Cultural Resources Investigation
Maxwell House Site
City of Hoboken, Hudson County
New Jersey

By

Lauren J. Cook, RPA
Glenn R. Modica

Principal Investigator: Lauren J. Cook, RPA (Archaeology)
Glenn R. Modica (Historic Architecture)

Prepared by: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.
30 N. Main Street
Cranbury, New Jersey 08512

Prepared for: 1101-1125 Hudson Street, L.L.C.
1125 Hudson Street
Hoboken, New Jersey 07030

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, prepared by Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc. for 1101-1125 Hudson Street, L.L.C., presents the results of a cultural resources investigation of the Maxwell House Site in the City of Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey. The cultural resources investigation consisted of an historic architectural survey of the Maxwell House Site to determine its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. A Phase IA archaeological survey was conducted to determine if the site may contain potentially significant archaeological resources.

When the Maxwell House Site was first surveyed in 1978 for the "Hoboken Historic Structures Survey," it was described as follows: "[a] large and impressively clean lined plant. The massing is quite interesting, though probably the result of stages of construction and no overall plan for such an effect." The 1978 survey made no recommendations concerning National Register eligibility. The present historic architectural survey has concluded that the Maxwell House Site is not architecturally significant and is not eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C. As utilitarian and conventional buildings designed and built from stock plans, the Maxwell House buildings are inherently common, vernacular interpretations of the International Style. While the Maxwell House buildings are recognizable products of their era, they represent omnipresent and prosaic products of their time. The most visually interesting facade in the complex is the four-story projection on the American Can Company Factory; but rather than integrated into the design of the entire building, this feature reads as a separate entity, a poorly executed appendage "architected" merely to conceal the commonality of the factory behind. The Maxwell House Site is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as a historically significant resource associated with the industrial development of the City of Hoboken.

It is recommended that prior to demolition of the Maxwell House Site, appropriate mitigation measures should be undertaken. Mitigation may include the following: written and photographic documentation, production of a popular document, development of a historic plaque or panel, display of Maxwell House signs and/or machinery in common areas, deposition of historical elements of the site with an appropriate repository, and new construction that is aesthetically compatible with the architectural character of the surrounding neighborhood.

The Phase IA archaeological survey determined that no previously identified archaeological resources are recorded within the impact area on the Maxwell House Site or within one mile of its

boundaries. Any prehistoric resources that may have existed within the impact area are unlikely to retain integrity, given the developed, urban nature of the site. The probability for intact prehistoric resources is low. The survey did indicate that potentially significant waterfront-related and structural surface resources may be present within the impact area. There is some question about the level of integrity of those resources. In addition, the significance of these resources lies in information that they may contain about the engineering and construction along Hoboken's waterfront, rather than in the resources themselves. Consequently, monitoring and recording at construction is recommended as a means of mitigating impacts to those resources.

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CULTURAL RESOURCES INVESTIGATION
MAXWELL HOUSE SITE
CITY OF HOBOKEN, HUDSON COUNTY
NEW JERSEY

APRIL 2003

RICHARD GRUBB AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
Cultural Resource Consultants

SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a cultural resources investigation conducted by Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc. for 1101-1125 Hudson Street L.L.C. in connection with the development of the Maxwell House Site in the City of Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey (Figures 1.1-1.3). The Maxwell House Site is located on a 14-acre parcel bounded on the south by Frank Sinatra Drive, on the north by 12th Street, on the west by Hudson Street and on the east by the Hudson River. The site consists of 12 buildings built between 1939-1970s for the storage, roasting and canning of coffee. The General Foods Corporation closed the facility in 1992. Proposed development of the site consists of townhouses, apartment buildings, commercial and retail areas, as well as open space.

This cultural resources investigation has been performed in compliance with an NJDEP Waterfront Development Permit application and in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:22-10.8. . The purpose of the Phase IA archaeological survey is to assess the potential for the presence of significant archaeological resources within the area of direct impacts on the Maxwell House Site, referred to in this report as the impact area . The survey consisted of background research and a site inspection. The purpose of the architectural survey is to evaluate the eligibility of the Maxwell House Site according to the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Tasks completed for the architectural survey included secondary and primary source research and architectural reconnaissance. Copies of this report will be on file with the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) in Trenton, New Jersey.

1.1 National Register of Historic Places Criteria

Determinations of significance or potential significance are based on the National Register of Historic Places criteria of historic and/or archaeological significance. Potentially significant historic properties include districts, structures, objects, or sites which are at least 50 years old and which meet at least one National Register criterion. Criteria used in the evaluation process are specified in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 60, National Register of Historic Places (36 CFR 60.4). To be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, a historic property(s) must possess:

> the quality of significance in American History, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture [that] is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and



Figure 1.1:

General Location of Project Area (State of New Jersey 2000). Arrow indicates the project location.

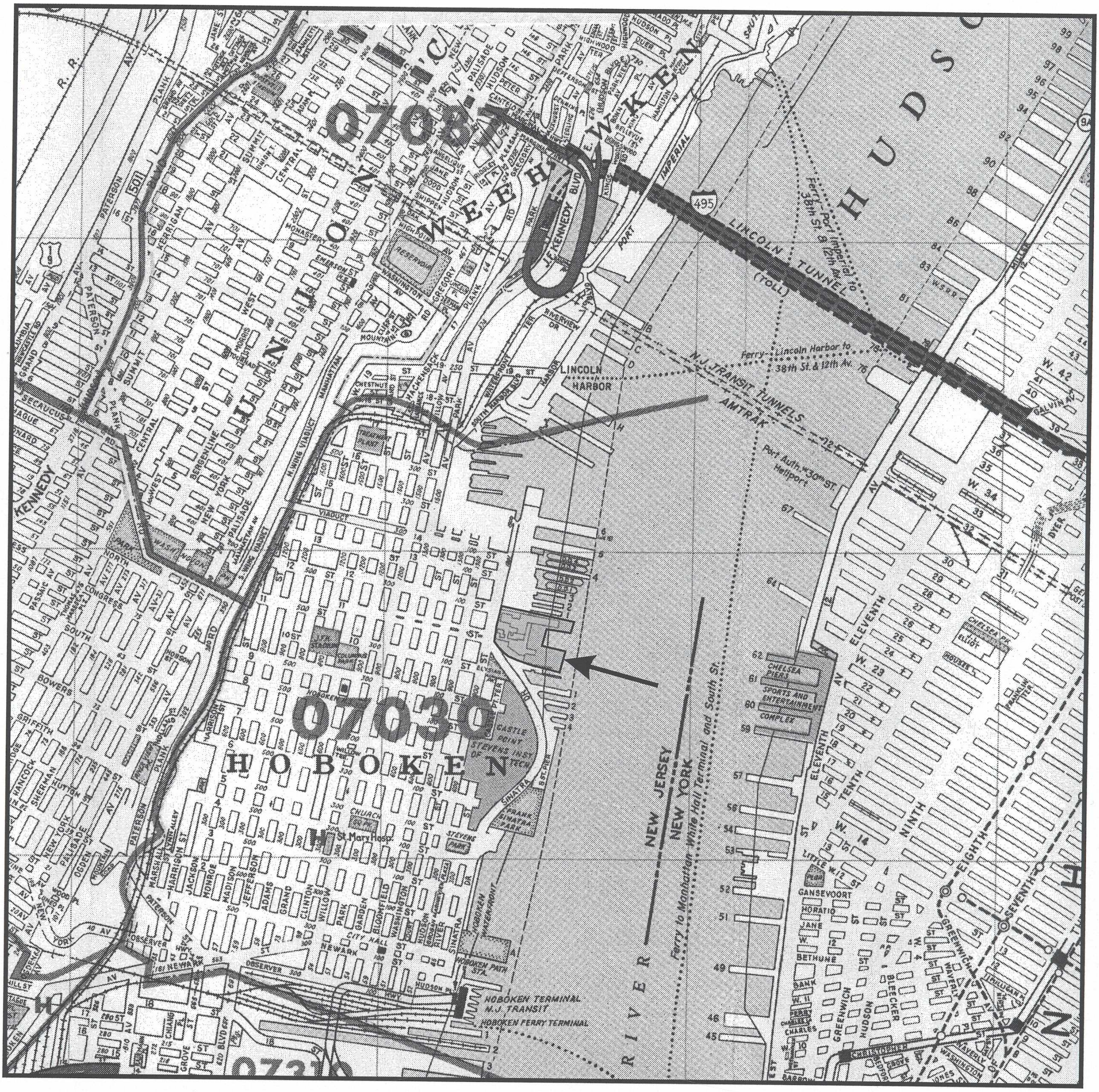


Figure 1.2:

Project Location Map (Hagstrom Map Company, Inc. 2000). Arrow indicates the location of the Maxwell House Site.

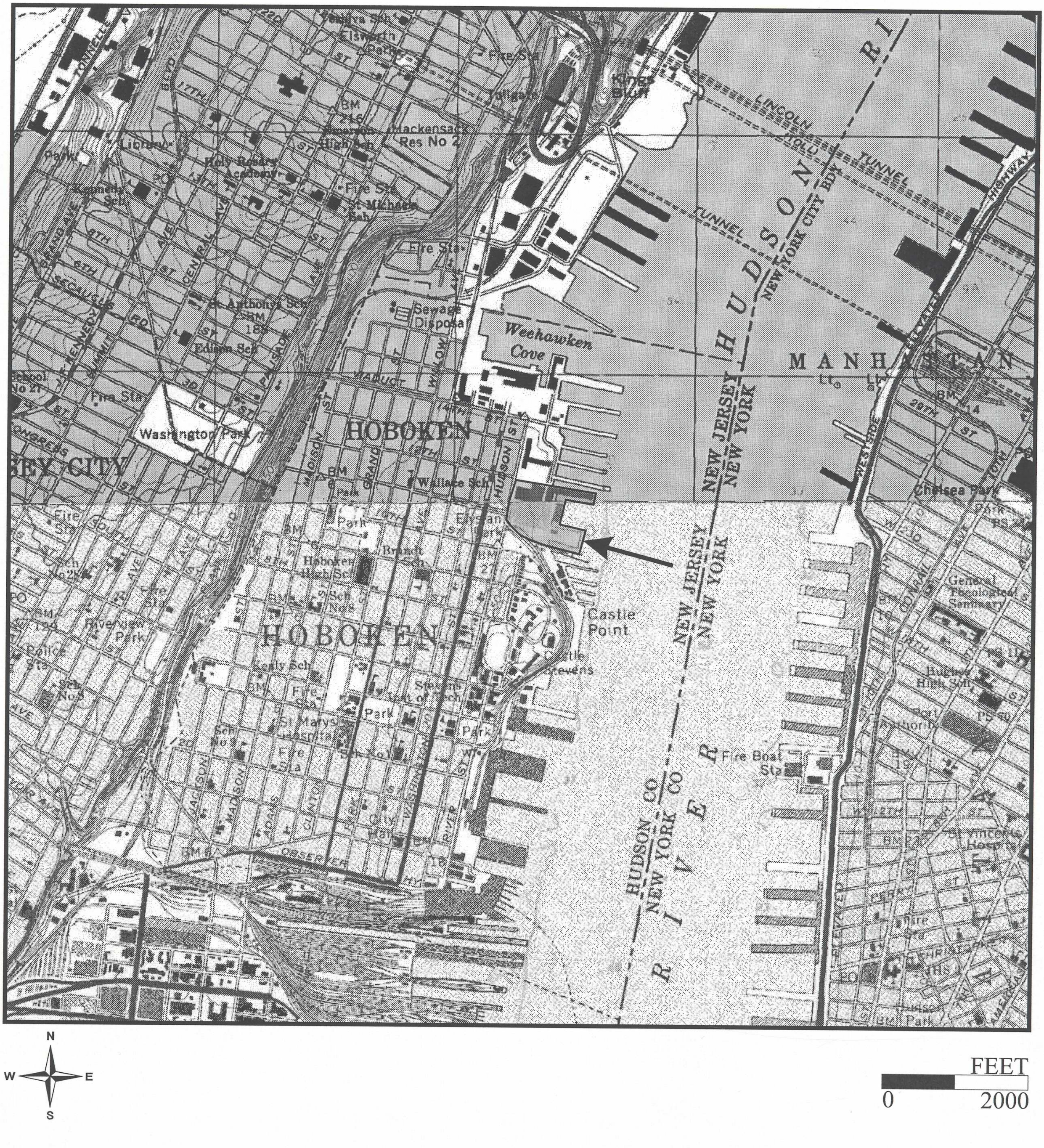
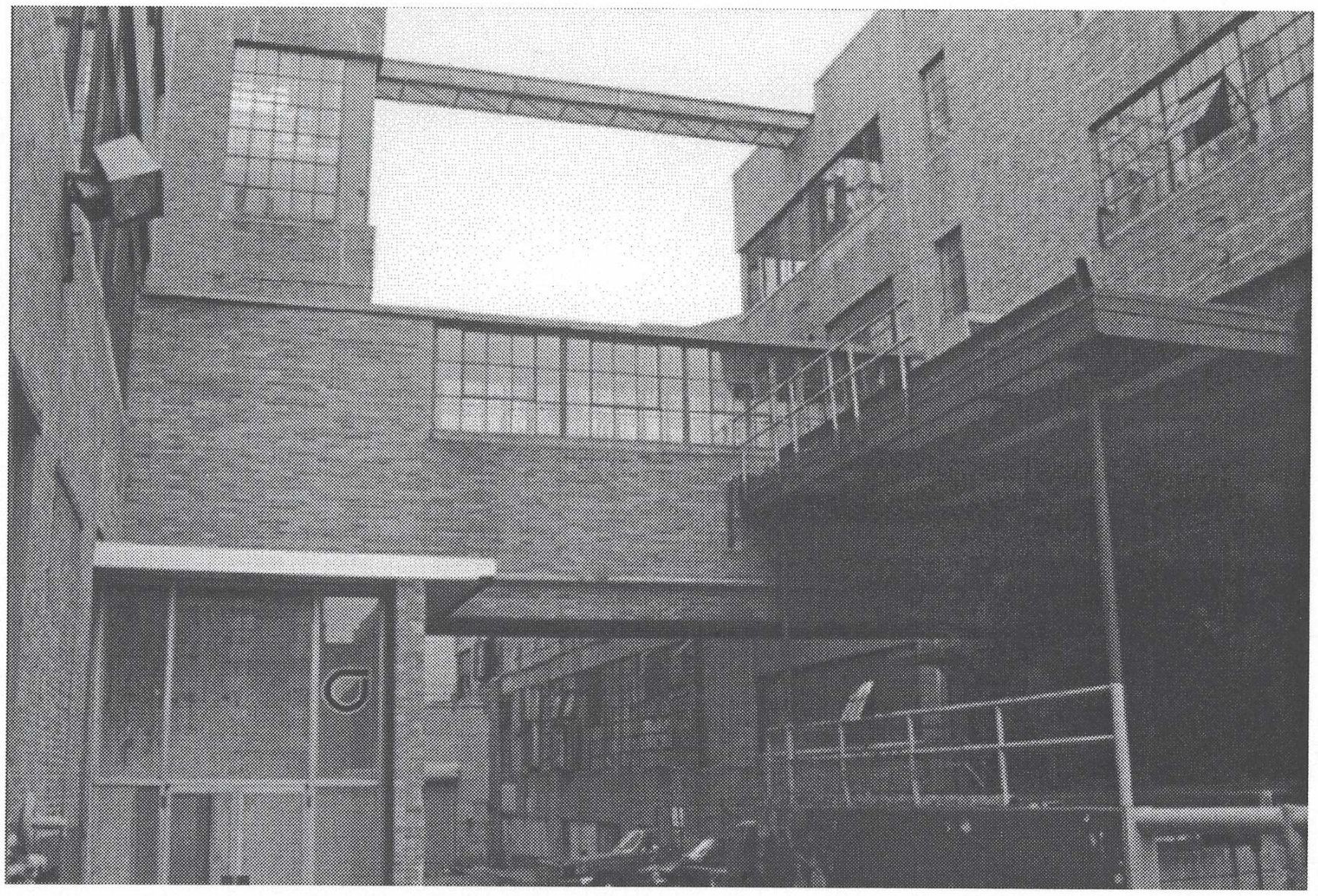


Figure 1.3:

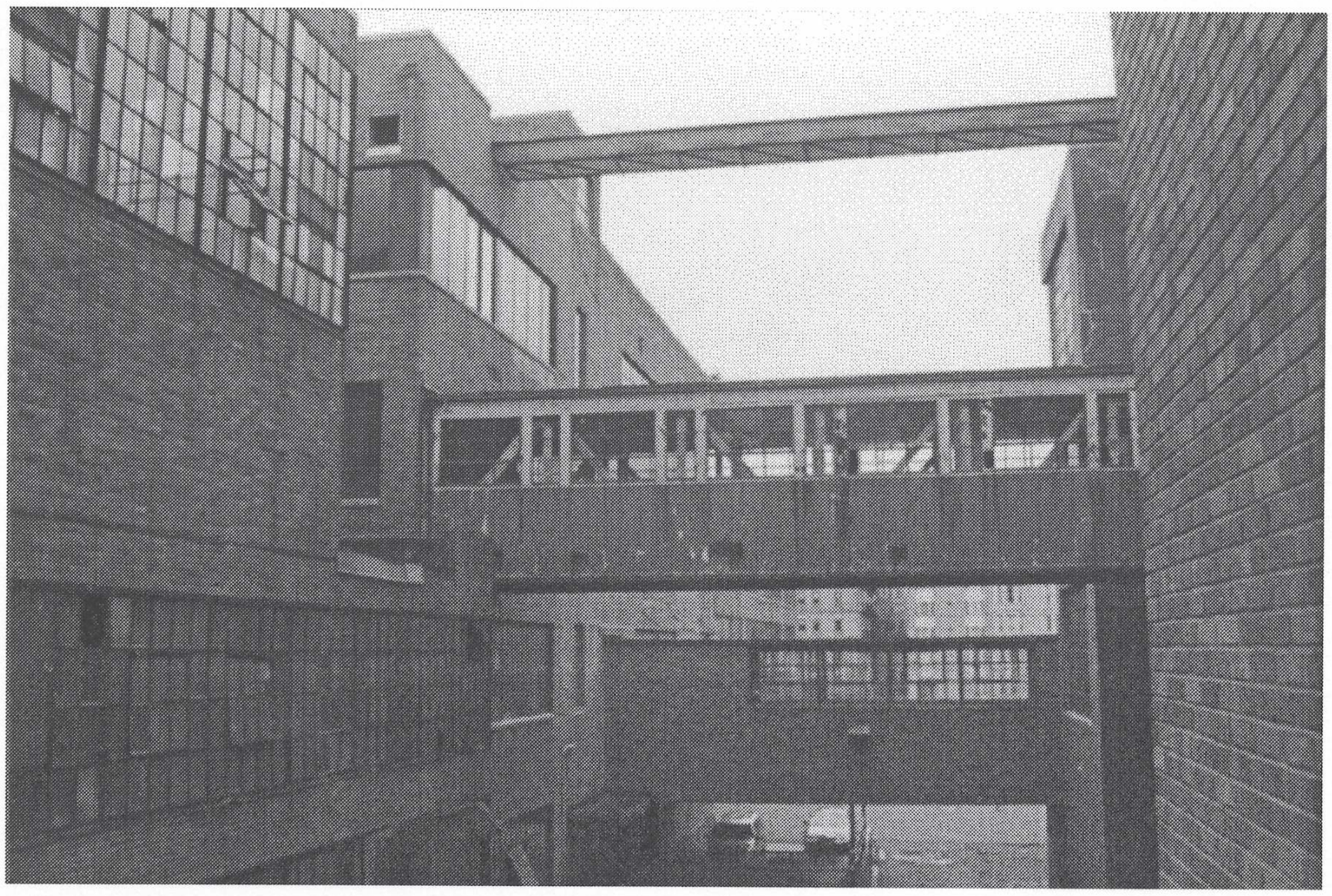
Project Location Map (United States Geological Survey 1967, 1995). Arrow indicates the location of the Maxwell House Site.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Bridge between 2nd floor of Manufacturing Building (#1; left) and Soluble Building (#7; right).



Bridge between 3rd floor of Soluble Building (#7; left) and Manufacturing Building (#1; right). Second-story bridge below and catwalk above.

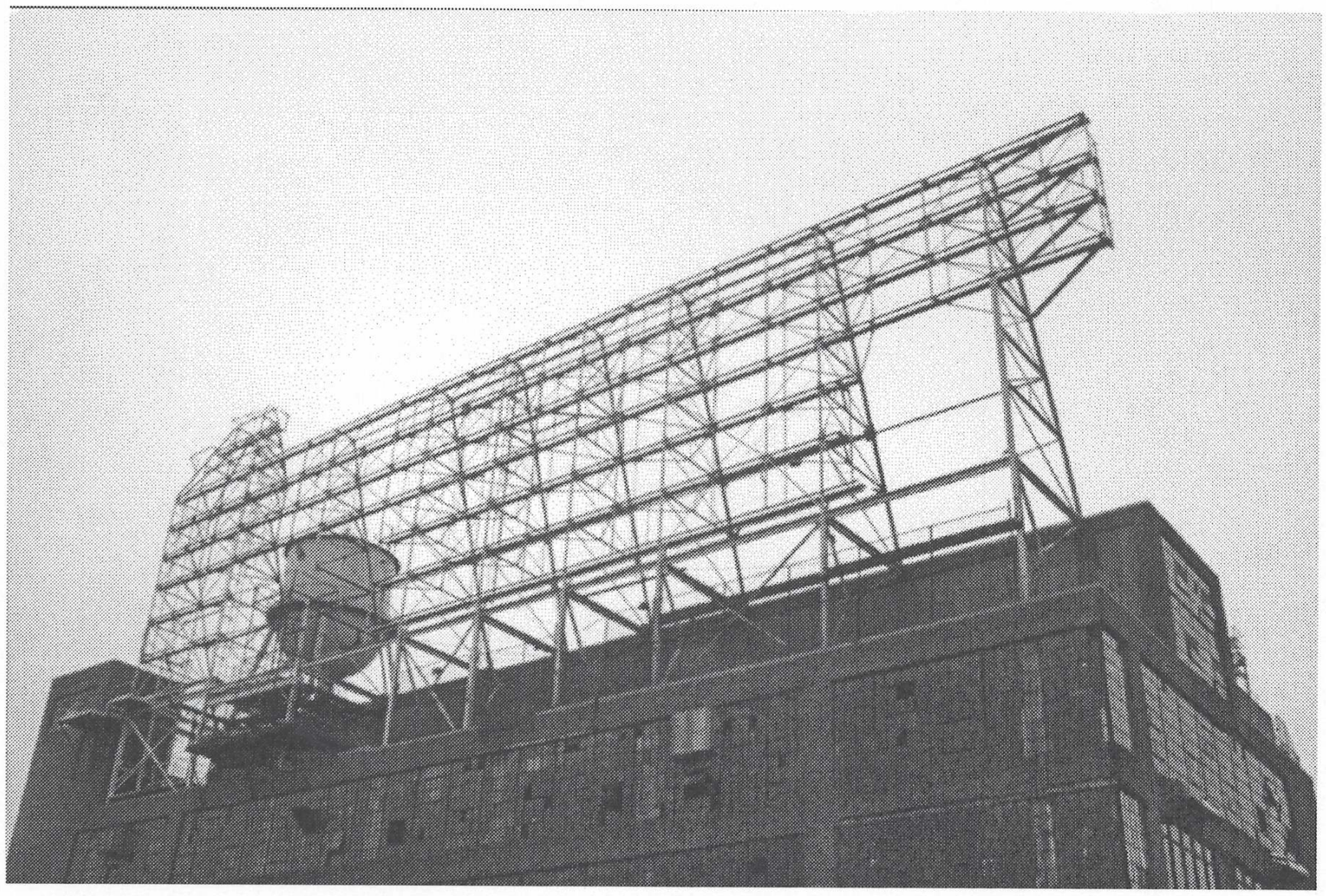
Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.
Date: November 2002

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Bridge between 3rd floor of Soluble Building (#7; left) and Process Building (#8; right). Beyond the passageway is Frank Sinatra Drive, where railroad siding entered the complex.



"Good to the Last Drop" sign skeleton, atop Manufacturing Building (#1).

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.
Date: November 2002

APPENDIX B: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Author:	Lauren J. Cook and Glenn R. Modica
Title:	Cultural Resources Investigation, Maxwell House Site, City of Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey
Location:	City of Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey
Drainage Basin:	Hudson River, Upper New York Bay, Lower New York Bay, Atlantic Ocean
U.S.G.S. Quad:	Jersey City, N.J. -N.Y. and Weehawken, N.J.-N.Y.
Project:	Real Estate Development
Level of Survey:	Phase IA archaeological survey and intensive-level architectural survey
Cultural Resources:	Maxwell House Site, potential waterfront resources and earlier structures

objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

(A) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, or

(B) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, or

(C) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction, or

(D) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (36 CFR 60.4)

There are several criteria considerations. Ordinarily, cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

(A) a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance, or

(B) a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event, or

(C) a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his/her productive life, or

(D) a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events, or

(E) a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived, or

(F) a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historic significance, or

(G) a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance. (36 CFR 60.4)

The physical characteristics and historic significance of the overall property are examined when conducting National Register evaluations. While a property in its entirety may be considered eligible based on Criteria A, B, C, and/or D, specific data is also required for individual components therein based on date, function, history, physical characteristics, and other information. Resources that do not relate in a significant way to the overall property may contribute if they independently meet the National Register criteria.

A contributing building, site, structure, or object adds to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations, or archeological values for which a property is significant because a) it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or is capable of yielding important information about the period, or b) it independently meets the National Register criteria. A non-contributing building, site, structure, or object does not add to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations, or archeological values for which a property is significant because a) it was not present during the period of significance, b) due to alterations, disturbances, additions, or other changes, it no longer possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or is incapable of yielding important information about the period, or c) it does not independently meet the National Register criteria.

SECTION 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

2.1 Research Design and Methodology

This section briefly presents the research design and field methods that were developed for this project based on background research and the environmental context of the impact area.

Research Design

The purpose of the Phase IA archaeological survey was to identify the potential for significant archaeological resources within the impact area for the proposed project (see Section 1.0). Background research indicated that no known archaeological resources were situated within the impact area.

Methodology

Phase IA archaeological survey is directed towards identifying known and potential archaeological resources within a defined impact area. Known prehistoric resources are identified through examination of statewide and regional survey reports (e.g., Skinner and Schrabisch 1913; Cross 1941) and documented sites listed in the site files at the New Jersey State Museum (NJSM). Potential for the impact area to contain undocumented resources is assessed through provisional reconstruction, where possible, of the predevelopment environment of the area using relevant geographical, geological, edaphic and other environmental literature.

Documented historical archaeological resources are identified through examination of printed maps, graphics, and other historical documents. As these sources are dated, they enable reconstruction of the changing resources present within the impact area over time. In many cases, the sources contain information that enables researchers to identify the construction material, size, location, and function of resources that are no longer extant. Particularly useful are late nineteenth and early twentieth-century insurance atlases. These sources contain detailed information on buildings and their functions, gathered to allow contemporary insurers to assess the fire risks inherent in each structure. Documentary research results in a list of resources that were formerly present in the impact area.

Field investigation at the Phase IA stage is limited to a surface physical examination of the impact area by a qualified archaeologist. The examination of the impact area has two complementary objectives. The first is to identify any surface evidence of documented resources, and any evidence of resources that were not identified during the documentary research. The second objective is to assess the extent and density of development on the site, and its likely effect on documented and undocumented resources. For example, urban areas are often developed at a level that makes it unlikely that earlier resources might exist there in an intact state.

Analysis of the data gathered from the documentary research and the field examination consists of assessing the sensitivity of the impact area to contain significant archaeological resources that maintain integrity. This is a function of the likely focus and extent of documented and potential resources. For example, deeper deposits and features are more likely to survive intact than shallower resources. For historic resources, masonry structures and foundations are more likely to maintain integrity than frame structures, many of which were placed on blocks or directly on the ground in the case of temporary structures.

Significance is considered in terms of the National Register criteria discussed above in Section 1.1. Not all resources that maintain integrity have the research potential to meet those criteria. At the Stage IA level of analysis, resources are discussed in terms of their "potential significance," as in many cases it is unclear whether the resources are still present or whether they maintain integrity.

2.2 Environmental Setting

The impact area is located in Hoboken, New Jersey, in the Piedmont Lowlands Physiographic Province (Figure 2.1). The Piedmont lowlands are characterized by gently sloping topography on older, softer rocks, with plateaus and higher hills and mountains associated with the Watchung Mountains and Hudson Palisades, where harder intrusions overlie the softer material (Wolfe 1977:244).

