

5.0 ARCHITECTURAL OVERVIEW

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5.1 Introduction

This section provides a brief academic description and generalized viewing context for architectural styles and forms found to be represented in the survey area of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood.

5.1.1 Federal Style (1780-1820; locally to ca. 1840)¹

Also known as the Adam Style, the Federal Style succeeded the colonial period following the signing of the Declaration of Independence. However, the Federal Style perpetuated many of the same ideas and techniques used during the colonial era including a preference for frame construction with clapboard sheathing common in examples found in the northern United States. Stucco and stone occur infrequently throughout the eastern United States. In general the symmetrical, box-like Georgian style of the late colonial period evolved into the more ornamented Federal Style, and is typically described as having a lightness and delicacy which was lacking in earlier Georgian designs. The most prominent feature of most Federal style buildings is an accented front entry door. Typically this feature is elaborated with an elliptical or semi-circular fanlight above the primary entry door, with or without sidelights, and is usually incorporated into a decorative surround which may feature moldings, pilasters or a crown. Buildings of this style also typically feature a cornice with decorative moldings, double-hung wood sash windows generally with six lights per sash with thin wood muntins, a five bay primary façade with symmetrical fenestration. Commonly, Federal style buildings appear as side-gabled, box-like structures. While some examples are relatively modest in their decoration, some Federal style buildings feature Palladian windows, oval rooms and decorative swags and garlands carved in wood or plaster.

In Black Rock, the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 increased interest in the nascent village. This first wave of Euro-American settlement in Black Rock corresponds to the popularity of the Federal style in Western New York. Numerous buildings were constructed throughout the region, during the Federal-period. Serving examples of the Federal style in the community, however, are not "high style," but rather more reserved in design. Further, extant Federal-era houses appear to exhibit elements of a more transitional form by incorporating stylistic details of the Greek Revival.²

¹ Dates provided for architectural styles and information is from Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994).

² Quoted from Frank J. Schieppati, Mark A. Steinback, and Christine Longiaru. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation for the Proposed Ambassador Niagara Signature Bridge*. Rep. Buffalo: Panamerican Consultants, April 2006; 4-5. Print.



Photo 5.1 71 Amherst Street

The Jacob Smith House was constructed ca. 1830s as a Federal style house with transitional Greek Revival elements including the surround of the front door. After years of neglect and scheduled for demolition in 1989, the house was lovingly restored back to its original period of significance and is a local architectural gem.

Remaining, original examples of Federal style houses are relatively rare in Buffalo and in Western New York, and it has been estimated by local residents that approximately 50 properties dating to this period may still exist in Black Rock; a much higher concentration than elsewhere in the City of Buffalo. Many of the buildings dating from the early decades of the nineteenth-century have been significantly altered and have lost much of their historic character.

5.1.2 Greek Revival (1825-1860)

At the end of the eighteenth-century, one of the most popular influences in fashion, décor and architecture was anything drawing from the Classical vocabulary. Though the earliest models had been Roman, contemporary archeological investigations had focused on the Ancient Greek civilization and its subsequent influence on the Roman Empire, and Greek styles and designs quickly became highly popular. Drawing inspiration from the great Greek temples, builders sought to adopt and apply the highly identifiable and idealized elements of these structures to contemporary architecture. Borrowed features commonly included: a front or side gabled roof of low pitch; emphasized cornice line with large entablature-type molding and/or detail trim; significant porches, varying full or half width and height with either a flat or pediment roof and columned supports; highly visible inclusion of columns, engaged columns, and/or pilasters; and ornamented door and window surrounds. Greek Revival architecture ranged from academic, near-replica examples which closely emulated the forms and shapes of Greek temples to those more modest examples which utilized individual elements from the Greek vocabulary such as

columns, entablature moldings or pilasters and incorporated these into more vernacular building forms.

The Greek Revival style was dominant in American domestic architecture between the 1830s and 1850s and is especially visible in areas that experienced rapid settlement and expansion during these decades, although it occurs in all areas settled by 1860. The decline of Greek Revival influence was gradual and an important lasting legacy of the style – the front gabled house- remained a constant in the vocabulary and a much used feature in American domestic architecture.



Photo 5.2 237 Dearborn Street

A rare example of the Greek Revival style, although modified. Note the broad gable moldings and 3-bay façade.



Photo 5.3 243 Dearborn Street

What was likely originally constructed as a side-gabled Greek Revival style building here has been modified with Italianate brackets.

