

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

MP-2342

# 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: Gotham Silk Hosiery Company

Other names/site number: NA

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: 2000-2034 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> 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Not For Publication: NA Vicinity: NA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

	<u>2/9/2018</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Pennsylvania Historical &amp; Museum Commission</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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

Signature of commenting official/Title:	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

### 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 Andrus  
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>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION – Manufacturing Facility (Hosiery)  
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION - Warehouse

**Current Functions**

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION - Warehouse

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## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification:** None (Industrial Vernacular)

**Materials:**

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete, Brick

### Narrative Description

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Gotham Silk Hosiery Company property is located in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia, occupying a site at the northwest corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris Streets (extending west to N. Phillip Street). The site measures approximately four-fifths of an acre in area and is urban in nature, largely surrounded by other industrial buildings with some small brick rowhouses to the north. Designed and built in 1922 by William Steele & Sons, the primary resource is a relatively plain ten-story, reinforced concrete and brick building with a prominent fenestration pattern, and a flat roof with a large water tank on the southwest corner. The building was expanded with two modest, one-story brick additions on the south and north elevations in 1943 and 1955, respectively. North of the 1955 addition, there is a paved open area surrounded by a chain-link metal fence. South of the 1922 building, the property consists primarily of a paved open area surrounded by a concrete wall and chain-link fence on the east and south sides of the paved lot and a narrow, long one-story brick garage building built in 1984 along the west. The garage abuts the main building but as there are no internal connections between the garage and the main building, it is counted as a separate, non-contributing resource. The property consists of one contributing resource (the 1922 building with 1943 and 1955 additions) and one non-contributing resource (the 1984 garage). The 1922 building retains integrity. The former complex associated with the Gotham Silk Hosiery Company at this location has been reduced to only the 1922 building. While the losses of formerly-associated buildings and structures is unfortunate, the 1922 building was the largest and most-important resource within the former complex, and is sufficient to convey the company's significance.

#### Narrative Description

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Typical of industrial buildings of the early twentieth century, the 1922 building's reinforced concrete structure is expressed on all four elevations and contains large window openings in most bays, which are currently infilled with translucent fiberglass panels, above brick spandrel panels. On the east elevation (facing N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street), the building is five-bays wide with the two southernmost bays being much narrower than the other three (see photo #2). The first bay from the south on the first floor contains a single-leaf metal door with surrounding concrete block infill, above which is a blank brick panel. The second bay contains a bricked-in opening (part of which is painted) with a multi-light steel transom window above. The third bay contains the main entrance consisting of recessed, double-leaf glazed metal doors with a decorative terra cotta surround that remains the most ornate architectural feature on the building (see photo #2). The entrance is reached by granite steps bookended by granite cheek walls. The fourth and fifth bays contain large former window openings that have been infilled with concrete block, below which are brick spandrel panels that have been painted. The second through tenth floors are

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treated identically. The first and second bays from the south contain relatively small blind brick “openings” that correspond to an interior stairway and have always been blind (see the 1922 rendering in Figure 13). The third through fifth bays contain larger window openings, where the original windows have been replaced on all four elevations with translucent fiberglass panels., some of which have operable vents. The top of the building has a paneled brick parapet with concrete coping, which continues around to the other three elevations. In the two southernmost bays, a brick stair tower extension rises an additional story above the roof.

The south elevation of the ten-story building is seven-bays wide and the center bays are recessed, creating two slightly projecting “wings” at the east and west ends that contain the interior stairways and elevator shafts (see photos #7 and 8). On the first floor, a long one-story garage built in 1984 extends south along the west side of the site. While it appears to extend from the 1922 ten-story building, it abuts it but does not provide any internal connections. The center recessed portion on the first floor has been infilled by a one-story addition built in 1943 (see photo #8). The addition, which is essentially an enclosed loading dock, is three bays wide and contains three raised openings: a single-leaf hollow metal door, which is reached by concrete steps; a chain-link metal gate and an overhead wood garage door. The 1943 addition post-dates the period of significance. The easternmost bay on the first through fourth floors and the westernmost bay on the second through fourth floors are faced in stucco, indicating where a previous four-story building shared a party wall with the 1922 building. The westernmost and easternmost bays on the fifth through tenth floors contain blind brick openings that correspond to interior stairways and have always been blind. The four center recessed bays contain large window openings with translucent fiberglass panels matching those on the east elevation. The top of the building has a paneled brick parapet with a concrete coping. In the two westernmost bays, a tall, cylindrical metal water tank on a four-legged metal platform rises above the roof. In the easternmost bay, a brick stair tower extension rises an additional story above the roof (this is the same stair tower mentioned in the previous paragraph describing the east elevation).

The west elevation (facing N. Phillip Street), is four bays wide (see photos #4 and 5). On the first floor, there are large three-part, multi-light industrial steel windows of equal width with operable awning sash in the first two bays from the north (see photo #6). These windows are original and represent the window type that would have been found in most of the openings on all four elevations. The third bay contains an infilled (with brick) door opening topped by a multi-light steel transom and flanked by two multi-light steel windows. On the second floor, the first, second and fourth bays from the north contain large window openings infilled with concrete block. The third bay is divided into three parts as on the first floor and contains a short “clerestory” window opening in the center flanked by two taller openings, all of which are infilled with concrete block. Because the center opening in the third bay extends down to the floor level, it likely originally functioned as a door opening where materials and goods would be brought into or taken out of the building with a hoist, which remains at the tenth floors as seen in photo #4. The third through tenth floors are treated similarly, but all openings contain translucent fiberglass panels matching those on the other elevations.

The north elevation is eight-bays wide (see photos #4 and 5). On the first floor, the one-story 1955 brick addition obscures the original portion in all eight bays. On the second floor, all bays are infilled with brick with small 1/1 aluminum windows. All bays on the third through tenth floors

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contain large window openings with translucent fiberglass panels, some with operable vents, matching those on the other elevations.

The 1955 one-story brick addition that joins the north elevation of the main building is rectangular, with a concrete water table. At the west end of the addition, a small section of the north elevation protrudes out. The east elevation, which faces 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, contains a former window opening that has been infilled with brick and concrete block (see photo #3), but the other two elevations do not contain any openings. On the east and west elevations and the eastern portion of the north elevation, the lower portion of the brick has been painted. The building has a flat roof with simple metal coping at the roofline. This addition post-dates the period of significance.

The 1984 garage is a long, one-story brick structure that extends from the south elevation of the main building parallel to N. Philip Street. There are no internal connections between the garage and the main building. Facing the open paved area south of the main building, the garage's east elevation contains eight roll-down metal garage doors (see photos #8 and 10). There are also single-leaf metal doors in the center bay and the northernmost bay on the east elevation. There are no openings on the south or west elevations. The building has a flat roof with simple metal coping at the roofline. The garage is a non-contributing resource, as it post-dates the period of significance.

### *Interior*

On the interior, the 1922 building is open in plan on nearly every floor with a row of square concrete columns running along the east-west axis. The columns are consistent in size on all floors. On the ninth floor, the space is subdivided with terra cotta blocks into several smaller rooms, which appears to be a later alteration that occurred within the past 50 years (see photos #31 and 32). The finishes are generally the same throughout the building with concrete floors, concrete columns at the perimeter walls with brick spandrel panels between, and exposed concrete beamed ceilings. The only exception is on the first floor, where the floors are covered with vinyl tile that appears to have been installed in the last 30 to 40 years (see photos #11 and 12). The interiors of the later additions are similarly utilitarian with concrete floors, exposed brick walls, and in the 1943 addition, exposed steel roof trusses (see photo #13). On columns throughout the interior, there are numerous maxims stencil-painted by Gotham Silk to encourage employees and improve morale (see Photo #16, for example). Vertical circulation is provided by two concrete stairs, one at the southeast corner and one at the southwest corner of the building (see photos #14 and 27). Both stairs provide access from the basement to the tenth floor. There are also two freight elevators, one adjacent to the stair at the southeast corner and one in the middle of the stair at the southwest corner of the building, both of which provide access from the basement to the tenth floor. No restrooms currently exist within the building.

### *Integrity*

The Gotham Silk Hosiery Company building retains integrity. The aspect of design is retained in the distinct industrial form of the building. The building's characteristic reinforced concrete frame with brick spandrels, in addition to the prominent and consistent fenestration pattern, reinforce the building's design quality. While many of the windows have been removed or altered, the alterations do not detract from the overall appearance and the original window

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openings, which remain intact and visible. As a result, the original fenestration pattern is easily recognized.

In addition, although the equipment, furnishings and people have long since departed, the aspect of feeling is retained in the intact finishes and voluminous spaces. These features and characteristics effectively relay the sense of place and the notable industrial history of the once prominent manufacturer who occupied this building. The stencils that remain throughout the interior enhance the feeling and association. The aspect of setting is retained in the surrounding neighborhood's largely intact residential and industrial fabric. The Gotham Silk Hosiery Company building stands on its original site among a neighborhood that has changed very little over the last century. The property remains surrounded by many of the same rowhouses that have stood since the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, and this ten-story industrial building continues to dominate the surrounding streetscapes.

As explained below in *Section 8: Statement of Significance*, the portion of the site south of the present ten-story building was once occupied by two late-nineteenth century mill buildings and a boiler house, all of which were demolished in stages between 1943 and 1983. These buildings were likely constructed in the 1880s or 1890s and were occupied by the Universal Hosiery Company around 1900 (the buildings are documented in the 1917 Sanborn map in Figure 10 and are depicted most clearly in a rendering of the present ten-story building in Figure 13). Gotham Silk acquired this property in 1916, moving into the three-story building at the southernmost portion of the site (fronting on Norris Street) in early 1917. The four-story building at the northernmost portion of the site, although owned by Gotham, was leased out to other companies between 1917 and 1922. In 1921, Gotham acquired additional property north of this site and built the present ten-story building in 1922. Neither of the former Universal Hosiery buildings were demolished or altered to make way for the new building, and in fact Gotham occupied all three buildings beginning in 1922. A fire insurance survey from 1924 indicates that all three buildings – both former Universal Hosiery buildings as well as the new ten-story building – contained knitting operations, demonstrating that the function of the two now demolished buildings was not unique within the complex (see Figure 11). Gotham sold the site in 1942 and it was occupied by the Miller North Broad Storage Company in 1943. Miller demolished the four-story mill building and office addition at the center portion of the site (indicated as No. 2 Knitting Mill and No. 4 Office Bldg in the fire insurance survey in Figure 11) as well as the boiler house. A later owner of the building, Kiddie City, demolished the remaining three-story building along Norris Street (indicated as No. 1 Knitting Mill in Figure 11) in 1983.

Although the former Universal Hosiery buildings were demolished after the proposed Period of Significance of 1922-1935, the present ten-story building is more than capable of conveying the significance of the Gotham Silk Hosiery Company. First, as seen in the renderings in Figures 13 and 14, the new 1922 facility dwarfed the nineteenth-century buildings, making Gotham's presence known from virtually any direction for blocks around (a cursory examination of Sanborn maps surrounding the subject property revealed that the ten-story building was one of, if not the tallest building in the immediate Kensington neighborhood. In addition, the total floor area of the new ten-story building – approximately 80,520 square feet – comprised over two-thirds of the floor area in the entire complex (the total floor area of the former Universal Hosiery buildings was 37,520 square feet). Secondly, it was only with the completion of the present ten-story building that Gotham achieved the productive capacity and levels of employment that

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allowed it to become one of the largest and most prominent full-fashioned hosiery companies in the United States. Lastly, apart from the replacement of most of the original steel windows, the ten-story building has changed little from the time of its construction in 1922. Due to its still imposing presence in the neighborhood, the building's current appearance would be unmistakable to former employees. Likewise, the building's rectilinear form, large window openings and expressed concrete structure, which were hallmarks of William Steele & Son's work, would certainly be familiar to the members of the firm who designed it. Gotham employees would also easily recognize the interior, where little has changed since 1922. In fact, numerous maxims, which were stencil painted on columns throughout the interior to encourage employees and improve morale (see Photo #16, for example), survive as perhaps the strongest link between the building and the men and women who once labored there.