Bedrock within the impact area consists of Manhattan Schist (CZm) in the northwestern portion and Cambrian and Late Proterozoic Serpentine (Czs) in the southeastern portion. Both of these are metamorphic rocks of the Manhattan Prong, a subprovince of the New England Uplands (Drake et al. 1996). The Manhattan Prong is characterized east of the Hudson River, and on Staten Island, by

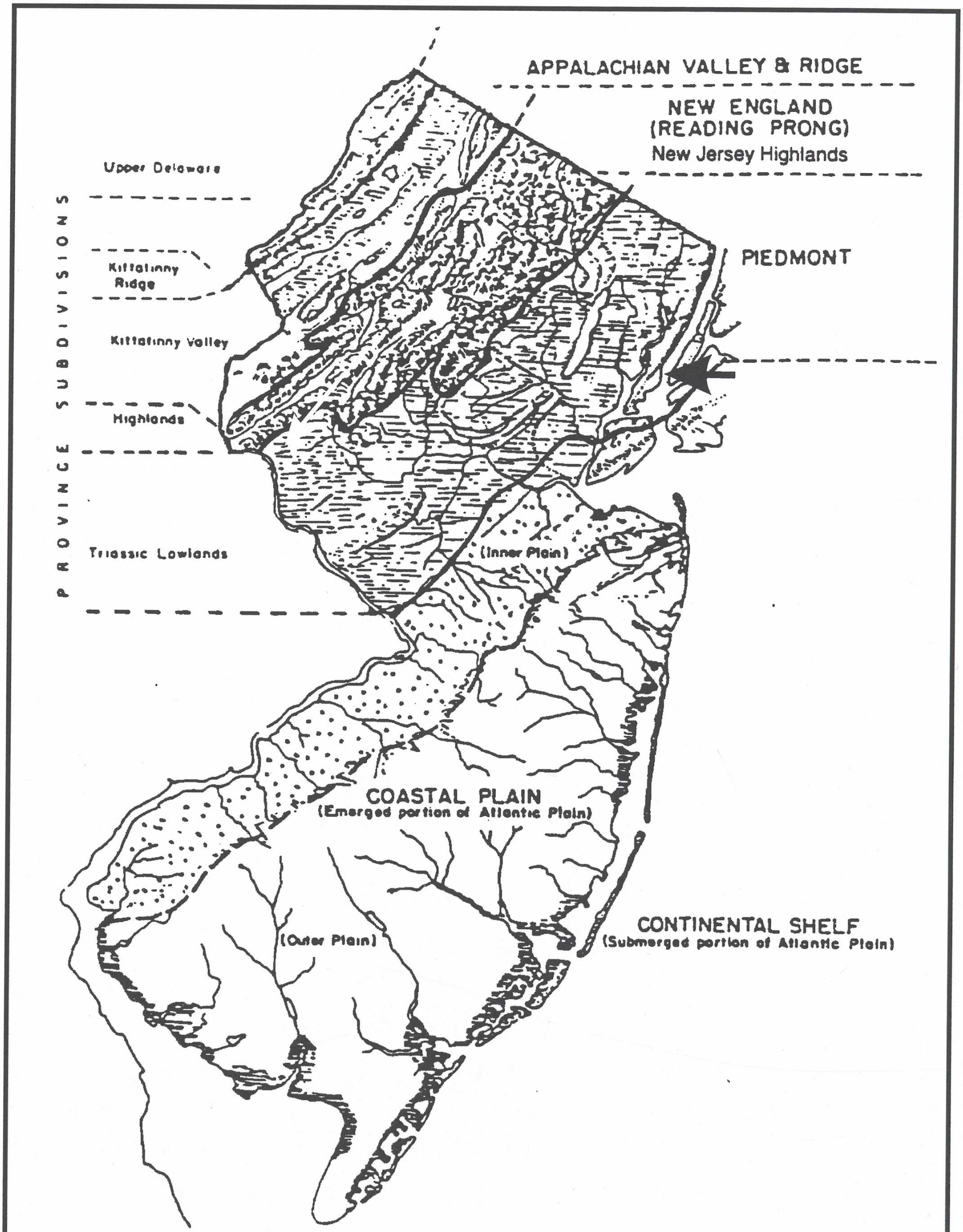


Figure 2.1:

Physiographic Provinces of New Jersey (from Wolfe 1977). Arrow indicates the general location of the project site.

northeast trending hills resulting from differential erosion of softer marble and harder gneiss and schist (Van Diver 1985:12).

Soils within the impact area are the Sulfaquents-Urthodents-Psamments association (Figure 2.2). These are "nearly level, very poorly drained, very deep mineral and organic soils on tide-flooded flats, and similar areas overlain by fill materials" (United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service 1993). Field observation and map evidence suggest that the impact area lies on urthodents, or filled and modified land.

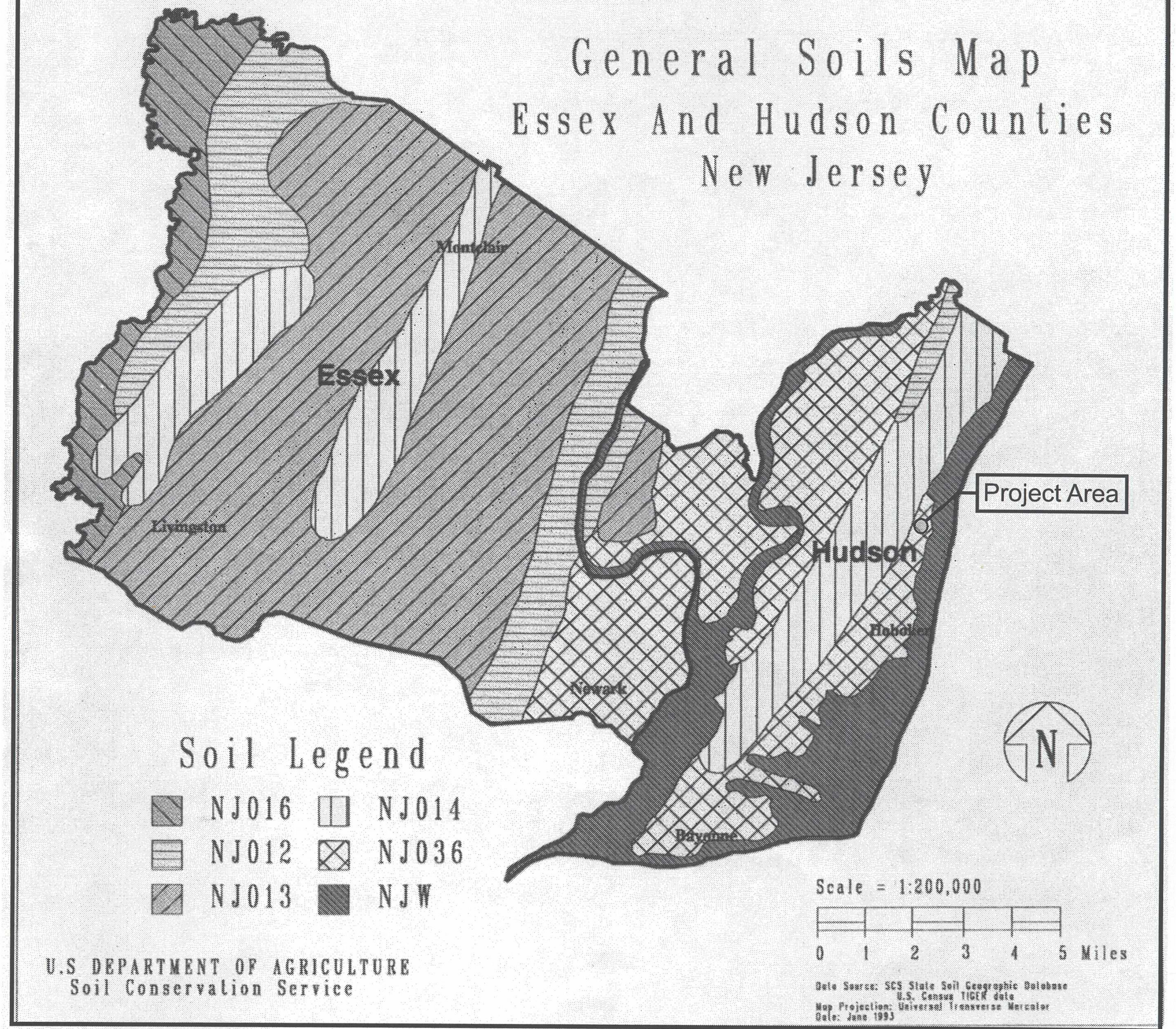
2.3 Summary of Previous Research

Background research included consultation of the records of the NJSM and HPO, as well as the examination of major published references (Skinner and Schrabisch 1913; Cross 1941). No known prehistoric or historic archaeological sites exist within the impact area.

Site files at the NJSM indicated that no recorded prehistoric sites are located within a one-mile radius of the impact area. The closest sites to the impact area reported by Skinner and Schrabisch (1913:42) are sites at Constable Hook and elsewhere in Bayonne and Jersey City. Those sites are not discussed by Cross (1941), but are shown on her map as "investigated by others."

Kraft (1978) noted Communipaw, or *Gemenoapau,* in present-day Jersey City, as "the only reference to any important Indian settlement in Hudson County." Rutsch et al. (1978:23-24) report an ethnohistorically known site (or more accurately, place name) of *Hobokan* or *Hobokan-hackingh* near what is now the corner of Hudson and 2nd Streets in Hoboken. The nature of this site, its type and extent, are not known as it has never been located or tested by archaeologists. Nineteenth-century historians indicate that it may have been a source for stone for tobacco pipes, and serpentine outcrops were noted in the area.

Numerous cultural resources investigations have been conducted in the vicinity of the impact area. Only a few have been directly relevant to the resources that might be expected within the impact area. A survey of the neighboring Grant Marina/Hoboken Shipyard, formerly the Fletcher Shipyard and Bethlehem Steel plant, located just north of the Maxwell House Site, dealt principally with standing structures and did not address archaeological remains, either above-ground or subsurface (Rothe Partnership 1998). Investigations at the Lincoln Harbor Development Site, approximately one



NJ036 SULFAQUENTS-UDORTHENTS-PSAMMENTS- Nearly level, very poorly drained, very deep mineral and organic soils on tide-flooded flats, and similar areas overlain by fill materials. Hydrologic group not assigned. Sulfaquents are hydric.

Figure 2.2:

Soil Map (United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service 1993).

mile north of the impact area, assessed sensitivity for prehistoric, historic and earlier industrial resources, and determined that those were unlikely to maintain significance or integrity. Further investigation of the site of the Erie Railroad Cold-Storage Warehouse, bulkheads and piers, and the Pennsylvania Railroad tunnel was recommended (Raber and Flagg 1986). Investigations at the Weehawken Engineering and Manufacturing Co. identified above-ground archaeological resources associated with adjacent properties (Greenhouse Consultants 2001). Other investigations in the vicinity have identified no significant archaeological resources.

2.4 Assessment of Archaeological Resources Sensitivity

The assessment of archaeological resources sensitivity is based on two allied concepts: the potential for archaeological sites to exist in a given area, and the sensitivity of that area for intact cultural resources. In areas where no sites are documented, the potential presence of prehistoric resources is based primarily on environmental setting: topography, proximity to water, and soil quality. The physiographic variables used to model prehistoric site location are less useful in predicting the presence of historic sites. The potential presence of historic resources is usually determined through analysis of historic sources and historic cartographic materials.

Prehistoric Archaeological Sensitivity

Several studies have been performed analyzing data on previously recorded archaeological sites to formulate predictive models of prehistoric site location. Settlement pattern studies conducted in New Jersey have defined areas of well-drained soils in close proximity to water as prime loci for prehistoric sites (Cavallo and Mounier 1980; Walwer and Pagoulatos 1990; Ranere and Hansell 1987). A distance of 300 feet from all wetlands, ancient or current, is considered the zone of highest sensitivity for the location of prehistoric archaeological resources. Although the proximity of water has been identified as a primary factor in predicting site location, other factors also have been identified. Level terrain, good drainage, and historic trails are all considered important predictors (Walwer and Pagoulatos 1990). It should be noted that the areas of sensitivity for prehistoric resources presented above also apply to inundated landforms (see Edwards and Emery 1977). Archaeological resources spanning all the periods of New Jersey prehistory could potentially be found buried in a coastal setting adjacent to New York Harbor or the Hudson River Estuary (Kraft 1977; Brennan 1977; Cantwell and Wall 2001:35-116).

Inundated *in situ* prehistoric archaeological sites would have a high potential to contain significant information regarding settlement and subsistence patterns due to the increased preservation of bone and plant remains in anaerobic conditions (Bierbrauer et al. 2002; Lowery 2001: 182). However, prehistoric archaeological sites in a coastal settling (i.e. shoreline) are also susceptible to multiple site formation processes that destroy archaeological resources. These processes include erosion, historic dredging, channelizing and mosquito control activities, and bioturbation (Lowery 2001: 202). As indicated by Lowery: "Coastal environments and the formation of tidal marshes create situations where archaeological sites can be preserved or not preserved" (Lowery 2001: 183).

It is difficult to assess the potential for prehistoric resources within the impact area, due to changes in landforms that have taken place along this section of the Hoboken waterfront over the last several centuries. As late as 1881, it appears that portions of the area north of Castle Point were wooded and level, which would make the area potentially attractive for settlement. What is unclear, however, is the location of the nearest potable water, which in this case would likely be a defining parameter for prehistoric settlement. In any event, given the extensive development associated with the Ocean Steamship Company Terminal, and the Maxwell House Site since 1939, any prehistoric resources within the impact area are not likely to maintain any integrity.

Historic Archaeological Sensitivity

A review of nineteenth and early twentieth century maps (Figures 2.3-2.6) indicates that the impact area was developed relatively recently, as compared to areas south of Castle Point. Historic maps depict no structures within the impact area until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The impact area is in many cases not even depicted in the principal atlas of the period, an indication that it was not developed (Hopkins 1873). Spielmann and Brush (1880) do not portray buildings within the impact area, or anywhere else for that matter, but they do show two wharves there (see Figure 2.3). These appear to be "T-wharves," which is to say wharves with a perpendicular jetty at the distal end. The southernmost of these is located between 10th and 11th Streets, and is not oriented to the street grid. This appears to be the earliest depiction of the "railroad wharf" discussed below. The second, northernmost wharf is aligned with the street grid and is located just south of the axis of 12th Street. A bird's-eye view of the Hoboken waterfront, drawn during the following year, shows the wharves, and gives some indication of the nature and location of the structures within and near the impact area (see Figure 2.4). Structures that are shown include several boathouses apparently associated with the New York Yacht Club at Elysian Fields at the foot of 10th street, and structures on the north side of

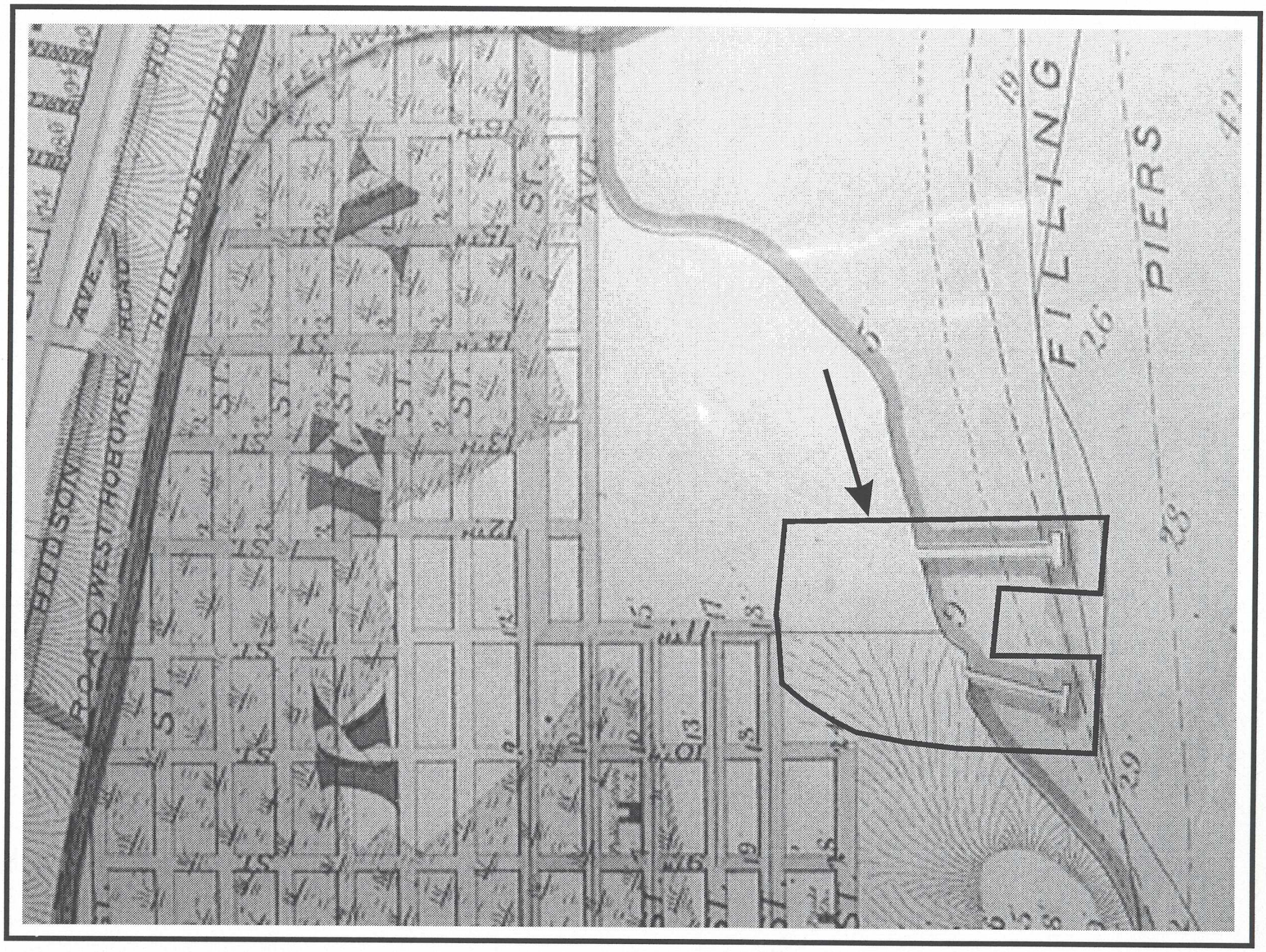


Figure 2.3:

1880 Spielmann and Brush, Sanitary and Topographical Map of Hudson County, New Jersey (Detail). Arrow indicates the location of the impact area.

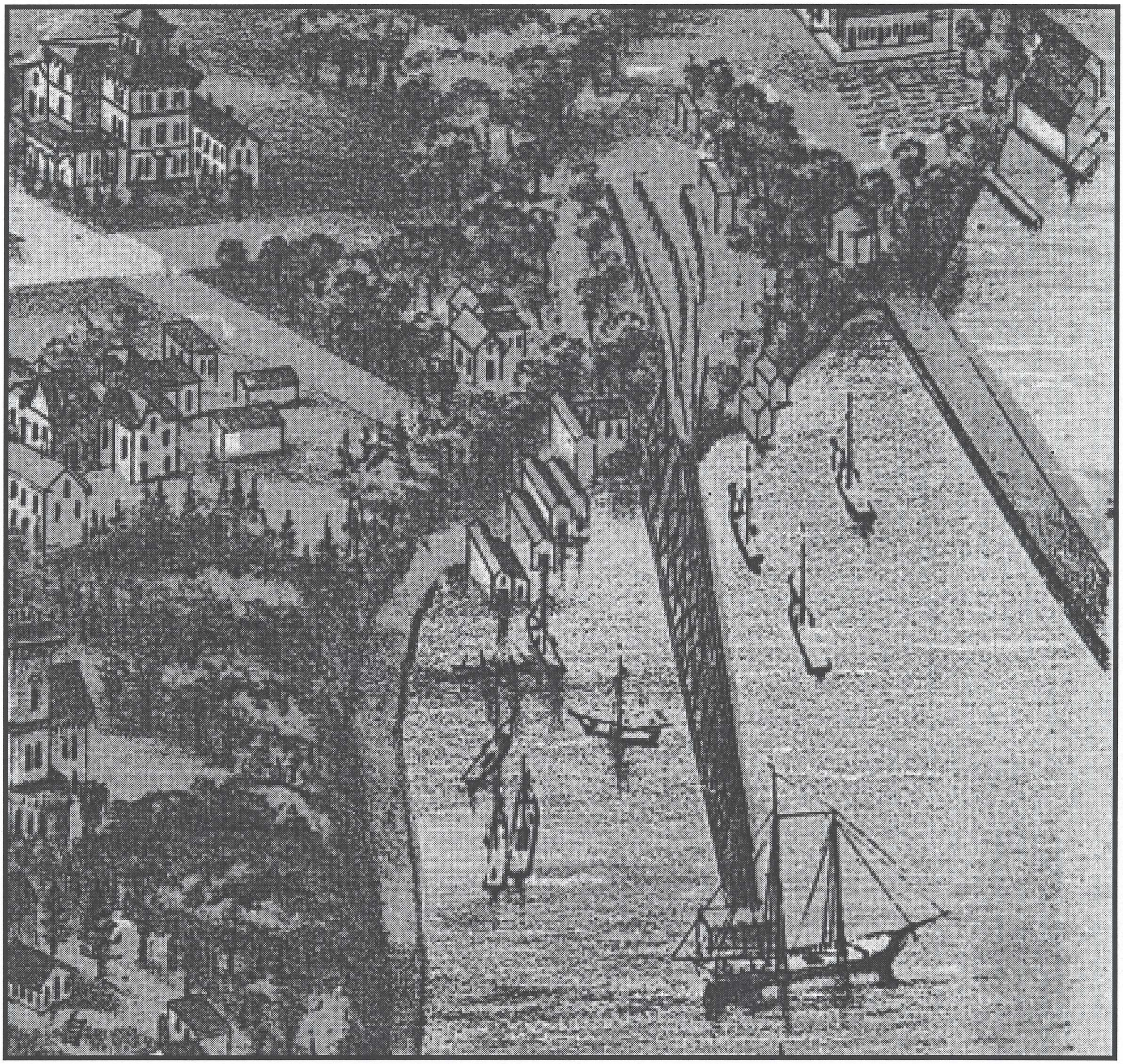


Figure 2.4:

1881 Bailey and Ward, The City of Hoboken, New Jersey (Detail).

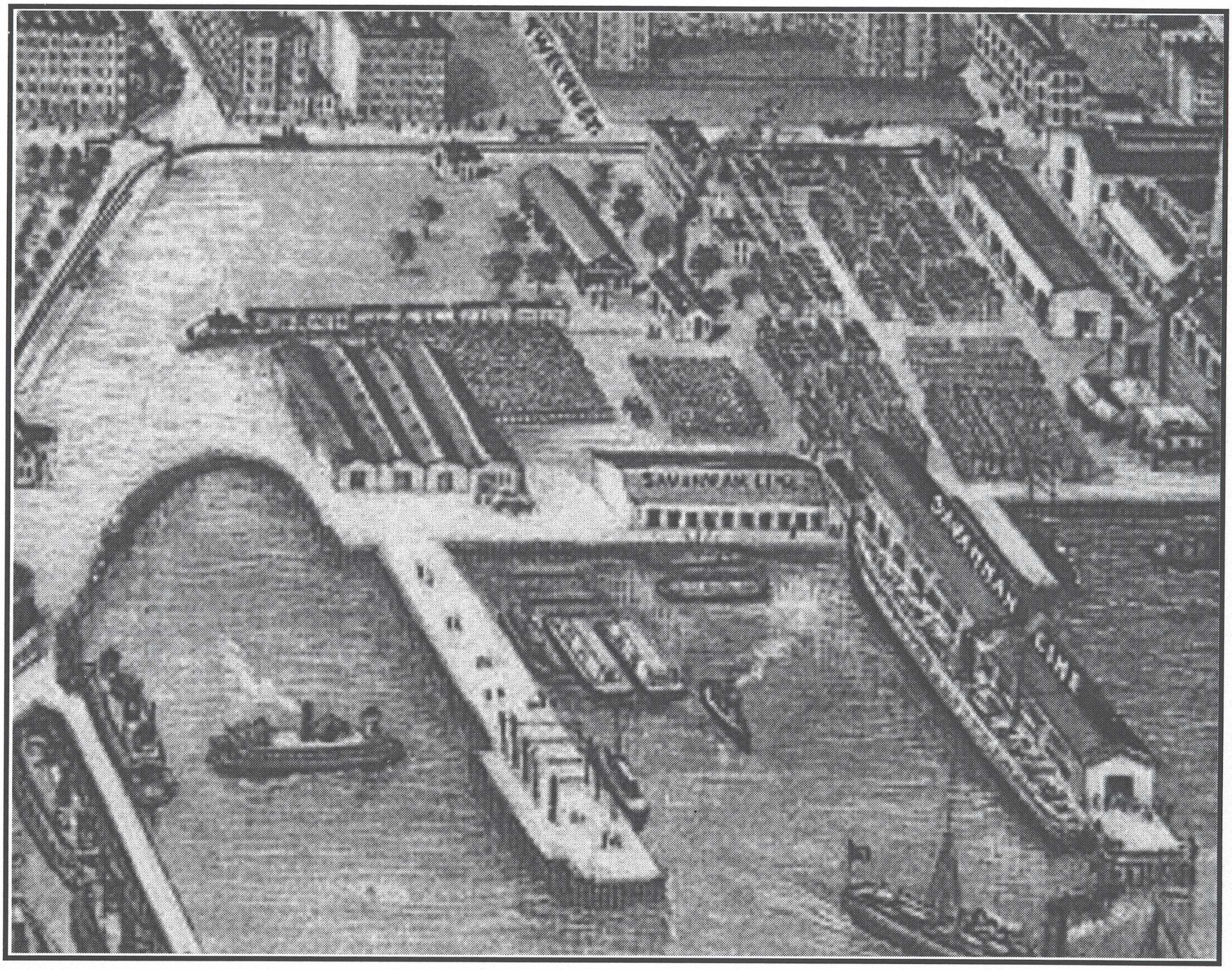


Figure 2.5:

1904 Hughes and Bailey, City of Hoboken, New Jersey (Detail).

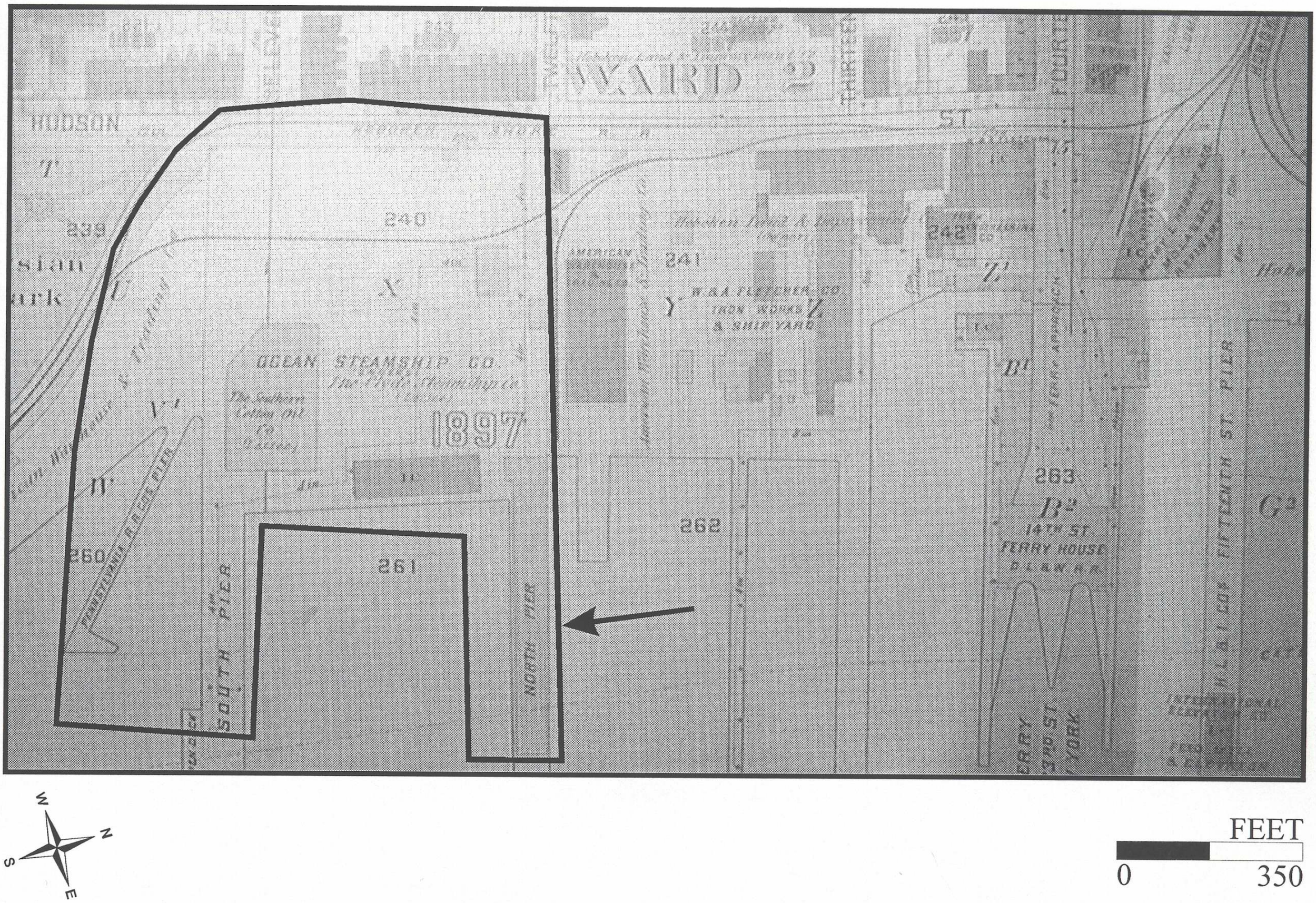


Figure 2.6:

1909 G.M. Hopkins, *Atlas of Hudson County, New Jersey.* Arrow indicates the location of the impact area.

10th Street near the water. The latter may be on property shown as the "estate of CT Perry" in 1873 (Hopkins 1873). The southernmost wharf, which appears to be of intricate "steel pier construction, clearly carries a railway or similar tracks. Three spurs extend from the wharf to Hudson Street, and there is a structure along Hudson Street to the north of the spurs that is probably associated with them. Two small structures that appear to be boathouses are located along the shore between the two wharves. There is a structure at the foot of the northernmost wharf, but it is not possible to guess at its function or even its shape. Bird's-eye views are problematic. On one level, they convey a great deal of information, but at the same time, graphic conventions, particularly at the edges of the frame, limit their utility for identifying or precisely locating structures.

The boathouses were present as late as 1891, when they are shown, along with the railroad wharf, on the property of the New York Yacht Club (Sanborn Map Company 1891:4). The northern portion of the impact area was the property of the Ocean Steamship Company. It had no piers, and only an open shed, a 2 ½-story building with a small footprint, and some masonry structures of unidentified function along its southern edge.

