

Stephen & Harriet Myers Residence
Albany, New York

Historic Structure Report

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Prepared for:
Underground Railroad History
Project of the Capitol Region, Inc.
P.O. Box 10851
Albany, New York 12201

Prepared by:
STEPHEN TILLY, ARCHITECT
22 Elm Street
Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522
(914) 693-8898

Project Team

STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

Stephen Tilly, Principal
Bob Gabalski, Senior Architect
Allyson Mehley, Preservation Specialist
Laura Forst, Preservation Assistant
22 Elm Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

*Underground Railroad History
Project of the Capital Region, Inc.*

Paul & Mary Liz Stewart, Co-founders
Walter R. Wheeler, Architectural Historian &
Building Committee Chair
P.O. Box 10851
Albany, NY 12201

Specialized Building Investigation

Structural Engineer:
Robert Silman Associates, P.C.
88 University Place
New York, NY 10003

A Voice in Defense of Freedom – Introductory Remarks

The following was written by A. J. Williams-Myers, Ph.D., Black Studies Department, State University of New York in New Paltz, New York.

African-Americans can stand in the twenty-first century assured of their constitutional rights as the result of *thousands of people banded together*” back in the 1960s to get the country to face its moral dilemma of racial inequality.¹ Those *thousands of people banded together* in what was then called the Civil Rights Movement. In the wake of that movement, which appropriately can be characterized as having been *like a ferment beneath the surface of [American] society*, constitutional guarantees for African-Americans were strengthened, and thus all Americans rested assured that their rights as well had been strengthened.²

The Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence stands as a monument to a similar, though earlier, nineteenth century movement – the Underground Railroad that clandestinely ferried Freedom Seekers away from their southern enslavement to northern freedom. It as well was a movement of thousands *banded together [in a conspiracy] for the deliberate purpose of depriving their southern neighbors of their [human] property [in defiance of the law]*.³ Among those thousands were Stephen and Harriet Myers, beacons of hope, freedom, and, together, a voice for the voiceless. Their house in Albany, New York, undoubtedly a stop on the Underground, stands today as a historic testament to the resiliency, dedication and perseverance of a people who would not rest until all were within the embrace of freedom.

When restored to its architectural character of the 1850s as a museum, and equipped with the latest interactive interpretation technology, the Myers Residence will not simply be about a reclamation of a piece of history but as well will be about a proclamation of an enduring thread in the American saga – the pursuit of freedom. On the one hand, visitors will learn in a synoptically precise fashion about African-American participation in the operations of Underground Railroad and its passengers. The African-American role gives voice to the voiceless while positioning African descendants center stage in the American saga. On the other hand, visitors will come to view the Residence not only as a historical marker in that historic Civil Rights Movement of the nineteenth century, but as well will view it as an economic marker of success that Stephen and Harriet Myers, and other African-Americans of that era, were capable of achieving in spite of proscriptions and restrictions.

In the final analysis, the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence for all of us, today and for generations to come, will *stand as a constant reminder of the unresolved issues that are part of the legacy we have inherited*, and, as before, are willing to band together to protect and strengthen that thread of freedom woven into We, The American People.

1 Albert Bushell Hart quoted in Larry Gara, *The Liberty Line The Legend of the Underground Railroad* (University of Kentucky Press: Lexington, 1961), 9.

2 Hart, 9.

3 Hart, 9.

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Executive Summary

Historical and Architectural Development

The Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence, located at 194 Livingston Avenue in Albany, New York, is a mid-nineteenth century, two and a half story brick structure with sandstone trim and wood joists, rafters and interior framing. Built in 1847 by African-American boat owner, John Johnson and later occupied by African-American activists Stephen and Harriet Myers, the house was also used for the office of the Vigilance Committee of Albany during the 1850s. Active in the city during the 1840s and 1850s, the Vigilance Committee assisted hundreds of fugitive slaves on their way to freedom in the northern United States and Canada.

The building has survived over the years through changes in ownership and remained largely unaltered. Aside from a stable, now demolished, constructed on the west side of the building in the late 1890s and a 1970s small addition to the rear facade, the building has retained its central mass and overall form.

In 2004 the property was purchased by the Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc. (URHPCR) and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The property was declared significant under Criteria A, B, and C (see Appendix C for completed nomination form) outlined by the National Park Service and the period of significance was identified as 1847-1858.

This report was prepared to document the history of the building and identify the remaining historic fabric and existing conditions in order to guide the preservation and rehabilitation of the building.

Program Recommendations

To achieve these goals, any intervention with the building's historic fabric must be sensitively addressed to ensure adherence to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. At present the structure is in an extreme state of disrepair. General and preventive maintenance has not occurred for some time, and as a result, substantial rehabilitation and restoration are required before it can be visited by the general public. The necessary work for the rehabilitation and preservation and rehabilitation of the Myers Residence is recommended to occur in four key and sequential phases.

Rehabilitation Priorities and Phases

Phase 1: Stabilization, Shoring, Material Testing & Investigation

- Stabilize compromised structural elements before any further deterioration occurs or restoration work begins.
- Incorporate proper material investigation and testing to ensure long-term compatibility of the historic fabric and contemporary building materials.
- Shore and brace the basement is north-south cross wall.
- Mitigate water infiltration.
- Commission a trained and licensed wood pathologist to inspect all levels of the building for fungal and insect-related damage.

Phase 2: Masonry Reconstruction, New Framing and Exterior Envelope Restoration

- Stabilize, restore, and re-point exterior brick walls.
- Restore windows through selective repair/replacement.
- Replace roof and repair drainage system.
- Replace entryway, door, and exterior stairs.

Phase 3: Building Systems

- Address all building systems (electrical, plumbing, fire prevention, HVAC). All systems are obsolete.
- Install security system, egress signs and emergency lighting for public safety and access.

Phase 4: Interior Restoration

- Restore interior with appropriate finishes.
- Repair all staircases, including new balusters and handrails, and provide proper life safety system. If visitor bathrooms are installed in the historic building, the facilities should be ADA compliant.

Methodology

Stephen Tilly, Architect (STA) followed a methodology consistent with national standards for the research and production of Historic Structure Reports. The early sections of this document focus on the property's significance and historical development. We developed them through research in archives, libraries, and county records to determine property ownership and succession. As the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence had been previously nominated and accepted to the New York and National Register of Historic Places in 2004,

a great deal of historic research had already been conducted. Mark L. Peckham, a Historic Preservation Coordinator with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, completed the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. Paul and Mary Liz Stewart compiled research and draft documents on the life of Stephen and Harriet Myers and the Vigilance Committee of Albany. STA consulted information previously gathered and supplemented it with information from archival research at the New York State Library and from the United States Census.

The second part of this document, beginning with Conditions Assessment and Analysis, examines the building's current physical condition and proposes a multi-tiered approach to preservation and rehabilitation. The information presented in these sections was compiled through comprehensive documentation and field survey of the site. The survey included digital photography of the interior and exterior of the building, sketch drawings, and field notes. The material collected was analyzed together with existing source materials on the history and physical condition of the site, including Walter R. Wheeler's Existing Conditions Assessment (September 8, 2005). Structural engineers from Robert Silman Associates inspected the building on March 3, 2006.

Recommendations are listed in order of priorities for protection of physical fabric, health, safety and welfare of occupants, and applicability to program needs. The purpose of this document is to serve as a means for effective planning and conservation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Description

This Historic Structure Report (HSR) was commissioned by the Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc. (URHPCR) in January, 2008 and completed by the firm of Stephen Tilly, Architect (STA) based in Dobbs Ferry, New York. The report focuses on the structure known as the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence, located at 194 Livingston Avenue in the Arbor Hill neighborhood of Albany, New York.

The URHPCR proposes the development of the building, its land, and acquired surrounding lots as a historic museum. The site would document the personal story of Stephen and Harriet Myers as a means to connect visitors to Albany's role in the Underground Railroad and the African-American struggle for freedom and equality in the United States. The building would be interpreted to the critical period in the 1850s when the couple resided in the house and it concurrently served as the office of the Vigilance Committee. The URHPCR's long-term vision includes a freestanding Visitors Center and other facilities that would support and promote its use as a historic site.

The preservation and rehabilitation of the building, along with the full development of the historic site, will be made possible through donations and grants secured by URHPCR.

The URHPCR financed the completion of the HSR with funding from two grants. The first, a *Preserve New York* grant, was provided by the Preservation League of New York State and the New York State Council on the Arts and the second, a *Network to Freedom* grant, was awarded through the National Park Service (NPS) National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program. Additional funds were generously contributed by M & T Bank, Citizen's Bank Members, and Community Supporters of Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region.

Since the purchase of the property in 2004, its primary stewards, Paul and Mary Liz Stewart, have provided steadfast commitment and leadership to this project. Assisting their efforts have been numerous individuals and community groups who graciously volunteered time to clean up the house and help maintain the grounds. Through the preparation and execution of this HSR, the URHPCR has secured a valuable tool to guide their planning for the long-term protection and preservation of the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence.

1.2 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this Historic Structure Report is to document the historical significance of 194 Livingston Avenue, to understand the historic structure prior to its adaption for re-use, to identify the remaining historic fabric and to identify problem conditions. In addition, this report will clarify the phases of work required to prepare the building for public use and the

necessary alterations to make the re-use as a historic museum possible. The preservation philosophy chosen for the rehabilitation of the building, which was based on all of the previously noted elements, is to retain the remaining historic fabric that defines the historic character of the

building. With the preservation philosophy identified, recommendations for rehabilitation were made with the understanding that the building's future re-use would be a museum interpreting the historic role of the Underground Railroad in Albany.



Figure 1: Front (north) facade of the Myers Residence.

2. Myers Residence - Historical Significance

2.1 General Site History ¹

The City of Albany traces its European roots to 1624 with the establishment of Fort Orange by the Dutch West India Company following Henry Hudson's voyage of 1609. Hudson claimed for Holland the river that bears his name, and lands east to the Connecticut River and southwest to the Delaware River, and the colony was known as New Netherland. Fort Orange was intended only as a fur-trading post, not a permanent settlement; rather, a medieval land-holding system known as the Colonie (original spelling) of Rensselaerswyck was organized surrounding the fort in 1630 to provide for permanent settlers who were expected to engage in farming, milling and other more stable occupations. That colony originally comprised over 240,000 acres east and west of the Hudson, in what are now Albany and Rensselaer counties, and its residents paid land rents in agricultural products to the "patroons" of the Van Rensselaer family each year.

By 1652, a small village named Beverwyck, Dutch for "beaver place," had grown up north of Fort Orange. This village was the home of those who desired a more settled existence in close proximity to the fort. In 1664, the British took over all Dutch claims in North America and New Netherland was thenceforth known as the colony of New York and Beverwyck as Albany,

¹ The following section on the history of Albany and the Arbor Hill neighborhood is adapted from materials originally researched and written for the Myers Residence National Register Nomination.

named for James, Duke of York and Albany. Despite the fact that the stockaded settlement comprised less than a square mile, a rectangular tract of land measuring approximately two miles along the Hudson and sixteen miles inland surrounding the stockade was chartered in 1686 by the English crown as the City of Albany. For the next hundred years, additional population growth was slow and continued to be heavily influenced by Albany's Dutch origins as descendants of the original Dutch outnumbered settlers of other nationalities.

The stockade was removed after the French and Indian War ended in 1763, but only after the American Revolution, as New Englanders began moving westward, did Albany begin to grow. The city became a major stopping point for travelers; Albany was the origin of a series of turnpikes that provided new routes into the interior of New York State and beyond. In the early years of the nineteenth century, the city's population increased rapidly; many travelers ended their journeys in Albany and settled permanently in the growing city.

Shortly after 1800, new sections were opened for development, including the area immediately adjacent to the northern city line separating Albany from the Van Rensselaer land holdings. This area, designated as early as 1794 as Arbor Hill and outside city limits, included the main road north to Lake Champlain nearly 100 miles north of the city, and was urbanized enough by the early 1810s that residents petitioned for annexation to the city. At the time

annexation came in 1815, this new ward was a neighborhood of coopers, boatmen, and other types of laborers, mainly employed in Albany's important Hudson River trade.

In 1825 the Erie Canal, which connected the Hudson River with Lake Erie 350 miles to the west at Buffalo, opened. Its eastern terminus was at the Hudson River at the foot of Arbor Hill in Albany. The effect of the canal on the economy and growth of the city of Albany and the entire state of New York was nothing short of remarkable. Both the city and state populations grew rapidly, and soon New York City became the most important port along the Atlantic Seaboard. Albany's population grew tremendously in the early nineteenth century, and immediately after the canal opened, its

workers joined other working class residents of Arbor Hill.

At the same time, some members of Albany's small African-American population, most of whom belonged to the city's working class, settled in Arbor Hill alongside white working class families. Households of African-Americans in Albany can be tracked during the early 19th century because they are listed in italics in the city directories of the period between 1813, when the first directory was published, and 1853 when the practice was discontinued. At this time, contrary to popular belief, Albany's black population was not racially segregated, but rather lived side-by-side with white families of the same economic status.

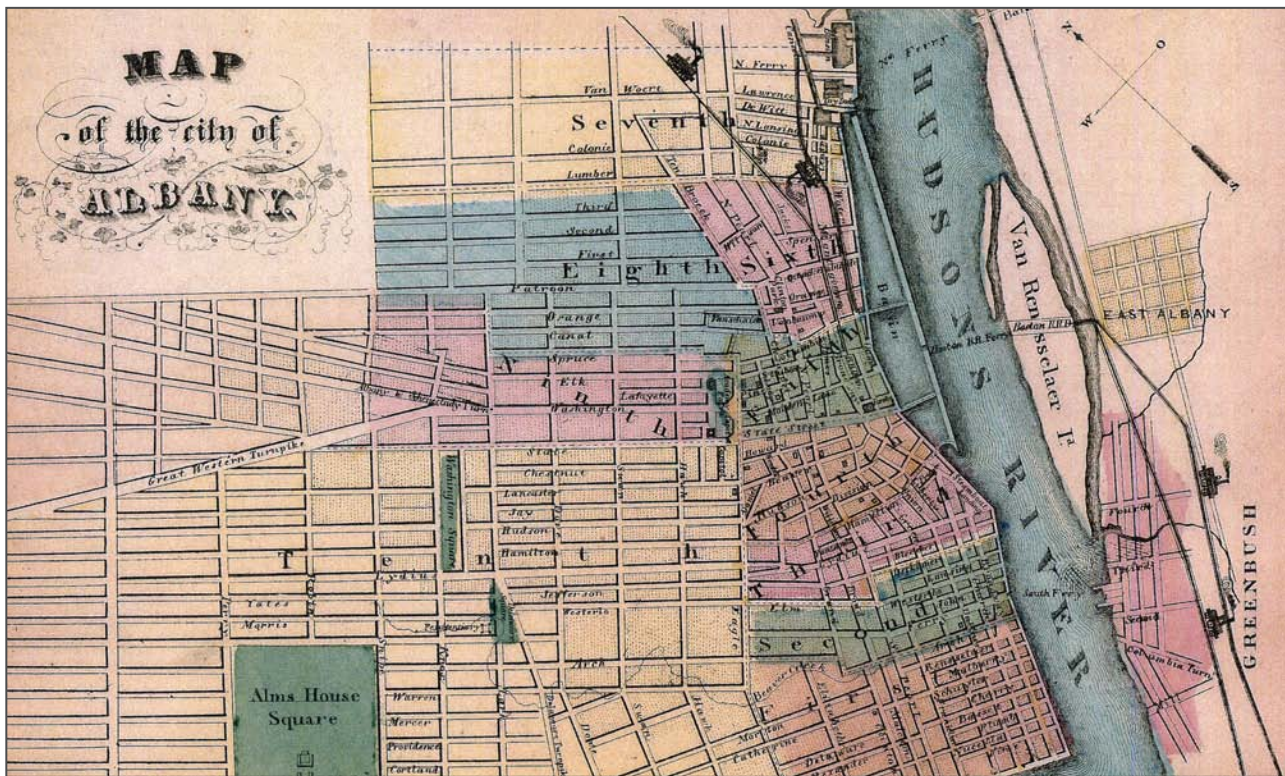


Figure 2: Map of the City of Albany, circa 1850s. Collection of the State Library of New York.

In this setting in 1847, John Johnson, an African-American ship owner, constructed the brick townhouse known today as 194 Livingston Avenue in the middle of a neighborhood of more modest workers' frame dwellings. Although Johnson's personal story and his reasons for constructing a brick townhouse with architectural pretensions outside the more middle- or upper-class neighborhoods of Albany are interesting, little is known of him at this time. Further development of that research topic may take place in the future, but at present, it is the importance of Stephen Myers and his connection with this building that is the subject of this study. A documented history of building ownership is included in *Appendix B*.

When 194 Livingston Avenue was constructed, the street was known as Lumber Street, so named because it originated about one-half mile down the hill to the east of this building at the location of Albany's thriving Lumber District. This district, located just north of where the Erie Canal entered the Hudson River, was characterized by a series of more than fifty narrow slips cut perpendicularly into the canal wall and used for storing lumber. Several mills and lumber processing buildings also populated the area.

Many of the merchants who made large fortunes harvesting lumber from New York State's Adirondack Mountains then processing and shipping it from Albany to markets all over the United States and beyond made their home east of 194 Livingston Avenue. The neighborhood

of many of these so-called "lumber barons" was developed between 1840-1875 along Ten Broeck Street and surrounding streets, and was originally listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 as the Ten Broeck Triangle Historic District. In 1984, the Arbor Hill Historic District was listed, encompassing the original listing and extending beyond the Ten Broeck Triangle one long block west to North Swan Street. Because of substantial alterations to buildings to the west of Swan Street and their more modest scale, however, the district boundary was established about 200 yards east of 194 Livingston.

2.2 Site Description

The building is located at 194 Livingston Avenue in Albany, New York. Located in the Arbor Hill neighborhood, it is approximately one mile from Albany's central business district. It has a property boundary that has been associated with the building since construction in 1847. It occupies less than one acre on a flat, rectangular parcel of land bound to the northeast by Livingston Avenue and southwest by 3rd Street. The building footprint is rectangular and is oriented primarily south-east to north-west along Livingston Avenue. The building is located on the USGS New York Albany Quadrangle, UTM Zone 18 and is shown on the Albany County Land and Tax Map.

2.3 Historical and Cultural Significance

During the years 1855-1858, the building, now known as 194 Livingston Avenue, was home to Stephen and Harriet Myers. Stephen Myers was principal agent of the Vigilance Committee during this period and perhaps the most important figure in Albany's Underground Railroad history. Myers actively assisted freedom seekers for nearly thirty years, beginning in 1831, and was an advocate of education and self-sufficiency for African-Americans, along with other civil rights. Harriet was supportive of her husband's goals and assisted him in his work. The couple lived in the house during part of the time he was principal agent of the Vigilance Committee and maintained the group's office in the building as well.

The property is also significant as the one-time office of the Vigilance Committee of Albany. This group was active in the Underground Railroad from the early 1840s into the 1850s and assisted thousands of fugitive slaves on their way to freedom in the northern United States and Canada. Albany was a critical link on the trail northward, and the Vigilance Committee was the primary group for ushering freedom seekers through Albany on their way to Canada.

Finally, the building, constructed in 1847, is architecturally significant as a highly intact example of a mid-nineteenth century brick Greek Revival style townhouse built in many other areas of Albany during the period but relatively rare in its location within the Arbor Hill neighborhood of Albany, New York.

3. Historical & Architectural Development

3.1 Stephen Myers and Anti-Slavery Activities in Albany

The story of Stephen Myers and his wife Harriet is intertwined with the narrative of the Underground Railroad, the African-American struggle for civil rights, and the pursuit of social equality. The era of the Underground Railroad continues to engage us today as a period of struggle and conflict between pro and anti-slavery forces in the United States.

In Albany, the story of the Underground Railroad can be divided into four distinct periods. In the earliest period (late 1700s-1820s), freedom seekers passing through the city found only loose and fledgling organizations offering help. In the second period (approximately 1825-1835), organizations such as the First African Baptist church with its pastor Nathaniel Paul, an outspoken opponent of slavery, became more prominent by playing a leadership role. The third period (approximately 1835-1845) was characterized by the growth of anti-slavery societies across the country. Individuals such as Abel Brown and Charles Torrey assumed leading roles in Albany. Stephen and Harriet Myers were at the forefront of the fourth and final phase (1845-1861) of the Underground Railroad during the years that led up to the Civil War.

Today, descriptions of the Underground Railroad vary. Frequent descriptions characterize it

as “a network of safe houses,” “paths used by slaves to gain freedom,” or “a network of hiding places.” Rather than focusing on the Underground Railroad as a place or a thing, it is much more appropriate and historically accurate to portray the Underground Railroad as movement to resist the institution of enslavement. It was a movement driven by the reality that those enslaved often chose to liberate themselves from slavery and needed to make their way to a place that was safe. Grasping the full meaning of the Underground Railroad calls for an awareness of the historical data, people, places, and events, as well as of larger historical forces in which they were embedded. Through a more complex narrative, we can more thoughtfully assess the legacy of the Underground Railroad.

The lives and work of Stephen and Harriet Myers capture our imagination in just this manner. Their story provides a personal view into the social “machinery” of the Underground Railroad, while at the same time inviting us into the lives of individuals whose dedication to the ideals of freedom, social justice, and education continues to resonate today.

Background

The family of Stephen Myers likely came to the Albany area from New York City. The historic path of his family’s migration would have followed the Dutch-based slave trade, beginning in West Africa, proceeding to the Dutch colony of Curacao, and then eventually moving on to New York City.

Stephen Myers was born as a slave in the house of Johnathan Eights, a well known Albany physician. Myers surname comes from the maternal side of Johnathan Eight's wife's family.¹ Her father was a merchant named Johannes Wynkoop and her mother was Anna Koens Myers. It was a common practice for slaves to take a surname of their owner's family. Garland Penn, a nineteenth century chronicler of African-American newspaper history, recorded information about Stephen Myers in relation to his role with the African-American press.² According to Penn, Stephen Myers was born a slave at Hoosick in Rensselaer County in 1800. However, other sources suggest he was born at Saratoga Springs or in Saratoga County.³

At the age of 18, Myers was manumitted from slavery in Albany by General Warren.⁴ In Penn's writing, he indicated that Myers was a servant to "General Warren of Revolutionary fame" at the time Myers was set free from slavery.⁵ It is questionable if this is the same General Warren shown in the famous painting of the battle of Bunker Hill (since the General died there in 1775). This may be the case if Myers was held as a slave by one of the members of the Warren family, but it is unusual

1 Stephan Belinski. "Jonathan Eights," Colonial Albany Social History Project, New York State Museum, <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/e/joeights7933.html>.

2 Irvine Garland Penn. *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors* (Springfield, MA: Wiley & Company, 1891), 48-51.

3 This is perhaps explained by the fact that the counties were differently defined in 1800. Records at Albany Rural Cemetery, where Myers is buried, lists his birth place as Hoosick, New York but this may not be from original information.

4 Penn, 48-51.

5 Penn, 48-51. While this item of information is noted in multiple sources, a review of manumission records at the Albany County Hall of Records did not reveal Myers' name listed there. At this time, the specifics under which the manumission took place have not been determined.

that the ownership would be described in this manner. There was a prominent Warren family recorded in the area of Albany and Troy during the early nineteenth century, but the true identity of "General Warren" has yet to be confirmed.

In 1827, Stephen married Harriet Johnson in Troy, New York. Harriet hailed from an African American family that may have had connections with New York City.⁶ Her family was involved in the shipping business and operated a sloop on the Hudson River called *The Miriam*.⁷ As operators of a sloop they no doubt had regular contact with New York City and many of the communities up and down the Hudson and would have had many opportunities to ferry passengers from New York City to Albany, some of whom may have been fugitives from slavery. The Johnson family is an important example of African-Americans in the river related trades in this period. River trade and the work of boatmen were important sources of employment for African-Americans.

