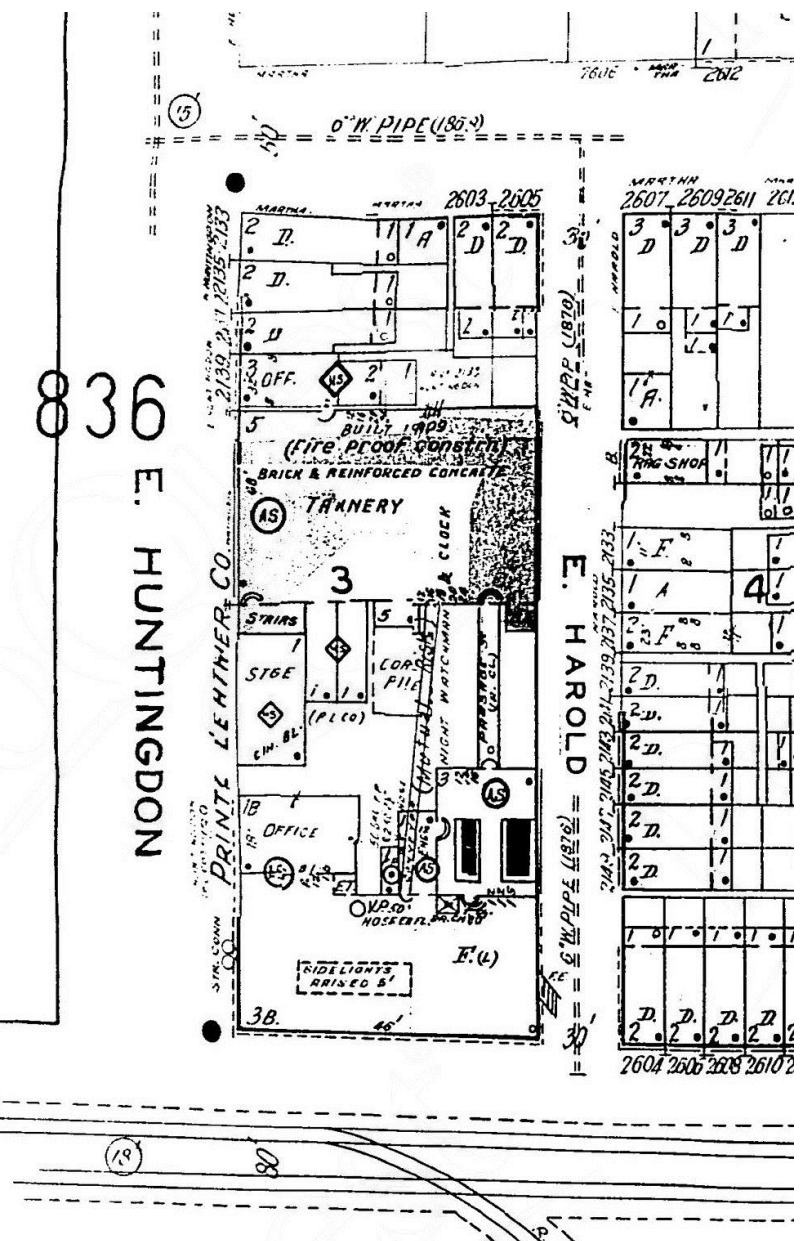


Figure 19 – Sanborn Map, 1951. This atlas shows the site largely as it exists today, minus the c.1960 addition (as illustrated on this map, no structures are believed to have existed on the portion of the site where the addition was eventually built at the time of its construction). By this point, the Printz Leather Company was operating the site as a tannery. The one-story addition (the small box marked as “STGE”) on the east side of Building 2, no longer exists, nor does the one-story structure, essentially just a roof, that covered the ramp that slopes down from the courtyard to an opening on the east elevation of Building 2.