Bird's-eye views are particularly useful when they can be used in conjunction with roughly contemporary maps. For example, the Hughes and Bailey 1904 bird's-eye view (see Figure 2.5) and the Hopkins 1909 atlas (see Figure 2.6) show roughly comparable landscapes. The bird's-eye view (Hughes and Bailey 1904) shows the western portion of the property as clear with scattered trees. It does not show the railroad wharf on the southern portion of the impact area, which appears on earlier and later maps and views, a remarkable omission. Both the south pier and the north pier are shown. The north pier holds an extensive structure, while either a derrick system or the framework of a partially-constructed pier shed appears on the south pier. A one-story structure with a gable roof is located just south of the north pier. This appears to be a warehouse, 10 bays long, with doors on the water side. The north pier and the adjacent warehouse are identified as the property of the "Savannah Line." A second, more extensive one-story structure is located at the foot of the south pier. This structure is four bays wide, and its roof has four gables running the length of the building, with skylights on the central roofs. It resembles four long sheds built side-by-side, and in terms of its framing that may be what it is. A railroad spur runs north and south immediately west of the latter structure, and the area bounded by the warehouses and the railroad spur appears to be filled with merchandise awaiting shipment. The railroad spur terminates at a three- by four-bay structure along the northern edge of the property. The clerestory monitor and smokestack at the west end of the building suggest a heating or power plant for the property. To the southwest, there is a large (at least

four- by six-bay) structure that appears to be another warehouse. It has what appear to be doors on its south side and a large loading dock on its east side, fronting on the railroad spur. A small, one-by three-bay structure along Hudson Street suggests, by its size and location, an office. Overall, the impression is one of a successful enterprise engaged in the coastal trade with the South, if its name is an accurate indicator of the nature of the business.

Some of these structures are visible on a map dating to 1909 (see Figure 2.6; Hopkins 1909). It shows the impact area and the locations of its structures in great detail. The area along the shoreline from 10th Street to just south of 11th Street is occupied by the American Warehouse and Trading Co. A double-track railroad line, identified as the Hoboken Shore RR, ran along the present axis of Frank Sinatra Boulevard, and a small frame structure was located adjacent to that, south of the impact area. A spur ran north from the railroad across the impact area, parallel to but east of Hudson Street, running beneath present Buildings 8, 6, and 5, as well as parking areas, rejoining the main line at 13th Street. This spur is well west of that shown five years earlier. The railroad wharf is shown as "Pennsylvania RR Co.'s Pier," but no rail lines are shown on it.

Just north of the railroad pier is the property of the Ocean Steamship Company, which occupied most of the impact area. Most of the property is identified as leased to the Clyde Steamship Company. A pier identified as the "South Pier" was located just north of the property line. A small frame structure is shown along the southern edge of the pier. At the head of the pier was a large frame structure, presumably the warehouse shown on the 1904 view, leased to the Southern Cotton Oil Co., located under what are now Buildings, 3, 4 and 7, and the area south of them. The southwest corner of this building was truncated, as if by a railroad line leading northwest from the railroad pier. The "north pier," located in the same location as earlier wharves, supported a large frame structure that occupied nearly the entire wharf. A large masonry structure was located parallel to the shoreline between the north and south piers, under the present location of Warehouse Building No. 2 and the access way east of it. It was marked "LC." Its function is unspecified, but given its location it was probably the warehouse shown on the earlier view. Two frame structures were located to the west of this building, one at the intersection of the north property line and the railroad spur (the earlier powerhouse or heating plant, now under Building No. 5), and the second smaller probable office along Hudson Street (under and west of Building No. 5). The warehouse between the powerhouse and the office was no longer extant.

A Sanborn Atlas map updated to 1938 gives a picture of the property the year before the Maxwell House Site was built (Figure 2.7). The property is described as the Dodge and Leslie Terminal, and was owned by the Lackawanna Railroad Company. The old railroad wharf was no longer present. The Shephard and Morse Lumber Company leased the portion of the property closest to Hudson Street. Two railroad spurs of two tracks each crossed the property from north to south. Offices with adjacent "stalls" were situated along the street. The spur closest to Hudson Street had lumber warehouses on either side. The remainder of the area between the two spurs was taken up by a lumber shed, a planing building, a wood works, a sawdust collector, and two small structures of indeterminate function. The remainder of the area, and most of the area between the eastern spur and the river was open space, where lumber would have been stacked while awaiting processing or shipment.

The south pier was leased by the Schultz Building Material Company, dealers in masons' materials, who had an office and a one-story garage and storage building at the head of the wharf. The wharf itself had a small frame structure that appears to have held a hydrant. This may be the same structure that was on the wharf in 1909. The north pier, now called Pier No. 11, was leased by Lawson & McMurray, lumber dealers. No structures are shown on the pier.

Sanborn maps dated 1951 show the extent and development of the Maxwell House Site (Figure 2.8). This subject is discussed more fully below in Appendix A. A new "railroad wharf" had been built, this one more parallel to the other wharves. It had an abutment extending a short distance out into the river, followed by a timber segment, and a "bridge" that served the function of lowering cars to the level of the tops of barges that docked in the "car ferry slip" (Daniel Gans, personal communication, January 14, 2003). From an archaeological standpoint, several structural features are shown on these maps that no longer exist. A hopper, presumably for the storage of process materials, was located on concrete posts ten feet above the ground west of the northwest corner of Warehouse Building No. 2. This feature is not shown on the later Sanborn map, and the location has been heavily disturbed. A "fuel oil tank" was located south of the southwest corner of Building No. 7. No surface traces of this structure is visible today. Neither the hopper nor the fuel oil tank is considered potentially significant. A "miscellaneous storage" building is shown on the 1939 Sanborn map at the foot of the South Pier, in the same location as the garage and storage building of the Schultz Building Material Company, discussed above. It is probably a portion of the earlier structure. This was a masonry building, one story in height and measuring approximately 45 feet by 85 feet. It did not appear on a later Sanborn map (Sanborn Map Company 1979), and its location is now

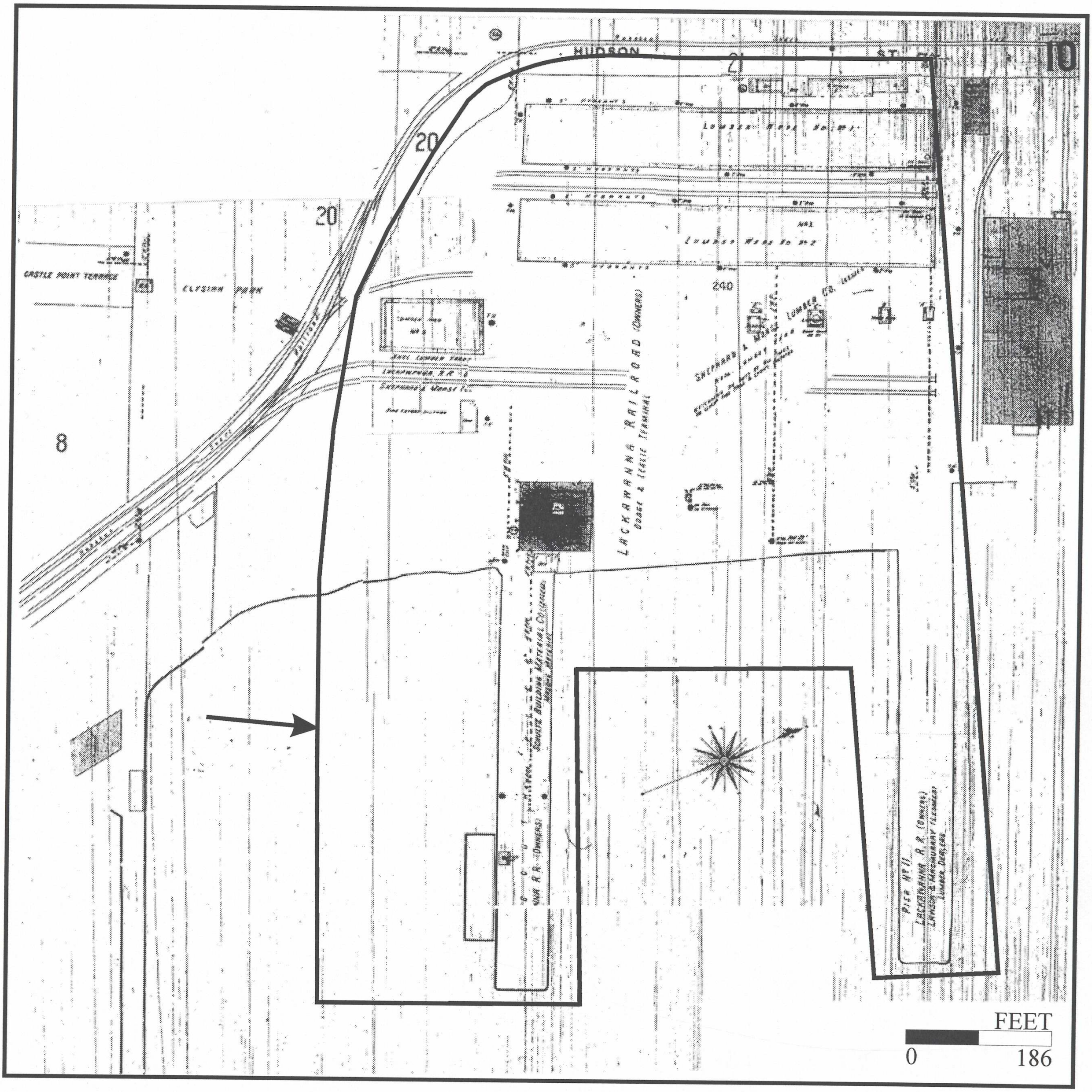


Figure 2.7:

1938 Sanborn Map Company, Fire Insurance Maps of Hoboken, N.J. Arrow indicates the location of the impact area.

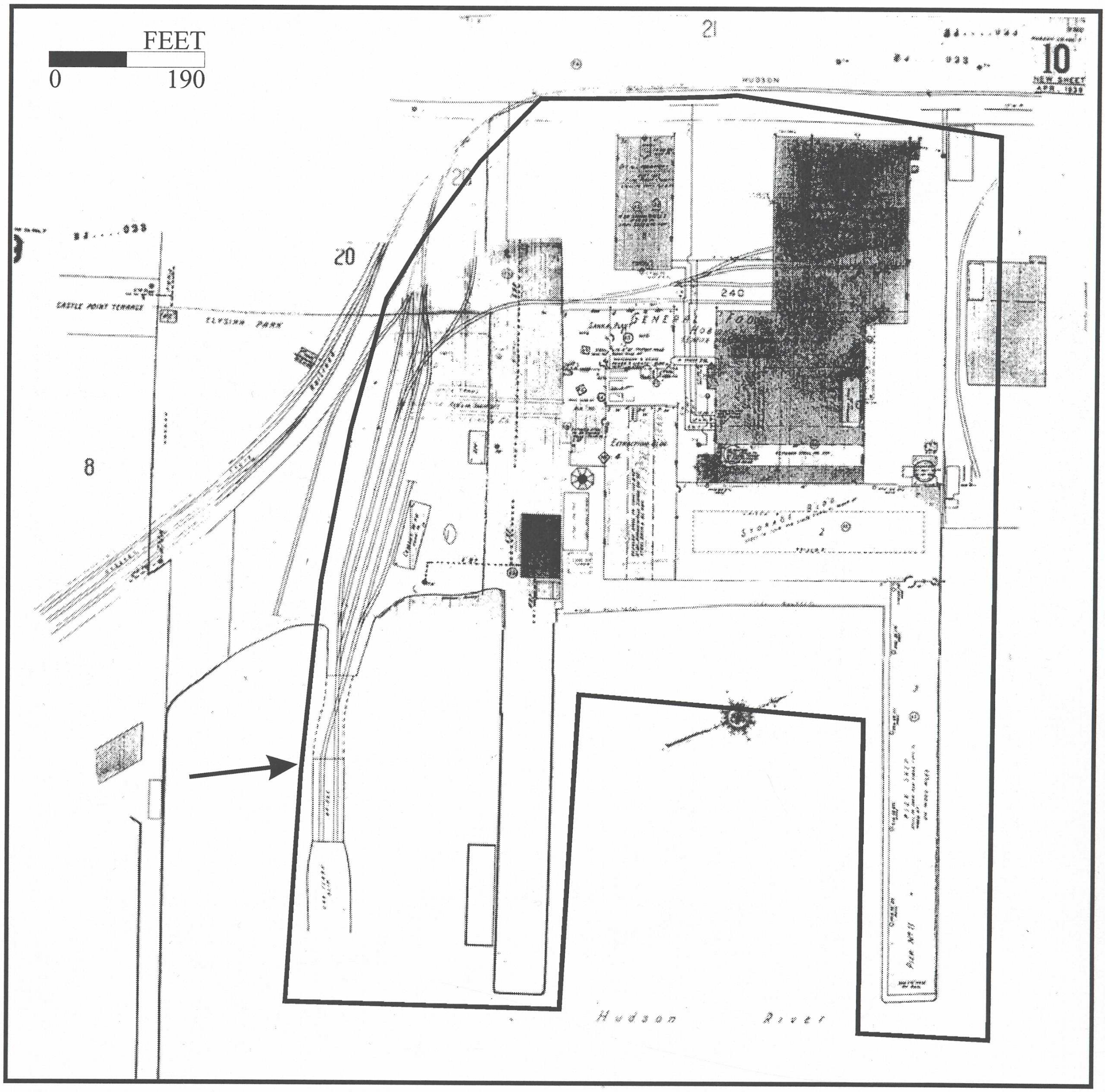


Figure 2.8:

1951 Sanborn Map Company, Fire Insurance Maps of Hoboken, N.J. Arrow indicates the location of the impact area.

occupied by a power substation. No remains of this structure are visible on the surface. It was likely built on a pad, and it appears to have been completely destroyed by the construction of the power substation. A feature identified as "5 fuel oil tanks" surrounded by a "conc. wall 14" high" was located east of the smokestack and south of Building No. 3. The tanks are now gone, but the concrete foundation exists on the surface.

2.5 Results

Fieldwork for the archaeological survey was conducted on January 14, 2003. All exterior areas of the property were examined in the course of a pedestrian survey. The principal features noted on the property were the structures of the Maxwell House Site, discussed elsewhere in this report. Several areas were noted that had remains of former structures or plant equipment. These areas are not considered potentially significant archaeological resources in and of themselves, but should be recorded at the same time as the standing structures.

Remains of several waterfront resources that appear to predate the present configuration of piers and structures were noted. These include a bulkhead adjacent to the beach on the southern shoreline of the property (Plate 2.1). This bulkhead consists of earth-filled timber cribbing with a breakwater curtain composed of piles with bolted stringers. This bulkhead structure may date as late as the 1930s or 1940s, and may be the abutment of the second "railroad wharf." The number "37 " was stamped in one end of a piece of timber associated with this feature. This may represent a date, as preserved timbers were sometimes so marked in order to enable builders to determine replacement intervals.

Further north, a large pier dating to the 1960s, made of rubble, is not considered significant, because of its late date, and the absence of any definite construction technique or material. The fill appears to have consisted of a mix of demolition debris and structural rubble that was laid in place as rip-rap, and filled with gravel and soil. The northwest portion of this pier contains the remains of an earlier structure that were simply buried in place. This appears to consist of a poured concrete deck and several poured concrete pylons that supported it (Plate 2.2). There appears to be some wooden structure beneath the concrete as well, but it is difficult to determine from the exposed portion whether the wood is part of the original pier structure, or is a component of the later fill. This earlier pier structure was identified during the geophysical survey (McLaren 2000: Figure B-1).

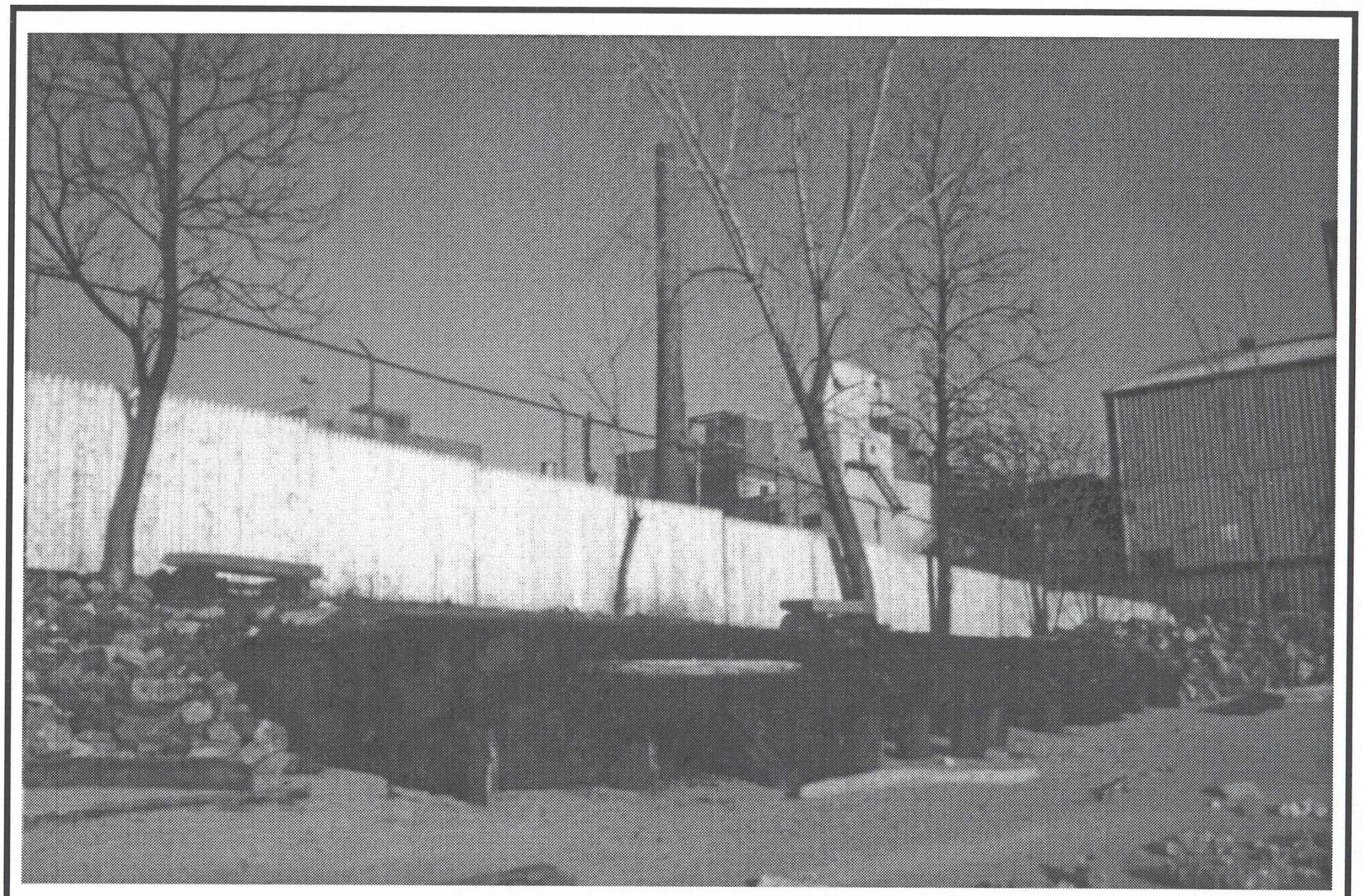


Plate 2.1:

Timber Cribbing, Possible Abutment of Second Railroad Wharf.
Photo view: Northwest
Photographer: Glenn R. Modica
Date: February 6, 2003



Plate 2.2:

1960s Fill Pier. Note concrete decking of original south pier, right of center.
Photo view: Southeast
Photographer: Glenn R. Modica
Date: February 6, 2003

This pier is in the same location as the South Pier of the Ocean Steamship Company identified on the 1909 Hopkins map, and shown as extending approximately 485 feet into the Hudson River. By April 1939, only about 210 feet of this pier remained. The pier did not contain any structures at the time, and it is doubtful that it was rebuilt. Circa 1961, the pier was enclosed within fill for a larger pier, though at extreme low water, pilings associated with it are visible beyond the 1960s filled pier, approximately 480 feet from the former shoreline (Daniel Gans, personal communication, January 14, 2003).

North of the former South Pier, there is a building containing storage silos. This structure (Building No. 11) is built over the tidal zone, and is supported by steel pilings encased in reinforced concrete. This structure dates to circa 1962. It has a wooden curtain of pilings and planks on the harbor side, that served to protect the concrete pilings from the elements, and as a fender for vessels unloading at the silos. The area beneath this building is open. The bulkhead here is located near the west wall of the structure, and in some places is a few feet west of it. The bulkhead was not examined during the present fieldwork, but the 1939 Sanborn maps note that the southern portion of it was wooden and the northern portion was metal.

To the north of the silo building is Pier No. 11. This is a poured concrete structure on wooden pilings. It was apparently in the form of a poured concrete box that was subsequently filled with soil and then capped with poured concrete (Daniel Gans, personal communication, January 14, 2003). The pier contains a metal pier building (Building No. 11). The pier and its superstructure are in the same location as, and appear similar to, the North Pier of the Ocean Steamship Company. Both the pier and the building were demolished and rebuilt in 1939, when Maxwell House took over the property.

It appears on the basis of field inspection that there is little likelihood of encountering intact remains of frame structures within the impact area, given the extent of its development since 1939. It is likely that wooden boathouses and other structures associated with the American Warehouse and Trading Co., the Southern Cotton Oil Co., and the Ocean Steamship Company were destroyed by subsequent development.

Remains of the masonry warehouse associated with the Ocean Steamship Company were not observed at the site. These would be located in the area of Warehouse Building No. 2 and the access way immediately south of it, and may survive beneath the surface.

Structural remains associated with the Maxwell House Site were located on the surface to the south of Buildings 3, 4, and 7 (Plate 2.3). These remains include the foundations of a smokestack (Plate 2.4) and of a structure that held five fuel oil tanks. These remains are not considered to be potentially eligible as historic archaeological resources in their own right; however, they are likely to contain information relevant to the development and operation of the Maxwell House Site, and should be recorded and interpreted at the same time as the standing structures.

It appears that much of the waterfront of the property contains piers, bulkheads, and other structures that are in excess of 50 years old. These resources provide the opportunity to examine wharf construction technologies in Hoboken in the period from 1880 to 1940. It is recommended that this area be monitored during demolition and excavation, so that these structures can be recorded as they are removed.

Although the development of the impact area occurred comparatively late in the history of Hoboken, there have been several episodes of development and construction, of which construction of the Maxwell House Site since 1939 was the most recent. Examination of profiles from boring logs indicated the presence of fills distributed across the site. It appears that these fills are thickest in the waterfront areas, where they are 25-27 feet deep, and thinnest near Hudson Street, where they are approximately 6-12 feet deep (McLaren 2000: Figure G-4). The areas near Hudson Street were also those most heavily impacted by construction and development of the Maxwell House Site, and it is in these areas where soils beneath the fills are expected to have suffered the most disturbance. Therefore, the probability for the existence of significant intact prehistoric resources within the impact area is low.

To summarize, the following historical archaeological resources were identified from maps as possibly being present within the impact area. Resources that are unlikely to survive within the impact area include:

1. Boathouses along the shore near 10th Street, and between the railroad wharf and 12th Street
2. Structures associated with the north pier
3. Southern Cotton Oil Co. Warehouse
4. Frame structures in northern portion of the impact area
5. Masonry storage building associated with the Maxwell House Site

Accordingly, no further investigation of these resources is warranted. Several resources may survive within the impact area. These include:

6. The first railroad wharf and associated spurs
7. Masonry warehouse associated with the Ocean Steamship Company

Other resources are at least partially visible on the surface, and so are known to be present, including:

8. Timber cribbing associated with the second railroad wharf
9. The north pier
10. The south pier
11. Features associated with the Maxwell House Site

So, there is a possibility that buried portions of the "railroad wharf," and foundations of the masonry warehouse associated with the Ocean Steamship Company survive within the impact area, and remains associated with the South Pier (pre-1909), the North Pier (1939), and various other masonry and timber bulkheads (nineteenth and twentieth centuries) were observed during the field examination. These resources should be documented during construction in the waterfront portions of the proposed project. Figure 2.9 shows the locations of selected potential resources identified during the survey and delineates the extent of the area where monitoring is recommended during construction.



Plate 2.3:

Structural Remains Associated with Maxwell House Site.
Photo view: Northwest
Photographer: Glenn R. Modica
Date: February 6, 2003



Plate 2.4:

Chimney Base Associated with Maxwell House Site.
Photo view: West
Photographer: Glenn R. Modica
Date: February 6, 2003

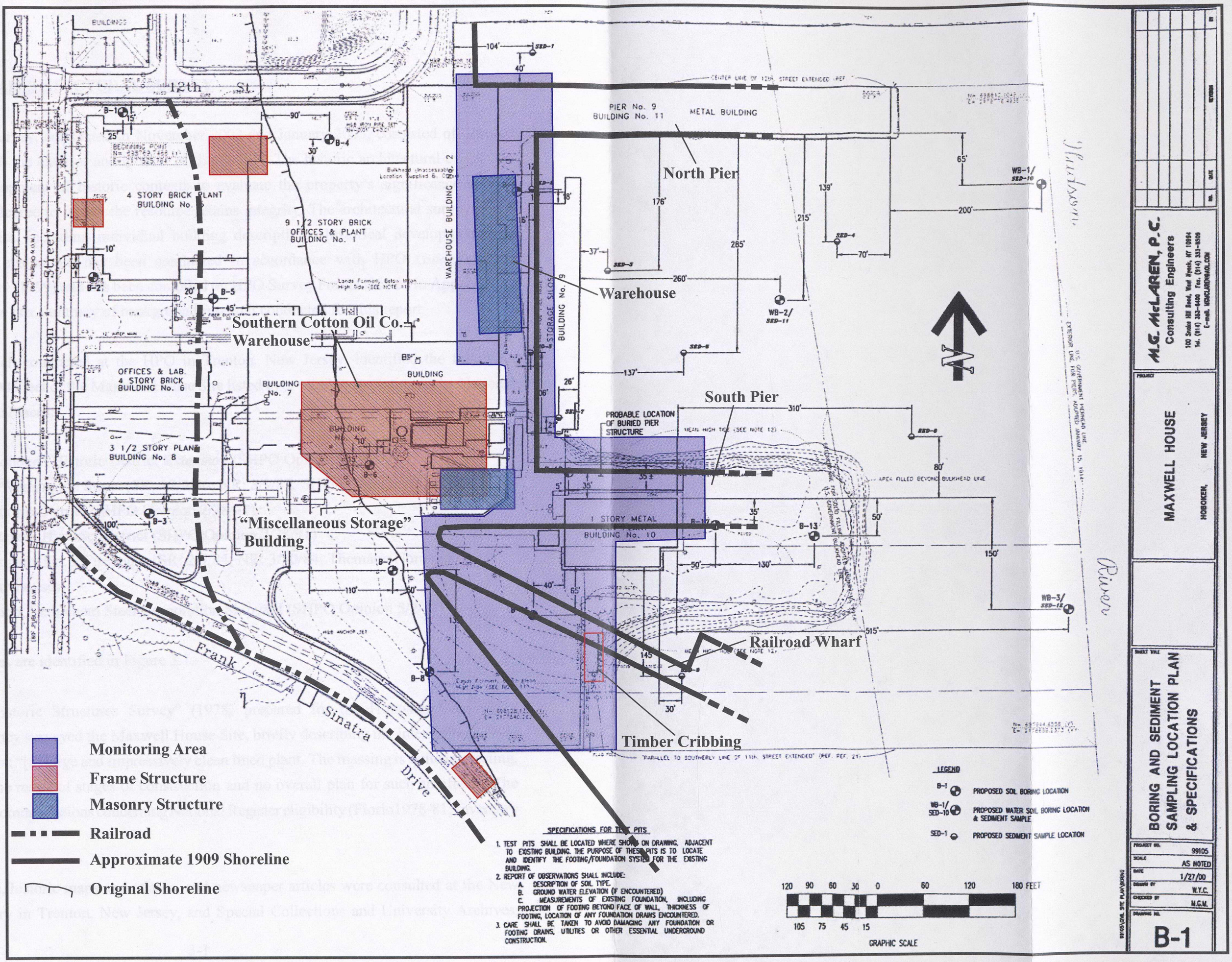


Figure 2.9: Potential Archaeological Resources, Showing Area Recommended for Monitoring.

SECTION 3.0 ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

The architectural survey, conducted in November 2002 and January 2003, consisted of detailed examination of both the exterior and interior of the facility. The historic architectural evaluation included the development of historic contexts to evaluate the property's significance and an assessment of the degree to which the resource retains integrity. The architectural survey of the Maxwell House Site, including individual building descriptions, historical development, and National Register evaluation, has been conducted in accordance with HPO *Guidelines for Architectural Survey* (1999) and has been compiled on HPO Survey Forms located in Appendix A. What follows below is a summary of background research conducted for this report.

Background research conducted at the HPO in Trenton, New Jersey, identified the following resources within 1000 feet of the Maxwell House Site listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

- Southern Hoboken Historic District Extension (SHPO Opinion 4/26/99)
- 1200-1206 Washington Street (SR: 12/3/86; NR: 3/9/87; SHPO Opinion: 6/24/87)
- Stevens Historic District (SHPO Opinion 2/28/91)
- Central Hoboken Historic District (SHPO Opinion 2/28/91)
- Engine Company No. 2 Firehouse (SR: 2/9/84; NR: 3/30/84; Thematic Nomination of Hoboken Firehouses)
- Machine Shop, Bethlehem Steel Corporation Shipyard (SHPO Opinion 5/2/97)

The above resources are identified in Figure 3.1.

The "Hoboken Historic Structures Survey" (1978) prepared for the Hoboken Community Development Agency surveyed the Maxwell House Site, briefly describing the International Style buildings as follows: "[a] large and impressively clean lined plant. The massing is quite interesting, though probably the result of stages of construction and no overall plan for such an effect." The survey made no recommendations concerning National Register eligibility (Florio1978-81; Inventory # 35-5-8).

Secondary sources, historic maps and atlases, and newspaper articles were consulted at the New Jersey State Library in Trenton, New Jersey, and Special Collections and University Archives,

Alexander Library, Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Engineering and architectural journals from the 1930s and 1940s were reviewed at the Van Houten Library, New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, New Jersey and the New York Public Library and the Science Industry and Business Library in New York City, New York. The latter repository also holds annual reports of the General Foods Corporation. The Hoboken Public Library contains a "Maxwell House" vertical file with newspaper articles covering the facility's closing in 1992.

Richard Grubb & Associates would like to thank Becky Haglund Tousey, Archives Manager at Kraft Foods in Morton Grove, Illinois for providing journal articles and historic photographs of the Maxwell House Site. Special thanks to Tony Romano, Head of Security, for leading the consultant on an interior tour of the facility.