Stephen and Harriet Myers had five children: Elizabeth Myers (born 1832), Stephen Myers, Jr. (born 1840), Abram (born 1841), Catharine (born 1846), and Harriet (born 1849).

Early Work

As early as 1831 Myers was assisting fugitives from slavery to reach Canada or settle in upstate

6 The U.S. census records for 1850 suggest Harriet Johnson was born in 1810.

7 Joel Munsel, *Annals of Albany*. Ten volumes published between 1850 and 1859 that are a comprehensive resource for early Albany history. The volumes include transcriptions of common council minutes, church records, important documents, newspaper items, genealogical and biographical materials, real estate transactions, probate records, and more.

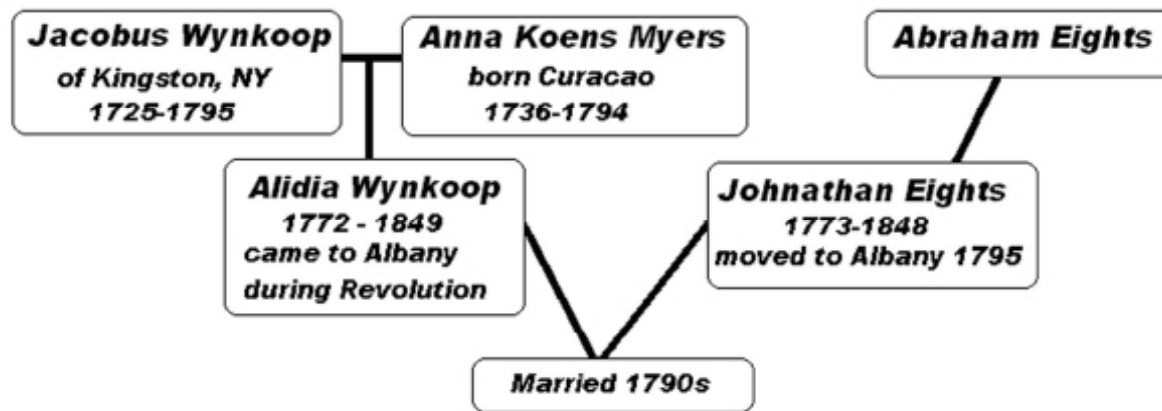


Figure 3: Chart by Mary Liz and Paul Stewart

New York.⁸ Stephen Myers assisted freedom seekers who passed through the community and eventually joined with others to pursue that work. One of the means by which he pursued that advocacy was through an organization called the African Clarkson Society.⁹ Members of this group included Charles Morton, Robert Pogue, Ben Lattimore, Michael Douge and Ben Cutler. These names appear from the 1830s through the 1850s as involved in or supporting the work of the Underground Railroad. Other participants were Horace Watts, Anthony Alcott, Thomas Alcott, Sam Williams, and Lewis Alcott.

For Myers, relationships and collaboration with like-minded individuals were essential for advocacy and action. One way African-Americans organized to press for rights was through what has come to be known as the convention movement. Throughout the period prior to the Civil War, and for many years thereafter, conventions of “Colored Citizens”

gathered to map out strategy for the betterment of black people and to press for equal rights.¹⁰

Although Stephen Myers’ activism was central in his life, the work did not financially support his family. He earned a regular income through trades that were open to African-Americans at the time. He worked most consistently as a steward (a individual in charge of provisions and dining arrangements on a ship) but also as a butler, waiter, and janitor at different periods in his life.¹¹ Even when Myers was engaged in the

10 Stephen Myers attended the New York State Convention of Colored Citizens in Albany held August 18-20, 1840. Among other people in attendance were William Topp, A. Johnson (likely Abram Johnson) and Adam Blake. Myers was on the central committee for the organization of the New York State Convention of Colored Citizens in September 18-20, 1844 held at a Baptist Church in Schenectady, New York. Both Stephen Myers and Abram Johnson are listed as involved in the 1851 Convention of Colored People held in Albany, New York on July 22, 23, and 24. Myers was on the nominating committee with others who nominated fellow Albany resident William Topp for the President of the convention. Myers, at this event, is also on a committee regarding schools. The Schools Committee brought a report to the convention. This is another example of Myers’ continuing interest in education. Myers was also on the committee for a call for a New York State Convention of Colored People in 1855 in the city of Troy.

11 C. Peter Ripley. *Black Abolitionist Papers* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), V. 3, 378-379; “Stephen Myers Obituary,” *Albany Evening Times* 14 February 1870. *The Black Abolitionist Papers* states that Myers worked “for a decade as a grocer and a steam boat steward.” Also, Myers’ obituary notes that he worked as a steward at the Delavan House hotel in Albany and the William Henry Hotel in Lake George, and as a janitor for the Postmaster of the City of New York. The Delavan house was a large hotel that occupied

8 *Northern Star and Freeman’s Advocate* newspaper. January 2, 1843; Tom Calarco. *The Underground Railroad Conductor* (Schenectady, N.Y.: Travels through history, 2003).

9 Stephen Myers involvement is recorded in the *Albany City Directory* for 1831. Based on the group’s name it appears to be an abolition group. Clarkson was a leading figure in the movement that abolished slavery in the British empire.

work of the Underground Railroad he did not always earn enough to support his family and had to take on outside work. This is evident in a letter Harriet Myers wrote to William Jay in August of 1860:

The two fugitives arrived here that you sent and I sent them immediately on their route to Canada. In this month we have had ten...Mr. Myers is not home. He is in Lake George this season as a butler...¹²

Advocacy & Action:

Publisher, Writer, and Orator

Stephen Myers was not only a fervent activist through his work building up the community of free blacks and assisting fugitives from slavery but also in his effort to advocate for work, education, and general betterment. Toward this end, he established a number of newspapers that provided a platform upon which he could crusade for improving the lives of African-Americans. Producing newspapers was a costly project and the ventures did not always sustain themselves for long periods of time. Besides income from subscriptions, funds from outside investors and donors were important for the newspapers' survival. Myers also used speaking and organizing as tools for advocacy.

the block along Broadway between Steuben and Columbia Streets. This hotel was built in the mid 1840s and survived to the mid 1890s when it was destroyed by fire. It was originally organized as a temperance hotel which would have been consistent with the principles of Stephen Myers. The William Henry Hotel was a large elegant hotel in the Lake George resort area of New York State. In a New York State Archives collection entitled *Entry documentation for building and maintenance of government facilities, 1785-1855*, "Stephen Myres" Myers submitted an invoice to the superintendent for the construction of the State Hall building in Albany, for either the delivery of sand or delivery and materials (i.e., the sand), on 17 September 1840. A0825 Box 3, folder 6, item 319, New York State Archives, Albany, New York.

12 Harriet Myers, Personal letter to William Jay, 20 August 1860, Jay Family Papers.

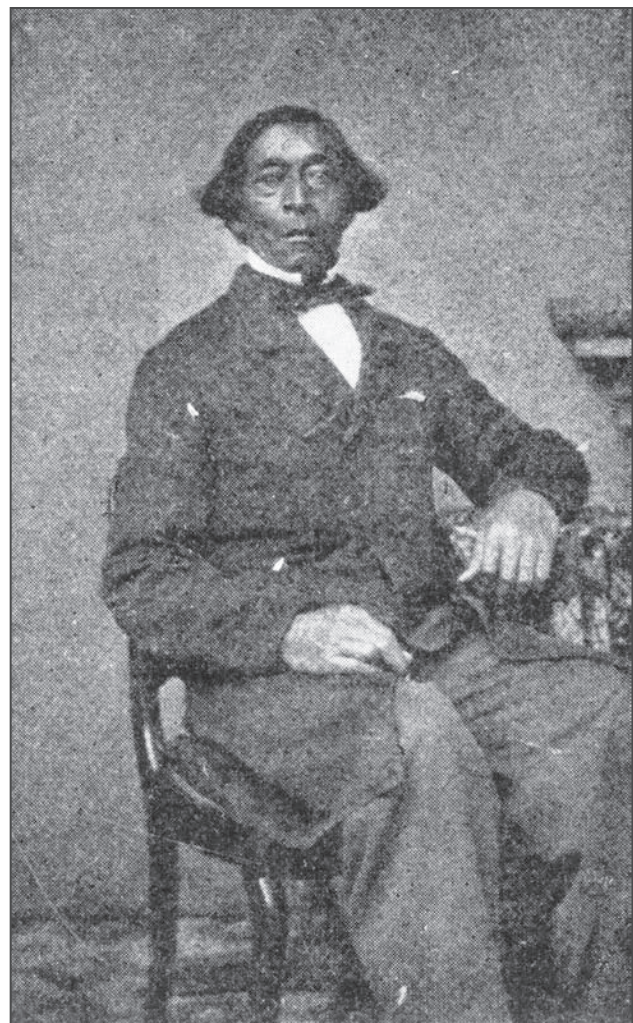


Figure 4: *The only known photograph of Stephen Myers is in the Autobiography of William Henry Johnson, Argus Press Albany, 1900.*

Although less well-known than someone like Frederick Douglass, who toured nationally and internationally through the sponsorship of the American Anti-Slavery Society and other organizations, Myers developed a local reputation as a respected orator. He also established himself as a skilled lobbyist for voting rights. He spent considerable time organizing suffrage clubs and collecting petition signatures to obtain the right to vote for African-American men in New York State.

His first venture in publishing was a newspaper called *The Elevator*. The newspaper was

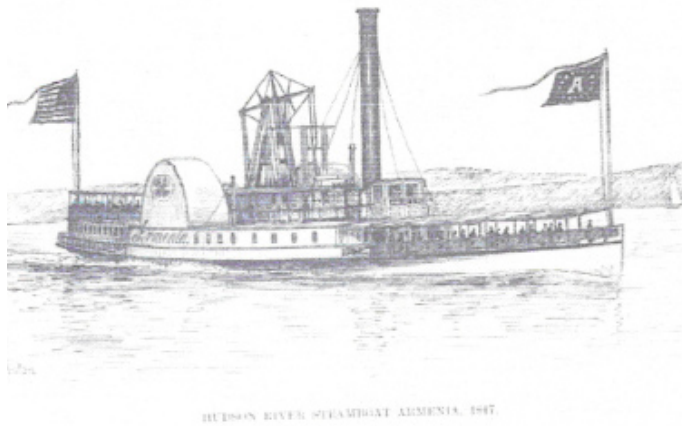


Figure 5: For a period of time, Stephen Myers worked on the day boat, the *Armenia*. This was a day steamer that operated between Albany/Troy and New York City beginning in the late 1840s. Above is a drawing of the *Armenia* included in *American Steam Vessels* by Samuel Ward Stanton, New York Smith & Stanton, 1895. (P. 88)

published in the late 1830s and short lived.¹³ In the early 1840s Myers became associated with a group called the Northern Star Association. This group published a newspaper called *The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*. Key partners in this venture were Charles Morton and John G. Stewart. Also important to the task was Stephen's wife, Harriet, who often reviewed articles, checked galley proofs and helped edit written work. *The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate* was a newspaper that focused on self-help for the African-American community as well as abolition and temperance.

Throughout its pages Myers tried to make the argument against slavery and for education. He also crusaded for jobs and anything that would aid in building up the community of free blacks in economics, moral stature, or education.

While the paper was still young a controversy occurred between the *Northern Star* and *Freeman's Advocate* and another abolitionist newspaper published from Albany, *The Tocsin of Liberty*. The Tocsin's editors were a confrontational bunch and believed they were the only local group properly assisting fugitives. They accused Stephen Myers of improperly taking money that was meant for the Vigilance Committee when, in fact, Myers had only accepted the money for the Northern Star Association to assist fugitives through it, rather than the Vigilance Committee.¹⁴ In 1848, consistent with Myers' developing focus on African-Americans owning land and farming as a means of betterment, the name of the *Northern*

¹³ Penn, 48-51

¹⁴ *Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*, 8 December 1842, Volume 31, 2.

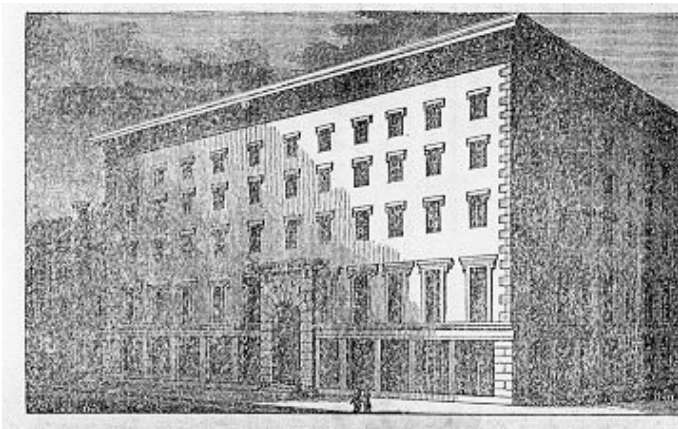


Figure 6: One of the places Myers worked was the Delavan House hotel. The hotel was located along Broadway in Albany at Steuben Street. It was named after Edwin C. Delavan, a developer, philanthropist and temperance advocate. The hotel was built as a temperance hotel in 1844 and destroyed by fire in 1894. This engraving by John Hall is based on an original drawing by Julius W. Adams, one of the designers for this structure. S. Wilson. Albany City Guide (Albany: C. Wendell, 1844)

Star and the *Freeman's Advocate* was changed to the *Northern Star and Coloured Farmer*. The newspaper lasted until 1849 when it merged with another publication, *The True American*, from Cortland, New York that was operated by Sam Ringgold Ward, another key black abolitionist. The new publication was based in Syracuse and called *The Impartial Citizen*, and lasted only until 1851 when it declared bankruptcy.

An article in the December 6, 1856 *Provincial Freeman* calls attention to Myers publishing a monthly called the *American Reporter*. *The Provincial Freeman*, an Afro-Canadian newspaper describes it as “a neat little monthly of six columns.” Further, it also added that “Myers deserves great credit for his papers, they are generally the best got up among the leading papers edited by colored men in the United States”. In the 1850's Myers edited several publications. *The Telegraph and Temperance Journal*, the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, the *American Reporter*, and, at the end of the decade, the *Circular to the Friends of Freedom* which were all well received though various in their capacity to last. All of these publication efforts underscored Myers' desire to advocate for betterment, equal rights, and elevation for African-Americans.

In addition to writing, Myers was also known for advocacy through speaking. He was often featured as a speaker at various events and meetings. In Frederick Douglass' Paper of February 18, 1853, a well-attended event was noted where Myers was one of several speakers who spoke along with Frederick Douglass in

Troy, New York. Frederick Douglass was regarded as a great sensation and an example of an enslaved person who escaped from slavery, became self educated, and was an eloquent opponent of slavery. An account of Douglas' svisit to Troy, New York stated:

Frederick Douglass spoke in the City Hall on Sunday evening last, the room was crowded to its utmost capacity; we are told hundreds went away, unable to get even a place to stand. Among the audience we noticed Dr. Nott, Judge Parker, Hon. R. Peckham, and other eminent men. On Tuesday evening a meeting was held at Troy, at which Messers. Douglass, Benson, of Mass., J. W. Loguen and Stephen Myers spoke. Mr. Northup, and the unfortunate man who was rescued from slavery, were also present, and the narrative of a portion of his life was exceedingly interesting and listened to with great interest; the meeting was large, and we think the impression made will be lasting.

In this example Myers' shares the podium with Douglass, and even Solomon Northup is present to tell his story. Northup was the man who was kidnapped in the early 1840s and held in slavery though a free man by birth. He was able to escape and tell his story as part of the anti-slavery crusade. The “unfortunate man” referred to is Solomon Northup. The “Mr. Northup” is likely Henry B. Northup of the Glens Falls area who came to rescue Solomon in Louisiana.

Another account of Myers spoken advocacy is documented in a letter to the editor published in the Frederick Douglass' Paper in 1855. It remarks on the strength of Myers oratory skills:

Newspapers/Publications Edited or Published by Stephen Myers			
Year(s) Published	Name	Brief Description	Source
1842	<i>The Elevator</i>	"A small but bright and newsy sheet."	Irvine Garland Penn The Afro-American Press and Its Editors, 1891
1842-1849	<i>Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate</i>	Anti-slavery, temperance and self help of African-American community	Existing copies at the NY State Library and other sources
1844	<i>Pioneer</i>	Unknown	The Black Abolitionist Papers, Vol. 3 edited by Ripley, 1991 p. 378
1848	<i>Northern Star and Coloured Farmer</i>	News, economic and self-help	The North Star newspaper April 14, 1848
1852-1860	<i>Anti-Slavery Reporter</i>	New of Albany Anti-Slavery Efforts	Jay Family papers and other sources
1856	<i>American Reporter</i>	A monthly of six columns	Noted in Provincial Freeman of December 6, 1856
1852-1855	<i>Telegraph and Temperance Journal</i>	Temperance and news	Noted in Frederick Douglass' Paper Septemebr 10, 1852
1859	<i>Circular To The Friends of Freedom</i>	Anti-Slavery News and Appeals	Existing copies at the NY State Library and other sources

Figure 7: Newspapers or Publications Edited or Published by Stephen Myers. All newspapers were issued out of Albany, New York. Information provided by Mary Liz and Paul Stewart.

Catskill, October 15, 1855

Mr. Editor: - The colored electors of the town of Catskill, met in this village, on Thursday evening October 11th, for the purpose of organizing for the ensuing political campaign. Martin Cross was chosen Chairman of the meeting, and David Brandow was appointed secretary.

On taking the Chair, Martin Cross stated the object of the meeting, and made a few appropriate remarks; after which it was moved and carried that Mr. Stephen Myers, of Albany, (who was present,) be requested to address the meeting.

The request was responded to by Mr. Myers, in a speech of great power, force and eloquence. Indeed it has not been my

fortune to listen to a speech more replete with interesting facts, more appropriate to the occasion, or more thoroughly infused with true and striking arguments, then the one given on this occasion.

After the address of Mr. Myers, the meeting declared, by unanimous resolution, that the Republican ticket was entitled to their support, and that they would sustain it in the ensuing canvass.

Yours, & c M. Cross¹⁵

Myers attended and spoke at many of the Colored Citizen's conventions held in New York State and elsewhere in the country. Both as a participant and as a speaker he continued his

¹⁵ *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, 14 December 1855

advocacy for the rights of African-Americans, for voting rights, for economic self-sufficiency, for temperance, and anti-slavery concerns. A footnote in *The Black Abolitionist Papers* described the extent of his activism:

Despite his detractors, Myers was widely recognized for his achievements in antislavery and civil rights reform. His Albany station had the reputation of being the best run part of the underground railroad in the state. He sheltered many fugitive slaves in his own home and personally raised funds to sustain the Albany Vigilance Committee. He helped lead the struggle to expand black voting rights in New York. Beginning in the 1830s, he coordinated petition drives, organized the Albany Suffrage Club, participated in several black state conventions, and served as president of the New York State Suffrage Association. His skillful and persistent lobbying of the state legislature in Albany strengthened the voting rights campaign. Myer also spoke out against proposals to subsidize African colonization with state funds. He sat on the executive committee of the American League of Colored Laborers in the 1850s and was a delegate to black national conventions in 1847, 1855, and 1864. During the Civil War, Myers recruited soldiers for the black Massachusetts regiments.¹⁶

In 1866 Stephen Myers was appointed general suffrage agent for the City of Albany. It probably was not a paying position. In this role he joined with others in efforts to lobby the state

¹⁶ Ripley, Vol. 3, 379

legislature to have the word “white”, referring to white citizens, be struck from the state constitution. Their concern was that the laws of the land be evenly applied to all citizens without respect to color.

The Myers and the Underground Railroad

All of his newspaper writing and political work went hand in hand with his work as a supporter and activist on the Underground Railroad. Frederick Douglass identified Stephen Myers as the key individual related to the Underground Railroad in his reflections on it many years later:

fugitives were received in Philadelphia by William Still, by him sent to New York, where they were cared for by Mr. David Ruggles, and afterward by Mr. Gibbs, ... thence to Stephen Myers at Albany¹⁷

Historian C. Peter Ripley has noted the importance of Myers and that his Albany “station” on the Underground Railroad was the best run in the state.¹⁸ Myers himself reflected on his work with the Underground Railroad in a newspaper article where he defended his work and noted the monetary support provided by fellow advocates in Albany:

I will say a few words in relation to slaves who have passed through this city. There was one sent to our office by Mr. Morrell of Newark. We put him on board of a canal boat,

¹⁷ Wilbur Siebert, *The Underground Railroad From Slavery* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1898), 125-126.

¹⁸ Ripley, 378.

Albany Anti-Slavery Office,

No. 10 LARK STREET, ARBOR HILL.

CIRCULAR TO THE FRIENDS OF FREEDOM:

The hundreds of fugitives that have fallen to my care during the last twelve years, have required a great deal of labor and expense to make them comfortable. They are sent to me by the Underground Railroad, south of Albany, and in many cases they come poorly clad and greatly in want of clothes, such as coats, pants and undergarments, both males and females. Whatever is sent, clothing or money, shall be faithfully used for that purpose. We have received some articles of clothing and money in this city, and from abroad, from ladies and gentlemen, for which they have our thanks. We devote all our time to the care of the oppressed who come among us; our pay is small, but yet we are willing to continue to do what we can for them. From the 1st of November, 1857, to April 1st, 1858, the number of fugitives which passed through Albany, was 121. Paid \$2 for passage each, amounting to \$242. We have arrivals every few days from Southern oppression; we forward them to the next depot, and from there they are forwarded to Canada. If any information is wanted concerning how many come through from time to time, they can address a line to the Albany papers.

All letters or packages must be directed to S. MYERS, or to the Anti-Slavery Office, Albany. Any articles of wearing apparel can be sent by express. A general report will be given through the Albany papers every six months. My books and accounts can be inspected by the friends of the cause, at any time they wish to see them. Those that arrive at this time of the year are in want of warm clothes, especially the children. If there should be any farmers wanting help, either men or women, in the house, they can be accommodated by sending to this Office. We consider it safe for them to go into the country, and it saves expense. We have sent quite a number in the country during this season and the last, and they write to us they make good help.

P. S. Ladies and Gentlemen will please, when they receive these circulars, to send them to their friends, for we are in want of material aid.

S. MYERS,
Superintendent Underground Railroad.

Report of S. MYERS, Superintendent of the Underground Railroad:

MONEY RECEIVED by S. MYERS. By subscriptions and by Agents, \$206.34. From the 1st November, 1857, up to April 1st, 1858, we have not received enough to meet the necessary expenses of the Underground Railroad. We make an appeal again to the friends of freedom to be generous towards aiding those destitute fugitives from slavery.

is duly authorized to collect funds for the Underground R. R. He forwards all subscriptions faithfully to this office.

[From the New-York Tribune.]
From Our Own Correspondent.

ALBANY, March 29, 1858.

Eight passengers, per Underground Railroad passed through this city during the last week, in the direction of the North Star. Why don't somebody call the attention of Mr. Stephens, or Mr. Toombs, or "Extra Billy" Smith to this incendiary? The North Star is clearly unconstitutional; as decidedly so as the Dismal Swamp or any other device which tends to lessen the value by decreasing the security of a peculiar species of property. If the President has not the power to remove this troublesome meddler with vested rights, he should make up a cause and take it before the Supreme Court, where he would find no difficulty in obtaining a decree to "put out that light" or to remove it to a Southern point or to prevent it shining, except on cloudy nights, when it can't be seen. Either would answer the purpose. I have carefully examined the Constitution of the United States and the Resolutions of '98, and can find no warrant in either for this Northern aggression. Mr Myers, the efficient agent of the Road, reports a remarkably prosperous business for this season, so far.

Persons receiving this Report will please give notice to this office.