In Black Rock, the Greek Revival style was primarily reserved for modest one- to two-story front-gabled cottages with little stylistic detail. These early buildings were constructed close to the Niagara River and the Erie Canal, many of which were replaced by subsequent commercial and residential development. Extant cottages survive from this period, though many are not easily discernable because they have been subsumed by later expansion or completely altered by modifications. The best surviving examples of the Greek Revival in Black Rock reflect the later period of the style when elements of the Italianate were incorporated. Two such examples are located at 1966 Niagara Street and 243 Dearborn Street. Both buildings are three-bays-wide, constructed of brick, and have side-gabled roofs. Italianate features include the façade entrances and brackets under the eaves.³

5.1.3 Italianate (1840-1885)

The Italianate style was among the dominant residential styles between the 1850s and 1880s, emerging in the 1830s as part of the picturesque movement,

³ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-6.

which drew inspiration from the romantic, informal and rambling Italian farmhouses and villas. In the United States, the style was popularized in the writings and pattern books of architectural theorists such as Andrew Jackson Downing. In New York, the Italianate style proliferated throughout cities, towns and rural areas from the 1850s until the turn of the century. Sometimes referred to as the Bracketed style, perhaps the key distinguishing feature of the Italianate style is its decoratively cut often scrolled brackets, which were typically used in abundance to support door and window hoods and to embellish the prominent cornice. Other characteristics of the style include the use of tall narrow windows often segmentally arched, bay windows and porches with elaborate detailing.



Photo 5.4 1918 Niagara Street

An Italianate commercial building which features a bracketed cornice, partially extant cast-iron storefront and a painted wall sign.



Photo 5.5 146 Dearborn Street

A good example of an Italianate residential building in Black Rock with intact window and door surrounds.

The Italianate Style is represented in various forms in the Black Rock neighborhood. As discussed in the previous section, Italianate stylistic elements were incorporated with the Greek Revival buildings. St. Elizabeth's School at 26 Military Road is a modest brick example of the style. There are a few intact examples of workers' cottages with Italianate round-arch window openings. Black Rock also has a couple of extant Italianate commercial buildings on Niagara Street.⁴

5.1.4 Second Empire (1855-1885)

Deriving its name from the French Second Empire, this Romantic architectural style is named in honor of the reign of Napoleon III (1852-70), who undertook a significant building crusade that transformed Paris into a city of grand scenic boulevards and grand monumental buildings that were copied throughout Europe and the New World. Common features of the Second Empire style include Classical and Italianate-derived moldings and details such as quoins, cornices,

⁴ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-7.

and belt course which are articulated with great depth and emphasized with the use of a variety of textures and colorful materials. Windows were typically tall and narrow, with arched and sometimes pedimented forms, sometimes grouped in pairs with shared molded surrounds. The massing of the style was typically square or rectilinear, sometimes featured a tower element or a cupola or lantern, and was occasionally joined to form continuous groups of town houses. The signature feature of the Second Empire style is the use of a Mansard roof; a dual pitched hipped roof with a steep lower slope. This Mansard roof allowed for additional living space beneath the roof, and was typically punctured with elaborate dormer windows to allow for interior illumination.



Photo 5.6 1924 Niagara Street
A rare example of a slightly modified Second Empire house



Photo 5.7 71 Bridgeman Street
A rare example of a commercial building in the Second Empire style. Note the historic dormers.

The survey area contains relatively few examples of Second Empire architecture, both in residential and commercial applications. One extant example of the style's residential application is located at 1924 Niagara Street, although it features a modified mansard roof and replacement windows. A commercial example of the style is 71 Bridgeman Street, which although modified, retains its original massing, several brackets, its signature mansard roof and numerous pedimented dormers.

5.1.5 Queen Anne (1880-1910)

Named for the early eighteenth-century British monarch, the Queen Anne movement began in England in the 1860s. In that country, the term is associated with the revival and reinterpretation of several various architectural trends and styles which proliferated throughout Britain from the late fifteenth through the early eighteenth centuries. The Queen Anne style in Britain had a wide variety of sources and inspirations from Medieval Tudor-era half-timbered structures, to the more Classical-inspired Renaissance era designs of the Elizabethan and

Jacobean periods. Gothic influences were also apparent in the Queen Anne style.