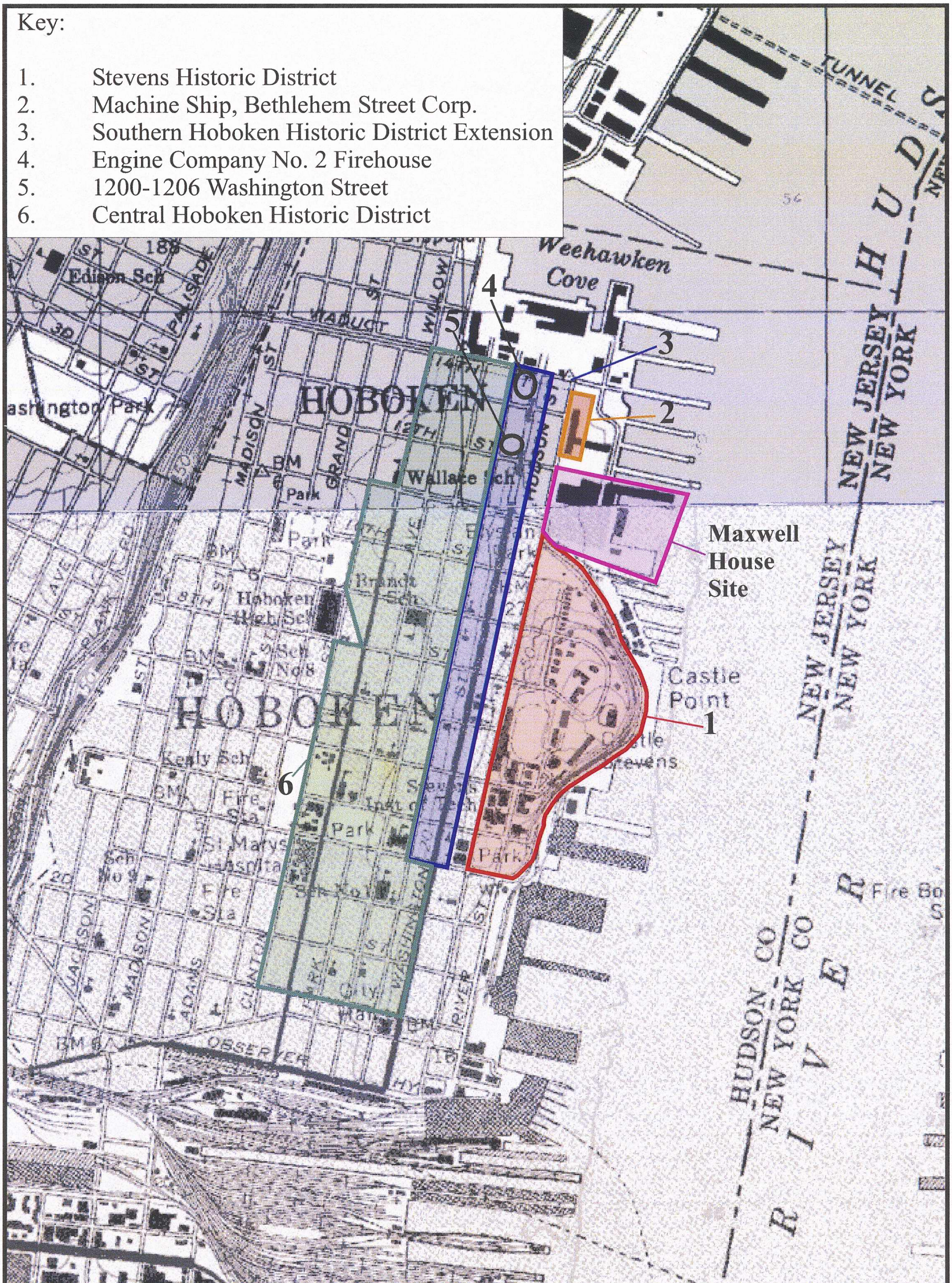


Figure 3.1:

Map of Historic Resources within 1000 Feet of Maxwell House Site (United States Geological Survey 1967, 1995).

SECTION 4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A cultural resources investigation was performed in connection with the Maxwell House Site in the City of Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey. This investigation included background and historical research, a Phase IA archaeological survey, and an intensive-level architectural survey.

The Phase IA archaeological survey identified several potentially significant resources that may remain at the site. These include remains of the "railroad wharf" from the 1870s that may survive in filled areas in the southeastern portion of the site, timber cribbing and other bulkheads associated with the filling of the site in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, remains of the south wharf dating from the turn of the twentieth century, remains of a masonry warehouse associated with the Ocean Steamship Company at the turn of the twentieth century, and the remains of the North Pier, rebuilt in 1939 by Maxwell House. Taken together, these remains offer the opportunity to examine wharf and waterfront construction techniques in Hoboken between the 1870s and the 1940s. Remains of these resources will be impacted by proposed development of recreational facilities along the waterfront of the impact area. It is recommended that construction in those areas be monitored to locate, assess, and record those resources.

There are also industrial archaeological considerations relevant to the Maxwell House Site. In addition to the standing structures, surface structural remains related to the Maxwell House Site, including ell foundations, equipment bases, and the base of a smokestack, were observed in the area south of Buildings 3 and 4. These remains should be recorded at the same time that the remaining Maxwell House structures are recorded (see below).

Based upon an architectural evaluation, it is concluded that the Maxwell House Site does possess the architectural significance necessary for listing in the National Register under Criterion C. Of the 12 buildings in the facility, six are undistinguished, utilitarian structures: Warehouse (1939), Pier Shed (1939), Power House (1939), Gate House (circa 1950s), Storage Silos (1962), and Pilot Plant (circa 1970s). The Soluble Building (1947) and Process Building (1962) emulate but are less evocative of the International Style than the remaining four original buildings that warrant architectural consideration. The Manufacturing Building (1939), Extraction Building (1939), American Can Company Factory (1939) and Central Laboratory (1939) employ, to a certain extent, the vocabulary of the International Style. When applied to vernacular industrial buildings, however, International Style characteristics are less an expression of architectural aesthetic but more a

reflection of practical engineering. The lack of ornamentation was a practical necessity considering the heavy vibrations of operating machinery, as well as a conscious choice on the part of the client (General Foods) to reduce construction time and cost. Flat roofs that are typically found on International Style buildings, are absent in the Maxwell House Site. The Manufacturing Building has multiple rooflines; the American Can Company Factory has sawtooth roofs, although these are not visible from street level; false front roofs on the Offices and Laboratory attempt to conceal the circulation system; and, the stepped gable roof on the Extraction Building looks backward to nineteenth century mills and factories. The expansive interior spaces with evenly spaced columns claimed by the International Style are an American development used since the early twentieth century. This cantilevered floor slab construction allowed for the banded fenestration pattern found on the Manufacturing Building and American Can Company Factory. The varied roofline and vertically articulated windows of the American Can Company Factory's four-story projection is the most visually interesting facade in the complex. But rather than integrated into the design of the entire building, this feature appears to be a separate entity, a poorly executed appendage "architected" merely to conceal the commonality of the factory behind. This lack of harmonious composition is also evidenced by the projecting tower at the northwest corner used to house the stairwell.

To get a sense of what was possible, of what was distinctive in late 1930s American industrial architecture, Talbot Hamlin's 1940 article for *Pencil Points*, "Factories as Architecture," serves as a useful guide. Hamlin singled out some of this country's most notable recently completed industrial buildings. Not surprisingly, Hamlin featured several works by Albert Kahn, including the Gerity-Adrian Manufacturing Company and Ford's River Rouge Plant. Other than prominent architects, Hamlin reviewed designs by engineering firms. The Austin Company in particular, the H.K. Ferguson Company's principal but more refined rival in the field of industrial construction, were singled out for their designs of the Church and Dwight Plant, Penn Electric Switch Company and Progressive Welder Company. Notably absent from Hamlin's review were the H.K. Ferguson Company, whose standardized and conservative designs failed to impress contemporary observers. Overall, Hamlin was generally unimpressed with recent American work, writing that "America is far behind many countries in Europe. It has yet to show a plant as beautiful as the Van Nelle plant in Rotterdam or the Austrian Tobacco plant at Linz, or any one of the several great factories of Sweden or England." Hamlin concluded his article, hopeful that American factory design could only improve: "With the tremendous amounts of factory building necessitated in the near future, the development of American industrial architecture is bound to come of age" (Hamlin 1940).

Though the Maxwell House buildings are recognizable products of their era, they do little to progress the architecture of the day. The utilitarian and conventional buildings on the site, designed and built by the H.K. Ferguson Company, an engineering firm that mass-produced the "standardized factory," were designed from stock plans and are representative of many similar industrial structures throughout the United States. Consequently, H.K. Ferguson buildings are inherently conservative and commonplace. H.K. Ferguson reused their template for Maxwell House from earlier plans, notably the General Foods corn mill in Kankakee, Illinois, built two years prior to Maxwell House. Even 12 years later the conservative design of the Manufacturing Building was reproduced for the Interchemical Company in Hawthorne, New Jersey.

While some of the buildings in the Maxwell House Site have certain characteristics of the International Style, style only serves to date a building. If highlighting typical features classifies a building within a particular style, then what distinguishes good architecture from the vernacular? Further analysis within the style is required to distill those buildings with distinctive characteristics. On a residential building, a hipped roof, overhanging eaves, and horizontal massing identifies it as a Prairie Style dwelling. But the overwhelming majority of Prairie Style dwellings are vernacular interpretations, utilizing shared design elements, and even less aspire to notable design intent, and only a handful are the work of the master, Frank Lloyd Wright. Similarly, there are those buildings designed by the skillful hand of the architect or engineer that truly represent the continuum of the International Style and advances in production layout. Then there are others, like the buildings of the Maxwell House Site that are static, representing omnipresent and prosaic products of their time.

This investigation has further concluded that the Maxwell House Site is historically significant on the local level and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The property is intimately associated with the industrial development of Hoboken and represents one of the last and largest industrial facilities to locate in that city, historically a heavily manufacturing-oriented city that played a central role in the industrial development of the New York metropolitan area. When completed in 1939, the Maxwell House Site became the largest coffee roasting plant in the world, producing more than half of the General Foods Corporation's output of Maxwell House Coffee, the nations best selling brand of coffee for more than 40 years. The Hoboken facility housed the General Foods Corporation's Central Laboratories, the company's research and development division that tested and refined old brands and introduced new brands for the entire General Foods product line. Prior to its shutdown in 1992, after most industrial concerns had left Hoboken, the Maxwell House Site had been the city's largest employer.

The Maxwell House Site is not associated with an individually significant person and does not meet Criterion B of the National Register.

The suggested period of significance for the Maxwell House Site is 1939-1953, from the time the facility opened to the 50 year cutoff. Key contributing resources include the following buildings original to the complex: Manufacturing Building, Warehouse, Extraction Building, American Can Company Factory, Offices & Central Laboratory, and Pier Shed. Despite the removal of windows and sealing of window openings the remaining original building, the Power House, is recommended a contributing resource. Because the Soluble Building, built in 1947, was present during the period of significance and its massing and brick exterior are compatible with the original structures, it should be considered contributing. The Gate House (ca. 1960s), Process Building (1962), Storage Silos (1962) and Pilot Plant (circa 1970s) fall outside the period of significance and are non-contributing resources.

Prior to demolition of the existing buildings it is recommended that the following mitigation measures undertaken:

- Record the Maxwell House Site to an appropriate level of Historic American Buildings Survey documentation. As part of the recordation effort, selected original plans, presently housed on-site, should be archivally duplicated. Copies of this report should be provided to the following repositories: Hoboken Museum; Hoboken Public Library; Special Collections and University Archives, Alexander Library, Rutgers University; and New Jersey State Library. Recordation of the surviving structures and surface remains should interpret their role in the industrial processes that occurred on the site and discuss the relationship of the physical development of the site with changing technologies of coffee production.
- Publication and distribution of a popular document that illustrates the historical development of the Maxwell House Site. This document should be kept on site for public review and be distributed to local historical societies, libraries, and preservation organizations.
- Develop a historic plaque or panel to commemorate the site.
- Display original signs, machinery, and other historic elements of the Maxwell House Site in public spaces, such as lobbies or indoor common areas.

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HISTORIC DISTRICT OVERLAY

Historic Sites #:

District Name: Maxwell House Site

County(s): Hudson **District Type:** Industrial

Municipality(s): City of Hoboken **USGS Quad(s):** Jersey City & Weehawken

Local Place Name(s):

Development Period: 1939 To 1992 **Source:** See "History"

Physical Condition: Fair

Remaining Historic Fabric: Medium

Registration and Status Dates:

National Historic Landmark: ____ SHPO Opinion: ____

National Register: ____ Local Designation: ____

New Jersey Register: ____ Other Designation: ____

Determination of Eligibility: ____ Other Designation Date: ____

Description:

The Maxwell House Site consists of 12 buildings, constructed between 1939-circa 1970s for processing coffee. The property has been recommended locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for being the largest coffee processing complex in the world when completed in 1939, for contributing to the development of the General Foods Corporations through the Central Laboratories, and for exemplifying Hoboken's central role in the economic and industrial development of the New York metropolitan area. While many of the buildings exhibit characteristics of the International Style, it has been concluded that the buildings are conventional and vernacular interpretations of the style and therefore not eligible for National Register listing under Criterion C. All major, original buildings of the plant remain and are considered contributing resources to the plant. They include the following: Manufacturing Building, Warehouse, Extraction Building, Power House, American Can Company Factory, Offices & Central Laboratory, and Pier Shed. Additions to the facility include the Soluble Building (1947), Gate House (circa 1960s), Process Building (1962), Storage Silos (1962) and Pilot Plant (circa 1970s). Of these, the Soluble Building is considered a contributing resource as its massing and brick exterior harmonize with the rest of the complex. The suggested period of significance is 1939-1953, from the time the plant opened to the 50 year cutoff.

Setting:

The Maxwell House Site is located on a 14-acre site bounded on the south by Frank Sinatra Drive, on the north by 12th Street, on the west by Hudson Street, and on the east by the Hudson River. Across the street from the plant, on the west side of Hudson Street, is the Southern Hoboken Historic District Extension (SHPO Opinion 2/28/91), which includes an intact row of late nineteenth century brownstones. To the south, across Frank Sinatra Drive, is the Stevens Historic District (SHPO Opinion 2/28/91), significant for its associations with the Stevens Institute, founded in 1870, and for its intact collection of turn of the twentieth century mansions and academic buildings. The Machine Shop, Bethlehem Steel Corporation Shipyard (SHPO Opinion 5/2/97) is immediately north of the plant, within "The Shipyard" residential complex.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R. Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

BASE SURVEY FORM

Historic Sites #:

Property Name: Maxwell House Site

Street Address: *Street #:* 1125 (Low) _____ (High) *Apartment #:* _____ (Low) _____ (High)

Prefix: _____ *Street Name:* Hudson *Suffix:* _____ *Type:* ST

County(s): Hudson **Zip Code:** 07030

Municipality(s): City of Hoboken

Local Place Name(s): _____ **Block(s):** 261 **Lot(s):** 1

Ownership: Private **USGS Quad:** Jersey City & Weehawken

Description:

The Maxwell House Site is located on a 14-acre site bounded on the south by Frank Sinatra Drive, on the north by 12th Street, on the west by Hudson Street, and on the east by the Hudson River. The complex consists of 12 buildings built between 1939-1970s for the storage, roasting and canning of coffee. The massing and window treatments of many of the buildings are characteristic of the International Style. The General Foods Corporation closed the facility in 1992. Proposed development of the site consists of townhouses, apartment buildings, commercial and retail space, as well as open space.

Registration and Status Dates:

National Historic Landmark: _____ SHPO Opinion: ___/___/___

National Register: ___/___/___ Local Designation: ___/___/___

New Jersey Register: ___/___/___ Other Designation: _____

Determination of Eligibility: ___/___/___ Other Designation Date: ___/___/___

Photograph:

5" x 3.5" - Please mount photos as indicated.
For portrait oriented photos, mount with the top to the left.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

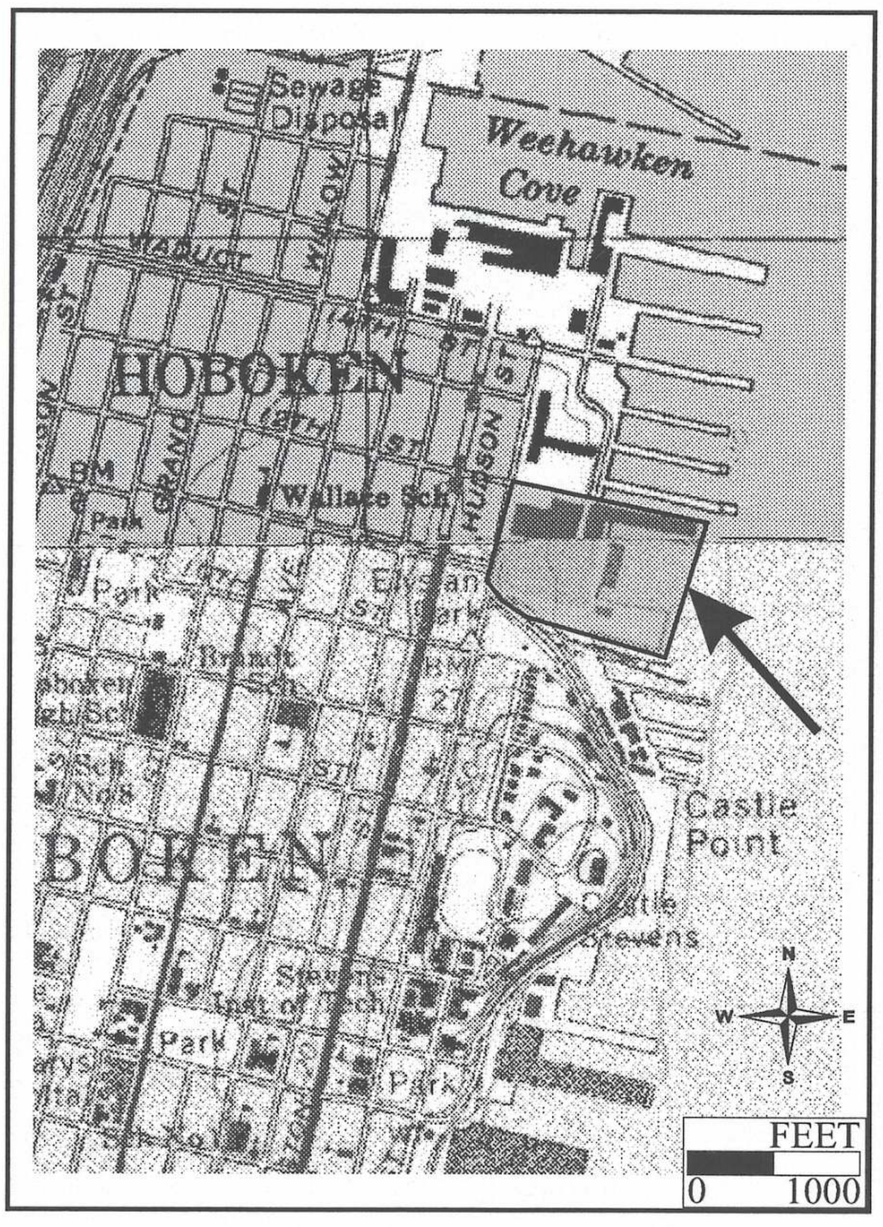
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

BASE SURVEY FORM

Historic Sites #:

Location Map:



Site Map:

INTENSIVE-LEVEL USE ONLY

2.5" x 3.5"
(Include North Arrow and Bar Scale)

SEE FOLLOWING PAGE

Bibliography/Sources:
SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Additional Information:

Original construction plans are housed on-site.

More Research Needed? ☐ Yes ☒ No

INTENSIVE-LEVEL USE ONLY:

Attachments Included: 2 Building/Element ____ Landscape ____ Farm
3 Bridge 11 Industry

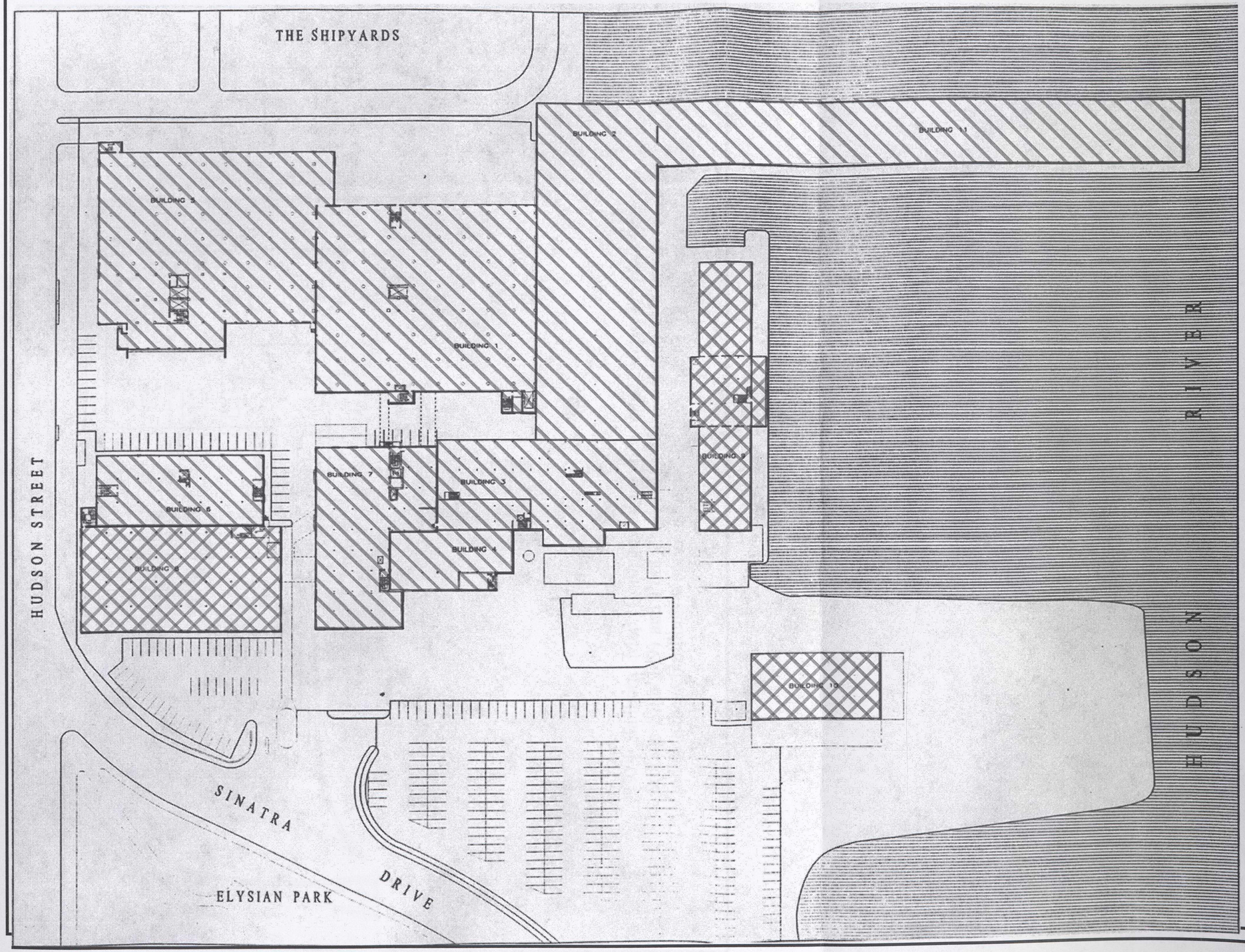
Historic District: ☒ Yes ☐ No **Historic District Name:** Maxwell House Site

Status: 6 Key Contributing 2 Contributing 4 Non Contributing

Associated Archaeological Site/Deposits? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(Known or potential sites - If yes, please describe briefly)
Archaeological monitoring recommended during demolition and excavation of the site.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

CONTINUATION SHEET



SITE PLAN
MAXWELL HOUSE SITE

Key:

1. Manufacturing Bldg. (1939)
2. Warehouse (1939)
3. Extraction Bldg. (1939)
4. Power House (1939)
5. Can Factory (1939)
6. Offices & Lab (1939)
7. Soluble Bldg. (1947)
8. Process Bldg. (1962)
9. Storage Silos (1962)
10. Pilot Plant (ca. 1970s)
11. Pier Shed (1939)
12. Gate House (ca. 1960s)

Contributing Building

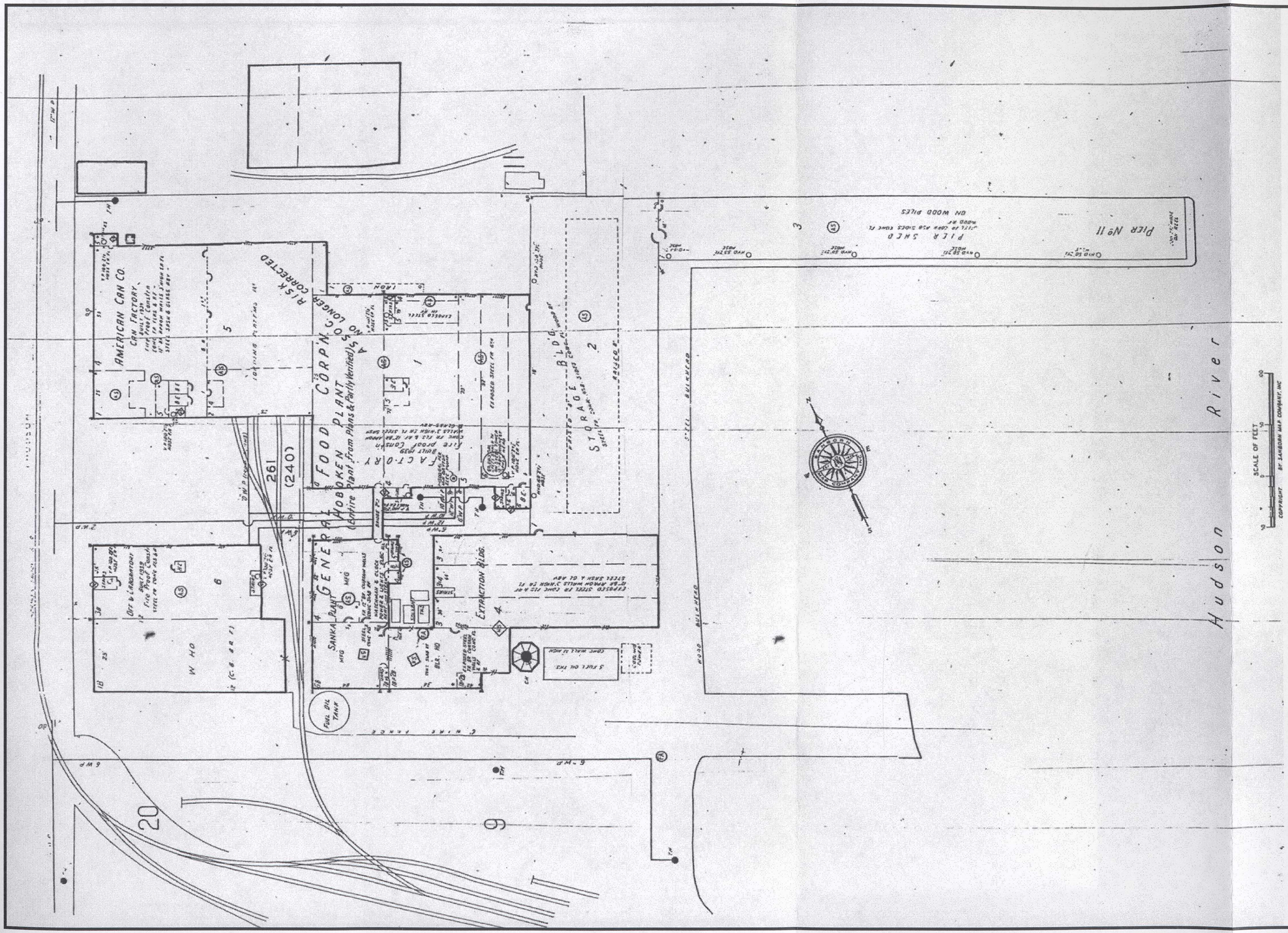
Non-Contributing Building

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R. Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

Date: November 2002

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



1979 Sanborn Map Company, *Fire Insurance Maps of Hoboken, NJ.* Storage Silos (#9) and Pilot Plant (#10) are not depicted, although records indicate these buildings were constructed in 1962 and ca. 1970s, respectively.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site

Surveyor: Glenn R. Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

Date: November 2002

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Manufacturing Building

Historic Name: Manufacturing Building

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #1

Construction Date: 1938-39 **Source:** Plaque

Alteration Date(s): 1950s-1990s **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Architect: H.K. Ferguson Company **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: H.K. Ferguson Company **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Style: International **Length:** 210' **Stories:** 4

Width: 185' **Bays:** 3

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, 5/1 common bond

Foundation Materials: Brick, 5/1 common bond

Structural System: Concrete flat slab **Roof System:**

Roof Finish Materials: Foam

Equipment/Machinery: Removed

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Four-story reinforced concrete building with mezzanine. Atop the roof are 3 penthouse structures: one atop the mezzanine at the east side of the building has masonry walls supported by steel columns and beams. This structure forms part of the support for the water tower and the former "Good to the Last Drop" sign, which was removed in 1993. Two other penthouses that housed the coffee processing machinery, are on the west side and have corrugated metal walls supported by steel columns and beams. The building's setbacks were designed as future floors for live loads, as the building columns were extended through the roof and temporarily capped. Bands of iron spot buff brick spandrels alternate with multi-light industrial windows with steel mullions. Glazing does wrap around the corners but is not continuous, as it is interrupted near the corners by brick piers. Appended to the southeast elevation is a rectangular tower that rises above the roofline and houses the circulation system. Fifteen truck bays on the north elevation are surmounted by a metal canopy. As built in 1938, the western section of the building was two-stories tall. An additional two stories, possibly added in the 1950s, is primarily brick, with paired, recessed windows. While the majority of windows are intact, some have been replaced by large, modern single-light windows or have been removed and infilled with brick.

Two bridges connect this building with the Soluble Building (#7): connecting the second and third stories of both buildings (See "Bridge Attachments").

