

9.0 DRAFT – MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM (MPDF)

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State and National Registers of Historic Places Nomination
Multiple Property Documentation Form
November 2010

HISTORIC RESOURCES OF THE BLACK ROCK PLANNING NEIGHBORHOOD

City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York



Black Rock Harbor showing Niagara River and Erie Canal, Canadian Shore in Distance, Buffalo NY (1914)

Prepared by:



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CBCA PN 08-019A

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

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

HISTORIC RESOURCES OF THE BLACK ROCK PLANNING NEIGHBORHOOD, BUFFALO, ERIE COUNTY, NY

B. Associated Historic Contexts

The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood
Lower Black Rock, ca. 1820s- 1960
The Grant-Amherst Neighborhood, ca. 1880s- 1960

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official | Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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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 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**HISTORIC RESOURCES OF THE
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E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Outline of Historic Contexts

1.0 THE BLACK ROCK PLANNING NEIGHBORHOOD, ca. 1950- Present

2.0 LOWER BLACK ROCK, ca. 1820s- 1960

3.0 THE GRANT-AMHERST NEIGHBORHOOD, ca. 1880s-1960

1.0 THE BLACK ROCK PLANNING NEIGHBORHOOD, ca. 1950- Present

The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is located near the north-western corner of the City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York (see Figure A-1), just north of the Scajaquada Creek where it meets the Black Rock Canal and Niagara River. The City of Buffalo has defined the boundaries of the Planning Neighborhood by the Niagara River and Black Rock Canal along the western perimeter, the Scajaquada Creek and I-198 Scajaquada Expressway to the south, and Elmwood Avenue forms the eastern boundary. The northern boundary of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is more irregular in form and is bounded by Arthur Street, portions of Tonawanda Street and Hertel Avenue and also correlates to the former rail bed of the Belt Line Railroad just north of Chandler Street to the north-east of the survey area. These physical features form a natural division for the neighborhood in many cases, such as the barrier of the Niagara River and Black Rock Canal as well as the Scajaquada Creek. Features such as the route of the former Belt Line railroad north of Chandler Street also form a physical division. The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood encompasses approximately 700 acres of land.

The notion of dividing the City into smaller, more manageable units for urban planning purposes began in 1950 and was finalized and published as a report in 1954. It appears that this plan was spurred by modern concerns for land use, zoning, traffic controls and other factors which, following World War II, flourished across the nation. In this year, the City Planning Commission undertook the *Buffalo Communities* report which divided the sprawling City of Buffalo into twelve planning communities. The boundaries of the communities were based on physical barriers (such as waterways, gradients, and railroads), as well as the street patterns and building lot sizes and orientation. Beyond just the physical characteristics which were used to establish the boundaries, these planning communities were also created based on the sort of cultural neighborhoods present in the City of Buffalo, described in the report: "Common interests of people whether racial, social, economic or otherwise also cause them to live in certain areas for mutual satisfaction."¹ As a result, critical to establishing the boundaries of the planning communities were census tract boundaries which had been established in the City based on the political ward boundaries as they existed in 1928.² Prior to this, this boundary appears to correspond to Tax District VIII as depicted in the 1915 City of Buffalo atlas. Census tract boundaries are established to contain approximately 2,500 to 8,000 people and are typically delineated to contain a largely homogenous population which shares a similar population character, economic status and living condition.³

In this 1954 report, the present area known as the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood was contained within the southern portion of the larger "Riverside Community." The Riverside Community contained the 2.97 square mile area from the Niagara River to Elmwood Avenue, extending south to the Scajaquada Creek and north to the City line at Vulcan Street and Kenmore Avenue (Figure A-2). In 1985, the Buffalo Division of Planning released the *Buffalo Community Summaries* report. The report acknowledged the establishment of these twelve planning communities in 1950, and the presence of 70 unidentified "neighborhood units" within the City, and provided updated statistical data for each area.⁴ Otherwise, the Riverside planning neighborhood remained largely consistent with its 1950s incarnation (Figure A-3).

¹ City Planning Commission, Daniel J. McKenzie (Chairman). *Buffalo Communities*. Buffalo: City Planning Commission, 1954; 1.

² Buffalo Division of Planning. *Buffalo Community Summaries*. Buffalo: Buffalo Division of Planning, March 1985; i.

³ "Census Tracts and Block Numbering Areas." *Census Bureau Home Page*. 12 Apr. 2000. Web. 11 Aug. 2010.

<http://www.census.gov/geo/www/cen_tract.html>.

⁴ *Buffalo Community Summaries*, i.

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The present Black Rock Planning Neighborhood has its origins at the end of the twentieth-century as the City of Buffalo began re-examining its urban planning and economic development strategies in anticipation of creating a new Master Plan. A series of 54 neighborhoods in the City were identified in the *City of Buffalo Master Plan Phase 1: Community/Neighborhood Conditions Summary* (November 1998). The current Planning Neighborhoods in the City of Buffalo were created as a part of the Good Neighbors Planning Alliance (GNPA) initiative in the *Queen City in the 21st Century: Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan* (2006). In this plan, the 54 City-designated neighborhoods were grouped into a series of 11 Planning Communities (rather than the previous 12 planning communities originally identified in 1950). Like the 1950 plan, the boundaries of the Planning Communities were designated to correspond to existing census tract boundaries. While still identified as the Riverside Planning Community in 2002, by 2006 this area was renamed as the Black Rock Planning Community, although the boundaries of this planning community correspond to those initially established in 1950. The Black Rock Planning Community contains three Planning Neighborhoods; Riverside Park, Military and Black Rock (Figures A-4 and A-5). The GNPA was established as a neighborhood-based planning process initiated by the Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning, as part of the City's ongoing Comprehensive Planning efforts. Its stated goal is to actively involve local citizens in the creation of community-based action plans in each of the City's GNPA areas, including the Black Rock Planning Community. This MPDF document is aligned to the boundaries and covers the history and architecture located in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood within the larger Black Rock Planning Community.

The boundaries of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood encompass the historic neighborhoods of Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst. Lower Black Rock developed as an early Erie Canal settlement at the western portion of the Planning Neighborhood nearest the Niagara River and canalway beginning in the 1820s, located at the time on the northern fringe outside the Village of Buffalo.⁵ The Grant-Amherst neighborhood developed in the eastern portion of the Planning Neighborhood primarily beginning in the 1880s as the Belt Line Railroad spurred new growth and settlement in this area. Today, the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is a diverse and unique section of the City of Buffalo which contains some of the city's oldest extant architecture. It is a mixed-use area with a significant residential component, as well as a variety of commercial and industrial resources.

2.0 LOWER BLACK ROCK, ca. 1820s- 1960⁶

The Lower Black Rock neighborhood is one of the City of Buffalo's oldest communities, developing as an early industrial and trade center in the Western New York frontier. The area known as Lower Black Rock was actually settled as a separate community, north of Upper Black Rock, and was a portion of the village of Black Rock. Lower Black Rock is generally defined as the area along the Niagara River just north of the Scajaquada Creek. Although the area had seen some sparse settlement in the early 1800s, Lower Black Rock developed primarily in the 1820s following the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. Early on, Black Rock rivaled its southern neighbor Buffalo, but eventually the boundaries of the expanding City of Buffalo swallowed the village of Black Rock in 1853. Despite losing its political independence, Black Rock continued to maintain a strong cultural identity as a distinct neighborhood and community within the City of Buffalo.

The settlement of Black Rock derived its name from the presence of a large, triangular outcropping of a darkly colored limestone which jutted approximately 200 feet from the shore into the Niagara River, and rose about 5 feet above the

⁵ In the early 1800s there were two areas known as Black Rock: Upper Black Rock and Lower Black Rock. The entire Village of Black Rock spanned from School Street at the south to as far north as Austin Street, and extended from the Niagara River at the west to the approximate New York State Reservation Line which was marked one mile inland from the river. Lower Black Rock was located north of the Scajaquada Creek, while the area south of the creek was known as Upper Black Rock. Despite being located at the north in the Village of Black Rock, Lower Black Rock was thus named because it was located downriver along the Niagara River which flows in a northerly direction. Having been settled early in the 1800s, Upper Black Rock was the location for many skirmishes during the War of 1812, while Lower Black Rock was settled after the war in the 1820s following the opening of the Erie Canal. Upper Black Rock was quickly physically and culturally absorbed into the growing City of Buffalo, however Lower Black Rock retained the "Black Rock" identity as an independent neighborhood despite being annexed into Buffalo in 1853.

⁶ Per the terms of CBCA's contract with the City of Buffalo, this section is largely quoted from the 2006 Ambassador Bridge survey project; Schieppati, Frank J., Mark A. Steinback, and Christine Longiaru. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation for the Proposed Ambassador Niagara Signature Bridge*. Rep. Buffalo: Panamerican Consultants, April 2006. It is important to note that the content of these sections has not been verified for accuracy.

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surface of the water. This rock, known as the black rock, was located near what is now the intersection of Niagara and School Streets. Called *Kis-tan-goi* by the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois, and more specific to the region are the Seneca) who, prior to the arrival of Euro-American settlers, frequented the location as a place for hunting, fishing and recreation, provided an ideal sheltered area for docking boats and eventually for an oar-powered ferry boat across the river to Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada.

During most of the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries, the Western New York and the Niagara Frontier region was occasionally explored with limited religious, commercial, and military expeditions, primarily by the French who sought to exploit the area's fur trading resources. This area had long served as a historic continental trade route through the region and into Canada. In the 1650s, the area was embroiled in a series of conflicts between the Haudenosaunee and their rivals throughout the Niagara Frontier, reducing settlement and exploration of the area. The lure of the rich natural resources in the area, however, soon led to the increased desire for the establishment of secured settlement and trading posts in Western New York, initiating the fortification of the region by the European. The French-built Fort Conti (later, Fort Niagara) was established at the mouth of the Niagara River at Lake Ontario in 1679, while the British constructed a fort near the present-day village of Geneva in the late 1600s. Also during this period, the natural harbors and waterways along the Niagara River and in the various smaller tributaries spurred the shipbuilding industry. "In 1678-1679, as part of the general reconnoitering and trade expeditions by the French in the Niagara valley (*sic*), men under the direction of René-Robert Cavalier de La Salle constructed a ship called *Le Griffon* along the Niagara River in the vicinity of Cayuga Island, opposite Grand Island. This ship would be the first sail vessel to ply the water of Lake Erie and prosecute the Great Lakes fur trade."⁷ The French continued to have a strong presence in the region, even in the midst of occasional conflicts which erupted with the Haudenosaunee, however following a brutal winter during which 88 of 100 soldiers at Fort Conti (then known as Fort Denonville) died, the French withdrew from the fort in 1688.

"A trader, interpreter, and former soldier, Louis-Thomas de Joncaire, Sieur de Chabert parlayed his years as a captive and adoptee of the Seneca into permission to erect a series of trading posts along the Niagara River and Lake Ontario, to the north, including one at the Lower Landing in what is now the Village of Lewiston, ca. 1720. Finally, in 1726, with the construction of a permanent fortification at the mouth of the Niagara River -- Fort Niagara -- the French began to exercise military control of the Niagara valley. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the French had created a string of military and trading installation that extended from Fort Niagara along Lake Ontario, south to Daniel (or Chabert) de Joncaire's temporary trading settlement at Buffalo Creek (referred to as *la Riviere aux Chevaux*), and along the southern shore of Lake Erie to Presque Isle (present-day Erie, Pennsylvania) into the Ohio valley."⁸

During the late eighteenth-century, Western New York in the area of the Niagara River continued to remain a largely unsettled wilderness. During the 1750s, tensions in the region between the French and British erupted into war. British troops eventually captured the French Fort Niagara in 1759 after a bitter siege, crippling the French presence in the region. Hostilities in the area continued throughout the American Revolutionary War era in the late 1700s. Following the 1783 Treaty of Paris, the British were expelled from the fledgling nation of the United States of America, forced across the Niagara River to the Niagara peninsula in Upper Canada. Without their British allies, the Haudenosaunee were forced to sign the Second Fort Stanwix Treaty (1784), ending their disputes with the Americans. The Second Fort Stanwix Treaty surrendered the Haudenosaunee claims to the land west of the Genesee River, except for the creation of several small reservations. This treaty was contested by several groups, and the territorial boundaries were eventually resolved with The Pickering (or Canandaigua) Treaty of 1794. Although the British continued to occupy Fort Niagara following the 1783 treaty, the Jay Treaty of 1796 finally brought resolution to the issue and removed the British influence from Western New York. Following their departure and the easing of political and military tensions throughout the burgeoning nation, settlement began to slowly move from the east into the frontier.

While international disputes were largely resolved in the last decade of the 1700s, Massachusetts and New York states both disputed the claim to the land west of Fort Stanwix (near Rome, Oneida County). "This conflict, with both states claiming ownership prohibited the sale and development of the disputed territory. Under an agreement signed in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1786, the land once occupied by the Haudenosaunee came under the jurisdiction of New York State, but

⁷ Quoted from Schieppati, Frank J., Mark A. Steinback, and Christine Longiaru. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation for the Proposed Ambassador Niagara Signature Bridge*. Rep. Buffalo: Panamerican Consultants, April 2006; 2-13.

⁸ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 2-14.

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the Commonwealth of Massachusetts maintained the pre-emption right to the area west of Seneca Lake once the Indian title to it was extinguished, except for a one-mile swath along the east side of the Niagara River, which New York State, reserved for itself (the Mile Reservation or "Mile Strip"). Despite the state's reservation of the parcel, the Seneca maintained they retained title to the Mile Strip, which was affirmed in the Pickering Treaty of 1794 without New York's concurrence. During the next decade large grants of land in western New York would be sold to private investors who would attempt to open the area to settlement."⁹ Eventually Massachusetts sold the land of Western New York to Philadelphian Robert Morris in 1791. Morris divided the land into several parcels, including those which he sold to several Americans who acted as representatives for a group of investors from Holland. This transaction became known as "The Holland Purchase." However, although the state ownership of the property was resolved, Morris was still unable to extinguish the Native American rights to this Western New York territory.

The Treaty of Big Tree, held from August 20, 1797 until September 16, 1797 near the present-day community of Geneseo, was a landmark event in the settlement of Western New York and Black Rock. During this treaty, the Native American title to the lands west of the Genesee River were extinguished, with the exception of small areas which included the Buffalo Creek, Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Tonawanda reservations. Assembled at this meeting was a group of reported 3,000 Native Americans including leaders such as Cornplanter, Red Jacket, Mary Jemison and others. Representing American interests was Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth, Commissioner, assigned by President George Washington to represent the Federal government interests, Captain Charles Williamson and Thomas Morris representing his father, Robert Morris, and Massachusetts and New York representatives. Theophilus Cazenove and Paolo Busti, represented the interests of the Holland Land Company. Also in attendance was Joseph Ellicott, land surveyor, and Horatio Jones and Jasper Parrish served as the interpreters between the Americans and the Iroquois. For their rights to the lands of Western New York, the Native Americans accepted a payment of \$100,000, to be deposited in the United States Bank, and paid to them in installments.

For their efforts as translators during the Treaty of Big Tree, Horatio Jones and Jasper Parrish were acknowledged by the Haudenosaunee. Both Jones and Parrish had lived among the Native Americans for many years, becoming proficient in the language as well as becoming trusted liaisons. Parrish had been captured as an 11-year-old boy by a group of Delaware Indians and eventually sold to a Mohawk Chief named Captain Hill. In 1780 Captain Hill brought Parrish to Fort Niagara for a negotiation between the Native Americans and the British. During this meeting, he was accepted into the family of Chiefs and afterwards like in harmony as a son with Captain Hill and the Mohawk. Thereafter, Parrish learned the culture and customs of his adoptive Native American family, becoming proficient in all aspects of Indian language and society. During the 1790s, he began working his way through the ranks as a Native American translator and guide. In 1790, Parrish was employed by Timothy Pickering, governmental sub-agent and Indian interpreter for the Washington Administration, to assist with the interpretation of meetings between the U.S. and the Iroquois at Tioga. In 1792, Parrish was promoted as standing interpreter for the U.S. for all negotiations between the Americans and the Iroquois by Secretary of War Henry Dearborn, acting under the order of President Washington. As acknowledgement for the aid provided as translators and interpreters by Jones and Parrish, the Seneca granted both men significant tracts of land in Western New York, located along the Niagara River. This gift was described as:

"We have therefore made up our minds to give them a seat of two square miles of land, lying on the outlet of Lake Erie, about three miles below Black Rock, beginning at the mouth of a creek known by the name of Scoy-gu-quoy-des Creek, running one mile from the River Niagara up said creek, thence northerly as the river runs two miles, thence westerly one mile to the river, thence up the river as the river runs two miles, to the place of beginning, so as to contain two square miles."¹⁰

Prior to the widespread settlement of the area, in July 1797 Joseph Ellicott was contracted by Theophilus Cazenove, the Philadelphia-based agent of the Holland Land Company, to survey the company's land in Western New York and divide it into townships. In addition to his work at the Treaty of Big Tree in 1798, Joseph Ellicott had previously served as the chief assistant for his brother, Andrew Ellicott, who in 1790 was hired by the Federal government to survey the district where the new capital of Washington D.C. was to be established. In 1801, Ellicott was hired by the Holland Land Company to

⁹ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 2-13 – 2-14.

¹⁰ Quoted from a speech by Farmer's Brother in Hill, Henry Wayland. *Municipality of Buffalo, New York: A History, 1720-1923*. New York: Lewis Historical, 1923; 66-67.

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survey the city of Batavia, which acted as the company's headquarters in Western New York. Bringing this knowledge of European Baroque-influenced city planning, with its radial boulevards, and broad vistas terminated by prominent buildings, Ellicott sited and laid out what he named New Amsterdam in honor of his Dutch-based patrons. Designing the new city in a manner clearly influenced by the grand design of Washington D.C., Ellicott laid out a hub-and-spoke plan, with a central square (Niagara Square) from which radiated a series of primary arteries, overlaid onto a traditional grid-plan. At this time, Ellicott also renegotiated the boundaries of the large Buffalo Creek Reservation to allow the new settlement to be sited at the foot of Lake Erie along the meandering Buffalo River, giving New Amsterdam strategic water access. Ellicott named the streets of his new city after his Holland-based patrons as well as with Native American names, however these complicated Dutch names (such as Vollenhoven Avenue), proved to be unpopular with the residents and shortly thereafter the Dutch names were abandoned in favor of street names such as Church Street and Niagara Street. The name of New Amsterdam was also referred to as "Buffaloe" around this time.

Concurrent to the planning and initial development of Buffalo, New York State began the movement to develop and sell the lands of the Mile Strip Reservation. Prior to this period, little permanent settlement had occurred in the Mile Strip, with only two Native American families which settled in the area, although it had been widely used as a recreational and hunting ground. The State's desire to develop the land was instigated by the construction of a fort near Black Rock (Fort Tompkins) by the U.S. Army in 1800. In 1804, the State of New York upheld the Seneca grant of land to Horatio Jones and Jasper Parrish, originally made to them in 1802. Jones was granted the northerly 640 acre tract, while Parrish received the 640 acre tract located between the Jones Tract to the north and the Scajaquada Creek to its south (Figure A-8). Parrish later sold 172 acres along the northern section of his tract to William A. Bird in 1824, which subsequently became known as the Bird Farm. Between the Parrish Tract and the Ferry Lot, 608 acres were granted to Peter B. Porter and others in 1817, an area known as the Stevens Survey. Shortly prior to this sale, in 1815, the State granted 100 acres of the Mile Strip to Peter B. Porter, who had gained the rank of Brigadier General during the War of 1812. This swath of land was located just south of what would become the Stevens Survey and just north of the Ferry Lot, a tract thus named as it was a short distance north of the north line of Ferry Street. The remaining portion of the Mile Strip was surveyed by Deputy State Surveyor Joseph Annin for the State of New York in 1804-05 and was laid out into blocks, constituting the South Village of Black Rock (Figure A-8). These blocks were subsequently sold to a variety of purchasers beginning in February of 1805.¹¹ By the early 1800s, the wide-spread settlement of Black Rock and the Mile Strip Reservation had begun.

The Black Rock and Buffalo rivalry which would heat-up in the 1810s and 1820s can trace its origins back to Joseph Ellicott. In an 1802 letter to Paul Busti, then General Agent of the Holland Land Company, Ellicott noted that Black Rock was "equally or more advantageous for a town than Buffalo."¹² At the time, Ellicott feared that New York State would survey the prized Mile Strip Reservation lands, open it to settlement, and plat the Black Rock offer lots for general sale, directly competing with the Holland Land Company's interests in Buffalo. Seth Pease had previously surveyed the serpentine Mile Strip Reservation Line for the Holland Land Company in 1798, establishing the Company's western boundaries in the area. Ellicott's fears proved to be unfounded, since the State did not offer the Mile Strip lands for sale until 1805, after land was sold in New Amsterdam/Buffalo.

Even once settlement began in Buffalo, Black Rock and throughout Western New York, most roads and highways were rough and difficult to traverse. As a result, the region's numerous waterways became critical transportation and supply routes. "Peter B. and Augustus Porter with Benjamin Barton (with Joseph Annin) formed a successful Great Lakes trading company (Porter, Barton and Company), and obtained a monopoly of this [portage] trade around Niagara Falls from Lewiston to Peter Porter's trading community at Black Rock, south of what became known as Squaw Island. Although formed in 1805, Porter, Barton & Company did not actively engage in the transfer business over the Niagara portage until 1807. While Joseph Ellicott and Paul Busti, the Holland Land Company's Philadelphia-based, American agent, endeavored to create a viable village at Buffalo Creek where the harbor was said to be "safe and commodious." Bird Island at the head of the Niagara River on the American side served as a small refuge from storms for small vessels to unload cargo on the nearby shore. In 1807, Black Rock contained the Porter, Barton and Company warehouses, Nathaniel Sill's house, and a log hut."¹³

¹¹ Hill. The Municipality of Buffalo, 87, 92.

¹² Quoted in Hill, 92.

¹³ Quoted from Schieppati, et al., 2-19

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In the first decade of the nineteenth-century, the rivalry between Buffalo and Black Rock continued, as both emerging communities sought to benefit from the increasing trading occurring in the region. "Beginning ca. 1809, Porter attempted to relocate the customs houses (or ports of entry) in Western New York from Buffalo Creek and Fort Niagara to Black Rock and Lewiston, two locations where Porter, Barton and Company were erecting trading facilities. U.S. Customs Collector Erastus Granger objected to the relocation of the facility to Black Rock, and defended Buffalo and its harbor. An annoyed Granger remarked that Black Rock "consisted of no more than one white and two black families, a temporary ferry-house and tavern." However, President James Madison decided in March 1811 that the port of entry would be located at Black Rock "from the first day of April to the first day of December in every year" and at Buffalo "for the residue of each and every...year." The action must have been a disappointment to Granger and the leader of Buffalo. Madison had in effect placed the customs house above the falls at Black Rock during the shipping season and moved it to Buffalo only during the winter months."¹⁴

On the eve of the War of 1812, the village of Black Rock was located primarily near the foot of Ferry Street along Niagara Street. Niagara Street had been laid out between 1807 and 1809, cutting through the wilderness following the Niagara River shoreline, but was not in wide use at the time. During this same period, the groundwork was laid for creating Lower Black Rock. In 1811, area landowners who included Augustus Porter had the area of Lower Black Rock surveyed and platted into a village. This area was then known as Lower Black Rock to differentiate it from the area platted by New York State known as Upper Black Rock.¹⁵ In this era, no discernable settlement was recorded in the area north of the Scajaquada Creek in the Parrish Tract. During this early era, Black Rock had a harbor which was superior to that of its neighbor Buffalo, and the first American-built ship constructed in the waters of Erie County was the small schooner "Contractor" which was built in the Black Rock harbor. The prominent portage giant Porter, Barton and Company also took advantage of Black Rock's hospitable harbor and waterfront; after the Mile Strip was opened for sale, the group bought the landing sites at Black Rock and Lewiston. With control of the overland portage routes as well as the prominent ferry landings in the area, the Porter, Barton and Company enterprise had a firm monopoly on transportation in the region.

Upper Black Rock played a strategic and critical role in the hostilities of the War of 1812. Lower Black Rock north of the Scajaquada Creek certainly saw activity in the way of troop movements and possibly even small skirmishing, although no significant military campaigns or battles are known to have occurred within the area north of the Scajaquada Creek in the Parrish Tract.¹⁶ As the strategic site of the ferry crossing to Canada as well as the population center for Black Rock, the Upper Black Rock area was heavily fortified in the days leading up to the conflict. Its numerous defenses included Sailor's Battery which consisted of three long 32-pounder cannons sited on the south side near the mouth of Scajaquada Creek. A battery of three guns were also located on Niagara Street near the present West Ferry Street. Near the actual black rock was located Fort Tompkins (also known as Fort Adams) which was actually an artillery battery.¹⁷

After the signing of the Treaty of Ghent ended the War of 1812 on December 24, 1814, Black Rock and the village of Buffalo returned to a state of tranquility and quickly began growing as a commercial and port city. While much of the buildings and businesses in the early Buffalo and Black Rock communities were lost during the war as a result of the British, residents soon returned to the communities, eager to rebuild. While this was a period of hardship for many who struggled to rebuild their homes and businesses, this era also offered many new opportunities for pioneering entrepreneurs and businessmen who saw great potential in the region.

¹⁴ Quoted from Schieppati, et al., 2-19. Also Hill, 110.

¹⁵ Hill, 110.

¹⁶ While no noted battles occurred in the Lower Black Rock area during the War of 1812, residents have found significant artifacts from the era in their yards and gardens. The owner of the ca. 1830s building at the corner of Amherst and East Streets has uncovered a significant collection of artifacts including buttons, pipes, bits of clothing and other artifacts which appear to indicate the possibility that some type of settlement or occupation occurred here which potentially dates to this era.

¹⁷ Numerous historical accounts of the War of 1812 have been written over the past nearly 200 years. For additional information, refer to works such as Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812: Or, Illustrations, by Pen and Pencil, of the History, Biography, Scenery, Relics, and Traditions of the Last War for American Independence*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1869. See also the books written by Donald R. Hickey. Also refer to the Library of Congress' web guide "A Guide to the War of 1812" available at <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/1812/>.

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Due to the rudimentary construction of roads through Western New York in the early 1800s which were often little more than old Indian trails, coupled with the unpredictability of the weather in the area which could easily turn a dirt road into an impassable mud trail, new methods of transportation were explored during this era. Also during this period, the Western New York remained largely a frontier region, located between more settled American lands and the still-hostile British and Native American settled regions of Canada, making the movement of troops and military equipment critical for security. As early as the late eighteenth-century, canals were viewed as a potential alternative to improve the flow of goods and people through the area. In 1792, General Phillip Schuyler introduced a bill that resulted in the incorporation of the Western Inland Lock Navigation Company and the Northern Inland Navigation Company, becoming the earliest canal laws passed by New York State. While these newly formed companies operated primarily in the Adirondacks and Upstate New York regions, this legislation reflected the growing interest in creating and utilizing canals for transportation in New York State. President Thomas Jefferson recognized the potential for canals in New York State in his Annual Message to Congress on December 2, 1806, calling canals the "most desirable national objects."¹⁸

At the time of Jefferson's speech, the most desirable project at the time was creating a canal which linked the Great Lakes and the Hudson River. In the Western New York region, existing water travel was limited primarily to routes through Lake Ontario where cargo was transporter overland via the portage routes (owned primarily by Porter, Barton and Company) near Niagara Falls, then transferred back to ships in Lake Erie. This proved not only expensive, but difficult and time consuming. In 1808, legislation was passed which allowed for the surveying land in relation to the inland canal from the Hudson River to Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. Among the commissioners were Gouverneur Morris, Stephen Van Rensselaer, Black Rock-resident Peter B. Porter and others. An ardent supporter of the canal, on February 8, 1810, Congressman Peter B. Porter offered a resolution in the House of Representatives calling for the appropriation of public lands in order to progress the construction of roads and canals.¹⁹

While planning efforts for the canal stalled during the War of 1812, efforts quickly resumed shortly after the end of hostilities. The Western New York region received a significant boost when it was decided to have the western terminus of the canal end somewhere along Lake Erie, and not Lake Ontario as had initially been investigated. In 1817, construction of the eastern terminus in Rome, NY was begun, while both Buffalo and Black Rock began to battle for the prominent role as host of the western terminus. Both communities sought to become the end of the canal, seeing the tremendous economic benefits which could result, and a five-year long battle between the two neighboring communities began in earnest. Each village undertook harbor improvements as a means to entice canal commissioners. At the time, Black Rock had the superior natural harbor, nestled between Squaw Island and shielded along the Scajaquada Creek, while the village of Buffalo had a sandy harbor which at times was difficult to navigate. Buffalo began improvements which connected the Little Buffalo Creek, the Big Buffalo Creek (now the Buffalo River) and Lake Erie, including widening and dredging the mouth of the harbor. Likewise, work in Black Rock centered on improving the connection between the Scajaquada Creek and the Niagara River, as well as creating a pier between Bird Island and Squaw Island.

While Black Rock had Congressman Peter Buell Porter advocating for the village to serve as the canal terminus, in 1819 Buffalo resident Samuel Wilkeson organized the Buffalo Harbor Company to improve and reconstruct the Buffalo harbor. The extensive work began in the spring of 1820 and continued through 1822, at which time the canal commissioners were convinced to locate the western terminus of the canal in Buffalo. In an 1822 letter by David Thomas, principle engineer of the western end of the canal, the western portion was determined to be excavated "from a point above the lower end of Squaw Island, up the shore of the river, by Black Rock, in the rear of the storehouses, to a point above that village; and then extend it on a right line, through the Buffalo Swamp, in the rear of the sand bank, into Buffalo Creek."²⁰ This report also highlighted the deficiencies of the Black Rock harbor, noting its swift current, its apparent vulnerabilities to British attack, too exposed to ice damage in the winter, and also more costly to develop.²¹ Throughout the 1820s, the issue of where to terminate the canal on the shore of Lake Erie became a hotly debated political issue. Countering the comments made about the Black Rock harbor, Peter B. Porter reported to the legislators on any flooding in the Buffalo harbor or hazards created by the reoccurring sandbars.

¹⁸ Quoted in Hill, 174.

¹⁹ Hill, 176.

²⁰ Quoted in Hill, 185.

²¹ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-24.

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The 1820s saw a host of various improvement projects in both Black Rock and Buffalo, and the decision on where to end the canal continued as the canal commissioners had reservations on both village's harbors. Because of Porter's continued lobbying for his village, in April of 1822, the legislature appropriated \$12,000 for construction work on the harbor and piers at Black Rock. This work included partially damming the Niagara River with the construction of a pier linking Squaw Island and Bird Island, creating a more useable channel. Known as the Bird Island Pier, this structure was frequently battered by ice and poor weather, but was subsequently repaired and eventually incorporated into the outer pier of the improved Black Rock harbor constructed by the federal government in the early 1900s.²²

Canal commissioners selected Buffalo as the site of the terminus on three separate occasions, each time evoking a strong reaction both from politicians and local residents in Black Rock.

"The climax of this rivalry ended quietly in early 1825. A compromise was reached on an independent canal that allowed for its construction, if needed. The compromise was propelled by Albany merchants and shippers who voiced fears about the new harbor's safety after a harsh winter damaged new construction at Black Rock. Damages to the harbor at Black Rock closed it in 1826 and a storm in the spring of 1827 destroyed the pier. The remaining shippers and business moved to Buffalo. As a result, Black Rock harbor began to lose shipping commerce and Buffalo continued to gain commerce. The location of the terminus at Buffalo guaranteed its victory in its rivalry with Black Rock, and after it opened on October 26, 1825, Buffalo became the transshipment point for goods moving between the Midwest through the lakes to New York and ocean trade. The canal was a major gateway to the West, bringing hundreds of thousands of settlers through Buffalo and a time of economic prosperity. In 1825, the population of Black Rock was 1,039.

Peter Porter, despite his unsuccessful efforts with the canal, continued to advance the prospects of Black Rock. Founded by Porter and William Bird, his nephew, the Buffalo & Black Rock Railroad was the first railroad in Buffalo in 1834. A horse-propelled line, the Buffalo & Black Rock Railroad ran on 2.5 miles of track along Niagara Street from approximately School Street to Main Street. In 1836 the line was converted to steam engines and was extended across the Scajaquada into what would become the Town of Tonawanda and all the way to Niagara Falls, becoming the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Railroad. By 1847 it ran two trains a day in both directions. It was consolidated into the New York Central Railroad in 1853.²³

"The economic success of the Erie Canal and the arrival of immigrants into Western New York dramatically increased the area's population. As a result, new cities, towns, and villages, were created. In 1832, the City of Buffalo was incorporated; its boundaries were North Street on the north, Jefferson Street on the east, and the Buffalo Creek reservation on the south. Upper Black Rock, the area south of Squaw Island, was just over the northern border of the growing city and with trolley service established began to be closely linked to the city. In 1836, the Town of Tonawanda, including Grand Island, was created from the Town of Buffalo. In April 1837 the Village of Black Rock was incorporated. In February 1839 the Town of Black Rock was organized from what remained of the Town of Buffalo outside the city, as well as nominally the area south of the city to the center of the Buffalo Creek reservation. By 1850, Erie County had a population of more than 100,000 with Buffalo having 42,261 residents. In 1853, the City of Buffalo extended its boundaries, annexing all of the Town of Black Rock and receiving a new city charter."

Upper Black Rock failed in its competition with Buffalo to be a terminus for the canal and was slowly absorbed into the growing west side of the City of Buffalo. Lower Black Rock, north of Scajaquada Creek, received a lock at the foot of Austin Street in 1883. The lock was a boon to the economic development in this area, which soon was referred to as Black Rock Dam, for it enhance the water power generated by the river and, after South Buffalo, Black Rock became the most heavily industrialized section of the city by the middle of the nineteenth century. Mills had been located along the Niagara River and Scajaquada Creek since the 1830s, and included Frontier Mills (reputedly erected in 1832 by Stephen W. Howells), Globe Mills (ca. 1935), and Enos' flour mill, all of which were still extant in 1884. William Bird, Peter Porter, and Robert McPherson reputedly erected a flour mill at Lower Black Rock ca. 1831. Other mills included the Erie Mills and the Queen City Mills (both erected ca. 1838), the Clinton mills and the North Buffalo mills (1857). Most of these mills were located south of Bird Avenue and along the pier extending south from Squaw Island. In 1866, Globe Mills, Niagara Mills, and Erie Mills were situated along the river near Amherst Street. Frontier Mills, Clinton Mills, Queen City Mills, and

²² Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-24 – 2-25.

²³ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-25.

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Marine Flour Mills were extant in 1894, but most of the mills had burned down or were torn down by the 1920s. Mills and factories soon attracted German and Irish immigrants to live in the area. The lock, until its closure in 1913, served as bridge to Squaw Island. The present lock was completed between 1908 and 1914.”

By the beginning of the 1840s “the canal towpath in Black Rock—at the foot of Amherst, Austin and Hertel—had become a significant manufacturing center with several flour mills, cooperages (barrel factories), and lumber mills”. In addition to the canal, the tracks of the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Railroad ran just east of the intersection of Amherst and Tonawanda streets. With industry and community development the population of Black Rock rose from approximately 1,400 in 1855 to 2,200 in 1875. The area north of what is now Hertel Avenue comprised mostly farms until the late nineteenth century. William A. Bird owned a large farm lot in this area.”

Although Gibson, Johnson and Ehle operated a foundry and machine shop in Black Rock in 1826 and Mr. Justin built a forge at Black Rock Dam in 1838, it wasn't until the middle of nineteenth century that heavy industry took root north of Scajaquada Creek. Founded in 1846, Buffalo Iron and Nail Works was the first rolling mill (e.g., produced metal rolled in bars or sheets) and one of the largest iron works in the city. It was located near the mouth of Scajaquada Creek in Black Rock, and was owned by Pratt and Company from approximately 1857 through 1880. It manufactured bar iron, hoop and band iron, rod and nail plate, “and has connected with it a manufactory for wrought railroad and boat spikes.” Pratt and Company was formed in 1832 by Samuel Fletcher Pratt, Pascal Paoli Pratt (his brother), and Edward P. Beals. Housed on the Terrace in Buffalo, the company was a dealer in hardware, bar iron, sheet iron, tools, contractors' and railroad supplies, and coach and saddlery ware.”

Circa 1850, Pratt and Company organized a separate firm to deal exclusively with the carriage and saddle aspect of the business. To this end the Pratt brothers partnered with William Pryor Letchworth from Auburn, New York, to form Pratt & Letchworth; Pratt & Company continuing in its old line. Pratt & Company subsequently became renowned for saddlery hardware. Headquartered on the Terrace in Buffalo, Pratt & Letchworth established the Buffalo Malleable Iron Works on Tonawanda Street in 1860, probably near or subsuming the Iron and Nail Works. The factory contained 50 nail making machines, while the mill had 16 puddling and 5 heating furnaces and five trains of rolls. An additional building, measuring 200 ft by 80 ft was completed by 1866, which added four heating furnaces and two trains of rolls to the factory's capabilities. At that time, the company put into operation “the Fletcher Furnace,” one-half mile from the factory on 12 acres “with an extended river and canal front. A canal basin at right angles to the canal, three hundred feet long by sixty feet wide and seven feet deep, has been excavated, which is connected by a slip with the Erie Canal. On the Niagara River, two hundred feet of substantial dock has been built; alongside of which is twelve feet of water.” In 1872, Pratt & Letchworth occupied 38 acres between the New York Central and Scajaquada Creek, which emptied into the Erie Canal adjacent to the Black Rock depot. The company manufactured “saddlery hardware, rings, buckles, trees, hames, & c.”

Perhaps motivated by altruism as well as practicality, Pratt & Letchworth erected for the workers “a goodly number of neat and convenient cottages, situated near the Works. In the immediate neighborhood there are two large, free public school buildings, where the children of the men employed have the most favorable advantages for educating their children.” The workers had the opportunity to purchase the house and lot. Moreover, the proprietors appear to have attempted to provide the workers a natural outlet to escape the dirt, noise and grime of factory work as “part of the unoccupied land has been planted and converted into a succession of flower gardens, that part nearest the water having, in Summer time, the appearance of a small park; and, lastly, a cozy little reading-room, well warmed, well lighted, and well supplied with newspapers has been opened for their use. A library will shortly be added to it. It would be a good thing if more large employers of labor were as thoughtful.” Interestingly, Pratt & Letchworth also used prison labor at the nearby penitentiary to produce some articles under contract.”

In 1873, William P. Letchworth sold his interest in the company to his brother, Josiah, who was running the company with George Letchworth in 1884. With railroad dominance of shipping and transportation at the turn of nineteenth century, the expanding iron works manufactured the driving wheels and frames of some of the largest American and foreign locomotives. Pratt and Letchworth was the first to use the open –hearth steel process in Buffalo and produced steel castings by 1888. After 1880, other companies operated the blast furnace, while the rolling mill was converted to other

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industrial uses. Pratt & Letchworth employed between 500 and 800 workers and served as the impetus to settle the area. In the 1920s, the Tonawanda Street plant covered 20 acres, with its power derived from Niagara Falls."²⁴

Figure A-11 illustrates some of the industrial and commercial development that characterized Lower Black Rock after the conclusion of the Civil War. Flour mills were located along the Niagara River near the canal lock and Pratt's blast furnace was farther north near the canal basin. At the time, numerous industrial operations were situated along both sides of Scajaquada Creek, including saw mills of Laycock Brothers and N.H. Hoyt, and a shingle mill on the creek's south side, and Parsons saw mill, the Malleable Iron Factory, Niagara Pail and Tub Factory, Ball and Son Fire Brick Factory, and a shingle factory on the north side. Pratt's Iron Works were located along the river south of the creek.

Iron ore smelting began in Buffalo around 1860, as economical lake transportation of ore to Buffalo enabled the city's commerce-based economy to gradually shift to a manufacturing economy (Holder 1960:14, 16). The Civil War stimulated the iron and steel industry and, by 1864, 24 foundries and machine shops were located in Buffalo. The trend toward heavier industry intensified after the Civil War and, in 1869, the city held an industrial exposition that featured the inventiveness of mechanization and production and advanced the idea of industry as craft (Goldman 1983:126). The introduction of the iron industry at the exposition provided a stage for the initiation, and subsequent development, of a new era of industrialization. Soon after, iron and steel manufacturing would become the backbone industry of the City of Buffalo and the railroads were vital for the importation of iron and coal from the mines of Pennsylvania.

The arrival of the railroads during the mid-nineteenth century fostered the continued economic diversification of Buffalo and Black Rock into a more densely populated, more heavily industrialized area. As noted, the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Railroad ran two trains a day in both directions by 1847 and was incorporated into the New York Central Railroad system in 1853 (Dunn 2000:10-11; Emslie and Kirk 1850; Geil 1855). In 1869, the New York Central merged with Cornelius Vanderbilt's Hudson River Railroad, becoming the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad (New York Central for short).

In the early 1870s, a flurry of construction emanated from several railroad lines that were expanding into or through western New York. In Canada, the Grand Trunk Railway's long gestating project of erecting a bridge over the Niagara River finally came to fruition as an international bridge was completed in 1873. The engineering firm of Sir Casimir S. Gzowski and D.L. MacPherson constructed a single-track iron railway bridge with a pedestrian walkway from North Buffalo to Fort Erie. This bridge was second railroad bridge to span the river (the first was the Suspension Bridge below Niagara Falls) and the only one at that time with piers in the river.