From April 1st the annual report of S. Myers, Sup't of the Underground Railroad, up to 15th February, 1859, to the committee of Gentlemen of this city. The number passed through from Southern Bondage in the last ten months has been more than any previous length of time, and they come needy as usual and by no effort of ours and when here they must be provided for, and they are the poorest of God's poor. Two hundred and sixty three have passed through my hands, for passages and other expenses, amounting to just four hundred and ninety-seven dollars, which I have received by collection in the city and from friends living out of the city. Those of our friends living out of the city have our thanks in behalf of the Bleeding Slave, for money sent by mail. Rev. Henry A. Sizer, is duly authorized as one of our agents for the Underground Depot, he has our thanks for money sent from time to time. The labors of the Rev. Henry A. Sizer will be long appreciated by the panting slave. All the moneys that I have received have been faithfully applied for the purposes specified, I am under the necessity to make an appeal for material aid to the friends of freedom, as still they come.

STEPHEN MYERS, *Superintendent of the Underground R. R.*, 1859.

P. S. The Albany papers publish nearly every month those that pass through, I presume the friends abroad read the Albany papers.

Figure 8: Albany Anti-Slavery Office, Circular to the Friends of Freedom from Stephen Myers. Hough Papers SC7009, Box 112, folder 15, item 185. New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Albany, New York.

paid his passage to Oswego, and furnished him with money to go into Canada, ... We assisted two slaves that were sent to our office by Mr. William Garner of Elizabethtown; we furnished them with money for Canada by way of Lake Champlain. ... I can always get money in this city to help off slaves...¹⁹

Myers' work has been well-documented in many other publications and his letters to financial supporters which have survived illustrate details of his conduct of the work. Myers discusses not only fugitives from slavery in this letter but also the finances of the Underground Railroad as it was operated in the City of Albany at that time. He cites financial supporters and even the bank on which a check was drawn.²⁰

One of the items of particular interest in this letter is the distinction Myers makes between the conduct of the UGRR work in Philadelphia and New York and the way they carried out this work in Albany. In fact, a comparison with the general method of operation undertaken in Boston would show that Albany's system in 1858 is very similar to Boston's. It is similar in that fugitives from slavery, or freedom seekers, are put up in the homes of supporters in the surrounding community, and these community members are reimbursed for their services of room and board. While New York and Philadelphia raised funds for their work in the UGRR through Anti-Slavery Societies and Fairs, in Albany the work was very much supported through donations from a more fixed range of individuals.

¹⁹ *Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*, 8 December 1842, Volume 31, 2.

²⁰ Ripley, Vol. 4, 407-411.

It is clear that Myers was a pillar of the Underground Railroad. In 1856 a key member of the Underground Railroad celebrated Myers' work as chairman of the committee for the previous three years. A fund raising flier celebrates this occasion, telling of 287 fugitives having been helped by Myers over a ten month period.

His notoriety for this work has often been recorded in sources documenting the history of Albany and the region. William Henry Johnson, a fellow anti-slavery activist in Albany, wrote in his autobiography:

One of the great institutions of the Northern States in slavery times was the great "Underground Railway". No modern railway ever had so many lines, so many trains, so many stations, or so many agents or conductors. It was very exclusive, for its passengers were all colored people. It started anywhere and everywhere in the Slave States and always ended in Canada. No through route ever had such a signal light, for it ran its trains by the north star. Every genuine lover of liberty was a stockholder, and every stock holder was a minute-man. Of course every true black man was a charter member. The most noted agent at the Albany station was Stephen Myers. He was born a slave in Rensselaer county in 1800, in the family of Dr. Eights, but was soon liberated by the abolition of slavery in this state in 1827. Thousands of slaves reached Canada through his aid. He enlisted the first company of colored men from Albany, upwards of forty, but Governor Morgan would not accept them, and they went to the front as part of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment. Some of his principal assistants were John G. Steward,

Charles B. Morton, William H. Topp., William McIntyre, William H. Mathews, Primus Robinson, Benjamin Cutler, George Morgan, and Dr. Elkins...²¹

Johnson continued to be active in the life of the Albany community after the Civil War and worked to lobby for legislation that safeguarded the civil rights of African-Americans. He became a prominent speaker and orator in the area. His association with the work of Stephen Myers enables him to be a first hand witness to his legacy.²²

Elevation through Education

In many of the actions undertaken by Stephen Myers, a concern at the top of his agenda was “elevation” of African-Americans. Elevation took on many forms. One was the battle for equality under the law. Another was sufficient education to allow African-Americans to participate in society and have a productive economic life through skills and trades.

Toward these objectives, Myers used his publishing efforts to encourage African-Americans to obtain education and to advocate for the development of educational resources. Marian Hughes, an Albany educator, authored a book on the development of education and educational opportunities for blacks in Albany. In her book, *Refusing Ignorance: The Struggle to Educate Black Children in Albany, New*

²¹ William Henry Johnson, *Autobiography of William Henry Johnson* (Argus Press, Albany 1900), 61.

²² William Henry Johnson’s short summary of Myers’ life errs in claiming Myers gained his freedom around 1827 but perhaps Myers was freed in connection with these laws as they actually were phased in over the 27 years from 1800. It is noteworthy that Johnson mentions many of the other people who were important players in the Underground Railroad drama.

York 1816 to 1873, she chronicles some of the involvement of Stephen Myers in the very local struggle for educational equality. She notes first that Myers used his newspaper the *Northern Star and Freeman’s Advocate* to write about education and advocate for educational attainment. She repeats, on page 33 of her book, an editorial Myers penned in the February 3, 1842 edition:

The subject of education is so frequently discussed that it is almost worn threadbare; and yet the very fact that it is so discussed shews [sic] it is very far from having produced all the results which philanthropy seeks to obtain.

Education is indeed a prolific theme. Its mode of operation, the powers, mental and even physical, it enlarges: the moral, social and political training which it affects, are fruitful topics, and would require the pen of inspiration to do them justice. To these higher views we do not now address ourselves. We look around us and find a distinct race of people, different in many respects, from their fellows, who are degraded by condition, by habits of servitude, by poverty, and much by legislative enactments.

The most fortunate of us can never hope even in this country, to soar to any distinction of fame, or to acquire any political influence. It is impossible; and the reflecting portion of the colored population see it, feel it, and despair.

It is not our intention at this time, to say where is our land of promise, or how our condition is to be permanently changed. It is a subject which at present is beyond our ken; but what we mean to say is, that while this state of



Figure 9: Image of Stephen Myers drawn by Albany artist Marcus Anderson in 2005.

things lasts, it is more necessary than ever that just notions of education should prevail among us.²³

Myers not only talked about education but was also a person of action. Early efforts at founding a school for black children in Albany started in 1816 with a school established on Malcolm Street. This was a small school supported by the funds and donations provided by blacks for its furtherance and survival. This school continued into the early 1820s when the larger white sponsored Lancaster School began to provide some support.

In the early 1820s, the efforts at educating black children were relocated to the African Baptist Church on Hamilton Street between South Pearl and Grand Streets. The school had its ups and downs; it closed in 1832 due to a cholera

epidemic; it reopened a short time later, and in 1836 closed again. By this time, city wide schools were serving some African-American children. The school, however, does not seem to have gone out of existence but seems to reappear by 1842 up the hill in the basement of the African Methodist Episcopal church on Hamilton Street (known as Israel Church today). For some of the time during the school's stay at the Methodist Episcopal Church, Stephen Myers functioned as the school's superintendent.

While many of the day to day activities of the school and its superintendent are not known to us, we do know that he worked with the school's teacher, Thomas Paul, and with other members of the school's community to petition the City of Albany to provide funds to build a school. The petition is dated June 15, 1843. By July 1845 the city built a building for the school at 37 Chestnut Street at a cost of \$830. It was a two story building but because it was built on sloping ground special supports had to be put in place to maintain the building. It could accommodate 175 pupils. The school was named the Wilburforce school after the famous British abolitionist, William Wilberforce (1759-1833).

Responding to the concerns of its secretary and trustee, Henry B. Haswell, in 1850, the City of Albany moved to segregate the schools and require all children of color to attend the Wilberforce School. The black community

²³ Marian Hughes, *Refusing Ignorance: The struggle to Educate Black Children in Albany, New York 1816-1873* (Albany, NY: Mt. Ida Press, 1998), 33.

voiced its strong opposition to this decision and took the matter to court. Stephen Myers was the lead plaintiff, arguing against forced segregation and pointing out the disruption of moving children from their local schools.

By June of 1852 the State Supreme Court had decided in Myers' favor and the school board was required to pay Myers' attorney, Jacob Werner, for his fees. Hughes points out that the fact that Myers had petitioned for the creation of what became the Wilberforce school five years earlier and now he was pressing for the option to attend any school showed a shift in the opinions of the black community regarding what was best in education. Perhaps it also showed a diversity of views.

Organizing for Labor Rights

Myers sat on the Executive Committee of the American League of Colored Laborers. In June of 1850, *The North Star* reported on the League, one of the first African-American labor organizations. While some identify it as a local organization, this is not the case.²⁴ Rather it was a national gathering as such was possible in 1850. This group was one of the earliest national organizations of labor for African-Americans.

Author Leslie Harris describes the American League of Colored Laborers:

In June of 1850, Douglass and other black reformers formed the American League of Colored Laborers, an organization designed to improve the condition of black

²⁴ *St. James Encyclopedia of Labor History*. Query online search of "American League of Colored Laborers done through: <http://www.bookrags.com/>.

workers. Participants included William Powell of the colored Sailors' Home; physician James McCune Smith; jeweler Edward Clark; minister and boot maker Charles Ray; wealthy restaurateur George Downing; and educator Charles Reason. The Reverend Samuel Ringgold Ward was elected president and Lewis Woodson of Philadelphia and Frederick Douglass, vice presidents. Of the twenty Executive Committee members, twelve were New Yorkers, the majority of whom had worked closely with the black working class for at least a decade. The group united reformers who held varying views regarding ways to assist black workers, but does not seem to have attracted any workers. Although a fair was planned for 1852, the league seems not to have survived past this first organizational meeting.²⁵

Interjecting a little context is appropriate at this point. The proposed fair was to be held in 1852. The initial meeting of the labor group was in June of 1850. In August of 1850 a radical convention of anti-slavery activists rallied at Casanovia and called for slave revolt. This would have been news were it not overshadowed by the September Compromise of 1850 and its Fugitive Slave Law Act which panicked the large fugitive population living as free persons in the North. The threat of capture provoked a great migration to Canada above and beyond what had already been taking place. It is likely that this panic derailed plans to hold the fair and continued concerns about organizing workers.

²⁵ Leslie Harris, *In The Shadow of Slavery: African-Americans in New York City, 1626-1863* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 239.

The League was an early effort at organizing workers along labor principles. It encouraged the development of trades and the elevation of African-Americans through the earning of money from trades. It also encouraged those who were successful to employ others and to take on journeymen and apprentices. It encouraged the development of wealth and assets.

The descriptions of the American League of Colored Laborers focus on figures such as Douglass, S. R. Ward and James McCune Smith. These men were developing giants in the recorded history of African-Americans. Many others were also making this organization possible and their role is not well recorded. William Topp of Albany was one of these. Stephen Myers was one of these unrecorded people, as well.

Recruiting for Colored Troops & the Emancipation Proclamation

A final point regarding the Johnson passage is that Myers was involved in recruiting troops to fight in the Civil War. The recruited people were known to have drilled in the yard of the Israel Church of Hamilton Street. While he was too old, being in his 60s, to go to the front himself, he recruited others and enabled local black participation in what became a great struggle to abolish slavery.

The work of recruiting troops, and participating in the struggle against slavery in this way, was rewarded by 1863 by the Emancipation Proclamation. Myers was part of a committee to celebrate the Emancipation Proclamation

with a program that included a rally at Israel church and a talk by Frederick Douglass at the African Baptist Church on lower Hamilton Street. William Henry Johnson was also on that committee.

Final Years

In their declining years Stephen and Harriet lived at 217 Jefferson Street with his oldest son and his family.²⁶

Harriet Myers passed away in late August of 1865 when the Myers lived at 10 Lark Street. Her obituary was written by William Henry Johnson and published in the Philadelphia paper, *The Christian Recorder*.²⁷ Johnson came to the Albany community as a young man and worked along side of Stephen and Harriet Myers for many years on behalf of their common causes. He was well acquainted with both of the Myers and witnessed first hand their charity and work for the dispossessed and unfortunate. Johnson eloquently recalled the life and contributions of Harriet Myers:

Died in this city on Wednesday last, of heart disease, Harriet, wife of our distinguished fellow citizen Stephen Myers, Esq.

Mrs. Myers was apparently enjoying good health on the morning of her death, and was looking forward with bright anticipation to the moment when she would be able to welcome home with affectionate greeting, her husband, who was then, and has been for some time, absent from the city, but whose return was daily looked for.

²⁶ Albany City Directory, 1870.

²⁷ William Henry Johnson. "Obituary of Harriet Myers," *The Christian Recorder* 7 September 1865.

God save the Union!

The Friends of Freedom in Albany County will hold a Mass

CONVENTION!

IN THE CITY OF ALBANY,

On the 5th day of January, 1863,

TO RECEIVE AND TO RATIFY THE PRESIDENT'S EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION, FREEING ALL THE SLAVES IN THE REBELLIOUS STATES, FOREVER.

God bless Abraham Lincoln, President of these United States.

On the 1st of January 1863, a new era in our country's history will be inaugurated. Then we will rejoice and give thanks, and the praise to God, for the millenium is at hand. A Moses is found who will lead the Children of Africa, out of American bondage; hereafter men shall not be enslaved, neither shall nations, but both shall be forever free.

The Convention will Convene at 1 o'clock P. M., in the Methodist Church, Hamilton Street, East of Lark.

The Friends of freedom in TROY, HUDSON, POUGHKEEPSIE, and throughout the state, without regard to color, creed or sect, are earnestly solicited to come and participate with us on the day we celebrate.

OH! FOR FREEDOM! Frederick Douglass, Esq., will be present and attend the Convention. This distinguished orator and champion of liberty, will lecture at 7 1-2 o'clock P. M., in the Baptist Church, Hamilton St., between Fulton and Grand Sts. Subject: **THE PRESIDENT AND EMANCIPATION.** A *Festival Extraordinary* will be prepared by the Ladies.

ADMISSION FIFTEEN CENTS TO DEFRAY EXPENSES.

The committee recommend the observance of the 5th day of January, as a holiday, and that all business be suspended during the sining of the Convention, in honor of the proclamation of freedom. Tickets for sale at the Bookstores and by the undersigned Committee of Arrangements.

STEPHEN MYERS,
P. ROBINSON,
JACOB MASON,
M. W. PRICE,

J. A. SMITH,
W. H. DIETZ,
R. WRITE,
WM. H. ANTHONY,

F. VAN EPPS,
J. R. JONES,
J. P. JOHNSON,
B. CUTLER,

WM. H. JOHNSON, *Secretary, No. 27 Maiden Lane.*

Figure 10: Friends of Freedom convention announcement, 1863. Stephen Myers name appears at the bottom of the flyer. Image from Albany Institute of History and Art, Ruth Robert Collection.

Mrs. Myers was attacked by the disease at 12 ½ o'clock, M., in the street, she was immediately conveyed to her residence in a carriage. She breathed her last about forty minutes after she reached her home.

Mrs. Myers was, at the time of her death, about sixty years of age. She was a kind and affectionate wife, an indulgent mother, a good neighbor and a warm and trusty friend, and all who knew her will deeply mourn her loss.

Mrs. M. was distinguished for her nobleness of heart, and her unselfish hospitality. Her house was ever a shelter and a refuge for the oppressed and the friendless. During the many years her husband was devoted to the superintending of the underground railroad, she was kind and unremitting in her attendance on the unfortunate passengers, whose aim was liberty, and when the sadness of her death reaches them they will drop a tear in respect to her memory.

Mrs. M. was an active and energetic anti-slavery woman, and believed in reducing the theories on the slavery question to practice, and did. She contributed largely to the support of the cause in its darkest days. She was also endowed with more than the ordinary share of literary ability, and was a faithful student; she read books and men too. She was well posted on State and national policy, and manifested a deep interest in the struggle for universal liberty, and equal suffrage, and it is a fact worthy of notice that she did perform much of the editorial labors upon the "Northern Light", published some years since by Mr. Myers, and was entrusted with the reading of the proof sheets for its columns. But now her labors have ended, and she has gone to her rest. Peace to her ashes.

Her funeral was solemnized yesterday (Friday) after, at 4 o'clock. It was attended by the

Lincoln Aid Society, and her own and her husband's many friends and acquaintances. It was one of the largest and most imposing funeral displays which has occurred in this city for many years.

Stephen Myers passed away on February 13, 1870. He was buried from Israel Church in Albany and laid to rest at Albany Rural Cemetery. It is most likely that his association with Israel Church connected the church to the Underground Railroad, though it is clear that several other members of the church had Underground Railroad associations too. The cemetery record from Albany Rural Cemetery lists his cause of death as "Brights Disease", a nineteenth century description of kidney failure. It also lists him as 69 years of age.

The day after his passing, Stephen Myers' obituary was published in the *Albany Evening News* which recounted his accomplishments and contributions:

This, the oldest and most celebrated of our colored citizens, died yesterday morning in the eightieth [sic] year of his age. Mr. Myers has passed an eventful life, having witnessed the greater portion of the most important epochs in the history of our country. For many... to the households of many of our Governors and other leading and distinguished citizens. He was also steward, for some years, in the earlier part of the century, on some of the North River steamboats, a most important position in those days. Until a few years since, he could always be found about the Capital during the Legislative session, and from his kind and pleasant manner made many warm friends. He was a prominent man among his race, being an agent for the "Underground

Railroad” before the war, and did more for his people than any other colored man living, not excepting Fred. Douglass. In days gone by, he was THE representative of them to the politicians of this State. With Wendell Phillips and Garrett [sic] Smith, he was one of the leading anti-slavery lights in this State in days when, to be known as such was to incur the displeasure of a large number of people.

During the past few years, Mr. Myers, at one time, held the position of steward at the Delavan House; he was also for a few seasons, steward of the Fort William Henry Hotel, at Lake George. For some time before his death, Mr. Myers held the position of Janitor to Gen. Jones, postmaster in the City of New York. Mr. Myers was a firm christian and died in the faith in which he lived. He will be buried from the A. M. E. Church on Hamilton street Wednesday afternoon.²⁸

²⁸ “Stephen Myers Obituary” *Albany Evening Times* 14 February 1870.

3.2 Vigilance Committee¹

As the 1830's drew to a close and the 1840's began, committees were formed in some northern cities to protect fugitive slaves from re-enslavement and to assist them in their flight to freedom in the north or in Canada. As slave catchers sought fugitives, these "vigilance" committees provided legal assistance, food, clothing, money, employment, and temporary shelter. Eventually, notable committees were formed in New York, Philadelphia, Boston and many other communities.

Such a committee formed in Albany in the early 1840s and, although its form changed over time, one continued to exist up to the time of the Civil War. Albany's anti-slavery newspaper, *Tocsin of Liberty*, identifies ten people, blacks and whites, as members of the executive body of the local Vigilance Committee in 1842. Some are familiar names from the city's history, African-Americans such as Thomas Paul and Revolutionary War veteran Benjamin Lattimore were among the participants. Non-African-Americans such as Charles Torrey, Abel Brown, A. G. Alden and E. W. Goodwin also participated. The rest of the Vigilance Committee was composed of all those who contributed financially to its work. Other Vigilance Committees in the region by the 1850s included one at Troy (*Troy Daily Times*, October 6, 1857) and the separate City of Lansingburgh (*Lansingburgh Democrat*, 1850). Albany's Vigilance Committee worked

¹ Parts of this section were previously published in the *The Freedom Seeker*, Vol. 2, Number 1, Summer 2005; newsletter of the Underground Railroad History Project.

alongside other local anti-slavery organizations such as the Liberty Party and the Eastern New York Anti-Slavery Society, and with anti-slavery newspapers such as the *Tocsin* and the *Albany Patriot*. Another group, the Northern Star Association, like the Vigilance Committee, directly assisted fugitives. In the early 1840s, the most visible agent for this group was Stephen Myers. African-Americans Charles Morton and John G. Stewart were also key members.

The Northern Star Association published a newspaper, *The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*. With Myers' leadership the group also sought employment and provided advocacy and education for people of African descent, both freedom seekers from the southern states and those who enjoyed freedom or emancipation from northern slavery. Myers spoke around the region, raising money and publicizing the association's work assisting fugitives.

Anti-slavery groups did not always cooperate with each other. Newspaper accounts of the period document that the Northern Star Association and the early Vigilance Committee competed with each other in the early 1840s (*The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*, December 8, 1842, Vol. 1 No. 31). There was even some hostility between Myers and members of the Vigilance Committee who accused Myers' group of not doing enough to aid freedom seekers (*The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*, December 8, 1842, Vol. 1 No. 31). It appears that the hostility between the groups subsided after Myers' chief opponent, Charles Torrey, left the scene. Torrey was

Vigilance Committee Office,
198 Lumber Street, Albany, N. Y.

At a meeting of the Vigilance Committee of Albany held on the evening of the 27th of April, 1856, it was

Resolved, That we, the Vigilance Committee, appreciate the untiring efforts of our Chairman, **STEPHEN MYERS**, in behalf of the Fugitive for the last three years.

The following resolution was offered by the Rev. John Sands of Albany:

Resolved, That we tender to Mr. **STEPHEN MYERS** our sincere thanks for his faithfulness in the proper expenditure of all funds placed at his control for the benefit of the Fugitive, and in accordance with the instructions of the Committee.

From the 12th day of September, 1855, to July 15th, 1856, two hundred and eighty-seven Fugitives passed through Albany. Paid for passage, \$542.36; board, \$76.60.

T. ELKINS,
Secretary.

C. BROOKS,
Chairman.

We call on our fellow citizens, here and elsewhere, to aid us in funds to help the poor, unfortunate Fugitives who come to us daily---in many cases destitute of clothing, weary of traveling, and hungry. No one is so poor as to be unable to give a little to this down-trodden class.

We appeal to the sympathy of ladies and gentlemen everywhere. We are in want of material aid and cast-off clothing.

All funds forwarded to Stephen Myers, William H. Topp, or any gentleman of the Committee, will be faithfully applied. All letters directed to this Office will be duly answered.

Rev. J. J. KELLEY,
Agent.

STEPHEN MYERS,
Gen'l Agent and Sup't.

COMMITTEE:

Rev. JOHN SANDS,
 Carr. A. JOHNSON,
 WILLIAM GARDNER,

RICHARD WRIGHT,
 STEPHEN MYERS,
 WILLIAM MATTHEWS.

MINOS MCGOWAN,
 Lumber Merchant, North Pearl St.
 JAMES WOOD,
 Dr. T. ELKINS.

BY THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD.

One day last week a party of sixteen escaped slaves arrived in Canada, and found quarters in Stamford township. One of the waiters at the Clifton House, near the Suspension Bridge, who escaped two or three years ago from bondage in Virginia, was apprised of the coming of the party and excited himself to procure them a resting place. It so happened that he told the tale to a gentleman at the hotel who was his master's neighbor in Virginia. The recognition was mutual and instantaneous.

They passed through Albany on the 13th Jc.

ALBANY, July, 1856.

Figure II: A flyer issued from the "Vigilance Committee Office" in which Stephen Myers name is prominently featured. The office was located at 198 Lumber Street (known today as 194 Livingston Avenue).

imprisoned in 1844 for assisting fugitive slaves in Maryland and died in prison two years later. In the late 1840s, Myers succeeded the prior Vigilance Committee leaders as the key player in the Vigilance Committee, serving as its staff and directing the local anti-slavery office into the early 1860s.

After the passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law, vigilance committees sprang up in many other cities as in the example of Lansingburgh where a committee held meetings in that city's African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church. These committees expressed widespread citizen opposition to slavery, especially to the Fugitive Slave Law, which enlisted the power of the federal government on the side of slave owners.