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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:** 1922-1935

**Significant Dates:** N/A

**Significant Person:** N/A



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**Cultural Affiliation:** N/A

**Architect/Builder:** William Steele & Sons

### Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Gotham Silk Hosiery Company building was built in 1922 during a period of major expansion by this prominent hosiery manufacturer, which was initially based in New York City. Known for their innovative “Gold Stripe Hosiery,” which became one of the most popular full-fashioned hosiery products nationally by 1920, Gotham was one of the largest hosiery manufacturers in the United States and one of the largest textile firms of any kind in Philadelphia during the 1920s and 30s. During the period when Gotham occupied the building – between 1922 and 1935 – it was part of the company’s single largest plant, of which there were seven spread throughout New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Due to the company’s impressive implementation of the “hand-to-mouth” production format, as well as the plant’s ability to produce millions of pairs of hosiery annually, the Gotham Silk Hosiery Company building is significant under Criterion A, Industry. The Period of Significance begins in 1922, when the building was completed, and ends in 1935, when Gotham closed the plant as a manufacturing site. The significance of the Gotham Silk Hosiery Company Building is evaluated within the historical context established by the *Industrial and Commercial Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia* Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). The property is in the central portion of the boundary established by the MPDF, which defines the Gotham Silk Hosiery Company Building as a factory building that was constructed for and occupied by a single tenant that was directly associated with the textile industry, one of the MPDF’s primary building types.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

The Gotham Silk Hosiery Company was founded in New York City in 1911 by Solon E. Summerfield. Initially involved in the manufacture of ribbons, Summerfield was an entrepreneur who sought to capitalize on one of hosiery’s chief flaws, which was the susceptibility of the garter hem to tear or form runs when the stocking was pulled up over the leg. By developing and patenting a stronger type of garter seam, reinforced with a “gold” thread, Summerfield transformed the hosiery market with his trademarked “Gold Stripe Hosiery,” which eventually became available in nearly every state and territory in the union and made Gotham one of the largest hosiery manufacturers in the country.<sup>1</sup>

Gotham specialized in a type of hosiery known as “full-fashioned,” which became tremendously popular in the United States beginning around 1910. Admired as one of the finer types of leg coverings, full-fashioned hosiery was knitted in silk on a flat frame, allowing the hose to be narrowed where necessary to create a permanently leg-shaped garment that would not lose its form over time. This was an improvement over cheaper seamless cotton hosiery, which was

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<sup>1</sup> Solon E. Summerfield, “Direct Selling as a Sales Policy,” *Administration* IV, no. 2 (August, 1922), 170.

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knitted on a rotary frame and cut to length. Although seamless hosiery was dried on a form to approximate the shape of a leg, the product would often revert to its true cylindrical form, resulting in a baggy appearance thereafter. While this problem was not so apparent as long as skirts remained long, the trend toward shorter skirts beginning in the 1910s greatly increased the demand for better fitted, less opaque hosiery.<sup>2</sup>

At first, Gotham consisted merely of a single storefront, located at 504 Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, and a small manufacturing space that produced hosiery exclusively for the company's own store. But as the popularity of the Gold Stripe product grew, Gotham began selling to other merchants in New York City and nationally and opened additional shops at 1 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street, across the street from the Empire State Building, and on the boardwalk in Atlantic City. As early as 1912, Gold Stripe hosiery was also available in department stores and specialty shops as far west as Portland, Oregon, and Los Angeles, California. And by 1919, Gold Stripe could even be found for sale in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Gotham expanded rapidly between 1911 and 1915, and ultimately the New York plant was unable to meet the growing demand for Gold Stripe hosiery products. Seeking to increase their manufacturing capacity, the company looked to Philadelphia, where the owners of the Universal Hosiery Company were looking to sell their business and property. Universal, which had been in operation since as early as the 1890s (possibly earlier), had occupied a three-story building at the northwest corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris Streets around 1900. While there are no records available to indicate precisely why Philadelphia was chosen, the opportunity presented by Universal, as well as the city's proximity to New York, likely played a role in the decision. Philadelphia also had the infrastructure necessary to support a vast textile industry, much of which was found within the Kensington neighborhood where Universal was already located, as well as virtually unlimited connections by rail to hundreds of other towns and cities. The city was, therefore, a logical and strategic place to open a new hosiery mill. Gotham acquired the Universal property in 1916 and started operations in the early spring of 1917.<sup>3</sup>

Although Gotham owned the entire Universal Hosiery complex, which at that point occupied 2000 through 2014 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, the company initially occupied only the three-story building at the southernmost portion of the site (see the 1917 Sanborn map in Figure 10). The four-story building at the northernmost portion of the site continued to be occupied on the third and fourth floors by other companies, including Atlas Paper Box Company, which likely moved in sometime during 1915 and remained until about December of 1919. Other tenants occupied this building after Gotham acquired the property, including the Bla-Shone Hosiery Company, which leased two floors from 1919 to 1922, and the Weierman Hosiery Company, which occupied an unspecified portion of the building beginning in 1920.

By dramatically expanding its plant during the 1920s, Gotham Silk was not alone among textile manufacturers in the Kensington neighborhood and adjacent Fishtown. In fact, some of the company's largest competitors, including Apex Hosiery at 5<sup>th</sup> and Luzerne Streets, Brownhill & Kramer Hosiery Company at 406 Memphis Street, and the Artcraft Hosiery Company on M

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<sup>2</sup> Philip Scranton, *Figured Tapestry: Production, Markets, and Power in Philadelphia Textiles, 1885-1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 432-433; Philip Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacture at Philadelphia, 1800-1885* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 169.

<sup>3</sup> "Manufacturing in Pennsylvania; In Philadelphia," *The Textile American* XXVII, no. 4 (April 1917), 11.

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Street north of Erie Avenue all expanded their mills during this decade. Like Gotham Silk, in nearly every case these companies hired William Steele & Sons, probably the best-known designers and builders of industrial buildings in Philadelphia during this period, to enlarge their properties. Like Gotham's 1922 building, all of these expansions expressed concrete structures and large multi-light steel windows. Although the tendency was to build out – none of Gotham's competitors built taller than six stories – in this case the constraints of the site at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris Streets necessitated building up. Therefore, the ten-story height of Gotham's 1922 building was somewhat unusual among textile companies in Kensington.

After they acquired their new plant at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris in 1916, the company installed new machinery and gradually worked up to producing about 10,000 pairs of women's and children's stockings a week. By about 1920, the company was producing upwards of 33,000 pairs of stockings every week or about 143,000 dozen a year, a capacity nearly triple that of the New York plant. Although Gotham remained headquartered in New York and even maintained two popular stores there, the company's largest manufacturing presence was in Philadelphia.<sup>4</sup>

But even the new manufacturing space provided by the former Universal mill would not be enough to satisfy the unceasing demand for Gold Stripe products. By 1921, Gotham began to explore the possibility of building two new plants, one in New York and one in Philadelphia. Later in the year and in early 1922, the company gradually acquired parcels north of their Philadelphia plant – 2016-2024 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 2015-2025 N. Philip Street – with the aim of building a modern and significantly larger mill building (Figure 13). By April of that year, the company hired William Steele & Sons of Philadelphia to design and build the new Philadelphia factory (Steele was also responsible for the New York plant), which would be a ten-story, reinforced concrete building measuring about 80,520 square feet in area. The new building would be built on the 2016-2024 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street portion of the property; the buildings on the original site at 2000-2014 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street – those previously occupied by Universal Hosiery – would all remain and would be used by Gotham as part of their knitting operation (see the 1924 fire insurance survey in Figure 12).<sup>5</sup>

Known as the No. 3 Mill, the Philadelphia factory would be exclusively responsible for the knitting of all Gold Stripe hosiery products while the new plant in New York, known as No. 2 Mill (No. 1 Mill was the original New York plant), would handle dyeing and finishing before the stockings were eventually sent out to customers. By July of 1922, the Philadelphia building was largely complete and the company began the "delicate task" of installing new machinery, which was then "adjusted, tested, re-adjusted, [and] tested again, until perfect fabric [was] produced." Running at full capacity, the new Philadelphia mill allowed Gotham to increase their production by about 50%. Knitting also continued in the three-story former Universal Hosiery building at the southernmost portion of the site (indicated as the No. 1. Knitting Mill in the insurance survey in Figure 11), as well as in the four-story building now in the center of the site (indicated as No. 2 Knitting Mill in the insurance survey), which Gotham began to use after the leases of the Bla-Shone and Weierman Hosiery companies expired or were terminated. Although the No. 2 and

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<sup>4</sup> Story, 22-23.

<sup>5</sup> "New York Company to Erect Factory Building on North Second Street," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 2, 1922, "Mill Construction and Business Expansion Projects," *American Silk Journal* Vol. XLI, no. 5 (May 1922), 55;

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No. 1 buildings would be demolished by subsequent owners in 1943 and 1983, respectively, their function as knitting space was not unique within the complex.<sup>6</sup>

Around the same time that Gotham completed the new Philadelphia plant in 1922, the company began to explore new ways of getting their product to market. During its first decade and into the 1920s, Gotham frequently struggled to keep up with ever increasing demand, making deliveries as many as six months after orders were received. Understanding that such a delay had to be overcome in order to keep pace with constantly changing fashions, the company decided to stop taking advance orders and to manufacture only for stock. As explained by Professor George W. Taylor of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Finance in 1928, Gotham's strategy was to keep "a service stock made up of goods in greatest demand, from which orders could be filled immediately; the boast is now made that any order received between the hours of 9A.M. and 4P.M. is filled and the goods in transit before the day's work is ended."<sup>7</sup> Although this production format had been used by manufacturers as early as the turn-of-the-century, the vast scale and efficiency of Gotham's system made the company almost unique during this period. The additional implementation of a network of consumer intelligence, explained below, led some to tout the company's "hand-to-mouth" approach as "one of the most complete" of its day.<sup>8</sup>

In many ways, Gotham's novel production methods were well suited to the fast pace and youthful spirit of Jazz Age-popular culture in the United States. According to historian Sharon McConnell-Sidorick, "Changes in fashion and popular culture brought a radical shortening in the hemlines of women's dresses associated with the 'modern' woman or flapper, and the hosiery, with its provocative seam up the back, was the iconic accessory to the short dresses of the flapper." Carefully attuned to ever shifting trends and the desires of young consumers during this period, Gotham prospered, quickly satisfying the insatiable demand for its product with up-to-the-minute styles and colors. In order to understand which goods were in demand and which ones to stock, Gotham received daily reports from between 80 and 100 stores from around the country detailing sales for the day, including which styles, colors, and sizes were selling best. The company also continued to maintain its small retail locations in New York City, primarily to gauge which products were the most popular. This invaluable information allowed Gotham to stay on top of trends, giving the company an advantage that few had at the time.<sup>9</sup>

Several patents filed by Gotham during the 1920s illustrate the range of products the company offered as well as the innovations its designers achieved to remain competitive. In 1926, for example, the company filed a patent for a new type of "well fitting" full-fashioned stocking "whereby the fullness of the upper or calf portion of the leg is accentuated, while in the lower or ankle portion slenderness and the graceful curvatures are rendered more pronounced", indicating that fit and not just style or color was a primary consideration for Gotham (Figure 18). And in 1928, Gotham filed a design patent for a particular type of ornamentation that would be

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<sup>6</sup> Gotham Silk Hosiery Company Advertisement in *Dry Goods Economist* Vol. 76, no. 4061, p. 70.

<sup>7</sup> Davis, Taylor, Balderston and Bezanson, *Vertical Integration in the Textile Industries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1938), 92; Scranton, *Figured Tapestry*, 392-393;

<sup>8</sup> Leverett S. Lyon, *Hand-To-Mouth Buying* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1929), 412.

<sup>9</sup> Sharon McConnell-Sidorick, *Silk Stockings and Socialism: Philadelphia's Radical Hosiery Workers from the Jazz Age to the New Deal* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 4; Davis et al., 392-393.

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knitted into the stocking well above the ankle, indicating that this particular stocking was meant to be worn with a shorter skirt (Figure 17).<sup>10</sup>

Due in part to Gotham's innovative and highly profitable production and distribution methods – not to mention prolific advertisements in newspapers and trade publications – the company's fortunes soared during the early to mid-1920s. Between 1921 and 1927, earnings increased over 400%, from about \$827,927 to \$3,697,452. The company also embarked on a series of acquisitions that led to an additional four plants in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The first was the purchase of the former Oscar Nebel Company plant in Philadelphia, a four-story hosiery mill at the southwest corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Courtland Streets, about three miles north of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris factory, in June of 1925 (Oscar Nebel remained in business, having moved to a new plant).<sup>11</sup> This was followed by the acquisition of the Largman-Gray Hosiery Company in 1926. Gotham occupied the Largman-Gray plant at M Street and Torresdale Avenue, about two-and-a-half miles northeast of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street mill, in June of that year.<sup>12</sup> The company's largest acquisition occurred in December of 1926, when Gotham purchased the Onyx Hosiery Company, which maintained a large factory complex in Dover, New Jersey, with a branch in Wharton, New Jersey. Neither the Oscar Nebel nor the Largman-Gray plants remain, however the Dover, New Jersey plant, with its collection of late-nineteenth and early twentieth century factory buildings, remains largely intact and likely would be recognizable to former Gotham employees. The Wharton, New Jersey, plant does not remain.<sup>13</sup>

Just prior to its Oscar Nebel and Largman-Gray acquisitions, Gotham's workforce consisted of 780 employees, making it the largest full-fashioned hosiery company in Philadelphia by 1925. Gotham's next biggest competitors were the H.C. Aberle Company (711 employees) and Apex Hosiery (686 employees).<sup>14</sup> But with two additional Philadelphia mills by the end of 1925, not to mention a growing workforce at its largest plant at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris, the company's workforce would more than double to 1,512 by 1927 (based on the 1925 employment figures for Oscar Nebel and Largman-Gray, Gotham's workforce at each of these plants would average about 300 during the 1920s, meaning that the plant at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris remained the largest by far). Although Apex surpassed Gotham by 1927 to become the largest full-fashioned firm in Philadelphia with 1,769 employees, Gotham remained the second largest and therefore one of the major players not just in hosiery, but in the Philadelphia textile industry as a whole. In fact, Gotham ranked as the sixth largest textile manufacturer of any type in the city by this time, and was the 27<sup>th</sup> largest industrial firm in Philadelphia overall.<sup>15</sup>

Yet another indication of Gotham's success and the immense popularity of full-fashioned hosiery overall during this period is the production data gleaned from the Census Bureau's

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<sup>10</sup> Katherine Ginnane, inventor; Gotham Silk Hosiery Company, assignee. Stocking. US patent 1,729,653, filed November 1, 1926, issued October 1, 1929; Ralph A. Day, designer; Gotham Silk Hosiery Company, assignee. Design for a stocking. US design patent 79,186, filed November 13, 1928, issued August 13, 1929.