The site selected for the crossing was located 3.5 miles north of Buffalo harbour [sic], where advantage could be taken of Squaw Island, situated close to the American side, to cross both the River and the Erie Canal. The piers had to be constructed in the swift current and several coffer dams were swept away before they were anchored by heavy stone. The crossing, which consisted of a bridge across the main river channel, an embankment across Squaw Island, and a swing span across the Erie Canal, was opened for single track traffic in November, 1873, and its success was immediate [Dunn 2000:52, quoting Jackson & Burtniak 1978].

The American end of the bridge connected with the tracks of the New York Central at Lower Black Rock. These tracks were formerly part of the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Railroad (Dunn 2000:52; Niagara Falls Thunder Alley ca. 1998). The bridge was renovated in 1900 with the pedestrian walkway removed to accommodate a second rail bed. It comprises three sections: 1) from Canada across the river to Squaw Island; 2) across Squaw Island; and 3) across the Black Rock Canal (Niagara Falls Thunder Alley ca. 1998). A total of 264 trains crossed the bridge during one 24-hour period (July 10, 1916), while in 1998 between 10 and 15 trains across the bridge per day (Niagara Falls Thunder Alley ca. 1998). Operated into the twentieth century by the International Railroad Bridge Company, the International Bridge is also referred to as the International Railroad Bridge.

At the same time, the New York Central was constructing a line to provide a direct connection for freight traffic to the International Bridge. Prosaically named the Junction Railroad, this line ran from east Buffalo generally north to just north

²⁴ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-26 - 2-29.

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of Main Street where it turned west and paralleled Amherst Street through sparsely settled northern Buffalo to the former Buffalo & Niagara Falls Railroad tracks. It was completed in 1872 (Dunn 2000:52-53).

Not to be outdone, the Erie Railroad endeavored to expand its line into Canada accessing the International Bridge. Incorporated in 1872, the Erie International Railroad when completed ran from the International Bridge at Black Rock across northern Buffalo to connect with the Suspension Bridge & Erie Junction Railroad at Main Street. Completed in 1871, the Suspension Bridge and Erie Junction Railroad left the Erie mainline near the intersection of William Street and Williamsville Road (now Bailey Avenue) and crossed Main Street near Hertel Avenue (Dunn 2000:52)."

By 1879, the New York Central had three principal passenger stations within the City of Buffalo: one in east Buffalo that was utilized by the New York Central and the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern line; one on Exchange Street (built 1855-1856) and one on Erie Street (west of Main) that [was] used by the Grand Trunk Railway as well as Buffalo, Niagara Falls & Lockport Railroad. To simplify its operation, the New York Central linked the Buffalo & Niagara Falls line (the tracks of which runs [sic] through the [proposed Ambassador Bridge] project area) with the Exchange Street station, which resulted in the termination of the Erie Street station and the creation of a local passenger station on the Terrace by 1880 (Beers 1880; Dunn 2000:98-99)."

This new link in downtown Buffalo was a key component in the creation of the infrastructure for "a belt line passenger service all the way around" the city. Beginning operation in July 1883, the so-called Belt Line used the tracks of the Junction Railroad on the eastern side, which had been completed to the International Bridge by 1872, and the tracks of the former Buffalo & Niagara Falls Railroad on the western side. A total of 2,100 passengers were served in the first week."

In its years, stations on the Belt Line counterclockwise from Exchange Street were located at the Terrace, Georgia Street, Water Works, Ferry Street, Clifton Avenue, Black Rock, (West) Amherst Street, Austin Street, Cross Cut Junction, Delaware Park, Villa Park, (East) Amherst Street, Main Street, Driving Park, Genesee, Broadway, William Street, and Seneca Street. In 1885 twelve trains ran counter-clockwise from Exchange Street beginning at 5:55 A.M., and thirteen clockwise ending at 7:45 P.M. In those halcyon days one could circle the city for a nickel [Dunn 2000:99]."

The extension of the Belt Line past and parallel to Amherst Street fostered industrial and residential development in the sparsely settled areas in the city's northern limits. Industries were liberated by the railroads from the necessity of locating near the waterfront or the canal to transport their goods. The advent of hydroelectric power at the turn of the nineteenth century also facilitated this transition. "Factories began to spring up along the tracks of the Belt Line. In Black Rock an industrial strip developed along the tracks that used the Tonawanda-Amherst Street station to transport their goods" (Zornick 2002; Goldman 1983:178-180; American Atlas Company 1894; USGS 1901). For example, Pratt & Letchworth expanded their operations in the 1880s and were joined in Black Rock by a variety of other industrialists in "the new urban-industrial frontier in Black Rock" (Zornick 2002, quoting Kowsky et al. 1981)."

Located at Niagara Street and Forest Avenue, the Niagara Bridge Works was regarded as one of Buffalo's most important establishments in connection with the iron industry in the 1880s. The company was founded at that Black Rock location in 1873 by G.C. Bell and S.J. Field and employed between 100 and 300 workers in the early 1880s (Smith 1884:II:88 Bio; Hill 1923:810). The International Starch Works opened in Black Rock in 1877 and employed 50 workers, with a capacity of 400 bushels of corn per day. It also operated a barrel-heading factory at its location (Smith 1884: II: 259). Buffalo Structural Steel Company erected a plant on Letchworth Street near Grant Street (south of Scajaquada Creek) in 1895, which was still in operation in the 1920s (Hill 1923:806). Buffalo Cooperative Stove Company operated a large plant at Amherst and Tonawanda Streets. It produced the "well-known" Amherst stoves, ranges, and furnaces (Hill 1923:807)."

In 1883, Thomas F. Griffin & Sons began manufacturing car wheels in a 600-x-70-ft building on Forest Avenue near Niagara Street, and the Shepard Hardware Company relocated their foundry to three-and-one-half acres in this area from Chicago Street. Founded by John D. Shepard, a long-time Buffalo ironmonger, the Shepard Hardware Company occupied the entire area north of Forest Avenue and south of Scajaquada Creek between the Erie Canal and the New York Central tracks in 1889, but this area was completely vacant in 1894 and occupied by the Buffalo Gas Light Company in 1900. In 1894 the New York Car Wheel Works and Griffin Machine Works flanked the tracks of the New York Central south of Forrest Avenue between the Erie Canal and Niagara Street (Smith 1884: II: 257-258; Sanborn Map Company

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1889, 1900; American Atlas Co. 1894). On the south side of the creek, the Peoples Gas Light and Coke Company and Buffalo Structural Steel Company occupied the northwest side of the intersection of Bradley and Dart Streets in 1900. This area only had a sawmill in 1894 (Sanborn Map Company 1900; American Atlas Company 1894).²⁵

Between Tonawanda Street and Scajaquada Creek were the United States Electric Light & Power Company, Thompson's shingle mill, Pratt & Letchworth's Buffalo Malleable Iron Works, Laycock Brother's Company sawmill, Glor & Gridley's Barrel Factory, Hall and Sons Fire Brick Works, and the Buffalo Sewer Pipe Company. The latter two operations appear to have collected clay from the banks of the creek for use in their operations. An extensive and growing collection of railroad tracks (and a variety of freight houses) were situated west of Tonawanda Street, covering the area to just northwest of Parish Street, and included the operations of the Grand Trunk Railway, the New York Central, the Michigan Central Railway, the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad, and the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad. In addition, Buffalo Co-operative Stove Company and A. Cutler and Son furniture factory were in this area, near Amherst and Churchill Streets."

Workers at that time when transportation was irregular or nonexistent [sic], tended to live near the places they were employed. This practice continued into the early decades of twentieth century when transportation was improving. As industry became ensconced in sparsely settled Black Rock area and along

Scajaquada Creek, workers, too, followed the Belt Line. Germans were the dominant ethnic group in this area in the early 1880s, but many of the new arrivals seeking employment in industries sprouting up in Black Rock were Eastern Europeans, particularly Polish immigrants, who had initially settled in Buffalo's East Side. What would become Assumption Parish was one example of this process of residential development complementing industrial development.

At first a simple stop on the Belt Line, the area quickly became a major node of immigrant settlement and industrial development. Because of its excellent connection with the rest of the city's railroad system, factories quickly located here. Settlers came too, primarily young Poles eager to move out and away from the older Polish section on the city's East Side. Now they had the opportunity, and beginning in 1883 hundreds and eventually thousands of Poles abandoned their old neighborhood. In 1888 Assumption parish, as a result of the combined forces of immigration, transportation and industrialization, had become the second largest Polish neighborhood in Buffalo [Goldman 1983:179].

The parish was established in 1888 along Amherst Street near the Belt Line. The present Romanesque Church of the Assumption was completed in 1914 at 435 Amherst Street and catered to the areas Polish immigrants and factory workers.²⁶

Another technological achievement was the development of the electric street railway or interurban. In 1895, the 35 cars of the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Electric Railway used the tracks of Buffalo Railway along Niagara, Tonawanda and Amherst Streets through Black Rock. It served 662,445 patrons during its first year, running cars at a minimum of every 15 minutes from each terminal. By 1900, 25 streetcar lines paralleled city roads (along with 87 miles of track) connecting downtown Buffalo with outlying neighborhoods in all corners of the city. In 1902 the electric railway was consolidated with other streetcar lines to form the International Railway Company (Dunn 2000:182-184; Goldman 1983:1986). The success of the electric railways undermined the profitability of the Belt Line, which stopped passenger service during World War I. The electric railways would, in turn, be undermined during the 1920s and 1930s by the success of the automobile and buses."

By the end of the nineteenth century, Buffalo was the second leading railroad terminus in the United States (after Chicago), which had reduced the economic impact of the Erie Canal to near irrelevance (Goldman 1983:129-130; Smith 1884: I: 320). As a result, New York State and canal interests believed another expansion of the old canal was necessary for it to compete with the railroads. By the last years of the nineteenth century, however, cost overruns and charges of incompetence caused the movement to improve the canal to be subsumed into the movement to re-conceive the canal in terms of the technological changes then-occurring: bigger, faster, motorized boats (McFee 1998:10-14, 39-42). While

²⁵ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-30 - 2-31.

²⁶ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-32.

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other portions of the state, including Niagara County, dramatically widened and deepened a new canal channel, the Buffalo electorate rejected a 1917 referendum to widen the Erie Canal in the city. Soon the source of Buffalo's nineteenth-century economic success would be filled with trash and buried. The Erie Barge Canal, as the new Erie Canal was called, terminated in the Town of Tonawanda, but canal traffic near Buffalo utilized the Black Rock channel and the Niagara River to reach Lake Erie or the Buffalo River (McFee 1998:74)."

Challenged by the streetcars and resurgent canal interests, the railroads were still the dominant method of transporting freight. Railroad companies, notably the New York Central and the Erie, established classification yards in Black Rock northwest of Tonawanda Street by the early twentieth century. The New York Central's Black Rock yards held seven miles of track and were northeast of the corner of Amherst and Tonawanda Streets, and along approaches to the international bridge (Dunn 2000:218). The Erie Railroad maintained a smaller classification yard in Black Rock that could service 325 cars with 12 switch engines (Dunn 2000:223). Beginning during the late nineteenth century, a movement to abolish railroad grade crossing slowly percolated through the city. The plethora of railroad lines and extensive trackage, as noted, separated communities and were dangerous. This movement spread, as the Belt Line opened up new areas to settlement and development and as neighborhoods grew during the early twentieth century. In general, streets were lowered to below grade and bridges erected over them to carry the trains (Zornick 2002)."

Electric streetcars and the Belt Line contributed to attract businesses to the Black Rock area in the early twentieth century. Established in 1896, the Fedders Manufacturing Company (later Fedco) relocated to Tonawanda Street from Genesee Street in 1910. The company manufactured radiators for automobiles, trucks, tractors, and airplanes and was the largest automobile radiator maker at the beginning of World War I. By 1925, Fedders-Quigan Corp occupied a complex of several buildings on both sides of West Avenue in the area between Scajaquada Creek and Tonawanda Street. The area north of West Avenue had been site of Hall & Sons Fire Brick Company until about 1910 (Hill 1923:810; Sanborn Map Company 1900, 1925). The Pratt & Lambert Company established a plant in Buffalo in 1903. The company was founded in Buffalo in 1849, developing a product that dried linseed-oil paint, and was one of the largest manufacturers of varnish. In 1908, it opened an industrial research laboratory that was dedicated to developing new products and ensuring quality control. By the twentieth century, Pratt & Lambert had constructed an extensive facility east of Tonawanda Street north of Fedders-Quigan Corp property. This area was partly occupied by the Buffalo Sewer Pipe Company, which was no longer running in 1900. Pratt & Lambert produced high quality varnish and oil and latex paints. Pratt & Lambert also had a small lacquer paint production factory on the south side of the creek (Hill 1923:788; Pratt & Lambert 2005; Sanborn Map Company 1900, 1925). The west side of Tonawanda Street in 1925 contained the New York Central's Black Rock passenger station and its freight station (used by Fedders-Quigan) and the freight house used by the Canadian National Railway, the Grand Trunk Railway, and the Wabash Railroad."

North of the Pratt & Lambert facilities on the east side of Tonawanda Street were Hard Manufacturing Company and Ushco Manufacturing Co. Inc. along Watts Road, and, north of them, Pratt & Letchworth Co. Inc.'s complex for steel and malleable iron casting, as well as rail sidings and a branch of the New York Central that crossed a trestle over Scajaquada Creek. In 1924, Pratt & Letchworth was purchased by Dayton Malleable Inc. (Sanborn Map Company 1916, 1925; Brown and Watson 1981:309). Hard Manufacturing Company was established in 1876 and moved to Buffalo by 1895, where it manufactured hospital beds. Ushco Manufacturing Co. Inc. was originally U.S. Hame Company, a subsidiary of Pratt & Letchworth that manufactured hames (the metal part of a horse's harness that goes around its body through which the leather harness leads run) and carriage accessories."²⁷

Despite the slow death of the canal movement in the city prior to World War I, canal improvements affected the Black Rock lock opposite the north end of Squaw Island. These improvements were undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers between 1908 and 1914, and resulted in the completion of a larger and more modern lock and the birth of the Black Rock Ship Canal. The old lock had provided a source of water power for nearby businesses, including the Erie Flour Mill on Amherst Street. In addition, the old lock served as a bridge to Squaw Island, which was utilized for recreation. Numerous ramshackle "cottages," fishing huts and squatter residences had been constructed along the shore of Squaw Island, beginning in the late nineteenth century (Leary and Sholes 1997: 76-84). A 1916 Sanborn Map depicted several single-story dwellings clustered along the shore north of the International Bridge, but the entire island was not shown. Further, the Erie Canal was still wide open at that time. North of the International Bridge, a 1927 aerial

²⁷ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-32 - 3-34.

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photograph showed both the Erie Canal in use and small structures along the eastern shore of Squaw Island (Sanborn Map Company 1916; Erie County Public Works nd).²⁸

In the 1920s in general, Buffalo's vibrant industrial economy drew other manufacturing concerns, such as the Curtiss-Wright Aeroplane Company (which employed more than 2,000 people in the 1920s), the burgeoning automotive industry employed more than 15,000 workers, various machine shops and foundries employed 13,000, meat-packing industries employed 3,000 workers as did the soap-making industries. The city had a population of 506,775 in 1920 (Goldman 1983:216-217; Graham 1967:97, 102; Van Ness 2001). The present-day Peace Bridge, south of the International Bridge between Buffalo and Fort Erie, was completed in 1927. The site of the American plaza was formerly the location of Fort Porter (demolished in 1925), which was erected by 1848 on high ground overlooking the confluence of the Erie Canal and the Niagara River. Tracks of the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Railroad ran east of the fort (Emslie & Kirk 1850; USGS 1948; Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority 2002; Rote 1990).

In addition, the Erie Canal was filled, usually with garbage and debris in a piecemeal fashion between the late 1920s and the late 1930s. A 1938 aerial photograph documented numerous small structures clustered along the northeastern end of Squaw Island and the Erie Canal in the process of being filled, although still partially open. By 1942 the canal had been filled. A 1950 map and 1951 aerial photograph illustrated a bit of water in the old canal bed north of the International Bridge to approximately Bridge Street, just east of the offices of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District; Erie Canal had been filled north of this area [sic]. These aerial photographs and Sanborn maps detail the area east of Tonawanda Street and west of Scajaquada Creek filled with industrial structures related to Fedders Manufacturing Inc., Pratt & Lambert, Hard Manufacturing Co., and Pratt & Letchworth among others (Ryskiewicz and Gorton 2003; Sanborn Map Company 1950; Erie County Public Works nd). Several structures of Buffalo Structural Steel were located on the east bank on the creek on both sides of the New York Central's tracks, as well as several large tanks.

Despite a seemingly vibrant, diversified economy in the 1940s, a long economic decline was underway by the end of World War II. Beginning in the mid-1950s, a general boom in large-scale public construction projects impacted Buffalo and Erie County, and included the Skyway (the elevated portion of Route 5), which was completed in the mid-1950s (ca. 1955). In addition, construction for the Niagara section of the New York State Thruway (Interstate-190) began in the mid-1950s, which when completed extended across the far western portion of the Town of Tonawanda through the northern part of the city and Black Rock into downtown Buffalo. North of Black Rock, I-190 was laid in the former right-of-way (ROW) of the Erie Canal. A 1958 aerial photograph documents the completion of portions of I-190 in former canal ROW, mostly north of International Bridge. Further, the Scajaquada Creek Expressway (New York State 198) was under construction at this time, although there was no construction south of tracks of the New York Central that extended eastward across the creek from Pratt & Letchworth/Pratt & Lambert properties (Graham 1967; Leary and Sholes 1997:92-94; Ryskiewicz and Gorton 2003). Construction for these routes and their circuitous intersection had not extended into the current project area at this time. Completion of I-190 through the Black Rock and Riverside sections of the city severed the area's historical access to the river and destroyed the small water-based communities that lived there (Goldman nd).

Improved transportation routes sparked the development of towns surrounding the city facilitating "suburban sprawl" as people began to relocate from older neighborhoods into residential subdivisions away from the urban core. Businesses also relocated away from the developed city since they had room to expand. The city's population fell from 580,132 in 1950 to 532,132 in 1960, as Erie County experienced increased suburbanization (the county's population exceeded one million in 1960) (Graham 1967:119; Goldman 1983:268-273). By 1965, the Scajaquada Creek Expressway (NY 198) had been completed through Black Rock and Delaware Park and the Niagara Thruway (I-190) had been completed along the river to Buffalo (USGS 1965).²⁹

In the 1950s, the character of the area was described as approximately half industrial and half residential and commercial, signifying the immense industrial and manufacturing capabilities of the north-west corner of Buffalo. In 1950, the Riverside Community contained a population of 35,400 which was noted as being a loss of nearly 3,000 people from the 1930 census.

²⁸ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-34.

²⁹ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-34 – 2-35.

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"In the mid-1960s, numerous structures were located long the northwestern and northeastern shores of Squaw Island, while sewage disposal operations were conducted in the southern part of the island. These structures were gone by 1986 (USGS 1965; NYSDOT 1986). In 1972 the City of Buffalo purchased land on Squaw Island for a secondary sewage treatment plant, called the Buffalo Sewer Authority's Bird Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. In 2004, the City of Buffalo established Squaw Island Park north of the railroad tracks. The businesses within the [proposed Ambassador Bridge] project area suffered dramatic declines after the 1980s. The Fedders Manufacturing Inc. (also called Fedco) was purchase by Transpro and later closed in 2005. Pratt & Lambert was bought and closed by Sherwin-Williams in 1996 with all of the plant's buildings demolished. Hard Manufacturing Co. closed ca. 1991. The Pratt & Letchworth plant closed by the end of 1981, with seventeen buildings on the complex demolished after 1990. In 1997, a golf course/driving range opened on the subsequent brownfields site, but later closed. In 2000, Buffalo's population had fallen to 292,648, its lowest level since 1890, and Erie County had a population of 950,255 (Ryskiewicz and Gorton 2003; Rey 2001)."³⁰

3.0 THE GRANT-AMHERST NEIGHBORHOOD, ca. 1880s-1960

For much of its early history during the first half of the nineteenth-century, the Grant-Amherst neighborhood was a largely unsettled, undeveloped area on the fringe of the Black Rock settlement and the growing City of Buffalo to the south. Although some initial planning occurred in the area shortly after the Civil War-era, it was not until the completion of the Belt Line railroad which encircled the City of Buffalo in the 1880s that this area saw rapid growth and development. By the turn of the twentieth-century and in the early decades of the 1900s, the Grant-Amherst neighborhood would become home to several prominent industrial and manufacturing companies, as well as home to a significant population of immigrant laborers.

Early maps depict the area as large open farmland throughout the early nineteenth-century. Located just east of the growing Erie Canal settlement of Lower Black Rock, the area which would become the Grant-Amherst neighborhood was very sparsely occupied and remained a rural fringe outside of the emerging City of Buffalo. Maps from 1830 and 1856 depict the Grant-Amherst area as comprised largely of generously sized farm tracts, traversed solely via Amherst Street which ran from Lower Black Rock to Delaware Avenue and further east. By 1856, some planning in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood near the intersection of Military Road and Amherst Street appears to have begun, on the eastern fringe of the Lower Black Rock community, however very little settlement beyond Tonawanda Street had occurred by the 1850s. Grant-Amherst continued to remain a sparsely settled area beyond the Mile Strip Reservation line through the Civil War era, with a grocery being noted to be located at the corner of Amherst Street and McPherson Street (later incorporated as part of the northern extension of Elmwood Avenue) but no other significant edifices appear in this area.

The Grant-Amherst neighborhood began to experience a slight increase in its growth following the Civil War in the 1870s. Atlases from 1872 note that more substantial growth had occurred at the Military Road and Amherst Street intersection. Interesting to note that during the 1870s, Lower Black Rock was nearly entirely contained within the bounds of the Scajaquada Creek, the Niagara River and within the confines of the New York State Ditch which connected the Scajaquada Creek to the Cornelius Creek via an arcing waterway.³¹ Outside of this region, some initial residential development was laid out. The right-of-ways for Germain, Howell, Bush and what became Peter Streets appear on the 1872 atlas as being laid out and parceled under the ownership of the Erie County Savings Bank. By 1875, thirteen Poles had settled in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood. At the south-west corner of this intersection, the Black Rock Farmers' Market was located. Behind this market was an area which was apparently nicknamed "Hell Town" by the residents, as the area quickly became a densely crowded community of newly-arrived Polish immigrants who sought employment in the area's numerous factories and plants.

In the second half of the nineteenth-century, the City of Buffalo was quickly becoming a wealthy, industrialized city which began expanding beyond its downtown core into the fringes to the north and west. Already a significant railroad center for the country, in 1883 the powerful New York Central Railroad constructed a new rail line which encircled the city just

³⁰ Refer to Schieppati et al., 2-35 – 2-36.

³¹ Little information about this waterway has been located. This connection appears on early maps from 1830 and disappears by 1915. It appears that the NY State Ditch may have been a drainage system, since it appears too small for use as a navigable waterway, and was used to route water between the Scajaquada Creek and the Cornelius Creek to the north. This waterway may have been a necessary part of the controls for the water levels of the Erie Canal and Black Rock lock system.

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beyond the areas which were settled and developed at the time. This rail line was known as the Belt Line as it formed a belt around Buffalo. This Belt Line railroad not only provided for circulation in and around the City, but it was also linked to the New York Central's massive network of rail lines which laced the country.

When it was initially constructed, the Belt Line had nineteenth stations spaced approximately one mile apart on its circuit around the City. The line's main station in the City was the main station at Exchange Street, where trains from across the country arrived and departed, carrying with them a wide assortment of raw materials and goods which helped to stimulate Buffalo's immense manufacturing and industrial economy. The constant activity at the Exchange Street stop which totaled approximately 170 weekday train arrivals and departures made possible an immense industrial base throughout the City of Buffalo. As a result, many industries chose to relocate or construct facilities adjacent to the Belt Line as an easy and cost-effective means to receive raw materials and ship final products. In addition to the freight capacity, the Belt Line railroad also provided City residents an easy transportation system; the conveniently spaced stops on the rail line provided access to any part of Buffalo for the cost of a nickel. Many of the stops were located in sections of the city which were less populated, such as the station at Amherst Street in Grant-Amherst and also in Buffalo's East Side along Broadway. As a result of the burgeoning industrial growth along the Belt Line in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood, this section of the City became an enclave of immigrant laborers, attracted to settle in the area by the numerous employment opportunities.

Capitalizing on the Belt Line railroad as a means to transport large numbers of people and also quantities of freight and materials, Buffalo's Pan American Exposition grounds were constructed adjacent to the future Grant-Amherst neighborhood, on the east side of Elmwood Avenue in 1900 and 1901. Constructed in what had previously been vacant land, similar to that of the Grant-Amherst neighborhood, the Exposition grounds were designed with a large rail station was installed at the northern end, linking the fair to the Belt Line and the national rail lines.

Following the close of the Pan-American Exposition, this entire section of Buffalo experienced tremendous growth and development. Specifically in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood, the years around the turn-of the twentieth-century witnessed the creation of the majority of the area's streets including Chandler and Grote Streets. This was the dawn of the age of industrial development in the neighborhood. Like the Pan-American Exposition grounds, many of these new industries located along the Belt Line railroad tracks along streets such as Chandler Street and at Amherst Street near Churchill Street. Industries along Chandler Street in 1900 include the Acme Malleable Iron Works (demolished) at Military Road, Buffalo Weaving Company (demolished) near Bridgeman Street, and the Clark Manufacturing Company (demolished).

The Grant-Amherst community attracted many Eastern European immigrants, drawing a significant population of Polish, Hungarians and Ukrainians to the area. This working class immigrant group constructed simple, modest and functional housing in the area, and the housing stock in the neighborhood consisted primarily of small one and one-and-one-half story workers' cottages or two-story flat buildings. The workers' cottages were popular throughout Buffalo's Eastern European-settled areas including the Hydraulics neighborhood around Seneca and Swan Streets and throughout the East Side communities. This type of small, affordable house was typically front-gabled, wood frame construction with telescoping rear additions for additional space. Workers' cottages afforded working class families their own home while being small and relatively inexpensive. These narrow houses could be built to conform to the typical long, narrow rectangular parcels, common through the City's industrialized and working class areas. Two-story flat buildings were also typically wood framed construction, and appear to draw from the turn-of-the century Craftsman style and American Foursquare models. These buildings featured two apartments or flats, one on each floor, and often accommodated a small porch on the front façade of each level. Buffalo flats, as this type of building is often called, were also typical of the City's working class neighborhoods.

One of the more unique areas developed in the early 1900s in Grant-Amherst was the "Parkview Estates" community. Located just west of Elmwood Avenue, this enclave established the streets of Beaumaris Place, Woodette Place and Elmview Place around the year 1915. While little information regarding the development of this small planned community is presently available, the Parkview Estates development on the west side of Elmwood Avenue appears to have been sympathetic to several other residential development projects occurring on the east side of Elmwood Avenue on the former site of the Pan-American Exposition grounds which were developed following the close of the fair. While the Parkview Estates development appears on the 1915 city atlas, it appears that development and construction of houses on

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the new streets occurred closer to 1920. Houses in the development are typically two story single-family homes in a modest Craftsman style which was popular during this period.

Religion was a significant part of the lives of the Grant-Amherst residents, and the community contains several beautiful churches and parish complexes. Perhaps the most notable parish founded in the neighborhood was the Assumption parish. Many Poles in the area had worshipped at the St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church located on East Street; however because this church was ethnically German, the Polish-speaking residents never felt truly welcomed. As the Polish community grew more prominent in the Grant-Amherst area in the late nineteenth-century, they established a new congregation. Forming the Assumption parish, the new congregation constructed their first modest church building between 1888 and 1889. This new church quickly became a prominent center for life in the neighborhood and in the years from 1888 to 1891, 800 baptisms and 136 weddings were performed. Eventually the prosperous congregation constructed the present twin-towered Romanesque building in 1913-1914. The Church of the Assumption was later joined by the Our Lady of Black Rock School and Parish forming a significant parish complex which bolstered not only the spiritual needs of the community, but the educational and social needs as well. The church acted as a beacon, attracting many Polish families to settle in the area; in 1900 the neighborhood contained about 1,000 Polish residents, but by 1915 this number had increased to over 5,000. The Poles also established the relatively more modest church at 1020 Grant Street in 1953 known as the All Saint's Polish National Catholic Church (extant). This unique polychrome building is the sole remaining Polish National Church in the City of Buffalo.

As the Polish community grew and strengthened in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood, they established the Polish Cadets Club of Buffalo (extant, NRE) in 1899 as a social organization to complement the work of the Assumption parish. The goals of the club were to foster civic pride as well as promote the ideals of American citizenship to the immigrant community. The club grew quickly in the Grant-Amherst area, and its rapid growth and stability led to its incorporation and the purchase of a parcel of land on Grant Street in 1912. The organization then turned to prominent local Polish architect, Wladyslaw H. Zawadzki, to construct the new brick clubhouse which was completed in 1913. The new Polish Cadets Hall was described as containing a spacious auditorium, frequently used for weddings, balls and receptions, conference rooms, a large library and other spaces. Today, the Polish Cadets Hall continues to serve the community in much the same capacity and is a center for social functions, community meetings and weddings.

The large Hungarian population in Grant-Amherst was second only to the Poles in number and also constructed many churches in the neighborhood. Many Hungarians who arrived in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood settled shortly after the turn of the twentieth-century, and like the Poles, were attracted to the many employment opportunities available in the area. The Hungarians had a significant presence in the community, and established several churches in the neighborhood. Out of the five remaining Hungarian churches in the City of Buffalo, the Grant-Amherst neighborhood contains three. St. Elizabeth's Roman Catholic Hungarian Church (1906-1907 by Max G. Beierl, NRE) located at 986 Grant Street is an excellent example of a brick Romanesque Revival church building (extant). In 1917, the Hungarians also formed the Hungarian Evangelical Lutheran Church of our Savior Church located at 1037 Grant Street (extant, NRE). This diminutive front-gabled church building was constructed on a raised basement level and features elegant stained glass windows. The Hungarian community also founded the First Hungarian Baptist Church located on Austin Street (extant, NRE) in 1916. The building was created in the Craftsman style, with wood shingle sheathing and a bracketed bell tower; a rare style for the construction of churches.

While some initial development and settlement in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood began in the mid-1850s, it was not until the twentieth-century that this neighborhood truly began to flourish. While the Belt Line railroad became a source of jobs, business and population growth for the community, its busy network of rail lines also served to sever it from its nearby Lower Black Rock neighbor, lying just to the west of the neighborhood. The rail lines effectively isolated the growing working class immigrant community from the earlier Lower Black Rock neighborhood through the late nineteenth and during the early twentieth-century. This separation helped to forge a unique sense of community for the self-sufficient Grant-Amherst area, differentiating it from surrounding neighborhoods.

Like the Lower Black Rock community, the Grant-Amherst neighborhood contained several significant manufacturers and industries. Located on Amherst Street at Kail Street was the McKinnon Dash Company, manufacturer of chains and hoist equipment. Originally founded in 1878 as the Ontario, Canada-based hardware store of McKinnon and Mitchell by Lachlan Ebenezer McKinnon, the company opened a Buffalo branch in 1887 (since demolished). Eventually the Buffalo

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subsidiary, known as McKinnon Dash Company, manufactured a wide variety of metal items including suspender buckles, as well as bicycles and chains. By 1929 the company had merged with other similar businesses and eventually incorporated to become the Columbus McKinnon Corporation. The Amherst, NY-based company of Columbus McKinnon presently employs 4,350 at 76 locations in 14 countries.

The Linde Air Products Company established its facility on Chandler Street in the early twentieth-century (extant, NRE). Incorporated in Cleveland Ohio in 1907, Linde Air Products Company became the first large-scale industrial gas producer in the country. Buffalo was selected as the best location for the company due to its proximity to the immense hydroelectric power of Niagara Falls, and the first Linde plant was constructed in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood shortly thereafter. During its early years, the Linde company pioneered a one-piece, light-weight cylinder of high-alloy steel, allowing for gas to be compressed and stored in a more compact container. The company quickly became successful and was partially acquired by the giant Union Carbide Company in 1911. By 1937, the Linde Air Products Company relocated to a new facility in nearby Tonawanda, NY; eventually in the early 1990s the company would become part of the Praxair Company, an international leader in the industrial air products field.

One of the largest manufacturing facilities located in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood belonged to the Buffalo Weaving and Belting Company, formerly located on Chandler Street (demolished) along the Belt Line railroad. The initial factory for the Buffalo Weaving Company was constructed ca. 1892 when the company was founded and was a large brick mill building. The building underwent a series of substantial additions in the early 1900s, with a two-story brick addition designed by prominent local architect Louise Blanchard Bethune in 1903. Bethune is recognized as the first professional female architect and also designed numerous schools throughout the area as well as the Lafayette Hotel (1903, NR 2010). The Buffalo Weaving and Belting Company manufactured a wide variety of rubber and cotton belts and hoses. During the turn of the twentieth-century era, many of these types of products were used by industrial and manufacturing facilities to drive machines. The Buffalo Weaving and Belting Company remained in business on Chandler Street until it became the victim of arson on April 15, 2003 after which the devastated complex was eventually razed.

Located at 37 Chandler Street was the Double Truss Cornice Brake Company (extant, NRE). Constructed in a simple brick factory building which dates to ca. 1905, the Double Truss Cornice Brake Company specialized in manufacturing a type of machinery used for bending and shaping sheet metal which was used in making building cornices, roofing, heating and ventilation system construction. Their machines, known as double truss cornice brakes, were also used for tinsmithing, furnace making, refrigerator manufacturing and repair, trunk making, and for a wide variety of building components including flashing, fire walls, ridging, roofing, decking and any other item which could be made of shaped sheet metal. These machines made by the Double Truss Cornice Brake Company of Buffalo were marketed as being easily transported to job sites, allowing for the manufacturing of components on-site, rather than having to transport finished products to the location.

Other unique companies in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood include the American Buffalo Robe Company, located on Howell Street near the Scajaquada Creek (extant, NRE). Founded at the site in the late 1890s, the company initially produced American Bison-hide lap blankets to be used in carriages and coaches during the cold Buffalo winters. By the early twentieth-century, the company began making lap blankets for use in automobiles, which lacked the interior heating of today's automobiles. Like the larger Buffalo Malleable Iron Works plant in Lower Black Rock, the Acme Steel & Malleable Iron Works on Chandler Street (since demolished) also handled a wide variety of metal manufacturing, including making metal components for use in the railroad industry, saw mill machine parts, steam pipes and a wide variety of other cast metal products. Also located on Chandler Street was the Houk Manufacturing Company (extant, NRE). Under the leadership of President George W. Houk, the company specialized in the manufacturing of wire wheels for automobiles in the early twentieth-century. In 1916 the company had several branch offices across the country and did nearly \$2 million dollars in business. It was later succeeded by the Wire Wheel Corporation of America. Also located on Chandler Street is the Jewett Refrigerator Company, located at 27 Chandler Street (extant, NRE); a company which was initially founded in 1849.

Like many communities throughout Buffalo, Black Rock and Grant-Amherst faced difficult times in the later half of the twentieth-century. As the City's significance as a major port and trade center waned following the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway on April 25, 1959 which effectively rendered the Erie Canal and the City's rail lines obsolete, Buffalo faced a severe economic downturn in the 1970s and 80s. During this period, the City of Buffalo faced the loss of much of

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its traditional industrial and manufacturing businesses, including its steel industry, eliminating thousands of jobs. Communities with strong industrial bases such as Black Rock and Grant-Amherst were especially hard hit during this process. Many of the factories and businesses which had once drawn residents to the area in the nineteenth and early-twentieth-centuries were closed, leaving many people unemployed. Because of this, many of the City's traditional residential and commercial neighborhoods declined, causing the neglect, decay and demolition of many of the area's historic buildings.

These conditions are still prevalent in the Black Rock and Grant-Amherst communities, although both have made positive strides towards their redevelopment for other purposes. The rebirth of the area partly stems from the construction of a Wegmans grocery store at 601 Amherst Street in 1997 which increased the traffic in the community. This increased traffic has led to the growth of a variety of new commercial projects in the area. The Amherst Street corridor between Grant Street and Elmwood Avenue, which is located in close proximity to the City's museum district, the Buffalo State College, Delaware Park and the Scajaquada Expressway, coupled with relatively lower commercial rental space on the street, has led to the growth of several new small "life style" businesses. Businesses such as Doreen DeBoth's Artsphere Studio and Gallery at 447 Amherst Street, the 464 Gallery at 464 Amherst Street, and Dog Days of Buffalo dog day care and grooming center at 632 Amherst Street have brought new life and vitality to the Grant-Amherst community. The Grant Amherst Business Association, originally founded in 1886, has also aided the rebirth of the community by promoting a street festival, a Scajaquada Creek cleanup and aiding in streetscaping with new trash receptacles, bike racks, banners and holiday lighting. The creation of the Scajaquada Bike Trail along the bank of the Scajaquada Creek in the area, which reclaimed portions of contaminated land along the creek, has also increased recreation and activity in the neighborhood. The bikeway also helped redefine the character of the Scajaquada Creek in Black Rock as a scenic park area, rather than a polluted industrial zone. In the Black Rock neighborhood, Niagara Street continues to serve as the area's commercial hub. Easily accessible to the New York State I-190 Thruway, Niagara Street contains several retailers, restaurants and other businesses.³²

Today, Black Rock and Grant-Amherst are neighborhoods which have stabilized after decades of decline, and appear to be on the rebound. While this area had experienced significant population loss and demolitions in the last half of the twentieth-century, this trend appears to be slowly reversing. Like other similar neighborhoods in Buffalo which relied on industry and manufacturing so heavily for their growth and settlement, such as areas in the East Side, demolitions do occur, primarily to neglected vacant properties and emergency demolitions. CBCA has identified several properties which were demolished between the 2006 Ambassador Bridge survey and the new 2010 field work for this survey; 6 properties in just a five year span, with many others also likely lost. While it does not appear that there is notable new residential or commercial development in the area, many existing buildings have been renovated to accommodate new small businesses, especially along Amherst Street and on Niagara Street which remain vital commercial corridors. Traces of the area's industrial past remain highly visible parts of the landscape, with several factory and industrial buildings remaining in use in the area. Unlike other areas of the City of Buffalo, the ethnic background of the community has remained fairly similar to its historic make-up, serving as the home to a large Polish community with many residents of German and African-American descent as well. This community is active in celebrating their heritage in the Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods, reclaiming a pride of place and history in this area.

The Black Rock and Grant-Amherst communities have also become more active in organizing and planning for the future rebirth and growth of the area. In 2000, the Mayor of Buffalo created a neighborhood planning process which incorporated participatory neighborhood planning practices via the Good Neighbor Planning Alliance as a component of the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan. This resulted in the creation of the Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbors Planning Alliance (Black Rock- Riverside GNPA) as one of the ten planning alliance areas established in the City of Buffalo. The Black Rock-Riverside GNPA has been perhaps the most active and vocal of the planning alliances and in 2007 began the process of creating a neighborhood plan. The active Dearborn Block Club was also involved in the process. In 2008 the finalized *Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial* document was produced, creating a comprehensive plan for the planning and redevelopment of the community.³³ This present survey project is an outgrowth of this plan. This comprehensive

³² Watson, Stephen T. "Amherst Street on the Rise." *The Buffalo News* 25 Jan. 2010: A1-A2. Print.

³³ Black Rock Riverside Good Neighbors Planning Alliance. *Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan*. Rep. Buffalo: City of Buffalo, 2008. *Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan*. City of Buffalo. Web. 1 July 2010; 1.

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planning document will help to guide and shape the future development and revitalization of the Historic Black Rock neighborhood, which will inevitably help to elevate the surrounding communities, including Grant-Amherst, as well.

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood consists of a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, religious and transportation-related architecture reflecting its identity as an independent section within the City of Buffalo. Residential architecture is the predominant type of architecture found throughout both the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst areas, and is located throughout the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood boundaries. Churches and religious resources are scattered throughout the residential areas and also sited along the more primary thoroughfares. Commercial and industrial architecture is generally located along Niagara Street, the Amherst Street corridor which also serves as the primary west-east corridor through the area and along the west side of Elmwood Avenue. Industrial areas are located along the former rail routes through the neighborhood, generally along Chandler Street to the north-east and centering on Tonawanda Street at Niagara Street to the south-west. A prominent feature in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is the area's remaining transportation network. Extant in the neighborhood is the Black Rock Canal and Lock, a reminder of the community's Erie Canal heritage, as well as numerous railroad-related structures including several buildings as well as structures such as viaducts and bridges.

Residential streets in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood have generally unified streetscapes with houses of the same general age, form, size, materials, and setback. Streets widths range from typical 50-ft wide residential streets to 100-ft wide major arteries such as Niagara Street. Other primary streets such as Amherst and Tonawanda Streets were laid out at 65- to 70-feet in width.