This wide variety of historical and constructional sources all merge in the Queen Anne style in the United States. The style is characterized by irregular forms, massing and shapes, and a wall surface which is frequently broken by recesses, projections, towers and bays. The influence of Medieval England and France is reflected in asymmetrical massing; varied, textured and patterned wall surfaces and planes; and the prominent use of overhangs, projections and jetties. One of the most common elements found in both high-style and vernacular examples is the widespread use of patterned or shaped shingles, available in a myriad of shapes and designs. These shingles could be applied to a single element such as a gable or a tower, or could be used more widespread across the building. In some examples, exterior surfaces were covered with multiple materials; stone, brick, slate, terra cotta, stucco, half-timber, clapboard, and shingle. Stucco might be molded or studded with stones or broken glass to emulate the parquetry found on old English dwellings. High hipped roofs and cylindrical or faceted towers or turrets generally with conical roofs brought the forms associated with chateaus, manors, and farmhouses of northwestern and central France to the American landscape. The Queen Anne style can be generally broken down into four broad categories, based on ornamentation which include the Spindework subtype, the Free Classic, Half-Timbered and Patterned Masonry. The Spindework variation accounts for about 50% of Queen Anne architecture and is highlighted by turned porch supports and spindework ornamentation. This variant is also known as Eastlake detailing, after Charles Eastlake an English furniture designer who promoted such design elements. The Free Classic variant incorporates elements such as Classical columns, pediments, Palladian windows, dentils and other features. Half-timbered examples can fully or partially incorporate faux-half-timbered elements into the building's façade with shingle or masonry often used. Patterned masonry examples feature polychrome or patterned brickwork or stonework with minimal wood detailing. This type was most prevalent in larger cities such as Chicago, New York and Washington DC and some examples are found in Buffalo's more fashionable districts along streets like Delaware Avenue and Linwood Avenue.

A majority of Queen Anne buildings blend many different elements and styles, reflecting the diverse and eclectic nature of the style. Hybrids of the Queen Anne style and Colonial Revival or Craftsman style are perhaps the most common type found in the City of Buffalo. The Queen Anne style also permeated vernacular architectural trends as well, and elements such as projecting bays, towers and patterned shingles continued to be used in residential architecture until the 1920s and 30s.



Photo 5.8 129 Farmer Street

One of the more archetypal examples of Queen Anne in Black Rock with its prominent corner turret, decorative panels, picturesque silhouette, and varied wall surface.



Photo 5.9 76 Peter Street

The most common variant of the style which is found throughout Black Rock is the 2 ½-story, front-gabled type with a full-width front porch and polygonal second-story bay.

The Black Rock survey area contains numerous examples of the Queen Anne style, particularly the 2 ½-story, frame, front-gabled type which generally features a full-width front porch and frequently had a polygonal bay on the second story. This type of example is perhaps the most common appearance of the Queen Anne style through the residential architecture of the City of Buffalo, as the massing and form allowed for the building to be sited on the typical long, narrow urban lot while elaborating the primary street-facing façade. Many examples in Black Rock retain much of their original materials including wood clapboard siding, patterned shingle sheathing, Eastlake, Colonial Revival or Craftsman style porches and detailing and other key features of the style. Numerous others in the survey area reflect modification and alteration over time, and feature replacement windows, altered porches, vinyl siding and other changes which detract from the spirit of the original Queen Anne-style vocabulary.

5.1.6 Workers' Cottage (1870-1920)

The post-Civil War workers' cottage is a significant house type because of its wide popularity in American urban and semi-urban areas during the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Additionally, it is important because it should be considered one of the first forms of fully industrialized housing for working-class Americans (Hubka and Kenny 2000:37). These modest buildings incorporated many of the most advanced technological and planning ideas of its era. Machined components included doors, windows, casings, hardware and decorative detailing, as well as standardized components for wood

structural and material finishing systems (Hubka and Kenny 2000: 38). Materials for workers' cottages were assembled following newly developed construction, merchandising, and distribution systems featuring the following: (1) standardized, interchangeable components such as nails, studs, and casings which were particularly adapted to the new balloon frame type of structural system; (2) a national production and distribution for building materials, facilitated by the railroad; (3) contractor and speculator initiation of the house building process, with minimal owner contribution to the design or construction; and (4) modern land development practices such as lot standardization, financing, and marketing practices (Hubka and Kenny 2000: 38; Gottfried 1005; 47-68).



Photo 5.10 218 Dearborn Street

A more decorative example of a worker's cottage, this building retains Italianate door and window surrounds and has an Eastlake-detailed late nineteenth-century porch.

Late nineteenth century cottages were typically expanded and transformed in the early twentieth century. Hubka and Kenny found that expanded cottages in Milwaukee incorporated several new features: (1) the separation of food preparation and dining activities with the eventual adoption of the dining room; the individualization of sleeping spaces for children, or at least their separation by sex into bedrooms; (3) the incorporation of more and larger windows throughout the entire dwelling, and especially in the basement units; (4) an increased emphasis on plumbing and sanitation facilities, especially the adoption of kitchen plumbing and interior bathrooms for each family unit; and (5) the conformity of exterior building aesthetics and yard maintenance practices and the elimination of agrarian influenced practices (Hubka and Kenny 2000:46.⁵

⁵ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-11 – 4-12.