<sup>11</sup> "Factory Property Transferred," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 7, 1925.

<sup>12</sup> "Purchases Another Plant," *New York Times*, June 11, 1926.

<sup>13</sup> "Hosiery Merger Underway," *New York Times*, November 5, 1926.

<sup>14</sup> Pennsylvania Department of Internal Affairs, *Fifth Industrial Directory of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA, 1925).

<sup>15</sup> Philip Scranton, "Large Firms and Industrial Restructuring: The Philadelphia Region, 1900-1980," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* CXVI, No. 4 (October 1992),

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Biennial Census of Manufacturers. Whereas in 1919 there were 92 full-fashioned mills in the United States producing 6,323,934 dozen pairs of hosiery annually, by 1928, there were 235 mills producing 19,771,030 dozen pairs. Between 1924 and 1926, Gotham itself increased its annual shipments from 439,611 to 774,000 dozen pairs, a dramatic change from the 143,000 dozen pairs produced in 1920. Based on the 1926 production figures for all full-fashioned companies – 12,365,828 dozen pairs were made nationally that year – Gotham constituted approximately 6.25% of the entire industry, a significant achievement considering the company had 234 competitors.<sup>16</sup> It is likely, however, that Gotham's impact was even larger based on the fact that in 1927 the company began to license other companies to manufacture and distribute its patented Gold Stripe products. The first companies to enter into such an agreement were Julius Kayser & Co, the Propper Hosiery Corporation, and the Combine Hosiery Corporation, all located in New York City. The Oscar Nebel Company, whose former plant Gotham had acquired in 1925, was also granted a license that year.<sup>17</sup> In 1928, Gotham licensed an additional nine firms in Philadelphia, New York, and North Carolina, which altogether would produce an additional 1,500,000 dozen pairs of Gold Stripe hosiery annually.<sup>18</sup>

Gotham Silk's ascendancy during the 1920s led to a public offering in October of 1925. That month, 100,000 shares of common stock were offered to the public on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) by Hallgarten & Co. and Merrill, Lynch & Co. Within hours of the market's opening on October 30<sup>th</sup>, all 100,000 shares had been sold at \$27.50 per share, netting the company \$2,750,000. Gotham's increasing profitability allowed the company to inaugurate dividends to shareholders at the annual rate of \$2.50 per share, a figure that increased to as much as \$7.00 toward the end of the decade.<sup>19</sup> Just prior to the public offering, Gotham also successfully incorporated the company in the State of Delaware, which after passing its General Corporation Law in 1899 was known for having the most business-friendly legal environment in the United States. The provisions of this legislation made it easier for Gotham to become a corporation, which was necessary for listing on the NYSE, as well as to execute future mergers and protect shareholders from liability, among numerous other benefits.<sup>20</sup>

Despite Gotham's success, however, by 1929 there were signs that the full-fashioned industry was becoming oversaturated due to years of intense production. Gotham itself had already recorded its first ever decline in earnings, from \$7.69 per share in 1927 to \$6.00 per share in 1928. At a convention in Philadelphia in July of 1929 year, a committee of manufacturers led by Gotham's own Solon E. Summerfield met to discuss the prospects for the coming years. One of the convention's keynote speakers, Professor George W. Taylor of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Finance, remarked that "the full fashioned industry is rapidly approaching the period where the danger of over-development has become eminent." Taylor, who had spent a year studying the full-fashioned hosiery industry, culminating in a major study entitled *Significant Postwar Changes in the Full-Fashioned Hosiery Industry*, also provided

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<sup>16</sup> George W. Taylor, *Significant Post-War Changes in the Full-Fashioned Hosiery Industry* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1929), 12; Charles P. White, "Shall We Control Demand or Follow It," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 139 (September 1928), 131.

<sup>17</sup> "Adopts New Manufacturing Policy," *New York Times*, December 19, 1927.

<sup>18</sup> "Gotham Silk Hosiery Licenses 9 Concerns," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 9, 1928.

<sup>19</sup> "Gotham Silk Issue Sold," *New York Times*, October 31, 1925.

<sup>20</sup> "Silk Company Chartered," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), October 28, 1925; S. Samuel Arsht, "A History of Delaware Corporation Law," *Delaware Journal of Corporate Law*, Vol. 1, no. 1 (1976), 7-8.

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enlightening statistics that clearly showed that full-fashioned hosiery was in decline. A result of the conference was that manufacturers began to cooperate on prices, agreeing to set fixed rates they believed would stabilize the market.<sup>21</sup>

While labor relations in the full-fashioned industry during the 1920s had been relatively stable due to “ever increasing” wages, Gotham workers, along with those at many other firms, began to organize and put pressure on their employers as the security of their jobs became threatened. In fact, it was at this time that labor interests began to play a major role in shaping the future of the full-fashioned industry. At an April 1929 convention in Philadelphia, for example, the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, led by Gotham knitter Gustave Geiges, pressed the manufacturers committee to abandon their proposal for what was known as the “double-machine” or “two-machine” system. In this scheme, two machines, which had always been operated by two knitters, would be operated by a single knitter. As a concession, the AFFFHW agreed to wage cuts they viewed as “equitable and necessary for the good of the industry” and as necessary to save their jobs.<sup>22</sup>

Although the manufacturers and the AFFFHW endeavored to minimize the losses to their balance sheets and the full-fashioned workforce, the Great Crash of 1929 greatly exacerbated the problem faced by large hosiery manufacturers. Due to sales and profits that continued to decline – in 1930 Gotham actually recorded its first loss, amounting to \$558,979 – the company was forced to close its largest plant at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris Streets in Philadelphia, at least temporarily, thereby laying off over 1,000 workers.<sup>23</sup> The other smaller plants in Philadelphia and those in New Jersey remained in operation, but would produce only a fraction of the hosiery made by Gotham at its peak during the mid-1920s.

By late 1931, conditions had begun to improve slightly, allowing Gotham to record modest earnings of \$62,765 that year, which amounted to \$1.98 per share, but only a fraction of the \$7.69 per share earned in 1927.<sup>24</sup> Still, by 1932 Gotham executives were optimistic enough to reopen the plant at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris Streets, hiring about 2,000 workers to repopulate the building. Regarding the reopening, Emil Rieve, who had succeeded Geiges as president of the AFFFHW in 1929, remarked that “instead of taking care of spurts in demand from time to time by falling back on shift work, the Gotham Company will, as far as possible, spread the work over a large number of employes [sic] on a single-shift basis.”<sup>25</sup> After the mill reopened, Gotham was once again the second largest full-fashioned firm in the city, still behind Apex, which had 2,209 employees according to a 1931 industrial directory.<sup>26</sup> By September of 1932, further improvements in the full-fashioned market led Gotham to transition at least 1,400 of its single-shift employees at the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris plant to full-time status.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> “Hosiery Interests Form Agreement,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 25, 1929.

<sup>22</sup> “Discuss Wage Cuts in Knitting Industry,” *New York Times*, April 18, 1929; Scranton, *Figured Tapestry*, 438-439.

<sup>23</sup> “Gotham Silk Hosiery,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 11, 1931.

<sup>24</sup> “\$1.98 Share Earned by Gotham Hosiery,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 17, 1932.

<sup>25</sup> “Gotham Mill to Reopen,” *New York Times*, August 29, 1932.

<sup>26</sup> Pennsylvania Department of Internal Affairs, *Seventh Industrial Directory of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA, 1931), 561-562.

<sup>27</sup> “Hosiery Trade Gains,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 12, 1932.

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Although the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris plant was again operating at full capacity by the end of 1932, signaling a reversal of fortunes for Gotham, the company would never again experience the tremendous growth of the 1920s. Full-fashioned hosiery, though still popular, was no longer a critical component of female fashion during the 1930s. In addition, Gotham faced increasing competition from hosiery firms in the southern states, which lured textile manufacturers away from Philadelphia and the Northeastern United States due to their lower taxes, wages and open-shop laws. In fact, between the years 1929 and 1935, Philadelphia's share of the national hosiery market decreased from 33% to 27% while in the south, capacity increased from 7% to 17% over the same period.<sup>28</sup> By 1935, Gotham, though still earning a modest annual profit, decided to close the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris plant for good, relying for several years on their other, much smaller Philadelphia mills (the company had also previously sold its New Jersey plant in 1931). From 1935 until 1942, when Gotham finally sold the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris property, the building was used only for the storage of knitting machinery.<sup>29</sup>

In 1939, in an effort to reorganize and consolidate knitting and finishing operations into one city, Gotham decided to build two new plants in Philadelphia. First, the finishing plant in New York was relocated to a new building at Jasper and Butler Streets in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia, while knitting would take place at a new mill at the former Largman-Gray property at M Street and Torresdale Avenue, in the Frankford section of the city.<sup>30</sup> Like the former Largman-Gray plant, the mill at Jasper and Butler no longer stands. Two years later, in 1941, Gotham moved its headquarters from New York to Philadelphia. By 1951, however, only the finishing plant remained in operation in Philadelphia after Gotham moved its knitting mill to Massachusetts where the company began to produce hosiery in newer materials such as nylon. Although it has not been determined when the company finally closed, it appears to have remained in business at least until the early 1970s.

After Gotham sold the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Norris plant in 1942, the building was very briefly owned (but not occupied) by the Progress Manufacturing Company, a maker of light fixtures. In 1943 the property was sold again, this time to the Miller North Broad Storage Company, which demolished some portions of the former Universal Hosiery Company buildings south of the present ten-story building, and added the existing one-story addition on the south side of the main building. After functioning as a storage facility for several years, the building was purchased in the early 1950s by Kiddie City, a chain retailer of toys and recreational products, for use as a warehouse and distribution center. Kiddie City built the existing one-story addition on the north side of the building in 1955. Aside from the addition, it does not appear they made any other substantial changes to the property, but likely found the openness of the building's floor plan easily adaptable to warehousing and distribution. In 1968, the Charles Schober Company, a manufacturer of wicker furniture and basket products, occupied the building and continues to use it as a warehouse today.<sup>31</sup> Schober demolished the last remaining portion of the former Universal Hosiery Company Mill, a four-story building directly south of the ten-story building, in 1983, building the existing one-story garage that year.

<sup>28</sup> *Monthly Labor Review* 43 (1936), 558.

<sup>29</sup> New York Stock Exchange, Listing Statement of the New York Stock Exchange Vo. 107 (New York: F.E. Fitc, 1936),

<sup>30</sup> "Mill Moves Here; Brown Hails Drive," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 26, 1939; "New Gotham Mill Starts Operations," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 4, 1939.

<sup>31</sup> "2d St. Building Is Acquired by Basket Firm," *Evening Bulletin*, February 2, 1968.



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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

### Books and Articles:

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*Pennsylvania Historical Review: City of Philadelphia, Leading Merchants and Manufacturers*. Philadelphia: Historical Publishing Company, 1886.

Ward, Gerald W.R., editor. *The Grove Encyclopedia of Materials and Techniques in Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

### Newspapers\*:

*New York Times*

*Philadelphia Inquirer*

*The Times* (Philadelphia)

\*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: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property:** less than 1 (~0.8 acres)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

Latitude: 39.981078 Longitude: -75.137401

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated property is shown on the accompanying map entitled "Site Plan and Chronology." (Figure 2)

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property includes the entire parcel on which the present building is situated. The current parcel matches the boundary of the property during the period of significance. No extant resources historically associated with the Gotham Silk Company at this location have been excluded.