The Underground Railroad was not a physical structure but a movement of anti-slavery activism of which vigilance committees were a critical element. Other organizations formed parts of the network that we call the Underground Railroad. Wesleyan Churches, Quakers, Free Will Baptists, African Methodist Episcopal, and AME Zion, Unitarians, and many members of Congregational and Presbyterian Churches all worked in the movement to assist fugitive slaves. Secular or non-church organizations such as the Eastern New York Anti-Slavery Society and the American Anti-Slavery Society played a role. But many people with no organizational or denominational affiliation assisted too. And, of course, the movement was also the *movement* of enslaved African people to become freedom

seekers and travel across the land to the non-slave northern states and to Canada.

The surviving 1856 flier (Figure 11) illustrates the work of the Vigilance Committee in Albany in the 1850s. The document identified Myers with the title Superintendent of the Underground Railroad. It notes a second person in the person of Rev. Kelley as an agent. It tells a bit of history presenting two resolutions acted on by the committee that mark Myers' activity with it over the previous years.

Most importantly, the 1856 flyer identifies the office address of the Vigilance Committee as 198 Lumber Street. Lumber Street was renamed Livingston Avenue after the Civil War. The numbers on the street have shifted several times over its existence, but careful research and documentation revealed that 198 Lumber Street is the same location as 194 Livingston Avenue. Myers and his family lived there while it served as the office of the Vigilance Committee. In fact it was the office of the Vigilance Committee because Myers, the committee's agent, lived there.

3.3 History and evaluation of the building

Emergence of the Greek Revival Style

The Greek Revival style in the United States evolved from a growing interest in Classical Antiquities that began in the mid-eighteenth century. Accounts of excavations in Italy and Greece by archeologists (who were often architects as well) drew widespread international attention. The four volumes, *Antiquities of Athens*, authored by Stuart and Revett between 1762 and 1816, provided detailed illustrations. In 1801, Lord Elgin, the British Ambassador to Greece, received approval to remove sculptures and other artifacts from the Pantheon and subsequently transported them to London. News of Elgin's acquisitions was closely followed by many in Europe and the United States and encouraged greater interest in Greek history and culture, a trend that gained momentum during the nineteenth century.¹

The understanding and influence of Greek architecture also began to change. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Greek architecture and culture were understood to be an extension or derivative of Roman architecture. This belief shifted when German archeologist and art historian Johann Winckelmann successfully proved that Greek culture and architecture served as a precedent, and had, in fact, influenced ancient Rome.² Two contributing factors in the widespread American interest in the Greek forms were

their associations with the “reinvention” of democratic government and the Greek War of Independence (1821-1830).

Between 1820 and 1865, the emergence of an “American” culture signaled the country's interest in distancing itself from its colonial roots. Since the Federal Style was British in origin, Americans were eager to embrace new styles in the pursuit of their own identity. As American nationalism rose, Roman architectural influences became less popular. Patriotism lent itself to a favorable view of the Greek Revival style as it evoked the idea of the democratic city-states and its “simple forms and spare ornaments could be appreciated by all Americans.”³

The country witnessed the emergence of a strong capitalistic economy and a remarkable improvement in transportation of people and goods. This engendered a belief in material and physical progress and created a growing middle class. Architectural historian Carole Rifkind wrote, “To a nation that was optimistic, expansive, idealistic, and mindful of posterity, the Greek Revival brought an architecture of beauty, breadth, simplicity, and permanence.”⁴

The spread of interest and execution of the Greek Revival style was bolstered by the growth and wider distribution of architectural handbooks and builder's manuals. While many of these books were published as portfolios, a new trend in pocket-size building manuals developed and made it easier for reference at a work site. The popularity of these books made

1 Charles Lockwood, *The New York Row House 1783-1929* (New York: Rizzoli, 2003), 57.

2 Lockwood, 58.

3 Lockwood, 58.

4 Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to American Architecture* (New York: New American Library, 1980), 38.

household names of their creators including Asher Benjamin, Minard Lafever and Andrew Jackson Downing.

For some architects, the Greek Revival style was adopted at its most literal from historic Greek buildings. William Strickland's design of the Second Bank of the United States (Philadelphia, 1818-1824) was based on measured drawings of the Parthenon by Stuart and Revett.⁵ But for others, the adoption of

Greek forms for buildings was less literal and executed through the use of decorative details and internal planning. Greek Revival townhouses and row houses began to appear in New York City in the 1830s. The design of these row houses referenced Greek elements for doorways, moldings, and other details found in books such as Asher Benjamin's *American Builder's Companion* (1827, 6th edition) and Minard Lafever's *The Young Builder's General Instructor* (1829).

5 Leland M. Roth, *American Architecture: A History* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001),152.

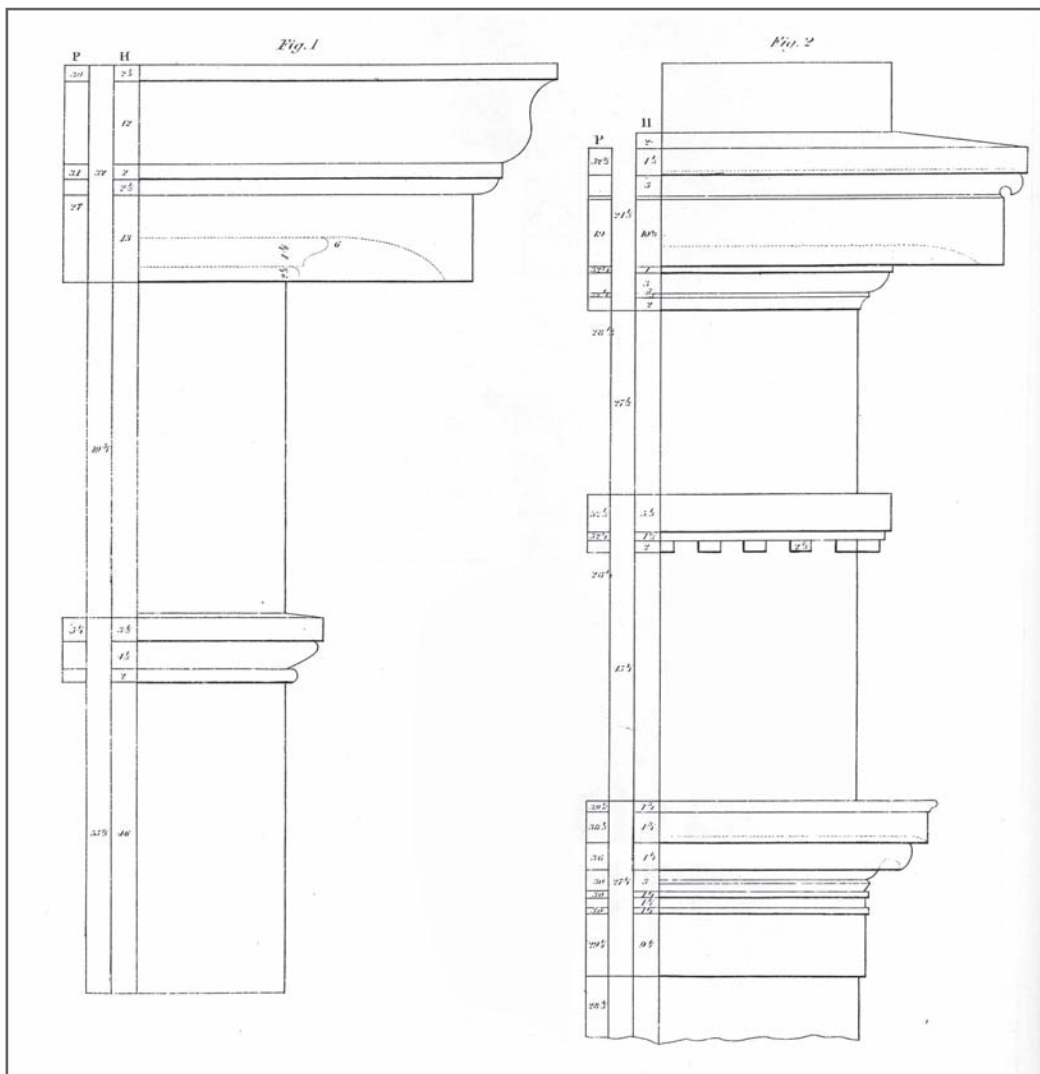


Figure 12: Asher Benjamin, *PLATE XIII*, *Practical House Carpenter*, 1830. Illustrated designs published in architectural handbooks and builder's manuals like Benjamin's influenced details that appeared in Greek Revival buildings.

Introduction of Row Housing and Greek Revival Style in Albany

Although the Myers Residence is by strict definition a townhouse, its design most accurately reflects mid-nineteenth century period row houses in Albany. To establish a historical understanding of the building's design, this section will look at the development of Greek Revival row housing in the city.

The evolution of the row house in Albany was influenced by precedents established in London and New York City. The earliest model for the London townhouse was a symmetrical five-bay dwelling with a central hall. By the eighteenth century, the design was refined to a more affordable and modest version with three-bays and a side hall passage. This version was built extensively in England and the colonies.⁶ Initially known as the "half-house," this housing type was a late arrival to Albany, but by the end of the eighteenth century it had become prevalent and was often referred to as a "modern style" house; later by the more familiar name of "row house."⁷

Beginning in the late 1820s, designs for rowhousing in Albany began a transition from the fine-scaled neoclassical style inspired by ancient Roman architecture and popularized by the Adam brothers, to a more massive aesthetic inspired by ancient Greek precedents, subsequently identified as the "Greek Revival"

by twentieth century historians. Contemporary explanations advocating for this transition tended to cite the style as representative of the natural affinity of the young United States to the ancient Hellenic democracy that was evoked by its architecture, and symbolically supportive of the contemporary efforts of Greece to become independent from Turkey. In Albany, the style was initially given form through the late designs of architect Philip Hooker, who utilized its features in buildings such as the Albany City Hall (1829-32), the John Meads house (1829-30) and the consistory house of the North Dutch Church (1830-31).⁸

Henry Rector, whose architectural career began with a failed entry in the competition for the design of the City Hall which Hooker won, became the region's strongest proponent of the Greek Revival style, and was responsible for the design of a number of public buildings and rowhouses utilizing its aesthetic during the 1830s and early 1840s. The style was adopted by the builders Rector associated with, including Orr & Cunningham, and then by builders in the city in general. The style was applied to houses of even the most modest size by the 1840s.

While it is an unusual house form in its immediate neighborhood, houses of the type represented by the Myers residence were constructed in new neighborhoods throughout the city during a population boom which

6 Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc., *A Very Working Class Neighborhood: Nineteenth-Century Archeology in Sheridan Hollow* (December 2005), 55.

7 Hartgen, 55.

8 Douglas G. Bucher and Walter Richard Wheeler, *A neat plain modern stile: Philip Hooker and his contemporaries 1796-1836*, ed. Mary Raddant Tomlan (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 246-48, 275, 313.

attended the initial construction and subsequent expansion of the Erie Canal, whose eastern terminus was at Albany. Examples of two-and-a-half story three bay wide, side passage houses with Greek Revival detailing were constructed

particularly in neighborhoods west of Eagle Street, in the South End, in Sheridan Hollow and along lower Clinton Avenue.



Figure 13: A two-story Greek Revival row house on Westerlo Street, constructed c.1840. This particular example has a wood frame with only a street facade of brick.



Figure 14: The Melville House in Clinton Square. Constructed in the early 1830s with a classic Greek Revival facade, the cornice was altered in the late nineteenth century.



Figure 15: Historic photograph showing Greek Revival-influenced row houses, Orange Street, 1890s. Most of these houses were two or two and a half story brick dwellings, and were constructed c.1835-1855. (Photo collection of Walter R. Wheeler).



Figure 16: 93 Herkimer Street. 91-95 Herkimer Street. This row of three houses was constructed in the mid-1830s by Ruell Clapp a prominent Albany builder, who lived at 95.



Figure 17: Herkimer Street row houses. The three buildings in the foreground are an excellent example of the refined simplicity of Greek Revival detailing. The fourth house in this row, at left, was altered by the addition of Italianate details c.1875.

Evolution, ownership, and occupancy of 194 Livingston Avenue

Although many original exterior and interior features of the Myers Residence remain today, the building has undergone changes through time. A review of the building's physical history and occupancy revealed two patterns. The first was a history of being leased rather than owner-occupied. The second, confirmed through historic map research, was that the building's primary footprint remained relatively unchanged during its over 150-year history. It can be surmised that the role of this property as a rental was an important factor in limiting the changes to which the building has been subjected.

It is notable that at several points in time, the property's deed was transferred to Albany County, suggesting some state of abandonment or neglect. While this type of treatment has negatively impacted its physical condition, it has also been a critical factor in the retention of valuable historic fabric.

As recorded in the 1842 deed, the history of the building begins with the sale of land by Nicholas N. Quackenbush to John Johnson, an African-American ship owner:

This Indenture made the first day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty two between Nicholas N. Gansevort Quackenbush and Catherine N. Quackenbush in the City of Albany of the first part and John Johnston Junior of the same City on the second part. Witnesseth that the said parties of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of two hundred and sixty dollars lawful money of the

United States of America to them in hand paid by the said party of the second part the receipt whereof is hereby confessed and acknowledged...All that certain lot of ground situate lying and being in the eight (formerly the fifth ward of the City of Albany) known and distinguished on a map of the subdivision of lot number sixty one and lot number sixty two of the West Manor of Rensselaerwyck as subdivision Lot Number (9) Nine and is bounded as follows to wit. On the north by Lumber Street by ground belonging to Mrs. Ann Profit on the south by Lot Number (10) Ten and on the east by lot number (8) Eight being in front and rear such thirty two feet and in depth from front to rear one hundred and thirty feet.⁹

The acquired land remained undeveloped until 1847 when Johnson constructed a 2 1/2 story brick townhouse on the property. At the time of construction, the location is known as 196 Lumber Street, although over the next three decades the address will alternately be known in public records as 194, 198, 200, and 202 Lumber Street. Johnson considered this his primary address, but during the 1850s, the building was leased to others, most notably to Stephen Myers during the years 1855-1858.¹⁰

An 1850 map of Albany (*Figure 18*) clearly shows the presence of Johnson's townhouse amidst a well-populated neighborhood of residential structures and commercial businesses but provides little information about other structures on his lot.¹¹ In 1858, John Johnson sold the house and land to Adam Blake and Elizabeth Gippard.¹²

9 Albany County (NY), Deeds Book 103, p.442..

10 City of Albany, Assessment Rolls, 1846-1876; Albany City Directory, 1847-1862.

11 Dripps (?) Map of Albany, 1850.

12 Deeds Book 152, p. 493.

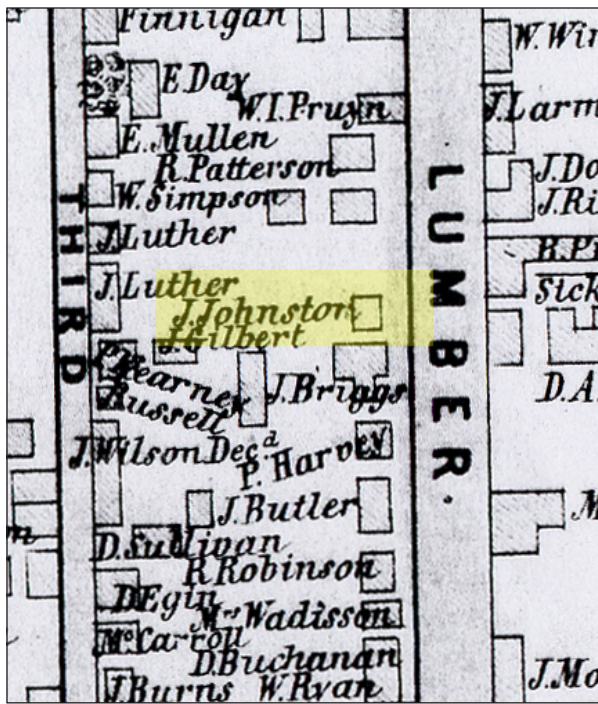



Figure 18: 1850 Albany map showing the building footprint and the owner's name, John Johnson. 

By the 1860s, those living in neighboring homes around Lumber Street were a mix of native New Yorkers and European immigrants. Occupations for local families included a variety of trade-oriented jobs such as stone masons, grocery keepers, laborers, servants, butchers, carpenters and boatmen. Local residences were often occupied by more than one family, likely broken up into apartments or sublets.¹³

Ownership of the property changed hands again in 1864 when it was purchased from Adam Blake by Philip Van Rensselaer.¹⁴ Rensselaer's tenure as owner was short-lived, as he sold the property to Sarah E. Hascy three years later.¹⁵ Both Rensselaer and Hascy did not reside in the building but leased the building to tenants.¹⁶

13 1860 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany County, New York, 8th Ward, sheets 34-35), Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed October 22, 2008).

14 Deeds Book 184, p. 442.

15 Deeds Book 210, p.119.

16 Assessment rolls for the years 1864-1876.

The first Albany map that clearly documents the building and ancillary structures was published in 1876 by G.M. Hopkins and Co (Figure 19). The ownership by "S.E. Hascy" was recorded on the map. No additions are indicated to the original rectangular building form, but an outhouse was located behind the building. The number of building stories or height was not recorded but the map key indicates the primary building's material as masonry construction. The map of the surrounding neighborhood confirms that the building was one of only a small number of brick residences constructed in this area of Arbor Hill, amid a majority of wood frame construction.¹⁷

Between 1875 and 1880, Lumber Street was renamed Livingston Avenue.¹⁸ By 1880, the majority of residents in the block surrounding number 194 (as the property was now known) were first generation Americans, born in New

17 G.M. Hopkins Co., *City atlas of Albany, New York, 1876*, 46.

18 Assessment Rolls 1875-1880.

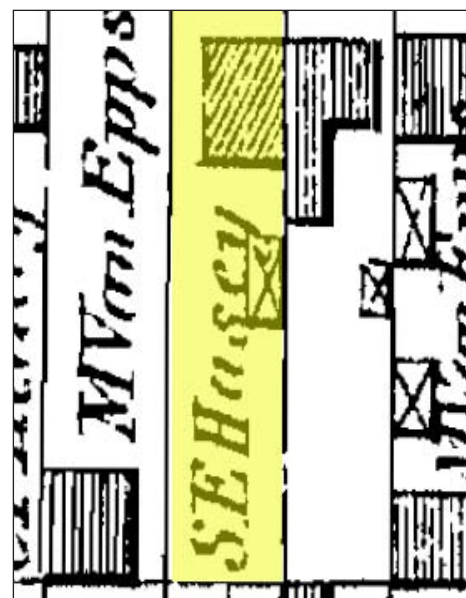



Figure 19: 1876, Detail of G.M. Hopkins Co., City atlas of Albany, New York, 1876. 

York State of European parents. Neighboring families included immigrants from Ireland, Scotland, Germany, Holland and Canada. Many of the nearby homes were occupied by multiple families.¹⁹ Family size varied from one to ten children and in 1880 approximately 50% were enrolled in school. Occupations varied within a lower-middle class status and included carpenters, shopkeepers, bakers and railroad employees.²⁰

194 Livingston Avenue was leased in 1880 from the owner Sarah E. Hascy to a large, extended family. Census records note that thirteen people were living in the house during this year. Although four different last names were recorded, the family included a widow, three sons, one son-in-law, four daughters, two granddaughters and two grandsons. Their occupations were similar to those of their neighbors and included a plumber, press man and a piano maker.²¹

During the 1880s through the mid-1890s, the property was bought and sold by a succession of owners.²² In 1884, municipal records show that the building was owned by William B. Scott.²³ By 1890 it had been purchased by Thomas. H.

¹⁹ 1880 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany County, New York, 8th Ward, Enumeration District [ED] 16 (sheets 22-33), ED 22 (sheets 18-24), Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed October 22, 2008). The block where 194 Livingston Avenue stood included approximately 170 families living in 107 homes.

²⁰ 1880 U.S. Census.

²¹ 1880 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany County, New York, 8th Ward, Enumeration District [ED] 22, sheet 21, dwelling 178, family 220, household name unidentifiable, Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed October 22, 2008).

²² Deed records for the years 1868-1896 were not located during the research for the HSR. As a result, Assessment Rolls and Water Rents records provided the sequence of ownership history during this period.

²³ Assessment Rolls 1885; Water Rents 1884.

Greer and his wife.²⁴

It was during Greer's ownership in 1890 that the presence of a two-story wood stable begins to appear in municipal records. The structure was located where the outhouse stood in an earlier 1876 map.²⁵ Despite the appearance of new construction, it has been concluded that the outhouse and stable are the same building. It most likely served a combination of uses including a stable, wood shed, and/or coal bin in addition to being an outhouse for this residence.

An 1891 map (*Figure 20*) also shows a one-story wood building on the western side of the building, constructed during the time period between 1876 and 1891.²⁶ But the following year, a newer map verifies (*Figure 21*) that this one-story structure has been removed.²⁷

By the mid-1890s, 194 Livingston Avenue once again changed ownership. 1895 municipal records indicate that Joseph Belser was briefly the owner and by the late 1890s, the building and lot were taken into the possession of Albany County. The County sold and transferred the deed to Stephen Parsons in 1897.²⁸

In 1900 the neighboring block around 194 Livingston Avenue saw a striking increase in residential home ownership when compared to the previous twenty years. Thirty percent of the occupants now owned their homes. Despite this, the long-term neighborhood trend of

²⁴ Water Rents, 1890.

²⁵ Assessment Rolls 1890, 1891.

²⁶ Scarlett & Van Wagoner, *Fire Map of Albany, NY*, 1891. Map color coding identified the type of building construction.

²⁷ Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Albany, New York*, 1892.

²⁸ Deeds Book 492, p405.

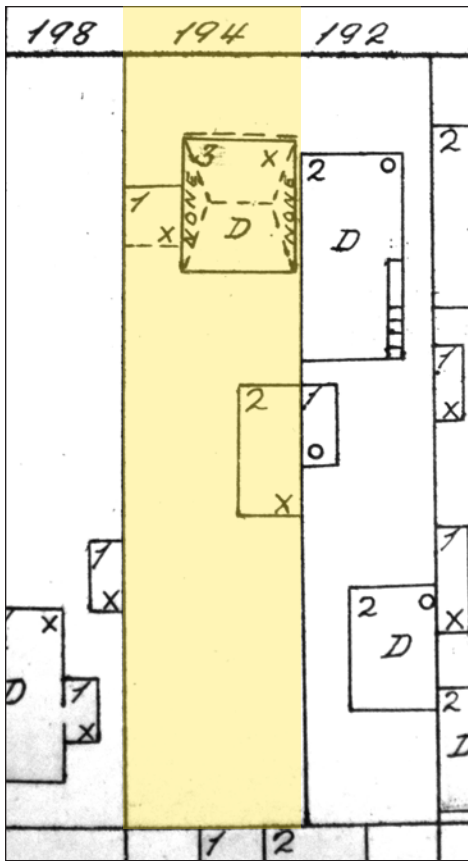


Figure 20: 1891, Detail of Scarlett & Van Wagoner Fire Insurance Map of Albany.