Interior Description:

The building formerly housed roasting, grinding and canning machinery, all of which have been removed. Floors are 10.5" thick flat slabs with drop panels supported by concrete mushroom columns arranged on a 24-foot grid.

Setting:

The building is located on the northern part of the property and abuts the Can Factory (#1) on the west and the Warehouse (#2) on the east.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Warehouse

Historic Name: Warehouse

Present Use: Storage

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #2

Construction Date: 1939 **Source:** Ferguson (1939)

Alteration Date(s): _____ **Source:** _____

Architect: H.K. Ferguson Company **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: H.K. Ferguson Company **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Style: None **Length:** 125' **Stories:** 1

Width: 330' **Bays:** 1

Exterior Finish Materials: Corrugated asbestos panels

Foundation Materials: Brick

Structural System: Steel frame **Roof System:** Truss

Roof Finish Materials: Built up tar

Equipment/Machinery: N/a

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Single-story, rectangular warehouse with corrugated asbestos siding and slab-on-grade floor. The butterfly or "M" roof has multi-light industrial sash with steel mullions. A metal door and fixed 12-light window is at the west elevation.

Interior Description:

Large open interior space with steel roof trusses and two rows of steel columns,

Setting:

Located on northeastern part of property and abutting Pier Shed (#11) on the east, the Processing Building (#1) on the west and the Extraction Building (#3) on the south.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site **Date:** November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Extraction Building

Historic Name: Extraction Building

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #3

Construction Date: 1938-39 **Source:** Ferguson (1939)

Alteration Date(s): 1960s **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Architect: H.K. Ferguson Company **Physical Condition:** Fair

Builder: H.K. Ferguson Company **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Style: International **Length:** 220' **Stories:** 3

Width: 90' **Bays:** 3

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, 5/1 running bond

Foundation Materials: Brick

Structural System: Steel frame **Roof System:** Hip truss; web joist or steel beam

Roof Finish Materials: Foam

Equipment/Machinery: Removed

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Three-story steel frame building with monitor roof with vents and iron spot buff brick facing. The central portion of the building features a 4-story pavilion with stepped gable roof and centered multi-light windows. The pavilion is flanked by three-story wings with wraparound and continuous steel multi-light windows alternating with bands of brick spandrels. In the 1960s metal cladding was added to the exterior walls.

Interior Description:

The building was used to extract caffeine for Sanka and Maxwell House Decaf. Extensive renovations and additions in the 1960s altered the internal layout (McLaren 2000). The original checkered plate floors were continuous throughout the building, but they were interrupted by new levels installed during alterations. The original roof is supported by hip trusses, and the renovated area is supported by open web joists or steel beams.

Setting:

Located at southeast of property, abutting Warehouse (#2) to the north, Soluble Building (#7) to the east and Power House (#4) to the south.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Power House

Historic Name: Power House

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #4

Construction Date: 1938-39 **Source:** Ferguson (1939)

Alteration Date(s): 1940s & 1960s **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Architect: H.K.Ferguson Company **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: H.K.Ferguson Company **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Fair

Style: International **Length:** 120' **Stories:** 6

Width: 60' **Bays:** 5

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, 5/1 common bond

Foundation Materials: Brick

Structural System: Steel frame **Roof System:** Steel truss

Roof Finish Materials: Not visible

Equipment/Machinery: Removed

Transportation Links: Dock; Rail siding

Exterior Description:

Six-story, steel frame building with brick exterior. All windows and doors have been removed and sealed. By 1951, the eastern end of the building was raised another story and a brick-faced addition was constructed.

Interior Description:

Single large open space. Roof supported by trusses that rest on north and south walls and on a row of interior columns. The building housed two Babcock & Wilcox boilers designed for operating pressure of 400 pounds, with a maximum capacity of 35,000 pounds of steam per hour (*Compressed Air Magazine* 1941). Remnants of support structures for boilers still evident.

Setting:

Located at south end of property, abutting Extraction Building (#3) on the east and Soluble Building (#7) on the west. A brick chimney is east of the Power House.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: American Can Company Factory

Historic Name: American Can Company Factory

Present Use: Office-private business

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #5

Construction Date: 1939 **Source:** Ferguson (1939)

Alteration Date(s): 1960s **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Architect: H.K.Ferguson Company **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: H.K.Ferguson Company **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Style: International **Length:** 210' **Stories:** 4

Width: 170' **Bays:** 7

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, 5/1 common bond

Foundation Materials: Brick

Structural System: Concrete flat slab **Roof System:** Steel beams and columns

Roof Finish Materials: Foam

Equipment/Machinery: Removed

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Four-story, reinforced concrete building with iron spot buff brick exterior. Atop the roof are four sawtooth skylights, and rising from the southwest corner of the building is a large steel smokestack (built ca. 1940-1946). The building features alternating bands of multi-light, industrial sash and brick spandrels. The sash wraps around corners, and is nearly continuous but for several interruptions by brick piers. The most visually interesting feature of the building (and the entire complex) is the south elevation, with its four-story projection with multiple setbacks and corner windows . The section partially houses the circulation system, the stairwell revealed by the vertically oriented sash. Though of visual interest, this portion conceals the monotony of the factory to the rear, rather than integrates with the whole. Similarly, the rectangular tower at the northwest corner that houses a separate stairwell appears more attached than attuned to the rest of the building.

Alterations include replacement of second story windows (west elevation) and first story windows (north elevation). A series of truck bays have been added to the south facade. As built, a railroad siding had entered a one-story wing to the east. This section has been raised one story, evidenced by lighter colored brick and the railroad bays converted for trucks.

Interior Description:

Building produced coffee containers, but all machinery has been removed. The four main floors are reinforced concrete, with 10.5" thick flat slab construction with drop panels supported by mushroom columns arranged on a 22'x24' grid. The roof is supported on steel beams and columns. The building presently houses the offices of the Hoboken Brownstone Company.

Setting:

Located at the northwest corner of the property along Hudson Street. The building abuts the Processing Building (#1) on the east.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Offices and Central Laboratory

Historic Name: Offices and Central Laboratory

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #6

Construction Date: 1938-39 **Source:** Ferguson (1939)

Alteration Date(s): 1960s and 1990s **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Architect: H.K. Ferguson Company **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: H.K. Ferguson Company **Remaining Historic Fabric:** High

Style: International **Length:** 165' **Stories:** 4

Width: 70' **Bays:** 3

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, 5/1 common bond

Foundation Materials: Brick

Structural System: Steel frame **Roof System:**

Roof Finish Materials: Foam

Equipment/Machinery:

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Four-story, steel frame building with raised basement and buff brick exterior. Around the length of the building are wide bands of multi-light windows with steel mullions separated by brick spandrels. Windows on the top floor have been replaced. The west elevation features a false front roof that partially conceals roof entry from the stairwell. This feature is better integrated on the east elevation, where a slightly projecting pavilion with centered windows and brick piers rises to the level of the roof access. As completed in 1938, this building was the only standalone structure on the Maxwell House Site, but in 1962 Process Building (#8) was appended to the south elevation and partially wrapped around the west (Hudson Street) elevation.

Interior Description:

Not inspected. The building housed the offices for Hoboken's Maxwell House Division, as well as the Central Laboratories for the General Foods Corporation.

Setting:

Located at southwestern end of property, facing Hudson Street, and abuts the Process Building (#8) on the south.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Soluble Building (Sanka Plant)

Historic Name: Soluble Building (Sanka Plant)

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processsing **Building ID:** #7

Construction Date: 1947 **Source:** Annual Report (1947)

Alteration Date(s): 1957 **Source:** Annual Report (1957)

Architect: **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Style: International **Length:** 117' **Stories:** 8

Width: 179' **Bays:** 8

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, 5/1 common bond

Foundation Materials: Brick

Structural System: Steel frame **Roof System:**

Roof Finish Materials:

Equipment/Machinery: Removed

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Eight-story, steel frame building with brick exterior. The building was constructed in three phases: the original or central block, built in 1947, is 72x142'; in 1957, a 45x82' addition was built on the northeast (Dry Side), and a 84x37' addition on the south (Wet Side). The 1947 section largely emulates the International Style of the original buildings in the complex except that glazing is narrower and not continuous. Corner windows are absent, with scored brick piers employed instead. The southern addition has wraparound windows (replacement) above the second story, glass block on the second story, and loading bays on the first.

Two enclosed bridges at the north elevation connect the second and third stories of this building with the Manufacturing Building (#1). A third bridge at the east elevation connects the third floor with the Process Building (#8) (See "Bridge Attachments").

Interior Description:

Not inspected

Setting:

Located in the south central portion of the property, abutting the Extraction Building (#3) and the Power House (#4)on the east.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Process Building

Historic Name: Process Building

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #8

Construction Date: 1962 **Source:** Hoboken Planning Board (2000)

Alteration Date(s): 1960s and 1970s **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Architect: General Foods Corp. (In-house) **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: **Remaining Historic Fabric:** High

Style: Modernistic **Length:** 195' **Stories:** 2

Width: 105' **Bays:** 8

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, 5/1 common bond

Foundation Materials: Brick

Structural System: Steel frame **Roof System:**

Roof Finish Materials: Not visible

Equipment/Machinery: Removed

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Two-story, steel frame building with brick exterior. This stark building is eight bays wide on the south elevation with punched, multi-light windows. Basement windows have been removed and sealed. The west elevation is concealed by ivy. A corrugated steel tower rises from the northeastern section of the building.

Interior Description:

Floors are reinforced concrete over metal decking supported on massive, closely spaced steel beams. The beams are supported by massive steel columns.

Setting:

Located at southeastern corner of property along Hudson Street and abutting Offices and Central Laboratory (#6) on the south.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Storage Silos

Historic Name: Storage Silos

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #9

Construction Date: 1962-63 **Source:** Hoboken Planning Board (2000)

Alteration Date(s): 1981 **Source:** Hoboken Planning Board (2000)

Architect: MacDonald Engineering Co. **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: **Remaining Historic Fabric:** High

Style: None **Length:** 465' **Stories:** 6

Width: 90' **Bays:** N/A

Exterior Finish Materials: Corrugated asbestos sheets

Foundation Materials:

Structural System: Steel frame; reinforced concrete **Roof System:**

Roof Finish Materials: Corrugated asbestos sheets

Equipment/Machinery: Exterior machinery extant

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Six-story, steel frame, windowless building constructed over the Hudson River with pile foundations. The Process Building consists of three sections: the northern and southern sections consist of exposed reinforced concrete silo arrays and the central section is faced with corrugated steel panels. Projecting from the central section is a control room, below which are two, two-story cement block sections with paired metal doors framed by single-light windows. Running the length of the east side of the building are conveyor belts. A one-story cement block south addition was built in 1981. A bridge platform connects this building with the Warehouse (#2).

The building was used by General Foods to store green (unprocessed) coffee beans after being unloaded from ships. The 40 enclosed silos on either side of the building had a storage capacity of 20.5 million pounds of coffee beans.

Interior Description:

Not inspected

Setting:

Building faces Hudson River at the eastern edge of the property. Along with the Pilot Plant, this is the only other standalone building in the complex.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Pilot Plant

Historic Name: Pilot Plant

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processsing **Building ID:** #10

Construction Date: Ca. 1970s **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Alteration Date(s): 1988 **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Architect: _____ **Physical Condition:** Excellent

Builder: _____ **Remaining Historic Fabric:** High

Style: None **Length:** 75' **Stories:** 1

Width: 50' **Bays:** 1

Exterior Finish Materials: Corrugated metal

Foundation Materials: Concrete

Structural System: Steel frame **Roof System:** Hip truss

Roof Finish Materials: Not visible

Equipment/Machinery: Removed

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

One-story, steel frame, gable front building with open interior. The building features asymmetrical, fixed light windows in the east gable end and a garage bay at the north elevation. A one-story, flat roof addition was appended to the east side of the building in 1988. The southern addition was made at an unknown date.

Interior Description:

Not inspected

Setting:

Located at the southeastern corner of the property, facing the Hudson River.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

INDUSTRY ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Pier Shed

Historic Name: Pier Shed

Present Use: None

Historic Industry: Coffee Processing **Building ID:** #11

Construction Date: 1939 **Source:** Ferguson (1939)

Alteration Date(s): _____ **Source:** _____

Architect: H.K. Ferguson Company **Physical Condition:** Fair

Builder: H.K. Ferguson Company **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Style: None **Length:** 511' **Stories:** 1

Width: 63' **Bays:** 1

Exterior Finish Materials: Corrugated asbestos sheets

Foundation Materials: _____

Structural System: Steel frame **Roof System:** Hip truss

Roof Finish Materials: Corrugated asbestos sheets

Equipment/Machinery: N/A

Transportation Links: Dock; rail siding

Exterior Description:

Long, rectangular, steel frame warehouse with a single bay at the east gable end. Twenty-one bays on the north elevation are divided by steel piers; the upper half of the bays have multi-light windows that have been painted over. The building sits on a relieving platform of timber piles, pile caps, and deck and gravity bulkheads.

Interior Description:

The interior consists of a single large open space, steel truss roof and concrete slab floor.

Setting:

Located at northeastern end of the property, resting on a pier jutting out into the Hudson River. The Pier Shed abuts the Warehouse (#2) on the west.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

BUILDING/ELEMENT ATTACHMENT

☒ BUILDING ☐ STRUCTURE ☐ OBJECT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Gate House (#12)

Historic Name: Gate House (#12)

Present Use: No activity

Historic Use: Unclassifiable activity

Construction Date: Ca. 1960s **Source:** Stylistic

Alteration Date(s): _____ **Source:** _____

Designer: _____ **Physical Condition:** Medium

Builder: _____ **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Style: Modernistic

Form (B): _____ **Stories (B):** 1

Type (B, S): _____ **Bays (B):** 4

Roof Finish Materials (B, S): Metal

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, running bond

Exterior Description:

One-story gate house with brick exterior and overhanging flat metal roof. The building features modern windows and doors and a small vehicular passageway.

Interior Description:

Setting:

The Gate House is located at the western end of the property and fronts Hudson Street.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

BRIDGE ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Bridge between 2nd floor of Manufacturing Bldg (#1) and Soluble Bldg (#7)

Historic Name: Bridge between 2nd floor of Manufacturing Bldg (#1) and Soluble Bldg (#7)

Feature Carried: N/A

Feature Crossed: N/A **Milepost:** _____

Owner/Operator: _____ **SI&A Structure Number:** | | | | | | | |

Construction Date: Post-1947 **Source:** General Foods (1947)

Alteration Date(s): _____ **Source:** _____

Engineer: _____ **Physical Condition:** Poor

Builder: _____ **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Type: Through truss **Spans:** 1

Design: Warren **Length:** _____

Material: Steel **Width:** _____

Patent Holder: _____

Patent Date: _____

Description:

This bridge connects the second stories of Soluble Building (#7) building with the Manufacturing Building (#1). It is a multi-purpose, two-level bridge: the upper level, used for pedestrian access, has metal and glass walls, corrugated steel roof deck, and concrete slab floor. The lower level supports two belt-type conveyors and numerous runs of pipe and electrical cables. The bridge is supported by the walls of the two buildings it spans. The original bridge at this location was a steel girder bridge built in 1947 while the Soluble Building was under construction. The date of construction of the existing bridge is not known.

Setting:

Located at the eastern end of the courtyard within the Maxwell House Site.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site **Date:** November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

BRIDGE ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Bridge between 3rd floor of Soluble Bldg (#7) and Manufacturing Bldg (#1)

Historic Name: Bridge between 3rd floor of Soluble Bldg (#7) and Manufacturing Bldg (#1)

Feature Carried: N/A

Feature Crossed: N/A **Milepost:** _____

Owner/Operator: _____ **SI&A Structure Number:** _____

Construction Date: 1956 **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Alteration Date(s): _____ **Source:** _____

Engineer: _____ **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: _____ **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Type: Through truss **Spans:** 1

Design: Warren **Length:** _____

Material: Steel **Width:** _____

Patent Holder: _____

Patent Date: _____

Description:

The third story bridge is slightly east of the second floor bridge and provides passage for pedestrians and cargo. The bridge has steel and glass walls, a corrugated steel roof deck and concrete slab floor. It is supported by two steel trusses that are carried by a steel frame at the north end of the Soluble Building.

Setting:

Located at the eastern end of the courtyard within the Maxwell House Site.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site **Date:** November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

BRIDGE ATTACHMENT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Bridge between 3rd floor of Soluble Bldg (#7) and Process Bldg (#8)

Historic Name: Bridge between 3rd floor of Soluble Bldg (#7) and Process Bldg (#8)

Feature Carried: N/A

Feature Crossed: N/A **Milepost:** _____

Owner/Operator: _____ **SI&A Structure Number:** _____

Construction Date: 1965 **Source:** M.G. McLaren (2000)

Alteration Date(s): _____ **Source:** _____

Engineer: General Foods Corporate Engineering Dept. **Physical Condition:** Poor

Builder: _____ **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Type: Through girder **Spans:** 1

Design: _____ **Length:** _____

Material: _____ **Width:** _____

Patent Holder: _____

Patent Date: _____

Description:

The bridge provided passage for pedestrians and cargo. It has steel and glass walls, a corrugated steel roof deck and concrete slab floors supported by steel beams and girders that are carried by columns of both buildings. The bridge was designed by General Foods Corporate Engineering Department in 1965.

Setting:

Located above the passageway from Frank Sinatra Drive to the interior courtyard.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

BUILDING/ELEMENT ATTACHMENT

☐ BUILDING ☒ STRUCTURE ☐ OBJECT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: Smokestack

Historic Name:

Present Use: No activity

Historic Use: Coffee Processing

Construction Date: 1939 **Source:** Sanborn (1939); M.G. McLaren (2000)

Alteration Date(s): **Source:**

Designer: M.W. Kellogg Company **Physical Condition:** Good

Builder: **Remaining Historic Fabric:** High

Style:

Form (B): **Stories (B):** N/A

Type (B, S): **Bays (B):** N/A

Roof Finish Materials (B, S): N/A

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick

Exterior Description:

This brick smokestack with reinforced steel straps is 162 feet high and tapers from a diameter of approximately 17 feet at the base to approximately 7 feet at the top. A second stack had been south of this stack but was demolished after 1970 (M.G. McLaren 2000).

Interior Description:

Setting:

The smokestack is located near the south end of the property, east of the Power House (Bldg. #4) and south of the Extraction Building (Bldg. #3).

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R. Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

BUILDING/ELEMENT ATTACHMENT

☐ BUILDING ☒ STRUCTURE ☐ OBJECT

Historic Sites #:

Common Name: "Good to the Last Drop" Sign (not extant)

Historic Name: "Good to the Last Drop" Sign

Present Use: None

Historic Use: Marketing/advertising

Construction Date: 1939 **Source:** *Jersey Journal* (May 1, 1993)

Alteration Date(s): 1993 **Source:** *Jersey Journal* (May 1, 1993)

Designer:

Builder:

Style:

Form (B):

Type (B, S):

Physical Condition: Good

Remaining Historic Fabric: Low

Stories (B): N/A

Bays (B): N/A

Roof Finish Materials (B, S):

Exterior Finish Materials:

Exterior Description:

The most prominent and most remembered feature of the Maxwell House Site, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign was the de facto symbol of Maxwell House and an icon on the Hoboken landscape. The sign was first lit May1,1939, its thousands of feet of neon tubes illuminating the Maxwell House brand of coffee to millions of observers, to seagoers on passing ocean liners, to office workers in New York skyscrapers, to pedestrians catching a glimpse down the corridor toward the river. Built on top of the Manufacturing Building (#1), the sign measured 182 feet long and 72 feet high. Large copper letters weighing three tons broadcast "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" across the Hudson River. To the left of the lettering was a tilted coffee cup, 42 feet high. Below were two coffee drops, each nine feet in diameter. These "last drops" could hold almost 30,000 cups of coffee and the cup, nearly two million. The "Good to the Last Drop" sign joined the ranks of other advertising legends in the New York area- the Colgate Clock in Jersey City, the Swingline billboard in Long Island City, and the Domino Sugar billboard in Brooklyn. When the sign went permanently dark in 1992, local residents spoke of sadness, "[t]his is definitely a landmark that's probably as significant to Hoboken as the Colgate Clock was to the people of Jersey City." On May 1, 1993, 54 years to the day since it was first lit, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign was dismantled and taken away. Today only the skeletal frame remains.

Interior Description:

Setting:

The sign sat atop the Manufacturing Building (#1) and faced the Hudson River and New York City.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002

Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET

Historic Sites #:

History:
SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

Statement of Significance:
SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

Eligibility for New Jersey and National Registers: ☒ Yes ☐ No **National Register Criteria:** ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

Level of Significance: ☒ Local ☐ State ☐ National

Justification of Eligibility/Ineligibility:
SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

For Historic Districts Only:

Property Count: Key Contributing: 6 Contributing: 2 Non Contributing: 4

For Individual Properties Only:

List the completed Attachments related to the property's significance:

Manufacturing Building; Warehouse; Extraction Building; Power House; American Can Company Factory; Offices and Central Laboratory; Soluble Building (Sanka Plant); Process Building; Storage Silos; Pilot Plant; Pier Shed; Gate House; Bridge between 2nd floor of Manufacturing Bldg and Soluble Bldg; Bridge between 3rd floor of Soluble Bldg and Manufacturing Bldg; Bridge between 3rd floor of Soluble Bldg and Process Bldg; Smokestack; "Good to the Last Drop" Sign (not extant).

Narrative Boundary Description:

City of Hoboken, Hudson County, Block 261, Lot 1.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

HISTORY

Joel Cheek

Joel Owsley Cheek arrived at Nashville's prestigious Maxwell House Hotel in 1892 carrying several bags of his personal blend of coffee. Born in 1852 on the Cheek family farm in rural Kentucky, Joel Cheek went to Nashville in1873 where he found work as a traveling salesman, specializing in selling coffee for a wholesale grocery store. In 1884, he became partner in the firm, called Cheek, Webb & Company. All the while Cheek had been experimenting with coffee samples, mixing them until he found the right blend. By that day in 1892, when he met Mr. Bledwell, the food buyer at the Maxwell House, Cheek felt he had finally found the optimal blend. Cheek gave Bledwell 20 pounds for free to use on a trial basis. When the coffee ran out and the hotel when back to its regular brew the guests complained. Cheek's coffee was brought back to hotel and granted a six-month trial after which he was allowed to name the blend after the hotel (Ukers 1935: 445; Pendergrast 1999: 131)

The following year Check formed a partnership with John Norton, but when Norton departed in 1901 Cheek partnered with John Neal to form the Nashville Coffee and Manufacturing Company, later renamed the Cheek-Neal Coffee Company. The company produced several other less expensive brands of coffee, but it was the Maxwell House brand that proved to be the company's most popular. In 1905, the Cheek-Neal Company opened a roasting facility in Houston, Texas, followed by others in Jacksonville, Florida in 1910 and Richmond, Virginia in 1916 (Pendergrast 1999: 132).

Maxwell House Coffee achieved ever-lasting recognition and the foundation for its future sales pitch in 1907. That year President Theodore Roosevelt visited the Hermitage in Nashville and was served a cup of Maxwell House Coffee. When asked how the coffee tasted, Roosevelt had purportedly had said it was "Good to the last drop" (Ukers 1935: 445; Pendergrast 1999:133). While Maxwell House could not buy a better endorsement, capturing a broader share of the coffee drinking public proved to be difficult in a coffee market dominated by larger, more well-established brands. At a time when coffee makers concentrated on regional markets, Maxwell House had well-established itself in the south. Dominating the coffee market was Arbuckle Brothers, whose Ariosa brand of coffee had outsold all others for many years, accounting for one out of every seven pounds of coffee sold in the United States. In 1913, Arbuckle Brothers successfully launched Yuban coffee to become New York City's preferred coffee. With its manufacturing plant in Brooklyn, Arbuckle Brothers had a foothold on the New York City market and the east coast, by far the largest coffee consuming market in the nation (Pendergrast 1999: 135).

Maxwell House took aim at Arbuckle Brothers in 1921, building a new roasting plant in Brooklyn. In 1923, due in no small part to a successful marketing campaign showing flappers sipping coffee, Maxwell House overtook Yuban as Manhattan's leading brand of coffee. Maxwell House continued to expand its market, building new roasting plants in Los Angeles in 1924 and Chicago in 1927 (1929 Annual Report). In 1927, after erecting a "Good to the Last Drop" neon sign in Times Square and flying a monoplane named *Miss Maxwell House* across the country to promote their product, Maxwell House became the best-selling brand of coffee in the nation, a position it would hold for the next 40 years (Pendergrast 1999: 172).

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

HISTORY (continued)

General Foods

The success of the Cheek-Neal Company, in general, and Maxwell House, in particular, caught the eye of Edward F. Hutton, CEO of the Postum Cereal Company, a national cereal and beverage corporation that changed its name the following year to General Foods Corporation. During the 1920s, the Postum Company was looking to diversify its product line by buying recognizable and profitable consumer brands. On August 1,1928, the Postum Cereal Company acquired the Cheek-Neal Company, renaming it Maxwell House Products Company. Postum paid $42 million for the Cheek-Neal Company, enough for Joel Cheek to split the profits with his nine children and two nephews and make them all instant millionaires (Pendergrast 1999: 172).

General Foods acquired the Cheek-Neal Company at the peak of the economic boom. After the stock market crash of 1929, coffee sales declined, hitting Maxwell House especially hard since it was one of the highest priced brands on the market. Profits of nearly $3 million a year on sales of 50 million pounds before the 1929 crash disappeared to no profit on sales of 39 million pounds in 1932 (Pendergrast 1999: 192). While consumers would pay the higher price of Maxwell House coffee in flush times, the dramatic decline in personal income required that the leaders of General Foods take action, lest they completely lose their market share to the lower priced competitors. In an effort to cut costs, General Foods consolidated coffee making operations, closing its plants in Nashville, Richmond, and Chicago (1936 Annual Report).

As a further cost-cutting measure, General Foods trimmed its advertising budget, from $3 million to $1million, concentrating all of it on a new medium- radio. An hour long variety show called the "Maxwell House Show Boat," inspired by the Jerome Kern musical of 1927, debuted in 1932. The show is credited with innovations for the medium: it was the first radio show to have a live audience, and the first to instruct the audience with cue cards that read "APPLAUSE" and "LAUGH." Within a year on the air the "Maxwell House Show Boat" had become the most listened to radio show in the nation. The shows popularity attracted famous stars of the era, with appearances by Bob Hope, Robert Benchley, Gloria Swanson, Jackie Coogan, Amelia Earhart and Dale Carnegie. The script was so written that audiences would here pouring coffee, rattling coffee cups and lip-smacking, all testifying to the great taste of Maxwell House (Pendergrast 1999: 194).

Meantime, General Foods scientists experimented with modifying the Maxwell House blend. In order to lower the retail price by a nickel, less Brazilian beans and more, much less expensive high-grown mild beans were added. The price cut and improved blend were announced on the January 1, 1933 Maxwell House Show Boat. Sales rose 70% two months later and 85% by year's end (Pendergrast 1999:194). In the midst of a deep economic depression, Maxwell House actually increased its profits. As Bill Benton, partner in Benton & Bowles, the advertising firm that handled the Maxwell House account observed: "Maxwell House didn't know there was a Depression. The chain stores were selling coffee that was almost as good- the difference was undetectable- for a much lower price. But advertising so gave glamor and verve to Maxwell House that it made everybody think it was a whale of a lot better" (Pendergrast 1999: 195). While unemployment lines in America grew longer, employment at General Foods doubled between 1929-1939, from 5,500 to 11,000 (*Jersey Journal* October 16, 1939). Throughout the Depression years, General Foods solidified Maxwell House's lead in the coffee market by absorbing the competition. In 1932, the company acquired Sanka, the leading decaffeinated coffee, adding to its growing roster of coffees that also included Kaffee Hag and Bliss. The once dominant but now ailing Arbuckle Brothers was taken over by General Foods in 1937 (Derdak 1993: 272).

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

HISTORY (continued)

With profits at an all time high General Foods found that its existing coffee facilities were struggling to keep up with demand. General Foods needed not only a large roasting facility, but one near its corporate offices in New York and convenient enough for its mid- and high level managers to work in a proposed laboratory and regional office. In Hoboken, New Jersey, the company found what it was looking for on a ten-acre site along the Hudson River. The site held some decaying warehouses formerly used by the U.S. Government as well as the remnants of the R.G. Matthews Corporation lumberyard, which had burned to the ground in 1937 (Hoboken Planning Board 2000).

Before industry came to Hoboken, when the city was still a rural retreat for pleasure seekers from across the river, the chosen site had been a broad, bucolic lawn, with towering shade trees and winding paths known as Elysian Fields. It was here, on June 19, 1846, that the New York Nine defeated the Knickerbocker Club 23-1 in the first baseball game ever played. The same year the New York Yacht Club erected its first clubhouse, a small gothic Revival building, at the foot of 10th Street along the Hudson River. The first commodore of the club, John Cox Stevens, built the yacht "America," and in 1851, "America" sailed to England to win the first "America's Cup" (Heaney 1976).

The fields and tranquility would soon be overcome by industry, by the construction of railroads, shipping piers and industrial buildings. By 1891, land west of the Hudson River, between 10th and 12th streets- the location for the new Maxwell House Site - had been filled in and was occupied by the Ocean Steamship Company, operators of the Savannah Line (Sanborn Map Company 1891). By 1909, the American Warehouse & Trading Company and W& A Fletcher Co. Iron Works and Shipyard shared the site (Hopkins 1909), and between 1920-1937 the site was maintained by the federal government, who leased part of the land to such company's as the Southern Cotton Oil Company, Elasticap Company and R.G. Matthews Corporation (Hoboken Planning Board 2000).