Photo 5.11 42 Glor Street

A more typical example of a workers' cottage, this example retains its Eastlake window hoods, a bold bracketed cornice and pedimented porch roof.

Due to the Black Rock neighborhood's character as a mixed-use neighborhood in close proximity to railroad and industrial resources coupled with a large population of Polish and Eastern European ancestry, the Black Rock survey area contains numerous examples of workers' cottages, similar to Buffalo's East Side neighborhoods. Many examples have been altered with later additions, replacement windows, modified porches and other changes, but many of the Black Rock survey area's workers' cottages retain their original wood clapboard sheathing, decorative (often Eastlake) door and window surrounds and other elements.

5.1.7 Gabled Ell Houses and Folk Victorian (ca. 1870-1920)

Gabled Ell houses were commonly built between 1870 and 1920. Their floor plans were either L-shaped, with a porch in the interior corner of the L, or T-shaped, with the projecting stem toward the street. The side wing or wings are not separate, but rather an integral part of the building core. These houses were usually frame and simple in designed, 1 ½ or 2 stories tall, with an intersecting gable roof at the same height as the main roof. They sometimes had applied ornament around doors and windows. The Gabled Ell provided more light and cross-ventilation than other house types.



Photo 5.12 234 Thompson Street
A good example of the gabled ell type Folk Victorian house with decorative shingles in the front gable.



Photo 5.13 301 Dearborn Street
Despite asbestos sheathing, this L-plan house retains an excellent Victorian porch and intact window surround.

Folk Victorian (1870-1910) includes the above-mentioned simple folk house forms that are defined by the presence of Victorian decorative detailing. Stylistic details of either Italianate or Queen Anne are generally applied to the porch and cornice line. Identifying features include: porches with spindlework detailing (turned spindles and lace-like spandrels) or flat, jigsaw cut trim; symmetrical façade (except for the gable-front-and wing sub-type); cornice line brackets are common. Black Rock and Grant-Amherst have several examples of these vernacular residential building forms.⁶

5.1.8 Craftsman/ Bungalow (1905-1930)

The Craftsman style was the most popular design for small residential buildings built throughout the country in the first three decades of the twentieth century. The bungalow was a new form of dwelling that was first used in the 1890s for rustic vacation or resort cottages; it was initially adapted for suburban residential purposes in California. Influenced by the English Arts and Crafts Movement and Oriental and Indian architecture, the style was popularized by the work of two brothers, Charles S. and Henry M. Greene. The Greenes began practicing architecture in Pasadena, California in 1893, and in the ensuing two decades designed a number of large, elaborate prototypes of the style. Their innovative designs received a significant amount of publicity in national magazines such as Western Architect, The Architect, House Beautiful, Good Housekeeping, and Ladies' Home Journal. By the turn of the twentieth century, the design had been adapted to smaller houses, commonly referred to as bungalows. It was this

⁶ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-13.

*scaled down version of the Craftsman style that became a ubiquitous has in residential neighborhoods during the early twentieth century.*⁷

The Craftsman bungalow is typically a one- or one-and-one-half-story building with a low-pitched gable (or hipped-roof) set end to the street. The eaves are wide and open, exhibiting structural components such as rafter ends, beams, and brackets. A deeply-recessed porch is often the most dominant architectural feature of the Bungalow. They are generally either full or partial width, with the roof supported by tapered square columns that either extend to ground level or sit on brick piers. Shingle, stone, and stucco, sometimes used in combination, were the most common materials. Windows are usually double-hung sash with vertical lights in the upper sash. Another stylistic variation for the bungalow is the use of simple colonial elements such as large, smooth columns. As a modest, convenient, and economical building type, the bungalow became popular with builders and contractors as well as with house buyers of limited means.

Another common variant of the Craftsman style is the American Foursquare, which seems to draw inspiration from early Prairie style models of the late nineteenth-century.⁸ The style likely got its name from the fact that in its most basic form, American Foursquare houses featured four approximately equally sized primary rooms on each level, arranged in a square. This type of simple, basic and affordable housing was extremely popular at the turn of the century until after World War II and provided spacious, relatively attractive and affordable housing in both urbanized areas as well as suburban regions. Hallmarks of the style include a box-like square or rectilinear massing of generally two or two-and-one-half stories, a low hipped or pyramidal roof, typically a large front dormer, generally a two-bay façade with simple double-hung factory-produced windows, and a full-width one-story front porch. American Foursquare houses were also popular models of “kit houses” and were produced by companies such as Sears, Gordon VanTine, Montgomery Ward and numerous other mail-order catalog companies which further enabled this popular, affordable housing type throughout the country to proliferate.