Due to the economic decline of the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods, this once thriving community now features many empty and vacant lots resulting from the demolition of several houses and commercial buildings. However, many of the streets, especially residential areas, retain the overall sense of density typical of the historic character of the neighborhood. The streets of the area were traditionally densely packed with architectural fabric, lined by seemingly continuous rows of houses, commercial and industrial buildings. The area has faced more notable loss to its industrial and commercial architecture. The structures which remain today frequently reflect the close-proximity of a long-gone neighbor; houses typically feature more windows on their gable ends, which faced the front and back yard, than on their longer sides which were shaded by their neighbor. Many commercial buildings also typically reflect this phenomenon as well.

Sidewalks are set close to the curb with an average planting strip width of 3 feet. Many of the streets in the neighborhood retain their original sandstone curbing. Many of the primary traffic arteries such as Niagara Street, portions of Hertel Avenue, Military Road and Amherst Streets were historically paved with stone pavers, but have seen been redone in modern asphalt. Many of the interior residential streets including Dearborn, East, Austin and Grote Streets were paved with smooth paving material by the early 1890s and have also since been redone in modern paving.

1.0 BUILDINGS

1.1 RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE

1.1A Description

The residential architecture located in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood reflects the area's heritage as a largely working-class area, with a few more affluent streets. Houses are typically single-family detached or multiple-family flats and date primarily to the mid-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century. Smaller houses are typically a 1 ½-story (sometimes 2-story) with basement front gabled house, densely clustered along the streets, whose form fits to the confines of the narrow property lots in the area. Setbacks for houses in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood generally range from 10-ft to 25-ft, leaving open lawn to the front. Some of the oldest streets such as Dearborn and East Streets in the Lower Black Rock area retain their irregular setback from the street, a reminder of their early origins. Often these houses display telescoping rear additions. This small workers cottage type is found throughout Buffalo, and is especially prominent in largely Polish and German working-class neighborhoods, including the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood. Larger houses are generally 2 ½-story or 3-story single-family detached houses with a basement level. There are a few examples of mixed commercial and residential buildings, with a small store on the ground floor with living space above. The earliest constructed residential buildings are located in the Lower Black Rock community and were likely owner-built.

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Other examples of residential architecture in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood appear to have been constructed by local builders using plans available either in pattern books or by mail. Their overall simplicity of design indicates few of the houses were likely architect-designed.

Stylistically, the residential architecture of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood represents a broad variety of architectural styles and types, dating largely between ca. 1830 until the pre-World War II era, with the vast majority of examples representing the Workers' Cottage and Queen Anne typologies and dating between the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries.

1.1.1 Federal Style (1780-1820; locally to ca. 1840)³⁴

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.

The Lower Black Rock area in particular contains several examples of Federal style residences along streets such as Dearborn, Amherst and East Streets. These streets developed during the community's earliest settlement period in the 1820s and 1830s following the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 which increased the attractiveness of the Lower Black Rock area. This settlement period corresponds to the popularity of the Federal style in Western New York. Given the pioneer-era development of the Lower Black Rock community during this period, extant examples are rather simple and reserved, rather than being true high-style examples. Many buildings of the Federal style also incorporate Greek Revival elements such as door surrounds and porches which were gaining national popularity in the early 1800s.

Remaining, original examples of Federal style houses are relatively rare in Buffalo, and it has been estimated that approximately 50 properties dating to this period still exist in Black Rock; a much higher concentration than elsewhere in the City of Buffalo. Unfortunately, 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.

Federal Style Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

1.) 71 Amherst Street Figure C-1
2-story, side-gabled, frame, five-rank Federal style house set on high stone foundation. Simple Greek Revival enframing around entry door with sidelights. Originally constructed by Augustus Porter ca. 1830 on a ¾ acre lot, the 2 westernmost bays were used as a small tavern. Restored by Scott Glasgow in the 1980s-90s.

2.) 189-191 Dearborn Street Figure C-2

³⁴ Dates provided for architectural styles and information is from Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994).

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The Samuel Howell House. 2-story, 3-rank, limestone, simple Federal style building with shallow hipped roof. Original block retains Federal style enframent with transom around paired entrance doors. Stone quoins at northwest corner. Has a later, nineteenth-century 2-story frame addition on stone foundation.

1.1.2 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 partering 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 Spindlework subtype, the Free Classic, Half-Timbered and Patterned Masonry. The Spindlework variation accounts for about 50% of Queen Anne architecture and is highlighted by turned porch supports and spindlework 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.

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.

Queen Anne Style Examples

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Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1.) 81 Amherst Street
2-story frame front-gabled vernacular Victorian house with Eastlake details. Although vinyl sided, building retains elaborate porch, pedimented window surrounds and bracketed eaves. Constructed on part of acreage once part of neighboring 71 Amherst Street.
- 2.) 285 Dearborn Street Figure C-3
2 ½-story frame closed front-gabled Queen Anne building with elaborate Eastlake full-width front porch. Gable features tripled window group with intact pilaster surrounds and unique original windows. Wood clapboard sheathing with imbricated shingles on porch and in gable. An excellent high-style example of Queen Anne residential architecture in the area.
- 3.) 281 East Street
2 ½-story frame side-gabled Queen Anne building with prominent front gable with cornice returns. Features full-width front porch with boxed columns and pediment above entry. Rock-faced stone foundation with wood clapboard sheathing. Decorative shaped shingles in pediment and porch, diamond patterned shingles in front gable.

1.1.6 Workers' Cottages (1860-1920)³⁵

"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 of construction; and (4) modern land development practices such as lot standardization, financing, and marketing practices (Hubka and Kenny 2000: 38; Gottfried 1005; 47-68).

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.)³⁶

Today, many of the examples of Workers' Cottages in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood are modified with modern siding, replacement windows and doors, new construction features such as porches and additions, and in other ways.

³⁵ Hubka, Thomas C., and Judith T. Kenny. "The Workers' Cottage in Milwaukee's Polish Community: Housing and the Process of Americanization, 1870 -1920." *People, Power, Places (Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture)*. Ed. Sally McMurray and Annemarie Adams. Vol. VII. New York: University of Tennessee, 2000. 33-52.

³⁶ This section is a direct quote from Schieppati, Frank J., Mark A. Steinback, and Christine Longiaru. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation for the Proposed Ambassador Niagara Signature Bridge*. Rep. Buffalo: Panamerican Consultants, April 2006; 4-11 – 4-12. This report formed the basis for the 2010 Reconnaissance Level Historic Resources Survey which forms the foundation for this nomination.

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Typically they feature an asymmetrical side hall or shotgun plan with an off-center entry door and single window on the ground floor indicating interior living space and room arrangements. Additional living space is indicated by windows at the upper floor, and traditionally these would have been bedrooms and sleeping areas. Most feature telescoping additions at the rear of the building, many are historical, reflecting Hubka and Kenny's noted changes which occurred in the early twentieth-century. Unfortunately, many of the workers cottages in the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods have deteriorated and have lost much of their original architectural features, materials and design.

Workers' Cottages Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

1.) 218 Dearborn Street

Figure C-4

1-story frame front-gabled workers cottage with well preserved Italianate details. Features double leaf doors and large 4/4 wood sash windows with elaborate wood surrounds. Full-width Eastlake Victorian porch is later addition; features elaborate spandrels and turned columns. Wood clapboard sheathing. An excellent decorative example of a workers cottage in Black Rock.

1.1B Significance

The Residential architecture in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is significant under Criteria C for its embodiment of unique domestic architectural styles. The wide variety of residential architectural style in both the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods reflect the different historical periods in which the architecture in those two communities developed. Styles found in the Lower Black Rock area are among the oldest extant examples remaining in the City of Buffalo, including many examples of Greek Revival, Italianate and early vernacular cottages examples from the first half of the nineteenth-century. The Grant-Amherst area contains primarily examples from the later nineteenth-century, including many examples of urban Queen Anne houses, workers' cottages and American Foursquares which were constructed as this neighborhood became a thriving industrial and railroad-oriented area in Buffalo. Further research may find specific buildings or groups of buildings to be significant under Criterion A, based on its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, and also Criterion B, based on their association with important people from the past.

1.1C Registration Requirements

Buffalo's Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is comprised of numerous examples of Residential architecture which are largely intact and in good overall condition. This area contains some of the City's only extant examples of early 1800s-era architecture. In order to qualify for listing, the building must be located in the defined boundaries of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood (as defined in Section G); residential buildings must be directly associated with a significant historical context; must have been constructed during the periods of significance; and must display the distinctive features characteristic to the period of construction. Individual properties must also meet at least one of the National Register Criteria in order to be included in this report. Buildings which substantially retain integrity of form, detailing and an overall historic appearance to their exterior may qualify as contributing components in the context of the potential historic areas. Because of the general loss of architectural integrity exhibited by many of the properties in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, a majority of properties exhibit at least one modification such as replacement windows, modern sheathing, or porch alterations. Because this area contains some of the earliest and rarest examples of Residential architecture in the entire City of Buffalo, some modifications should be considered acceptable for registration. Residential architecture which retains significant historical associations and/or architectural distinction, and which retain integrity of architecture, construction, form, materials and detailing, satisfy the requirements for individual listing. Related groups or series of buildings may have the potential to become Historic Districts within the neighborhood.

1.2 COMMERCIAL, PUBLIC AND RECREATIONAL ARCHITECTURE

1.2A Description

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“Commerce” is generally defined as being concerned with the production, transportation and marketing a commodity and therefore commercial architecture specifies those buildings which primarily housed these functions. Commercial architecture of the nineteenth-century is a broad category which contains a wide variety of buildings from simple wood-framed structures to steel-framed skyscrapers. Prior to the development of skyscrapers in the 1880s and 1890s, commercial buildings typically consisted of a series of identical upper floors, subdivided into individual offices, store-rooms or sometimes residential apartments, with a more articulated retail façade on the ground floor. Typically the ground floor of commercial buildings could be ornamented with carved wood details, painted signage and later cast-iron elements; ornament ranged from classical columns and pilasters to botanical curves and flourishes to animal motifs (such as lions and eagles) and geometric patterns. Many buildings were typically designed with a rather general plan to accommodate a variety of shop types and needs, and were typically designed and constructed by business owners and local carpenters and builders. Specialized businesses such as banks or insurance companies, to whom prestige and appearance became an increasing concern, were among the first commercial builders who sought skilled architects with prominent reputations to design dignified and architecturally interesting buildings. One of the key concerns for both high and lower end commercial buildings was fire resistance, and a majority of commercial structures were built of brick or stone masonry with minimal wood members.

Ground floor commercial space benefitted from the use of large shop-windows as a means to advertise and display merchandise, and the development of cast iron supports made larger window space available in many mid-nineteenth-century buildings. Full iron skeletons were in use in Boston, Massachusetts as early as the 1820s, but the more common use of iron was as internal support columns with a masonry exterior. While the first floor of typical commercial buildings featured open expanses of glass, upper stories generally maintained the smaller window voids of earlier predecessors.

Public architecture is definable as those buildings which housed governmental services or functions. This type of building would include city halls, correctional facilities, fire stations, governmental offices, courthouses etc. It also includes educational buildings such as schools and libraries. The majority of public architecture in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood conforms to the contemporary architectural styles of the time including Neoclassical Revival (popular around the turn of the twentieth-century), the Craftsman style (popular between ca. 1900-1920s), and some examples of the Italianate style (used in brick commercial buildings along Niagara Street from ca. 1870s-80s). The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood also contains several good examples of Recreational-related architecture. This category includes building used for entertainment, social and cultural functions and includes buildings such as meeting halls and clubhouses, theaters, auditoriums, art galleries and museums. These types of buildings were also typically constructed in keeping with the general design and stylist trends which prevailed at the time of the building's construction.

In the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, both Niagara Street and Amherst Street developed early on as primary arteries through this area, and therefore also attracted commercial and public architectural development. Maps indicate a wide variety of shops, stores and taverns sprung up along Niagara Street, which ran parallel to the Erie Canal, as early as the 1850s and likely dating back to the origins of the neighborhood in the 1820s. Later, following the Pan-American Exposition of 1901 and especially in the mid-1900s, Elmwood Avenue developed as another significant commercial route and formed the eastern boundary of the survey area. Like many of Buffalo's neighborhoods, many street intersections within the more residential regions also contain one or more commercial buildings, often mixed-use buildings with residential space above a commercial storefront on the ground floor.

1.2.1 Commercial Buildings

Like any nineteenth-century community, Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst once boasted a large, thriving commercial area primarily located along Niagara Street and Amherst Street. Early maps from the 1830s and 1850s show what is called the “Market Square” which was located on Amherst Street just east of the junction with Niagara Street. This park-like area would have been a thriving market area where vendors and dealers could set up stands and booths to sell their products. Today, these areas still serve as the primary commercial areas for the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood. Extant early commercial architecture in Buffalo generally dates to the Victorian era (ca. 1850s-1900s), and displays styles which coincide with many of the popular residential styles from the period including Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque. Much of the extant commercial architecture in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood dates to this period, as well as to the early to mid-twentieth-century. As was common in commercial architecture, historic photos show that a majority of the architecture was designed as two-part commercial

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blocks (the prevalent style from the 1850s to the 1950s) with a façade which was divided into a lower floor public commercial space with unified upper stories which accommodated other functions such as private offices and residences.³⁷

Much of the earliest nineteenth-century commercial architecture appears to have been constructed of wood frame. An image of Niagara Street dated to the 1870s shows a variety of frame buildings, generally front-gabled with few brick buildings. These wood constructed owner-occupied commercial buildings would have been relatively inexpensive and quick to build, indicating that the growth of Lower Black Rock along Niagara and Amherst Streets may have occurred rather quickly following the success of the Erie Canal in the 1820s. Many of these early wood-frame commercial buildings survived into the late nineteenth and into the twentieth-century. Some of the larger commercial buildings along Niagara Street were constructed of brick and likely feature heavy wood timbers used for joists and rafters. While many of the wood frame commercial buildings have since been lost, several of these ca. 1870s brick commercial buildings remain, such as 1910 Niagara Street and 1920 Niagara Street. Brick commercial buildings from the second half of the nineteenth-century also began to incorporate cast iron and then steel columns and beams in their construction, replacing some of the vulnerable wood framing. This construction method was thought to deter the spread of fires, the scourge of nineteenth-century dense urban landscapes. Victorian-era commercial architecture was often ornamented through the use of cast-iron storefront facades which featured elaborate columns, pilasters, panels, designs and other elements which surrounded the store windows. Glazed terra cotta tiles were also a method for decorating the exteriors of late-nineteenth-century commercial architecture, and these could be shaped, textured and colored in a wide variety of ways.³⁸

While certainly early commercial buildings were located in the Lower Black Rock neighborhood in the 1820s, much of the extant commercial examples located in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood today dates from the mid- to late-nineteenth-century and into the early decades of the twentieth-century. Early on, front-gabled wood frame buildings ranging from one to three stories lined these streets and housed a variety of small enterprises including butchers, blacksmiths, brewers, painters and a myriad of other trades. Overall, much of the nineteenth-century commercial architecture in the neighborhood maintains a similar size and scale comparable to the residential architecture. Even the more modern commercial growth along the Elmwood Avenue boundary and in the Grant-Amherst section of the survey area, commercial growth has maintained a relatively modest size and scale.

While most of the commercial activity occurred along Niagara Street, Amherst Street (both near Niagara and also at Grant Street) and Elmwood Avenue, there are a few instances of mixed commercial and residential buildings in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood residential areas. Some of these buildings were constructed originally as residential buildings with apartments and were later converted to contain ground-floor commercial space. Other buildings were constructed for mixed-use, often with the shopkeeper living above. These buildings are typical of the architectural styles found in the residential architecture in the neighborhood, and the size and scale of these buildings relates to the 2-story building height typical in the residential sectors.

Commercial Architecture Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1.) 52 Amherst Street
Former Black Rock Mutual Home Savings Association Building. 2-story brick clad commercial building with hipped roof with triangular dormers. Wood frame original building later clad in Craftsman/ Neoclassical style facades.
- 2.) 415 Amherst Street

Figure C-5

³⁷ Longstreth, Richard W. *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. Washington: The Preservation, 1987; 24.

³⁸ LaChuisa, Chuck. "Commercial Architectural Styles in Buffalo, NY." *Buffalo Architecture and History*. 2008. Web. 30 July 2009. <<http://www.buffaloah.com/a/archsty/commercial/index.html>>.

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Former People's Bank of Buffalo branch building. 1-story temple front Neoclassical Revival commercial building which features three bays divided by large engaged Ionic columns with simple corner plasters which support a substantial entablature and shaped parapet. Features a unique shaped cartouche at the center parapet.

3.) 1888 Niagara Street

2 story Queen Anne brick commercial building with two prominent front gables. Two prominent curved oriel windows flank central paired window with bracketed cornice. Somewhat altered, however a unique example of late 19th century commercial architecture.

1.2.2 Public Architecture

Being that the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods functioned as self-contained, self-sufficient communities within the confines of the larger Buffalo area for much of their respective histories, it is not surprising to find that the area features several examples of public architecture. Public buildings are those which served governmental, municipal services or other similar capacities including schools, fire stations, post offices and other functions. Often these buildings shared many characteristics of typical commercial buildings from the time including a ground floor service zone with additional stories above. The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood contains several good examples of Public architecture including primarily schools, extant fire stations

Public Architecture Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

1.) 64 Amherst Street

Former Engine No. 15. 2-story brick fire station with a hipped roof with dormers designed in an Arts and Crafts style with Italianate elements. Ornate sandstone door surround, prominent brackets at eaves and Italianate tower. Converted to apartments in the 1970s.

Figure C-6

2.) 395 Amherst Street

Former Hook and Ladder No. 12 Firehouse. An excellent example of a yellow brick Flemish Revival firehouse which features polychrome window hoods, elegant broken pediment above the central garage bay, decorative drop motifs and a shaped Dutch gabled silhouette. Also features shaped wall dormers along side elevations.

Figure C-7

3.) 348 Austin Street

Former Police Station No. 13. Large 2-story brick former police station building in a Romanesque Revival style. Features raised basement level on sandstone foundation with arcaded round-head windows springing from stone beltcourse. Prominent entry doors feature large rock-faced Syrian-type sandstone arch surrounding an elaborate iron grill panel above an entablature which is supported by diminutive brick pilasters with sandstone Corinthian capitals. Upper floor features flat-headed windows with prominent sandstone headers. Corner of building is chamfered. Originally had a mansard roof, removed in 1954.

4.) 1005 Grant Street

Public School No. 42. Red brick three-story educational building with vaguely Collegiate Gothic details. Original school building is located at rear of lot at Germain St.

5.) 101 Hertel Avenue

PS No. 51 (aka Black Rock Academy). Original wing faces Guernsey St; features broadly overhanging eaves with brackets. West wing designed in the Collegiate Gothic style with brick and stone details.

6.) 26 Military Road

Former Primary School No. 20/ St. Elizabeth's School. 2-story front-gabled brick Romanesque Revival school building with a jerkinhead gable. Features tall, narrow round headed windows with keystones and corbelled table at eaves. Reportedly the oldest surviving school building in Buffalo.

Figure C-8

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- 7.) 1776 Niagara Street
US Government Store House and Office. Ornate Renaissance Revival style building of buff-colored brick with segmental arched windows. Prominent central entry. Built for the US Army Corp of Engineers.
- 8.) 1932 Niagara Street Figure C-9
Former Jubilee Library & Recreation Building. 1-story Classical Revival brick building with prominent central entry flanked by columns with entablature. Set on elevated stone basement. Heavy stone cornice with corner pilasters.

1.2.3 Recreational Architecture

The category of Recreational architecture pertains to those buildings designed to house a function or serve the purposes of entertainment, housed public meetings and events, and serve cultural uses. Recreational architecture typically serves as a location where a group of people gathers for the purpose of entertainment and leisure. Recreational architecture can be buildings such as theaters, museums, sports or music facilities, meeting halls, club houses or other similar buildings. Typically these buildings were designed in the prevailing architectural styles which were popular at the time of their construction. The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood contains several good examples of Recreational architecture, generally dating from the period around the turn of the twentieth-century.

Recreational Architecture Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1.) 927 Grant Street Figure C-10
Polish Cadets Hall. 3 story mansarded brick meeting hall building in a vaguely Renaissance Revival style typical of Zawadzki's work in the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood with symmetrical façade.
- 2.) 1940 Niagara Street Figure C-11
Former Unity Temple Masonic Lodge. 2-story coursed stone Neoclassical Revival temple-fronted building features raised basement. Main façade highlighted by monumental four column façade supporting massive pediment. Door surround features columns, entablature and window enframing. Features sphinx on plinth in front.

1.2B Significance

Commercial, Public and Recreational Architecture is significant to the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood under Criteria C for its architectural merit. While many examples have been demolished in the twentieth-century, surviving examples illustrate the self-sufficient nature of the neighborhood. The quantity of commercial, public and recreational buildings which originally existed in the area indicated that the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods were places to live, work, do business, buy goods and receive public services. Further research may find specific buildings or groups of buildings to be significant under Criterion A, based on its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, and also Criterion B, based on their association with important people from the past

1.2C Registration Requirements

Buffalo's Black Rock Planning Neighborhood contains several good examples of Commercial, Public and Recreational architecture. In order to qualify for listing, the building must be located in the defined boundaries of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood (as defined in Section G); commercial and public buildings must be directly associated with a significant historical context; must have been constructed during the periods of significance; and must display the distinctive features characteristic to the period of construction. Individual properties must also meet at least one of the National Register Criteria in order to be included in this report. Buildings which substantially retain integrity of form, detailing and an overall historic appearance to their exterior may qualify as contributing components in the context of the potential historic areas. Because of the general loss of architectural integrity exhibited by many of the properties in the

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Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, a majority of properties exhibit at least one modification such as replacement windows, modern sheathing, or porch alterations. Commercial, Public and Recreational architecture which retains significant historical associations and/or architectural distinction, and which retain integrity of architecture, construction, form, materials and detailing, satisfy the requirements for individual listing. Related groups or series of buildings may have the potential to become Historic Districts within the neighborhood.

1.3 CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

1.3A Description

"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); Zion German Methodist Episcopal Church at 221 East Street (1889; architect unknown); and St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church at [60] Hertel (1925-1927; Oakley and Schallmo, architects).

In Grant-Amherst, Assumption Roman Catholic Church was the first church constructed in the area. 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).

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 offers 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.³⁹

Churches and Religious Institutions Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1.) 85 Amherst Street Figure C-12
St. John's Evangelical Church - Excellent example of a brick and sandstone Gothic Revival church with prominent central slate-covered spire with copper flashing. Façade features three pointed-arched porticos.
- 2.) 417 Amherst Street Figure C-13

³⁹ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-17 – 4-18.

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Church of the Assumption, Architects: Schmill & Gould - An excellent, large Romanesque Revival church building whose two prominent 170-foot tall towers dominate the Black Rock skyline. Constructed of sandstone with a tile roof, the building features an elegant rose window on its north Amherst Street façade. Originally constructed to serve the area's large Polish community.

3.) 350 Austin Street

First Hungarian Baptist Church. Modest, 2 ½-story frame Arts & Crafts style church building with gabled main block with hipped roof tower. Church features stained glass windows in main façade. Side entry pavilion features paired doors with leaded glass transom. Stone foundation. Now being clad in vinyl siding, the original wood shingle is still present on the tower.

4.) 221 East Street

Zion German Methodist Episcopal Church (aka East Street German ME Church; presently New Beginnings Church). Unusual residential-scale Romanesque Revival church constructed with front-gabled block with paired side gables sheathed in wood shingles. Brick corner tower with pyramidal roof features stone quoins and round arch entry portal.

Figure C-14

5.) 165 Germain Street

St. John's Ukrainian Catholic Church (New Apostolic Church). Modest brick cross-gabled basilica-plan church with Tudor Revival details. Likely replacement windows in round-headed openings. In keeping with Eastern European traditions, was simply detailed with only icons and statuary. Built by prominent local Polish architect responsible for several churches in Buffalo's East Side.

6.) 986 Grant Street

St. Elizabeth's Roman Catholic Hungarian Church. Romanesque Revival brick hall-style church building with prominent central tower and spire. Features corner buttresses, corbelled table and stone accents.

7.) 1020 Grant Street

All Saint's Polish National Catholic Church. Modest front-gabled hall-style church building with Modern polychrome concrete block wall surface, modest buttressed and gabled entry portico with compound pointed arch surround. The sole remaining Polish National Church in the City of Buffalo.

8.) 60 Hertel Avenue

St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church. Excellent example of Spanish Baroque Revival/ Italian Gothic Revival basilica plan church. Features highly ornamental entry portico with Solomonic columns and broken pediment. Local landmark.

Figure C-15

9.) 70 Military Road

Immanuel German Evangelical Church. Gothic Revival style church with central hall flanked by one crenellated tower and one tower with pyramidal roof. Features wide Tudor arched recessed entry. Constructed to house the growing number of young English-speaking members of St. John's United Evangelical Church on Amherst St which offered only German services.

1.3B Significance

The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood contains several excellent examples of a wide variety of Religious architecture, primarily in the form of churches or church complexes, which are significant to the neighborhood under Criteria C for their architectural merit. The wide variety of denominations which constructed churches in the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods is a reflection of the area's diverse, primarily immigrant, population through much of the late nineteenth and early-twentieth-centuries. The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood contains some of the City of Buffalo's only extant examples of churches built for the Hungarian and Ukrainian communities. The Religious architecture in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood are good examples dating from primarily from the late-nineteenth-century into the twentieth-century and generally retain a high-level of architectural integrity. Further research may find specific buildings or groups of buildings to be significant under Criterion A, based on its association with events that have made a significant

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contribution to the broad patterns of history, and also Criterion B, based on their association with important people from the past

1.3C Registration Requirements

Buffalo's Black Rock Planning Neighborhood contains several extant examples of Religious architecture from many of the styles popularly used for designing churches during the late 1800s until the mid-1900s. The Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst communities contains many examples of common church styles such as Romanesque Revival and Gothic Revival and also more unusual church styles such as Craftsman, Tudor and even Spanish Baroque Revival. In order to qualify for listing, the building must be located in the defined boundaries of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood (as defined in Section G); religious buildings must be directly associated with a significant historical context; must have been constructed during the periods of significance; and must display the distinctive features characteristic to the period of construction. Individual properties must also meet at least one of the National Register Criteria in order to be included in this report. Buildings which substantially retain integrity of form, detailing and an overall historic appearance to their exterior may qualify as contributing components in the context of the potential historic areas. Religious architecture which retains significant historical associations and/or architectural distinction, and which retain integrity of architecture, construction, form, materials and detailing, satisfy the requirements for individual listing. Related groups or series of buildings may have the potential to become Historic Districts within the neighborhood.

1.4 INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE

1.4A Description

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.⁴⁰

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 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 buildings, and mill builders.⁴¹

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.

The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood was a thriving industrial area in the City of Buffalo. Early on in the 1820s and 30s, the Lower Black Rock area utilized the water power of the Scajaquada Creek and Niagara River to power a variety of mills. Once the Belt Line railroad developed in the area in the 1880s, industry began to thrive in the Black Rock Planning

⁴⁰ Bradley, Betsy H. *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States*. New York: Oxford UP, 1999; 7-8.

⁴¹ Bradley, 14-15.

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Neighborhood. Areas along Tonawanda Street, Chandler Street and along the waterfront on the Black Rock Canal and Niagara River became the most heavily industrialized. The majority of these nineteenth-century industrial buildings were simply designed, functional and utilitarian buildings constructed in brick masonry with numerous window openings to allow natural light into the interior. Some buildings incorporate modest stylistic details from popular residential styles of the time such as detailed brick work, arched windows and other elements. These buildings were generally not architect-designed, but largely appear to have developed over time, with additional spaces constructed as the function of the factory dictated. In the early twentieth-century, several new factory buildings were constructed using the new reinforced concrete frame construction system, which was favored for its improved fire retardant properties and scrubability. With the downturn of the area in the mid- to late-twentieth-century, many of the former industrial plants and facilities were closed and subsequently demolished. Although the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood has lost many of its significant historical factory buildings and complexes, it still retains several excellent examples of industrial architecture from the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries.

Industrial Architecture Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

1.) 23 Austin Street

Former Buffalo Smelting Works. Part of a larger complex of buildings, the standout buildings are the paired gabled Romanesque-inspired industrial buildings with continuous roof monitors. Buildings retain variety of Tudor arched door voids, segmental arched, round-headed and ocular window openings.

Figure C-16

1.4B Significance

The industrial architecture in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is significant under Criteria C for its embodiment of unique industrial architectural styles. The extant industrial mills and factories which largely date to the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century signify the area's origins are the core of manufacturing and industry dating to the neighborhood's founding in the 1820s. Many of the companies which called the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhood home played a significant role in shaping the development of industry not only in the immediate area, but Buffalo and also the nation. Further research may find specific buildings or groups of buildings to be significant under Criterion A, based on its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, and also Criterion B, based on their association with important people from the past.

1.4C Registration Requirements

Buffalo's Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is comprised of several extant examples of industrial architecture which are largely intact and in good overall condition. The Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst areas contain unique, large and small scale industrial complexes and individual building examples. In order to qualify for listing, the building must be located in the defined boundaries of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood (as defined in Section G); industrial buildings must be directly associated with a significant historical context; must have been constructed during the periods of significance; and must display the distinctive features characteristic to the period of construction. Individual properties must also meet at least one of the National Register Criteria in order to be included in this report. Buildings which substantially retain integrity of form, detailing and an overall historic appearance to their exterior may qualify as contributing components in the context of the potential historic areas. Industrial architecture which retains significant historical associations and/or architectural distinction, and which retain integrity of architecture, construction, form, materials and detailing, satisfy the requirements for individual listing. Related groups or series of buildings may have the potential to become Historic Districts within the neighborhood.

1.5 TRANSPORTATION AND RAILROAD ARCHITECTURE

1.5A Description

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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. 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.

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.⁴²

While once the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood was filled with a wide variety of railroad related depots, stations and service buildings in the late nineteenth-century and into the early twentieth-century, much of this architecture has since been lost and demolished. With the decline in rail travel in the mid-1900s, many related resources were abandoned and subsequently demolished. This trend occurred throughout similar neighborhoods in the City of Buffalo which had former Belt Line railroad stations and other railroad buildings.

Transportation and Railroad Architecture Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1.) 1765 Niagara Street Figure C-17
Former Grand Trunk Railway Company's Black Rock Freight Office (aka Custom House and Canadian National Railroad Office). 2 story front-gabled brick railroad-related building set on high sandstone foundation. Vaguely Arts & Crafts appearance. Features unique gable with decorative brackets at corners.

1.5B Significance

The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood contains several excellent examples of a variety of transportation-related architecture, primarily in the form of former railroad depots and freight stations, which are significant to the neighborhood under Criteria C for their architectural merit. Railroad depots and stations once proliferated throughout the City of Buffalo, due to the city's prominent location as a hub for many national and international rail companies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries. As the nation's rail network began its general decline in the mid-1900s, many of these stations and related building were demolished. The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is fortunate to retain several excellent examples of buildings and structures used by the rail industry during the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries. Further research may find specific buildings, groups of buildings, and structures to be significant under Criterion A, based on its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, and also Criterion B, based on their association with important people from the past

1.5C Registration Requirements

Buffalo's Black Rock Planning Neighborhood contains several extant examples of transportation architecture from many of the styles popularly used for designing churches during the late 1800s until the mid-1900s. The Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst communities contains many examples of common church styles such as Romanesque Revival and Gothic Revival and also more unusual church styles such as Craftsman, Tudor and even Spanish Baroque Revival. In order to qualify for listing, the building must be located in the defined boundaries of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood (as defined in Section G); religious buildings must be directly associated with a significant historical context; must have been constructed during the periods of significance; and must display the distinctive features characteristic to the period of construction. Individual properties must also meet at least one of the National Register Criteria in order to be included in this report. Buildings which substantially retain integrity of form, detailing and an overall historic appearance to their

⁴² Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-19 – 4-21.

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exterior may qualify as contributing components in the context of the potential historic areas. Religious architecture which retains significant historical associations and/or architectural distinction, and which retain integrity of architecture, construction, form, materials and detailing, satisfy the requirements for individual listing. Related groups or series of buildings may have the potential to become Historic Districts within the neighborhood.

2.0 STRUCTURES

2.1 RAILROAD AND WATER TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

2.1A Description

“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.

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. 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 Casimir 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).⁴³

Given the industrialization and development in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, it is not surprising that the area contains several excellent examples of structural design. The International Railroad Bridge, which linked Canada and Black Rock beginning in 1873, is a noteworthy structural railroad bridge. These interesting engineering feats are related to the railroad in the form of cast iron and steel subways, which interlace the neighborhood. The presence of these metal structural elements, juxtaposed against the residential and commercial fabric, strengthens the sense of industrialization and transportation which formed the foundation of the neighborhood.

Railroad and Water Transportation Resources Examples

Within these defined boundaries, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) has determined that the following properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1.) The International Railroad Bridge, Squaw Island, Niagara River
International Railroad Bridge, a National Register- eligible swing railroad bridge. Engineers: Casimer S. Gzowski, E.P. Hannaford, J. Hobson

Figure C-18

⁴³ Quoted from Schieppati et al. *Phase 1A Cultural Resources Investigation...*, 4-19 – 4-21.

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2.1B Significance

Railroad and Water Transportation resources are a prominent feature in the landscape of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood and are significant under Criterion C. Their unique engineering designs which cut through the entire neighborhood- from commercial to industrial to residential areas- become a prominent physical feature in the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst areas. These structures reinforce the area's tie to transportation, be it rail or canal, upon which the neighborhood was founded and thrived from the early 1800s to the mid-twentieth-century. Further research into their history may find these structures to qualify for listing under Criterion A, for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, or also Criterion B, for its relationship to the lives of significant historical figures.

2.1C Registration Requirements

Buffalo's Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhood is comprised of several extant examples of railroad structures which are largely intact and in good overall condition. In order to qualify for listing, the structure must be located in the defined boundaries of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood (as defined in Section G); residential buildings must be directly associated with a significant historical context; must have been constructed during the periods of significance; and must display the distinctive features characteristic to the period of construction. Individual structures must also meet at least one of the National Register Criteria in order to be included in this report. Structures which substantially retain integrity of form, detailing and an overall historic appearance to their exterior may qualify as contributing components in the context of the potential historic areas. Railroad viaducts and subways which retain significant historical associations and/or architectural distinction, and which retain integrity of architecture, construction, form, materials and detailing, satisfy the requirements for individual listing. Related groups or series of structures may have the potential to become Historic Districts within the neighborhood.

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G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The geographical boundaries for the "Historic Resources of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood" MPDF correspond to the boundaries defined as the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood in the Black Rock Planning Community by the City of Buffalo in 1999 and 2006. The area is defined by the Niagara River and Black Rock Canal along the western perimeter, the Scajaquada Creek and I-198 Scajaquada Expressway to the south, and Elmwood Avenue forms the eastern boundary. The northern boundary of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is more irregular in form and is bounded by Arthur Street, portions of Tonawanda Street and Hertel Avenue and also correlates to the former rail bed of the Belt Line Railroad just north of Chandler Street to the north-east of the survey area. These physical features form a natural division for the neighborhood in many cases, such as the barrier of the Niagara River and Black Rock Canal as well as the Scajaquada Creek. Feature such as the route of the former Belt Line railroad north of Chandler Street also former a physical division. These boundaries contain two historic neighborhoods, the Lower Black Rock neighborhood which developed in the western portion of the Planning Neighborhood ca. 1820s and the Grant-Amherst neighborhood which grew in the eastern portion ca. 1880s. The geographical area covered by the MPDF incorporates the area covered by its related historic contexts.

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

A Reconnaissance Level Historic Resources Survey of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood was completed by Architectural Historian Jennifer Walkowski of Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc in August 2010, with the assistance of Meagan Baco, Historic Preservation Project Assistant, and Alma O'Connell-Brown, Project Manager. A brief review of portions of the survey area was also made by Ms. Walkowski along with Michele Brozek Knoll, City of Buffalo Senior Planner, and Daniel McEneny, NY SHPO Field Officer in March 2010. Based on the preliminary findings of the *Phase IA Cultural Resources Investigation for the Proposed Ambassador Niagara Signature Bridge Project* completed by Panamerican Consultants of Buffalo in April 2006, CBCA was engaged to prepare an MPDF for the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood to correspond to the results of the 2010 survey work.

As noted, the only previous survey work completed in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood was the 2006 study which focused on the impact of the proposed Ambassador Niagara Signature Bridge project. This survey was prepared with a different set of goals as typically used in a CBCA survey; the goal of the Panamerican report was to focus on those historical and architectural resources impacted by the bridge project. Typical CBCA survey projects focus on identifying historical and architectural resources and assets which are already well-known in the community as well as identifying those which have the potential for rehabilitation, reuse, or restoration to become vital neighborhood assets once again. As contractually required, CBCA surveyed only those properties identified on the 2006 Annotated List of Properties (193 properties total) plus an additional 321 properties in areas outside of the previous survey boundaries. Additional historic properties outside of the list of addresses were noted in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood as being potentially significant, but could not be officially surveyed in this project. Therefore additional National Register Eligible properties may be located in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood and could be registered for the National Register using the Historic Resources of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood cover document.

The previous survey work recommended several key buildings and structures as potentially eligible for the State and National Registers of Historic Places. To date, only the St. Francis Xavier Parish complex along East Street has been listed on the National Register within the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, which was done in 2009.

The history of the Black Rock area is well documented in many sources due to that community's active and significant role in the War of 1812. The area today defined as Lower Black Rock was formed following the end of the hostilities of the War of 1812 and corresponds to the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 which was along the settlement's western border. The name and identity of "Black Rock" shifted to this neighborhood by the mid-1800s as what had formerly been Upper Black Rock and the Village of Black Rock was subsumed both physically and culturally by the growing City of Buffalo in 1853. The history of the Grant-Amherst neighborhood is not as well documented.

The intent of the Multiple Property Documentation Form is to formally submit to the National Register historically and architectural significant districts and individual properties which reflect nineteenth- through early-twentieth-century development in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood. Properties selected illustrate the social, economic and architectural development of the area as detailed in the two historic contexts of Lower Black Rock and the Grant-Amherst neighborhood. Each building or structure documented is an excellent example of a given architectural style under requirements of Criterion C of the Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60) as outlined in *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (NPS Bulletin 15, National Park Service 1995). Further research on individual buildings and districts may yield information which identifies these properties as historically significant as described under Criterion A for its association with significant historic events or Criterion B for its association with persons significant in our past.