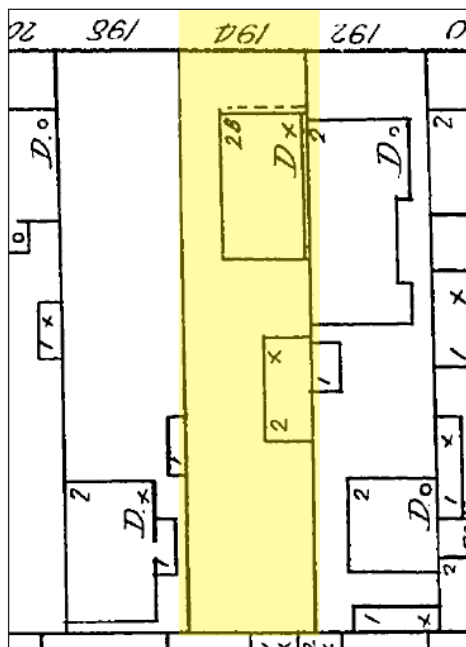


Figure 21: 1892, Detail of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Albany

properties housing multiple families remained unchanged and the ethnic makeup remained primarily white.²⁹ The neighborhood remained family-oriented; 85% percent of the residents had children. At this time, 194 Livingston Avenue was leased to a married couple, an Irish immigrant and his New-York born wife, who shared the residence with their three daughters and four sons. The family was struggling with unemployment, with the head of household, a cigar maker by trade, out of work, and one of his sons, a professional ball player, also unemployed. Two daughters, a stenographer and a printer, and two sons, a laborer and a clerk, were supporting the family.³⁰

A 1908 map (Figure 22) revealed no change to the building's exterior or other structures on the lot since 1892. In 1910 Jennine A. Parsons (possibly Stephen's widow or daughter) sold the property to John P. Donohoe.³¹ Rather than leasing the building out, Donohoe and his family lived at 194 Livingston Avenue. Census records of 1920 indicate that Donohoe, a widower, was living at the address with his three adult children. He worked as a carpenter, and his son John Jr. was employed in the railroad industry. Of his two daughters, the youngest, Lillie, worked in sales at a department store while the older daughter, Emma, likely cared for the family home.³²

29 1900 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany County, New York, 8th Ward, Enumeration District [ED] 31 (sheets 14-17), ED 32 (sheets 3-6), Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed Oct. 22, 2008). In 1900, the surrounding block was home to 160 families living in approx. 95 homes.

30 1900 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany County, New York, 8th Ward, Enumeration District [ED] 32 sheet 4, ED 32 (sheets 3-6), ED 43 (sheets 14-17), dwelling 49, family 80, Henry Ward (sp?) household, Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed October 22, 2008).

31 Deed Book 589, p. 410.

32 1920 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany

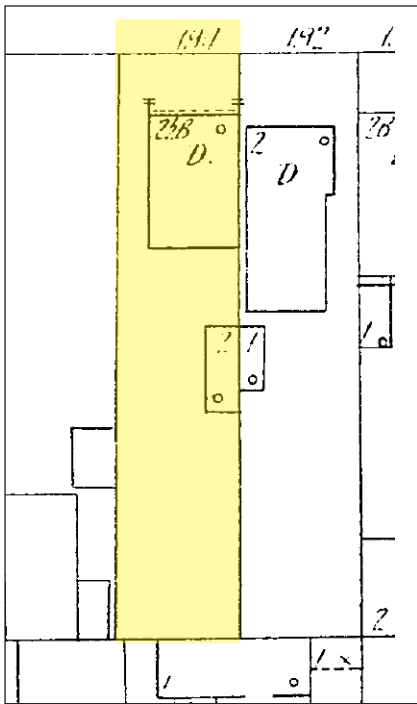


Figure 22: 1908, Detail of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Albany.

By 1920, the number of multiple families living nearby had increased; home ownership rates dropped between 1900 and 1920 to approximately 22%.³³ A large number of children were first generation Americans, their parents having come to the United States during the previous fifty years. Fourteen percent of the individuals were European immigrants from Ireland, Poland, England and Germany. Although the neighborhood was ethnically diverse, almost all local residents spoke English and could read and write.³⁴

County, New York, 8th Ward, Enumeration District [ED] 43, sheet 8A, dwelling 194, family 148, John P. Dohohoe household, Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed October 22, 2008).

33 1920 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany County, New York, 8th Ward, Enumeration District [ED] 37 (sheet 7B), , 7A, ED 41 (sheets 6B, 7A, 7B, 8A, 8B, 9A, 9B), ED 43 (sheets 6A, 6B, 7A, 7B, 8A, 8B), Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed October 22, 2008). By 1920 approximately 164 families lived within approximately ninety homes on this block.

34 1920 U.S. Census.

Between 1926 and 1927, 194 Livingston Avenue was acquired by John and Marie Quinn who sold it to Catherine Mattimore around 1930.³⁵ Mattimore did not live in the building but leased it to Henry and Estelle Martin.

Originally from Virginia, the Martins shared the home with their adult niece, Helen. All were employed; Henry as a chef, Estelle as a hairdresser and Helen as an elevator operator in a department store. In 1930, the Martins were leasing the brick row house but during the year Estelle Martin purchased the property from Catherine Mattimore.³⁶

The majority of homes on the block were occupied by multiple families by 1930 and the home ownership rate remained similar to the previous decade. The majority of residents were white although two African-American families were living at 240 Livingston Avenue. Most of the residents were born in New York State with almost all children born in the United States. European-born parents had emigrated from countries such as Poland, Russia, Germany, Switzerland, Ireland and England. A pattern of migration within the United States began to emerge during this period. Neighboring adults had moved from states such as Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont and Mississippi.

In 1930, at the beginning of the Great

35 Deed Book 790, p. 27; 821, p. 427; 815, p. 288. Port Realty was the holder of the second mortgage when the Donohoe's owned the property. They appeared to take possession of the house in the late 1920s. In 1927, Port Realty sold the property to John and Marie Quinn.

36 Deed Book 821, p. 427; 1930 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany County, New York, 8th Ward, Enumeration District [ED], dwelling 22, family 40, Henry C. Martin household, Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed October 22, 2008).

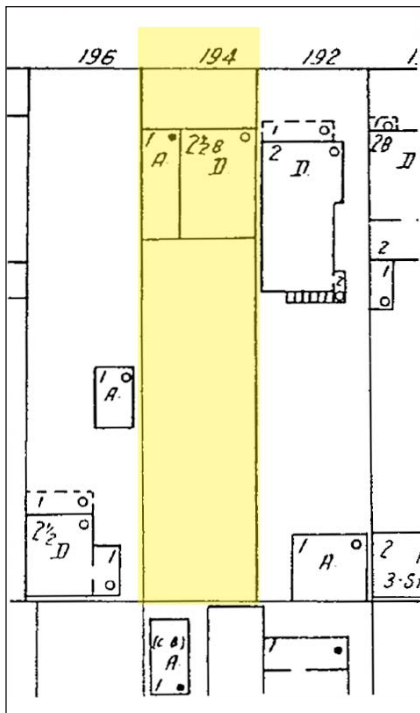


Figure 23: 1934, Detail of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Albany.

Depression, households in this block showed an approximate 15% unemployment rate. Of those who were employed, most had jobs in the railroad, coal, paper, pharmacy, wood, telephone and manufacturing industries.³⁷

In the early 1930s, a one-story wood garage was constructed on the west side of the building. It extended the length of the building and was a stand-alone structure. A 1934 map (Figure 23) documents the structure and its physical relationship to the building.³⁸

Estelle Martin remained the owner of the

³⁷ 1930 U.S. Census, population schedule, Albany, Albany County, New York, 8th Ward, Enumeration District [ED] 1-36 (sheets 15A-B, 16A-B, 17A-B), ED 1-37 (sheets 1A-B, 2A-B, 3A-B), Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com> (accessed October 22, 2008). The 1930 Federal Census found that 58% of the homes on the block had more than one family living in them. Nearly 23% of the individuals on this street owned their homes.

³⁸ Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Albany, New York, 1934*; and Assessment Rolls, 1942-1943. There is no physical evidence that the wood building was connected to the main residence.

property until 1976 when Albany County assumed ownership. By 1976, the building was reported to be in fair condition but completely vacant with the doors and windows boarded up.³⁹

It was sold to new owners, James and Mary Lownes, in 1976.⁴⁰ During their ownership, a one-story porch was constructed on the rear of the building. This appears to be the only major addition to the building's exterior footprint during their ownership. The one-story wood garage remained standing during the Lownes ownership but was demolished sometime between 1990 and 2003.⁴¹

In 2004, the building was taken over by Albany County once again and subsequently acquired by the current owner, the Underground Railroad History Project of the Capitol Region Inc.

³⁹ City of Albany, *Bureau of Buildings Inspection Report for 194 Livingston Avenue, 1976*.

⁴⁰ Deed Book 2162, 309.

⁴¹ Assessment Roll, 1990. When Paul and Mary Liz Stewart first saw the property in 2003, the wood garage doors were leaning against the west wall of the building. The doors remain on site today.

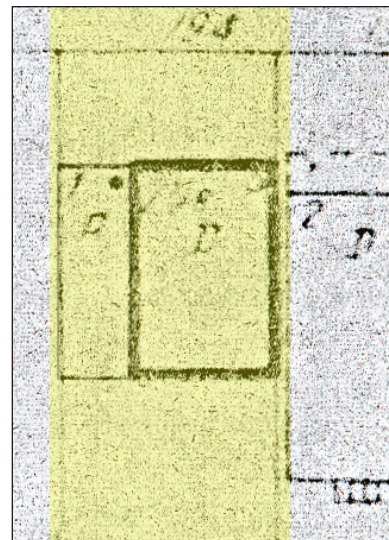


Figure 24: 1965-1970, Detail of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Albany.

Architectural Evaluation

Built during the period of the Greek Revival's popularity (1825-1860), the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence is a textbook example of a vernacular Greek Revival row house. Despite the passage of over 150 years, the building retains many of its period characteristics. The following sections outline the historic form and details embodied by the prototypical Greek Revival row house.⁴² Key Greek Revival elements of the Myers Residence are noted in the accompanying images.

The Greek Revival Row-House: Front Façade

A common exterior appearance and plan developed for the Greek Revival row house or townhouse. Buildings of this style in Albany were constructed of brick or wood frame construction, one to four stories over a raised basement and typically three bays in width (*Detail 1, see opposite page*). Brick construction was considered more desirable for this style and accents of sandstone, granite or white marble trim were preferred. The stylistic difference between Greek Revival row house and its slightly more ornate and pronounced Federal predecessor was evident through the Greek Revival's use of simple forms, especially around the doors and windows.

Common roof types on the Greek Revival row house were gable or hipped, and roofs had lower pitches than on earlier row house styles (*Detail 2*). The standard cornice defined the

⁴² Several books were used to determine common characteristics of the Greek Revival style and specifically its row house form. These included Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to American Architecture*; Virginia and Lee McAllester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*; Leland M. Roth, *American Architecture, A History*; and Charles Lockwood, *Bricks and Brownstone: The New York Row House 1783-1929*.

top of the row house. A frieze usually ran the full length of the house with a dentiled molding added above it (*Detail 3*). Small windows, usually a single pane or two horizontal panes, pierced the frieze, allowing light to enter the attic (*Detail 4*). The use of dormers was uncommon for this style.

Keen attention was paid to achieve smooth surfaces and quality detailing (*Detail 5*). Rectangular window lintels and sills were straightforward and minimal in form. These elements were rendered in low relief and lay almost flush with the façade (*Detail 6*). Windows were approximately the same size as those used in "Federal" style dwellings and typically six over six (*Detail 7*). Given the elegant simplicity of much of facade detailing, quality masonry craftsmanship was critical and the width of masonry joints between the bricks were minimized (*Detail 8*).

The front doorway of the Greek Revival row house was surrounded by a plain, rectangular transom and sidelights. The use of a recessed doorway enhanced the entryway's monumentality and stood in contrast to the façade's restrained detailing (*Detail 9*). Entry stairs were constructed of wood or masonry. Stoop railings (decorative wood or hand wrought/case iron), and porch and frontal area fencing introduced highly detailed ornamentation in a controlled manner. (*Detail 10*).

DETAIL 2: Shallow, side-gable roof

DETAIL 3: Frieze with dentiled molding.

DETAIL 4: Small, single or multiple pane windows enable light to enter the attic. Originally, these were divided into three lights to keep them in scale with the sash below.

DETAIL 1: Basic configuration of the building reflects standard Greek Revival row house type: 2 1/2 stories over a raised basement and tripartite arrangement of windows.

DETAIL 5: The overall ornamentation and detailing are designed in low relief. The result is a smooth, refined facade.

DETAIL 6: The lintels and sills are simple rectangular forms. These elements are made of sandstone, a common material used in Greek Revival row house buildings of this period .

DETAIL 8: Masonry joints on the front facade are a narrow 3/8". The use of standard size brick (machine-pressed or rubbed) on this wall allowed for the creation of a thinner joint.

DETAIL 7: An original 1847 window. With the exception of those at the attic level, all windows would have been double-hung with a six over six glazing pattern.

DETAIL 9: Recessed doorway with decorative sandstone pediment. The interior door has a transom and rectangular sidelights.



DETAIL 10: The original stoop has been removed. Although Greek Revival row houses in Albany have masonry or wood stoops, a more modest building of this period, like the Myers Residence, would most likely have had a wooden stoop. The lack of anchors on the building and masonry footing supports this conclusion.



Figure 26: Historic image of a Greek Revival style building with a wood stoop (Monroe Street near Chapel Street), circa 1900 (Collection Albany Public Library).



Figure 25: 126 S. Swan Street, Albany. Row house with similar facade detailing and configuration. The Myers Residence originally had a wooden stoop similar to this. The present day railing on 126 S. Swan is a contemporary update (as are the windows) but at the time of its construction would have been an ornamental design of wood or iron.

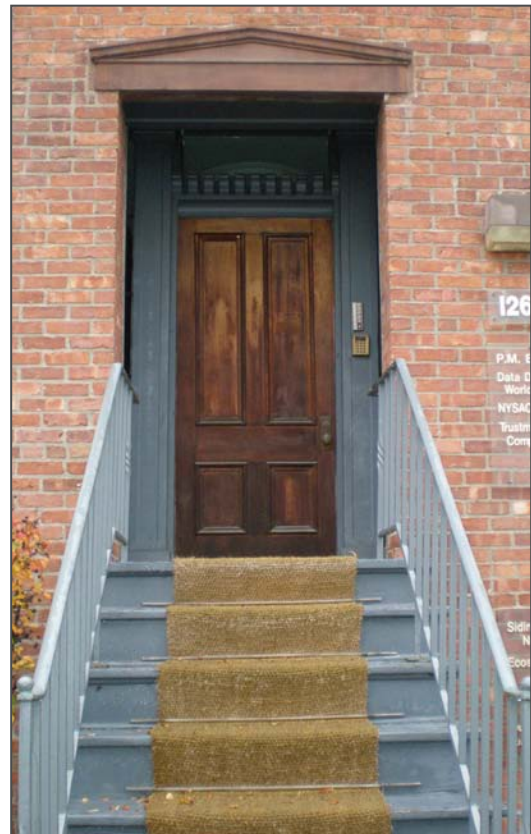


Figure 25a: 126 S. Swan Street, Albany, showcases a restored entryway. Two, four, and six-paneled wood doors were a standard form (although there were some creative variations) for the Greek Revival building.

***The Greek Revival Row-House:
Interior Plan and Design***

In nineteenth century America, the Greek Revival residential house plan, whether freestanding or row house, was typically a rectangular form with the short side facing the street. The rooms were arranged front to back with a side hall. Regardless of whether the building was high style or vernacular, internal planning was relatively consistent.

The basement level of the most common Greek Revival row houses contained a dining room in

front and a kitchen in the back, with a ceiling height of seven to nine feet (*Figure 27*). The first floor held the front and back parlors, with the back parlor occasionally serving as a formal dining room (*Figure 28*).

As a general rule, the Greek Revival's first floor contained most of the public spaces in the house and therefore had the best finishes and ornamentation. The standard ceiling height for the first floor ranged from eleven to twelve feet and a pair of doors separated the front and back parlors. The combination of the open parlor

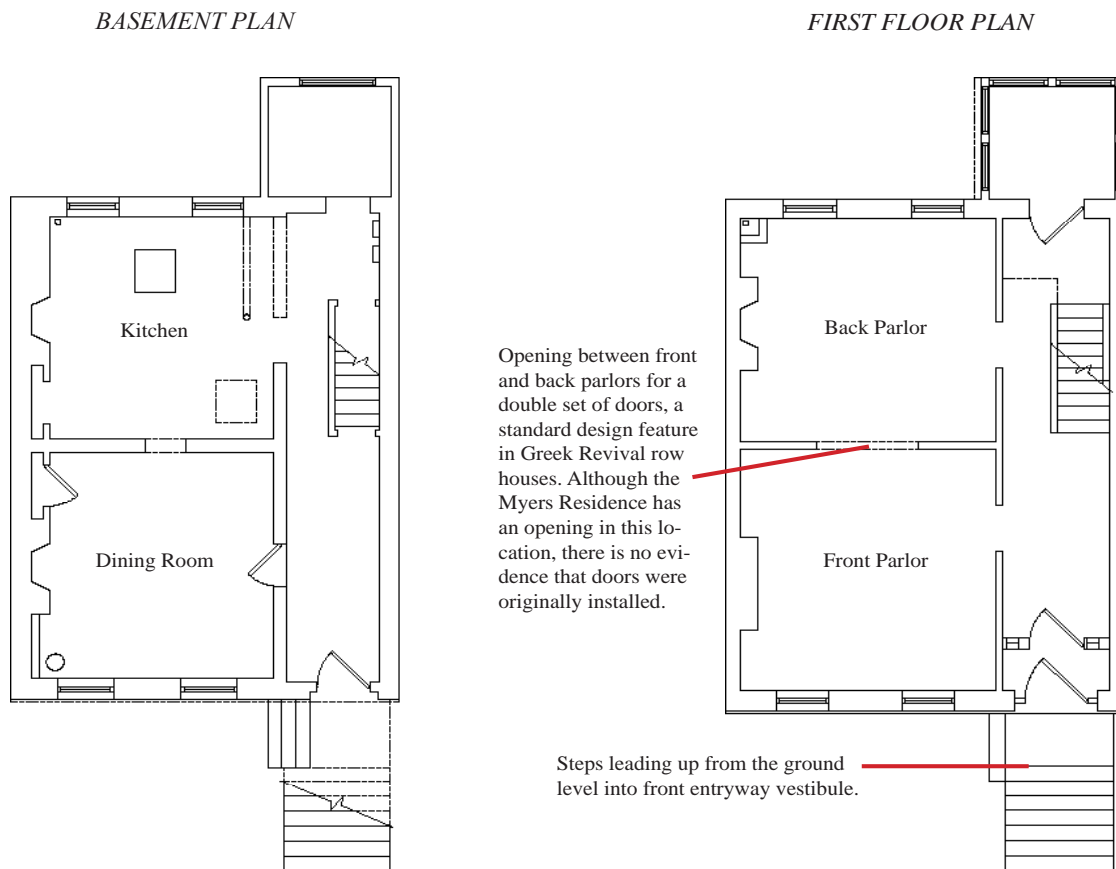


Figure 27: Myers Residence Basement plan is a typical example of a Greek Revival row house, with an overall rectangular form, a dining room in the front and the kitchen located directly behind it.

Figure 28: The First floor plan of the Myers Residence is also a typical example of a Greek Revival row house as the front and back parlor were located on this floor. These spaces were often considered the more public spaces in the house and were therefore occasionally used as a formal dining room.

doors and the high ceiling offered a feeling of spaciousness on the first floor. Doors that slid into the walls were a popular feature of the Greek Revival row house and were often utilized as a key decorative feature (*Figure 28*). The flexibility to close and open the doors allowed the occupants to manage the public/private aspect of the first floor.

Like the façade, the Greek Revival interior contrasted simple forms with a controlled use of rich ornamentation. Walls were plaster, painted a light color, with simple baseboards and a plaster cornice at the ceiling. Materials used for the mantels on small houses of this type included stone, such as marble or slate, or painted wood. (*Figure 30*).



Figure 29: View from the Front Parlor into the Rear Parlor on the first floor. A set of double doors would have originally been installed in the opening. Although double doors that slide into the walls were a popular feature of Greek Revival buildings there is no evidence that this existed in the Myers Residence.



Figure 30: The remaining original fireplace surround is located in the basement dining room. It is wood with a painted finish. The molding work reflects popular examples found in architectural handbooks and builders' manuals.

Ceiling decoration in the parlors on the first floor included a simple molding or two-part molding above and below a rounded cove (Figure 31). Parlors would often have heavy sculpted medallions in the middle of the ceiling. Centerpieces varied from simple circular molding to stylized foliate forms (Figure 33). Like the cast iron railings, decorative ornamentation such as molding and centerpieces were mass produced in the nineteenth century and were common even in the finest of homes.

The upper floors of the row house were the most private areas of the building with bedrooms located on these levels. Detailing on these floors was much simpler due to the less visible nature of these spaces.



Figure 31: View of the ceiling medallion in the first floor side hallway. There is no indication that decorative centerpieces were installed in the Front or Rear Parlors but one is present in the side hall. The simple, circular molding design reflects standard detailing of the Greek Revival Style and appears to be original to the building.

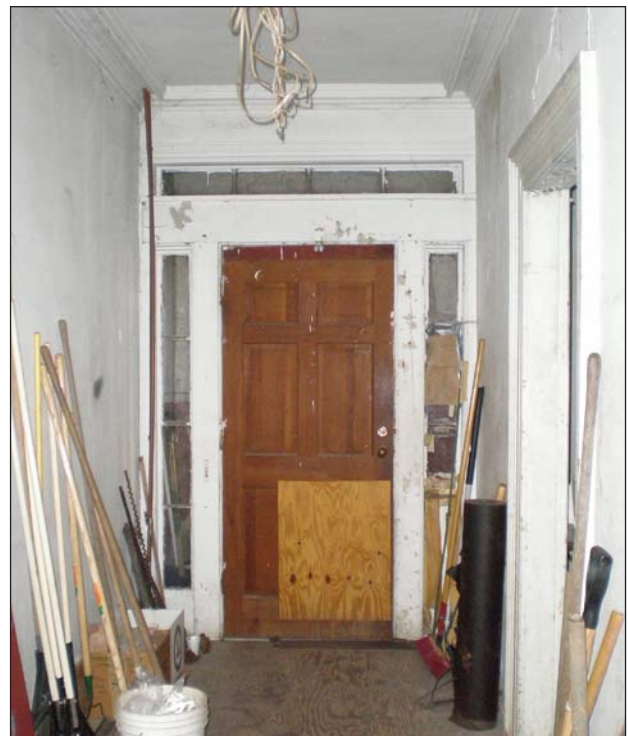


Figure 32: Viewed from the interior first floor hallway, the details of the front entryway are clear. The Myers Residence has a classic Greek Revival entryway with rectangular transom and sidelights. The door is not original. In Albany, Greek Revival buildings similar to this would have had single or double paneled doors.



Figure 33: Ceiling decoration in the front parlor on the first floor. The combined moldings stand in contrast to the smooth plaster walls.

4. Conditions Assessment and Analysis



Figure 34: Site Plan of the Myers Residence with Livingston Avenue on the north (front) facade.



The information contained in the following section draws on three key sources for assessing and analyzing the building's condition: *Existing Conditions Assessment* by Walter R. Wheeler on September 8, 2005 (*Appendix G*), *The Myers Residence: Existing Conditions Report* by Stephen Tilly, Architect on August 28, 2006 (*Appendix H*), and on-site observations conducted by the staff of Stephen Tilly, Architect in September, 2008. Visual examinations were completed of accessible spaces only. No material analyses were

conducted, systems tested, or physical openings made in building fabric to examine hidden conditions.

This section includes a narrative description of the existing conditions found on the exterior and interior of the 194 Livingston Avenue, including the building systems.

4.1 Exterior

General Exterior

The Myers House is a two-and-a-half story structure on a raised cellar. The front façade is three bays wide, with a side hall entrance. The front has regular fenestration and Greek Revival details, including a cornice and an entablature over the entrance. The exterior is brick, with sandstone (often referred to as "brownstone") water table, lintels and sills. The window frames, sashes and cornice are wood, and the shallowly pitched side gable roof is presently finished with asphalt shingles.