⁷ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-15.

⁸ The categorization of the American Foursquare housing type is somewhat controversial. Some authors root it in the Prairie and Craftsman traditions; while other authors claim it has more in common with the Colonial Revival tradition also prevalent at the turn of the century. This basic, flexible housing form could be detailed and accented with a variety of elements ranging from Classical columns and pediments to Craftsman style woodwork, making it difficult to identify its origins. A majority of the American Foursquare examples found in the survey area feature Craftsman-inspired details such as raked paneled columns, shingles and brick and rock-faced concrete block elements, hence why for the sake of this report it is categorized under the Craftsman style.



Photo 5.14 37 Peoria Street

A rare and largely intact example of a Craftsman Bungalow which retains its original porch, shed roof dormer and knee-brace brackets.



Photo 5.15 641 Amherst Street

A good example of a typical hipped-roof American Foursquare house with a full-width partially enclosed front porch and dormer.

The Black Rock survey area contains numerous examples of the American Foursquare variant of the Craftsman style, and relatively few examples of the Craftsman Bungalow style. The neighborhood also contains several buildings which merge the popular late Queen Anne front-gabled building with Craftsman details, especially porches. Several examples of American Foursquare houses in the Black Rock neighborhood are multiple-family dwellings or flats; a type which is common throughout many similar neighborhoods in the City of Buffalo.

5.1.9 Neoclassical (1895-1950)

The Neoclassical style, which drew its inspiration from Greek, Roman and Renaissance sources, was a dominant style for domestic architecture throughout the country during the close of the nineteenth-century and well into the twentieth-century. During this period, many of the nation's architects were being trained at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris or in the offices of those architects who had studied at the school, where the aesthetic value of the Classical vocabulary of form was promoted. The style was introduced to the United States in large part through the architecture and design of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago of 1893, which helped to disseminate the ideals of the Classical vocabulary of form, stark white coloration and monumental scale. The architecture of the Fair also promoted more historic "American" styles such as the Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival and others, thus incorporating elements from these traditions into the more eclectic Neoclassical mode.

The Neoclassical style had two general waves of popularity. The initial phase of the style lasted from roughly 1900 until 1920 and emphasized hipped roofs and elaborate, but academically accurate, columns and orders. Between approximately 1920 to the 1950s, the style's second phase emphasized side-gabled roofs and simplified, more slender columns. During this later phase the Neoclassical style was still prevalent, but has lost much of its popularity to more eclectic styles. While the Neoclassical style is found in some larger scaled

residential projects, by far the most common application of the style was for public and commercial buildings.



Photo 5.16 415 Amherst Street

The former branch office of the People's Bank of Buffalo (ca. 1923, architect unknown) is an excellent example of a late Neoclassical style building with simplified, more geometric details which indicate the influence of the Art Deco movement and the stripped classism aesthetic popularized by the designs of noted civic architectural designer, Paul Cret.

Commonly, the Neoclassical mode emphasized and elaborated the porch, cornices, doorways and windows in its general decoration. Earliest examples of the styles prior to the 1920s typically have more ornate columns which are typically of the Ionic or Corinthian order. Typically, these columns supported a two-story or full-height porch. Doorways were generally elaborated with detailed, decorative surrounds based on Greek Revival, Federal or Georgian models and featured elements such as pediments, pilasters, sidelights and fluted or paneled details. A Neoclassical building generally features a boxed eave with a moderate overhang, often with dentils or modillions beneath. Occasionally a wide frieze band is employed. Another characteristic of the style were rectangular double-hung sash windows, generally with six or nine panes per sash. Bay windows, paired windows, transomed windows and arched windows were also utilized for the style, differentiating it from earlier Greek Revival or Early Classical Revival styles.



Photo 5.17 1934-36 Niagara Street and 1940 Niagara Street

The Jubilee Library (1915, H. Beck architect) at left and the Unity Temple (ca. 1905, Green & Wicks) are two excellent examples of the Neoclassical style used for public buildings in the Black Rock survey area.

The Black Rock survey area contains several excellent examples of Neoclassical architecture. As was typical of the national trend, the style was used primarily for public, commercial and educational examples. Examples of the Neoclassical style were used for public buildings such as the Jubilee Library at 1924-16 Niagara Street and the Unity Temple at 1940 Niagara Street (photo 5.18). It also was used for the former People's Bank of Buffalo branch building located at 415 Amherst Street (photo 5.17).