**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: September-December, 2017

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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- **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**

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Gotham Silk Hosiery Company

City or Vicinity: Philadelphia

County: Philadelphia State: PA

Photographer: Robert Powers

Date Photographed: June 23, 2017

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

<i>Photograph #</i>	<i>Description of Photograph</i>
1.	South and east elevations, view northwest
2.	East elevation, view west
3.	East and north elevations, view southwest
4.	West elevation, view southeast
5.	West elevation, view east
6.	West elevation, view northeast
7.	West elevation, view northeast
8.	South elevation and open area, view north
9.	Open area south of the building, view south
10.	Site and south elevation, looking northwest
11.	First floor, view west
12.	First floor, view east
13.	First floor of 1943 addition, view west
14.	Second floor, stairway, view east
15.	Second floor, view north
16.	Second floor, column detail, view north
17.	Second floor, view northwest
18.	Third floor, view south
19.	Third floor, view north
20.	Third floor, view southeast
21.	Fifth floor, view north
22.	Fifth floor, view northwest
23.	Seventh floor, view north
24.	Seventh floor, view northwest
25.	Eighth floor, view northwest
26.	Eighth floor, view east
27.	Eighth floor, stairway, view west
28.	Eighth floor, stairway, view southwest
29.	Ninth floor, view north

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30.	Ninth floor, view east
31.	Ninth floor, view west
32.	Ninth floor, view north
33.	Roof, view west
34.	Roof, view east

## Index of Figures

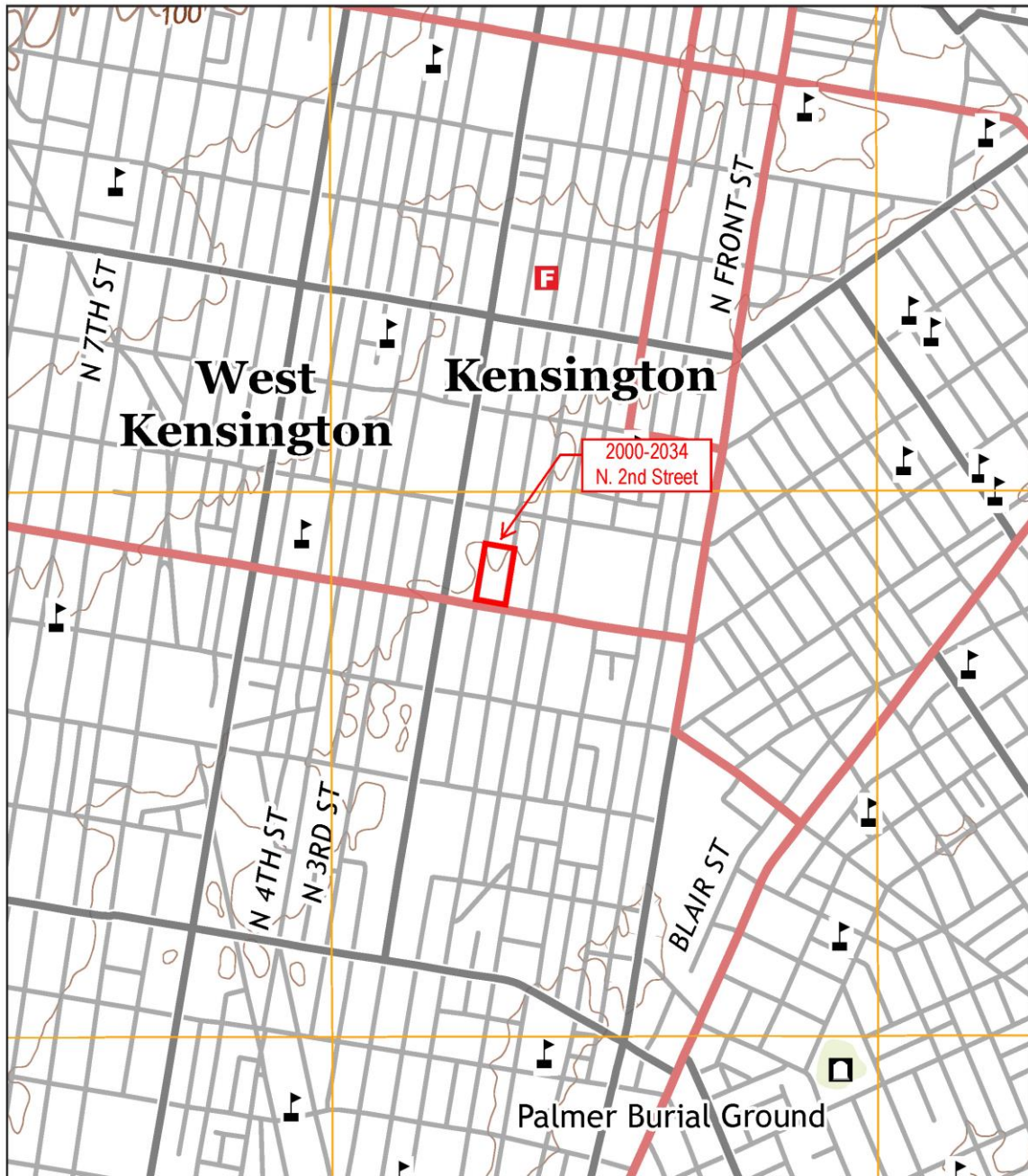
<i>Figure #</i>	<i>Description of Figure</i>
1.	USGS Map – Philadelphia Quadrangle, Pennsylvania-New Jersey (2016)
2.	Site Plan with National Register Boundary and Building Chronology
3.	Photograph Key – Site
4.	Photograph Key – First Floor
5.	Photograph Key – Second and Third Floors
6.	Photograph Key – Fourth and Fifth Floors
7.	Photograph Key – Sixth and Seventh Floors
8.	Photograph Key – Eighth and Ninth Floors
9.	Photograph Key – Tenth Floor and Roof
10.	Sanborn Map, 1917
11.	Associated Factory Mutual Insurance Company Survey, 1924
12.	Sanborn Map, 1950
13.	Artistic Rendering of the Building, 1922
14.	Rendering of the Building from <i>The Story of Gold Stripe Hosiery</i> , 1921
15.	Advertisement from the <i>Textile Economist</i> , 1922
16.	Gold Stripe Hosiery Box, Undated (likely 1920s)
17.	U.S. Design Patent 79,186 (1928) - Stocking
18.	U.S. Patent 1,729,653 (1929) - Stocking

**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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USGS Map - Philadelphia Quadrangle, Pennsylvania-New Jersey (2016)

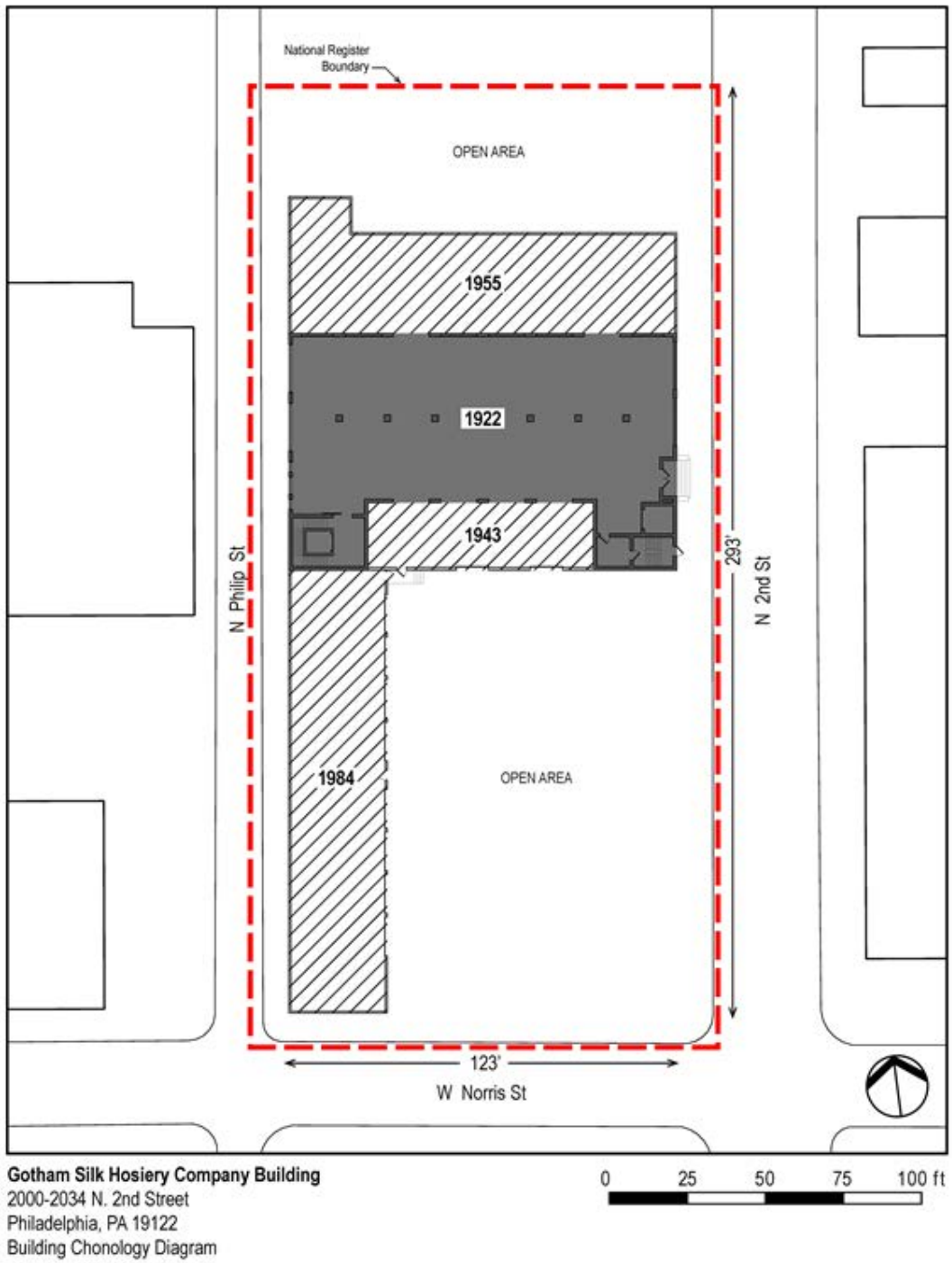
Gotham Silk Hosiery Company  
2000-2034 N. 2nd Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Latitude	Longitude
39.981078	-75.137401

Figure 1: USGS Map Excerpt

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**Figure 2: Site Plan and Chronology**  
*(the parcel containing the Gotham Silk Hosiery Company property is within the dashed line)*

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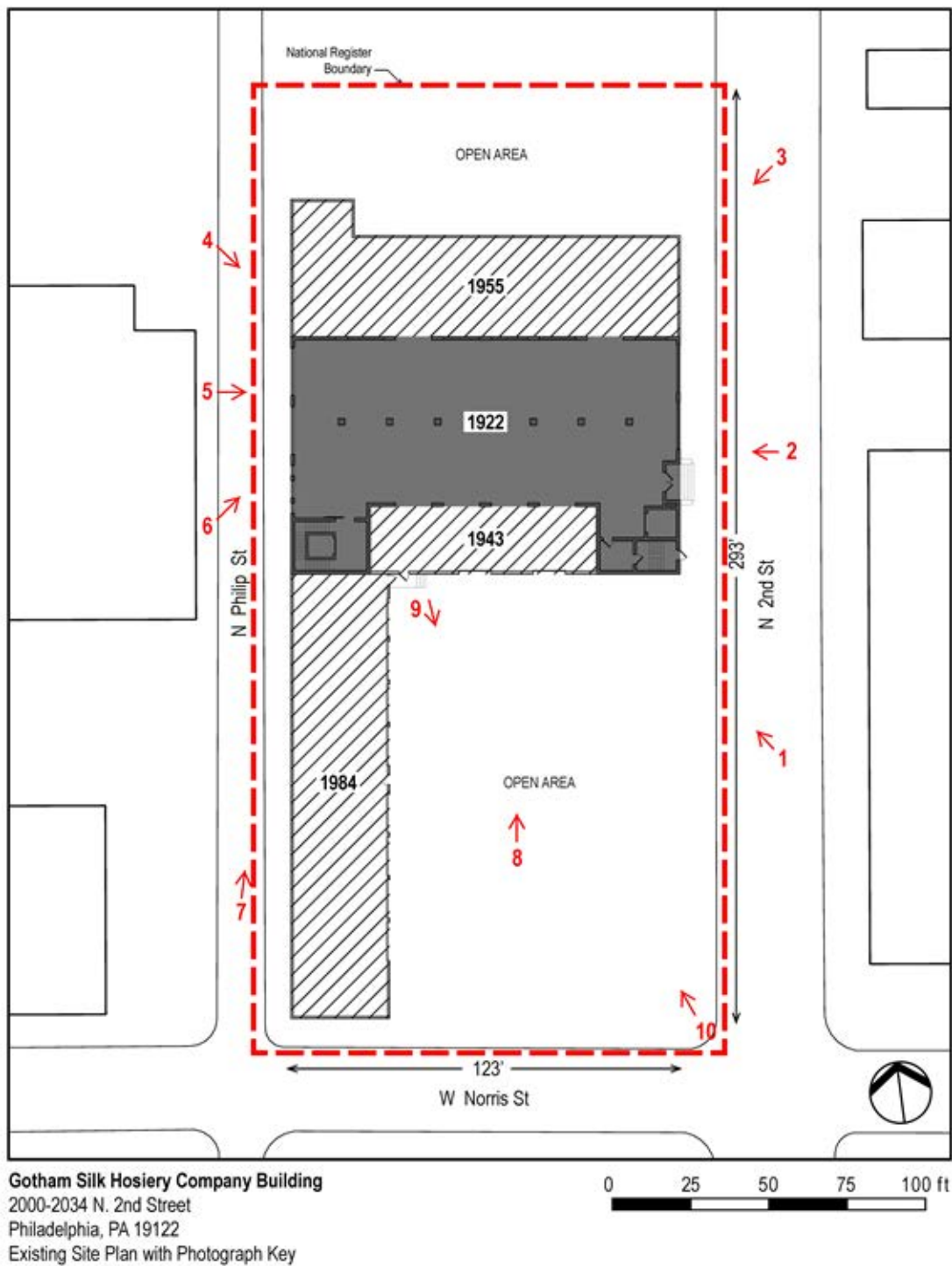
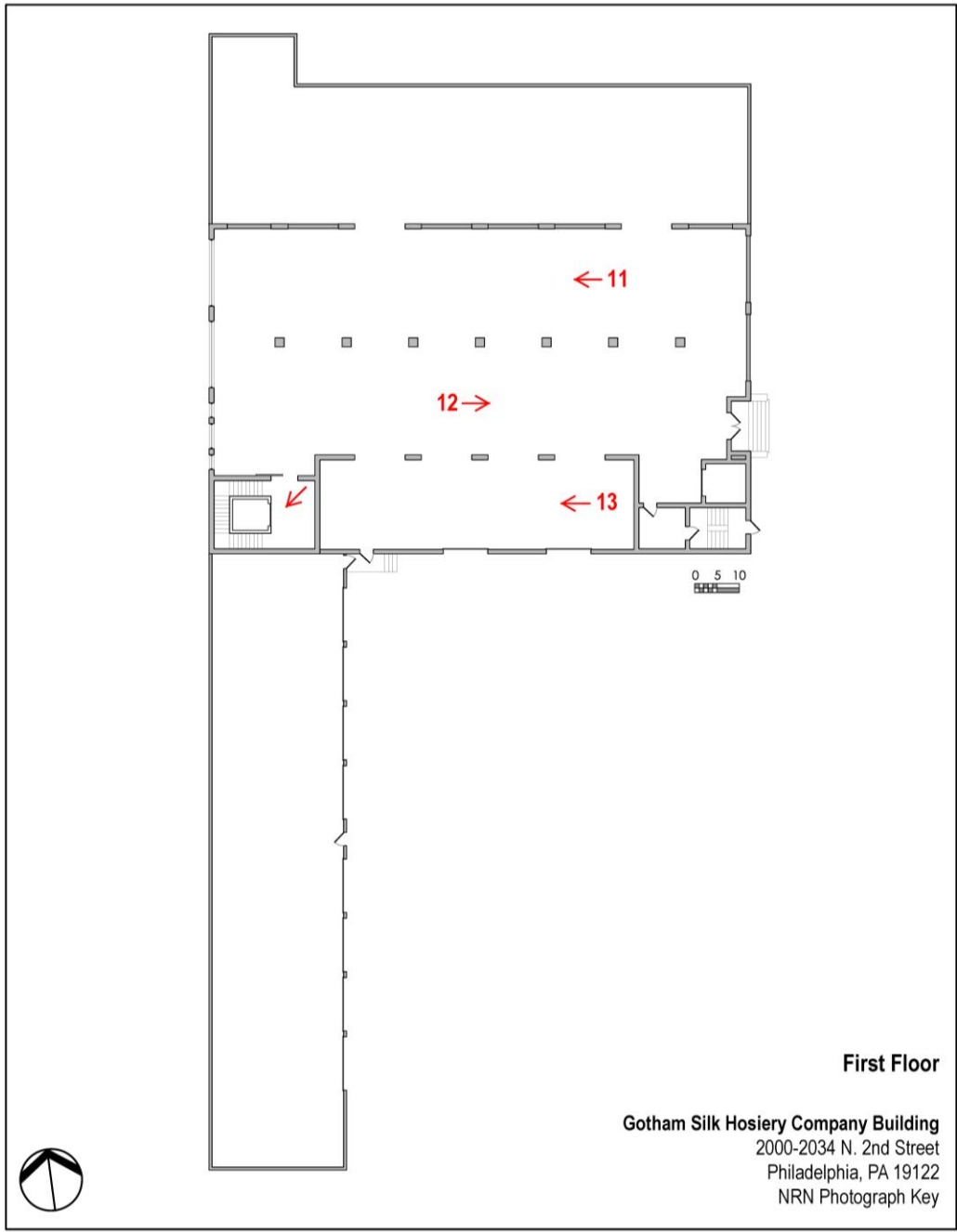