Construction and Operation

The ground breaking ceremony for the facility was held on June 6, 1938, and the first building to be completed, the Extraction Building, also known as the Sanka Plant, went into operation in January 1939 (1939 Annual Report). On Friday, October 13, 1939 Hoboken's Maxwell House Division was formally dedicated (*The Spice Mill* 1939). To announce the opening of new plant, President of General Foods, Clarence Francis, held a luncheon at Meyers Hotel for 150 guests, including Hoboken Mayor, Bernard N. McFeely, and Robert Cheek, son of the founder Joel Cheek, who served as director of General Foods (*Jersey Journal* October 16, 1939; *New York Times* October 14, 1939). General Foods held an "Open House Party" over the weekend, giving tours of the new facility to some 6,000 visitors, including local residents, stockholders, food distributors, and members of the press (1939 Annual Report). Hoboken's local paper, *The Jersey Journal*, printed the story the following Monday, quoting conciliatory remarks made by Clarence France during the luncheon and reporting that the Hoboken site had been selected because of its "live and helpful community," and that the plant had been built in "record time" (*Jersey Journal* October 16, 1939). The *New York Times* devoted half a column in the Business Section to the opening of the "Big Plant," which was certainly an understatement, since the Maxwell House Site was the largest coffee roasting plant in the world (*New York Times* October 14, 1939).

HISTORY (continued)

The seven original buildings, with over 500,000 square feet of floor space, consisted of the Manufacturing Building, Warehouse, Extraction Building, Power House, American Can Company Factory, Offices and Central Laboratory, and Pier Shed. Extending 522 feet into the Hudson River was the Pier Shed, a steel-frame building built atop timber piles. The Warehouse, a long one-story, steel-frame structure is attached to the rear and at a 90 degree angle to the Pier Shed. The three-story Extraction Building is at the south side of the Warehouse, and attached to the south side of the Extraction Building is the Power House. Along the west side of the Warehouse rises the four-story Manufacturing Building, where coffee is cleaned, roasted and canned. Attached to the west side of the Manufacturing Building is the American Can Company Factory, the last of the original buildings in the complex to be completed. The only standalone building in the complex was the Offices and Central Laboratory, which had its own entrance on Hudson Street, separate from the rest of the factory workers. To process instant coffee, the Soluble Building was constructed in 1947 on the site of coal bins used to fuel the roasters. Further expansion occurred in the 1962 when the Process Building was constructed adjacent to the Central Laboratory, and tons of fill were deposited in the Hudson River to erect the Storage Silos. General Foods built the Storage Silos to store green (unprocessed) coffee beans after being unloaded from ships. The 40 enclosed silos on either side of the building had a storage capacity of 20.5 million pounds of coffee beans. The last building to be erected on the site was the Pilot Plant in the 1970s.

Inside the plant, coffee processing was efficiently carried out. With two shifts working 24 hours a day, the plant was capable of blending, roasting, grinding and packaging 300 tons of coffee every day, equal to 25,000 cups every minute (*Compressed Air Magazine* 1941). In 1940, one year after the Maxwell House Site opened, the plant had 386 employees, making it one of Hoboken's largest employers, joining the likes of American Lead Pencil, Bethlehem Steel, and General Electric (Gribben 1940). Freighters laden with green beans from all over the world, from Tanzania, Uganda, Costa Rica, Columbia and Brazil, docked alongside the pier. Burlap sacks of green beans weighing 132 pounds were unloaded and then sorted according to type and stored for up to a year on wooden pallets in the Warehouse, a single-story, steel-frame building capable of holding up to 7000 tons of green beans (*Compressed Air Magazine* 1941). When ready to be processed, the beans were raised in bucket elevators to the sixth floor of the Processing Building, where the entire operation, from cleaning to canning, was achieved by the "gravity-flow method,"a method where each step in the coffee making process was arranged vertically within a single building. First the beans were poured into a cleaner where streams of high pressured air remove all foreign matter. The cleaned coffee beans were then mixed with other beans in a blender, roasted for 20 minutes, cooled for another twenty, and then sent to pneumatic separators to remove stones and other heavy material. The roasted coffee descended via storage bins to the grinding equipment. Finally the ground coffee descended to the floor below into filling machines. After the coffee was inspected, it passed to ground level where the finished coffee was packaged and sealed (*Factory Management* 1940). For the manufacture of the decaffeinated brands Sanka and Kaffee Hag, caffeine was removed in the Extraction Building. Caffeine and coffee oils were removed from the beans, then taken by pipeline to the Laboratory, where the caffeine was refined. Coffee oils and wax were then returned to the beans prior to roasting to preserve the coffee flavor (*The Spice Mill* 1939). Packaged coffee was transported either from a truck loading facility on the north side of the Manufacturing Building or by railroad siding of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad that entered the plant from present-day Frank Sinatra Drive and terminated at the south side of the Can Factory. As truck transport proved to be more economical than rail after World War II, the railroad facilities were replaced by truck bays.

In the Offices and Central Laboratory, Maxwell House employed 275 scientists and laboratory personnel to train scientists from other Maxwell House Divisions in the United States and overseas, to create new products for the company, and to refine existing products for the entire General Foods product line, from Log Cabin Syrup to Grape Nuts, from Hellman's Mayonnaise to Jell-O. The Central Laboratories experimented with methods to dehydrate, can and freeze foods, analyzed the effectiveness of different machinery to remove dust, and studied the effects of caffeine on both laboratory rats and humans (Annual Report 1952).

HISTORY (continued)

One of the laboratory's most important innovations was developing a special method to capture coffee aroma. During the grinding process, coffee beans release a natural gas. To capture this gas, or aroma, pipes built into the grinding machines sent the gas upstairs, where the gas was frozen with liquid nitrogen, producing a snow-like substance called "coffee aroma frost." This frost was mixed with raw coffee oil and then converted to a liquid. A tiny bit of this liquid coffee aroma was squirted into the coffee and the can was quickly sealed, waiting to be released upon opening (*Hoboken Reporter*, June 13, 1984).

During World War II, the Central Laboratories experimented with different processes to dissolve coffee grinds in hot water to produce instant coffee. Instant coffee had been on the market since World War I, but due to its poor taste it had only limited appeal. In 1945, General Foods introduced Instant Maxwell House and Instant Sanka to compete with what was then the leading brand of instant coffee, Nescafe (Derdak 1993: 272). For the production of instant coffee, the Soluble Building was erected adjacent to the Extraction Building in 1947. Processing instant coffee required a substantial financial outlay for tall spraying towers and additional treatment processes, but the final product cost 1.25 cents per cup, 1 cent less than regular. By 1952, instant coffee accounted for 17% of all coffee consumption in the country, and the following year Instant Maxwell House surpassed Nescafe as the nation's leading instant brand (Pendergrast 1999: 240).

Mostly hidden from the rest of Hoboken but clearly seen from across the Hudson River, the "Good to the Last Drop" would be the most remembered feature of the Maxwell House Site. Perched atop the Manufacturing Building, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign was the de facto symbol of Maxwell House and an icon on the Hoboken landscape. The sign was first lit on May 1,1939, its thousands of feet of neon tubes illuminating the Maxwell House brand of coffee to millions. The sign measured 182 feet long and 72 feet high. Large copper letters weighing three tons broadcast "MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE" across the Hudson River. Left of the lettering was a tilted coffee cup, 42 feet high. Below were two coffee drops, each nine feet in diameter. These "last drops" could hold almost 30,000 cups of coffee; the cup, nearly two million. The "Good to the Last Drop" sign joined the ranks of other advertising legends in the New York metropolitan area - the Colgate Clock in Jersey City, the Swingline Billboard in Long Island City, and the Domino Sugar Billboard in Brooklyn. When the plant closed in 1992, it would be the sign that local residents identified with most, saying it "is definitely a landmark that's probably as significant to Hoboken as the Colgate Clock was to the people of Jersey City" (*Maxwell House Messenger* 1961; *Hoboken Reporter*, June 13, 1984; *Jersey Journal* May 1, 1993).

The International Style and Factory Design

For the design and construction of the new facility, General Foods selected the H.K. Ferguson Company, an engineering and construction firm based in Cleveland, Ohio. The company had been founded by Harold K. Ferguson in 1918, and by the 1930s the H.K. Ferguson Company had become one of the country's leading builders of industrial facilities, constructing plants for Procter & Gamble, National Cash Register, Firestone Tire and Rubber, and Union Carbide. In 1937, the H.K. Ferguson Company had completed the largest corn mill in the world for General Foods in Kankakee, Illinois (Bradley 1999: 251). This eight-story structure had set back roofs and featured bands of continuous glazing, concrete spandrels, and complete lack of ornament, characteristics of the International Style. The engineering journal, *Architectural Concrete,* observed that the continuous spandrels and sash on the corn mill produced "a clean-cut, pleasing exterior without resort to ornament in any form" (Maag 1938). The outward appearance of the corn mill is strikingly similar to the American Can Company Factory and Manufacturing Building, although for those buildings Ferguson would continue the fenestration around the corners of the buildings.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

HISTORY (continued)

Americans were first introduced on a wide scale to the International Style, then known as European modernism, during the *Chicago Tribune* competition of 1922. Although the Gothic-inspired winning entry appeared to be a victory for historical styles, entries by European architects, such as Adolf Loos and Walter Gropius, distanced themselves from historical styles and pointed the way of the future. In 1926, Walter Gropius's Bauhaus School buildings in Dessau, Germany dramatized the steel frame with cantilevered and recessed terraces and broad glass plates almost flush with the wall plane. The American public was formally introduced to the new style in 1932, when Henry Russell Hitchcock and Phillip Johnson launched "The International Style," a retrospective of modern architecture at the newly opened Museum of Modern Art in New York City (Hitchcock and Johnson 1995).

Several characteristics distinguish the International Style from historic architectural styles. Applied ornament was replaced by self-decoration. Roofs were flat and buildings were monochrome. Long runs of ribbon windows emphasized horizontality, and major facades were arranged asymmetrically. In its overall composition, International Style buildings emphasized volume over mass, highlighting open interiors and revealing skeletal construction.

One of finest examples of the style applied to industrial buildings is the Van Nelle Tobacco and Coffee processing plant in Rotterdam (1928-1930; Brinkman & Van der Vlugt, Architects). This shimmering assemblage of factory buildings features wide glass windows and narrow bands of brick spandrels. In America, the pinnacle of industrial design is arguably the Starrett-Lehigh Building in New York City (1929-1931; Cory & Cory, Architects). The Starrett-Lehigh Building, part office, part warehouse, is defined by its curved corners and continuous ribbons of glass windows (Condit 1961: 170).

By the 1930s, the International Style's emphasis on volume over mass, and the use of ribbon windows to flood the interior with light and ventilation was readily accepted in factory design. But to the engineers who designed America's industrial buildings, conveying a particular "style" had less to do with an aesthetic sensibility and was more a product of practical considerations and standard construction techniques. While the design aesthetic of minimal or no architectural ornamentation became defining characteristics of the International Style, the minimal facade detail had a practical purpose, as the vibration of machinery argued against projecting ornamentation on exterior walls (Bradley 1999: 231).

What made the continuous glazing possible were cantilevered slab floors, a method of construction first developed by Claude A.P. Turner of Minneapolis at the turn of the twentieth century. Known as the Turner System, it was distinguished by flat slab concrete floors supported by flared or mushroom columns that proved to be extremely effective in distributing heavy loads and reducing stress on the members. A refinement of this system was the Drop-slab system, first implemented in the Sears, Roebuck and Company warehouse in Chicago in 1912, where square concrete pads were placed between the column capital and the underside of the floor slab (Condit 1961: 168). Cantilevering the floor slabs beyond the peripheral columns allowed for continuous ribbon windows even around the corners of buildings, allowing for maximum interior light and air. Two of the Maxwell House buildings, Manufacturing Building and the American Can Company Factory, employ flat slab concrete construction, their mushroom columns being the most distinctive interior feature.

HISTORY (continued)

To the engineer, the practical necessities of plant layout, internal arrangement of machinery, and adequate working light and air were tantamount to a well-designed factory. The arrangement of equipment ensured the smooth flow of raw materials to finished product. Industrial facilities must also be flexible. That is, the buildings on the site should be designed to allow for easy alteration, enlargement or adaptability to purposes other than original intention. Writing about the necessity of an efficiently planned and functional internal layout, H.K. Ferguson wrote in 1939: "My own high mark to date is making and testing thirty-four alternative layouts for one plant before arriving at the one and only one extremely simple and clean-cut arrangement which most nearly harmonized the ideal and practicable layout in all particulars" (after Bradley 1999: 81).

Harold K. Ferguson was born in 1883 in Albion, Michigan. After graduating from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1905, Ferguson went to work for the Austin Company, a major engineering firm that would later rival Ferguson in the field of industrial design (*New York Times*, December 10, 1943). While at the Austin Company, Ferguson had developed the "standard factory" principle of building, a technique that called for the construction of factory buildings from stock plans (Bradley 1999; *Architectural Record* , June 1939). By using standard plans that could be easily adapted to different industrial processes, the H.K. Ferguson Company earned a reputation for its ability to mass produce standardized factory buildings in both a short time frame and at a competitive price. "Standard designs are necessary," wrote Ferguson, "because industrial buildings are always wanted in a hurry. Furthermore, some kind of a standard is necessary as a base upon which to make improvements. It is much better to refine a standard product than to attempt to embark upon a radically new, though theoretically improved product" (Engineering News-Record 1936).

Clearly, Ferguson's primary concern was efficiency in construction rather than architectural expression. By using stock plans, it is likely that many reinterpreted variations of the Maxwell House buildings exist throughout the country. As noted earlier, the General Foods Corn Mill (1937) in Kankakee, Illinois, is markedly similar to the Manufacturing Building and American Can Company. In fact, in 1951, 12 years after the Maxwell House Site was completed, H.K. Ferguson erected a near twin for the Interchemical Corporation in Hawthorne, New Jersey. The manufacturing plant consisted of seven buildings, all but one more than a single story. That rectangular, four-story building, featured an attached tower containing the stairwell and bands of glazing and brick spandrels that, in this case, featured wider spandrels between the third and fourth story (Dodge Corporation 1957:99).

Post-World War II and Decline

During World War II, government rationing of coffee significantly reduced sales on the homefront. But the coffee industry still managed to prosper as the military supplied American GI's with all the coffee they could drink. Maxwell House converted its Hoboken facility to produce "10-in-1" rations, waterproof, shockproof packages that included enough food and coffee for ten people a day (Pendergrast 1999: 224).

By wars end, the General Foods Corporation could boast of 77 plants and processing units, 66 in the United States, 7 in Canada, and 4 overseas (1947 Annual Report). Of the four Maxwell House Divisions then in operation, it was the Hoboken plant that produced more than half of all Maxwell House Coffee. During the1950s, with coffee consumption at an all-time high, the Maxwell House Site reached its peak period of production by employing 2,000 factory workers, scientists and managers, five times the number when the plant opened in 1939 (Jersey Journal June 28, 1990).

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

HISTORY (continued)

During the 1960s, General Foods coffee, represented by its Maxwell House, Sanka and Yuban brands still dominated the coffee market, accounting for over 1/3 of national coffee sales, with Maxwell House coffee, "the well-advertised and low-priced giant," leading the pack with 24% of the coffee market (Pendergrast 1999: 271). But by this time, coffee consumption was on the decline, dropping from 3.1 cups a day in 1962 to 2.2 cups in 1974. In 1962, nearly three-quarters of all Americans drank coffee, a figure that dropped to little more than one-half by 1982, a drop of 39% (Pendergrast 1999: 314). In 1978, Procter & Gamble entered the New York and eastern market, unveiling its Folger's brand, a coffee previously confined to the western market and the number two brand behind Maxwell House. Folger's soon garnered 28% of the coffee drinking public to surpass Maxwell House (Pendergrast 1999: 334). Price wars with Folger's and declining sales led to further unprofitability for Maxwell House. By the 1980s, a new trend of smaller roasters with speciality coffees further cut into Maxwell House's sales. It became clear that Maxwell House, long the behemoth of the coffee industry, was being trounced.

After Phillip Morris acquired General Foods in 1985, production at Maxwell House Divisions across the country were scaled back to almost half their capacity. By the late 1980s, it became clear that the declining trend in coffee consumption was not going to be reversed. As a drastic cost-cutting measure, a decision was made in 1990 to close one of two Maxwell House Divisions: Hoboken or Jacksonville. The Jacksonville facility, a complex predating the Hoboken plant by more than 20 years and in operation since the days of Joel Cheek, had the advantage of being closer to Central American markets and providing cheaper labor. Despite offering greater economic incentives to stay, Phillip Morris announced on June 27, 1990 that it would shut down the Hoboken plant by the spring of 1992 (*New York Times* June 28, 1990). Maxwell House was Hoboken's largest employer, and with the plant's closure 600 jobs, mostly blue-collar, were lost. On May 1, 1993, 54 years to the day since it was first lit, the "Good to the Last Drop" sign was dismantled and taken away (*Jersey Journal* May 1,1993).

The demise of Maxwell House followed in a long line of factory closings in Hoboken, after Lipton Tea, Tootsie Roll, Levolor and Colgate-Palmolive, to name only a few. Factory closings and the trend to relocate industrial facilities from the inner city to larger complexes in the suburbs began after the Second World War. Hudson County, in general, and Jersey City and Hoboken, in particular, were especially hard hit as more and more manufacturers left the region. Some local residents were hopeful that the site would not remain vacant for very long. The owner of the Elysian Café said "I'm optimistic that a future developer will come in. If they just let [the land] linger I'm afraid that will be a big mistake." Others were indifferent, stating "I think Hoboken will survive without Maxwell House" (*Hoboken Reporter* July 8, 1990).

Almost immediately after the plant closing was announced, General Foods and Hoboken Mayor Patrick Pasculli led developers on a tour of the site and requested proposals for its development (*Hudson Dispatch*, February 21, 1991.). No action was taken, and today, 12 years later, the facility stands idle, with some space leased to a variety of tenants. As of January 2003, the Hoboken Planning Board has approved preliminary plans to develop to the site into townhouses, apartments, commercial and retail space, as well as open space.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Based upon an architectural evaluation, it is concluded that the Maxwell House Site is not architecturally significant and therefore not eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C. Of the 12 buildings in the facility, six are simple, utilitarian structures: Warehouse (1939), Pier Shed (1939), Power House (1939), Gate House (circa 1960s), Storage Silos (1962), and Pilot Plant (circa 1970s). The Soluble Building (1947) and Process Building (1962) emulate but are less evocative of the International Style than the remaining four original buildings that warrant architectural consideration. The Manufacturing Building, Extraction Building, American Can Company Factory and Central Laboratory employ, to a certain extent, the vocabulary of the International Style. When applied to vernacular industrial buildings, however, International Style characteristics are less an expression of architectural aesthetic but more a reflection of practical engineering. The lack of ornamentation was a practical necessity considering the heavy vibrations of operating machinery, as well as a conscious choice on the part of the client (General Foods) to reduce construction time and cost. Flat roofs that are typically found on International Style buildings, are absent in the Maxwell House Site. The Manufacturing Building has multiple rooflines; the American Can Company Factory has sawtooth roofs, although these are not visible from street level; false front roofs on the Offices and Laboratory attempt to conceal the circulation system; and, the stepped gable roof on the Extraction Building looks backward to nineteenth century mills and factories. The expansive interior spaces with evenly spaced columns claimed by the International Style are an American development used since the early twentieth century. This cantilevered floor slab construction allowed for the banded fenestration pattern found on the Manufacturing Building, Extraction Building, American Can Company Factory. The varied roofline and vertically articulated windows of the American Can Company Factory's four-story projection is the most visually interesting facade in the complex. But rather than integrated into the design of the entire building, this feature appears to be a separate entity, a poorly executed appendage "architected" merely to conceal the commonality of the factory behind. This lack of harmonious composition is also evidenced by the projecting tower at the northwest corner used to house the stairwell.

To get a sense of what was possible, of what was distinctive, in late 1930s American industrial architecture, Talbot Hamlin's 1940 article for *Pencil Points*, "Factories as Architecture," serves as a useful guide. Hamlin singled out some of this country's most notable recently completed industrial buildings. Not surprisingly, Hamlin featured several works by Albert Kahn, including the Gerity-Adrian Manufacturing Company and Ford's River Rouge Plant. Other than prominent architects, Hamlin reviewed designs by engineering firms. The Austin Company in particular, the H.K. Ferguson Company's principal but more refined rival in the field of industrial construction, were singled out for their designs of the Church and Dwight Plant, Penn Electric Switch Company and Progressive Welder Company. Notably absent from Hamlin's review were the H.K. Ferguson Company, whose standardized and conservative designs failed to impress contemporary observers. Overall, Hamlin was generally unimpressed with recent American work, writing that "America is far behind many countries in Europe. It has yet to show a plant as beautiful as the Van Nelle plant in Rotterdam or the Austrian Tobacco plant at Linz, or any one of the several great factories of Sweden or England." Hamlin concluded his article, hopeful that American factory design could only improve: "With the tremendous amounts of factory building necessitated in the near future, the development of American industrial architecture is bound to come of age" (Hamlin 1940).

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

While the Maxwell House buildings are recognizable as products of their era, they do little to progress the architecture of the day. The engineers at the H.K. Ferguson Company erected utilitarian and conventional buildings. The firm mass-produced the "standardized factory," designing similar structures from stock plans throughout the United States with some modifications to suit a particular industrial purpose. Consequently, H.K. Ferguson buildings are inherently conservative and commonplace. H.K. Ferguson reused their template for Maxwell House from earlier plans, notably the General Foods corn mill in Kankakee, Illinois, built two years prior to Maxwell House. Even 12 years later the conservative design of the Manufacturing Building was reproduced for the Interchemical Company in Hawthorne, New Jersey.

While some of the buildings in the Maxwell House Site have certain characteristics of the International Style, style only serves to date a building. If highlighting typical features classifies a building within a particular style, then what is there to distinguish good architecture from the vernacular? Further analysis within the style is required to distill those buildings with distinctive characteristics. On a residential building, a hipped roof, overhanging eaves, and horizontal massing identifies it as a Prairie Style dwelling. But the overwhelming majority of Prairie Style dwellings are vernacular interpretations, utilizing shared design elements, and even less aspire to notable design intent, and only a handful are the work of the master, Frank Lloyd Wright. Similarly, there are those buildings designed by the skillful hand of the architect or engineer that truly represent a continuum of the International Style and advances in production layout. Then there are others, like the buildings of the Maxwell House Site, that are static, representing omnipresent and prosaic products of their time.

This investigation has further concluded that the Maxwell House Site is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. When completed in 1939, the Maxwell House Site became the largest coffee roasting plant in the world, producing more than half of the General Foods Corporation's output of Maxwell House Coffee, the nations best selling brand of coffee for more than 40 years. The Hoboken Plant housed the General Foods Corporation's Central Laboratories, the company's research and development division that tested and refined old brands and introduced new brands for the entire General Foods product line. The Maxwell House Site was one of the last and largest industrial facilities to locate in Hoboken, historically a heavily manufacturing-oriented city that played a central role in the industrial development of the New York metropolitan area. Prior to its shutdown in 1992, after most industrial concerns had left Hoboken, the Maxwell House Site had been the city's largest employer, and a lone reminder of Hoboken's industrial past.

The suggested period of significance for the Maxwell House Site is 1939-1953, from the time the plant opened to the 50 year cutoff. Key contributing resources include the following buildings original to the complex: Manufacturing Building, Warehouse, Extraction Building, American Can Company Factory, Offices & Central Laboratory, and Pier Shed. Despite the removal of windows and sealing of window openings the remaining original building, the Power House, is recommended a contributing resource. The Soluble Building, built in 1947, was present during the period of significance and its massing and brick exterior are compatible with the original structures. The Gate House (circa 1960s), Process Building (1962), Storage Silos (1962) and Pilot Plant (circa 1970s) fall outside the period of significance and are non-contributing resources.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

JUSTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY/INELIGIBILITY

The Maxwell House Site is historically significant and eligible for the National Register under Criterion A as the location of the largest coffee roasting plant in the world when it was completed in 1939, as the producer of the nation's best-selling brand of coffee, as the home to General Foods research laboratories, and as one of the last physical reminders of Hoboken's industrial heritage. Since the property is not associated with a significant individual, it does not meet Criterion B. The Maxwell House Site does not possess architectural significance and is not eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C. Buildings on the Maxwell House Site are utilitarian and conventional buildings designed and built from stock plans that are common, vernacular interpretations of the International Style.

Overall, the property retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical significance. Since the facility opened in 1939, numerous additions and alterations have been made to all of the buildings; however, these alterations do not significantly detract from their industrial purposes, and the resource retains a moderate level of integrity of materials, workmanship and design. Despite the near complete abandonment of the facility, the intact buildings, waterfront setting and courtyard plan convey integrity of feeling, association and setting. The property retains integrity of location.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Looking south on Hudson Street to Maxwell House Site (lower building at left).



Looking north on Hudson Street to Maxwell House Site at right.

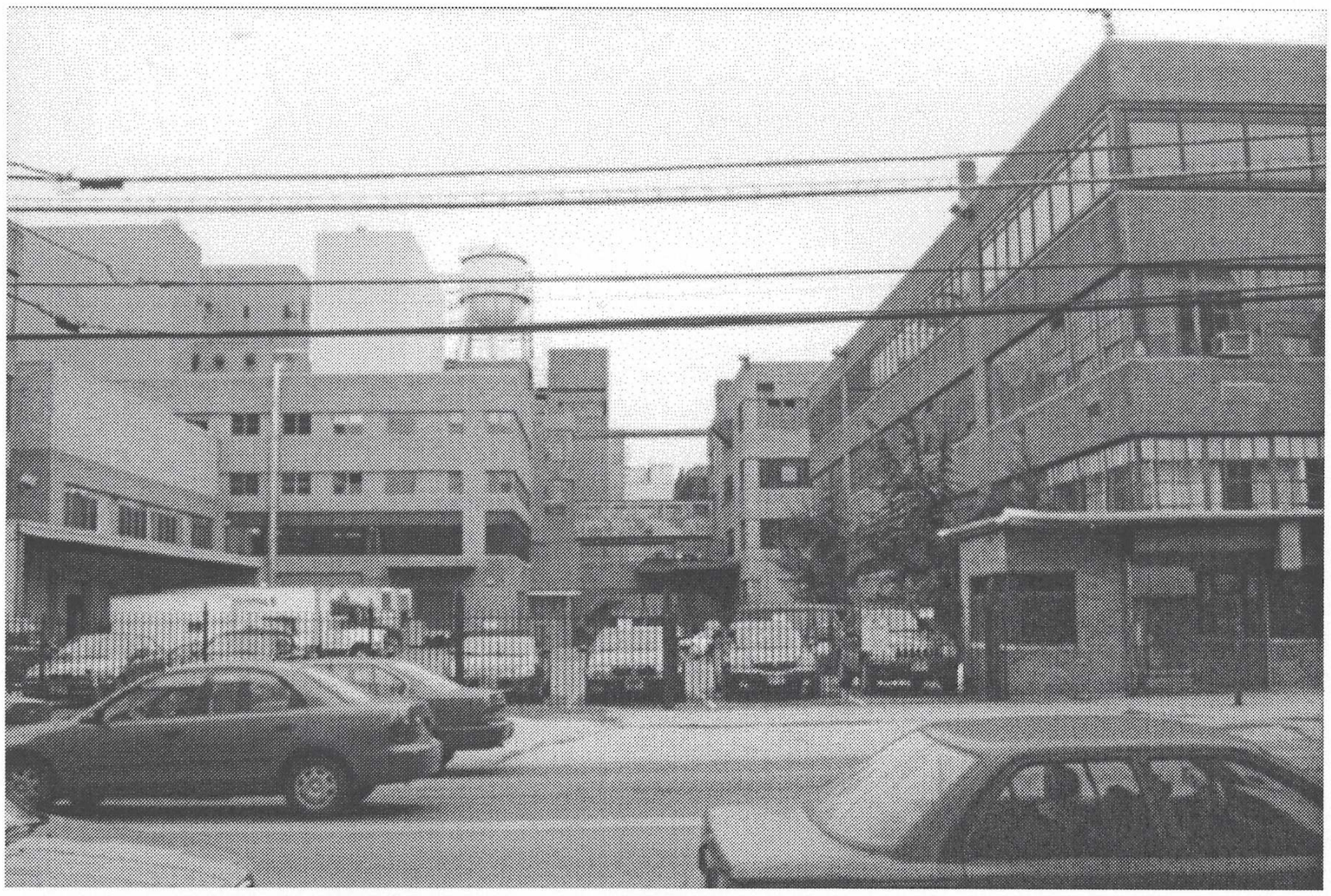
Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Hudson Street and 12th Street, west side, looking south.

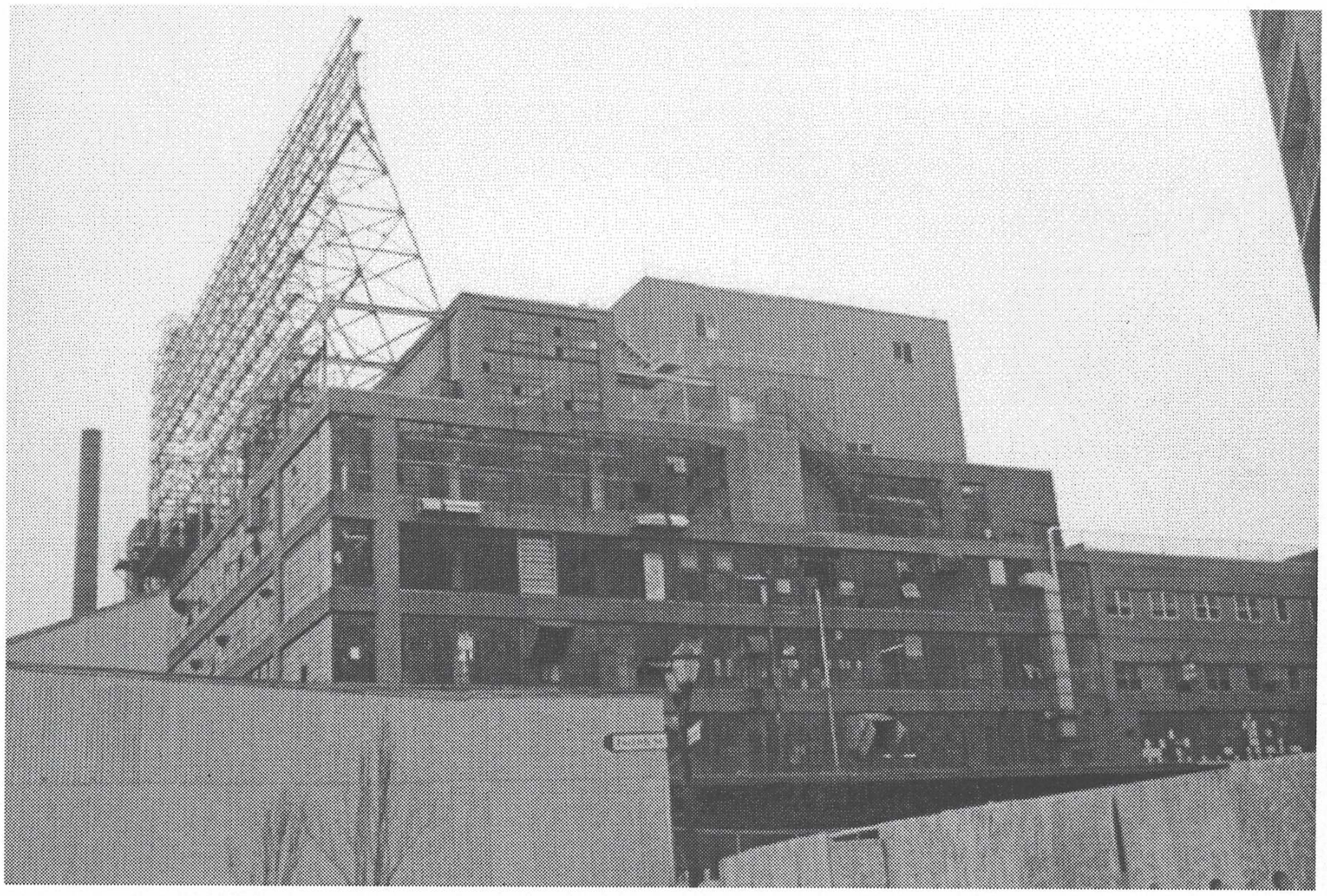


Courtyard of Maxwell House Site, looking east.