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- Digital Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps – 1889, 1900, 1916, 1925-1950
- Untitled Map of Black Rock dated 1856 - copy provided by Scott Glasgow
- Buffalo Maps and Atlases- 1872, 1894
- The image collection of the Buffalo and Erie County Historic Society

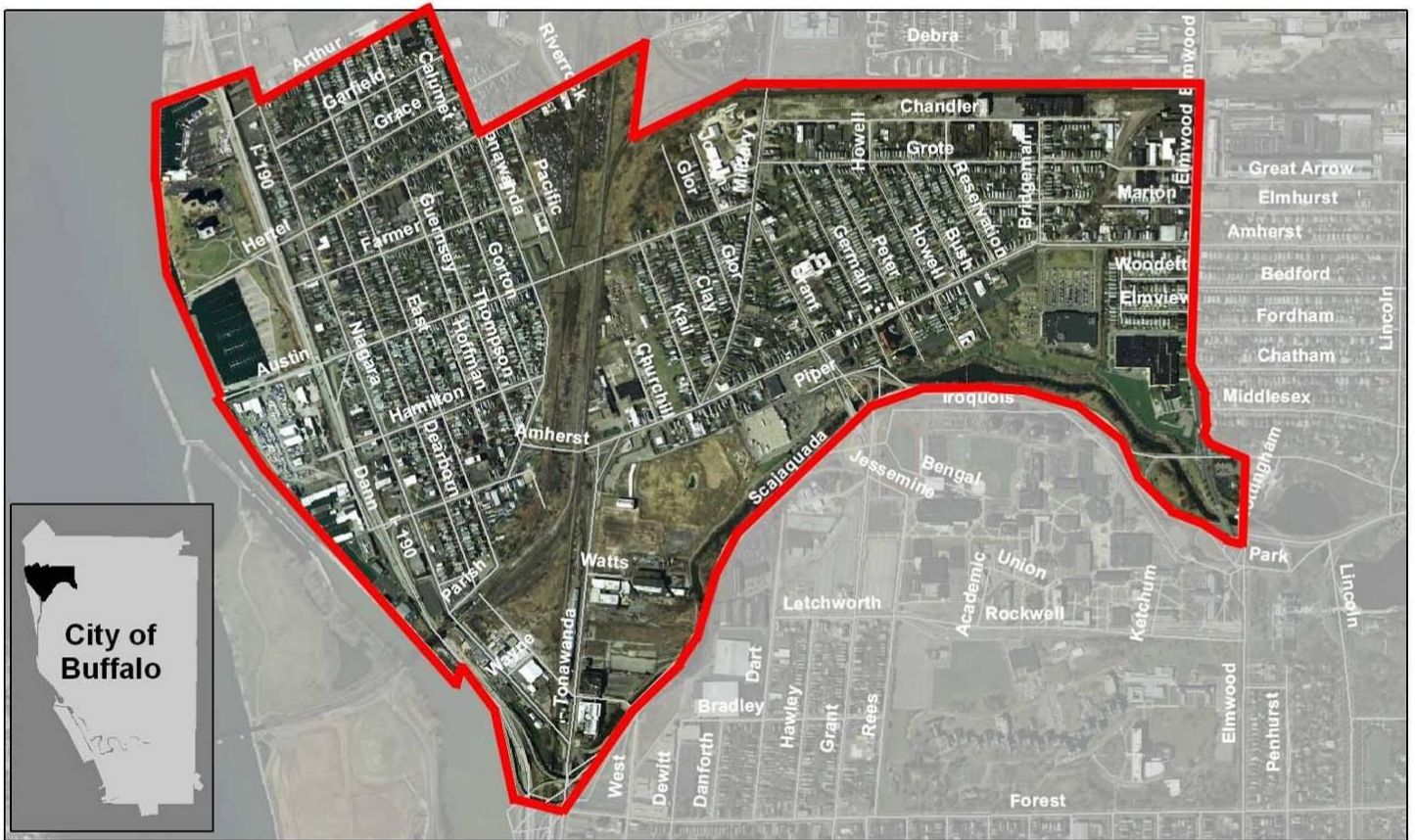
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Maps



Black Rock Historic Resource Survey Area

Comprehensive and Community Planning
Office of Strategic Planning
City of Buffalo
3/13/2009

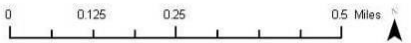
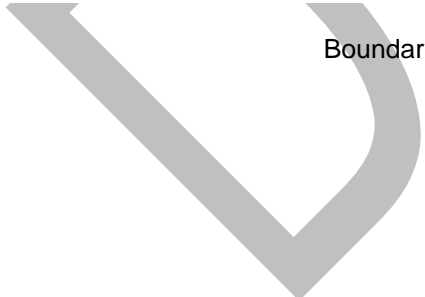


Figure A-1:
Boundary Map, Black Rock Planning Neighborhood (2010)



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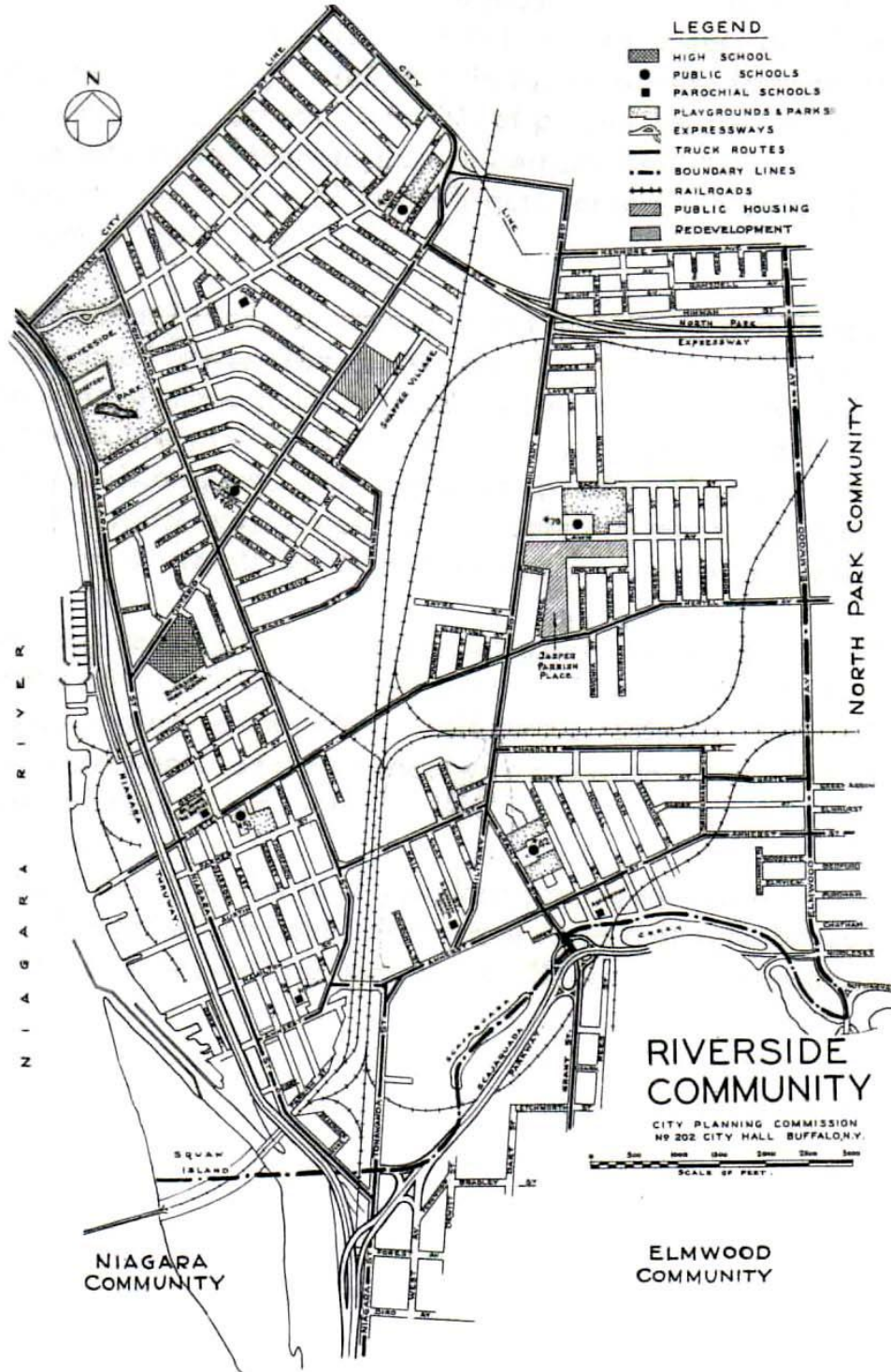


Figure A-2:
Riverside Community map, from *Buffalo Communities* report (1954)

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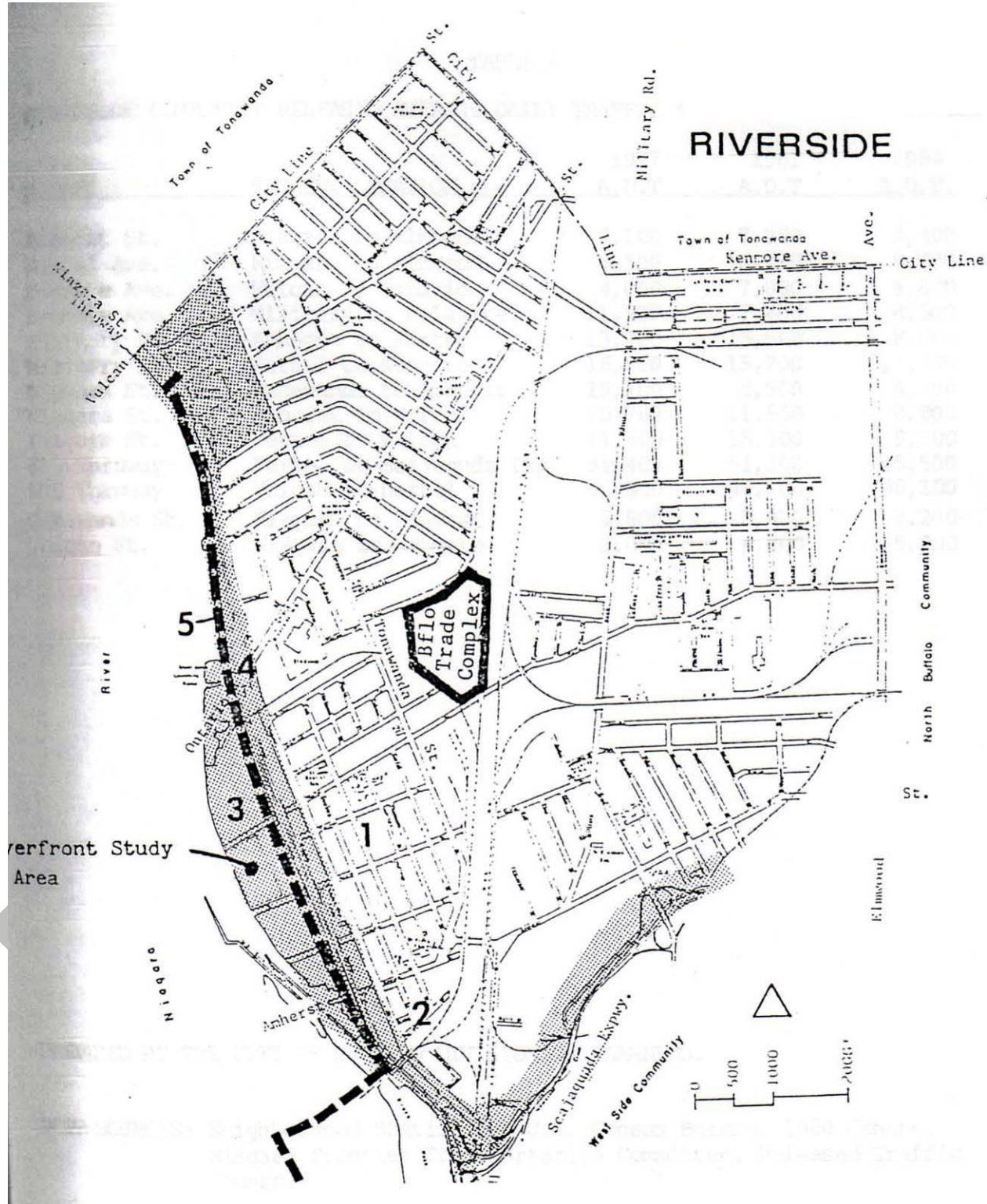


Figure A-3:
Riverside Planning Community map, from Buffalo Community Summaries report (March 1985)

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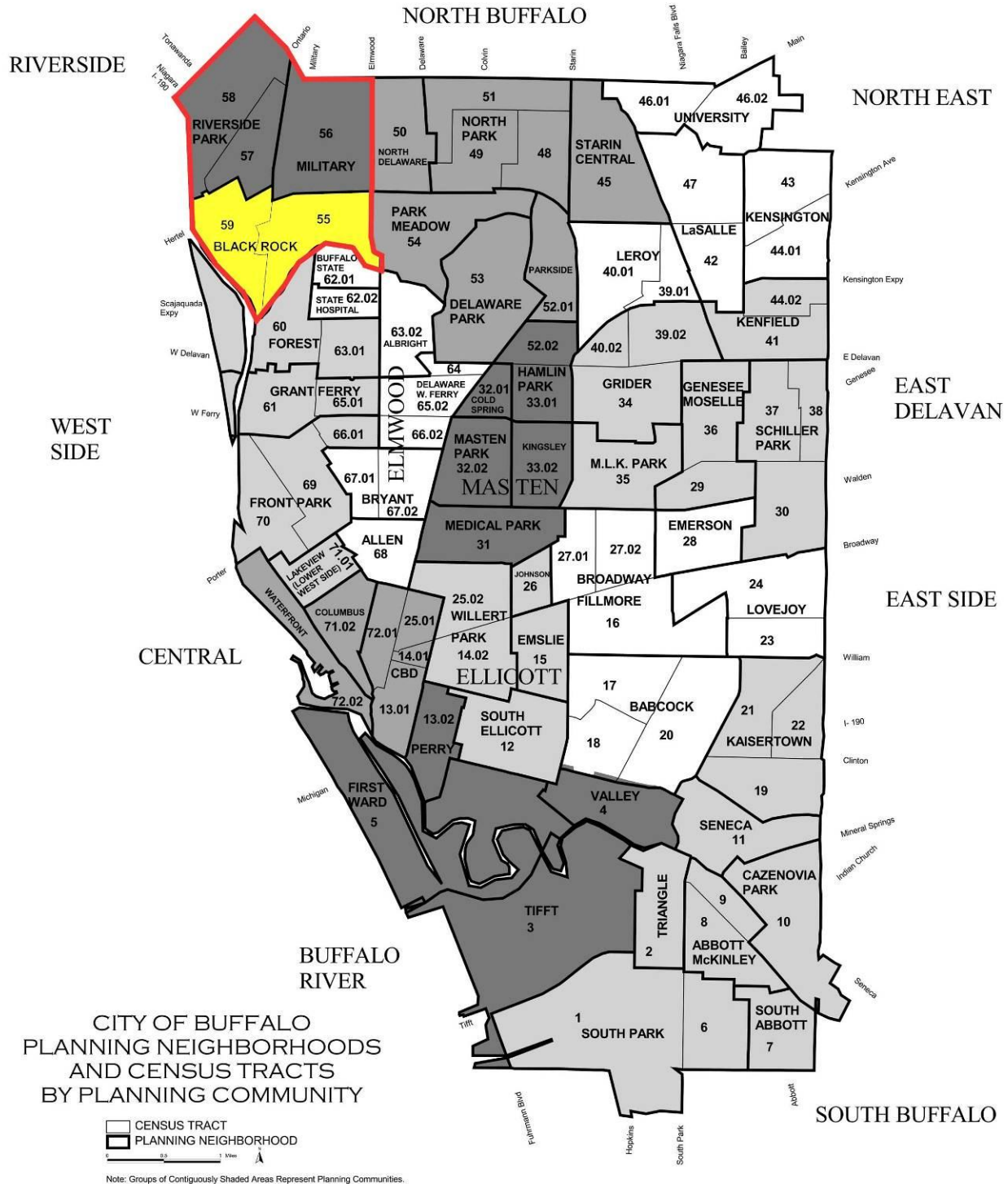


Figure A-4:

City of Buffalo Planning Neighborhoods and Census Tracts by Planning Community (2002)
The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood within the Riverside Planning Community is highlighted in yellow.

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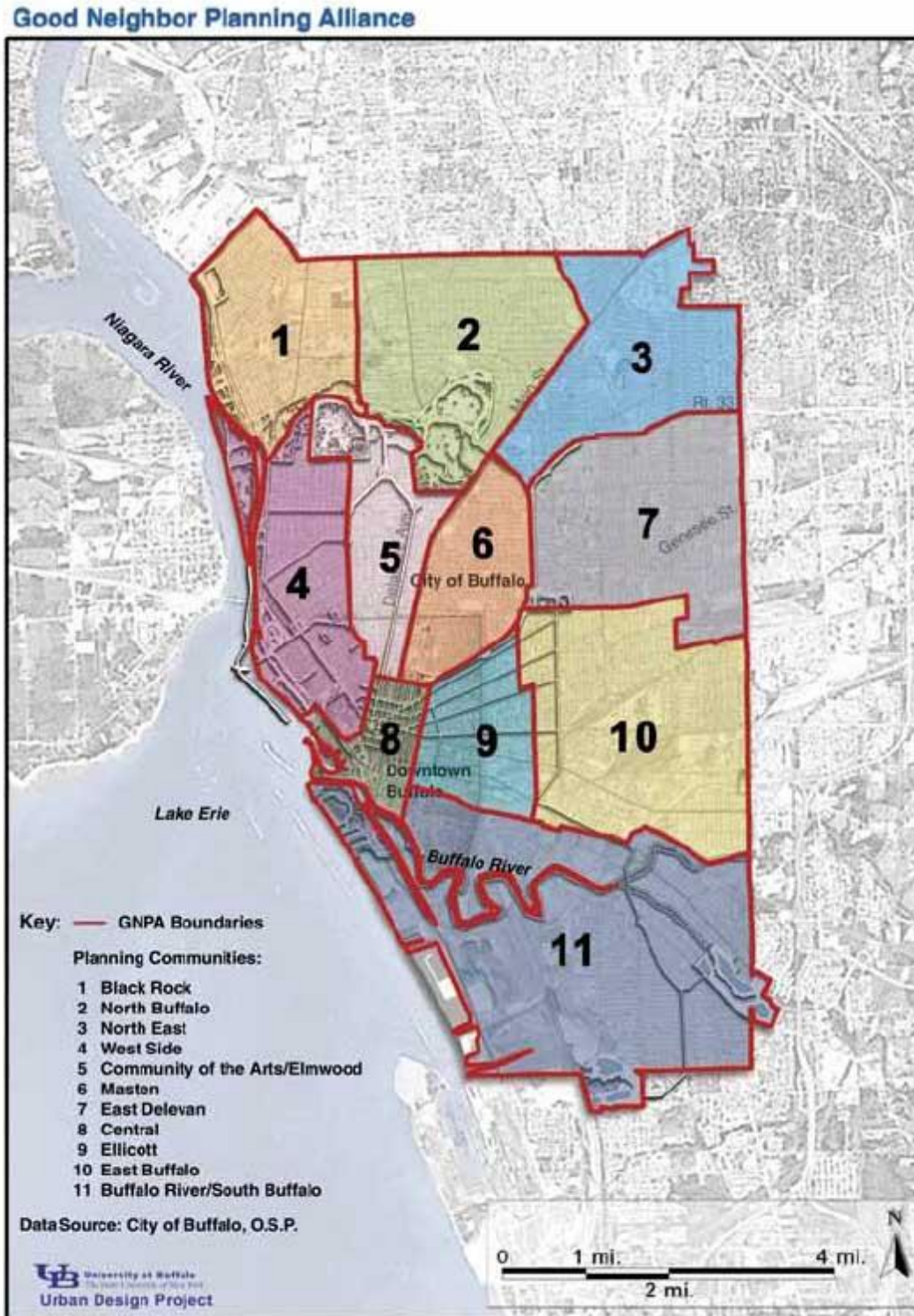


Figure A-5:

Good Neighbor Planning Alliance Planning Communities map, from the City of Buffalo Master Plan (2006)
The area numbered "1" on the map is the Black Rock Planning Community, formerly known as the Riverside Planning Community, which contains the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood.

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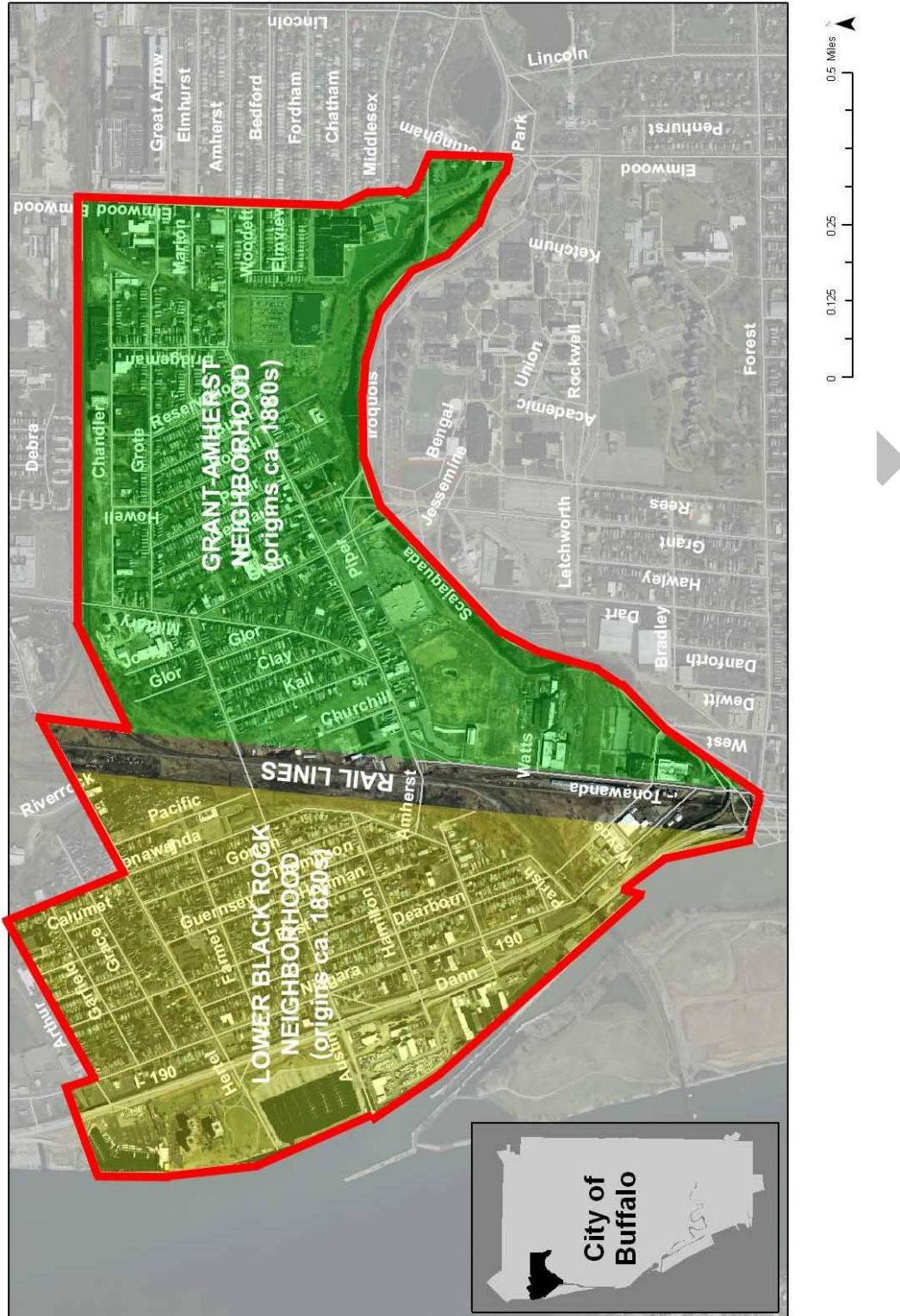


Figure A-6:

Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods within the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood

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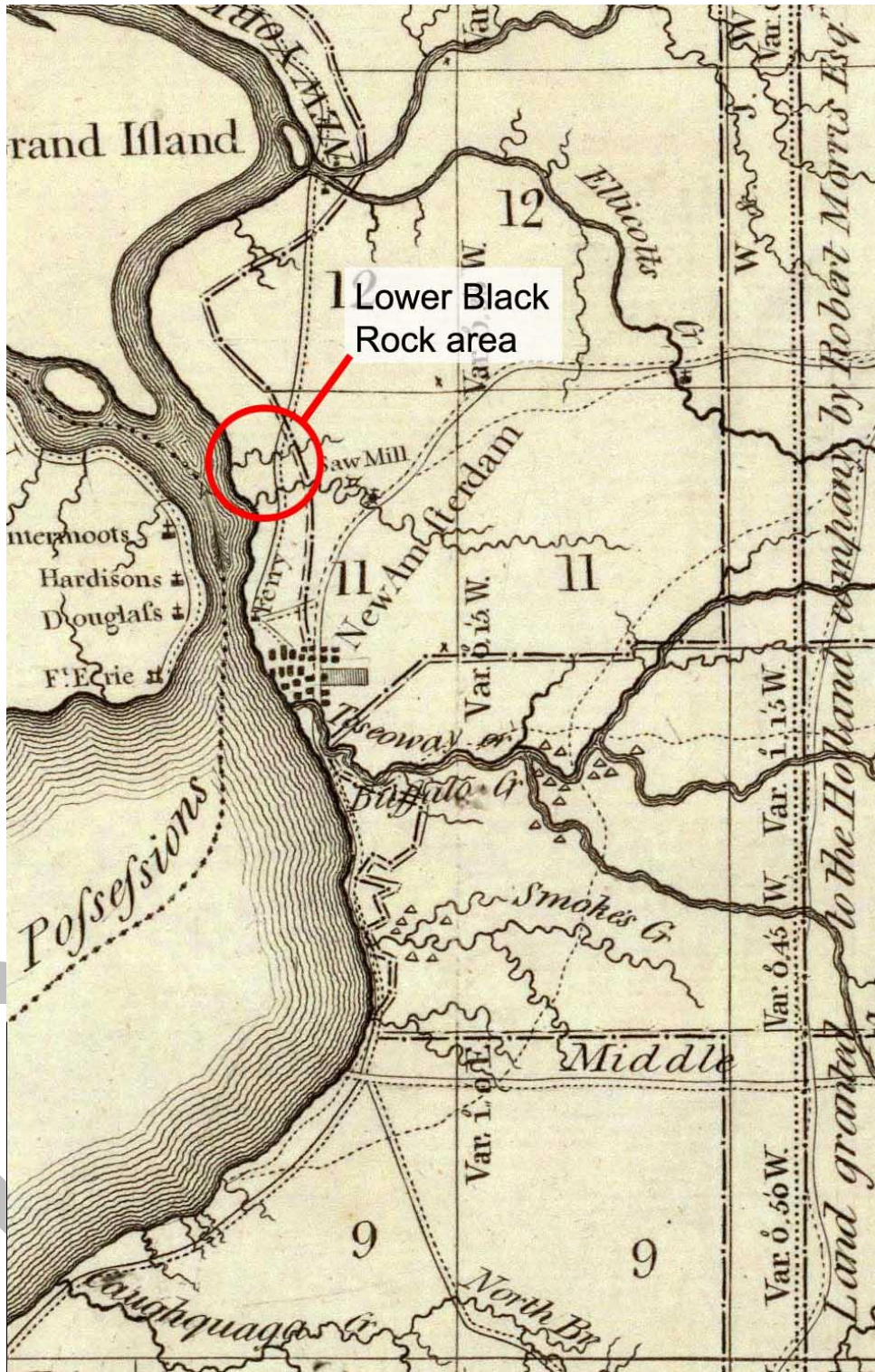


Figure A-7:

Detail, *Map of Morris's Purchase or West Geneseo in the State of New York (1804)*

The earliest map of Western New York which depicts some activity in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, here a Saw Mill is indicated along the Scajaquada Creek.

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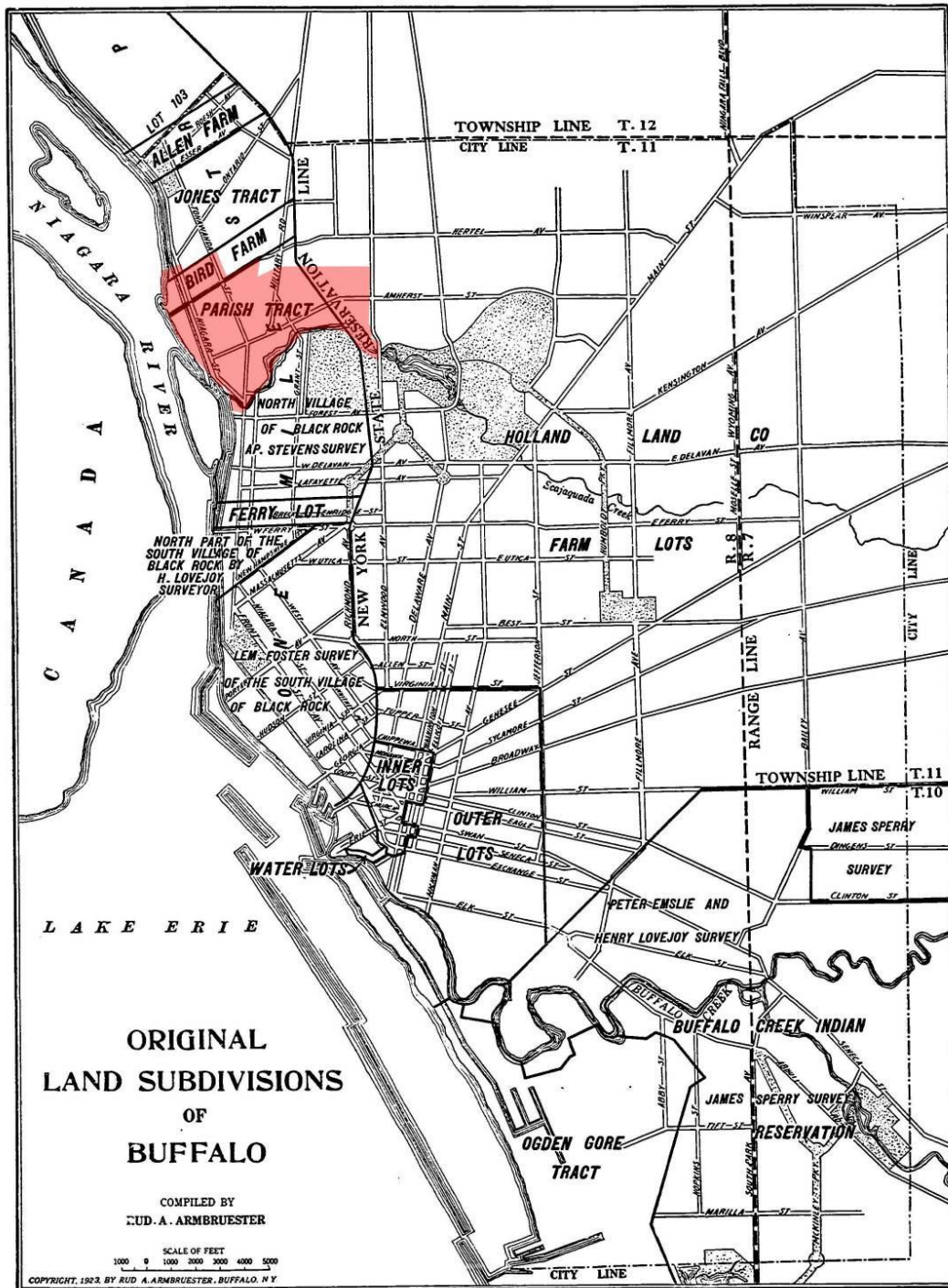


Figure A-8:
Original Land Subdivisions of Buffalo (1923)

Depicts the land divisions of the City of Buffalo during the early 1800s. The approximate survey boundaries have been overlaid onto this map; note that the Parish Tract and Bird Farm located within the Mile Strip Reservation form a large portion of the present western area (Lower Black Rock) with additional land from the Holland Land Company farm lots at the east (Grant-Amherst).

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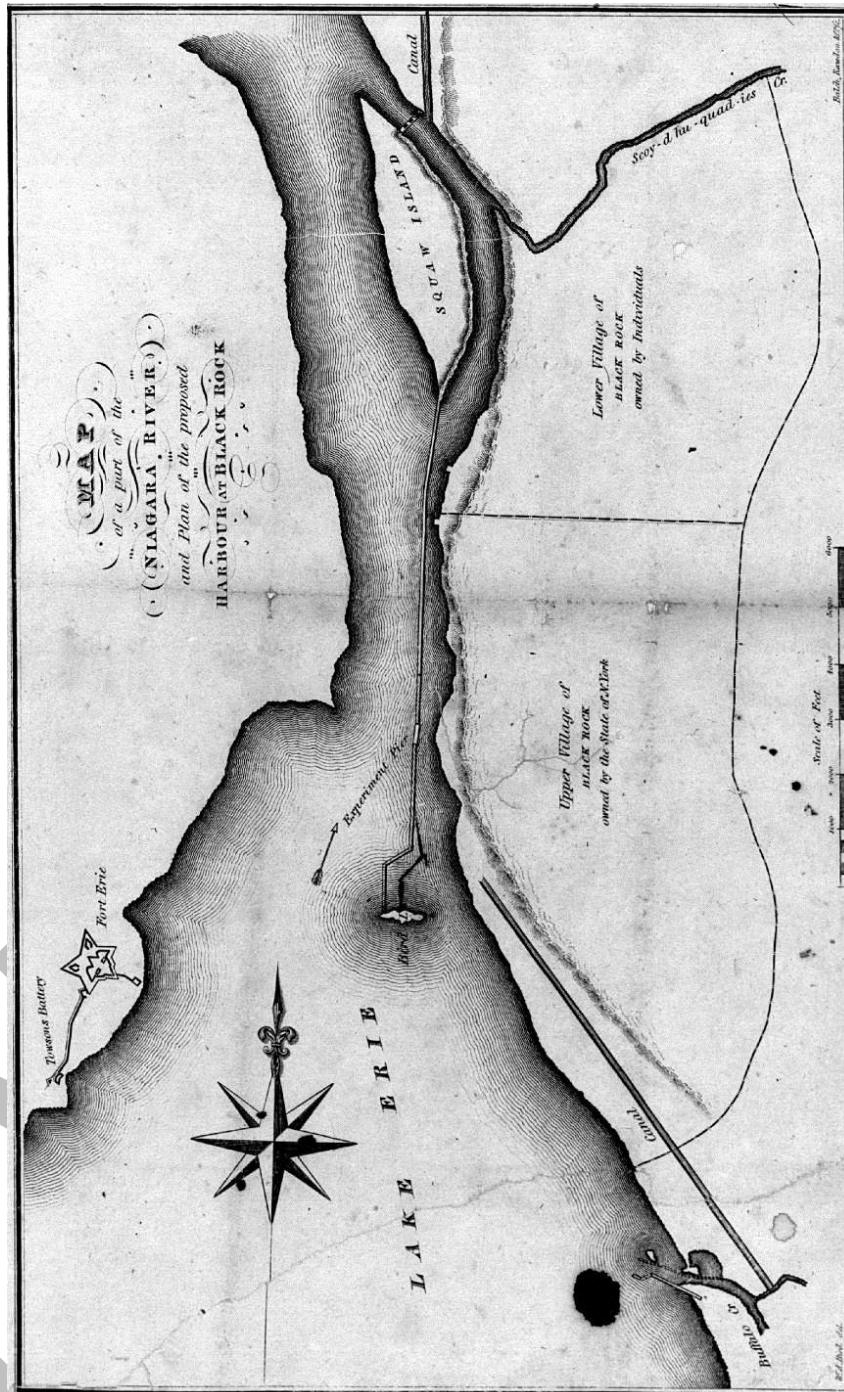


Figure A-9:

Map of part of the Niagara River and Plan of the proposed Harbor at Black Rock (1829)

Following the end of the War of 1812 when Black Rock was devastated by the British attacks, there were two different "Black Rock" communities. Upper Black Rock here is identified as being owned and developed by the State of New York, whereas Lower Black Rock is noted as being owned by individuals. While located south of the present Lower Black Rock boundaries of today, this nomenclature suggests the migration of the Black Rock identity which occurred in the early to mid-nineteenth-century as settlement in the Village (and later City) of Buffalo pushed northward.

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Figure A-10:

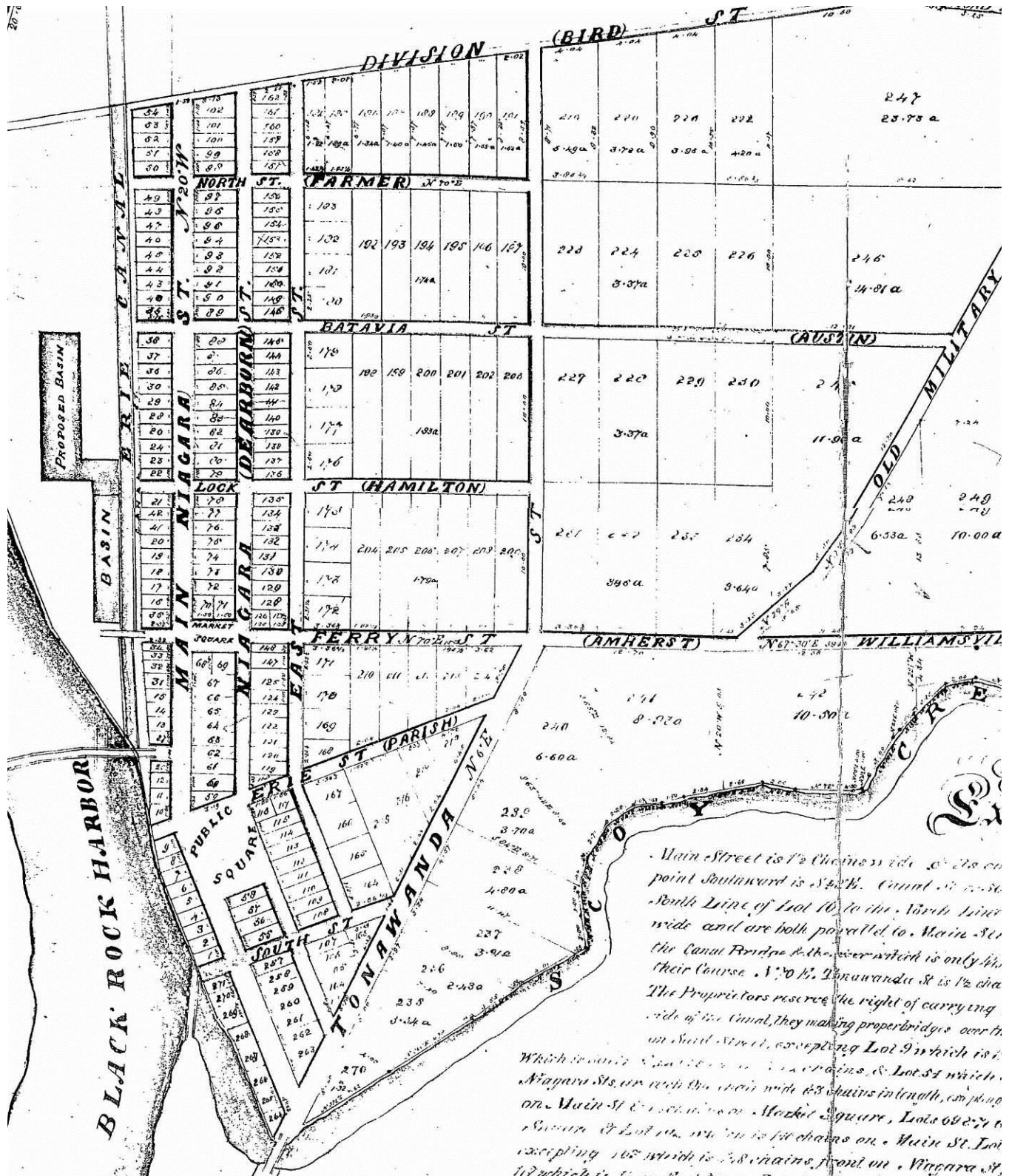
Map of the Parish Mile Square as surveyed in the year 1830 (1934 copy of lost original)

The earliest located depiction of the growth and development of Lower Black Rock in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood. Note the density of the parcelization nearest to the Erie Canal along the western (left) portion of the map. The eastern portion (today's Grant-Amherst neighborhood) is largely open farm lands and fields.

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Detail, Map of the Parish Mile Square (1830)

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Figure A-11:

Untitled Map of Lower Black Rock (1856)

Note the residential development along streets such as Dearborn, East and Amherst Streets in Lower Black Rock with commercial businesses located primarily along Niagara Street and the Erie Canal. Industry is located along Tonawanda Street and the "Scajaquady" Creek. Note the rail line which bisects the area into a western (Lower Black Rock) and eastern (what will become Grant-Amherst) section. Note that this map indicates that while the Grant-Amherst area has been parcelized around Military Road and Amherst Street, it remains undeveloped.

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Figure A-12:

Untitled Map of Grant-Amherst Neighborhood (1856)

Portion of previous map, depicting area where the Grant-Amherst neighborhood would flourish in the 1880s.

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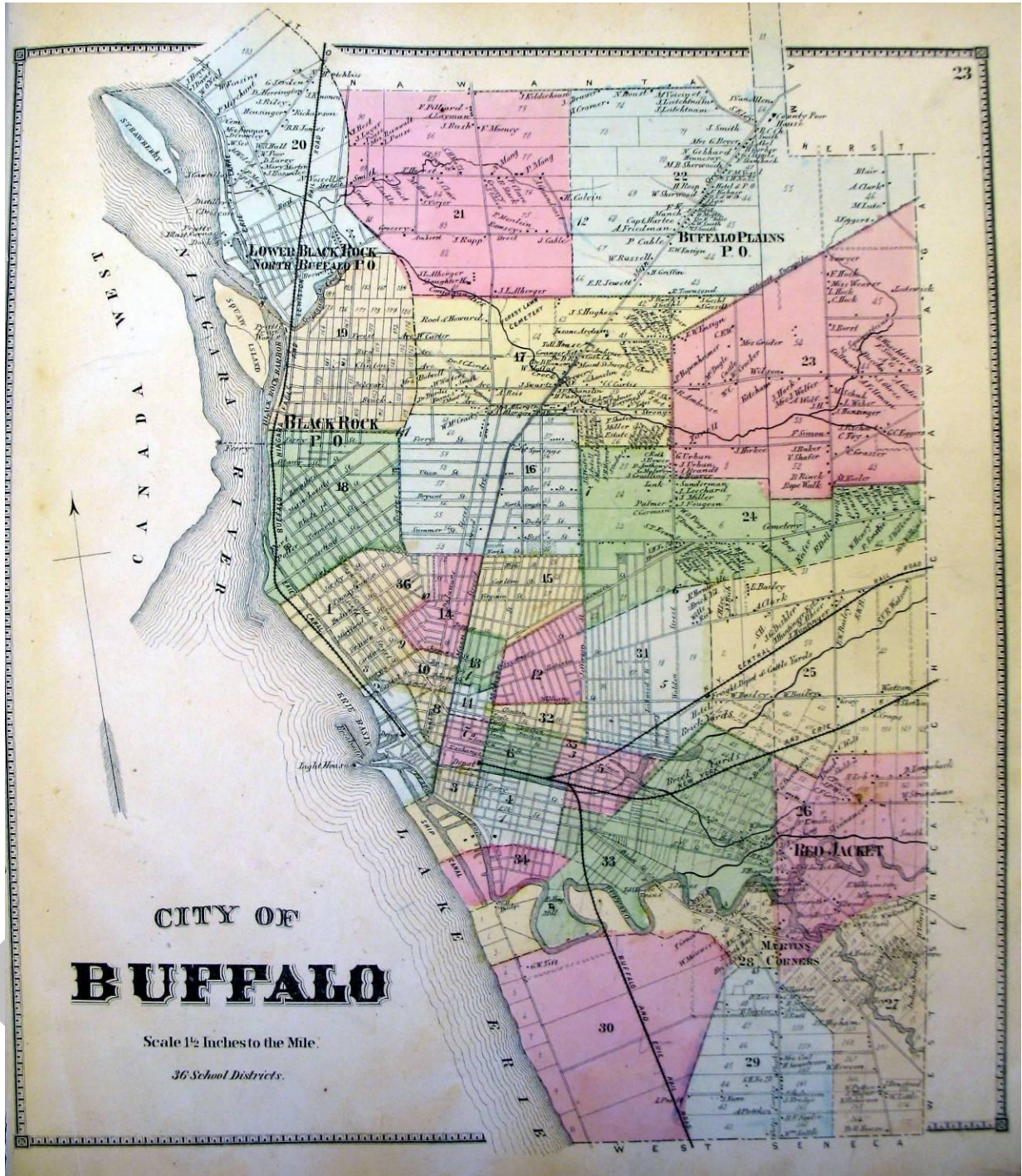


Figure A-13:

City of Buffalo (1866, from the Stone & Stewart Atlas of Buffalo)

In this map of the City of Buffalo, the present area contained within the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood has been identified as Lower Black Rock. This identity migrated to become associated with the area just north of the Scajaquada Creek following the incorporation of the City of Buffalo in 1832 and the subsequent physical and cultural absorption of Upper Black Rock into the City of Buffalo.