Figure 3: Exterior Photo Key



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**Figure 4: Interior Floor Plan and Photo Key, First Floor**



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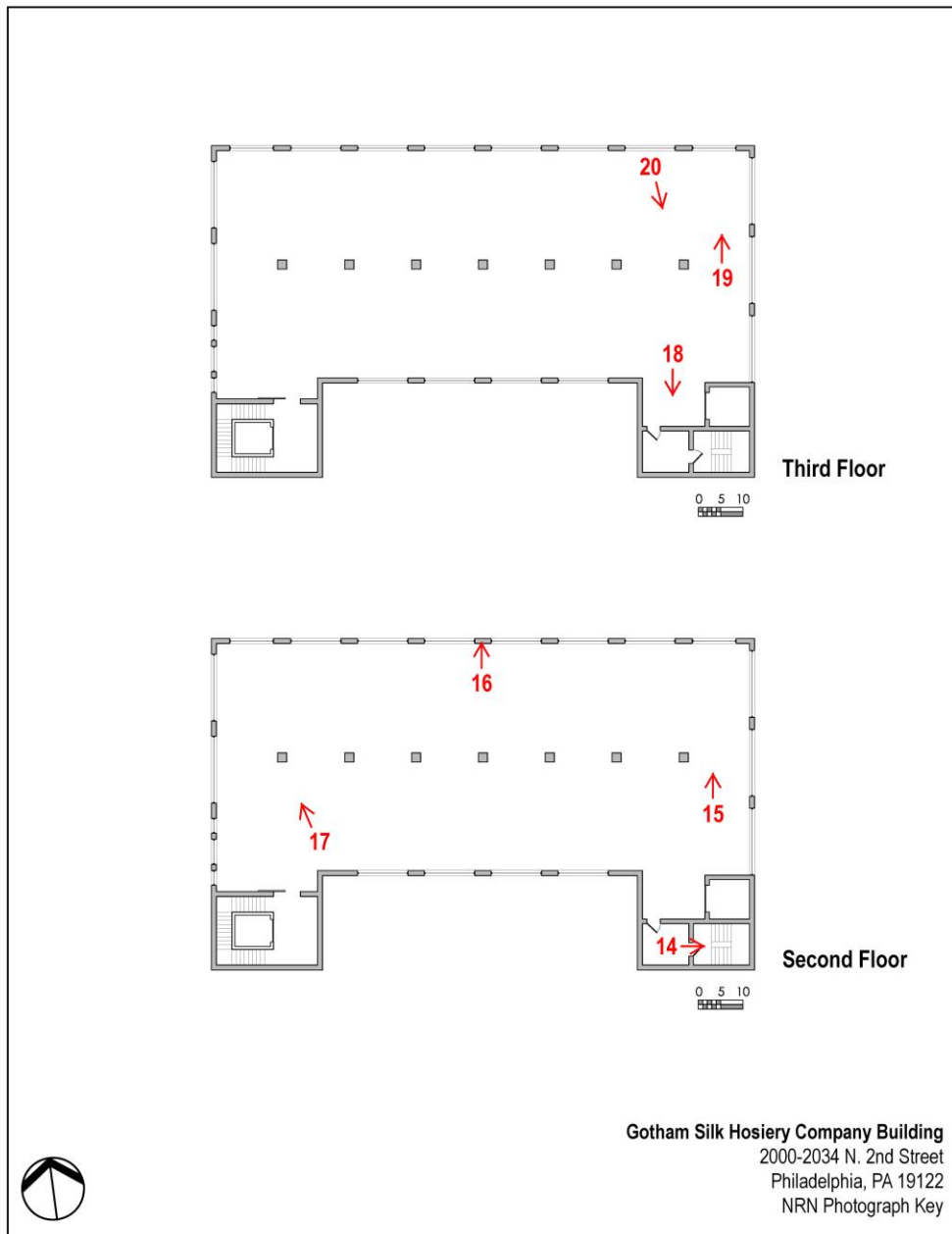
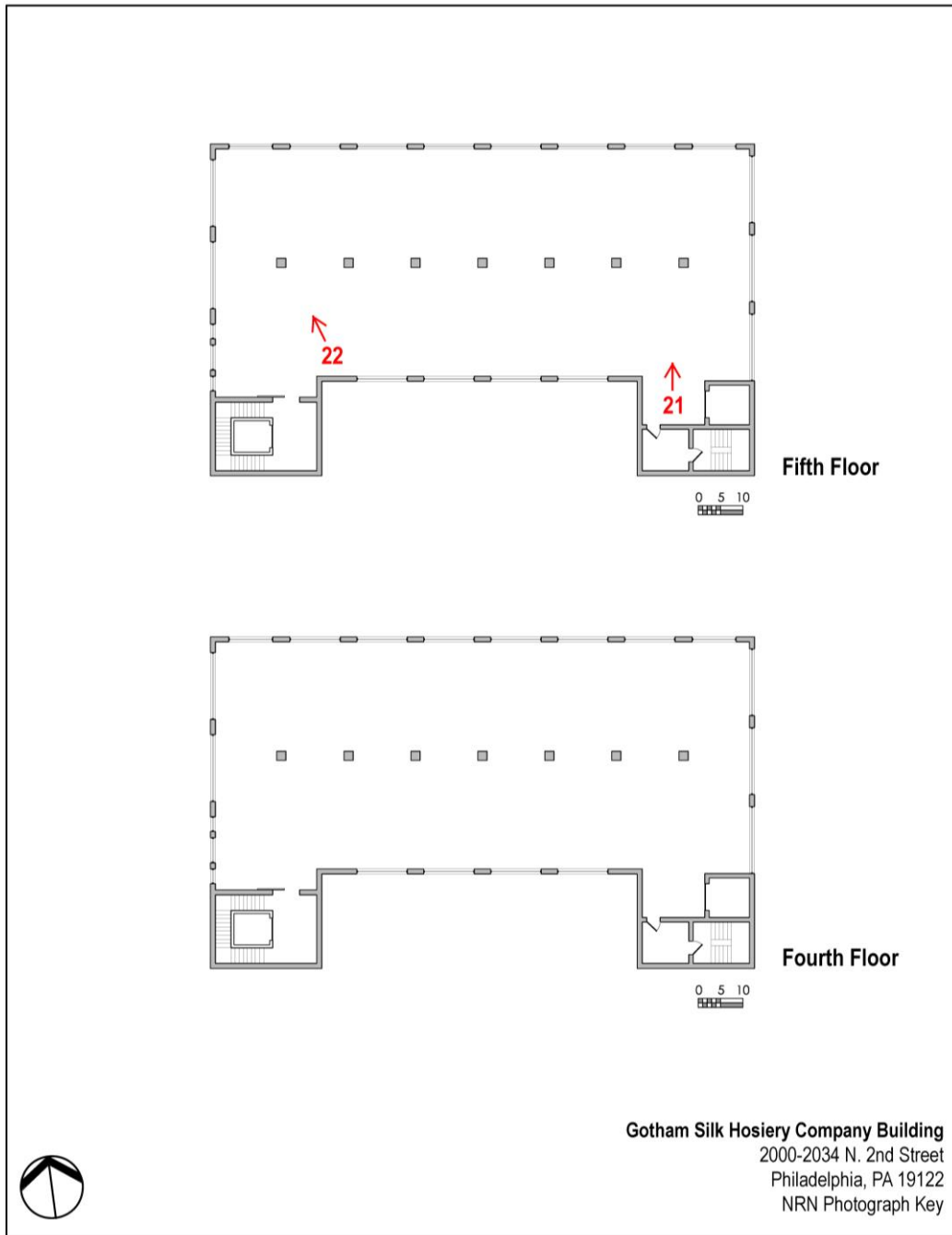


Figure 5: Interior Floor Plan and Photo Key, Second and Third Floors

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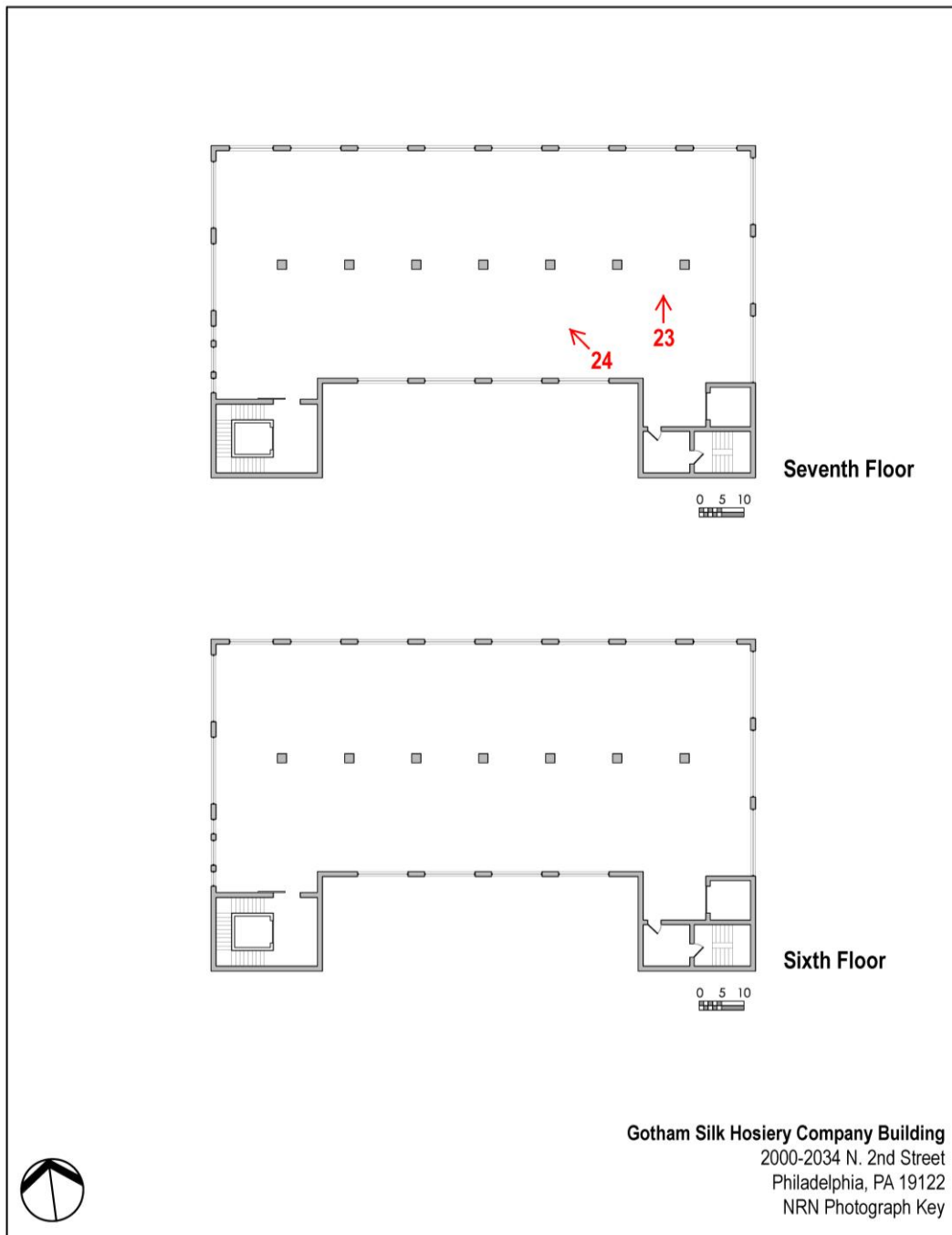
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**Figure 6: Interior Floor Plan and Photo Key, Third and Fourth Floors**