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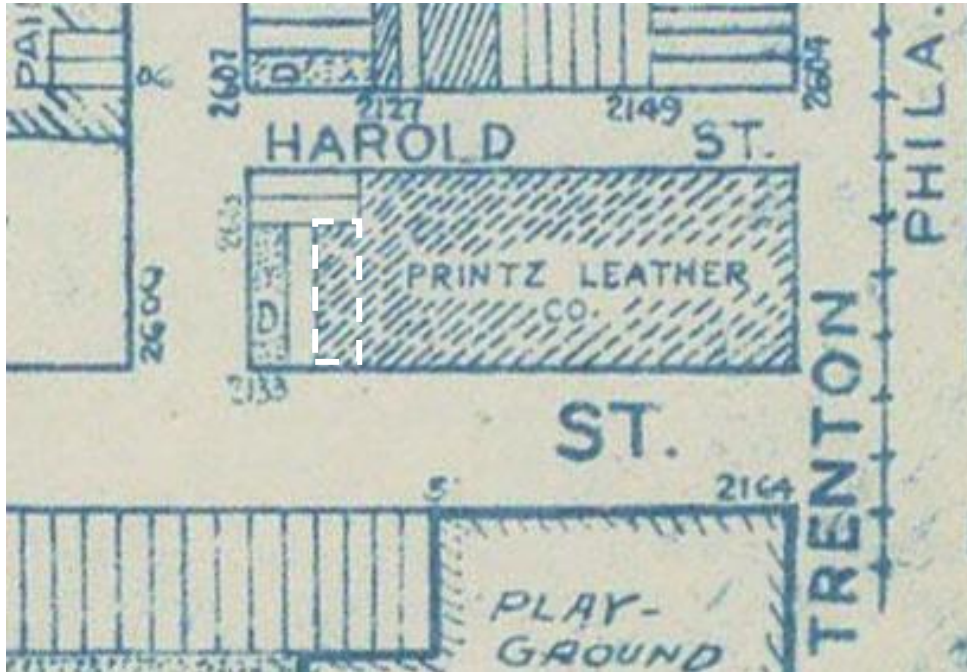


Figure 20 – Philadelphia Land Use Map, 1962 (Plate 5B-4).

This map incorrectly shows Printz Leather as the occupant of the site in 1962; as described above in the Statement of Significance, Printz left in 1954. However, this map does indicate that Printz or subsequent owner had taken over the property at 2139 E. Huntingdon Street (outlined in dashed line).

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Figure 21 – Current Aerial View, Looking Northwest

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Figure 22 – Current Aerial View, Looking South

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

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













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NO SMOKING



























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MEN













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Franklin Carpet Mill

Multiple Name: _____

State & County: PENNSYLVANIA, Philadelphia

Date Received: 3/7/2018 Date of Pending List: 4/2/2018 Date of 16th Day: 4/17/2018 Date of 45th Day: 4/23/2018 Date of Weekly List: _____

Reference number: SG100002340

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 4/17/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept, National Register Criterion A.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus *Patrick Andrus* Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218 Date 4/17/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

1515 Arch Street, 10th Floor
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102
Tel: 215.686.7660

Robert Thomas, AIA
Chair

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D.
Executive Director



24 January 2018

Elizabeth Rairigh, Division Chief, Preservation Services
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission
PA State Historic Preservation Office
400 North Street, Second Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: 2141-2145 E. Huntingdon Street, Franklin Carpet Mill

Dear Ms. Rairigh:

I am writing in response to your request that the Philadelphia Historical Commission provide its official Certified Local Government recommendations on the nomination proposing to add the Franklin Carpet Mill, located at 2141-2145 E. Huntingdon Street in Philadelphia to the National Register of Historic Places. At its monthly public meeting on 12 January 2018, the Philadelphia Historical Commission reviewed and discussed the nomination and accepted public testimony. The Commission agreed that the building satisfies National Register Criterion A, in the area of industry, and recommended that the building be added to the National Register of Historic Places. The Commission contends that the property retains sufficient integrity. The property is not listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Thank you for providing the Philadelphia Historical Commission with the opportunity to comment on this nomination.

Yours truly,

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION



February 26, 2018

Paul Loether, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service, US Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington DC 20240

Re: Franklin Carpet Mill; Gotham Silk Mill; and Waverly Garage National Register
Nominations, Philadelphia PA

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find three National Register nominations for your review. Included are signed first pages, CDs containing the true and correct copies of the nominations, and CDs with tif images. Copies of correspondence are enclosed as well.

The proposed action for each nomination is listing in the National Register. Our staff and Historic Preservation Board members support these nominations. If you have any questions please contact April Frantz at 717-783-9922 or afrantz@pa.gov. Thank you for your consideration of these properties.

Sincerely,

Andrea L. MacDonald, Director
State Historic Preservation Office

enc.

ALM/aef