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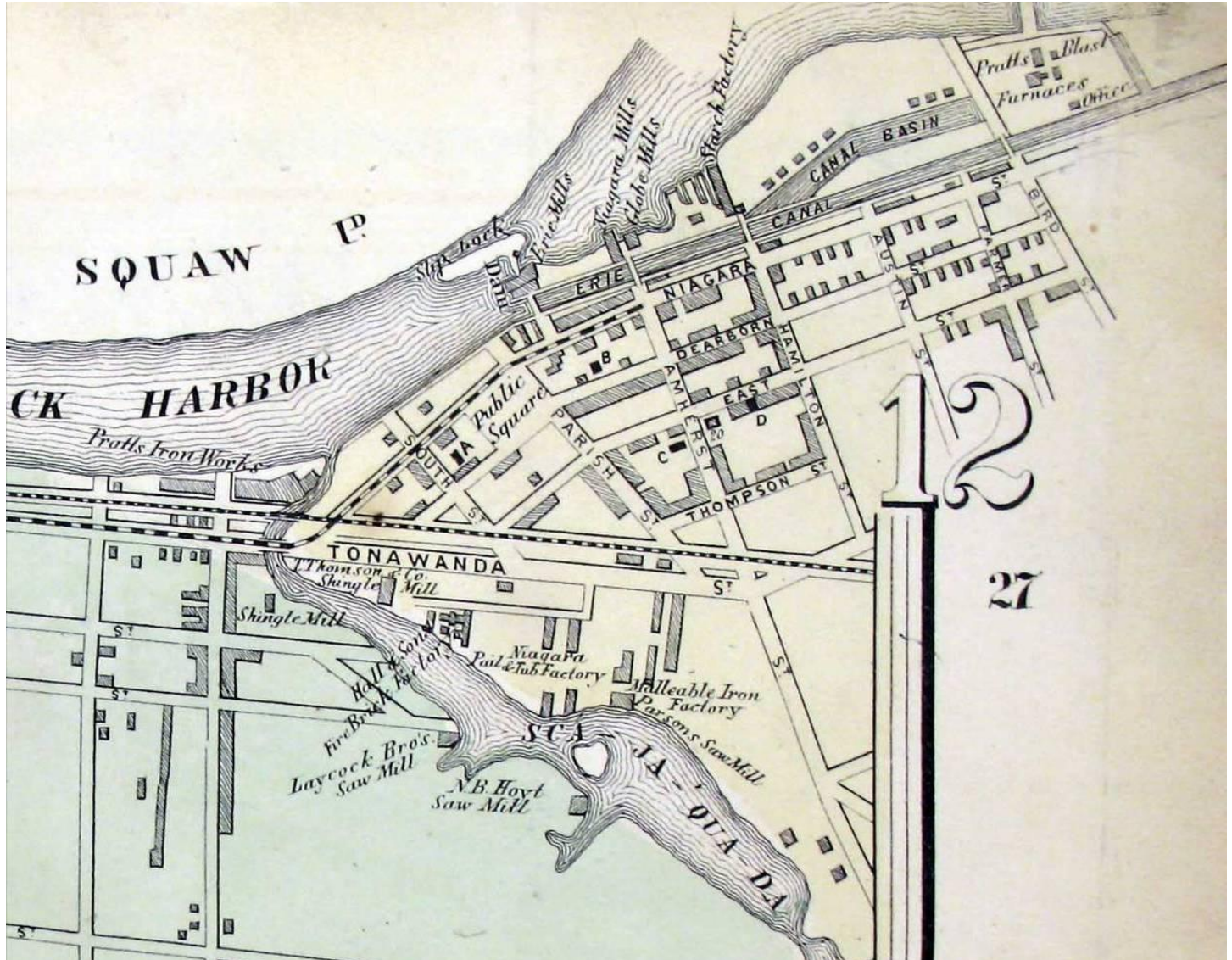


Figure A-14:

Detail showing Lower Black Rock, Stone & Stewart Atlas of Buffalo (1866)

Identifies several of the industries and factories located in Lower Black Rock along the Scajaquada Creek. Notable businesses along the creek include the Niagara Pail & Tub factory, Hall & Sons Fire Brick factory, the Malleable Iron Works, Parson's saw mill, and T. Thompson & Co. shingle mill. Along the Black Rock Harbor and Erie Canal were several mills including the Erie Mills, Niagara Mills, Globe Mills, and a Starch factory. Pratt's Blast Furnaces are also identified on the 1866 map at the upper right hand corner of the map.

Key to map:

- A – Black Rock Baptist Church
- B – Black Rock Methodist Church
- C – German Evangelical Church
- D – St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

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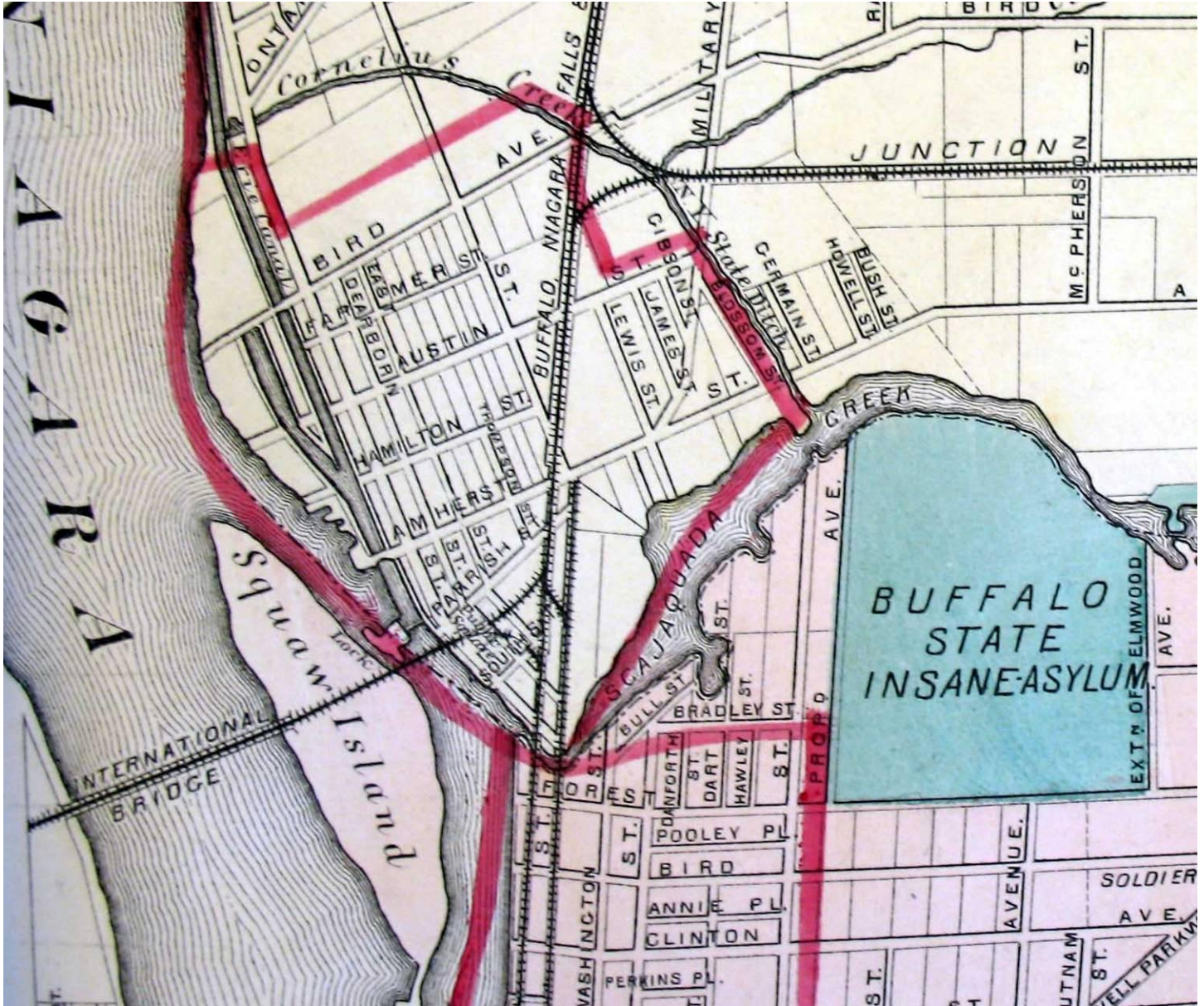


Figure A-15:
Detail, Map of Buffalo from *Atlas of the City of Buffalo* (1872, G.M. Hopkins & Co.)

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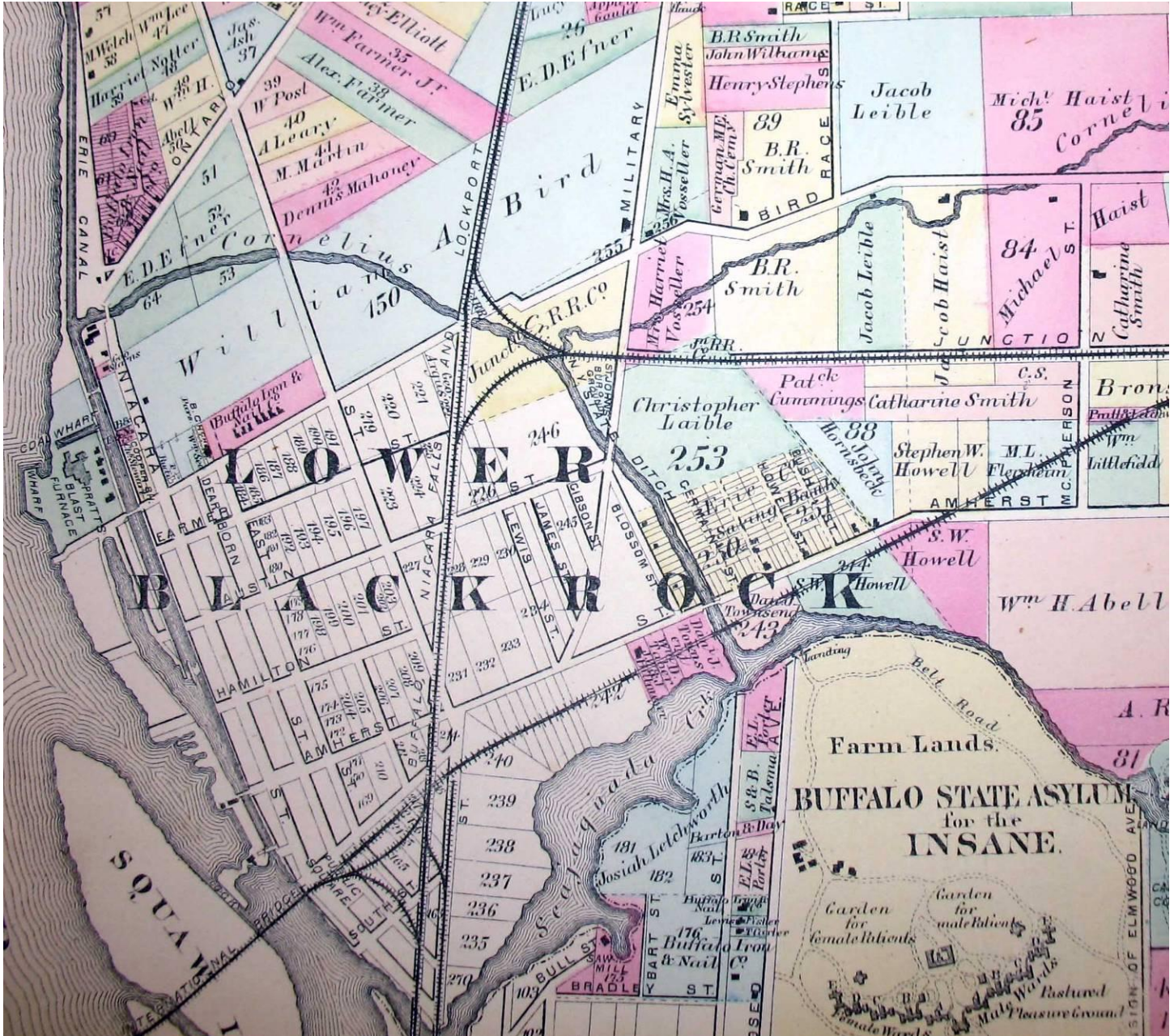


Figure A-16:

Detail, *Parts of Eleventh and Twelfth Wards* (1872, G.M. Hopkins & Co.)

Note the development of new streets in the Lower Black Rock area as well as the proliferation of rail lines which bisect the neighborhood and also form a northern boundary. Also significant is the New York State Ditch which connected Scajaquada Creek with Cornelius Creek and the Erie Canal. William A. Bird retained ownership of the "Bird Farm" tract to the north of the survey area, while the eastern portion remains largely undeveloped farm lands.

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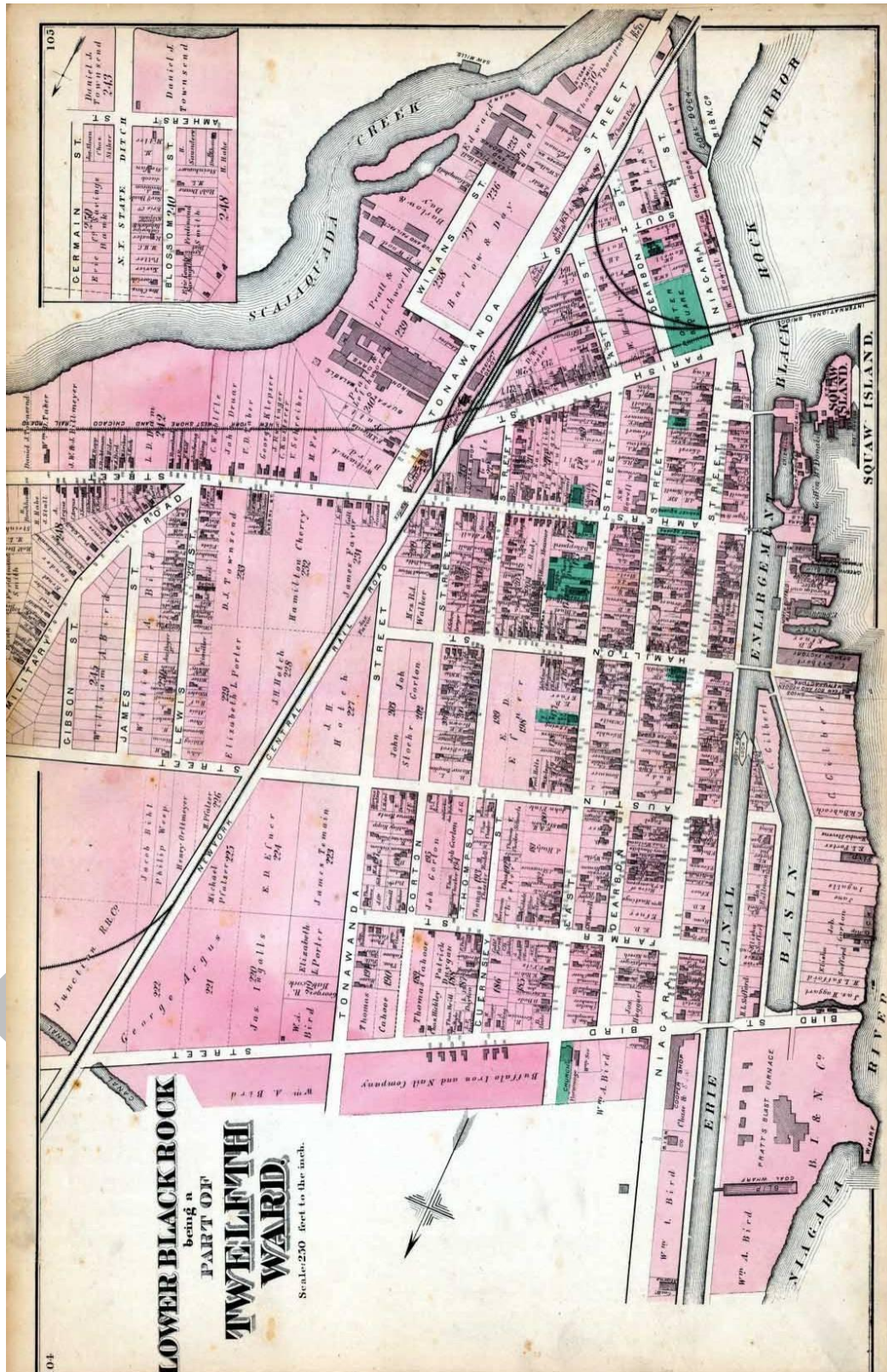


Figure A-17:
*Lower Black Rock
being part of Twelfth
Ward (1872, G.M.
Hopkins & Co.)*

By the 1870s, Lower Black Rock was a thriving community of industry, residential and commercial activity based on the area's proximity to the Erie Canal and also the expanding rail system in the area. A market which dates at least the 1830s located at Niagara and Amherst Streets is visible, as is the large Porter Square at Niagara and Parrish Streets. Residential areas are clustered primarily between Niagara and Tonawanda Streets to the west, but also have developed along Amherst Street near Military Road in what is now the Grant-Amherst neighborhood.

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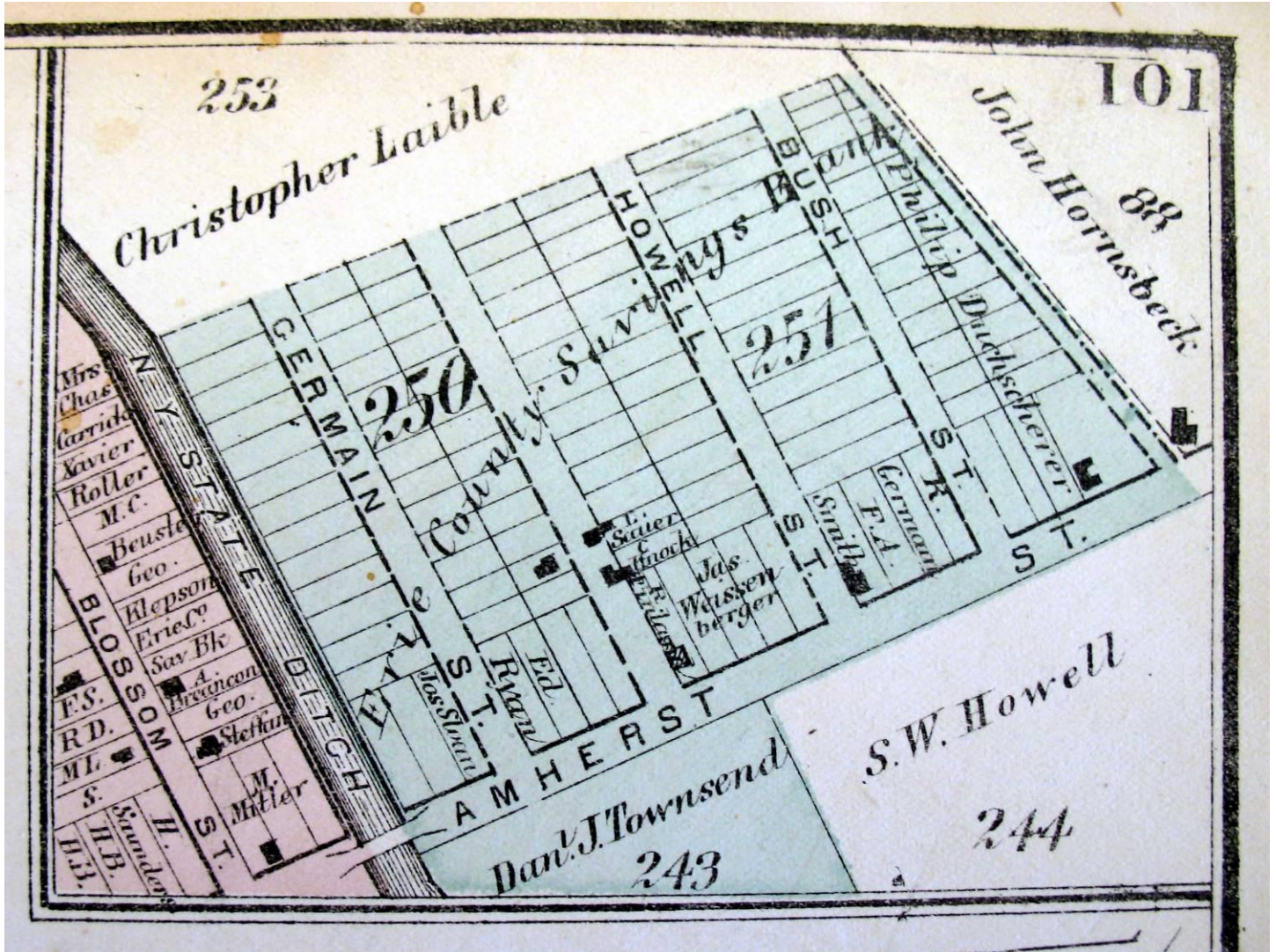


Figure A-18:

Detail, *Parts of Eleventh and Twelfth Wards* (1872, G.M. Hopkins & Co.)

An inset showing the area of Amherst Street and the newly laid out Germain, what would become Peter and is here unlabeled, Howell and Bush Streets just east of the NY State Ditch. This area appears to be parceled for a residential development owned by the Erie County Savings Bank around this period. Blossom Street (at right) would become renamed as Grant Street.

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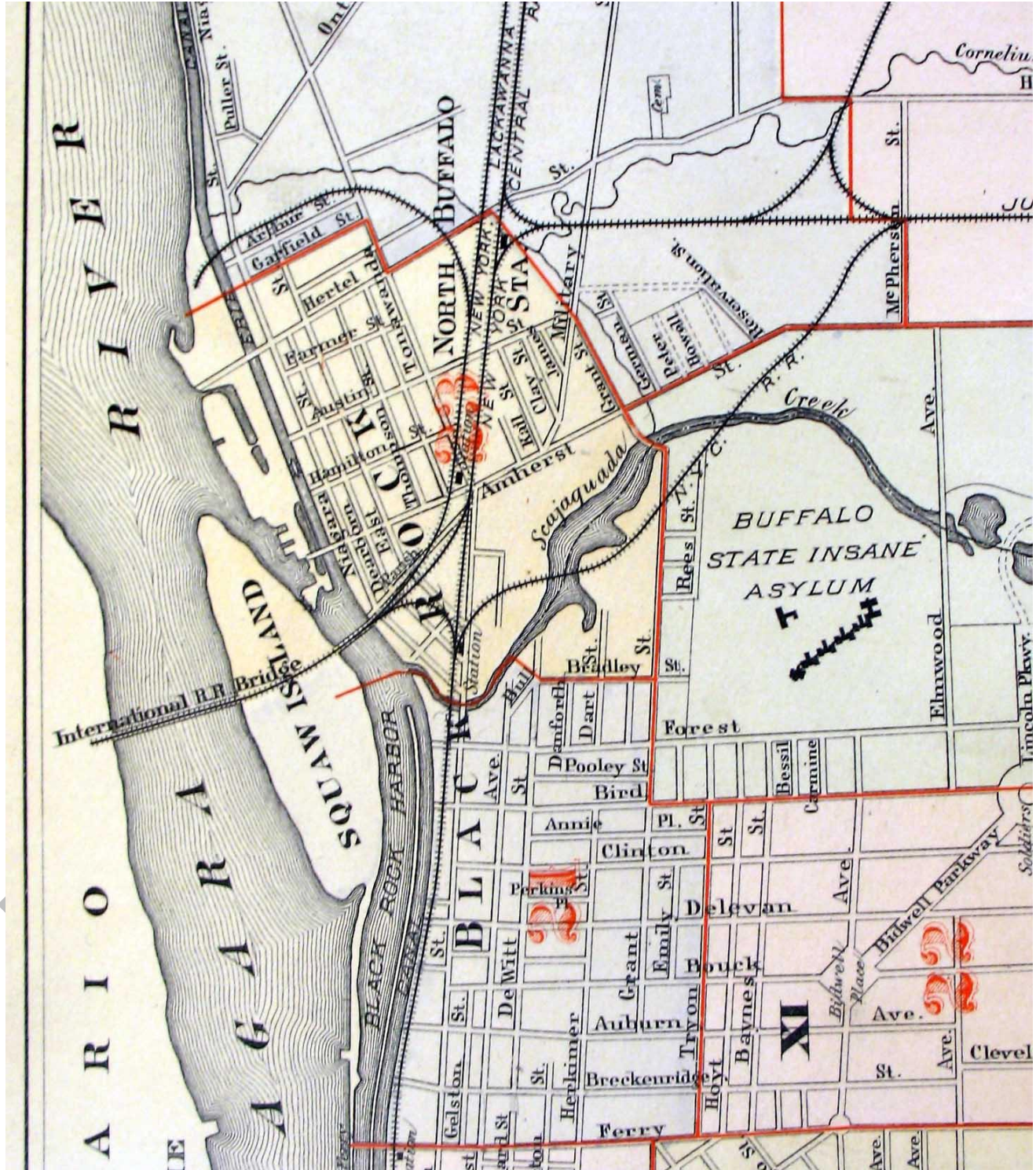


Figure A-19:
Detail, *Map of the City of Buffalo* (1884, G.M. Hopkins & Co.)
Detail highlighting the area known as Black Rock (note here it extends southward to Ferry Street).

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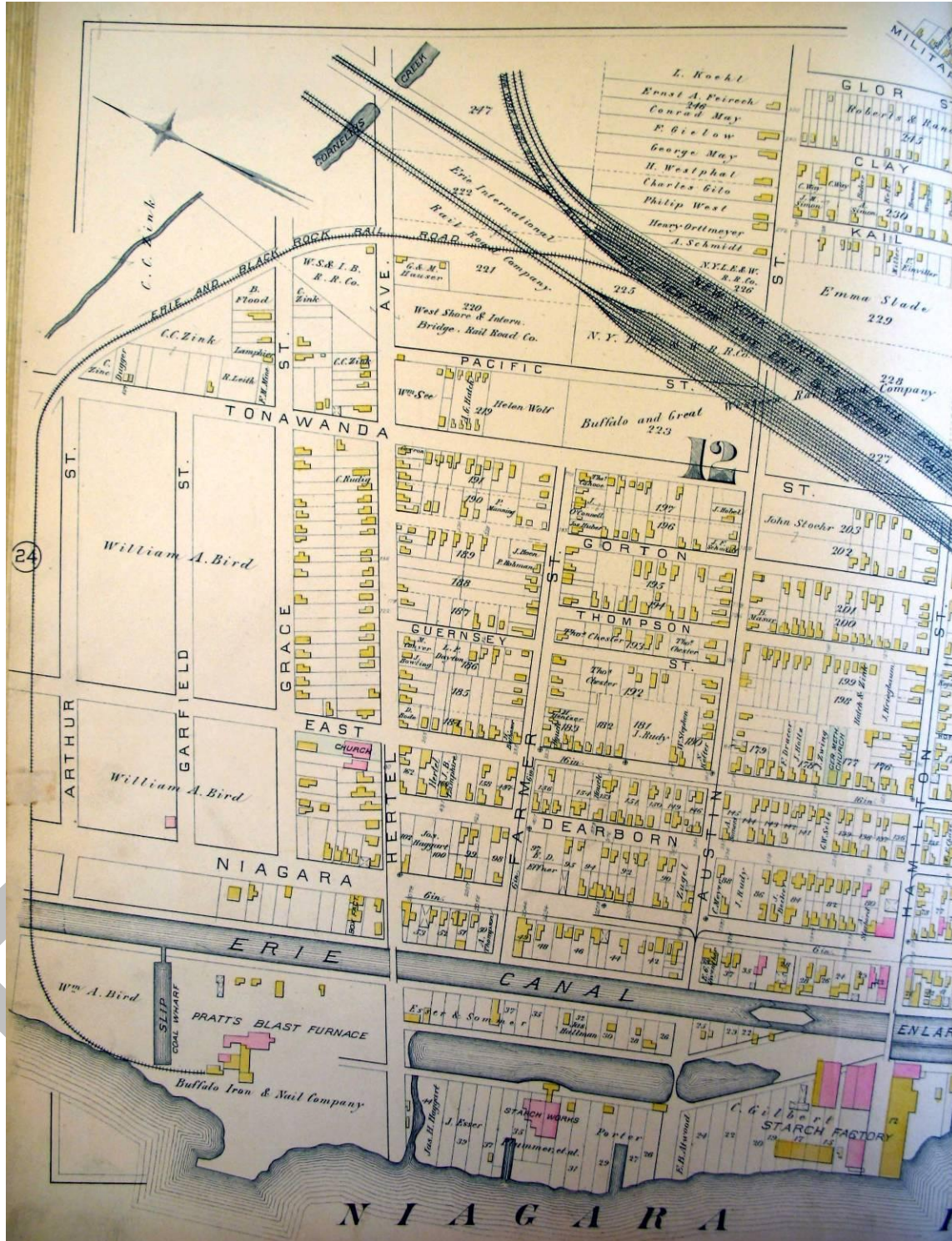


Figure A-20:
Plate 23, Buffalo, NY (1884, G.M. Hopkins & Co.)

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The northern portion of the area known as Lower Black Rock near Niagara Street and Hertel Avenue. Note the Bird Farm tract is still owned by William A. Bird but has roads developed through it.

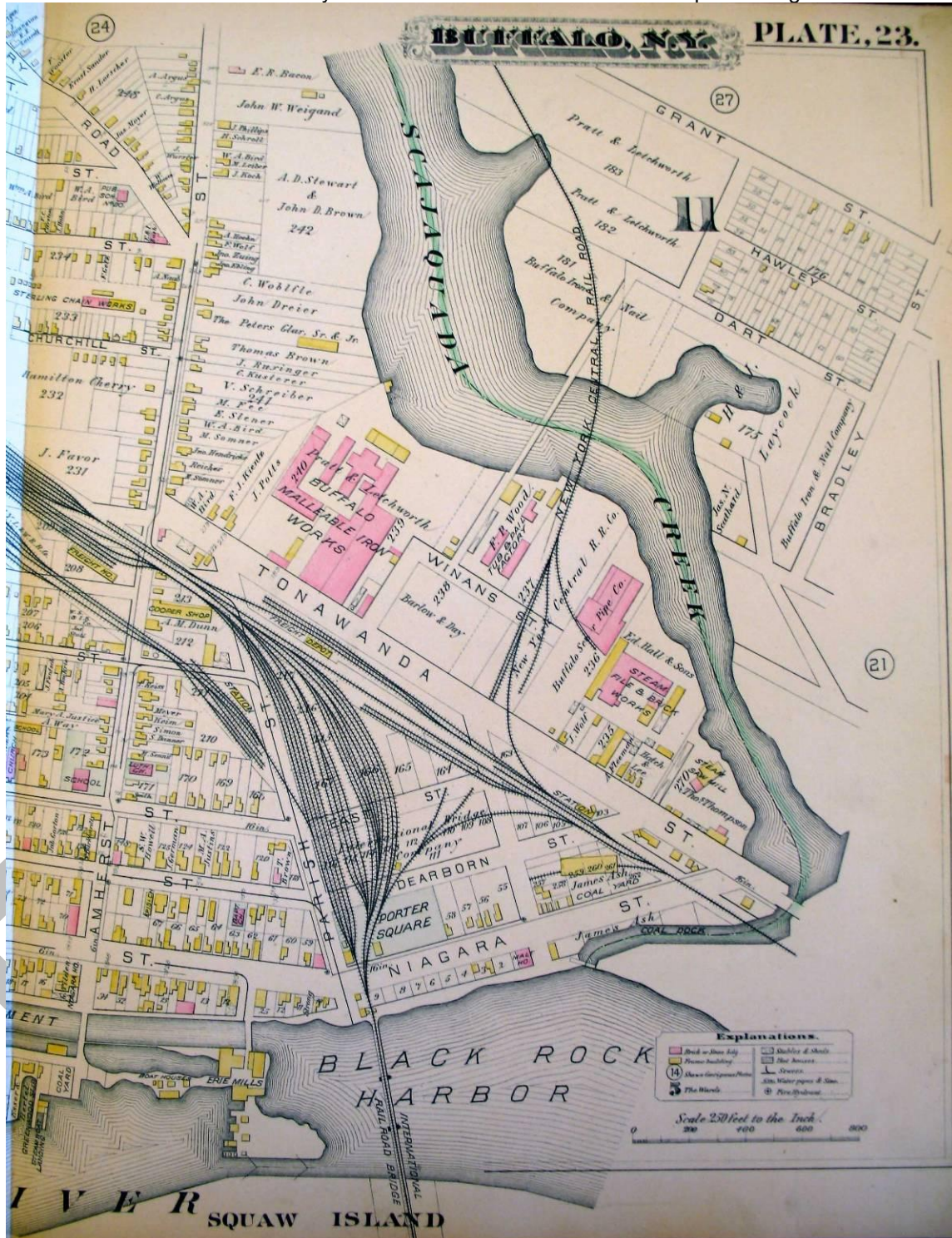


Figure A-21:
Plate 23, Buffalo, NY (1884, G.M. Hopkins & Co.)

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The southern portion of the Lower Black Rock area near Niagara and Tonawanda Streets. Note the industry along Tonawanda Street and also the dense web of rail lines which lace the neighborhood.



Figure A-22:
Plate 24, Buffalo, NY (1884, G.M. Hopkins & Co.)

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The eastern portion of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood along Amherst Street and Military Road. Note that the ca. 1872 Erie County Savings Bank development along Germain and Amherst Streets appears to have not taken shape, as the roads are tentatively dotted in. Still, this area is largely undeveloped.

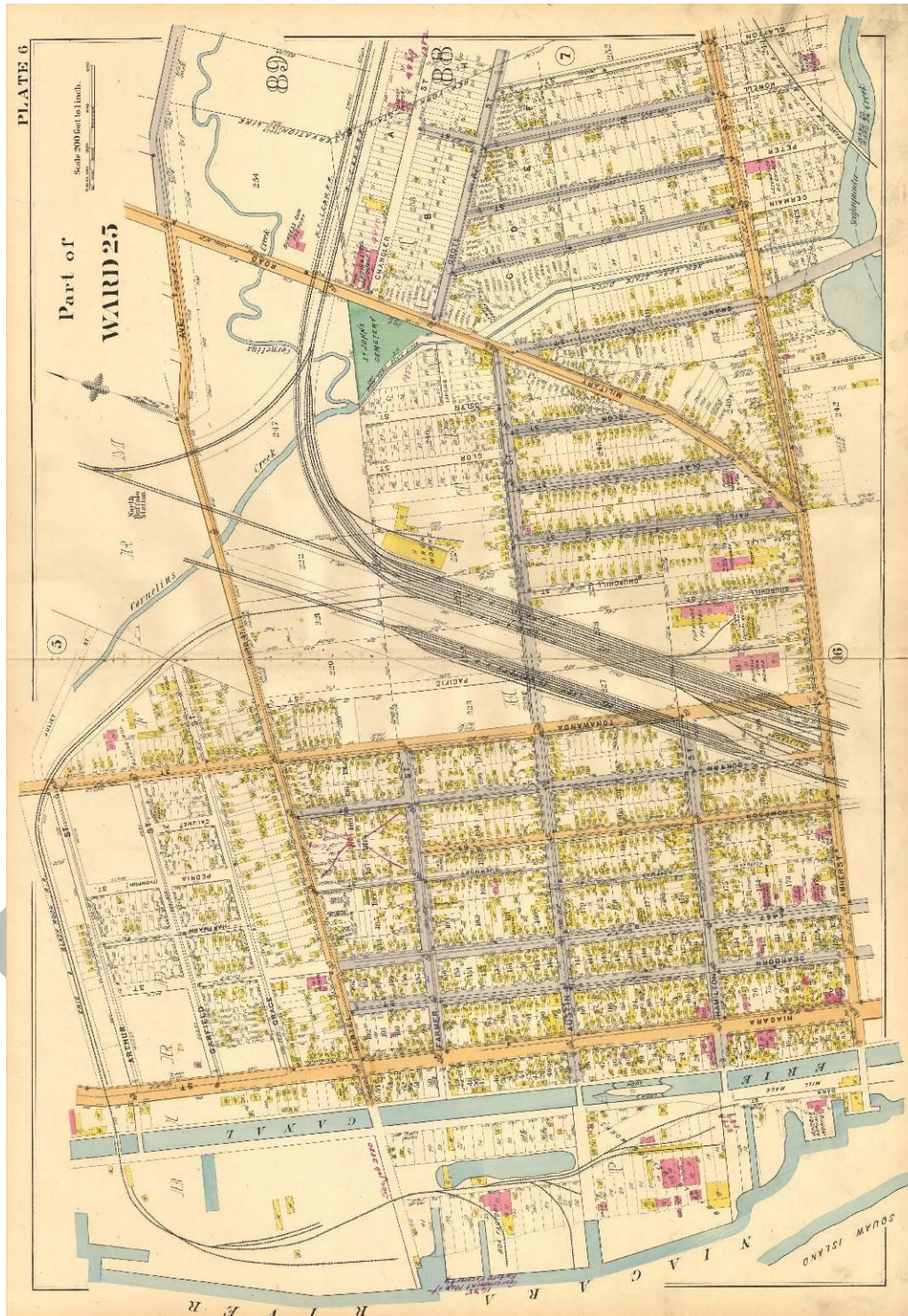


Figure A-23:
Part of Ward 23
(1894, American
Atlas Co.)

The growth of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood was historically dictated by the arrival of two modes of transportation in the area. While the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 ushered in the growth of the Lower Black Rock area, the opening of the Belt Line railroad in 1883 spurred the growth and industrialization of the Grant-Amherst area towards the east. By the close of the nineteenth-century, note the significant development and growth of the infrastructure in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood and the industrial development along the Belt Line railroad lines. Note also the continued existence of the NY State Ditch from the Scajaquada Creek.

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Figure A-24:
Part of Ward 24 & 25
(1894, American
Atlas Co.)

The southern portion of Lower Black Rock near the intersection of Niagara and Tonawanda Streets along the Scajaquada Creek. By the 1890s, industry along the creek was well established. Note the substantial factory complex of the Buffalo Malleable Iron Works, the Buffalo Sewer Pipe Works, and the Fire Brick Works. Also notice the increasing web of rail lines through the area with the confluence of domestic and international routes.