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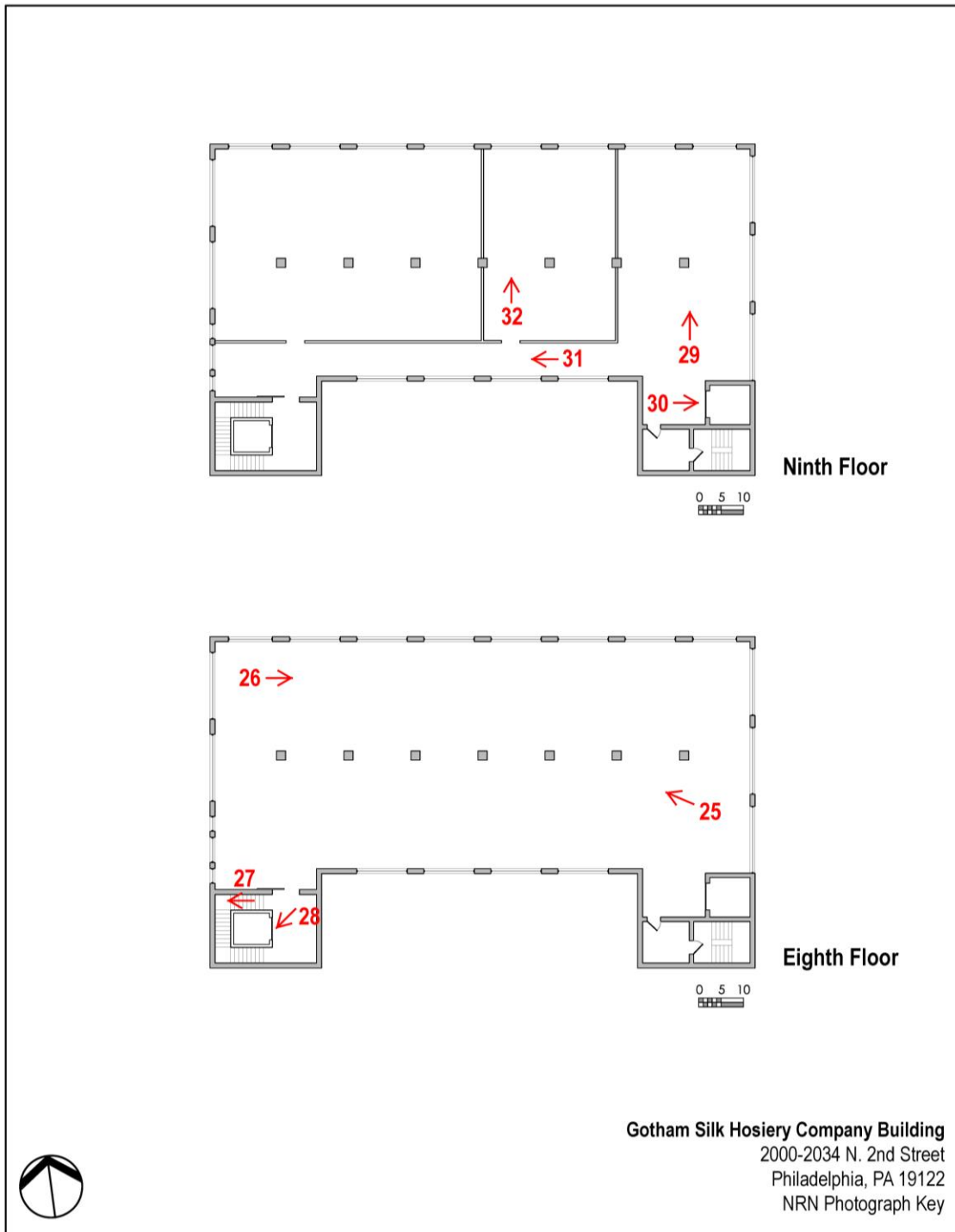
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**Figure 7: Interior Floor Plan and Photo Key, Sixth and Seventh Floors**

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**Figure 8: Interior Floor Plan and Photo Key: Eighth and Ninth Floors**

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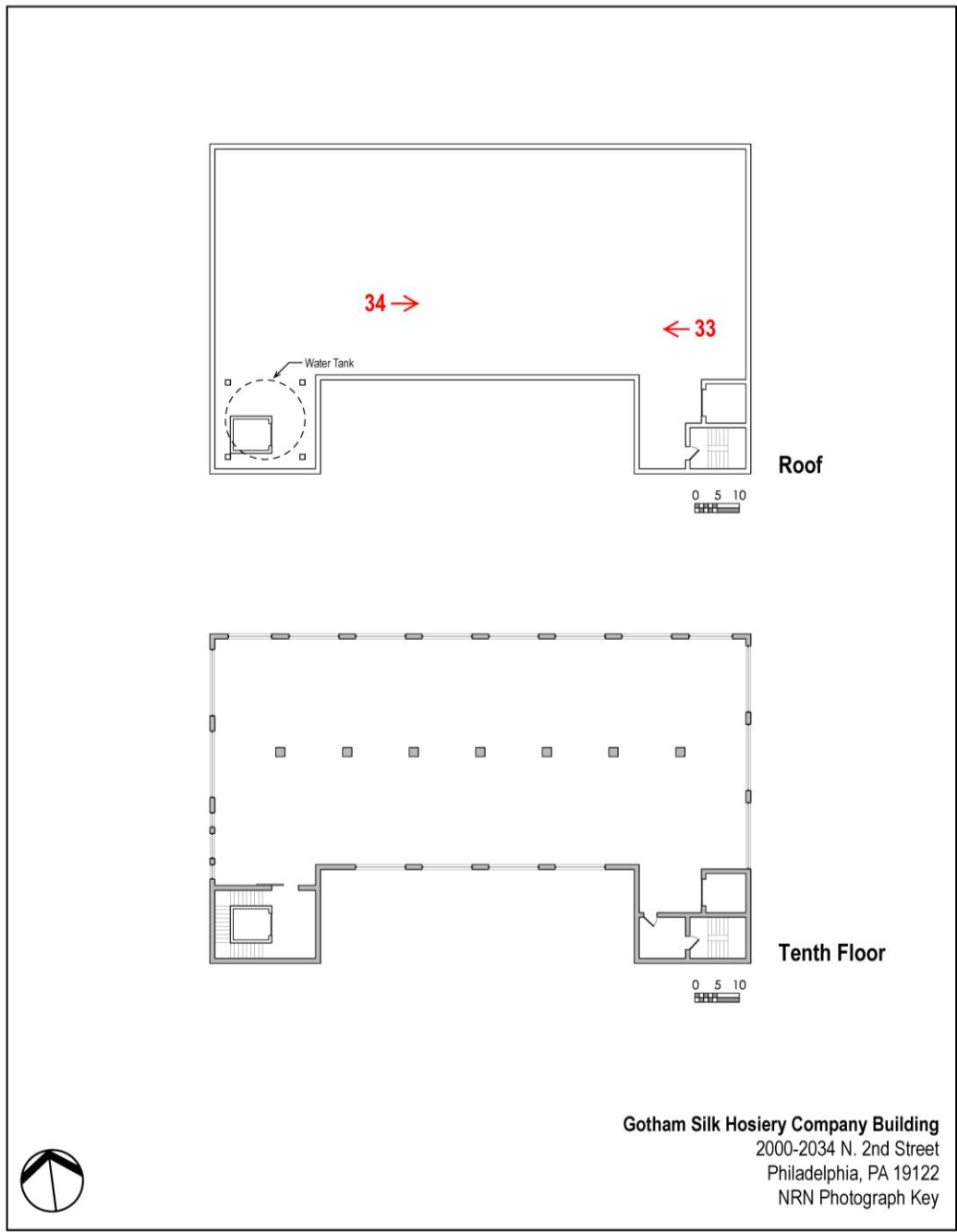
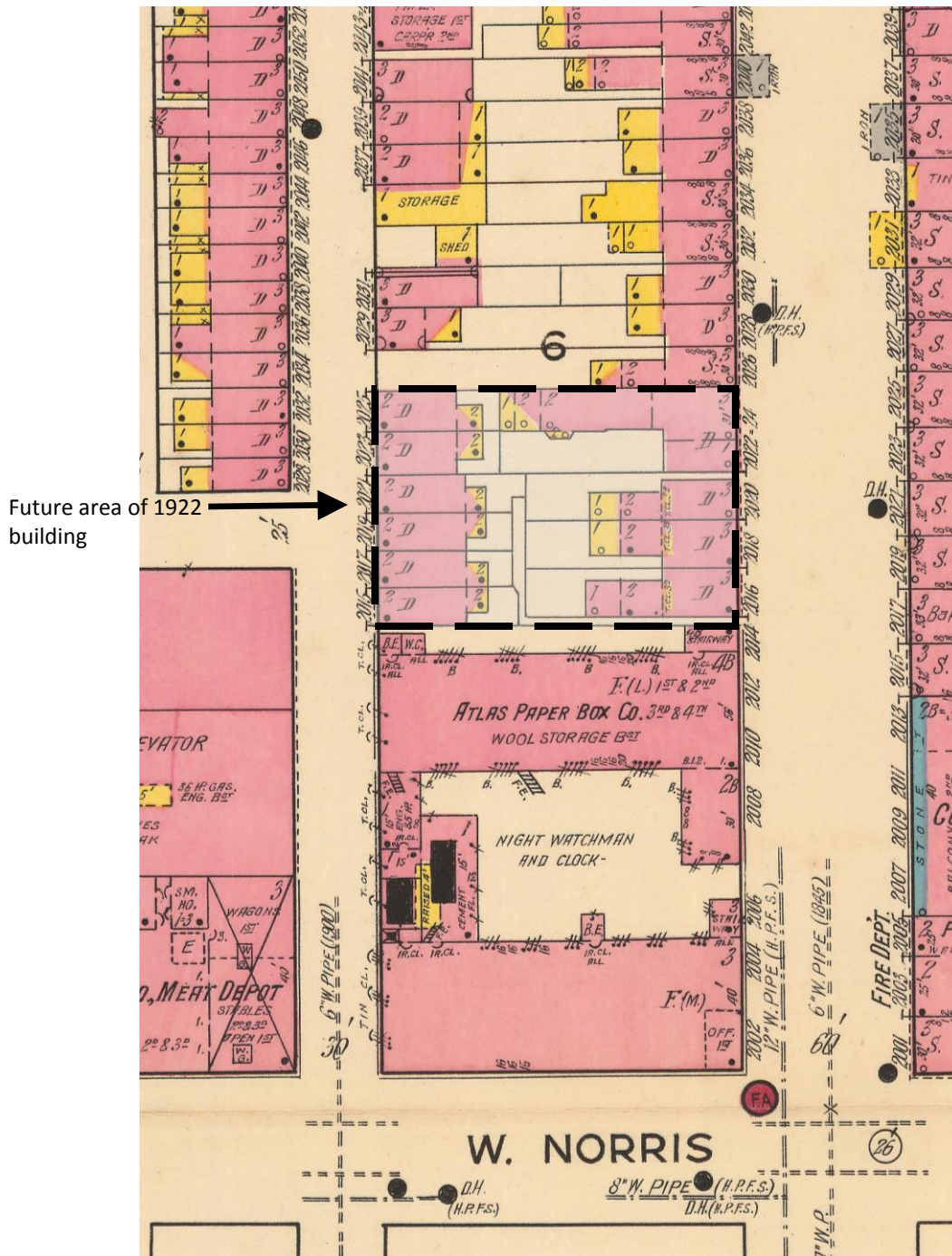