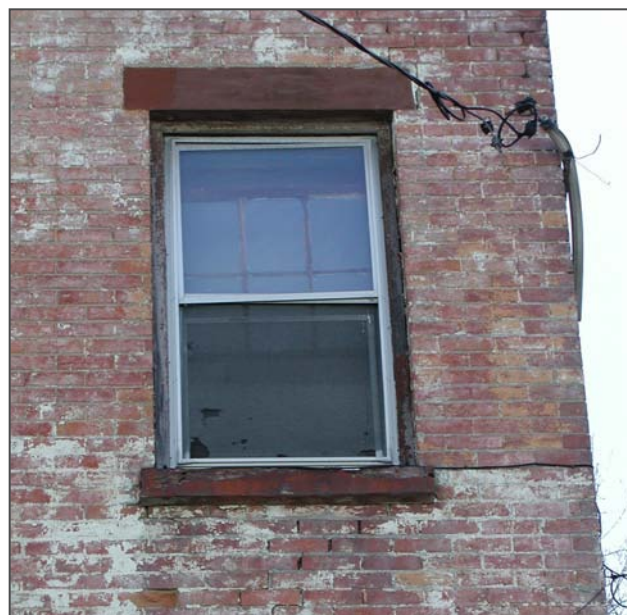


Figure 35: Door and window openings on the north façade are accented with reddish-brown sandstone lintels and sills.

The front (north) façade is built of a higher quality bricks with sharp edges laid in running bond while the side and rear walls are built with lesser quality bricks laid in common bond. On the front façade, the bricks are slightly corbelled to form a cornice that conceals a built-in gutter. It is not known how the rear gutter was constructed, as this side is covered by blue tarps and could not be inspected thoroughly.

The floor joists and roof rafters are sawn lumber; the joists run east-to-west as does the ridge of the roof. Wrought-iron ties fixed to the joist ends and rafter plates run through the masonry and secure the east and west walls to the framing. These ties are clearly visible on the west façade of the building and in the interior of the attic (*Figure 36*). It is likely that the roof was originally covered with wood shingles, as their undersides are visible in the attic; they are currently covered in asphalt shingles.

The exterior walls have suffered extensive damage due to the failure of the built-in gutters and the removal of the leaders from the building. Water that should have been collected and diverted away from the building has instead flowed down over the walls and saturated the building materials. Repeated wetting has caused the lime to leach out of the mortar. In some places, the breakdown on the lime binder is so severe the mortar is reduced to sand. Repeated freeze-thaw cycles have caused the bricks to spall, bulge, and disintegrate, and the mortar to crack, further weakening the walls.

Water has entered the building via four primary routes. First, failed gutters allowed the roof runoff to dump down the length of the north and south walls at the corners. On the south façade, the water soaked into the ground, damaging the foundations. On the north façade, a concrete surface prevented the water from soaking into the soil, and instead, the water splashed off the hard surface and back onto the building. This water caused extensive damage to the rubble stone foundations and the interior masonry at this location.

Second, water entering the tops of the brick walls through failed gutters has damaged both the bricks and the mortar, causing weakened

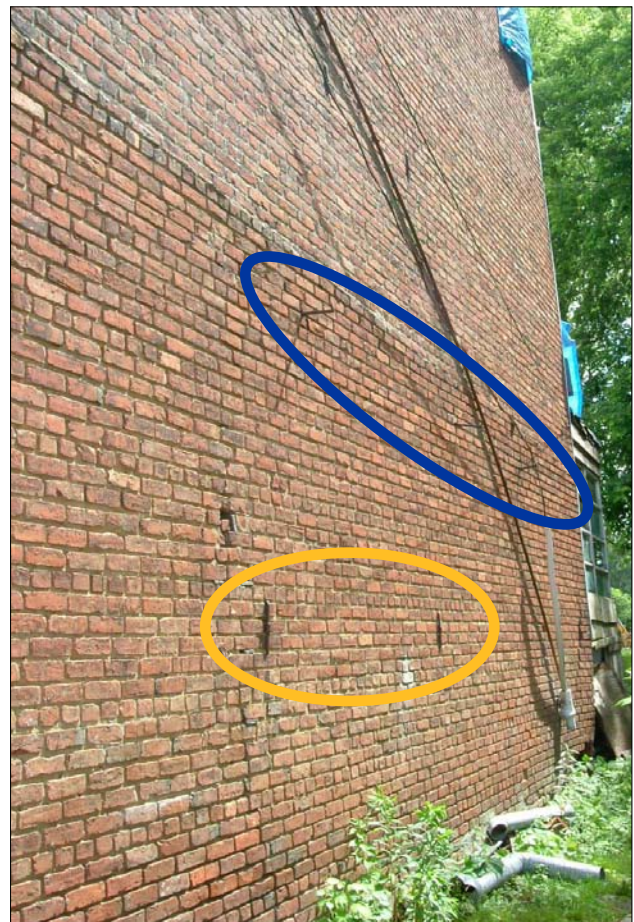


Figure 36: Both wrought iron ties (circled in orange) and joist hangers (circled in blue) are visible on the west façade.



Figure 37: North facade cornice at the corner of the west facade with a detail of the failing built-in gutter system. The location of a since-removed leader is highlighted.

masonry at the tops of the north, south and east walls. This damage is evident at the cornice on the north wall, where mortar joints have eroded and bricks have shifted out of alignment. However, the damage is most severe at the south wall, several areas of which appear to be near collapse.

Next, water that was collected by the gutters has flowed into the inlets, but since there were no leaders to direct it, the water flowed down the corner of the building and eroded the mortar joints. This damage is most evident at the northeast corner of the building. The lower portion of this wall has suffered partial collapse, probably the result of weakened mortar joints. Similar damage will certainly be exposed on the south façade when the tarps are removed.

Finally, another vector is rising damp. Hydrostatic pressure from wet soil and salt

concentrations leads to a sacrifice of mortar and even brick spalling due to osmosis.

North Facade

The front (north) of the building faces Livingston Avenue. The bricks on this facade are of a higher quality, denser, have sharper edges and are laid in a running bond with no headers visible. Eight-inch key square bricks knit the three-wythes thick front wall together. The bricks are generally in good condition. Few areas have spalled, with only one large spalled patch east of the exterior stairs. An entire section of bricks is missing on the east end of the north facade. It is currently braced with a temporary wooden support, but the wall is precariously thin. Water infiltration has damaged the brick cornice, resulting in the need for serious repair work such as repointing or partial reconstruction.

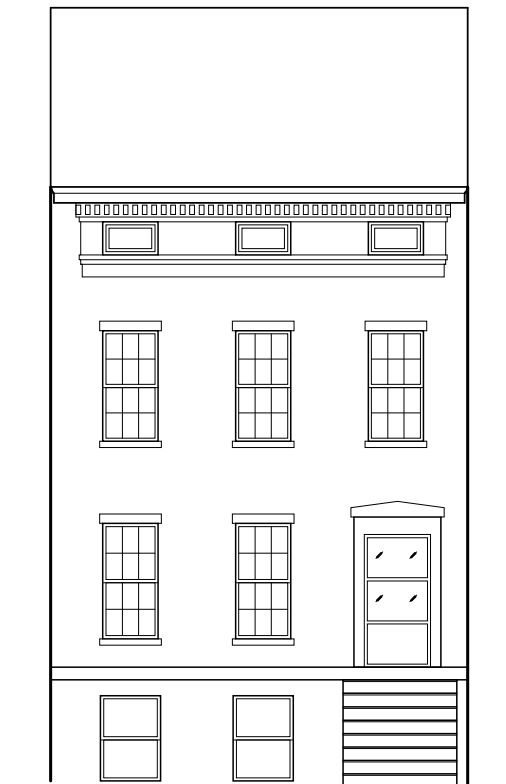


Figure 38: North Facade Elevation



Figure 39: Two of three wythes of the brickwork at the east corner of the north façade have partially collapsed and require immediate attention (note temporary support).

The lime mortar is in poor condition due to the failed gutter system. Many areas need repointing. Inappropriate repairs to the mortar joints were made with portland cement and some inappropriate bricks were inserted in the lower part of the east and west ends. Additional mortar loss is evident at the base of the north wall.

The sandstone water table, sills and lintels are all deteriorated (spalling). At the east end, above the collapsed area of brick, an entire section of the water table (approximately 3' long) is missing. The damage is worst at the east end, where the leader was removed.



Figure 40: Pediment detail above the front door



Figure 41: Area of spalling brick to the east of the contemporary stoop.

The property area directly in front of the building includes a 3' wide concrete slab adjacent the building, a 13'6" x 13' grassy area that extends across the east end of the front lot, a 9'6" wide concrete sidewalk extending the full width of the lot, a narrow driveway to the west of the building, and a 6" granite curb.

As previously mentioned, the 20th century concrete surface presents some problems to the structure. The slab is even with the sill of the basement windows and is holding water against the masonry surface of the building. As a result of this water infiltration, the sandstone sills have deteriorated and damage has occurred to the masonry.

All of the windows on this facade have aluminum storm windows in poor condition. Sashes on the first and second floor have been removed, and repairs to the cellar windows have failed due to water infiltration as a result of the raised grade and concrete surface.

The existing entrance stoop is a historically inappropriate replacement from the 1970s but in good repair and serviceable. Poor repairs of masonry in this area may have removed any indication of connections or support of the original stairs, although it is likely that they were originally wood. A circa 1975 screen door encloses the space of the original, open vestibule. If an accurate restoration is desired, the screen door should be removed and the entrance stoop replaced with a historically accurate version. Albany's surviving row houses from the same period can provide models for an appropriate replacement.

The original exterior stairs to the basement on the north facade were largely sheltered by the stoop. Three bluestone treads remain from this feature. The door and frame have been replaced, and the surrounding opening remains unstable.

West Façade

The west façade is the gable wall and has no windows or other openings. The bricks used on the west facade are of lesser quality than those on the north facade (front of the building). Molded bricks measuring 7 -3/4" x 2-1/2" x 3-3/4" are laid in common bond with five courses of stretchers between courses of headers. At the south end, the lowest courses of bricks have suffered partial collapse (*Figure 42*). This weakened area likely resulted from the same roof runoff and foundation issues that affected the south façade. Much of the mortar appears to be original and will require repointing.

From the interior of the building it is evident that the wall has pulled away from the interior stair. A large crack visible on the exterior is



Figure 42: Weakened masonry at the south end of the west façade (note severely eroded mortar joints) has partially collapsed.

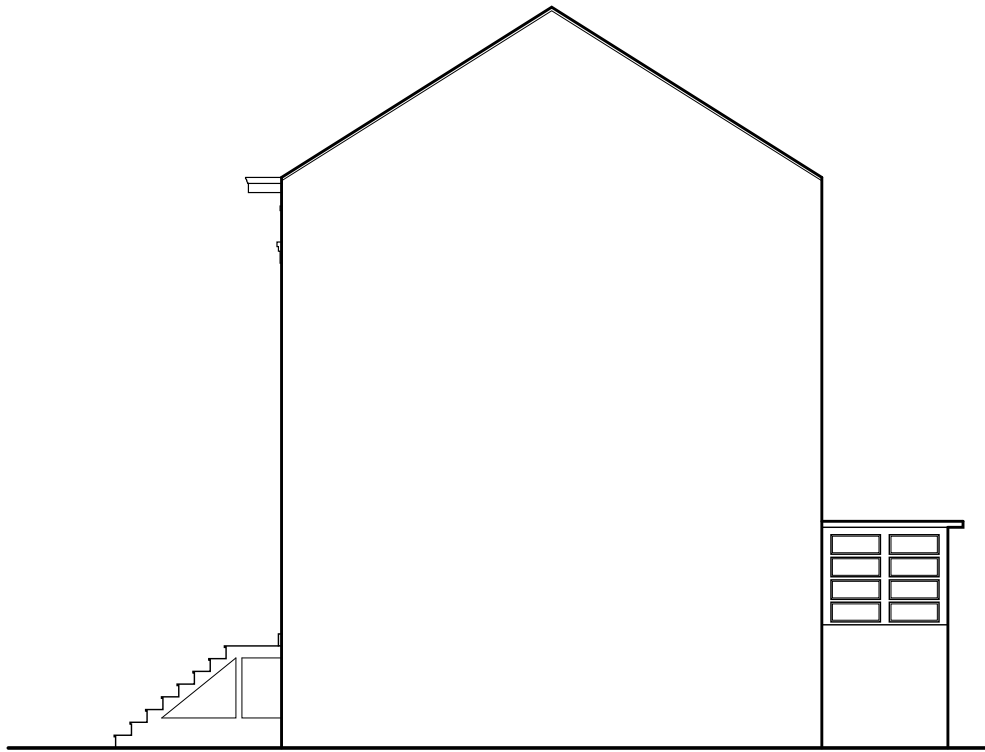


Figure 43: West Elevation

also apparent on the interior plaster in the same location. It is not clear whether the separation was a result of the stair moving or the exterior wall moving/settling; however, this question should be further investigated during the first phase of work .

In the late nineteenth century, a structure approximately 11' high, likely a carriage house, flanked the existing west masonry wall. Three wrought iron joist hangers remain attached to the wall; their sloping elevations indicate a shed roof from the former structure (*Figure 36, pg. 45*). The 1891 Scarlett & Van Wagoner Fire Insurance Map of Albany exhibits the approximate size and placement of this structure (*Figure 20. pg. 35*).

South Facade

The south wall is severely compromised. During all site visits by Stephen Tilly, Architect, it was covered in tarps, making the conditions

survey process difficult. Most observations were made by pushing the tarps out of the way while standing inside the building. It should be noted that these tarps have successfully halted water infiltration and should remain in place until related repairs begin. In June of 2008, the URHPCR installed a new tarp.

Fenestration on the south wall has a staggered placement, with the western openings depressed to accommodate the stair landings. Behind the tarps, the rear brick wall is covered with asbestos shingles attached with wood furring strips. The shingles did nothing to correct the source of significant damage – water infiltration – and the deteriorated condition of modern finishes on the interior indicate that the water continued to enter the building. It is likely that the damage (dissolution of the lime in the mortar, material breakdown from freeze-thaw cycles) continued behind the shingle surface.

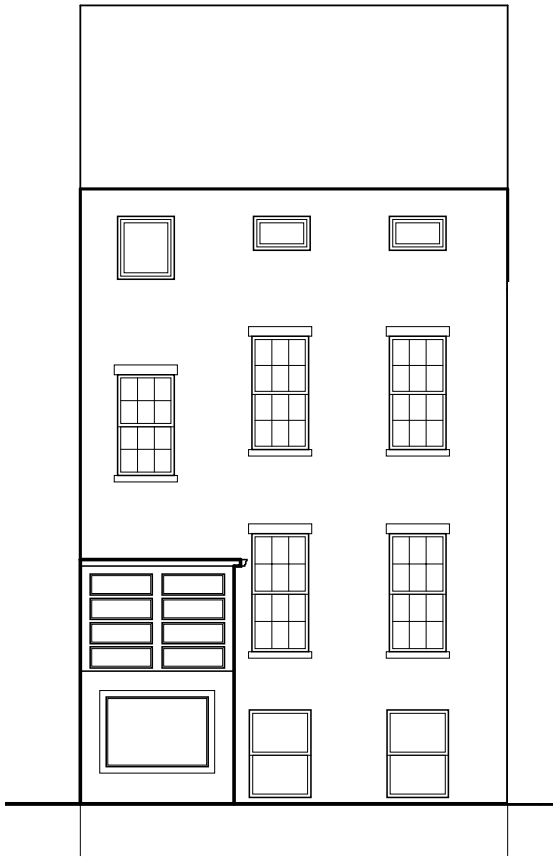


Figure 44: South Facade Elevation



Figure 45: When a new tarp was added to the south facade in June of 2008, fallen asbestos siding revealed the deteriorated masonry wall underneath.



Figure 46: Exposed siding and brick on the south facade on June 20, 2008 when the tarp was being replaced.

Inspection of the brick masonry revealed that the brickwork below most window openings is bulging. Poor maintenance of the south gutter resulted in water traveling through the wall, weakening the mortar and causing the bricks to move out of position. Water-generated damage in the cellar has moved beyond the exterior masonry into the interior perpendicular walls. In the cellar, entire areas of brick masonry have collapsed.

A small enclosed wooden porch is located on the southwest corner of this facade. None of its elements appear to predate the late twentieth century. It is severely damaged and in a poor state of repair. Due to structural concerns, this space was not entered during any of the site visits. Stairs leading to the back porch seem to date to the 1970s and only survive in fragments. Steps underneath this porch lead to the cellar. Large amounts of debris prohibited closer inspection but they appeared to be constructed of bluestone (at least in part) and rise towards the south.

Thick vegetation and debris once filled the backyard. Continuous cleanup campaigns directed by the URHPCR since 2005 have resulted in the removal of much of the vegetation. A few trees remain on the southern end of the lot. The largest tree is a big box elder (*Acer negundo*, also known as an ashleaf maple) measuring 3' in diameter, 9'-8" in circumference at approximately 4' above grade. A large elm stump is located approximately 20'

from the south side of the house, on axis with the pier between the two south parlor windows. Its size suggests that it was likely a tree planted in the nineteenth century. A paved path extends approximately 32' from the rear porch. It is comprised of closely laid bluestone pavers that are 3' wide, closest to the house, and decrease in width as the path gets further away from the house. The path may have originally ended at a privy or stable.



Figure 47: The south façade was covered in tarps to stop ongoing water infiltration during an initial attempt at stabilization in fall of 2004. The rear porch, a later addition, is probably not salvageable.

East Façade

The east façade is partially concealed by an adjacent residential structure. As a result, only the exposed portions could be surveyed. The most obvious issue on the east façade is a bulge in the brick masonry where the roof meets the wall. The likely source of this deformation is water infiltration through failed chimney flashings (the chimneys have since been removed). Bricks in this area are clearly shifted out of plumb and mortar is substantially deteriorated.



Figure 49: View from rear (south). The masonry at the upper portion of the gable on the east façade is visibly bulging.

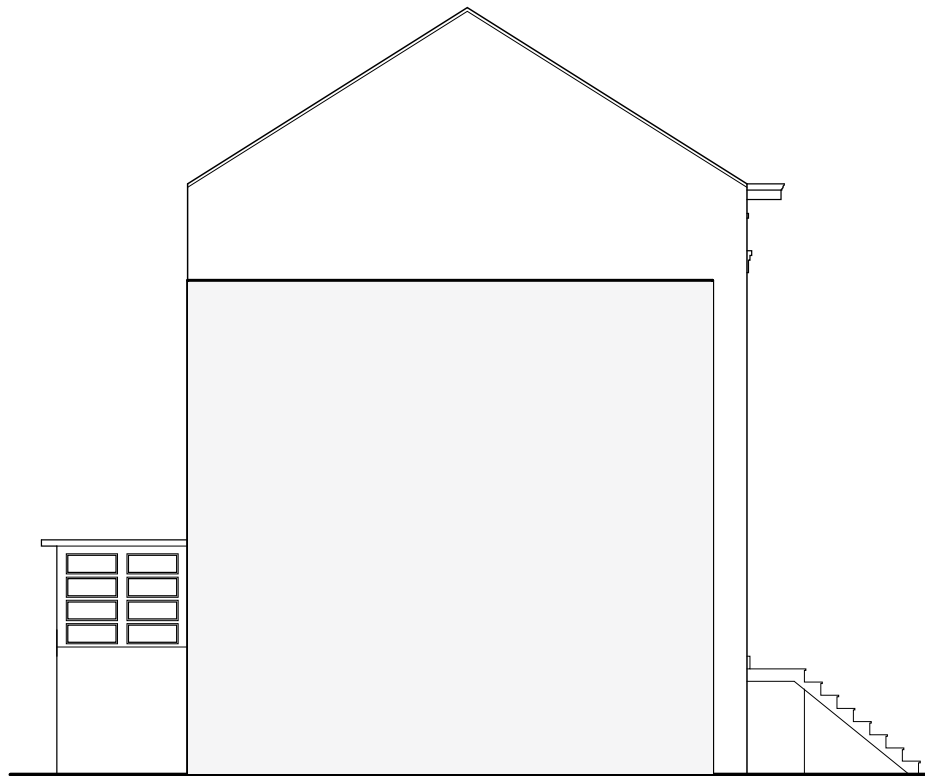


Figure 48: East Façade Elevation with shaded area indicating the portion of façade concealed by neighboring structure.

4.2 Interior

4.2.1 Basement

The basement is divided into two rooms (Rooms B01 and B02) and a side hall (Room B03). A north-south “stiffening” partition separates the hall from the two rooms; a second brick partition running east to west separates Rooms B01 and B02.

The north-south “stiffening” wall has suffered partial collapse at the north end and has shifted out of plumb at the south end. The partial collapse is likely a weakened masonry assembly due to failed mortar. As a result of failed gutters and roof runoff (the gable runs east to west, thus approximately half of the roof runoff is deposited on the south façade and foundation), the water entered through the porous exterior wall and saturated the south end of the contiguous stiffening partition. The water dissolved the lime in the mortar, causing it to lose cohesion. In recent years, the basement has not been heated and the wet mortar has been undergoing freeze/thaw cycles in the winter, further accelerating its breakdown.

The brick masonry in the east-west partition wall has also suffered severe deterioration caused by moisture (*Figure 54*). During a site visit in March of 2006, frost and ice were clearly visible in the bricks of the east-west partition. The source of the frozen moisture is not readily evident, but most likely it comes from dampness rising from the underlying soil. Most of this moisture is sealed in by the relatively non-porous concrete floor; the trapped moisture looks for the easiest means of travel –

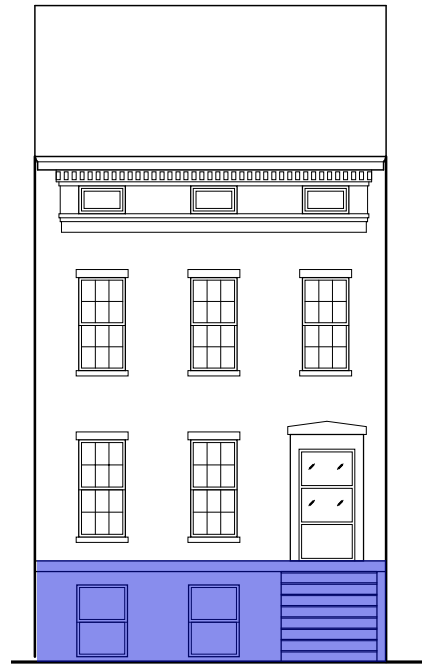


Figure 50: North Facade Elevation with the basement highlighted.

in this case, the relatively porous old brick and soft mortar wall – to escape. A large diagonal crack in the brickwork near the door indicates settling of this partition as well.

Finishes throughout the basement are deteriorated or missing. All of the original floors have been removed and a concrete floor exists in B01 and B02.

The walls are finished with plaster parged directly on brick and the ceilings are plaster applied over lath. Most of the plaster has failed, and sections of lath are missing as well.

The stair to the basement is severely deteriorated. Wood treads are worn and moisture damage has caused the bottom of the stringer to rot away. Removal of the historic wood floor has left the bottom of the stair unsupported and floating above the existing dirt floor.

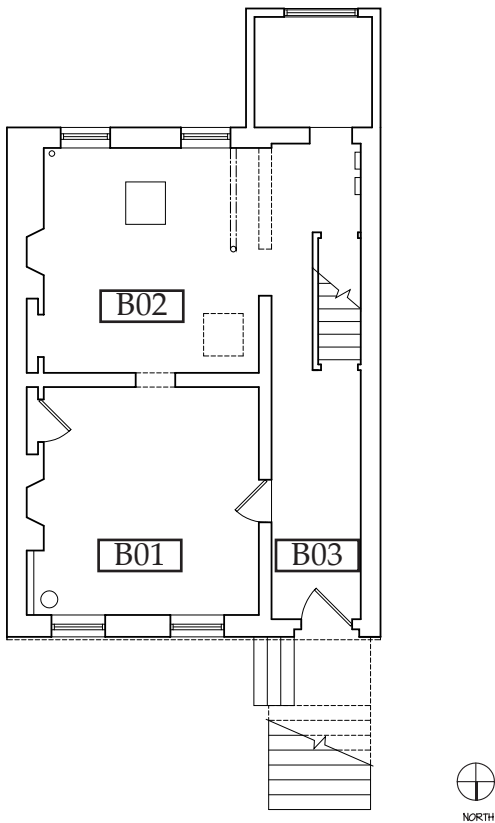


Figure 51: Existing Condition Basement Floor Plan



Figure 52: All of the brickwork at the south end of the stiffening partition between B02 and B03 has collapsed. Temporary posts and beam support the first floor.