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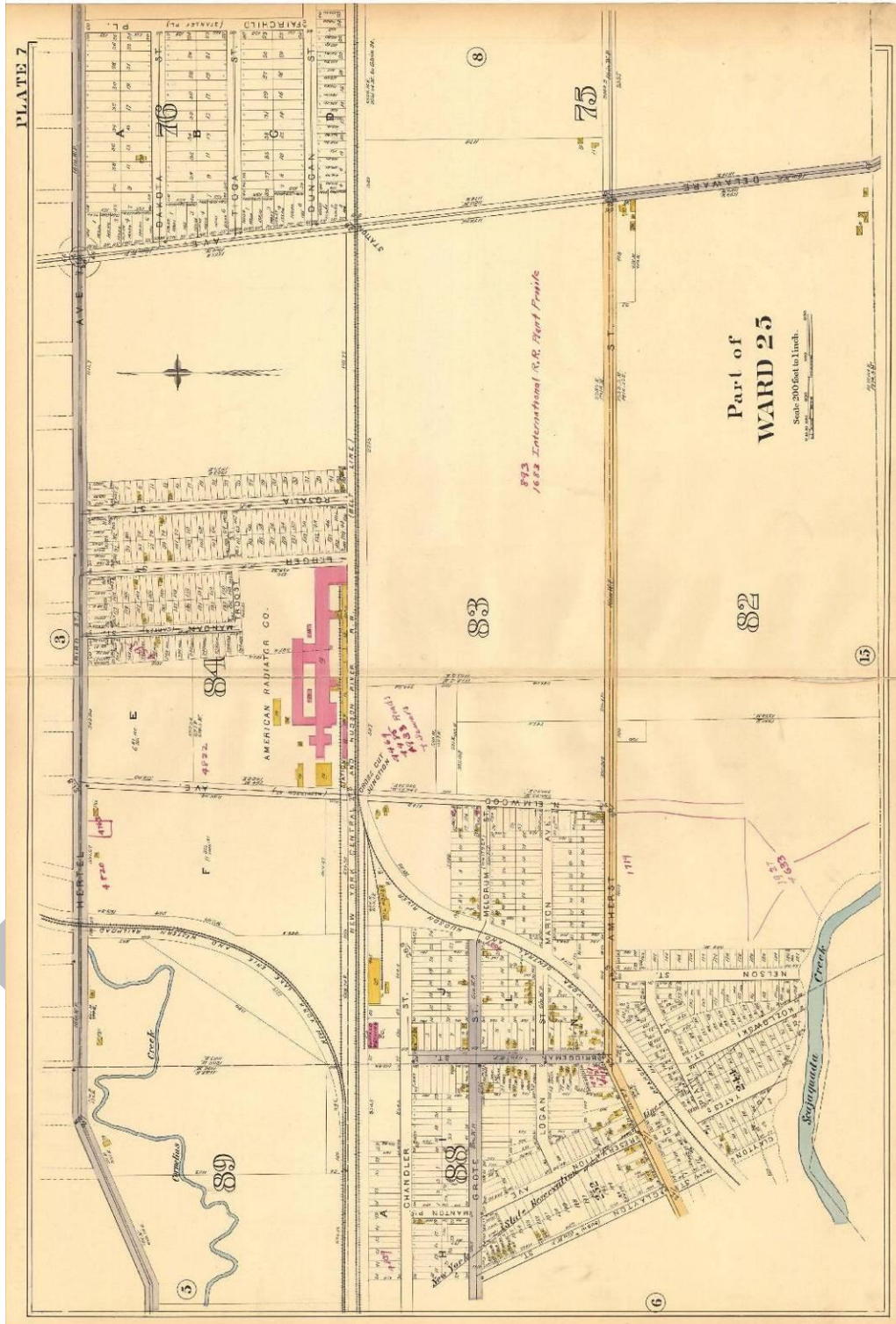


Figure A-25:
Part of Ward 25
(1894, American
Atlas Co.)

Depicts the eastern portion of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood survey area, focusing on the Grant-Amherst neighborhood. While much of the land is still vacant in the early 1890s, note that a majority of the area's roads have been mapped and the land has been parceled for development. Elmwood Avenue (the former McPherson St) has been partially extended northward which creates the survey area's eastern boundary, but it has not yet been connected to the southern neighborhoods in Buffalo. Note the growing industrialization along the Belt Line rail lines north of Chandler Street including the Buffalo Weaving Company.

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Figure A-26:

Detail, Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst areas, City of Buffalo (1902, Buffalo 1902 Bird's Eye View)

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Lower Black Rock and the Erie Canal are located at the bottom of the image, while Grant-Amherst is located towards the upper-center of the map. Note how disconnected the two historic neighborhoods were in the early 1900s, divided by a thick network of rail lines. Also note the significant industrialization of the Black Rock coast and at the Scajaquada Creek/ Tonawanda Street area.



Figure A-27:
Detail, *Greater Buffalo* (1915, Century Atlas Co.)

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By the early 1900s, the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood was fully developed in regards to its transportation infrastructure. Note Elmwood Avenue has been connected to the southern route, linking the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood area to the downtown areas of the City.

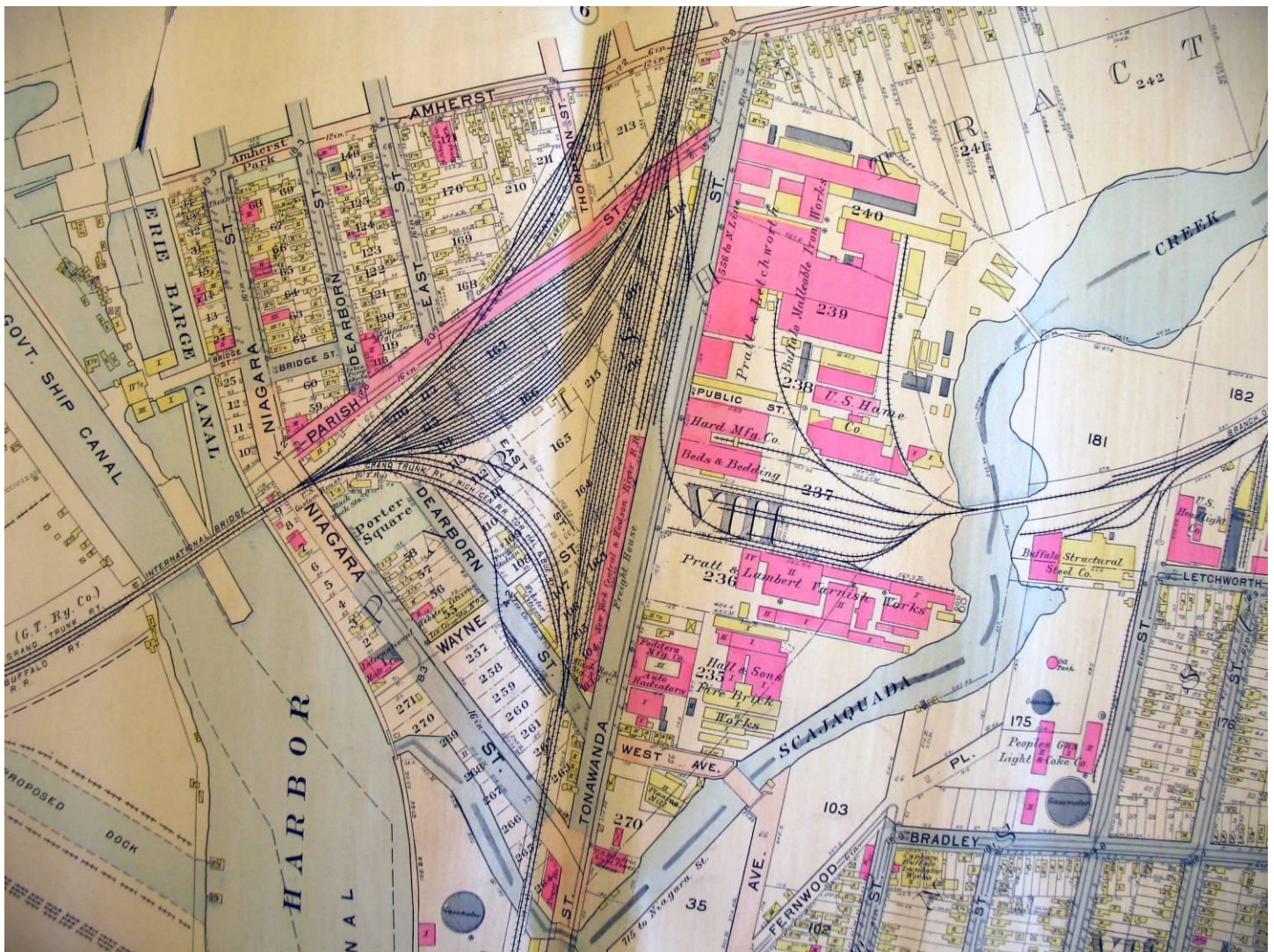


Figure A-28:

Detail, Section of Tax District VIII (1915, Century Atlas Co.)

Notice that by 1915, Lower Black Rock at Niagara and Tonawanda Streets had taken a decidedly industrial appearance. The massive brick factories of Pratt & Letchworth and Pratt & Lambert and others dominate the area along Tonawanda Street, and the neighborhood has taken on new significance as a major railroad hub, connecting the Canadian rail lines via the International Bridge crossing and the domestic lines of the Belt Line rail road. Also notice that the area is still regarded as being the Parrish Tract (superimposed over this portion of the map).

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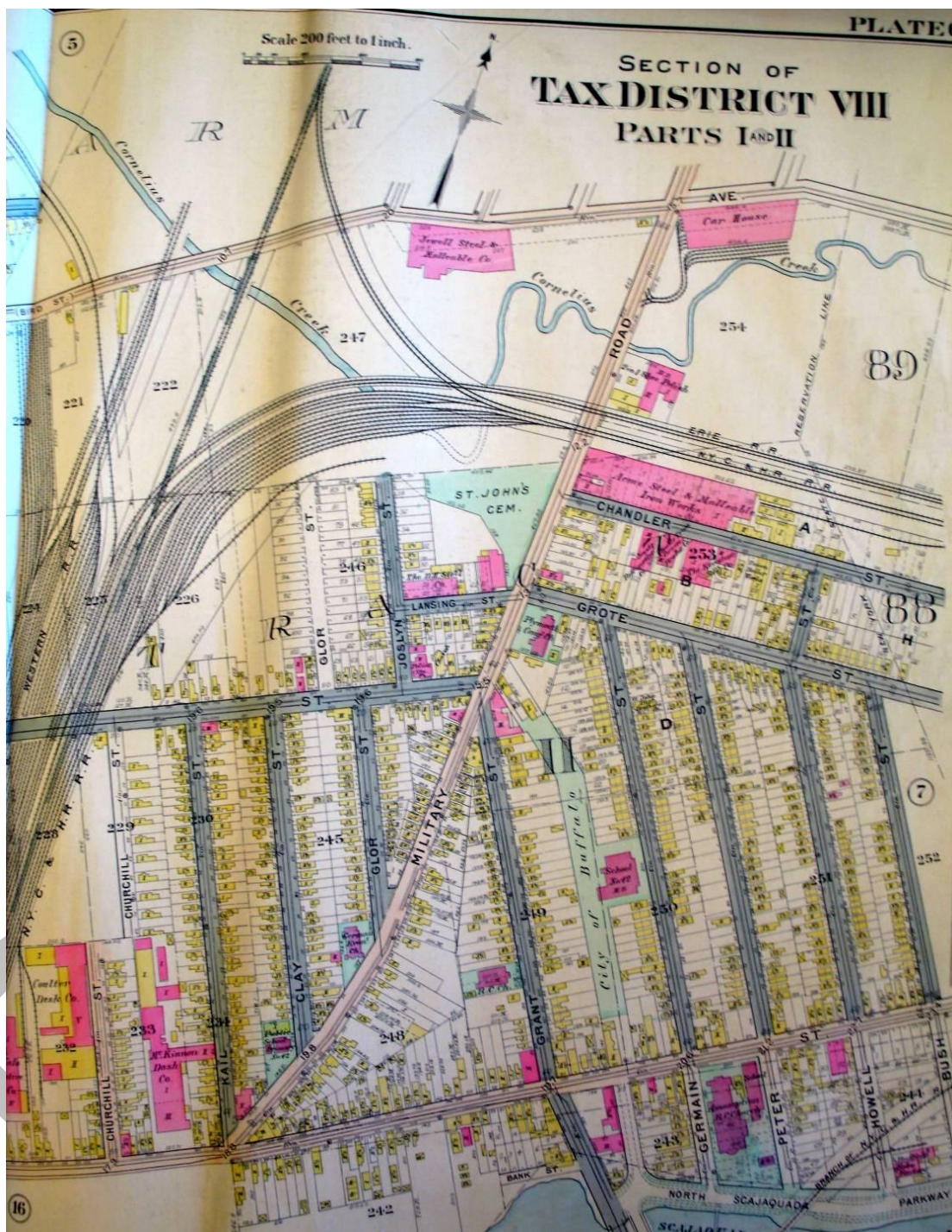


Figure A-29:

Detail, Section of Tax District VIII (1915, Century Atlas Co.)

A view of the Grant-Amherst area of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood around Military Road, Grant Street and Amherst Street. Note that by this time, the neighborhood showed significant growth and settlement, with rapid house construction in this area between approximately 1900 and 1915. Note the industrial development at the north along Chandler Street and to the west in the neighborhood on Amherst Street at the Belt Line railroad.

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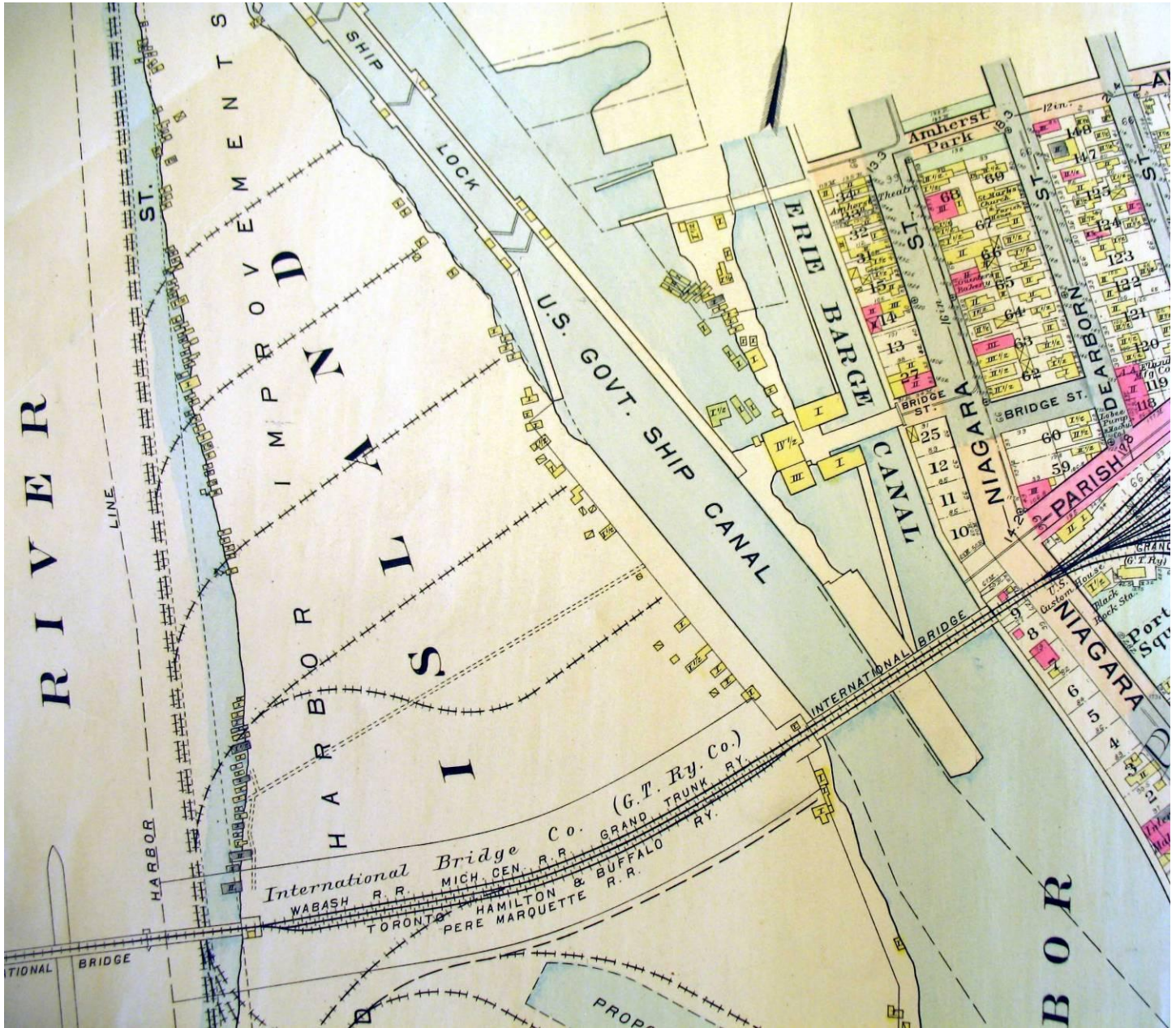


Figure A-30:

Detail, Section of Tax District VIII (1915, Century Atlas Co.)

A detail view of Squaw Island in 1915. Note the intricate lock system constructed in the Black Rock Canal. Notice in this view the myriad of small wood frame structures along both shores of Squaw Island; these were largely the cabins and houses of squatters residing illegally on the island.

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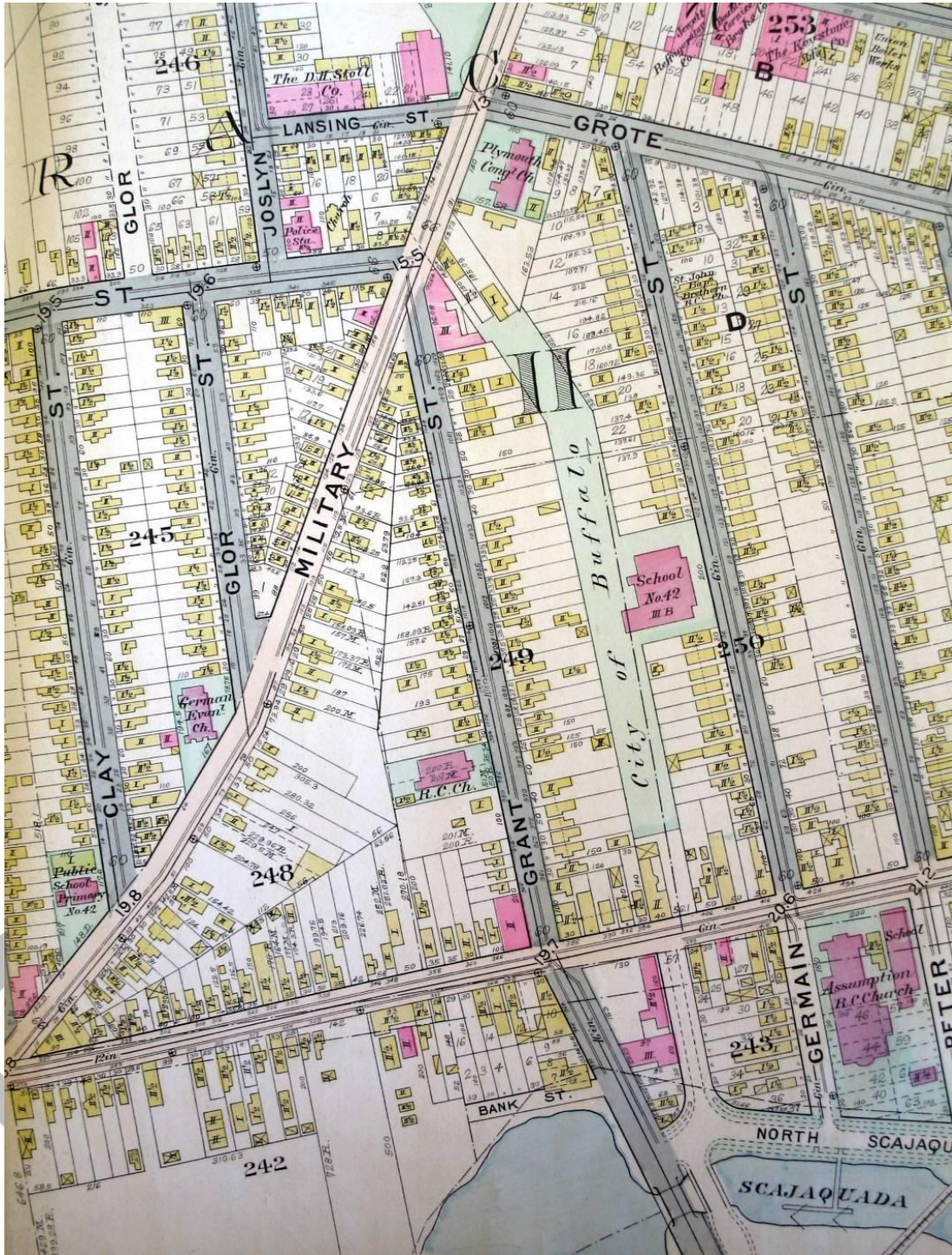


Figure A-31:

Detail, Section of Tax District VIII (1915, Century Atlas Co.)

The so-called New York State Ditch, a small waterway which connected the Scajaquada Creek and Cornelius Creek and Erie Canal beginning in the 1830s has been infilled and has disappeared by 1915. While the mouth of the waterway has

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become a roadway at its southern end, the property remains a narrow ribbon of greenspace between Grant and Germain Streets. The right-of-way of this waterway can still be seen in the property lines in this block.

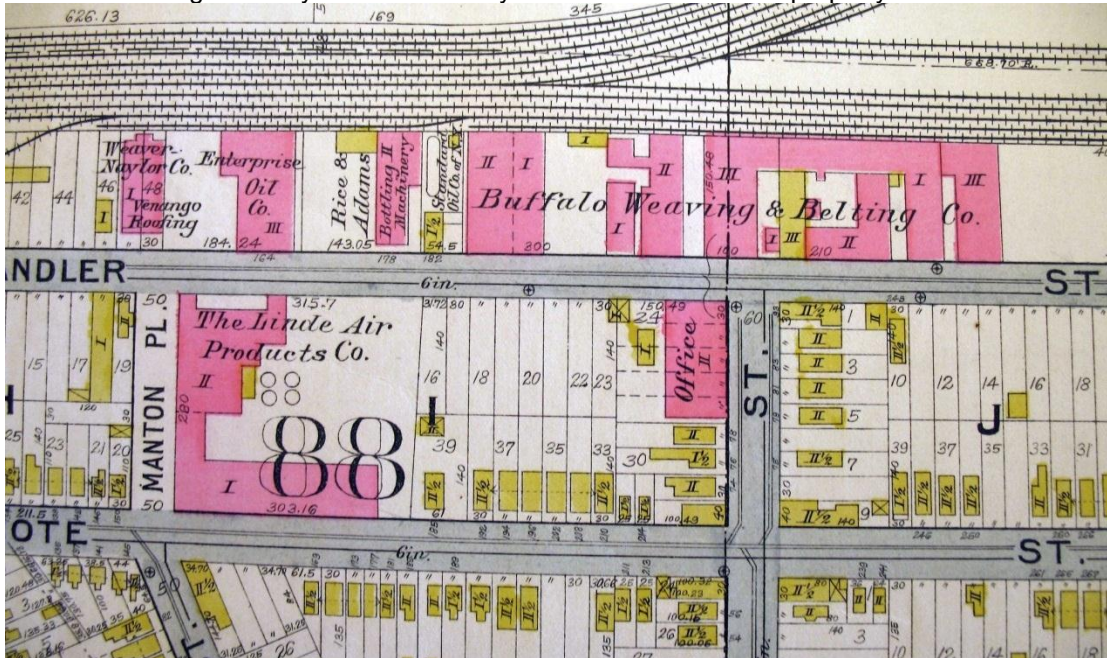


Figure A-32:

Detail, Section of Tax District VIII (1915, Century Atlas Co.)

Detail of the industrial companies along Chandler Street in the eastern portion of the survey area.

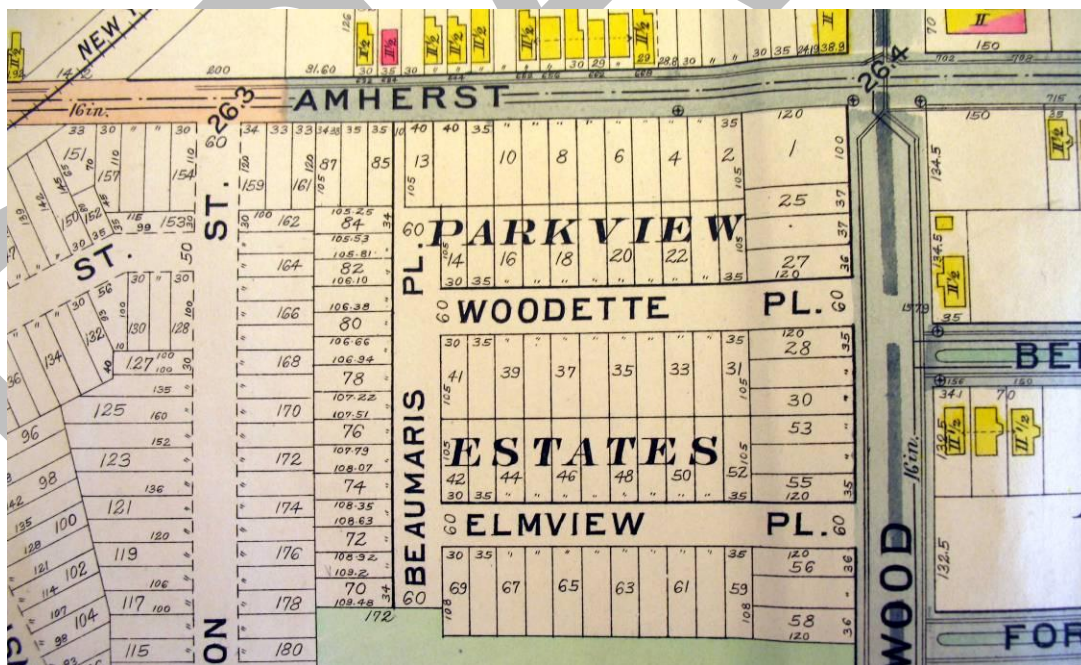


Figure A-33:

Detail, Section of Tax District VIII (1915, Century Atlas Co.)

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A view of the "Parkview Estates" development at the corner of Amherst Street and Elmwood Avenue. This neighborhood appears to have been unique to the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, but was comparable to several further east of the survey area on the site of the 1901 Pan American Exposition property.



Figure A-34:

Detail, *Greater Motorway System aerial map* (June 1st, 1927)

This aerial photograph of the Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst neighborhoods from 1927 depicts an area which is well settled and densely developed. Note the railroad tracks which bisect the Planning Neighborhood and gave rise to the two independent and unique communities. It appears that even as late as the 1920s, these two neighborhoods were still

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divided, with only two roads which appear to link to two areas. Also note the dense, large-scale industrial development along Tonawanda Street near the Scajaquada Creek; these massive complexes include Pratt & Letchworth's Buffalo Malleable Iron Works, Pratt & Lambert's Varnish Works and the former Hall & Sons Fire Brick site, all since demolished.

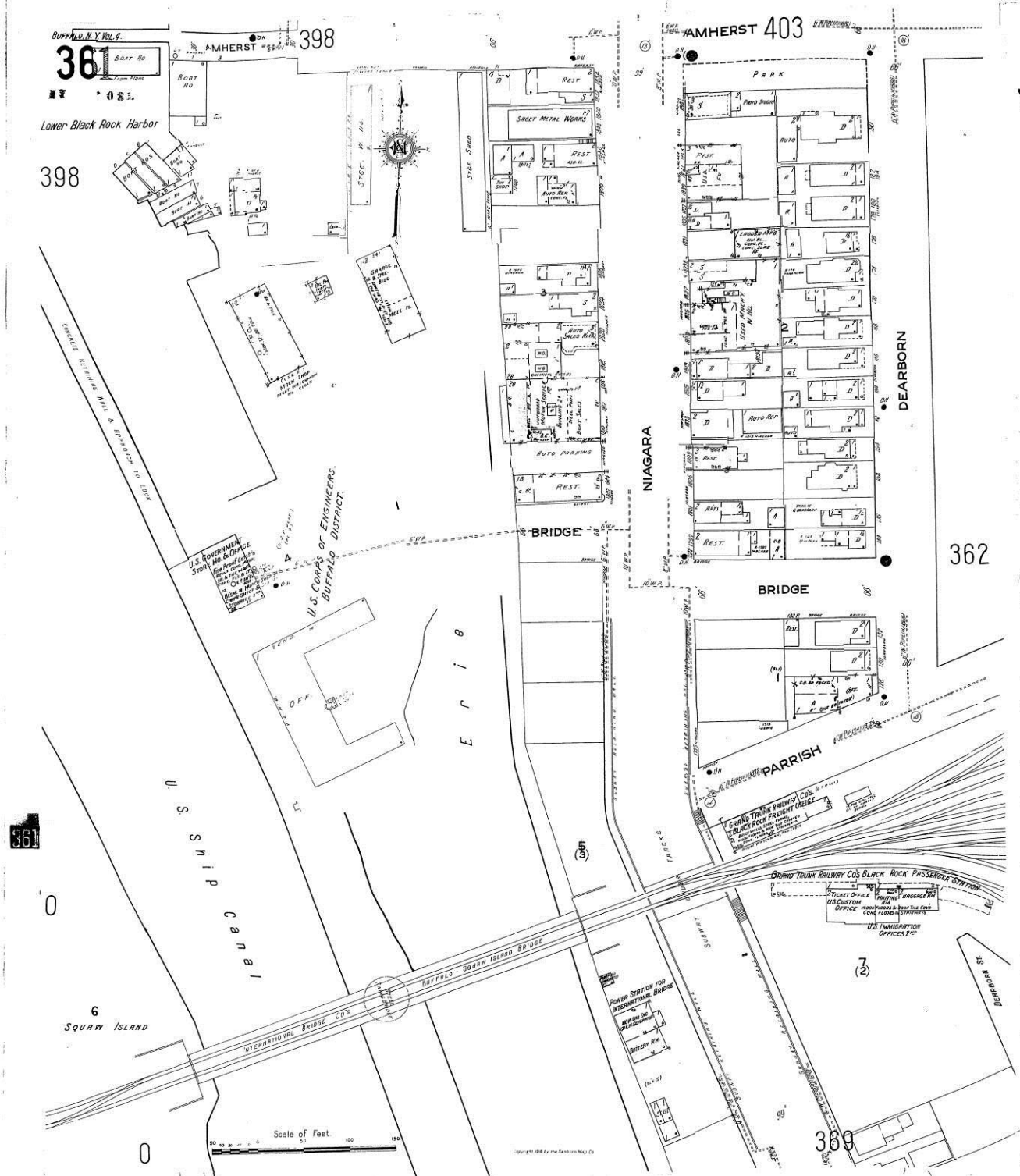


Figure A-35:

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1916 Updated to 1950 (sheet 361)

A detail view of Niagara Street near the Black Rock lock and canal. Note the Grand Trunk Railroad depots adjacent to the International Bridge (near bottom), and the US Army Corps of Engineers buildings along the water.

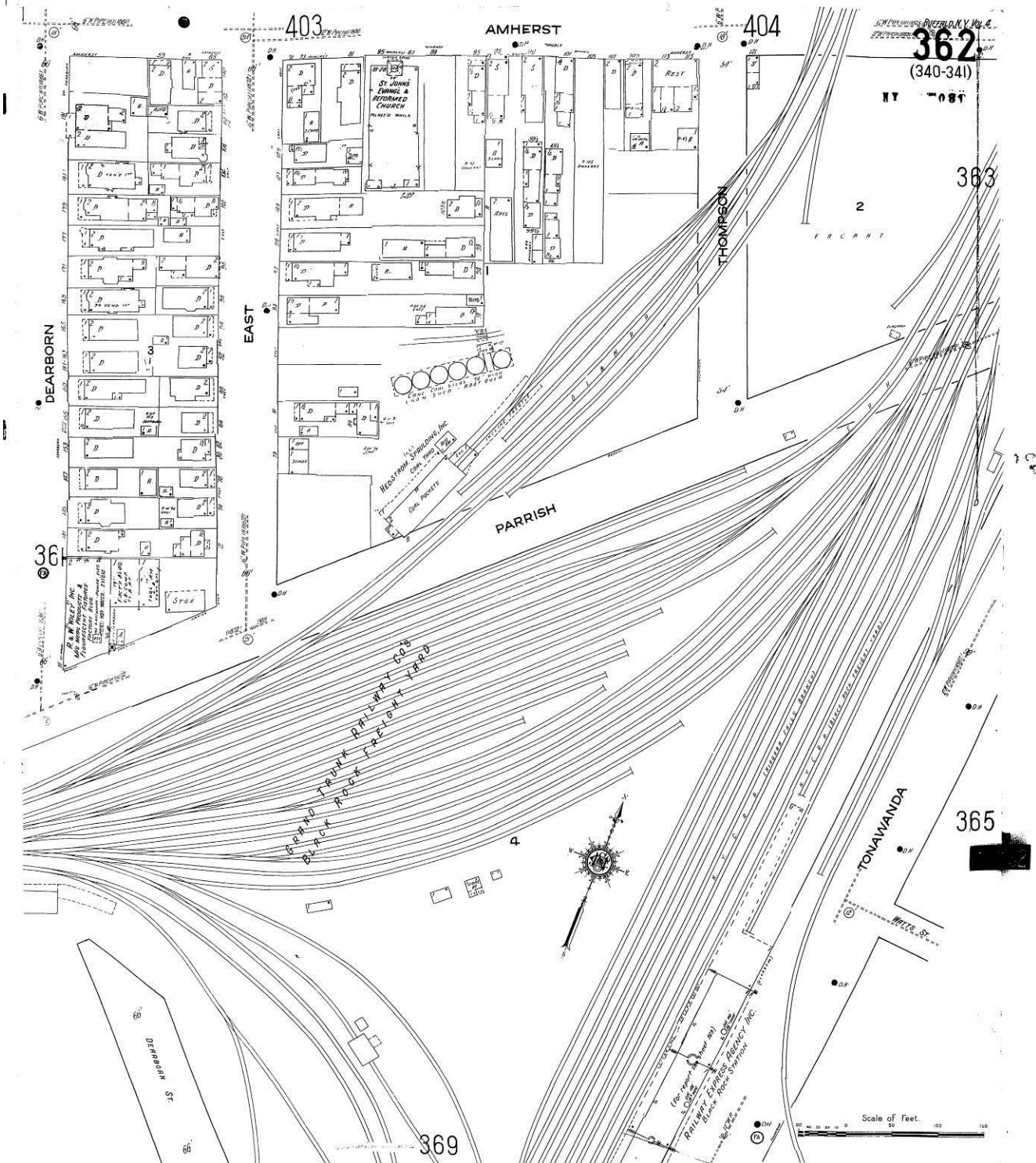


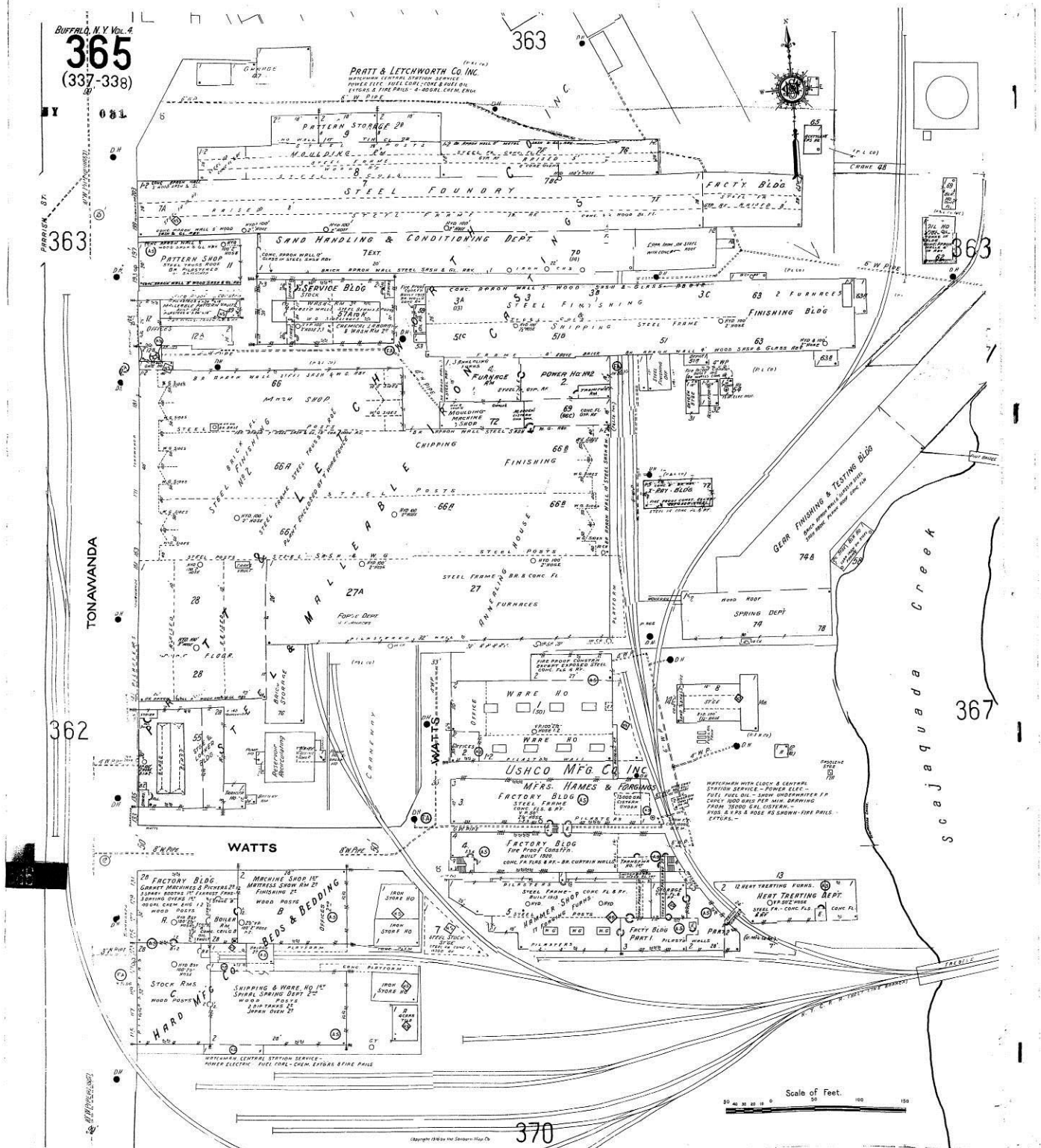
Figure A-36:
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1916 Updated to 1950 (sheet 362)

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A detail view showing the profusion of rail lines in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood. Note that the triangular block from Niagara, Parish and Tonawanda Streets is practically a solid mass of rail lines, making this area one of the most significant rail centers in the City of Buffalo. Note the proximity of residential and commercial properties to the rail yard.



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Figure A-37:
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1925 Updated to 1950 (sheet 365)
Detail view of the industrial areas between Tonawanda Street and the Scajaquada Creek in 1950.

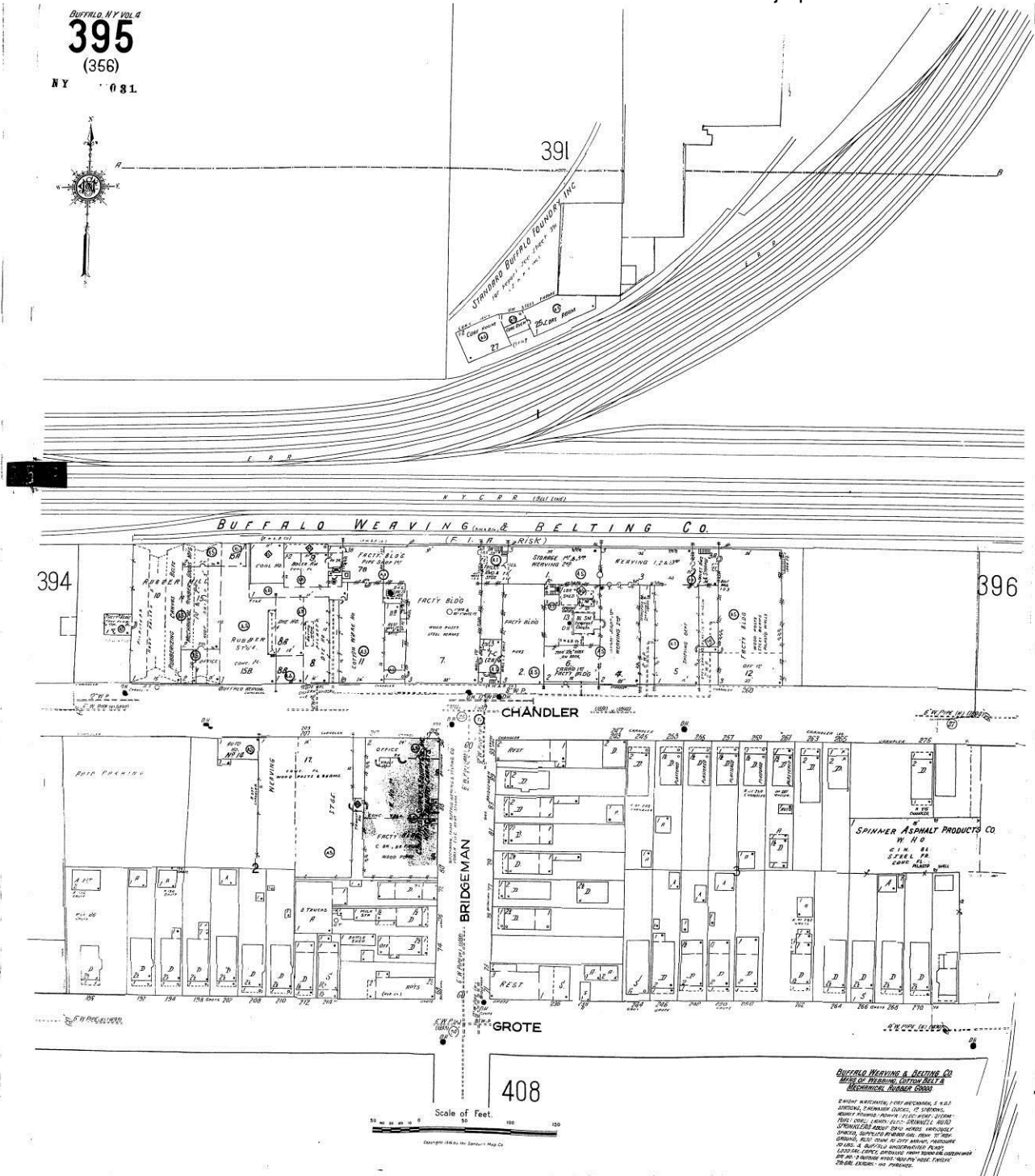


Figure A-38:
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1916 Updated to 1950 (sheet 395)

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A view of Chandler Street at Bridgeman Street just south of the Belt Line rail lines. Note the extent of the Buffalo Weaving and Belting Company factory buildings (since demolished). This factory is a good example of the type of industrial development which grew along the Belt Line after the 1880s, which gave rise to the Grant-Amherst neighborhood. Note the mix of workers' cottages adjacent to the industrial sites.