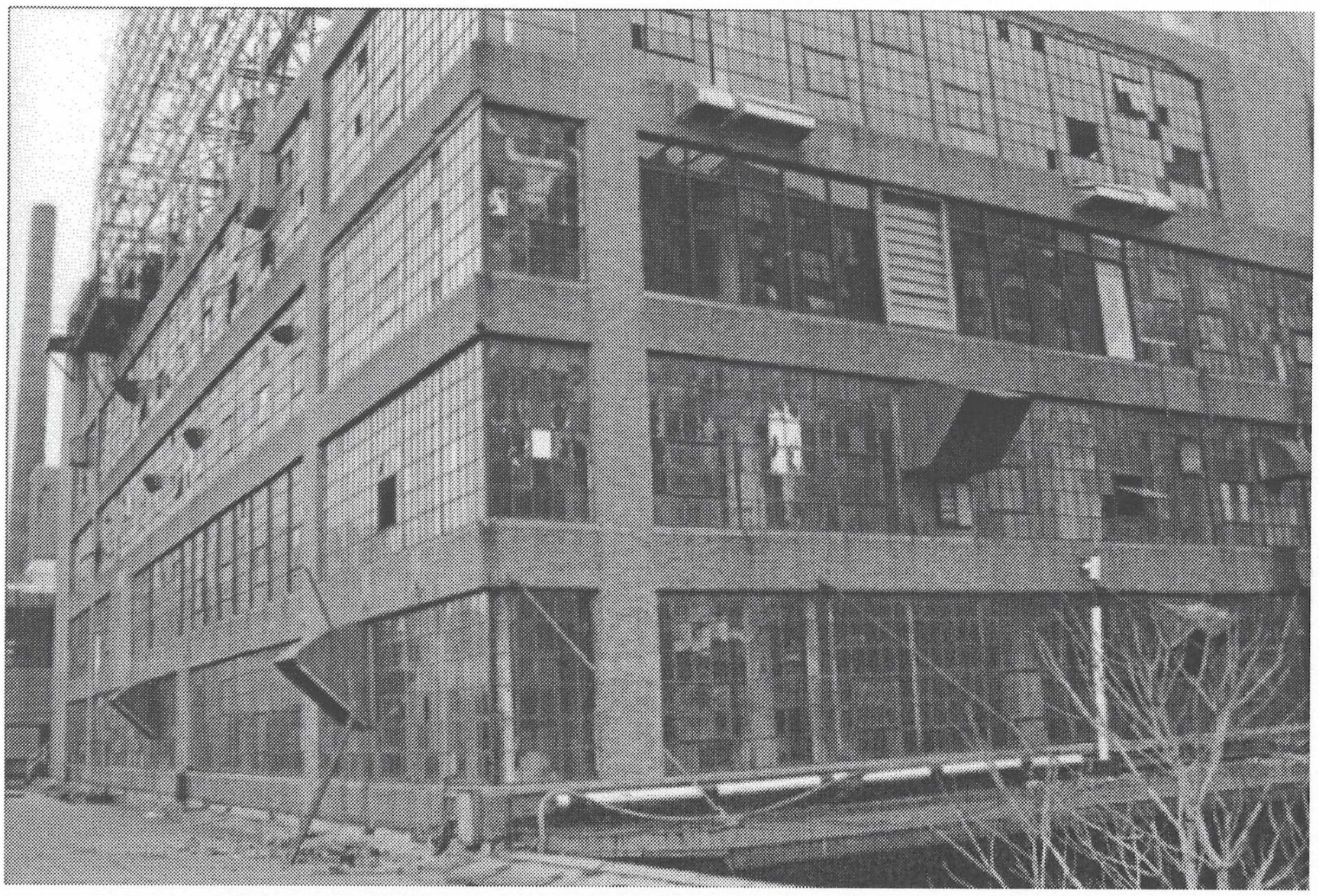
Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.
Date: November 2002

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Manufacturing Building (#1), north elevation. Warehouse in left foreground and skeleton of sign at top of Manufacturing Building.

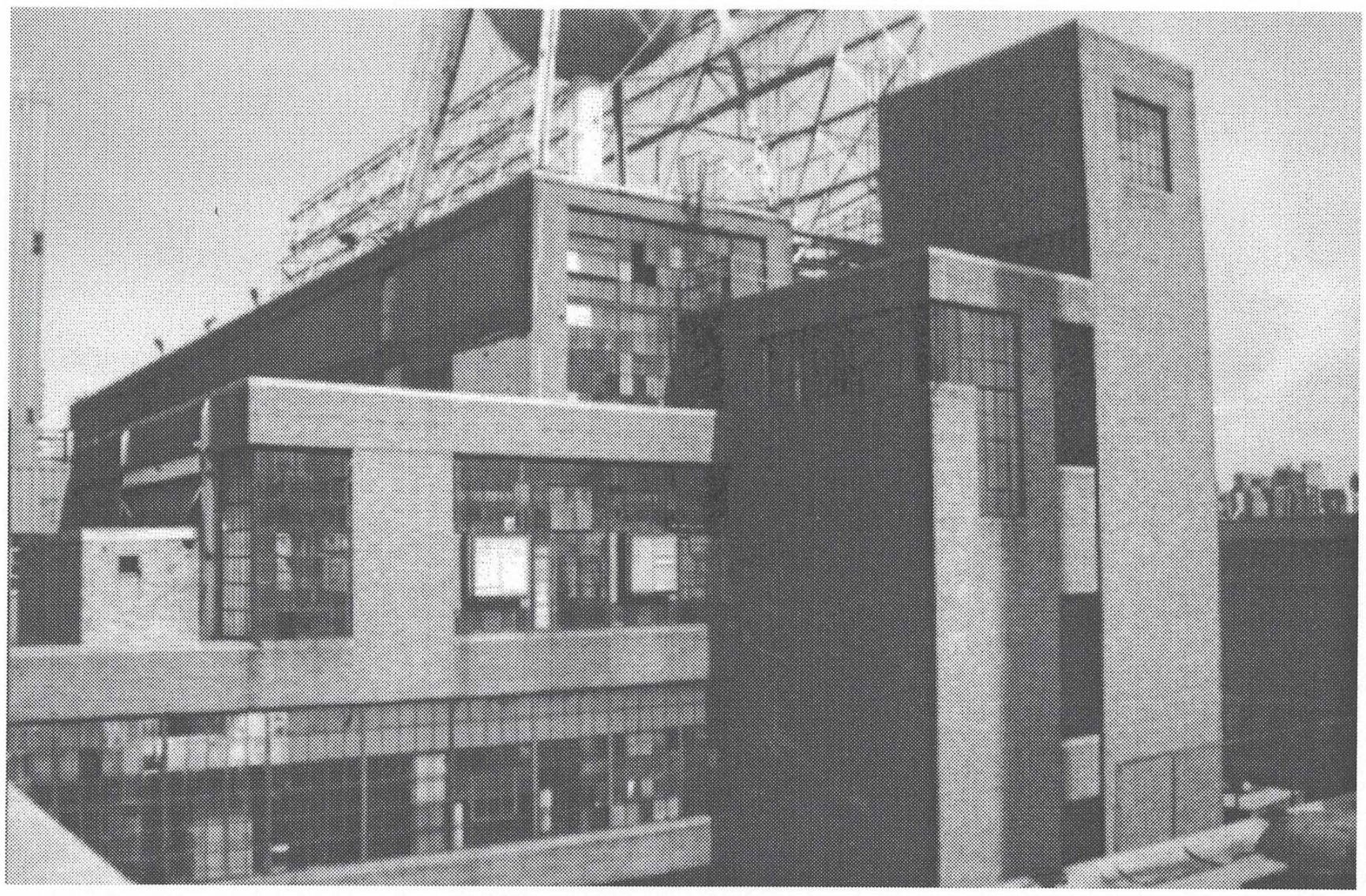


Close-up of Manufacturing Building (#1), north elevation.

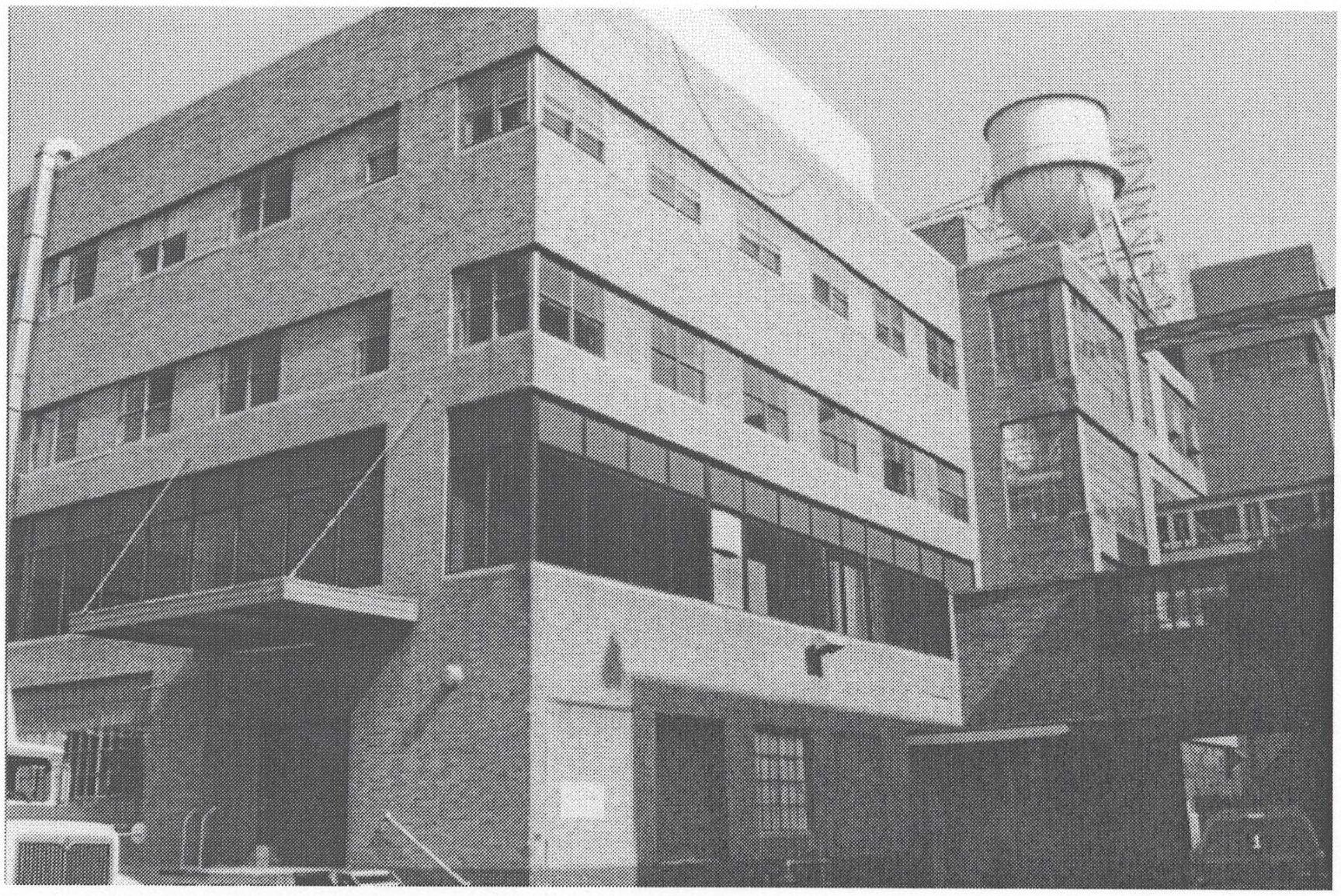
Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
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CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Manufacturing Building (#1), south elevation.



Manufacturing Building (#1), west (left) and south (right) elevations, from courtyard.
The upper two stories were added ca. 1950s.

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Date: November 2002

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Interior, Manufacturing Building (#1).

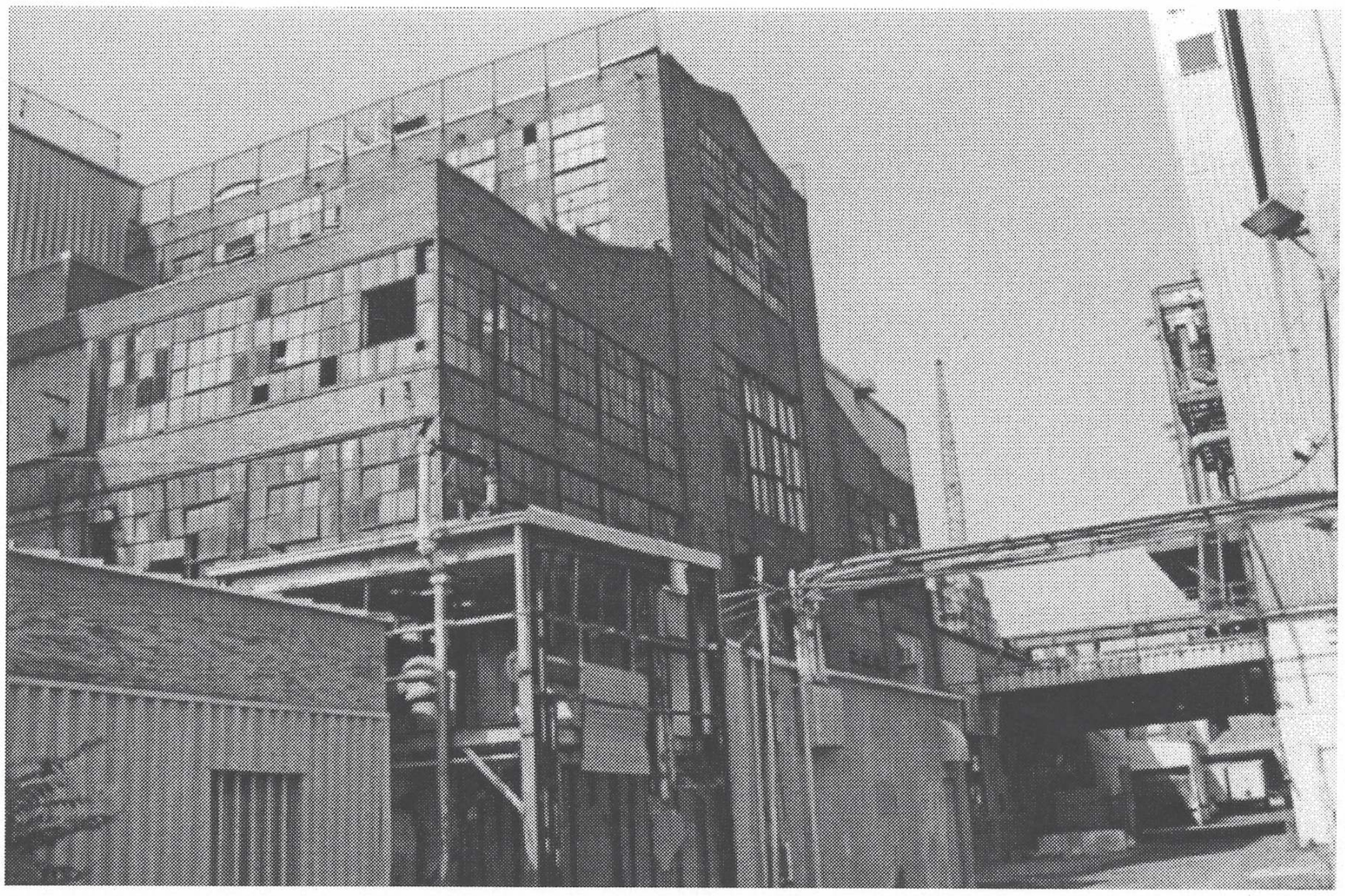


Warehouse (#2), north elevation, from "The Shipyards." The waterfront walkway presently dead ends at the Maxwell House Site. Plans call for continuing the walkway through the subject site, as part of a 5-acre open public waterfront with a beach.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site Date: November 2002
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Extraction Building (#3), east elevation, from Storage Silos (#9).



Power House (#4), south elevation, from parking lot.

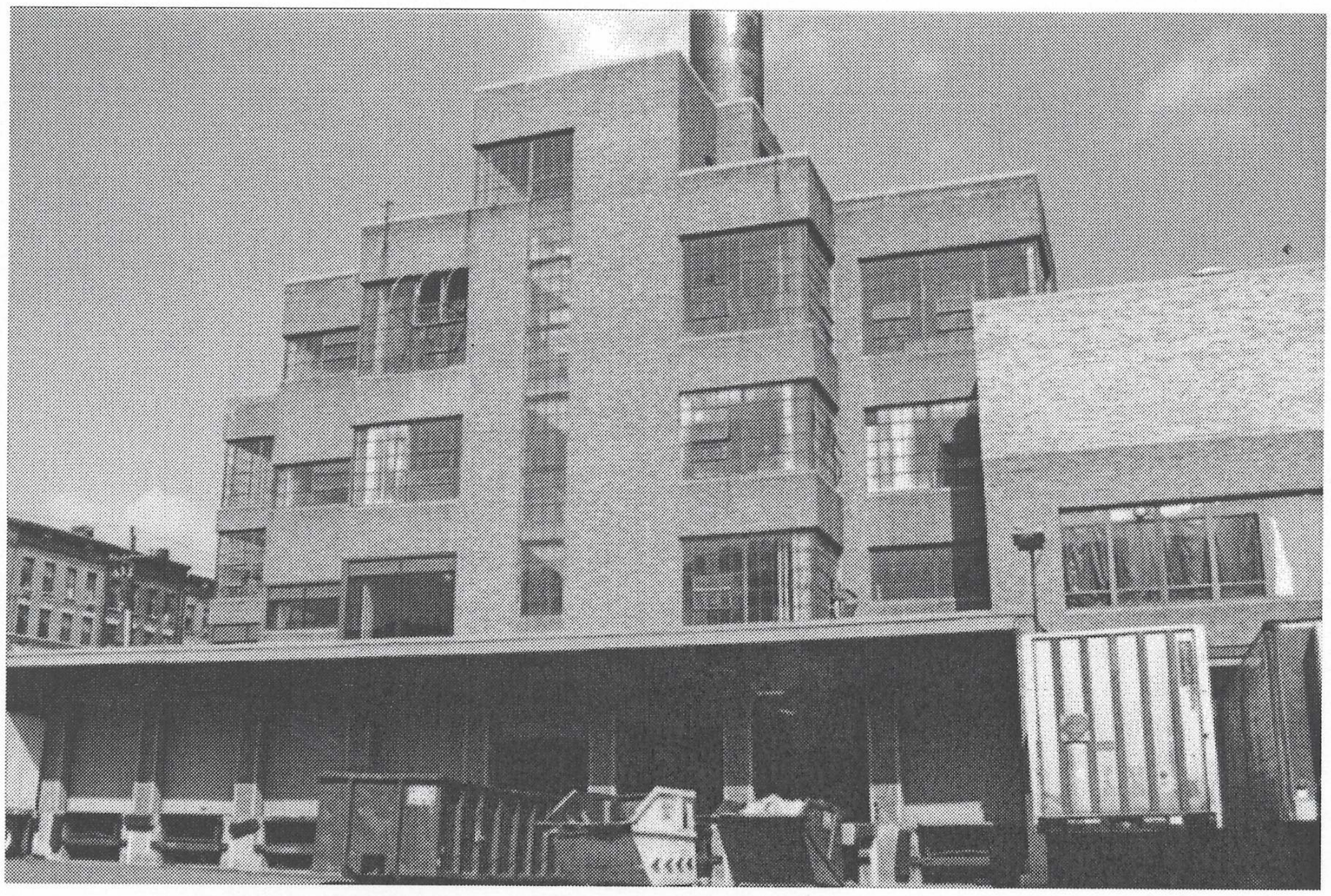
Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.
Date: November 2002

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



American Can Co. Building (#5), west (left) and south (right) elevations, from Hudson Street. Four-story projection houses circulation system.

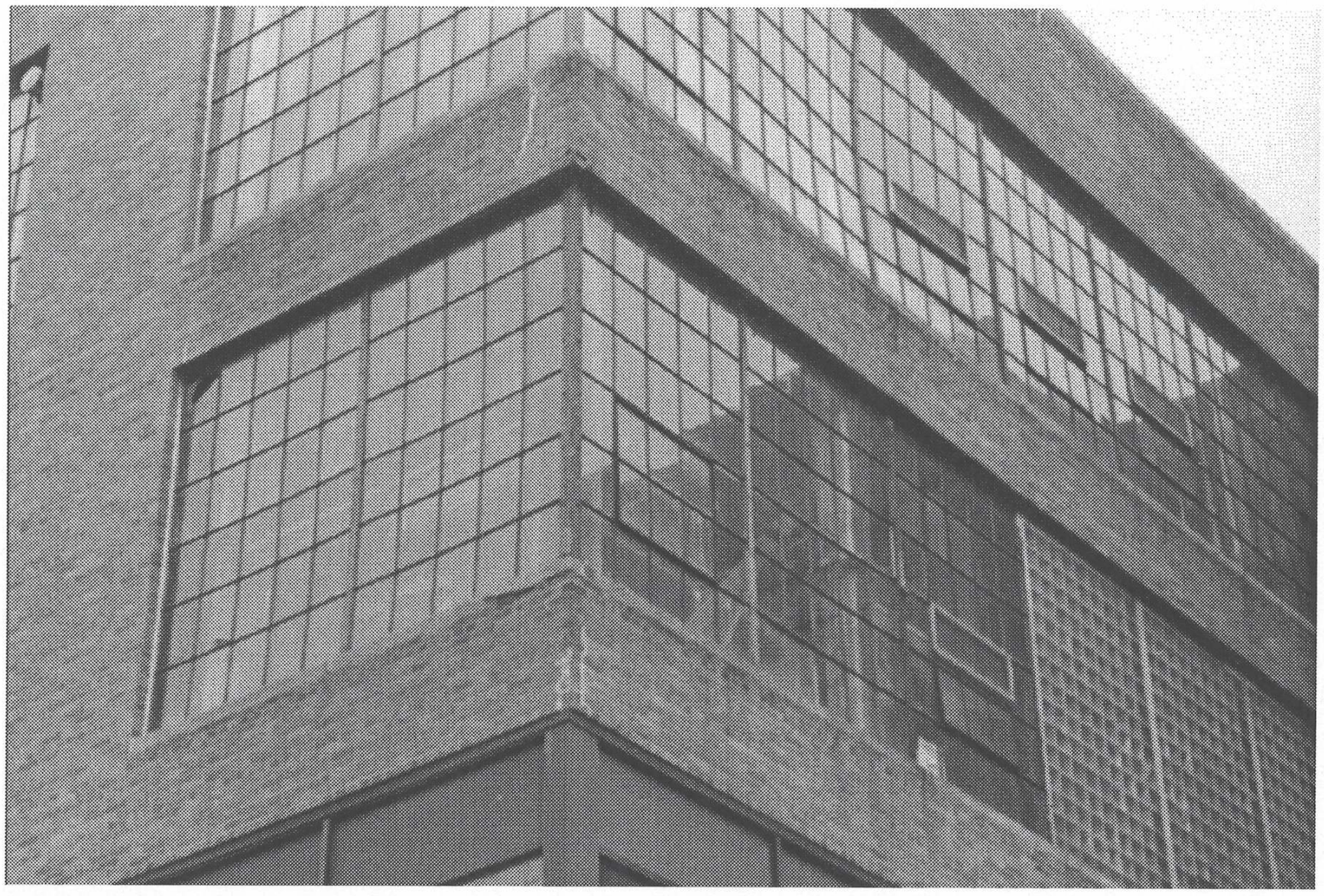


American Can Co. Building (#5), south elevation, from courtyard.

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Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.
Date: November 2002

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



American Can Co. Building (#5), window detail.

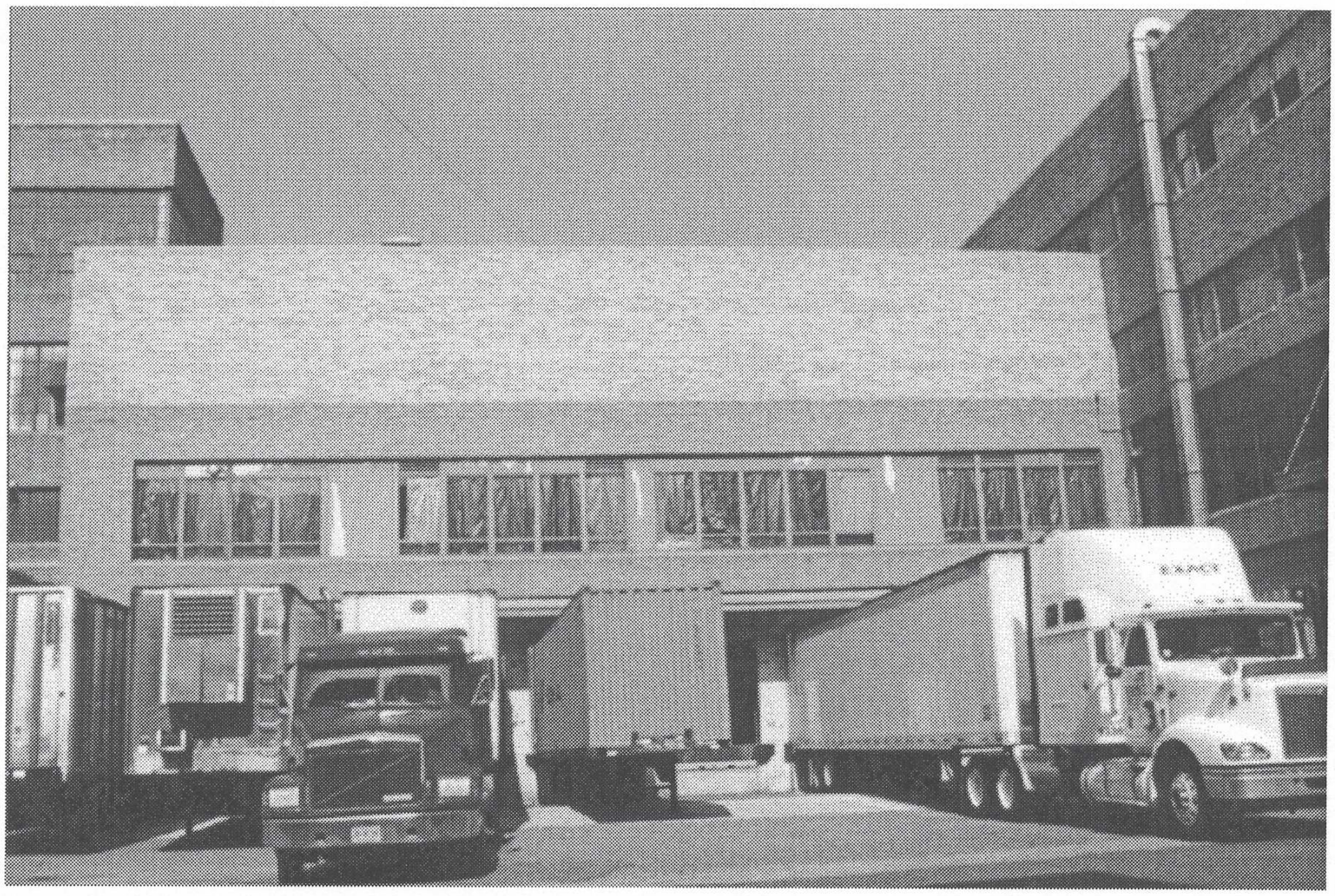


American Can Co. Building (#5), north (left) and west (right) elevations, from Hudson Street. The corner tower houses the stairwell.