Figure 53: The south end of the brick stiffening wall between the basement hall (B03) and the former kitchen (B02) has suffered partial collapse.



Figure 54: Repeat freeze and thaw cycles have left the bricks in the basement walls brittle and friable.



Figure 55: Most of the finishes in the basement are deteriorated from water infiltration. Plaster from the walls and chimney breast in the northeast corner of Room B01 have delaminated from the brick walls.



Figure 56: During a winter visit, ice was visible in the bricks in the east-west basement partition.



Figure 57: During a spring visit, damage was visible in the bricks in the east-west basement partition, where the ice has melted.

Room B01

It is likely that Room B01 originally served as a dining room. This interpretation is consistent with Albany row houses of the period, and remained the typical pattern for Albany houses into the early twentieth century. Most recent use may have been an ancillary space to the kitchen (B02).

Floor: At an unknown date, a 1-1/2” thick concrete floor was poured in this room. The original floor finish is not visible or known, but typically would have been wood flooring over sleepers. Any original flooring remaining underneath the concrete is likely damaged.

Walls: The walls in this room are plaster parged directly on brick. The bottom of the east and north walls (which are also the exterior walls), has a rubble stone foundation that is thicker than the brick sections above.

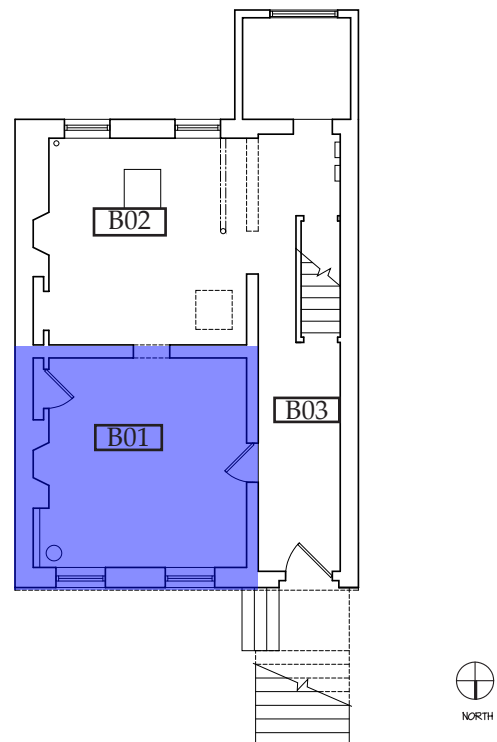


Figure 58: Existing Condition Basement Floor Plan with Room B01 highlighted.



Figure 59: Only remaining original mantelpiece on the east wall in Room B01.



Figure 60: Cast iron grill on the south wall likely part of first central heating system.

Much of the plaster in this room has severe moisture damage and has delaminated from the walls. Much plaster on the east wall has failed, exposing the underlying brick. Bricks found on the exterior in the same location (northeast corner) have fallen and failed likely due to drainage problems. On the north wall, bricks were removed for the installation of a meter.

Ceiling: The ceiling is plaster on lath, largely intact, and may be salvageable. It does not have a cornice or other embellishments.

Trims: Door architraves on the east, west, and south wall are present and in salvageable condition. Jambs on the door to B03 on the south wall are splayed, likely from a structural failure of the wall. The windows on the north wall retain original trim and casing. Window architraves are present but damaged from water infiltration.

Remnants of a beaded board wainscot remain on the south, west, and east walls. Whitewash on the plaster below the chair rail suggests the wainscot was installed after the initial construction of the building. Portions of chair rail were also found on these walls and may have been installed with the wainscot.

Doors: Unlike most rooms, B01 appears to have its original doors. On the west wall, the four-paneled door leading to B03 has a large amount of flaking paint. The wood is sound and in good condition. The southern closet flanking the chimney breast on the east wall also retains a hung door. This four-panel door has late-



Figure 61: Intact wainscoting and chair rail on the south wall in Room B01.

nineteenth century hardware and hinges that may be original.

Windows: Two window openings are on the north wall; the east window has one sash with four lights, and the west opening was covered by a tarp and could not be inspected from the interior.

Fireplace: Located on the east wall is a chimney breast with closed stove pipe hole. At this level of inspection there is no evidence of a firebox, suggesting that this room was always heated by a stove. The only original mantelpiece found in the house is located in this room. Overall, it is in good condition with some bottom portions missing. It is characteristic of the late Greek revival style, with capitals atop Doric pilasters showing Italianate influences. The mantel was likely ornamented appropriate to a dining room.



Figure 62: Closet and likely original door on the east wall in Room B01.

Other: A cast iron grille is also located on the south wall, west of the door and appears to date to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. This was likely used as part of the first central heating system. Early wrought iron hardware of an unknown function is located on the west wall approximately 4' from the south wall and 1' from the ceiling. A number of likely original doors and other architectural fragments found during building clean-outs are stored in this room.

Room B02

Room B02 was probably used as the original kitchen for the house; typical use patterns in Albany support this interpretation. When heating was installed in the late nineteenth century, the central hot air furnace was located in the northwest corner of this room. More recently, this space has been used as a utility room and stores a furnace and hot water tank. Overall, this room has the most severe structural problems and failing elements.

Floor: At an unknown date, a concrete floor was poured in the two main rooms of the basement (B01 and B02). Temporary lally columns installed in the southeast corner of this room have overloaded the concrete floor and caused it to crack. The temporary columns sank and have moved out of alignment.

Walls: Although the walls were likely originally covered in plaster, little intact plaster remains. Persistent water infiltration has severely damaged the walls, deteriorating the south and west walls of any remaining fabric. This infiltration delaminated most of the plaster from

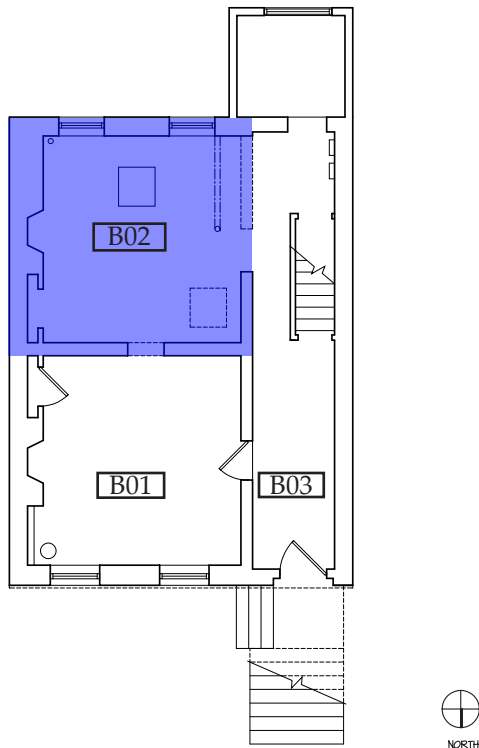


Figure 63: Existing Condition Basement Floor Plan with Room B02 highlighted.

these interior walls, and it has weakened the mortar and caused partial collapse to structural walls.

The north-south “stiffening” wall (separating B02 from the hall) has suffered partial collapse at the south end and has shifted out of plumb to the west on the north end. Two lally columns installed in 2004 act as temporary supports to this collapsing wall. Fiberboard panels cover much of the remaining portions of this wall, and some failing areas display original plaster parged on brick. The collapse of this north-south partition wall is extremely severe and threatens the stability of the structure.

On the north wall early twentieth century fiberboard conceals much of the plaster; water infiltration has caused much damage to the plaster behind and underlying brick.



Figure 64: Both plaster and lath are missing from the ceiling in B02.



Figure 65: Ongoing water infiltration has destroyed many of the finishes in Room B02.

Ceiling: The ceiling was originally plaster on lath. The lath was set on nailers oriented north-south and nailed to the east-west laid floor joists above. The shims are continuous and generally in good condition, but the majority of lath and plaster has been replaced by gypsum board.



Figure 66: Boarded up windows on the south wall.

The gypsum board is not intact and is partially removed.

Trims: Some remnants of wainscoting and chair rail remain in place in the northeast corner of the room. Deterioration of surrounding masonry has caused displacement of window jambs, door frames, and casings. The door architrave on the west wall is largely intact but severely dislocated as a result of the failing wall.

Windows: Two window openings on the south wall are boarded up. On the east opening, the top and side trim are intact, but the lower casing and sill are missing. No interior sash or glazing remains. The western window opening is completely covered by plywood, leaving the

condition of any remaining trim, sill or casing unknown. A temporary brace holds the window cover in place and helps support the first floor. Fiberboard panels probably dating to the first quarter of the twentieth century may represent an earlier attempt to deal with, or hide, water damage in this area.

Fireplace/Heating Systems: The chimney breast on the east wall has also suffered partial collapse, making it difficult to determine the type of stove or range originally used here. There is some indication of a flue and the back of a firebox. A cast iron range or stove was likely located in a broad fire box and would have served as the cooking facility typical of the 1840s. Judging from the few fragments remaining in the house, a central



Figure 67: Collapsed chimney breast on the east wall.

hot air furnace was installed in the northwest corner of this room as the first central heating system (probably between 1885-1910). This early furnace likely remained in situ when the concrete floor was laid, but was removed soon afterward. That system was replaced in the later twentieth century with a gas-fired furnace and hot water tank installed in the southeast corner of the room. Numerous remnants of former heating systems and supply lines for various equipment remain in this room.

Other: Remains of a nickel-plated metal pendant light fixture remain in the center of the ceiling. Electric insulators survive on the west jamb of the north door.

Room B03

This room served as a hallway, connecting the basement level rooms with the exterior and the rooms above.

Floor: Unlike Rooms B01 and B02, no concrete floor was installed in this room. The floor is dirt and covered in debris, with portions of the original flooring possibly surviving underneath the debris.

Walls: The walls are plaster parged directly on brick with the remaining plaster remnants compromised. Elevated moisture levels resulting from water rising through the dirt floor may have accelerated deterioration in this room. A significant amount of damage is occurring to the brick and stone masonry on the interior surfaces of the west exterior wall. Poor repairs to the brick on the north and south walls were performed with portland cement.

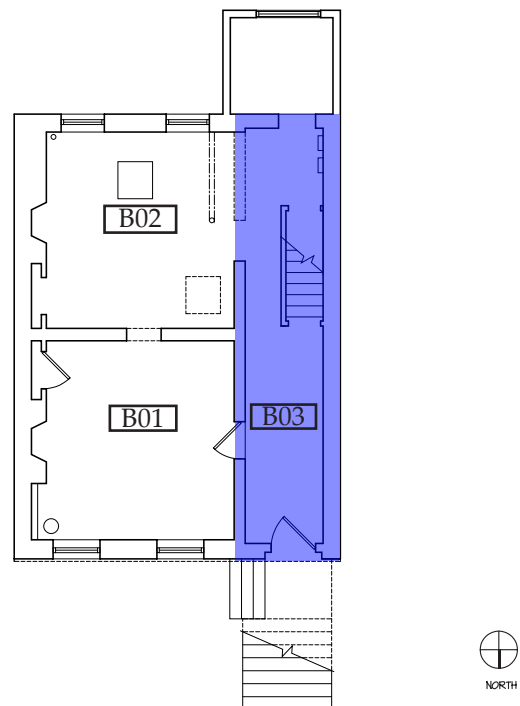


Figure 68: Existing Condition Basement Floor Plan with Room B03 highlighted.

Ceiling: The plaster on lath ceiling is also severely damaged. Most of the plaster is missing and the exposed lath is in poor condition. The lath is oriented east-west and the nailers run north-south.

Trims: Physical evidence on the walls – a ridge in the plaster and wood nailers – suggests this room had a wood wainscot on the east wall, near the door. A concrete lintel replaces the original over the door on the north wall.

Doors: Both doors (to the front and rear yards) in this space access the exterior and have been



Figure 69: Large vertical crack in the stiffening wall.

removed and replaced with hollow steel doors, dating to the 1970s. The present doors are smaller than the original openings. The door on the southern wall has been filled on three sides with concrete to form a smaller opening. An original door lintel remains in place above this historically inappropriate replacement.

Windows: There are no windows in this room. It is likely that one or both of the doors in this space had sidelights or were fitted with glazed panels.

Other: The wood stair to the first floor is in extremely poor condition. Removal of the finished floor at an unknown date and broken and rotted stringers have left the bottom of the stair unsupported and unstable. A large area of plaster and lath was removed for the installation of pipes for a radiator in the hall (Room 103) above.



Figure 70: Removal of the historic floor and deterioration of the stringers have left the bottom of the stair to the basement unsupported and precarious.

4.2.2 First Floor

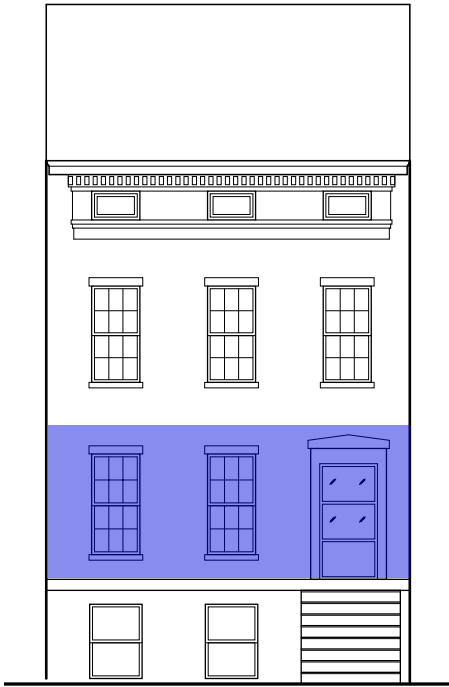


Figure 71: North Facade Elevation with the first floor highlighted.

The first floor is divided into two rooms, a side hall, stairs to the second floor and a vestibule. The two rooms are connected with double doors and appear to have served as front and rear parlors. In the hall, a stair to the second floor ascends along the west wall towards the south.

Many of the first floor details and finishes, such as wood floors, plaster walls, and ceilings, remain in place, as does the millwork, including door casings and window trim. However, as was found on other floors, all of the baseboards have been removed. Paint ghosts retain the outlines of these now-missing features. On the first floor, all of the doors and their hardware are missing as well.

No light fixtures remain in place. Only the junction boxes on some of the ceilings are still

present to indicate the location of twentieth century electric light fixtures. Evidence of nineteenth century gas lighting is not visible.

Room 101

Room 101 occupies the northeast corner of the first floor. Its location and the more elaborate design of its decorative elements suggest it served as a front parlor.

Floor: The floor is covered in fiberboard sheets, which probably served as an underlayment for a since-removed carpet. The original floor material and its current condition are concealed behind the fiberboard and could not be surveyed. These fiberboard sheets are currently acting as a protection to the underlying floor.

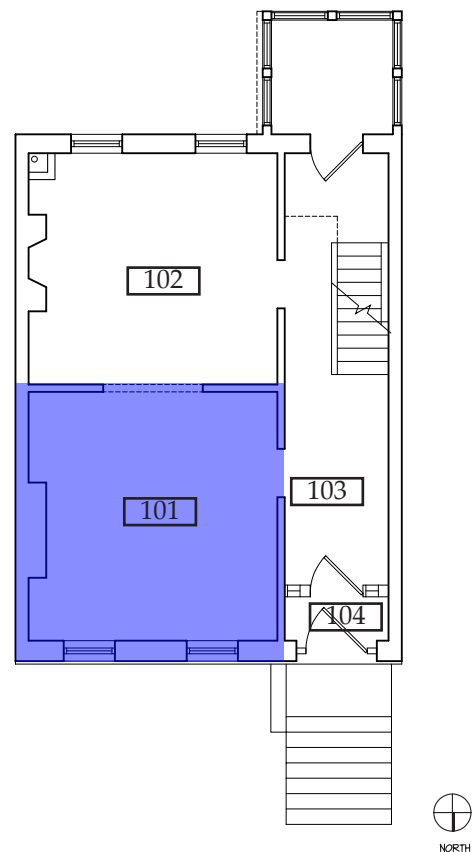


Figure 72: Existing Conditions First Floor Plan with Room 101 highlighted.



Figure 73: In Room 101, the front parlor has the most elaborate finishes in the house: a run plaster cornice and recessed wood panels below the windows. Diagonal cracks (at left in this photo) indicate settling.



Figure 74: In the northeast corner of Room 101, peeling paint and soft plaster indicate moisture infiltration.

Walls: All of the walls are finished with plaster. The north wall is plaster on brick and has suffered some water damage in the northeast corner. The east wall is plaster, likely on lath, and is in good condition. On the south wall, remnants of an original or early distemper finish are visible where more recent paint is flaking away. The west wall has some large vertical cracks between the door and the front façade, but the keys appear to be sound and the wall should be salvageable.

Ceiling: The ceiling is gypsum wallboard; screws are visible through the paint. Peeling paint and mildew on the ceiling in the northeast corner of the room indicate moisture damage in that area.

Trims: A heavy Greek Revival, run-in-place, plaster cornice extends around the room and chimney breast. Some damage has occurred to the cornice near the chimney breast and at the northeast corner, but overall it is in good condition. At one time it appears that the cornice in this room matched the one in Room 102; however, the center piece of this molding (bordering the ceiling field) has been removed.

All of the baseboards have been removed. Some of the walls have portland cement patches in lieu of the missing baseboard. Architraves of the two windows on the north wall and their recessed panels are intact. These windows are surrounded by molded wood casings that continue to the floor; the space between the window and the floor has a recessed panel. The doors and window architraves have paint outlines that indicated dimensions of original trim profiles. All of the frames and trim around the door openings remain in place and in good condition.

Doors: The doors on the south and west walls that once opened into this room are missing.

Windows: Two window openings on the north wall retain 6/6 window sash hung on pulleys that are probably original. The muntin profiles, rail and stile sizes are likely original and in good and salvageable condition.



Figure 75: Detail of muntin profile on East window in Room 101, likely original.

Fireplace/Heating: The chimney breast is located in the center of the east wall and has been rebuilt or repointed using a gray, portland cement-based mortar. Although historically inappropriate, the mortar is not damaging the adjacent brick. This recent work has obscured details such as the original stove hole location and opening size. Although few signs of the original heating system remain, the room was likely heated by a wood or coal-burning stove. Baseboard hot water radiators were installed along the north wall in the 1970s, and the radiator and baseboard to which it was secured were removed in December 2004.

Other: Wiring for an electrical outlet and a thermostat are along the west wall, north of the door jamb. A stem for a chandelier and wiring for a pendant light are located in the center of the ceiling.

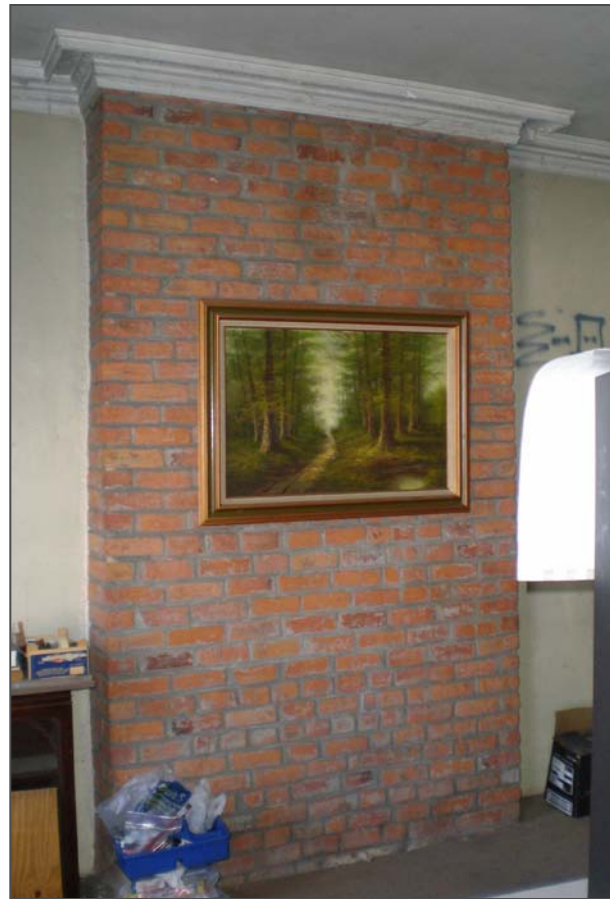


Figure 76: Chimney breast in Room 101 with repointed mortar and run-in-place plaster cornice.

Room 102

Room 102 occupies the southern half of the first floor. It was likely a rear or second parlor and dining room; the large door opening in the north wall allowed it to function as a double parlor with Room 101. Finishes in this room are more elaborate than those found on the other floors and are similar to those in the front parlor.

Unfortunately, ongoing water infiltration through the rear (south) exterior wall has significantly eroded finishes in this room severely deteriorated. Failed plaster and mildew on the gypsum wallboard ceiling indicate a history of water entering the building. Installation of a tarp on the south façade has temporarily halted the water infiltration.

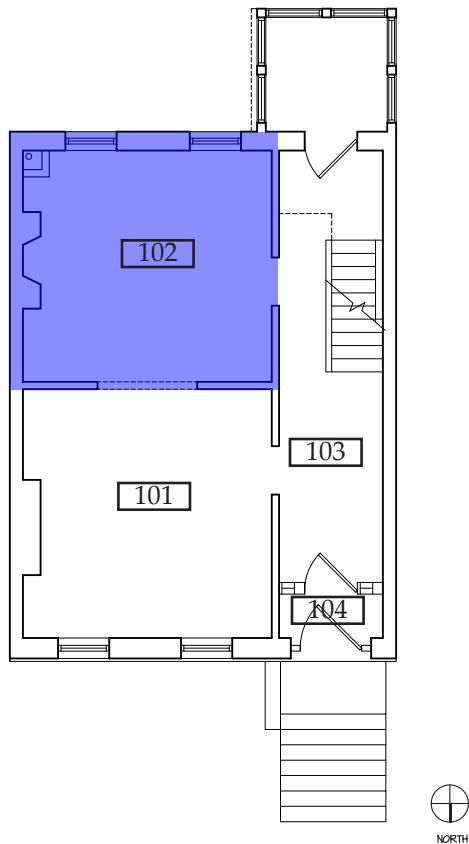


Figure 77: Existing Conditions First Floor Plan with Room 102 highlighted.

Floor: The floor in this room is covered in fiberboard panels, an underlayment for a since-removed carpet. The fiberboard suffered water damage in the past and is buckled at the center of the room. In the northwest corner, the floor has a large plywood patched area where a floor register was removed.

Walls: The north wall is gypsum wallboard, in good condition with no visible evidence of water damage. The west wall is also laminated with gypsum wallboard. At the south end, the gypsum wallboard displays heavy mildew growth indicating the presence of water. The water is likely entering through the exterior masonry.

The east wall is original plaster on brick. The plaster has some cracks but appears to be otherwise sound. The southeast corner has a cast iron drain enclosed in an approximately 1'-6" square plywood chase. The south wall is also plaster on brick. It is in marginal condition, and portions of plaster near the ceiling and between the windows have fallen from the brick substrate. A large, bulging hole in the plaster between the windows is likely the result of water infiltration from the exterior masonry walls.

Ceiling: The ceiling is gypsum wallboard. A section of lath is visible at the chimney breast, likely marking the location of a previous cornice; it could not be determined if any of the original plaster ceiling survives anywhere in this room. Mildew on the gypsum wallboard indicates that previous water infiltration continued even after the newer ceiling was installed. If any of the original plaster ceiling



Figure 78: Southern wall in Room 102 in between the windows. Severe water infiltration has resulted in the plaster detaching from the brick, buckling and falling off.



Figure 79: Water infiltration through the south wall damaged the plaster walls and cornice and left mildew stains on the ceiling of Room 102.

survives, it is likely in very poor condition due to ongoing water damage.

Trims: The architrave around the double door opening on the north wall is intact although the doors are missing. The door architrave on the west wall is intact, and all of the door openings in this room retain original frames and casings that are in good condition.