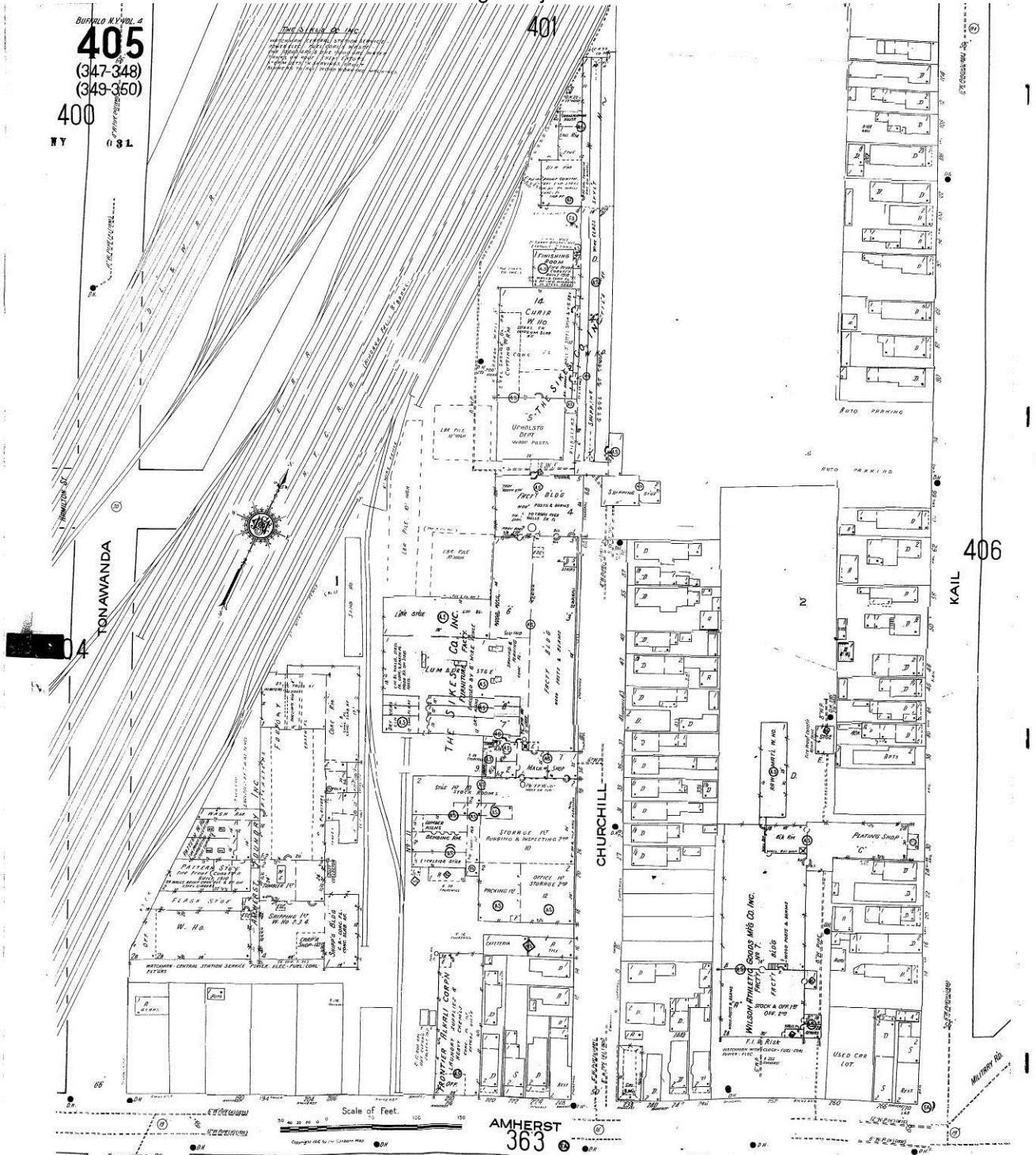


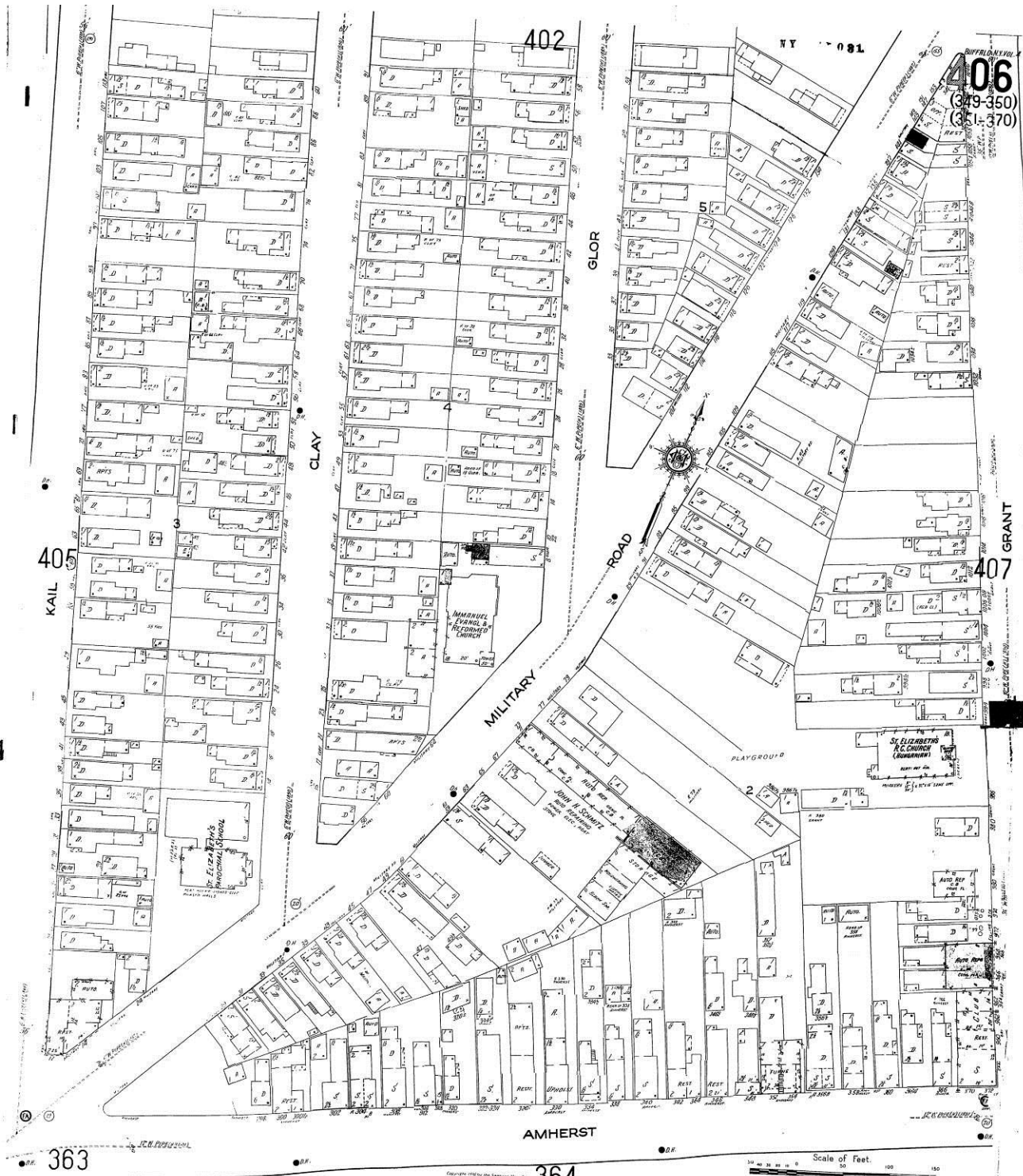
Figure A-39:
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1925 Updated to 1950 (sheet 405)

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Detail of Amherst Street showing the profession of railroad tracks which crossed this area, creating a division between Lower Black Rock and Grant-Amherst Street which lasted from about the 1880s until the 1930s. Note how adjacent industrial buildings linked to the rail lines, and are mixed into the commercial and residential fabric.



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Figure A-40:

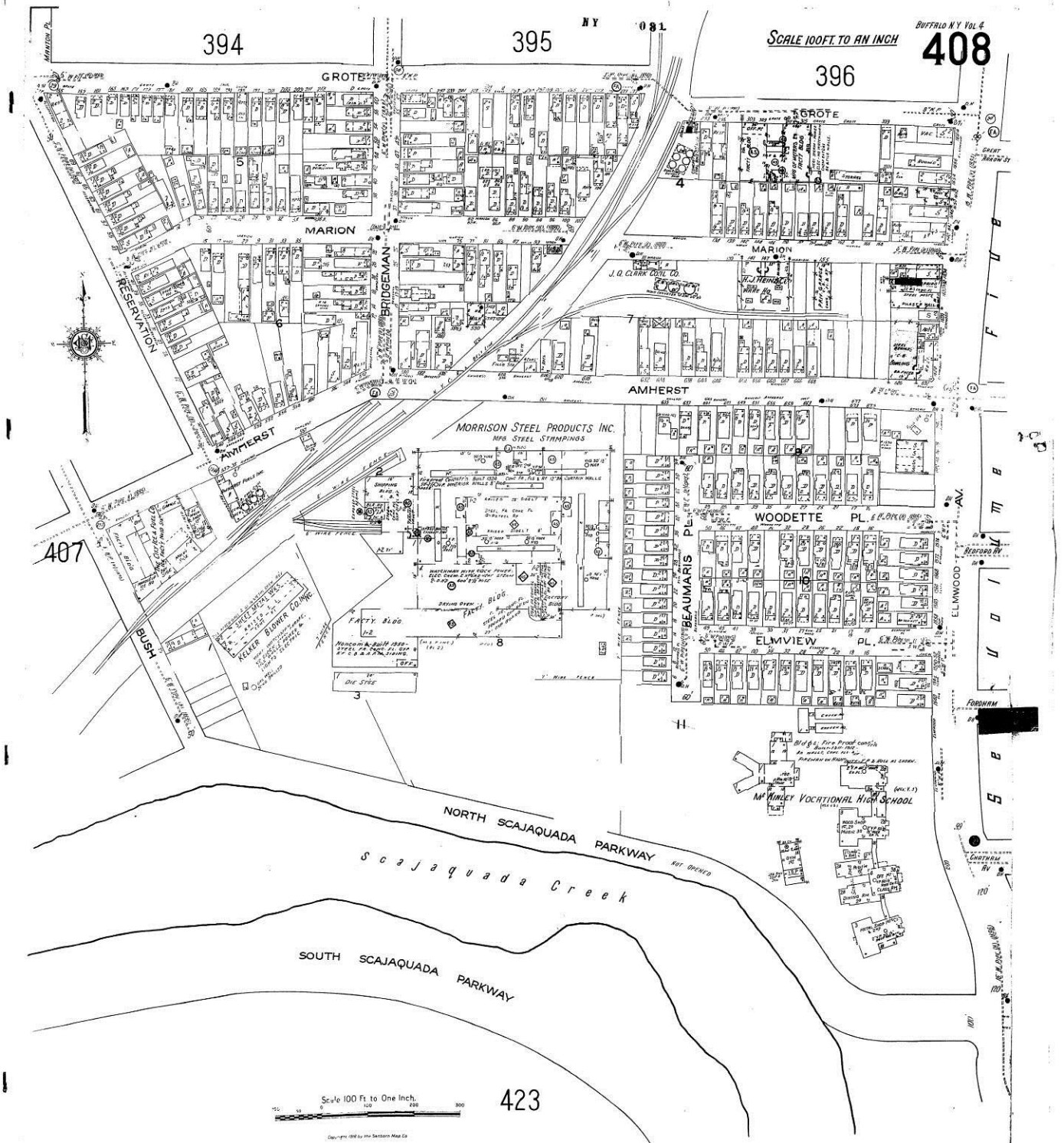
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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1925 Updated to 1950 (sheet 406)

Detail view of the intersection of Amherst Street and Military Road in the Grant-Amherst neighborhood. Note the density of the largely residential architectural fabric in this portion of the Planning Neighborhood. Also notable is the variety of shops and stores along Amherst Street; a primary commercial corridor for the Planning Neighborhood.



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Figure A-41:

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1925 Updated to 1950 (sheet 408)

A detail of the Grant-Amherst area between Reservation Street and Elmwood Avenue just north of the Scajaquada Creek.

The site of Morrison Steel Products is now the Wegmans grocery store

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Historic Photos

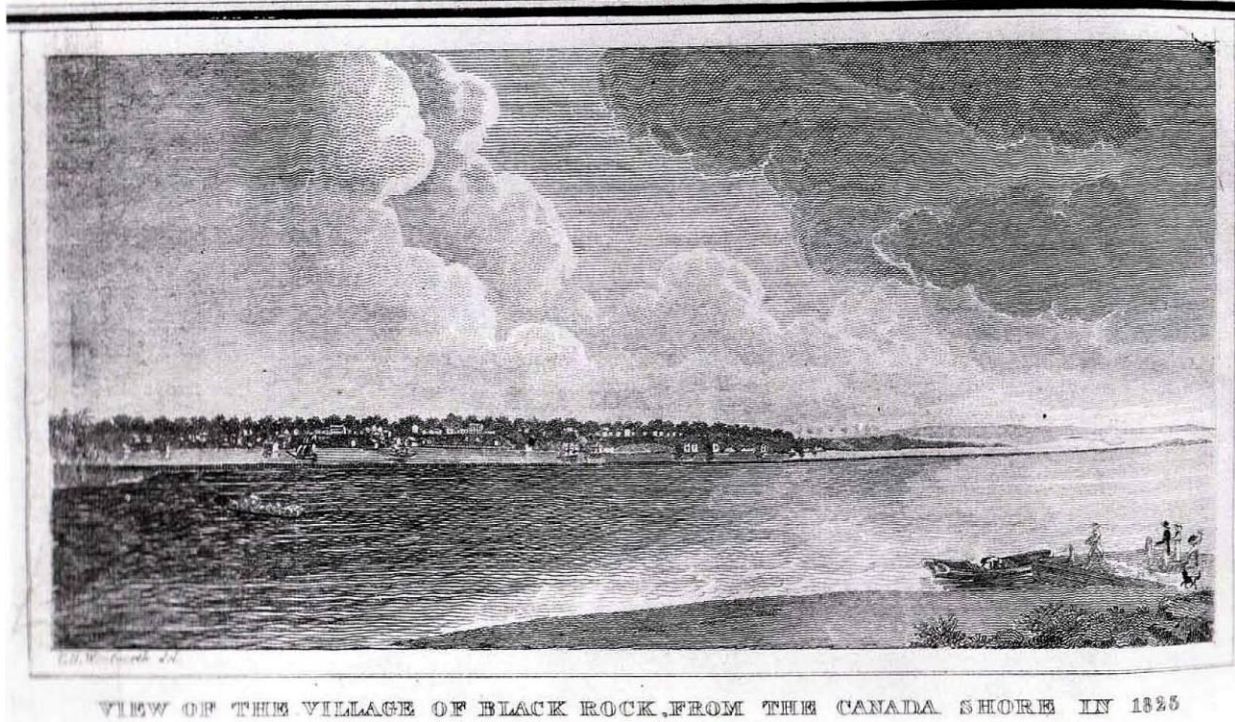


Figure B-1:
"View of the Village of Black Rock, from the Canada Shore in 1823"

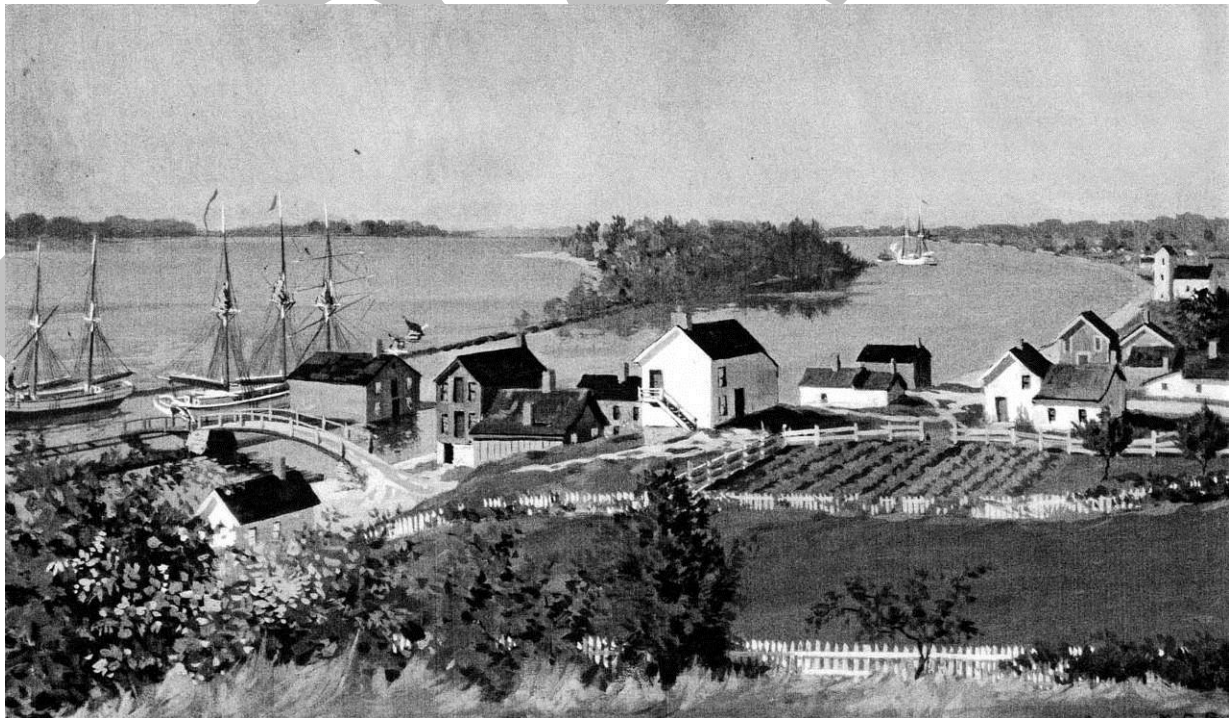


Figure B-2:
"Black Rock in 1825" (Drawn by Mildred C. Green from the original sketch made by George Catlin, 1825)

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Figure B-3:
Niagara Street near Amherst Street, looking north-west (ca. early 1870s)

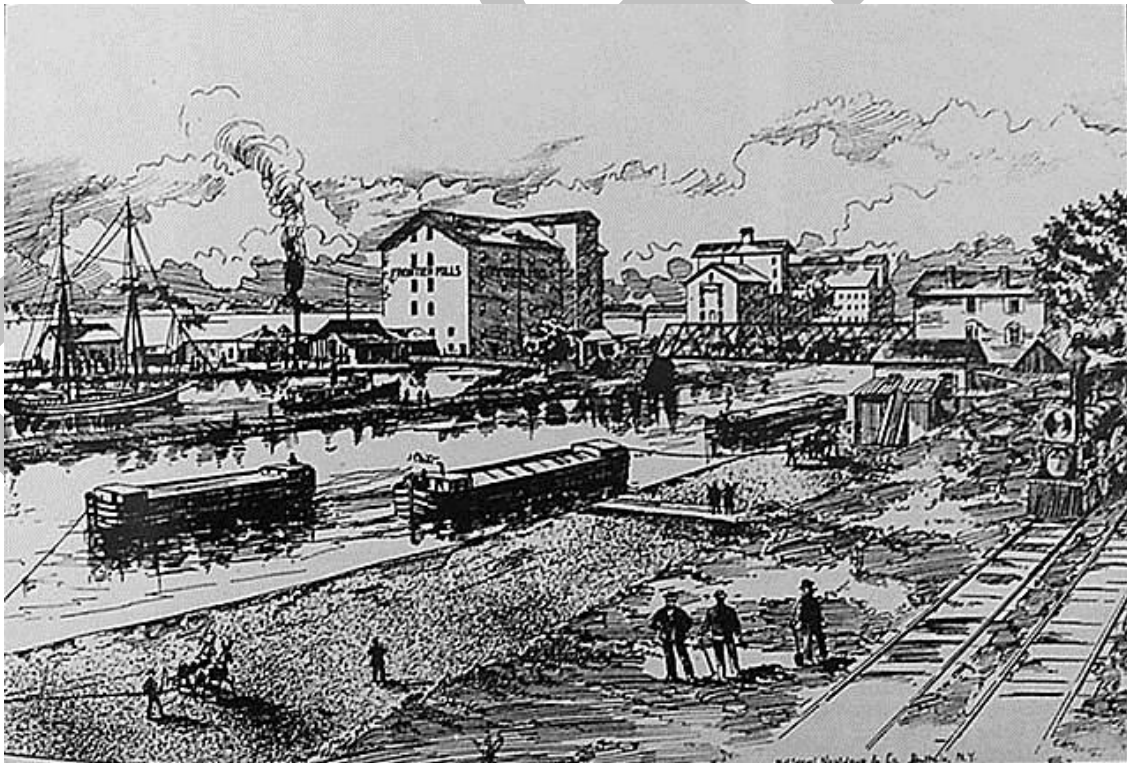


Figure B-4:
View of Black Rock, historic print (ca. 1888)

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Figure B-5:
"Picturesque Buffalo, in Black Rock Harbor" (1895)

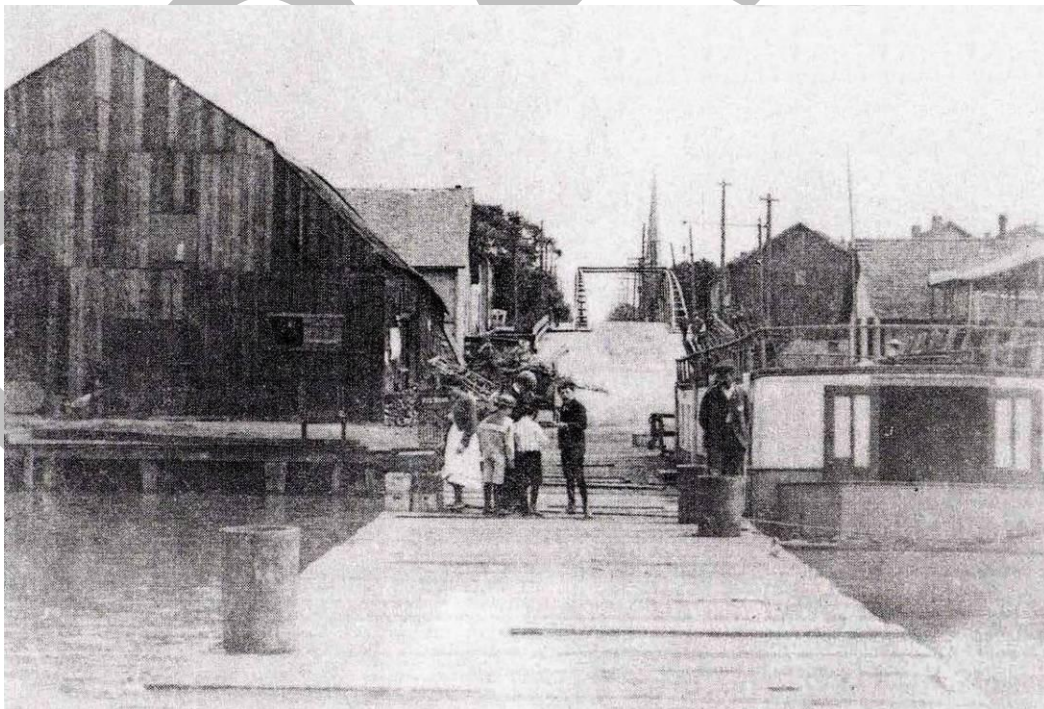


Figure B-6:
Dock at the foot of Amherst Street, looking east (1899)

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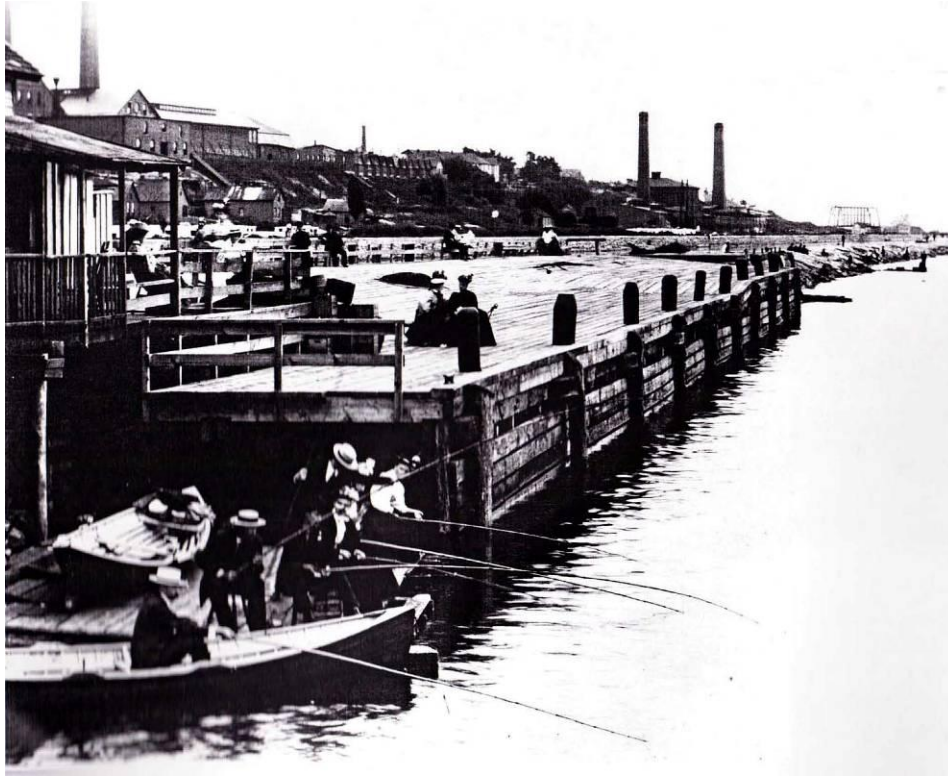


Figure B-7:
The Bird Island Pier, Niagara River, foot of Albany St. Old Black Rock (1898)

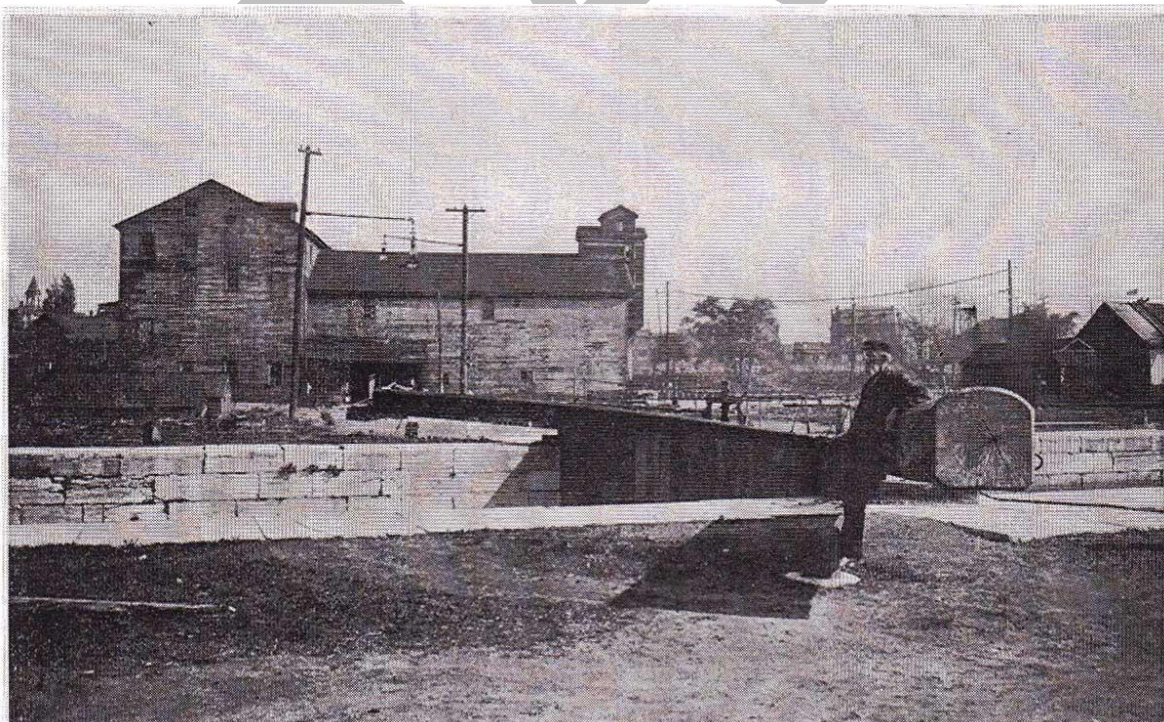


Figure B-8:
The Old Canal Locks at Black Rock (ca. 1900)

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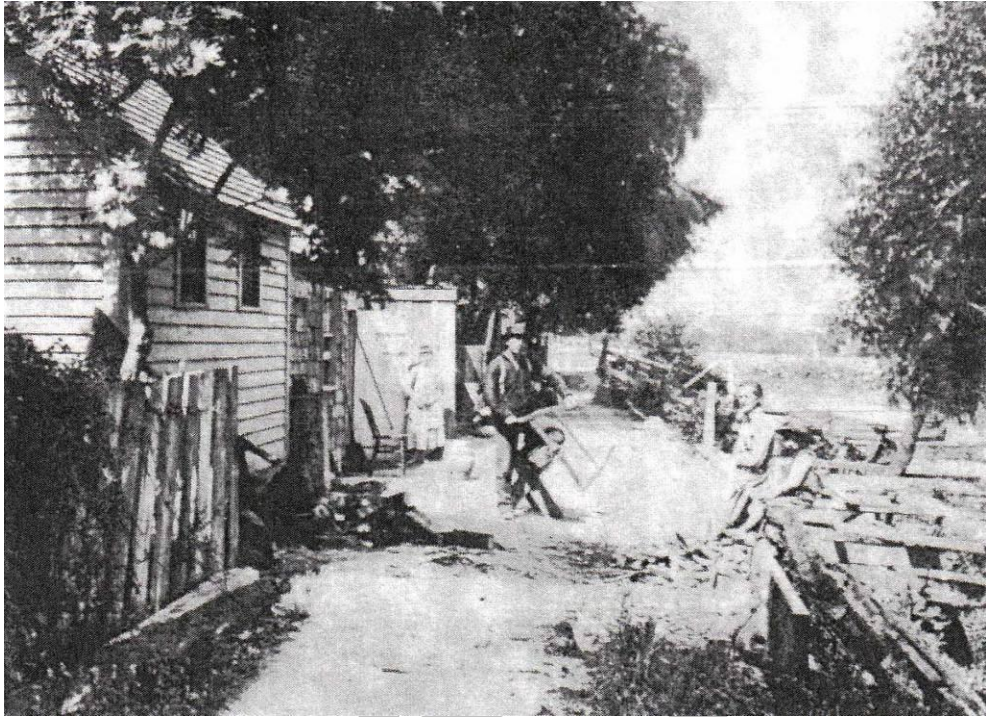


Figure B-9:
"Squatters Cottage, Squaw Island, about 1900"



Figure B-10:
Black Rock Harbor Construction and Cofferdam (1908-09)

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Figure B-11:
Black Rock Harbor Construction and Cofferdam (1908-09)

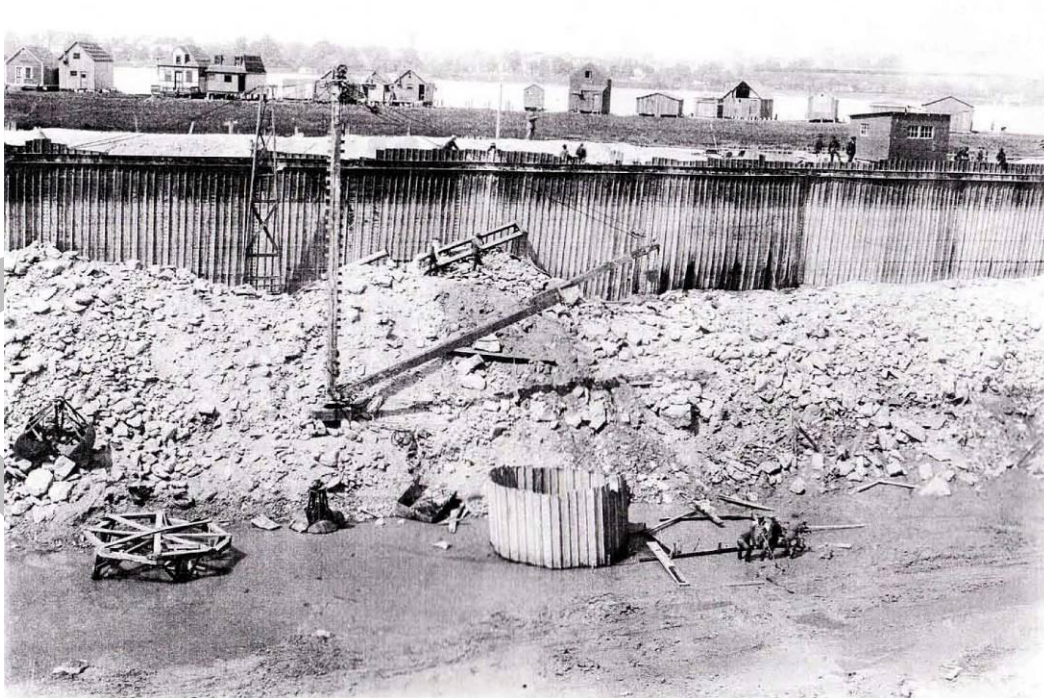


Figure B-12:
Black Rock Harbor Construction and Cofferdam (1908-09) –Note structures on Squaw Island

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Figure B-13:

Black Rock Harbor Construction and Cofferd Dam (1908-09) – Note Buffalo Smelting Works in upper left



Figure B-14:

Black Rock Harbor Construction and Cofferd Dam (1908-09) – Note International Railroad Bridge in background

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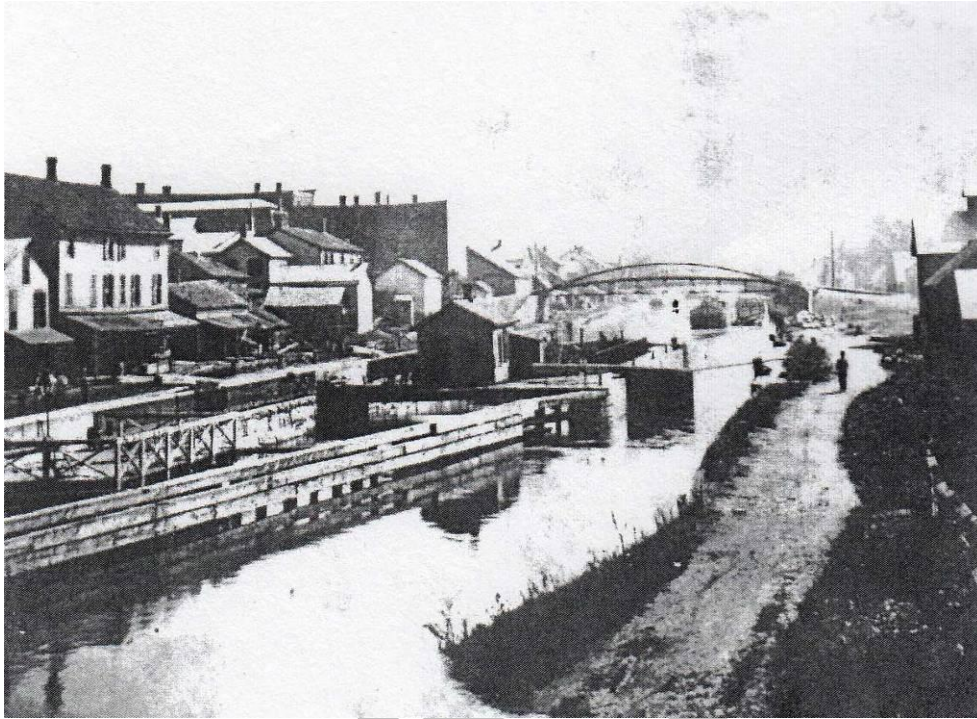


Figure B-15:
"Guard Locks, Austin to Amherst Streets, about 1910"



Figure B-14:
International Railroad Bridge, Canadian side looking east to Black Rock (ca. 1900-1915)

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Figure B-15:
International Railroad Bridge, Black Rock (ca. 1900-1915)



Figure B-16:
Black Rock Harbor, showing Niagara River and Erie Canal, Canadian Shore in Distance (1914) – looking south

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Figure B-17:
"NYS Thruway 'buries' the Towpath, 1957"



Figure B-18:
Looking south on Niagara Street at Amherst Street (June 23, 1961)

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Figure B-19:
Looking north on Tonawanda Street at Amherst Street (May 2, 1963)



Figure B-20:
Looking east down Amherst Street at Tonawanda Street (May 2, 1963)

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Figure B-21:

Looking west on Amherst Street at Tonawanda Street (May 2, 1963) – Note St. John's near center in distance



Figure B-22:

Looking east on Amherst Street at Tonawanda Street from beneath railroad bridge (May 2, 1963) – Note Pratt & Letchworth Buffalo Malleable Iron Works to right (now demolished)

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Figure B-23:
428 – 412 Amherst Street, looking west (ca. 1970s-80s)



Figure B-24:
428 – 412 Amherst Street, looking west at north side of street (ca. 1970s-80s)

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Figure B-25:

"1st St. Francis Xavier- 1849-1860 First Catholic Church and Church School, 157 East Street at Amherst Street"
These 1 and 1 ½-story front-gabled frame workers' cottages were typical of the architecture found throughout Lower Black Rock in the mid-1800s. Although the photo is labeled as being East Street, this photo is likely of Dearborn Street where St. Francis Xavier was known to have rented a house for use as a school. The building at center appears to be Greek Revival, with modest pedimented window and door hoods. The building at the center of the group appears to be a modest, potentially Greek Revival example, while the larger building at the right of the group appears to feature a fan light above the door, indicating it may be in the Federal style and possibly date slightly earlier to ca. 1820.

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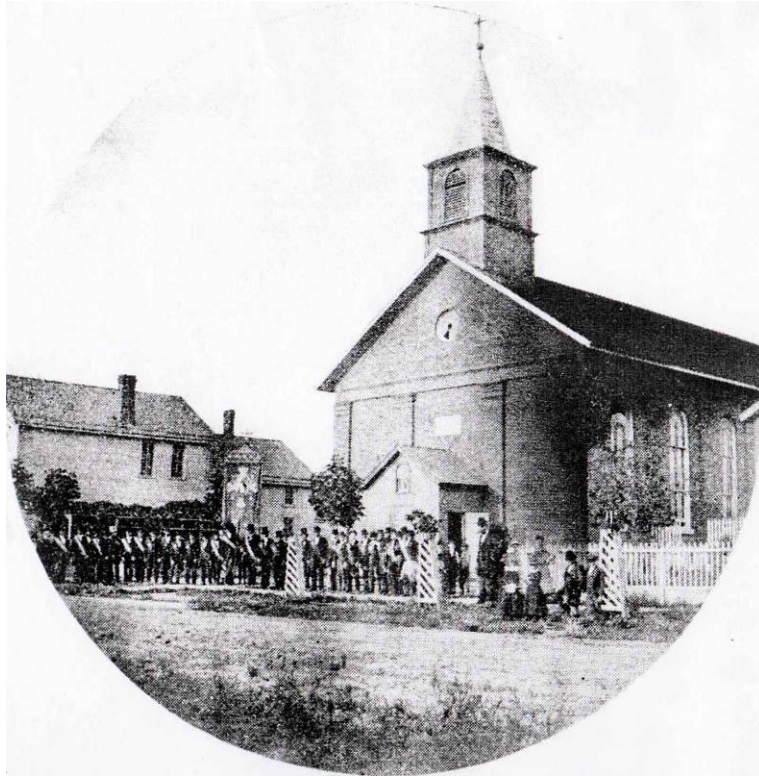


Figure B-26:

“St. Francis Xavier 157 East Street, built 1853. Steeple & 1st bell by Father Zawistowski in 1860.”