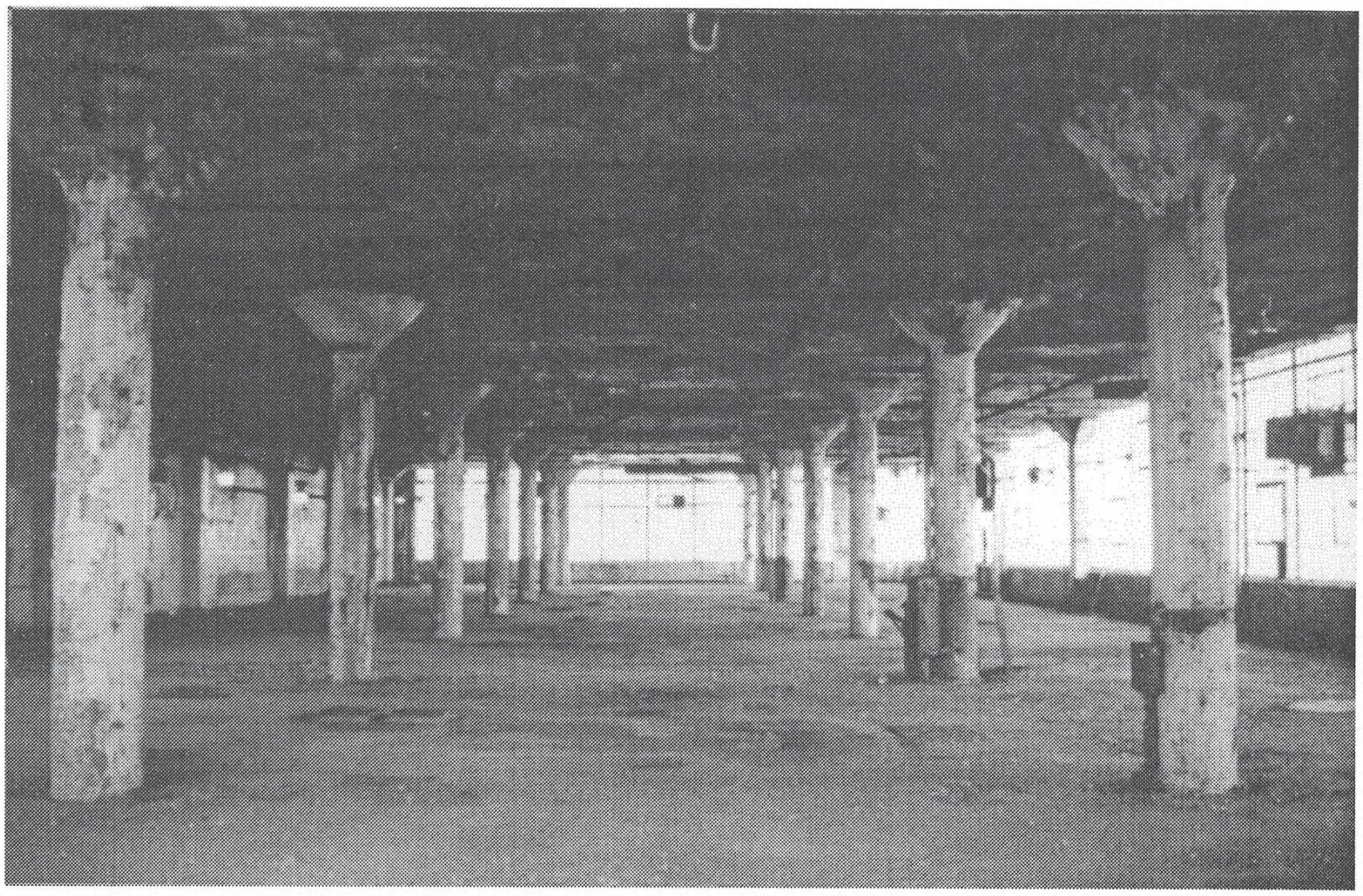
Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
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Date: November 2002

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Historic Sites #:



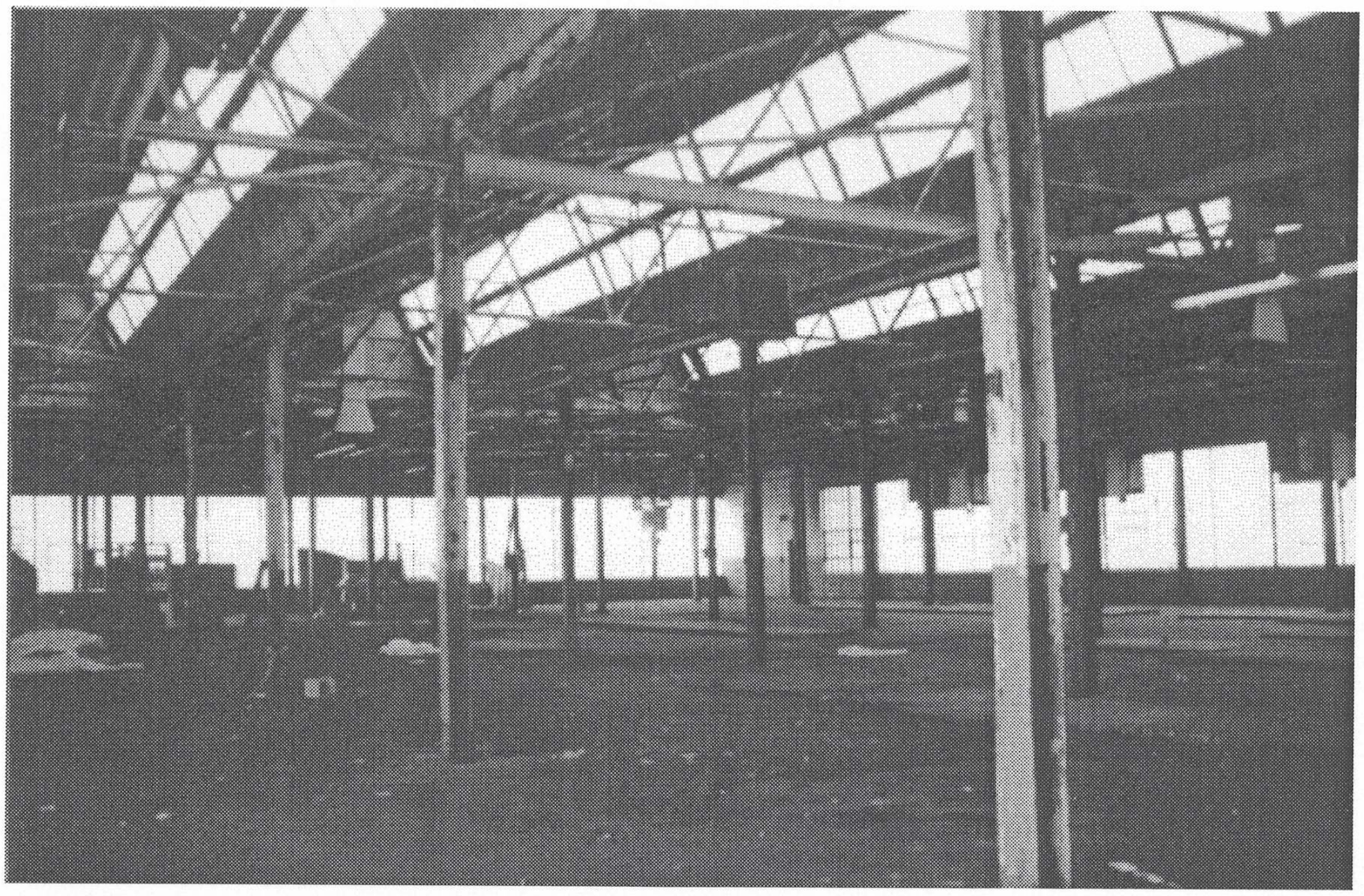
American Can Co. Building (#5), two-story addition, south elevation, from courtyard. Before truck bays were added, railroad siding terminated here.



Interior, third floor, American Can Co. Building (#5), showing grid on flared columns.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Interior, fourth floor, American Can Co. Building (#5), showing monitor roof and steel frame construction.



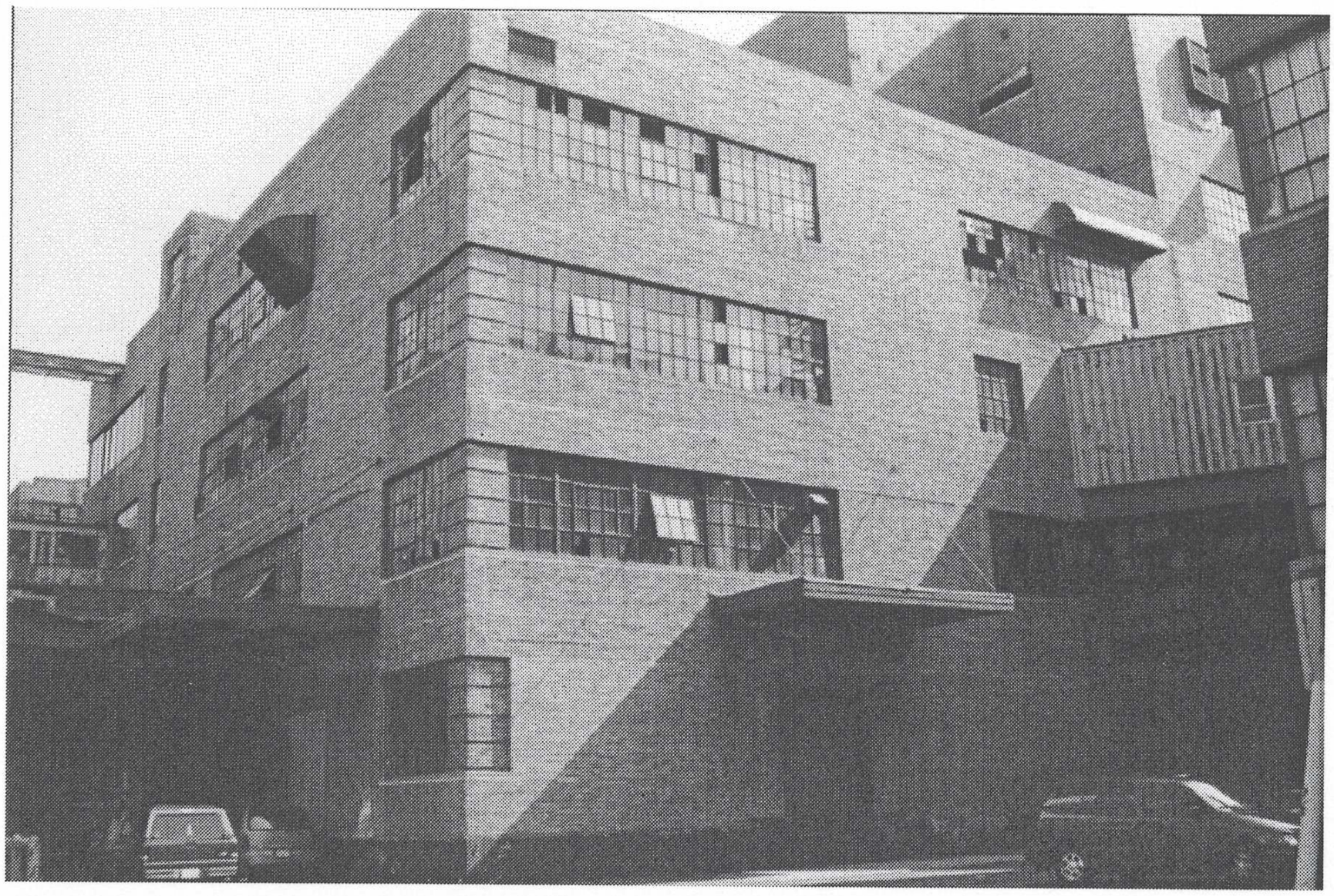
Offices & Central Laboratory (#6), north (left) and east (right) elevations, from Hudson Street. One-story Gate House in foreground.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Offices & Central Laboratory (#6), east (left) and north (right) elevations, from courtyard.



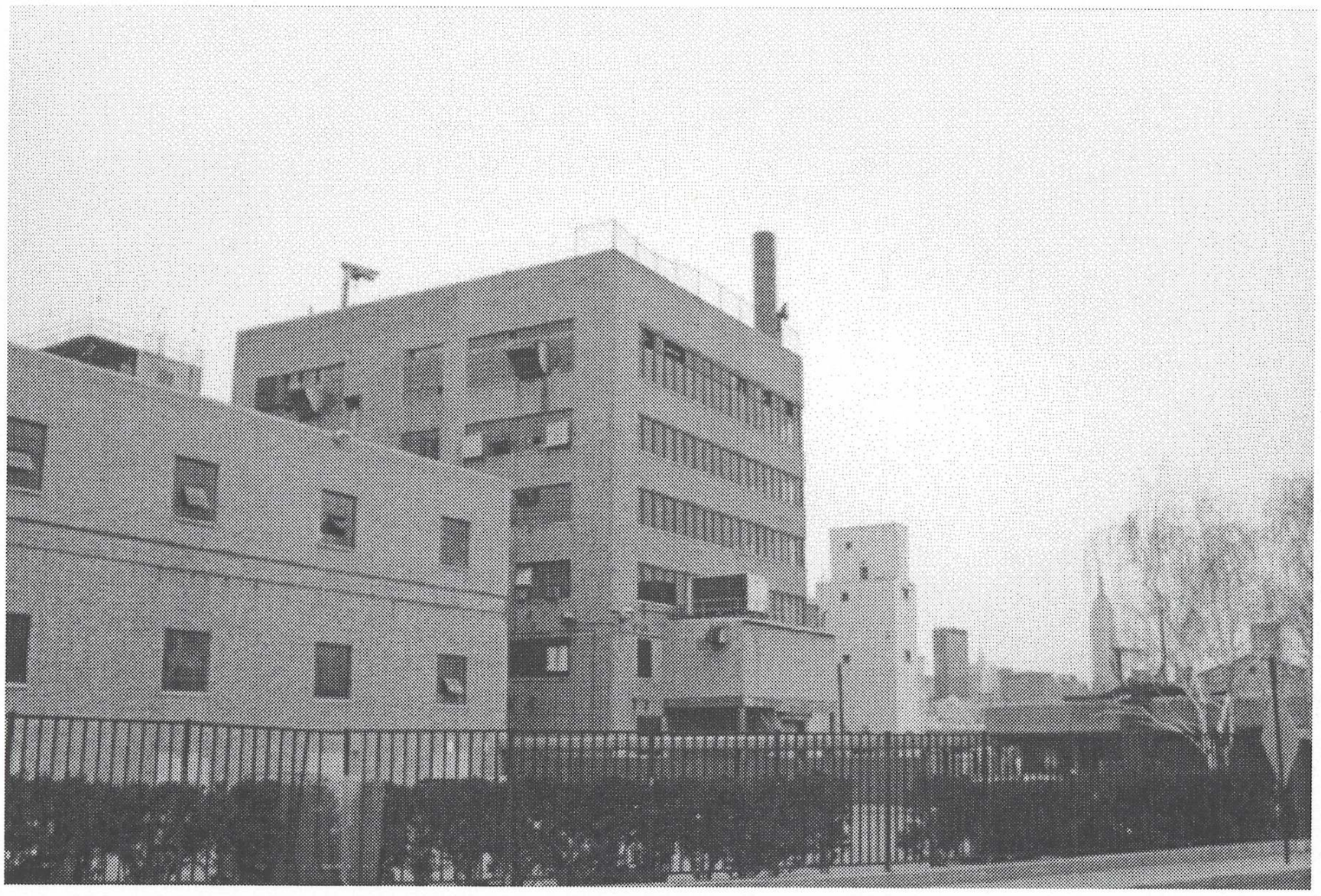
Soluble Building (#7), north (left) and west (right) elevation, from courtyard.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

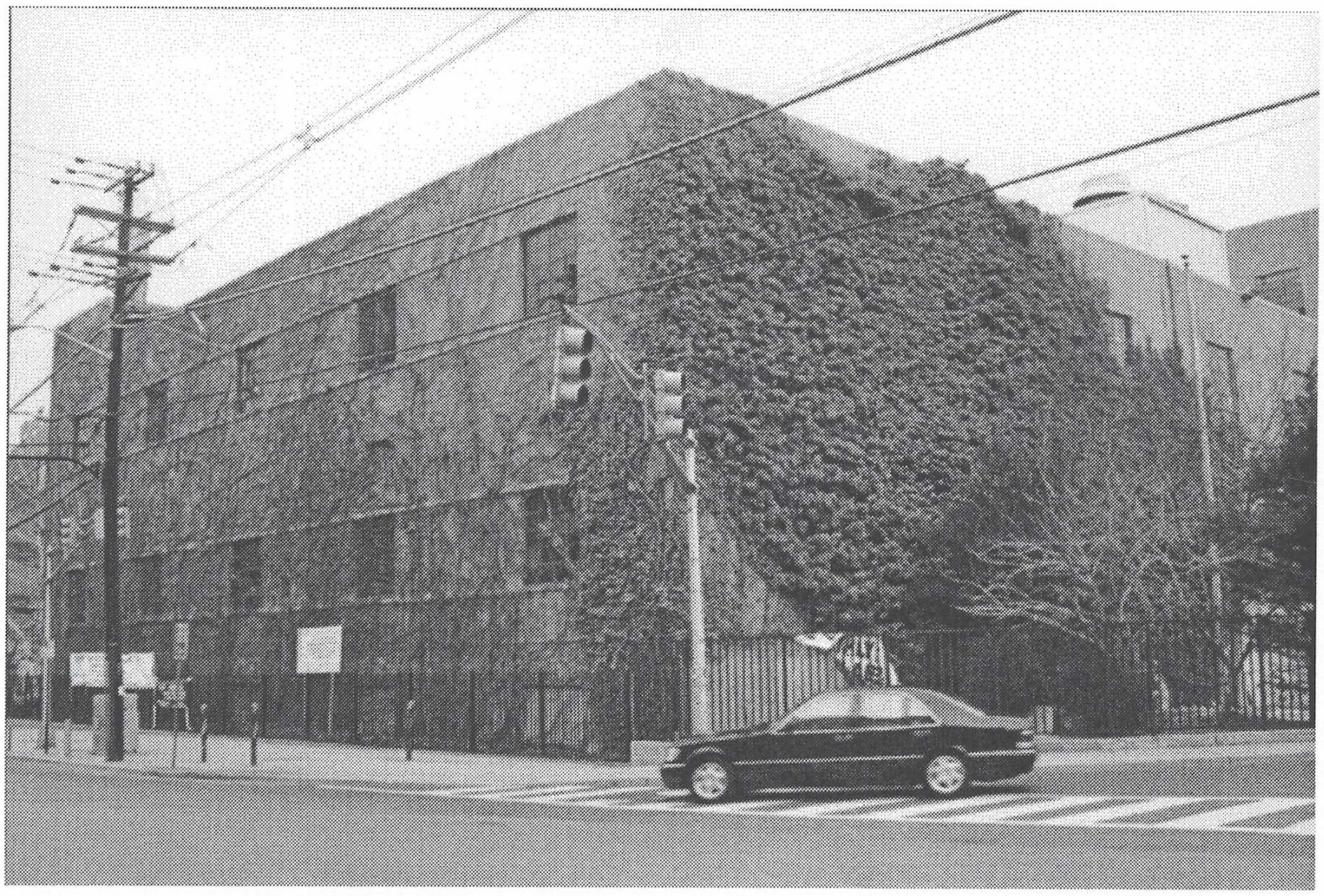
Date: November 2002

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Historic Sites #:



Soluble Building (#7), from Hudson Street, the Process Building (#8) is at lower left.

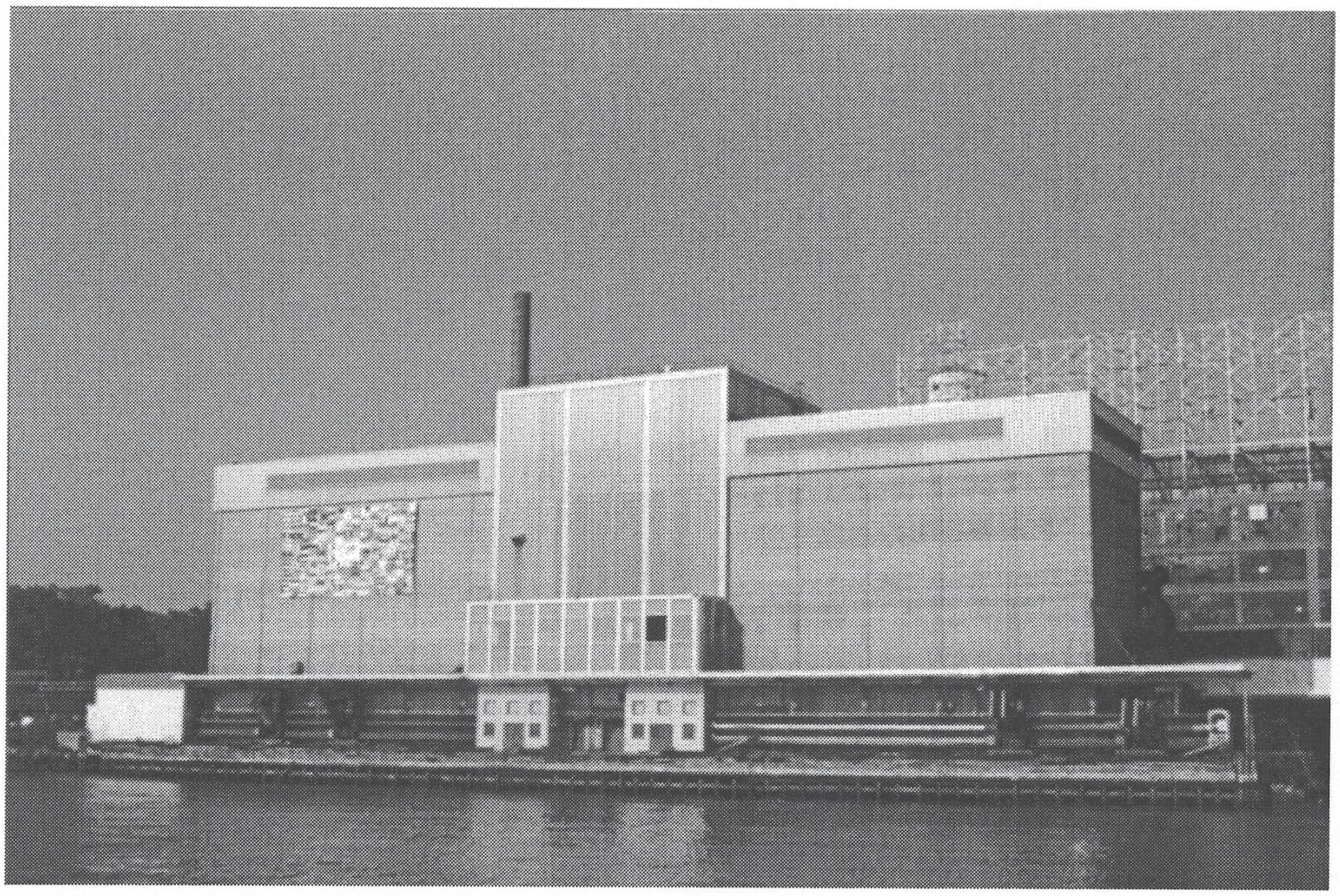


Process Building (#8), from Hudson Street.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.
Date: November 2002

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Storage Silos (#9), east elevation, from end of Pier Shed (#11).



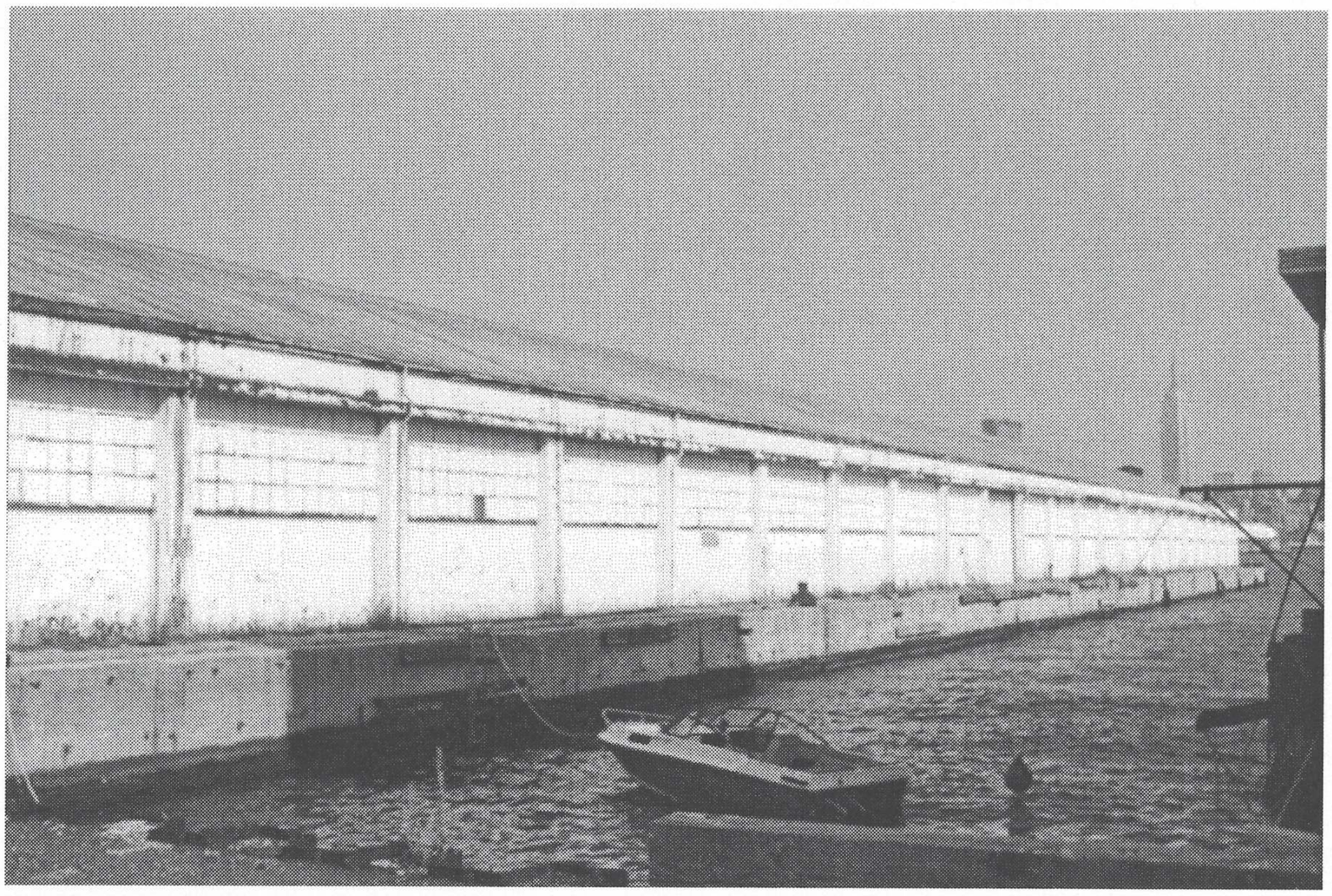
Pilot Plant, (#10), east elevation, from edge of Hudson River.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

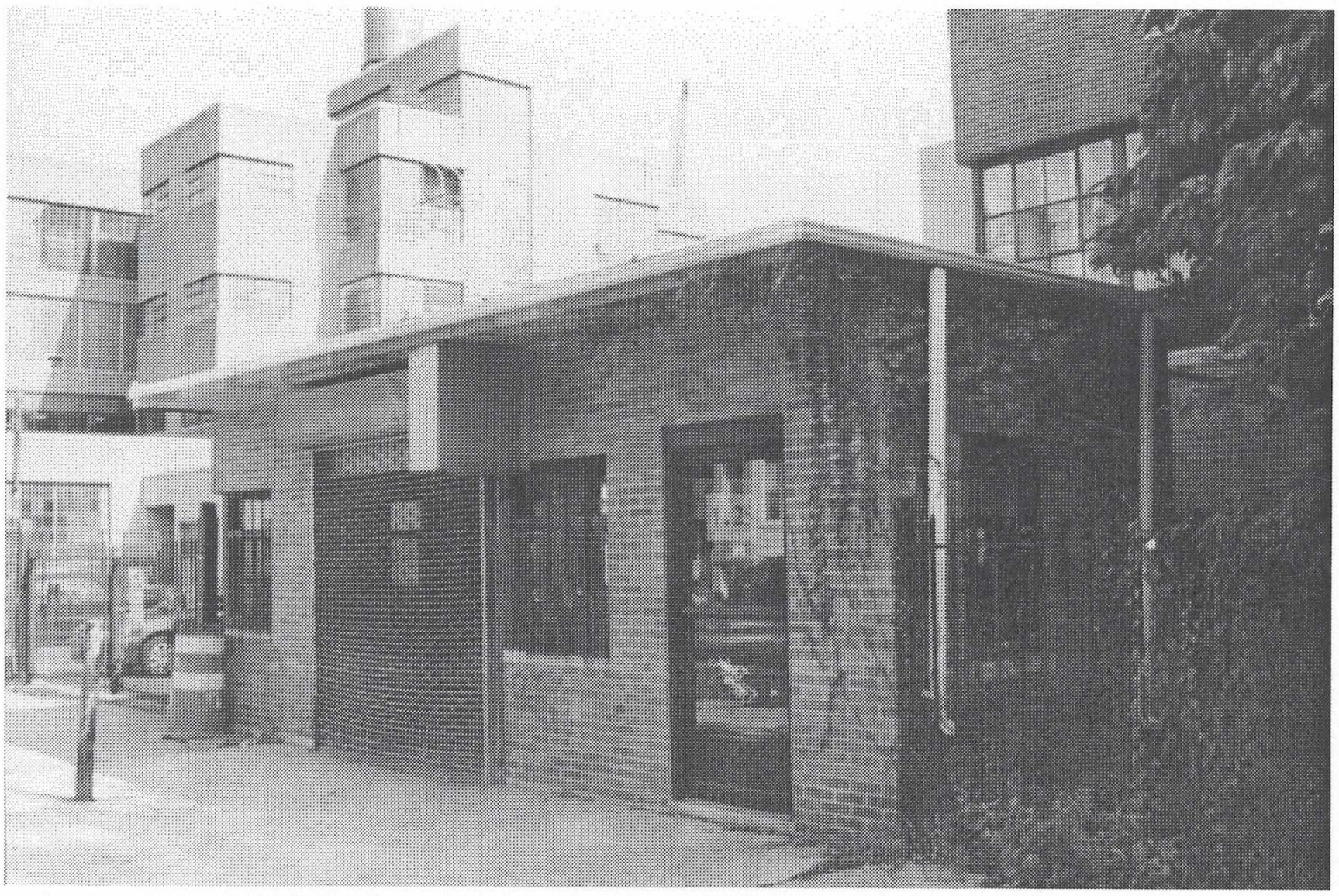
Date: November 2002

CONTINUATION SHEET

Historic Sites #:



Pier Shed (#11), south elevation, from Storage Silos (#9).



Gate House (#12), west elevation, from Hudson Street.

Survey Name: Maxwell House Site
Surveyor: Glenn R.Modica
Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.
Date: November 2002