Figure 9: Interior Floor Plan, Tenth Floor and Roof Plan and Photo Key

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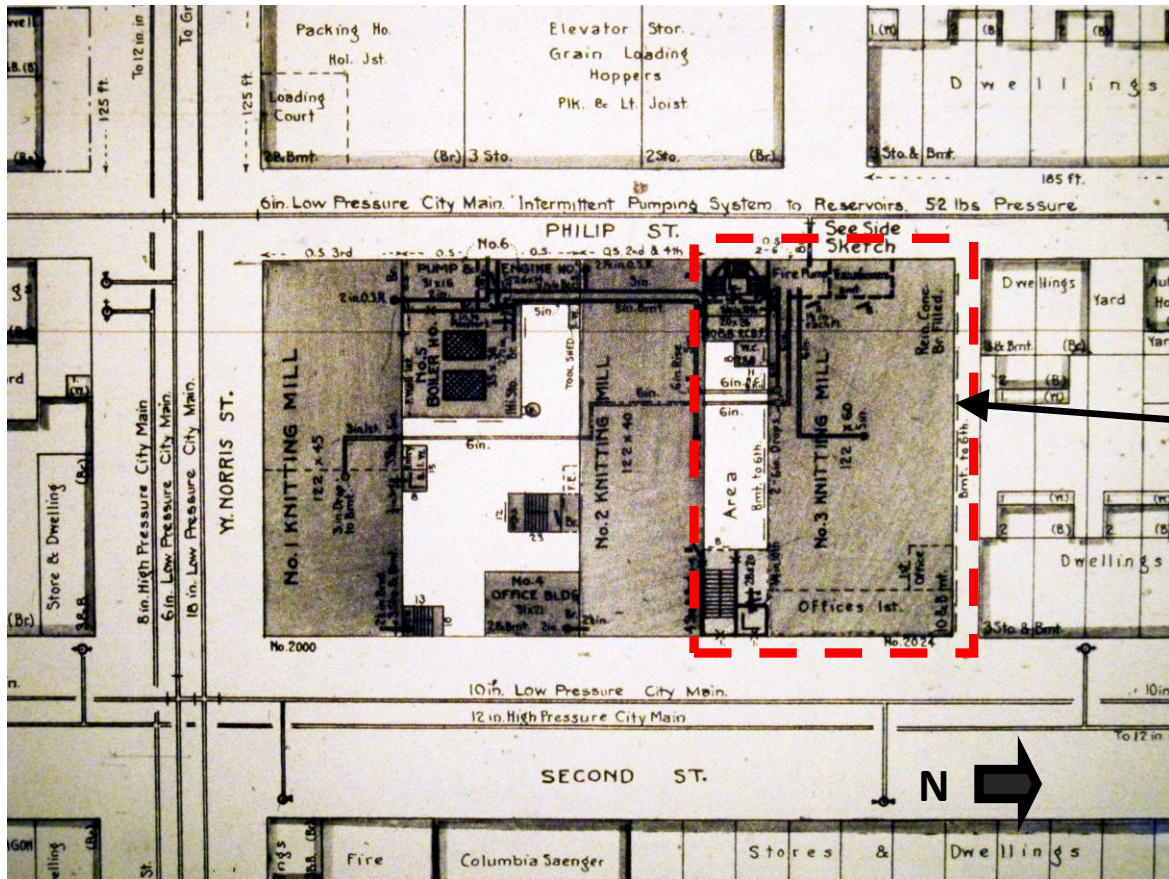


**Figure 10** – Sanborn Map, 1917. This map shows the property prior to Gotham’s purchase. In 1922 Gotham acquired additional land north of the Atlas Paper Box building to build the present 10-story building (area indicated above by dashed line).



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1922 building shown inside dashed line

Figure 11 – Associated Factory Mutual Insurance Company Survey, 1924. The ten-story 1922 building location is indicated within the dashed line.

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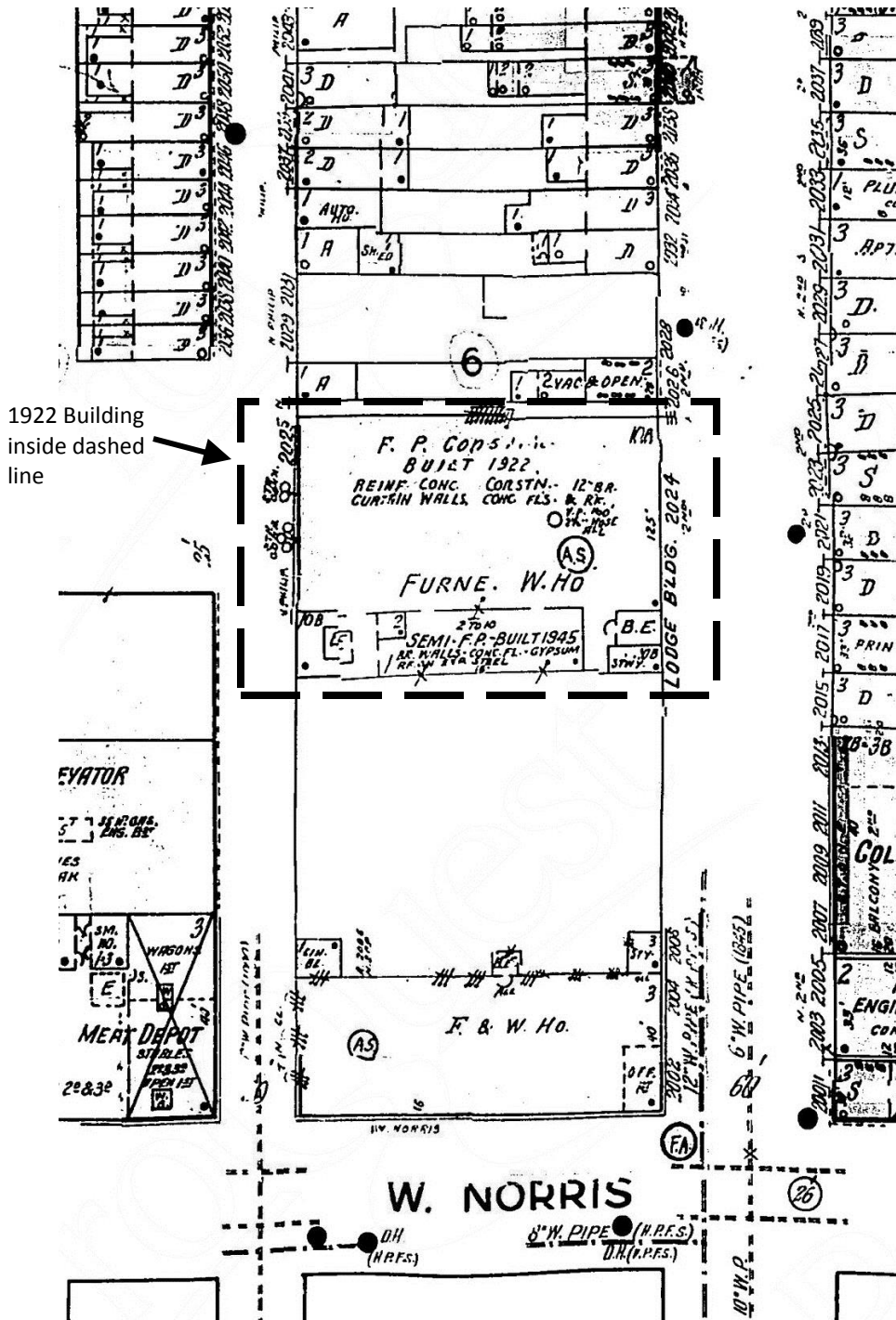


Figure 12 – Sanborn Map, 1950. This map shows the property after it was acquired by the Miller North Broad Storage Company, which demolished a portion of the former Atlas Paper Box complex just south of Gotham’s 1922 building (the 1922 building is shown inside the dashed line).



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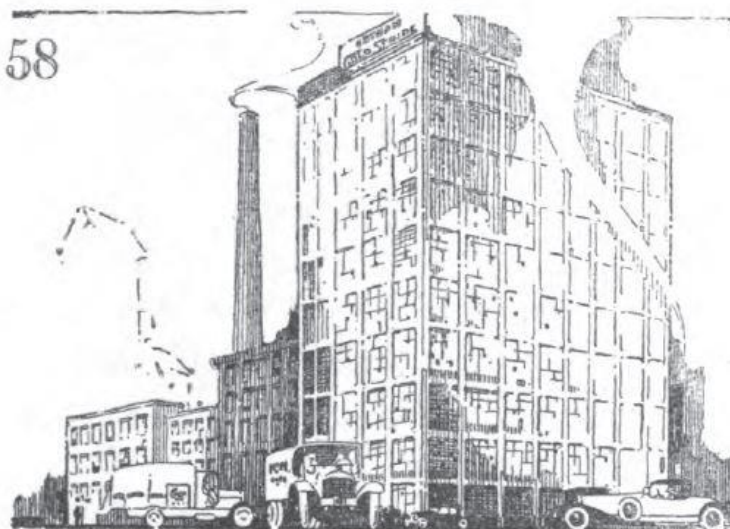


NEW PLANT OF GOTHAM SILK HOSIERY CO. NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN PHILADELPHIA. THE OLD PLANT IS SEEN AT THE LEFT.

**Figure 13** – Rendering of the new plant in 1922, from *Silk Journal* Vol. 15 (April 1922). This image shows that the ten-story 1922 building dominated the other buildings once part of the complex, and became the functional and visual focus of the company's facility at this location.

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*OUR NEW* Philadelphia mill is nearly ready. Note in the picture how it dwarfs the present plants.

But the building itself is the easy part of the job. After the structure is all done begins the delicate task of installing machinery. And hosiery machinery is not easy to set up.

By July part of the mill should be in production—and as rapidly as possible the output will be increased, in a sincere effort to catch up, and keep up, with the demand.

75


**Figure 14** - Page from *The Story of Gotham Gold Stripe* (1921) describing the new building. As in Figure 13, Gotham Silk's 1922 building overwhelms the now-demolished nineteenth century mill buildings (seen at left) and therefore is sufficient alone to convey the company's significance.

Gotham Silk Hosiery Company  
Name of Property

Philadelphia, PA  
County and State

**GOTHAM**  
**GOLD STRIPE**  
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

*Silk Stockings that Wear*




*The just completed New York Plant No. 5*

**A**NOTHER unit has been added to the Gotham producing capacity.

Plant No. 5, just completed, will be used exclusively for dyeing and finishing.

This means that there will be fewer disappointments among merchants who wish to handle the Gotham line, and more—silk stockings that wear.



*The Gotham production center in Philadelphia*

87

**Gotham Silk Hosiery Co. Inc.**  
MANUFACTURERS  
516-Fifth Ave. New York  
Mills: Philadelphia and New York

Figure 15 – Gotham Advertisement from the *Dry Goods Economist* (October 14, 1922).

Gotham Silk Hosiery Company  
Name of Property

Philadelphia, PA  
County and State

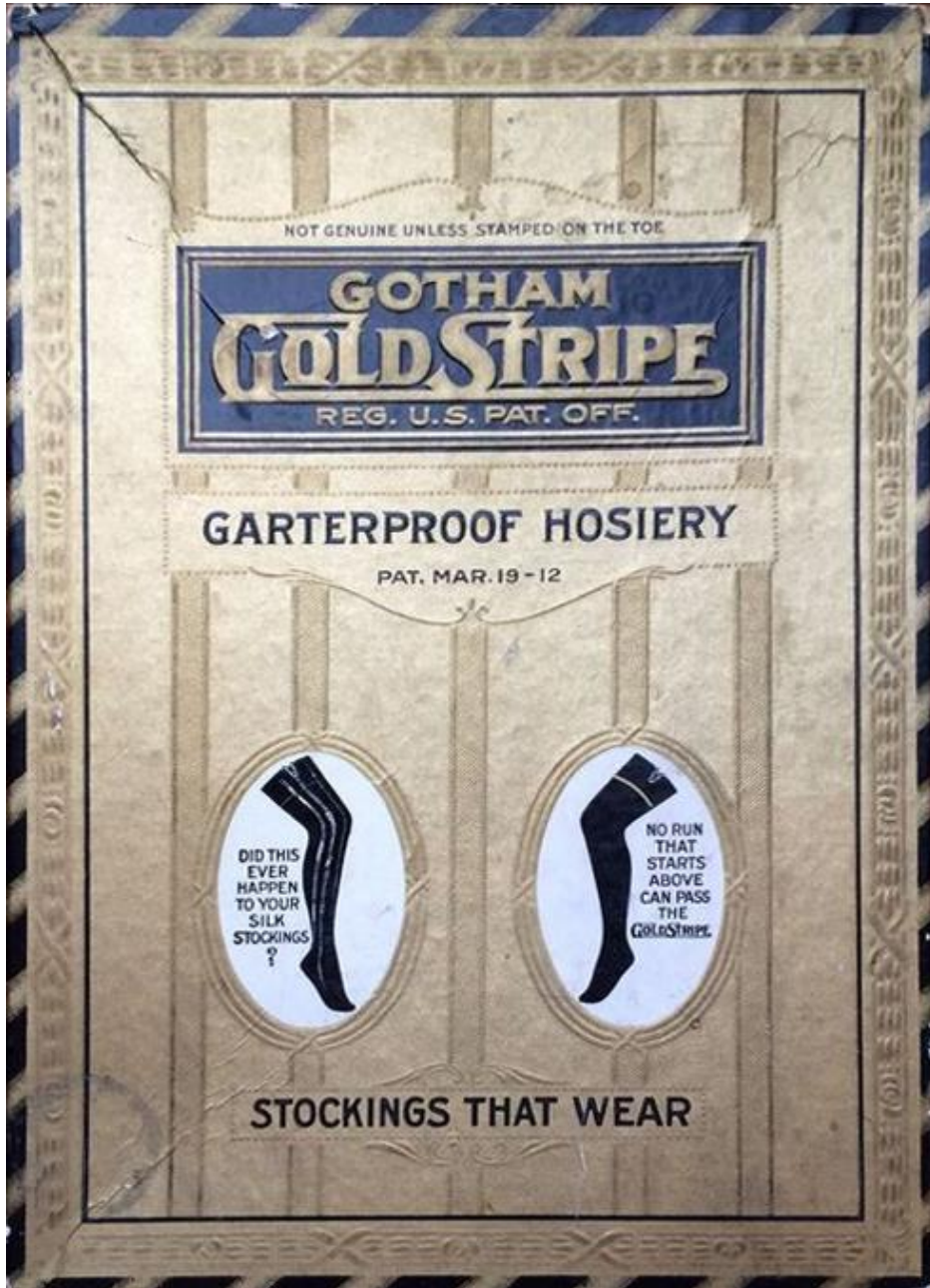


Figure 16 – Gold Stripe Hosiery box (undated).