5.1.10 Religious Buildings

Black Rock and Grant-Amherst offer several excellent examples of high-style religious buildings constructed in the period from 1889 to 1953. Some of them were designed by the premier local architects of the period. The larger churches also had ancillary buildings such as schools, convents and rectories. Architectural styles represented in the survey area for religious buildings include Gothic Revival, Romanesque Revival, Spanish Baroque/Italian Gothic Revival, as well as modest applications of the Tudor Revival and Craftsman styles.

In Black Rock, there are four surviving church buildings in the survey area that are associated with German and Irish congregations. These include: St. John's United Evangelical Church at 85 Amherst Street (1890; architect unknown); St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church at 161 East Street (1911-1913, NR listed, Max G. Beierl, architect, photo 5.20); Zion German Methodist Episcopal Church at 221 East Street (1889; architect unknown, photo 5.21); and St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church at [60] Hertel (1925-1927; Oakley and Schallmo, architects, photo 5.22).



Photo 5.18 417 Amherst Street

The elegant Romanesque Revival Assumption RC Church is part of a large complex of religious buildings which includes a school and rectory. Its paired towers are a prominent local landmark.



Photo 5.19 161 East Street

The National Register-listed St. Francis Xavier Church is another example of the Romanesque Revival, here drawing on more Italian traditions. It is also part of a large complex of related buildings.

In Grant-Amherst, Assumption Roman Catholic Church was the first church constructed in the area (photo 5.19). The first Assumption congregation was formed in 1888 by thirty Polish families and a two-story, brick church was built on Amherst Street, between Germain and Peter Streets. By 1909, there was a need for a larger church and school as the Polish community in Grant-Amherst had swelled. Other Eastern Europeans such as Hungarians and Ukrainians also settled in Grant-Amherst during the early twentieth-century. As a result, nine churches built in the neighborhood in the period from 1904 to 1953, seven of which are in the [proposed Ambassador Bridge] survey area. These include: Immanuel German Evangelical Church at 70 Military Road (1904; W.S. Brickell, architect); First Hungarian Baptist Church at 350 Austin Street (1912; John H. Coxhead, architect); Hungarian Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Savior (1917; H Walker Jr., architect); All Saints Polish National Church at 1020 Grant Street (1953; Edward J. Leitz); Assumption Roman Catholic Church at [417] Amherst Street (1914; Schmill & Gould, architects); and St. John's Ukrainian Catholic Church at 159 Germain Street (1906; W.H. Zawadzki, architect).



Photo 5.20 221 East Street

A unique church, the former Zion German Methodist Episcopal Church, designed in a Romanesque Revival style with elements of the Shingle Style and Arts and Crafts movement incorporated in this residential-scaled building.



Photo 5.21 60 Hertel Avenue

A local Buffalo landmark, the remarkable St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church is an unusual Spanish Baroque Revival/ Italian Gothic Revival style which features a Churrigueresque entry portal with an elaborate broken pediment and Solomonic columns, surmounted by a carved double-headed eagle in honor of the congregation's Eastern European roots. The church was closed by the diocese in 2007.

The decline of the ethnic working class population in Black Rock and Grant-Amherst has contributed to the dwindling congregations. A few of the churches have closed and new congregations or groups have moved into the church buildings such as in the case of Immanuel German Evangelical Church and St.

John's Ukrainian Church. Or in the case of St. John the Baptist, the church is still owned by the Catholic diocese but no longer offer services. The tall towers and spires of a few of these churches have contributed to serve as visual landmarks and they represent the ethnic and religious heritage of their neighborhoods.⁹

5.1.11 Transportation-related Buildings and Structures

The NRE Black Rock Canal, which follows the path of the old Erie Canal, separates Squaw Island from the mainland... The canal received its name from a large triangular shelf of dark limestone that protruded from the bank of the Niagara River in the general vicinity of the present-day Peace Bridge. As commerce and trade advanced with the settlement of the area this rock outcrop was deemed a hazard to navigation and in the 1820s was dynamited to make way for the Black Rock Canal. A lock has been in place at Black Rock since 1833. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed the present lock from 1909 to 1913 to provide the capacity to accommodate large Great Lake [sic] Vessels. Various ongoing rehabilitation and construction projects have been conducted at the lock since 1975.



Photo 5.22 Black Rock Canal and Lock

This National Register eligible structure was originally constructed in 1909-1913, and has been undergoing rehabilitation projects since the mid-1970s.