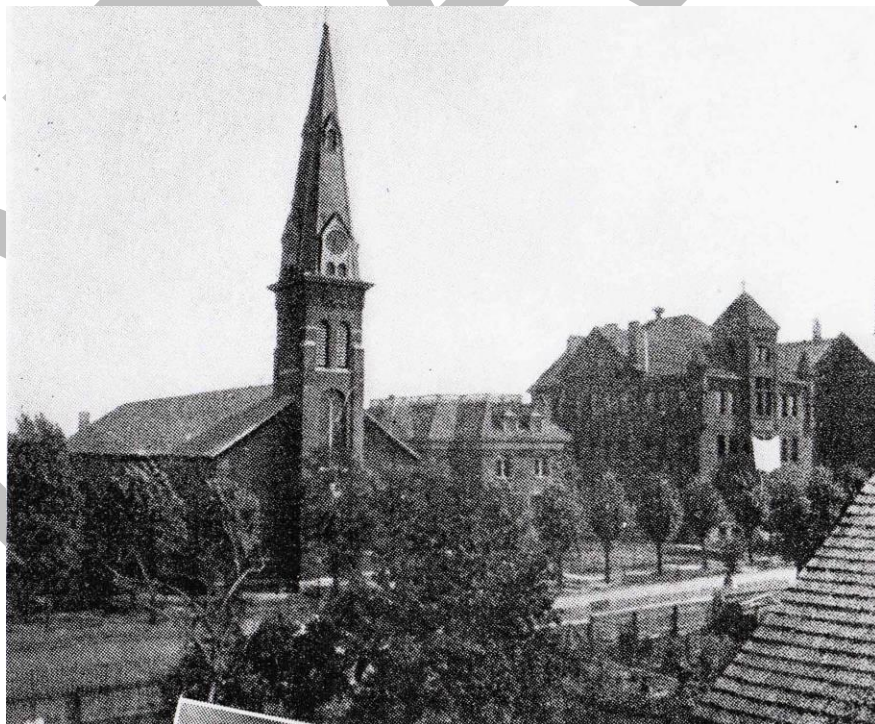


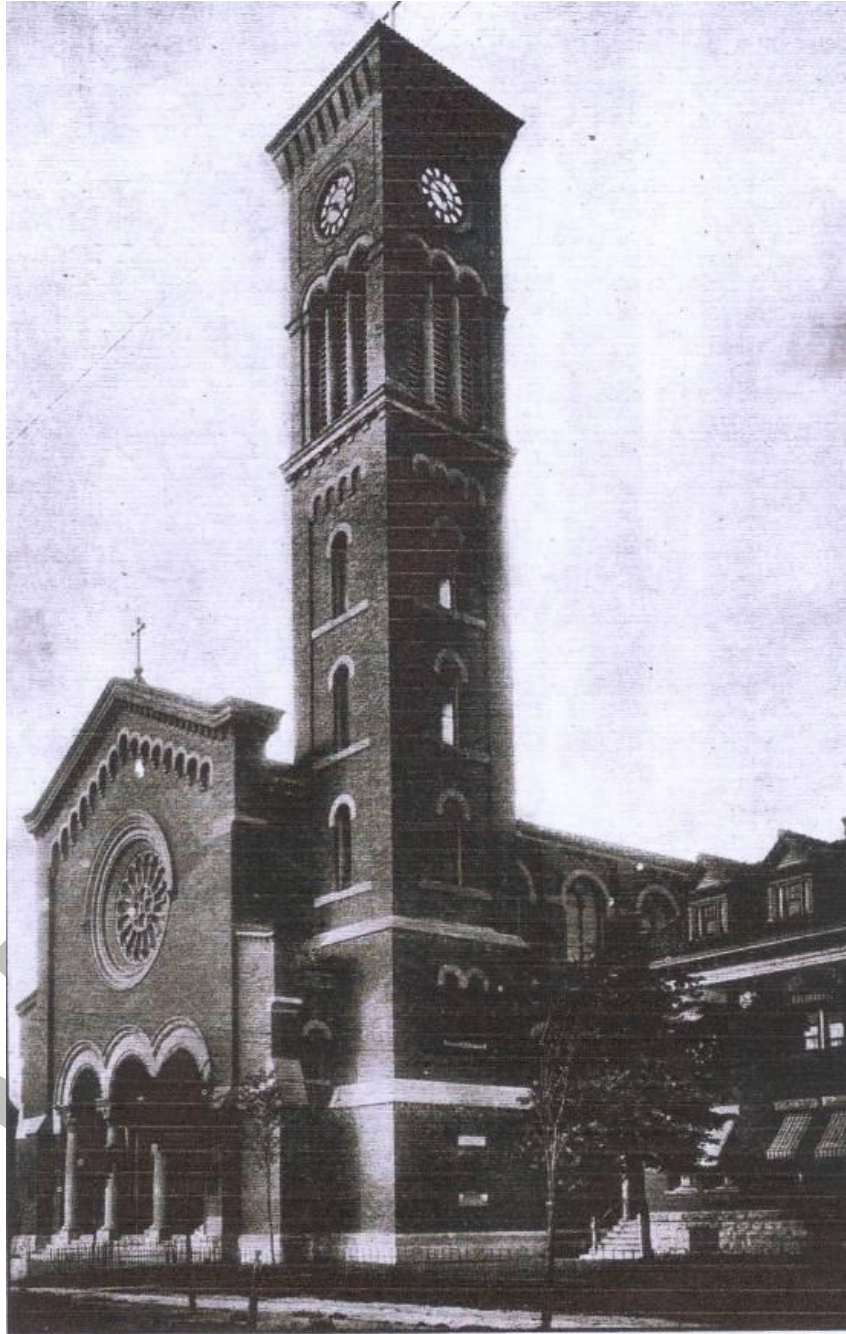
Figure B-27:

St. Francis Xavier R.C. Church, 157 East Street at Amherst, built 1853 - new addition & steeple by Father Kofler in 1874”

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PRESENT CHUCH, DEDICATED FEBRUARY 2, 1913
ORIGINAL CHURCH TOWER

Figure B-28:

St. Francis Xavier Church, dedicated February 2, 1913 – note original tower design

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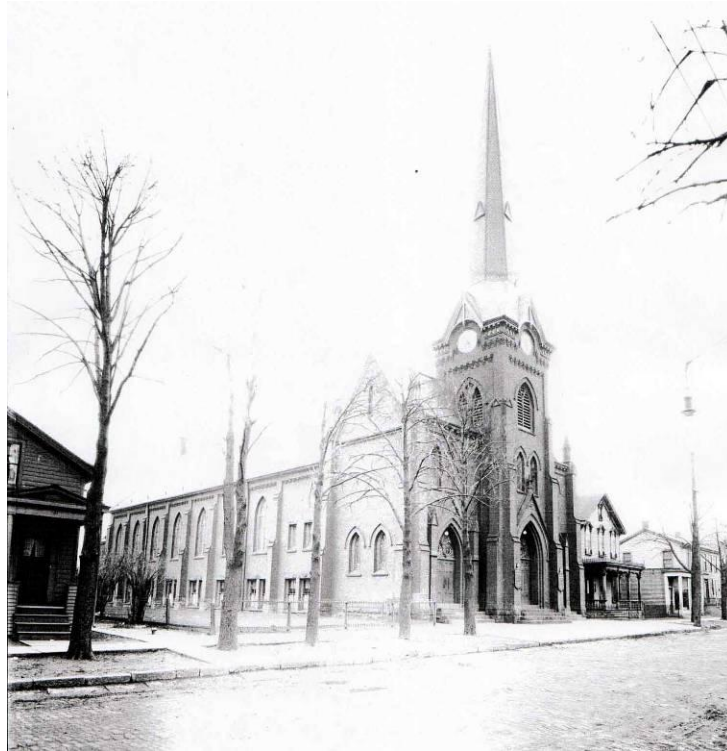


Figure B-29:

St. John's Episcopal Church, 85 Amherst Street (undated, possibly ca. 1920s)

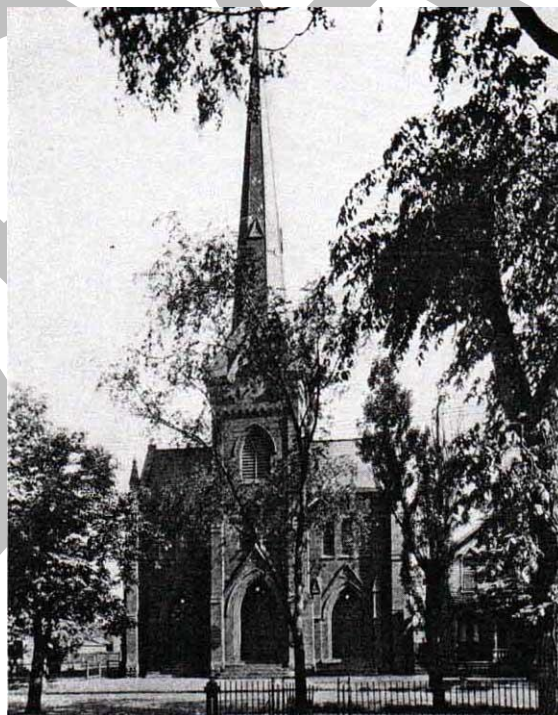


Figure B-30:

St. John's Episcopal Church, 85 Amherst Street (ca. 1931)

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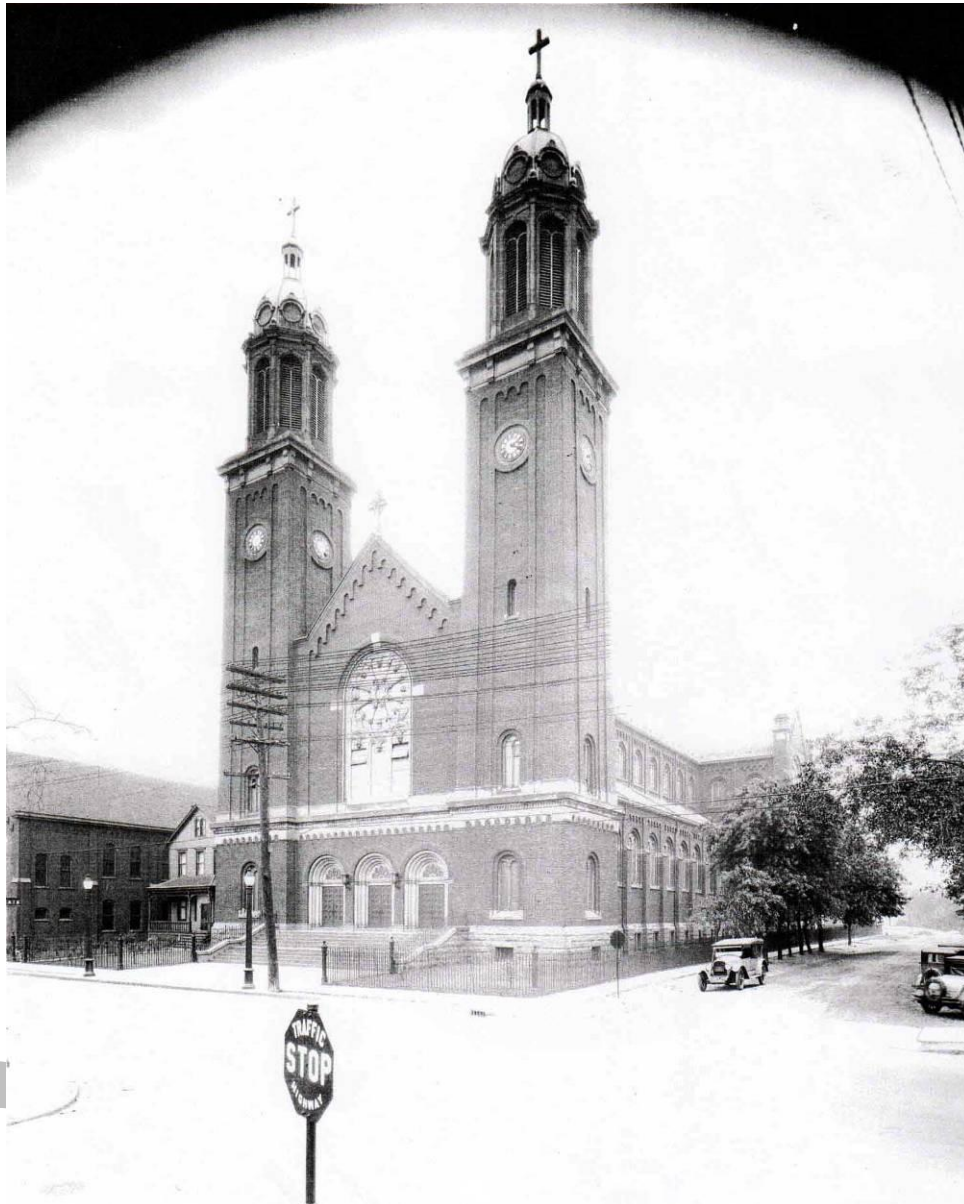


Figure B-31:
Assumption R.C. Church, Amherst Street (ca. 1920s)

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Figure B-32:
St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church, Hertel Avenue (ca. 1930)

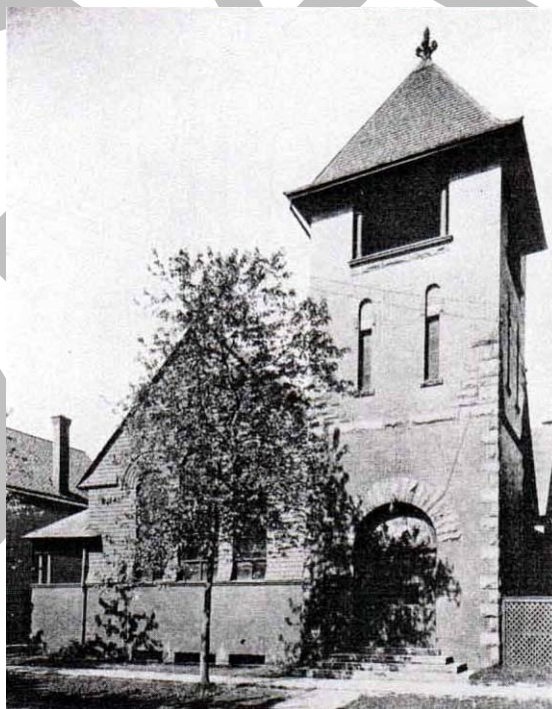


Figure B-33:
Zion German Methodist Episcopal Church (aka East Street German ME Church; presently New Beginnings Church), East Street (ca. 1931)

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Figure B-34:
St. Elizabeth's R.C. Church, Grant and Amherst Streets (June 1962)



Figure B-35:
First Hungarian Baptist Church, Austin Street (ca. 1931)

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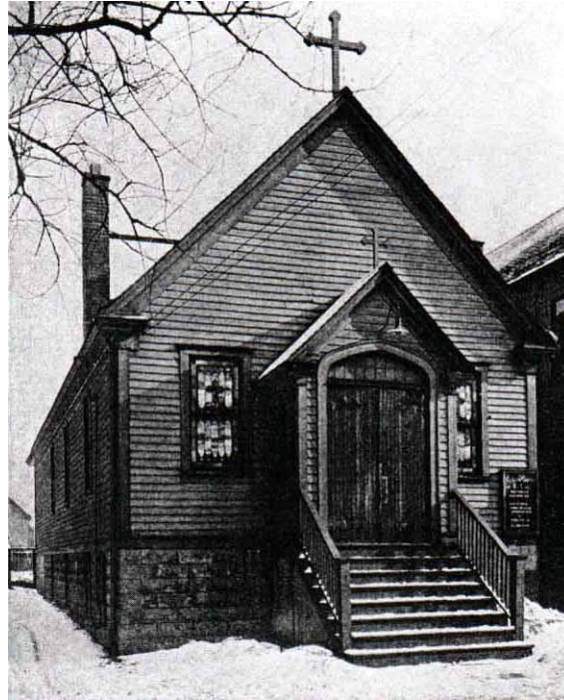


Figure B-36:

Lutheran Church of Our Saviour (aka Hungarian Evangelical Lutheran Church of our Savior), Grant Street (ca. 1931)

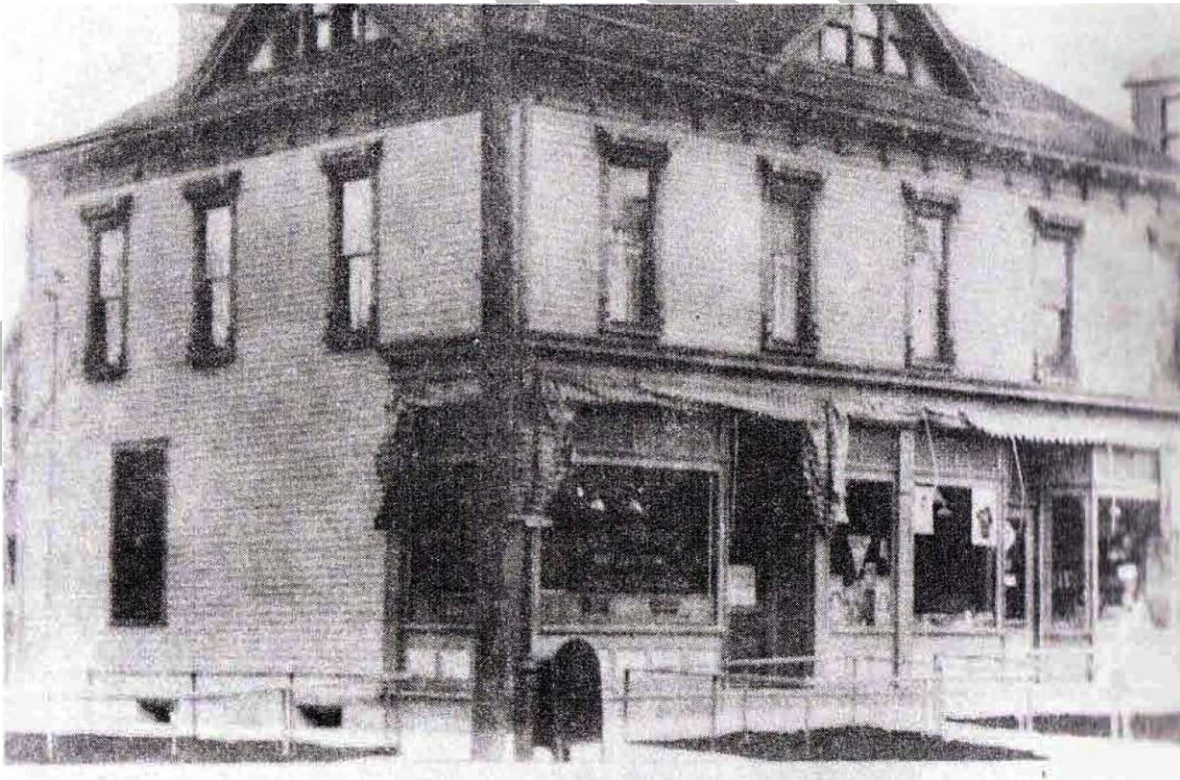


Figure B-37:

Black Rock Mutual Home Savings Association, corner of Amherst and Dearborn Streets (1912)

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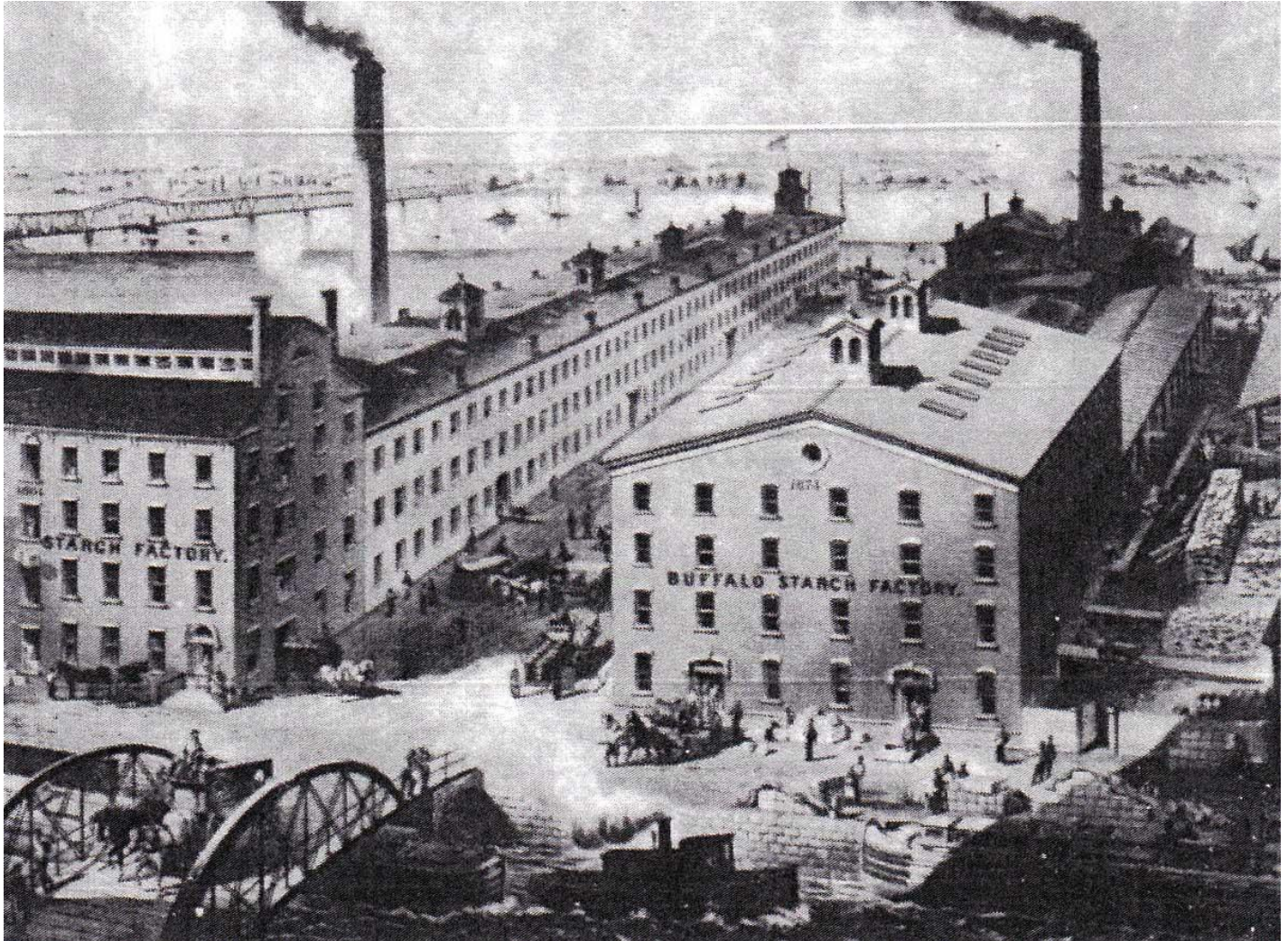


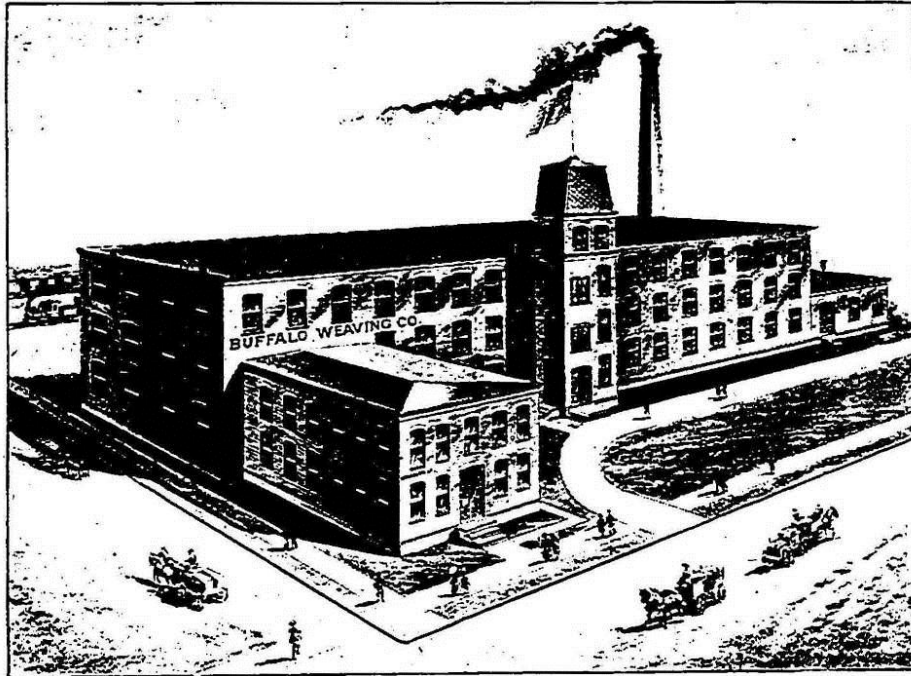
Figure B-38:

The C. Gilbert/ Buffalo Starch Works, located at the foot of Hamilton Street between the Erie Canal (foreground) and the Niagara River (background, with International Railroad Bridge visible at left), manufacturer of corn starch, (ca. 1876)
Typical of the early-era mills and factories which once lined the coast of Black Rock along the canal and river.

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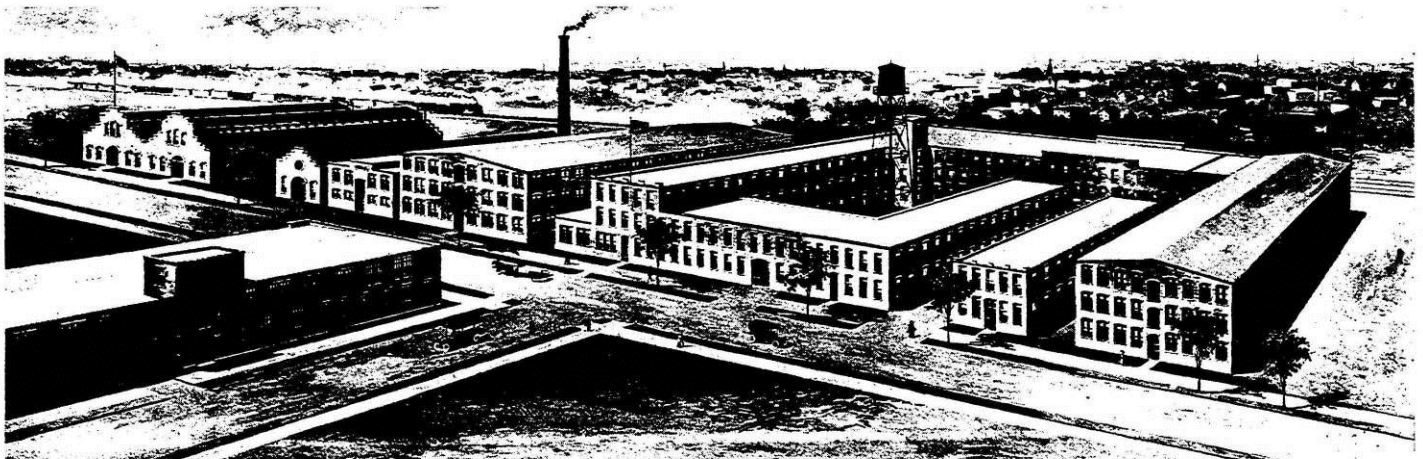
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THE BUFFALO WEAVING CO., 234 Chandler Street.
Manufacturers of Webbing, Surcingles, Halters and Girths, and Web Specialties.

Figure B-39:

The Buffalo Weaving Company plant (demolished), Chandler Street (1897)
Note how the original building was constructed in a manner typical of late nineteenth-century industrial construction as a basic brick box with numerous window penetrations, allowing for interior lighting. A stair tower features a mansard roof



PLANT OF THE BUFFALO WEAVING AND BELTING COMPANY
Manufacturers of Patent Rubber Belting, Cotton Belting and Webbing, Webb Saddlery Goods, and Mechanical Rubber Goods

Figure B-40:

The Buffalo Weaving and Belting Company Plant (demolished), Chandler Street (1914)
Note the size and expanse of the facility.

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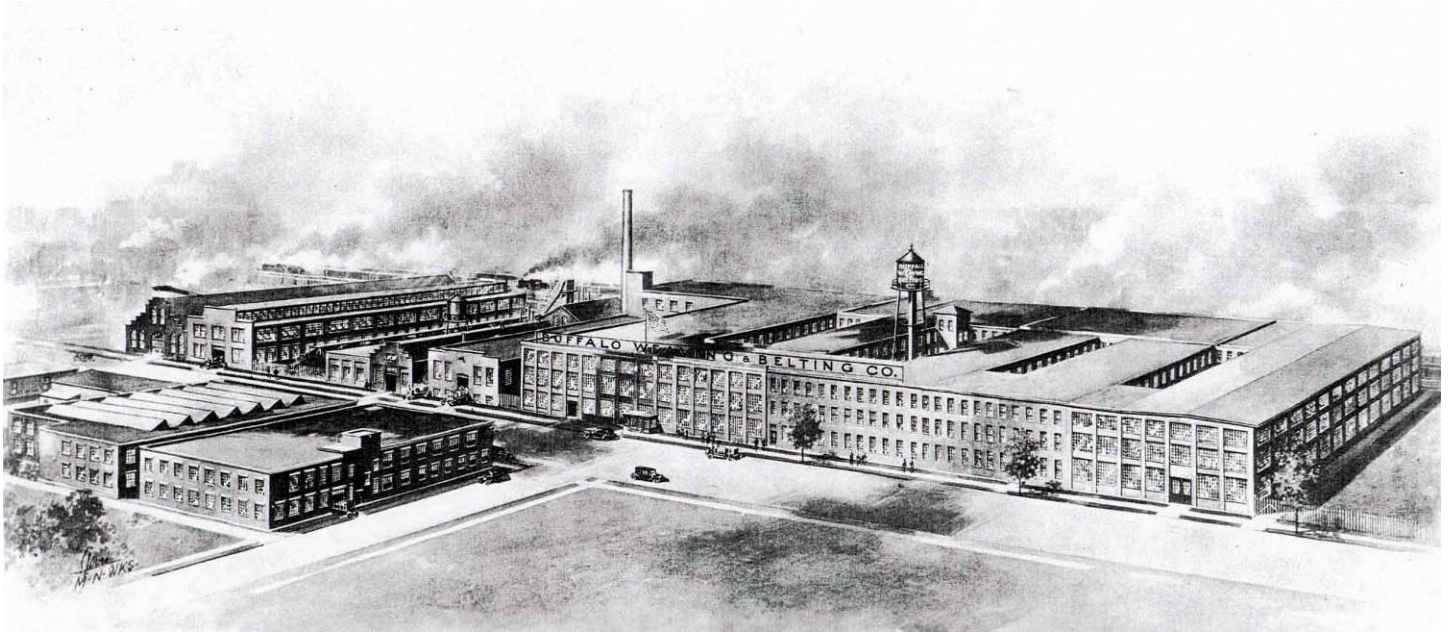


Figure B-41:
Buffalo Weaving and Belting Company (demolished), Chandler Street (1920)



Figure B-42:
Buffalo Weaving and Belting Company Office Building (extant), Chandler Street (1920)

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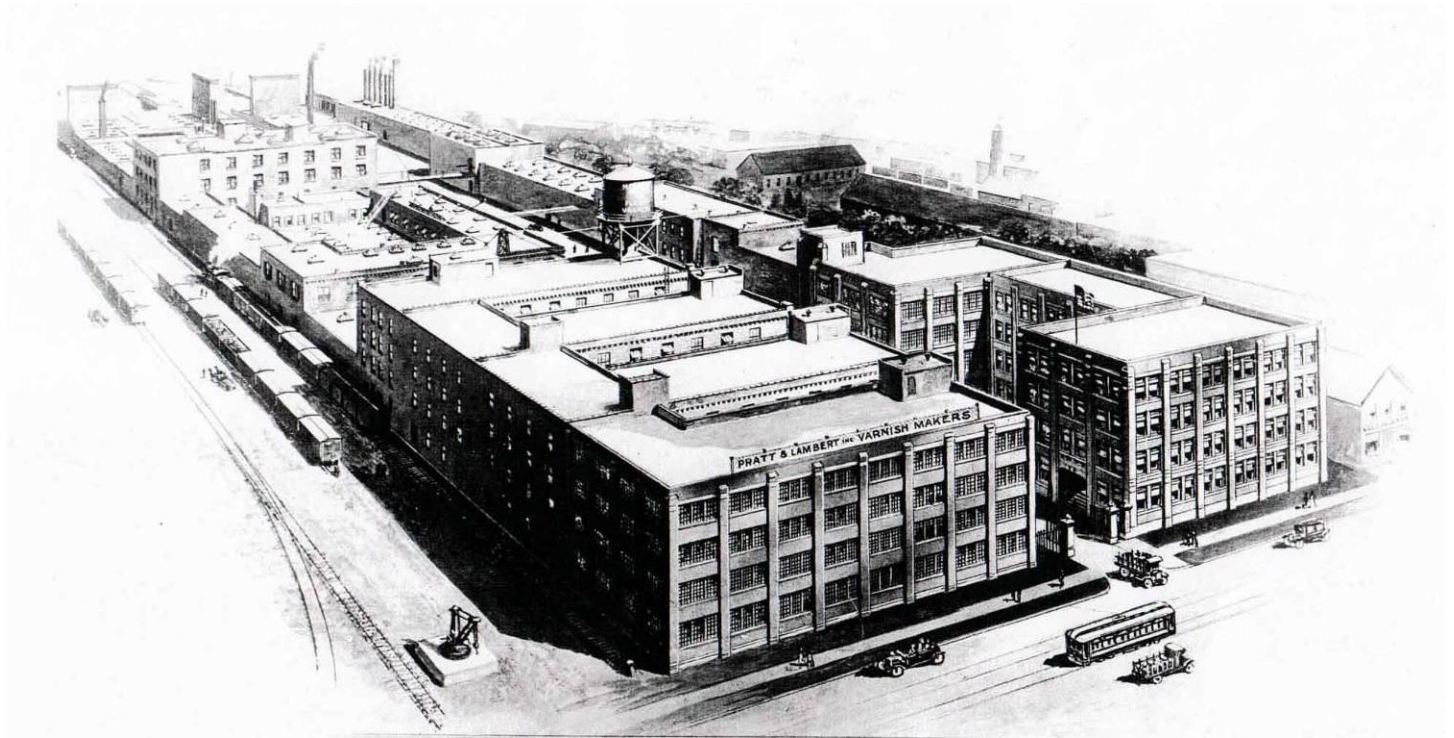


Figure B-43:

Pratt & Lambert Company Varnish Makers Factory (demolished), Tonawanda Street (1920)

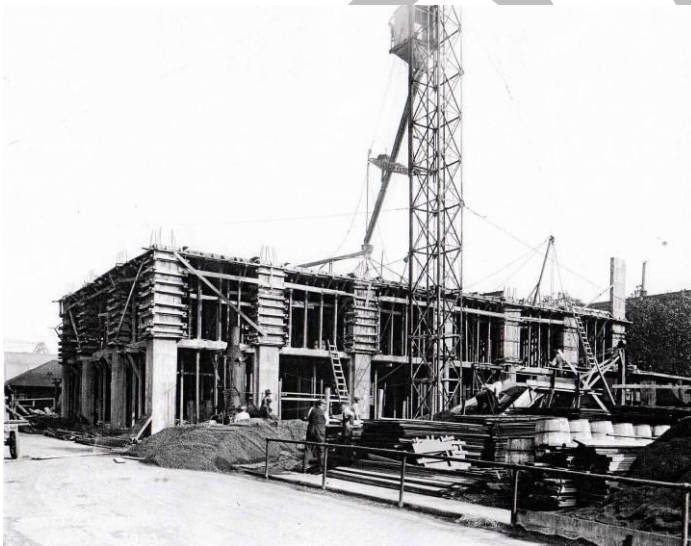


Figure B-44:

Construction of a reinforced concrete frame factory building for Pratt & Lambert Co. (demolished), Tonawanda Street
(September 22, 1920 and October 22, 1920)

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Figure B-45:
Pratt & Letchworth Company factory, 189 Tonawanda Street (ca. 1970s)



Figure B-46:
Looking south on Tonawanda Street, Pratt & Letchworth factory at left (March 16, 1923)

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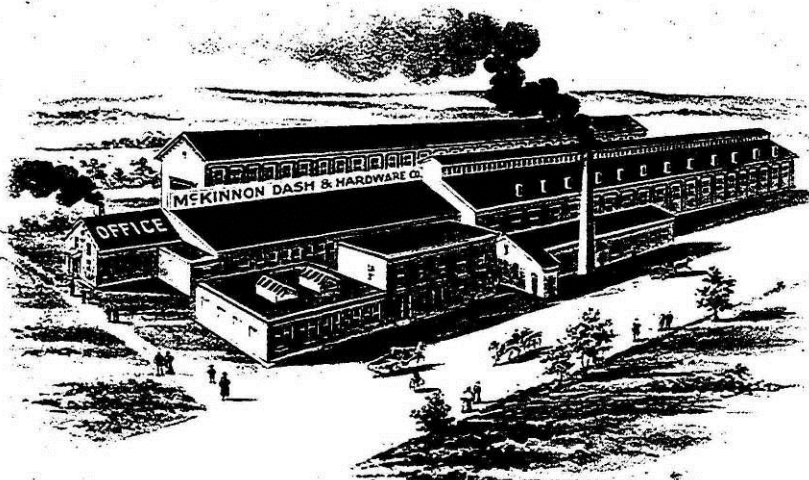
MILLS OF THE AMERICAN BUFFALO ROBE CO., 1 to 7 Howell Street, Buffalo, N. Y.

A. M. Newlands, Louis Viedt, A. Newlands, Jr. Manufacturers of Saskatchewan Robes, Fur Cloth Coats, Astrachans, etc. Canadian Works, Newlands & Co., Galt, Ontario.

Figure B-47:

The American Buffalo Robe Company Factory (1897)

Note the presence of a tall chimney stack as well as the elegant mansard roof tower with cresting.



BUFFALO WORKS OF THE MCKINNON DASH AND HARDWARE CO., Ltd.
250 Amherst Street.

Organized 1886; paid-up capital, \$100,000; 400 employees in factories at Troy, O., St. Catharines, Ont., and Buffalo, N. Y.

Figure B-48:

The McKinnon Dash Company Factory (demolished), Amherst Street (1897)

Another example of the wide-variety of industrial buildings prominent in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood.

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Figure B-49:

Views of the Grand Trunk Railroad Passenger Station (built ca. 1915, demolished), Parrish Square (ca. 1960s)

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Figure B-50:

Grand Trunk Railroad Passenger Station (demolished) with Freight Station (extant) at right (ca.1960s)



Figure B-51:

Grand Trunk Railroad Freight Station (undated photo)

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PUBLIC SCHOOL No. 51, Guernsey Street, near Hertel Avenue.

Figure B-52:

Former Public School No. 51/ Black Rock Academy, 101 Hertel Avenue (1897)

Note the building was oriented to Guernsey Street originally, until the 1927 construction of the Hertel Avenue wing.

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Examples of the primary building and structure types in the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, as defined in Section F.

1.1 Residential Architecture Examples



Figure C-1:
The Jacob Smith House and Tavern, 71 Amherst Street (ca. 1830s)
An excellent example of residential architecture of the Federal Style



Figure C-2:
The Samuel Howell House, 189-191 Dearborn Street (ca. 1830, addition ca. 1870s)
An excellent example of a stone-constructed residential building of the Federal Style.

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Figure C-3

285 Dearborn Street (ca.1892)

An excellent example of Residential architecture in a more ornate Queen Anne style.



Figure C-4:

218 Dearborn Street (ca. 1880s, porch later addition)

An excellent example of residential architecture of the workers' cottage type.

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1.2 Commercial, Public and Recreational Architecture Examples



Figure C-5

Former People's Bank of Buffalo branch building, 415 Amherst Street (ca. 1923)
An excellent example of Commercial architecture in the form of a Neoclassical Revival bank building.



Figure C-6

Former Engine No. 15, 64 Amherst Street (1912)
An excellent example of Public architecture.

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Figure C-7

The former Hook and Ladder No. 12, 395 Amherst Street (1912)
An excellent example of Public architecture.



Figure C-8

Former Primary School No. 20/ St. Elizabeth's School, 26 Military Road (ca. 1870)
An excellent example of Public architecture, and potentially the oldest extant school building in the City of Buffalo.

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Figure C-9

The former Jubilee Library, 1932 Niagara Street (ca. 1905)
An excellent example of Public architecture.



Figure C-10

Polish Cadet Hall, 927 Grant Street (1913)
An excellent example of Recreation architecture.

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Figure C-11

The former Unity Temple, 1940 Niagara Street (ca.
An excellent example of Recreational architecture.

1.3 Churches and Religious Institution Examples



Figure C-12

St John's Episcopal Church,
85 Amherst Street (1890)
An excellent example of
Religious architecture.

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Figure C-13
Church of the Assumption RC
Church, 417 Amherst Street
(1914)
An excellent example of
Religious architecture.



Figure C-14
Zion German Methodist Episcopal Church (aka East Street German ME Church; presently New Beginnings Church)
221 East Street (1889-1891)
An excellent example of Religious architecture.

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Figure C- 15

St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church, 60 Hertel Avenue (1925-27)
An excellent example of Religious architecture.

1.4 Industrial Architecture Examples



Figure C-16

Former Buffalo Smelting Works, 23 Austin Street (1891)
An excellent example of Industrial architecture.

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1.5 Transportation and Railroad Architecture Examples



Figure C-17

Former Grand Trunk Railway Company's Black Rock Freight Office (aka Custom House and Canadian National Railroad Office), 1765 Niagara Street (1915)
An excellent example of Railroad-related architecture.

2.1 Railroad and Water Transportation Structures Examples



Figure C-18

International Railroad Bridge (1873)
An excellent example of a Railroad-related structure.