Gotham Silk Hosiery Company  
Name of Property

Philadelphia, PA  
County and State

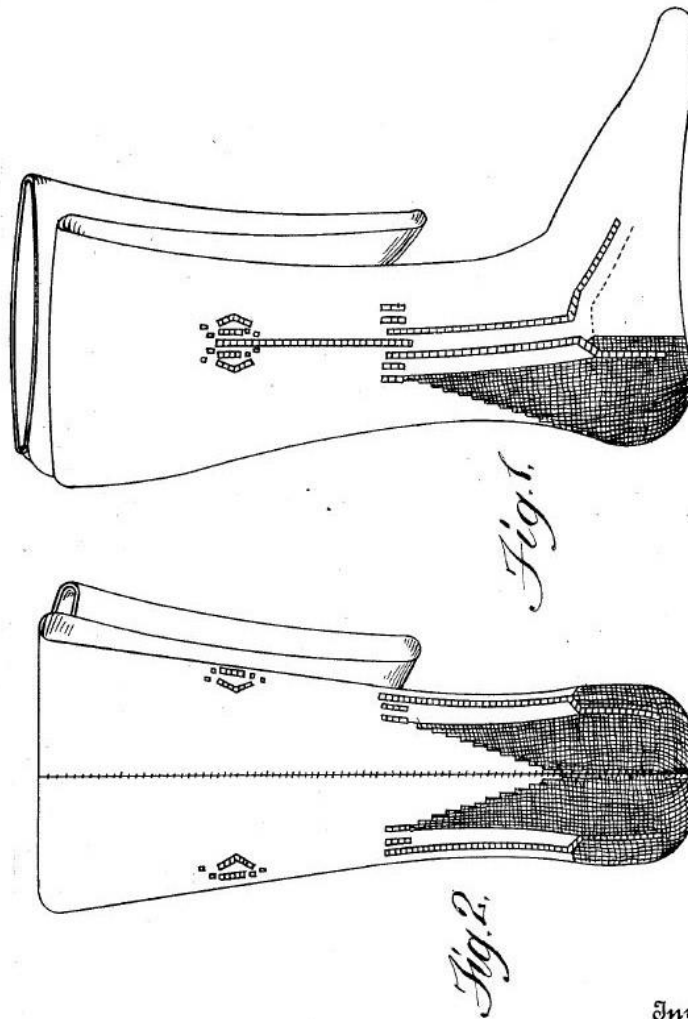
Aug. 13, 1929.

R. A. DAY

Des. 79,186

STOCKING

Filed Nov. 13, 1928



Inventor  
Ralph A. Day  
By his Attorneys  
Daisy v. Darby

Figure 17 – Patent for Stocking Design, 1929.

Gotham Silk Hosiery Company  
Name of Property

Philadelphia, PA  
County and State

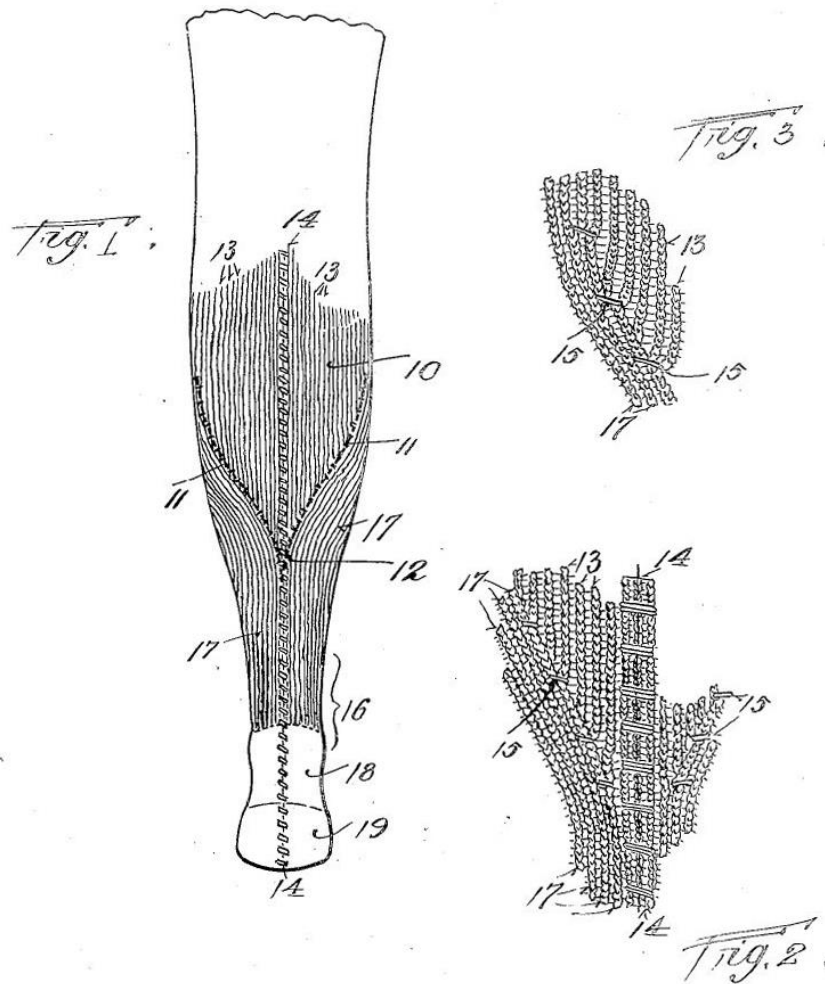
Oct. 1, 1929.

K. GINNANE

1,729,653

STOCKING

Filed Nov. 1, 1926



*Inventor*  
Katherine Ginnane  
By her Attorneys  
Dulby & Dulby

Figure 18 – Patent for Stocking Improvements, 1929.

Gotham Silk Hosiery Company  
Name of Property

Philadelphia, PA  
County and State



Figure 19 – Current Birds-eye view, looking NW.

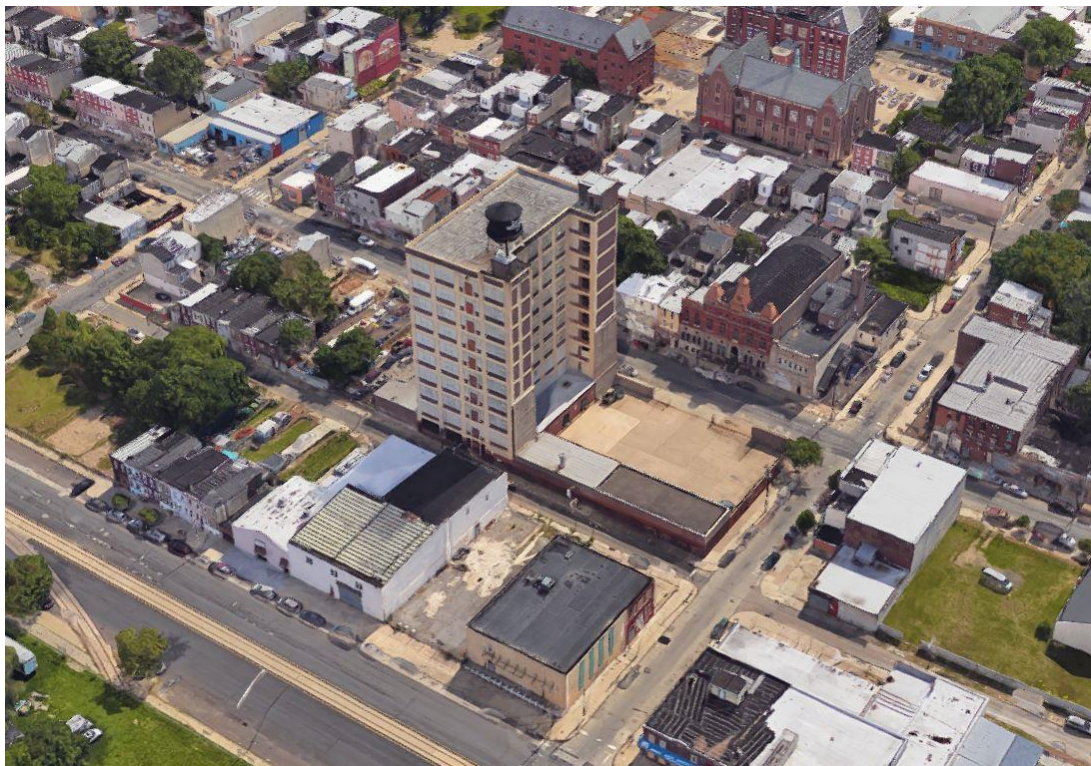


Figure 20 – Current Birds-eye view, looking NE.









CHARLES SCHÖBER COMPANY

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NO PARKING  
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NO STOPPING

NO PARKING  
NO STANDING  
NO STOPPING

GRAFFITI



**CHARLES  
SCHOVER  
COMPANY**  
PROPERTY OF CHARLES SCHOVER COMPANY  
1000 BROADWAY STREET

→  
**CHARLES SCHOVER  
PARKING**  
ARROW  
OF ROAD





CHARLES  
MAY

STUR

AVIRO





DUAL DRY  
STAIRPIPE  
TALK TOWER

NO OPEN  
FLAMES



okemo

RE  
NAME

FIRE DEPT.  
CONNECTION







CHELSEA  
WATER TOWER

STOP



OLD CITY  
- MOVERS -  
PHILADELPHIA, PA  
267-205-5209

33830









5209

ery.com





















CHS  
MADE IN CHINA  
C/NO.



PERFECT STOCKINGS MADE BY  
— G O T H A M —  
MEANS SATISFIED CUSTOMERS  
SATISFIED GOTHAM CUSTOMERS  
MEANS STEADY WORK



STANDS FOR QUALITY  
PROTECT OUR GOOD NAME





3RD FLOOR



EXIT  
→

FIRE TOWER



STARKS FOR QUALITY  
PROTECT YOUR GOOD NAME

EXIT  
→









CHS  
MADE IN CHINA  
C/NO

46-3081-0041

PDF: 9808  
ORDER NO: CHS4382  
ITEM NO: 9  
QTY: 24  
NW: 45  
SW: 77  
M: 39 1/2 x 1 1/2





LIVE LOAD  
120 LBS





C.S.  
PHILADELPHIA  
U.S.A.  
MADE IN CHINA  
C/NO  
DATE: December

PHILADELPHIA  
U.S.A.  
MADE IN CHINA  
C/NO  
DATE: December

C.S.  
PHILADELPHIA  
U.S.A.  
MADE IN CHINA  
C/NO  
DATE: December

Live Load  
75 LBS











R  
120 lbs  
LIVE LOAD









EMERGENCY ONLY  
DO NOT USE  
ELEVATOR

IN CASE OF FIRE  
DO NOT USE  
ELEVATOR

9  
STAIRS





THESE  
CALLS FOR THE BEST  
LESS WASTE, MORE PROFIT  
AND HEALTHY WORK  
YOU ARE MORE THAN A WOMAN  
SEE THAT YOU TELL  
100% QUALITY AND APPEARANCE  
PERFECT STOCKINGS MADE BY  
MEANS  
WEARS WITHOUT TEARS  
SATISFIED CUSTOMERS  
MEANS STAY-PUT

EXIT

10  
10TH FLOOR  
EXIT

IN CASE OF  
FIRE OR  
OTHER EMERGENCY  
USE ELEVATOR

















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Gotham Silk Hosiery Company

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: MP100002342

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, 13th Floor  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102  
Tel: 215.686.7860

Robert Thomas, MA  
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: 2000-2034 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Gotham Silk Hosiery Company Building

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 Gotham Silk Hosiery Company Building, located at 2000-2034 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:afrantz@pa.gov). Thank you for your consideration of these properties.

Sincerely,

Andrea L. MacDonald, Director  
State Historic Preservation Office

enc.

ALM/aef