The [Black Rock Planning Neighborhood] survey area has several railroad bridges, ranging in age from the late 1870s through the early 1930s, which are located at Niagara Street, Tonawanda Street, Amherst Street and Austin Street. The most significant is the International Railroad Bridge over the Black Rock/ Erie Canal (USN 02940.001416) and Niagara River (USN 02940.000086), which is a National Register eligible property...Constructed in 1873, the bridge engineers were Casimir Stanislaus Gzowski, E.P. Hannaford and J. Hobson

⁹ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-17 – 4-18.

(photo 5.24). The bridge is a rare, surviving example of a “swing-type” bridge that is still in use. The International Railroad Bridge was built as a result of the economic growth in the years following the War of 1812. Both the Grand Trunk Railway and the International Bridge Company opened the bridge in 1873. The total length of this span is approximately 3,650 feet (1,113 m). In 1993, the Canadian National Railway Company temporarily closed the bridge while repairs were made to the three masonry support piers nearest Squaw Island (Niagara Falls Thunder Alley nd.)

The International Railroad Bridge is of note for the local Polish-American community as Casimer Gzowski, though not a Buffalonian, was the son of a Polish nobleman. Gzowski arrived in America in 1832 and then went to Toronto in 1841, where he became prominently connected with the department of public works. From 1871 to 1873, Gzowski served as the principal engineer in construction the International Bridge across the Niagara River. The large colony of Poles who has lived at Black Rock viewed the bridge as a memorial to the achievement of one of their countrymen in the New World (Daniels 1901).



Photo 5.23 The International Railroad Bridge

South elevation of a rare, National Register eligible “swing-type” bridge structure which dates to 1873 which is still in use for rail traffic between the US and Canada to this day.

The Black Rock rail yard was crossed by several major national and international railroads. By 1894, there were freight houses in the Black Rock survey area for the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, Michigan Central Railroad, New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad and the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad... The former New York Central freight house is located at [68] Tonawanda Street (photo 5.26). The long, narrow, one-story brick freight house once had a two-story office section. The building is recommended as National

Register eligible for its association with the transportation and industrial history of the City of Buffalo at the local, international and international levels.



Photo 5.24 1764 Niagara Street

Constructed in 1915 as the Grand Trunk Railway Company's Black Rock Freight Office, this masonry building replaced an earlier wood frame building on this site.



Photo 5.25 68 Tonawanda Street

A rare remaining example of a masonry freight house in the City of Buffalo, this National Register eligible building is the former New York Central Freight House and Office

One other significant building in the survey area associated with the city's railroad and international transportation history is the [former Grand Trunk Railway Company's Black Rock Freight Office] Custom House and Canadian National Railroad Office at 1764 Niagara Street, located near the intersection of Niagara Street and the mainline railroad tracks to the International Railroad Bridge...It is recommended as National Register eligible (photo 5.25).¹⁰

5.1.12 Industrial Buildings

Industrial architecture is a broad category which includes many types of buildings which once served as factories, manufacturing plants, machine shops and other types of functions. New York State passed a law on factory regulation in 1914 which defined a "factory" as any place where goods or products were manufactured or repaired, cleaned or sorted. Buildings such as mills, workshops, manufacturing businesses and all associated buildings, sheds and structures were included in this definition. The term factory can be used to describe a single building or to an entire facility of composed of any number of structures, and the term is synonymous for industrial architecture.¹¹

Industrial buildings, unlike commercial and residential architecture, were not constructed with aesthetics in mind; typically these buildings featured simple, utilitarian designs based on function and the needs dictated by the interior production. Industrial buildings of the nineteenth-century relied on the natural elements for interior illumination, ventilation and even for the power to drive the belts and shafts which in turn operated machinery. As a result, industrial

¹⁰ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-19 – 4-21.

¹¹ Bradley, Betsy H. *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States*. New York: Oxford UP, 1999; 7-8.

buildings are often constructed in phases, with additions added to the building as need dictated, and typically featured numerous window voids. Industrial buildings were typically not thought of as true “architecture” in the nineteenth-century, and in fact many architects lacked interest in industrial architecture due to the financial and economic limitations and a belief in the lack of artistic possibilities in their design. Factory design was often a mix of common empirical engineering with engineering based on rationalized, technological planning. But, prior to the development of specialized engineers or architects, early factory design also involved a bit of luck and trial and error by builders and craftspeople. As a result, most nineteenth-century industrial buildings were designed as collaborations between industrialists, engineers, local carpenters and builders, and mill builders.¹²



Photo 5.26 200 Amherst Street

The former Buffalo Stove works which dates to the 1890s is a good example of a late-nineteenth century industrial building. Note the numerous segmental arched window openings which would have provided interior illumination in the era before electric lighting.

Fires were a major concern of nineteenth-century industrial buildings, which often featured heated boilers to drive machinery, gas lighting and volatile compounds. As a result many industrial buildings were built utilizing fire retardant materials. In the nineteenth-century this was predominately brick or sometimes stone, while in the early twentieth-century new technological advents led to factories being constructed of reinforced concrete.

¹² Bradley, 14-15.



Photo 5.27 133 and 135 Tonawanda Street

The former U.S. Hame Company buildings include the survey area's sole example of a reinforced concrete frame 'daylight factory'; a type which was once common throughout the City of Buffalo.

The company produced both wood and iron hames, a component of a horse harness.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Black Rock was the most heavily industrialized section of the city only after South Buffalo (Kowsky et al. 1982: 172). In the late nineteenth-century, Tonawanda Street was home to several major industries that operated large-scale works on the east side of the street. During the height of Black Rock's industrial activity, such companies included Fedders Manufacturing Inc., Pratt & Lambert, Hard Manufacturing Co., U.S. Hame Company, and Pratt & Letchworth. Almost all of the industrial buildings associated with these companies have been entirely or mostly demolished. The [Black Rock Planning Neighborhood survey area] retains one surviving example of a daylight factory¹³ at 135 Tonawanda Street. Constructed by the U.S. Hame Company (an offshoot of Pratt & Letchworth) ca. 1918, the factory building is a notable example of its type with its exposed concrete frame, brick spandrels, and steel multi-sash windows. This type of factory building was constructed at industrial works throughout Buffalo. However, today their presence is increasingly less visible due to such factors as loss of industry, demolition, and modern development.¹⁴

¹³ "The 'daylight factory' was an exposed rectangular reinforced concrete frame with glass replacing solid walling materials almost completely. Because of its advantages in terms of fire-safety, economy of construction and improved working environment, the daylight factory became standard throughout North America in the first quarter of the twentieth century." Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-23.

¹⁴ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-23.

The Black Rock survey area contains several extant examples of a wide-range of industrial buildings. While it retains one example of the daylight factory type as described above, the area contains several good examples of smaller-scale nineteenth-century industrial architecture. Many of these buildings are constructed of masonry for its fire retardant properties and feature numerous windows to maximize interior illumination. Ranging in height from one to four-stories, these industrial buildings reflect the diversity of industrial construction styles, philosophies and techniques which flourished in the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries in the Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods.

5.2 Results

The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood survey area has a good number of surviving historic properties including residential, commercial, industrial, religious and other types of buildings. Since the 2006 Ambassador Bridge survey, three buildings in the survey area have been National Register listed. The three buildings of the former St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Parish Complex at 157-161 East Street were listed as a complex on the State and National Register in 2009. Presently, the church itself is being reused as the Buffalo Religious Arts Center and has become a vital asset to the local community as well as serving as a unique museum of religious art from throughout Buffalo and Western New York. The rectory and school buildings await reuse

This Reconnaissance Level Historic Resources Survey reviewed a total of 514 properties, and 215 primary buildings and structures have been documented in the annotated list. Of these properties recorded in the Annotated List of Properties, 41 buildings and structures appear to be individually National Register eligible. Like many of Buffalo's neighborhoods, there are a noticeable number of demolitions and empty lots in the survey area, and several buildings surveyed were noted as vacant, abandoned or condemned. Many of the buildings in the survey area demonstrate significant loss of integrity, either through alteration, loss of historic features, replacement with modern materials and components, or other factors, rendering these properties non-historic and non-contributing to the survey.

Examples of a wide range of architectural styles may be found within the building stock of the City. Some styles are well represented such as the American Foursquare and Queen Anne styles, while others are scarce such as the Second Empire style, only being noted once or twice. As expected those styles present in greater abundance correspond in date and locale with the historic settlement and expansion trends experienced by the Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods. Distinct patterns may also be seen in the location and frequency of certain styles which denote areas of certain character, class, or occupation with rough, discernable boundaries. The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood survey area proves to be an area which is varied and diverse in the nature of its architecture and use; containing examples of a wide variety of single and multi-

family residential examples, both early and later commercial buildings and a handful of industrial examples. Areas around Amherst Street, Niagara Street and Dearborn Street contain some of the earliest extant architecture from left in the entire City of Buffalo. The growth of the this area from the western area near the Erie Canal and Scajaquada Creek of the 1820s towards the west, terminating on Elmwood Avenue in the early twentieth-century, is reflected in the general architectural styles and construction dates of the buildings located within the survey area.