Only the south wall has a baseboard, which is modern; the other walls have no baseboards and the gypsum wallboards continue to the floor.

Some of the original, run plaster cornice remains in place and is in good condition. A section along the chimney breast is missing and the entire south wall cornice is severely water damaged. This is unfortunate because the cornice retains an extra molding at its bottom edge that has not survived on the other walls in this room. In all other cases, the bottom edge was either covered or removed when the gypsum wallboard was installed.

Similar to Room 101, recessed wood panels beneath the windows on the south wall continue to the floor. The window openings retain their original trim but suffer from water infiltration.

Doors: There are no doors present in the openings on the west and north walls.

Windows: Two window openings remain on the south wall. In the east opening, a single, two-light sash remains; the sash likely dates to the late nineteenth century and is not original. The western opening could not be surveyed as it was sealed with plastic sheets to prevent water infiltration.

Fireplace/Heating: Centered on the east wall is a chimney breast that appears to have been completely rebuilt or repointed. The bricks are exposed and pointed with a hard, gray, portland cement-based mortar. A curb of bricks on the floor composed of two rows of stretchers was created around the hearth and was probably constructed when the chimney was rebuilt.



Figure 80: The curb of bricks in front of the fireplace in Room 102 is a contemporary alteration.

The room originally would have been heated by a stove connected to the chimney breast on the east wall. More recently it was heated by a radiator as evidenced by the pipes in the southeast corner of the room. Currently this room is unheated.

Other: There is no light fixture in this room, only a junction box on the ceiling where an electric fixture was once installed.

Room 103

Room 103 has always served as a stair hall, with a staircase rising to the second floor. The stairs to the basement are located underneath this staircase.

Floor: The floor is covered in 1/2" plywood, which is not an original finish, and the condition of the original floor (presumed to be hidden below) could not be inspected. The plywood floor is protecting the original floor underneath.

Walls: The walls are finished with plaster on lath or brick. The east wall contains original plaster on lath and is largely intact. It has minimal damage – a few holes – and is salvageable. Water damage is evident at the base of the wall above the failing stiffening wall in the basement.

The north and south walls are plaster on brick. The north wall is in good condition and contains the entry door with transom and sidelights. The south wall is in fair condition with areas of soft plaster. Remnants of wallpaper are visible on the south wall surrounding the door trim. This door leads to the enclosed wood porch addition on the south facade.

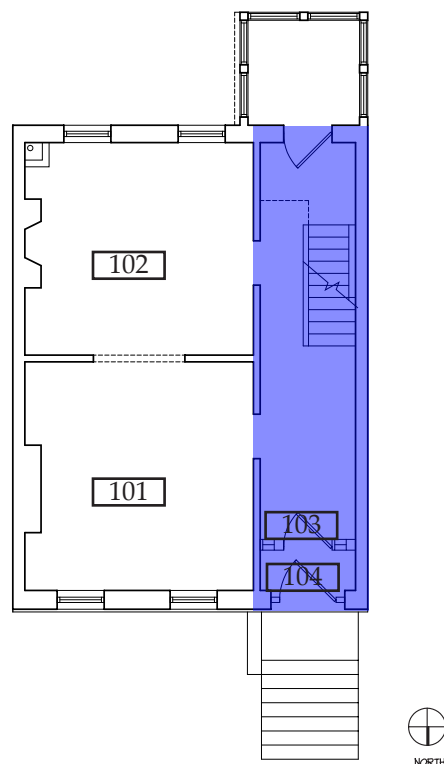


Figure 81: Existing Condition First Floor Plan with Room 103 and Room 104 highlighted.



Figure 82: Room 103 retains an original plaster cornice.

The west wall is plaster parged on exterior masonry. This wall does not show signs of water damage; however, large cracks in the plaster resulting from building movement are visible. A large crack in the plaster on the west interior wall coincides with one observed in the exterior brickwork in this location.

Ceiling: The ceiling is plaster on lath with a run plaster molding and medallion. Entire sections of the flat plaster have fallen away, leaving the sawn lath exposed.

Trims: East wall door architraves are intact. All of the original baseboards in this room have been removed. Originally, there was no baseboard on the north wall, as the sidelights and their trim continue to the floor. On the west wall a plain, modern wood baseboard has been installed, likely replacing the original. Gypsum wallboard was installed on the east wall and portland cement was parged onto the brick on the south wall.

A plaster molding runs around the perimeter of the room and is in good condition. The cornice appears to match those in Room 101 and 102. A run plaster medallion remains in place near the center of the room. The medallion is a simple, turned design and appears to be in good



Figure 83: Staircase to the second floor with missing railing and balluster.

condition; it is likely an original feature.

The main entrance in the north wall retains its original transom and trim. Some of the side lights are broken. All of the millwork is in good condition and salvageable.

Doors: Both the entrance door on the north wall and the entrance door to the rear (south) yard are replacements.

Other: The staircase to the second floor runs along the west wall. The stair to the second floor is missing its balustrade and is unstable.



Figure 84: Central ceiling medallion with wiring and chain remaining from previous fixture.



Figure 85: The stair to the cellar retains most of its original ballustrade. The cap on the newel post is missing.



Figure 86: Interior view of the main entrance with original trim and transom and contemporary door.

A turned newel post is present in the southeast corner of the hallway, but it is currently not attached to the stairs. Many treads are damaged and need repair. The stringer on the west wall is no longer tight to the wall. It is not clear if the stair settled or the wall shifted westward to create the gap along the stringer. The balustrade around the stair opening to the basement remains in place, although it is missing a few balusters and the cap on the newel.

This room appears to have been unheated until floorboard radiators were installed in the 1970s and since removed.

An outlet and a switch are located on the east jamb of the door on the south wall. Wiring from a pendant light fixture hangs from the ceiling medallion.

Room 104

This room has always served as a vestibule entrance to the raised first floor of this house. The vestibule was originally open, a common feature in Greek Revival row houses of Albany.

Floor: Original tongue and groove floorboards are covered over by plywood.

Walls: All four interior walls are plaster on lath in moderate condition. Plaster above the transom on the south wall is intact and in good condition. The lower section of the east wall has substantial damage to the plaster and the west wall has similar damage, including bulging.

Ceiling: The ceiling is plaster on lath.



Figure 87: North entrance with screen door and sandstone sill, looking at frontispiece.

Trims: A large sandstone sill caps the thickness of the masonry wall at the north. Water infiltration has deteriorated the sandstone sill on the inside surface.

The east and west walls have a 2” wide chair rails that continue to the jamb of the door.



Figure 88: Detail of wooden frontispiece with dentil cornice.

There is no evidence of an architrave on the north door and it is less elaborate than the door on the south wall. The wooden frontispiece on the south wall contains an exterior cornice with dentils, two square pilasters with Italianate molded caps flanking the door opening, a four-light transom overhead and two side lights, with four lights each. Overall, the frontispiece is in good condition.

Doors: The north wall has a twentieth century storm door fit into the larger original opening. The south wall frontispiece opens into Room 103. This six-paneled Colonial Revival wood door is a replacement, circa 1975.



Figure 89: Contemporary door replacment on frontispiece on the south wall of Room 104.

4.2.3 Second Floor

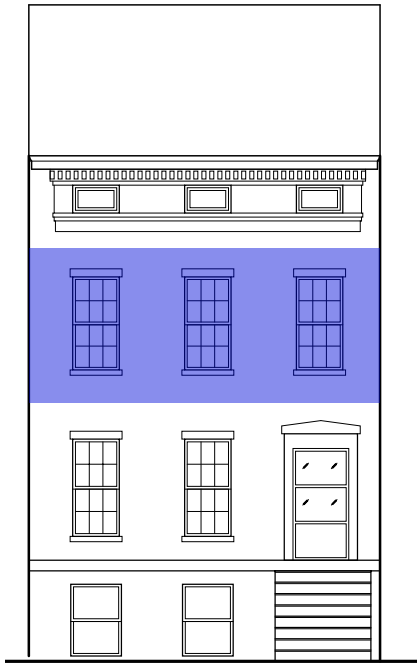


Figure 90: North facade elevation with the second floor highlighted.

The second floor plan is similar to the first floor, with a side stair hall (Room 203) and two large chambers (Rooms 201 and 202). Historically, the second floor would have contained bedrooms. The large chambers each have two large windows and at least one closet. A small chamber occupies the northwest corner, accessible from Room 201. Finishes are simpler than those on the first floor: there are no ceiling cornices or medallions and no wood panels beneath the windows. Windows on this floor typically have stools but no aprons.

As on the first floor, all of the baseboards have been removed and the space infilled with gypsum wallboard or a cement parge. One of the original, four-panel doors remains hanging in its frame and another is stored in the rear chamber. All of the other doors are missing.

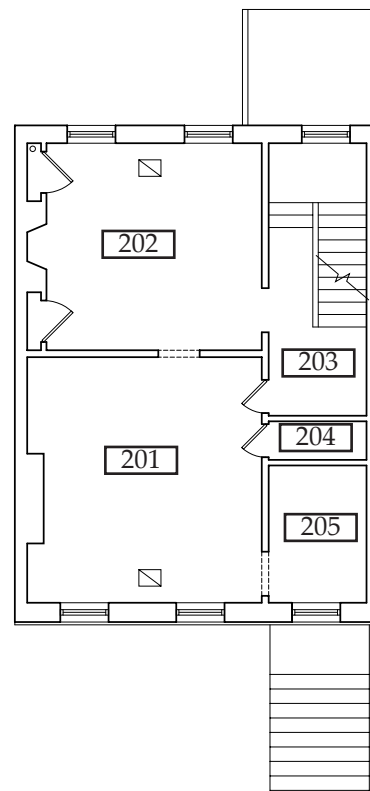


Figure 91: Existing Condition Second Floor Plan

Room 201

This room occupies the north end of the second floor and is the largest in size.

Floor: The floor is wide, tongue and groove pine wood boards running north to south. They are painted and appear to be in good condition. The boards run continuously under the partition between this room and 202.

Walls: The north wall is plaster on brick and faces Livingston Avenue. Water damage in the northeast corner has left the plaster there in a fragile state, with spalling and bulging; the rest of the wall is sound and are likely original.

The east wall is plaster, and other than minor damage around the stovepipe hole in the chimney breast, is in good condition. The south



Figure 92: The chimney breast in Room 201 is currently covered in *GWB*.



Figure 93: A small area of “modern” baseboard in the northwest corner.

wall is finished with gypsum wallboard (*GWB*); the baseboard has been removed and the *GWB* continues to the floor. The west wall is plaster on lath and is in good condition.

Ceiling: The ceiling is plaster on lath. Water damage is visible in the northeast corner of the room – the result of roof runoff that should have been diverted by a leader but instead entered through the exterior masonry – and a large section of plaster is missing at the center of the room. Exposed plaster on the southwest corner of the ceiling is covered by a tarp.

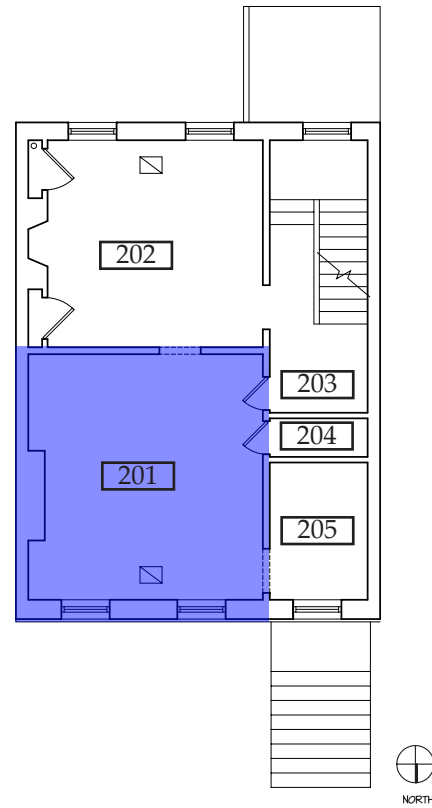


Figure 94: Existing Conditions Second Floor Plan with Room 201 highlighted.



Figure 95: Remnants of an electrical fixture on the ceiling next to a large section of broken plaster.

Trims: Originally, baseboards extended around the room. When they were removed, plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. There is no cornice in this room. All three door openings on the west wall retain architraves.

Doors: On the west wall, three doors lead to the hall (Room 203), a deep closet (Room 204), and a small chamber (Room 205). A fourth opening in the south wall leads to the southern chamber (Room 202). All the door openings retain original frames and casings in good condition, but only the door to the hall remains in place.

Windows: The room is illuminated by a pair of windows in the north wall. The window openings have original casings and stools. The



Figure 96: A four-paneled door hanging in 201 with possible original hardware, one of the few that remain.



Figure 97: Two windows on the north facade illuminate this room.

wooden trim is painted and in good condition. Both windows retain the frame from exterior storm windows, and the west window also has a screen.

Fireplace: The chimney breast located on the east wall of this room does not appear to have been fitted with a firebox. A closed stove flue hole suggests that a free-standing coal or wood burning stove may have originally heated this room. A floor register was installed between the two windows on the north wall and approximately two feet away from the wall sometime during the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. In the 1970s, baseboard radiators nailed to a board on the north wall replaced the hot air central heating system.

Other: A canopy on the ceiling is all that remains of an electric light fixture. There are no electric switches.



Figure 98: An original door with original hinges was found in Room 202.

Room 202

Room 202 is a rear chamber. It can be reached via the hall or through a door in its north wall that leads to Room 201.

Floor: The floor is wood boards running north to south. At the south wall, water staining indicates that the floor has been damp. The rest of the floor is in good condition.

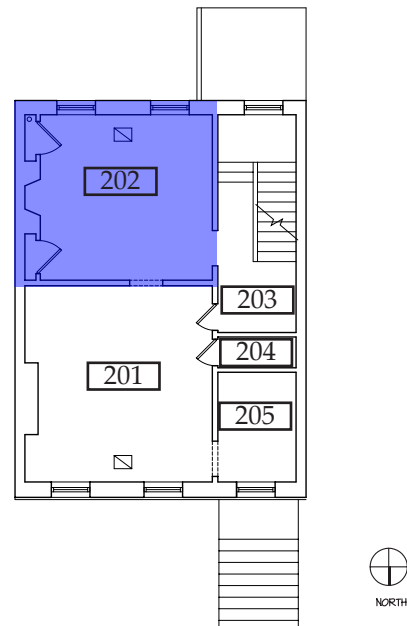


Figure 99: Existing Conditions Second Floor Plan with Room 202 highlighted.



Figure 100: Ongoing water infiltration through the exterior south wall of Room 202 has damaged both the original plaster wall finish and the wood paneling likely installed to hide the ruined plaster.

Walls: The north wall is plaster on lath. Damage includes broken keys (evidenced by bulging plaster), holes, and peeling paint. It may be salvageable. The east wall is plaster on lath or brick. It is also in poor condition with holes, cracks and poorly executed patches. The west wall is plaster on lath. It is in fair condition, with cracks, holes, and bulges indicating broken keys.

Wood paneling covering the entire south wall has severe water damage and is mildewed and delaminated. Where the underlying plaster is visible, it is degraded to the point of disintegrating to dust and thus exposing the underlying bricks behind it.



Figure 101: In Room 202 all of the original ceiling plaster was removed and a gypsum wallboard ceiling was installed on furring strips attached to original lath.



Figure 102: This lift-off hinge was found in Room 202. It was the only example of this type of hinge found in the building.

Ceiling: The ceiling is gypsum wallboard installed on furring strips, which in turn are installed over the original lath. Sections of the gypsum wallboard are missing along the south wall and near the center of the room. It appears that the entire original plaster ceiling is missing. Stains visible on the lath suggest water damage caused the original ceiling's failure.

Trims: Little original trim remains in this room. It seems that all the window casings and stools were removed when the wood paneling was installed on the south wall. All baseboards have been removed from this room. A saddle from the doorway into Room 203 is missing. Two closets on the east wall, flanking the fireplace, retain original frames and trim.



Figure 103: Room 202 has a shallow closet on either side of the fireplace opening. The mantelpiece was removed at an unknown date and the wall repaired with portland cement.

Doors: The doors for the two closets on the east wall are missing. No doors are currently hung in any of the four door openings.

Windows: Contemporary undivided, double-hung sash windows are covered by sheet plastic and tarps on the south wall.

Fireplace: The chimney breast in this room is missing its mantelpiece but is original. This appears to be the most intact chimney breast in the building, and thus it has the most potential to yield information about how the house's fireplaces and stoves were used. An upside down, U-shaped patch of portland cement indicates the location and size of a since-removed mantelpiece. In the center of this U-shaped patch there remains what appears to be original plaster. This plaster shows remnants of an early distemper finish. The presence of this plaster and early finish suggest that this room may have been heated by a stove that stood in the room, rather than coal in a grate or insert.

On August 20, 2005 a fragment of a painted slate mantle was found in the back yard, likely dating to the end of the 19th century. The mantel was similar in style to the cast iron surround that survives in this room, and its shape suggests an opening of similar size as indicated by the surround. These two fragments may have been installed in this room, or may represent a remodeling to a first floor mantel, which was later brought upstairs.

Other: A floor register is located between the two windows, at the south end of the room. A flush-mounted electric fixture remains in place on the ceiling. The fixture has a metal ceiling canopy, a single lamp, and a stem for a shade (the shade is missing). A five-arm cast iron coat hanger, with one arm broken, probably dates from the 1890s and is attached to the south jamb of the northern door on the east wall. A four panel door stored in this room appears to be original to the building.

Room 203

Room 203 is a stair hall that runs north to south along the west wall of the building. Parallel stairs on the west wall ascend south wall to the third floor and descend north wall to the first floor.

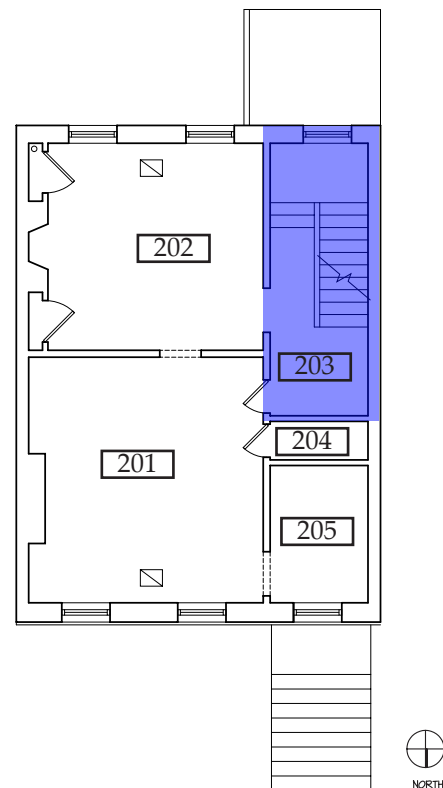


Figure 104: Existing Conditions Second Floor Plan with Room 203 highlighted.



Figure 105: Stairs to the third floor with remaining railing and ballusters.



Figure 106: View of hallway and staircase on the second floor (Room 203)

Floor: The floor is covered with plywood and the existence and condition of the underlying floor could not be determined.

Walls: The north and east walls are covered with faux wood paneling that continues to the floor. Plaster and early finishes remain in place behind the paneling. A section of paneling is missing at the south end of the east wall at the stair landing, and the exposed plaster and lath are severely deteriorated. The west wall is plaster parged directly onto brick. A heavily textured skimcoat has been added to this wall,

and the staircase is pulling away from this wall, as on other floors. The south wall is plaster parged directly onto brick. The plaster here is in very poor condition, with large cracks and bulges where the plaster has delaminated from the substrate. On the underside of the flight to the third floor, all the plaster is missing and only the lath remains.

Ceiling: The ceiling is completely covered in fiberboard acoustic panels; the original ceiling was not visible.

Trims: There is no baseboard in this room, and it could not be determined if this room originally had a cornice.

Doors: Two door openings on the east wall, one to Room 201 and the other to Room 202, are described elsewhere.

Windows: The window opening on the south wall has four aluminum-framed hopper sashes. Pulley ropes on the frame indicate the window once had hung sash.

Other: An electric light fixture consisting of a ceiling canopy, chain and socket remain in place on the underside of the stairs to the third floor. No evidence of earlier lighting was found nor that this room was ever heated. Most of the railing and balluster on the staircase to the third floor has been removed. A small section of railing remains at the landing between the second and third floors.

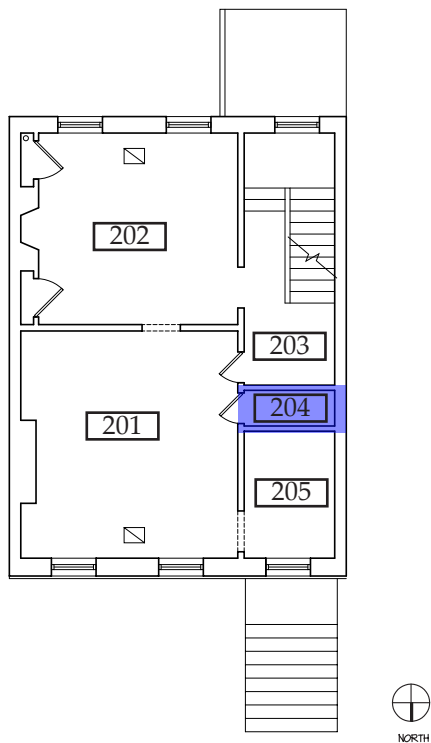


Figure 107: Existing Conditions Second Floor Plan with Room 204 highlighted.

Room 204

Room 204 is a deep closet accessed via a door in the west wall of Room 201.

Floor: The floor is wide wood boards running north to south and painted white and likely original.

Walls: The walls retain original plaster that is all sound. The north and south walls have cleats for three shelves nailed into the surface. Nail holes for now-removed cleats show evidence of an earlier shelf arrangement.

Ceiling: The ceiling is plaster on lath and is also original and in good condition.

Trims: The door opening on the east wall retains its original frame and casings but the door itself is missing. This room also retains original



Figure 108: View of the room looking west.



Figure 109: Room 204 is the only room in the entire house that retains original baseboards. The baseboard is a plain board with a beveled top edge.



Figure 110: The east end of the floor has been cut, likely to facilitate access to the gas pipes serving the chandelier in Room 103 below.

baseboards on its north, south and west walls. The baseboards are plain boards with a beveled top edge.

Doors: The door on the east wall is missing.

Other: There are no lighting fixtures or heating equipment or evidence of these items in this room.

Room 205

Room 205 is a small chamber off of the northern large chamber, Room 201. It occupies the northwest corner of the second floor, and it is likely that it originally served as a storage space, or perhaps a work or sewing room for the occupant of the large chamber. Modern clothes poles and shelves indicate that Room

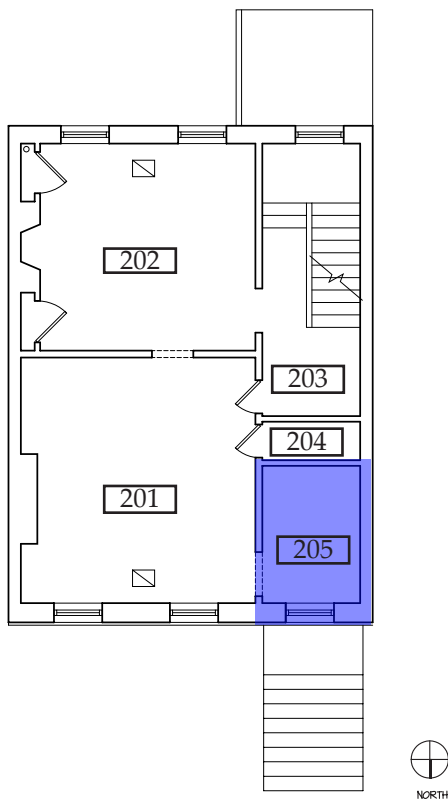


Figure 111: Existing Conditions Second Floor Plan with Room 205 highlighted.

205 was most recently used as a walk-in closet. The floor, ceiling and most of the walls are covered in twentieth century finishes which are protecting any surviving historic fabric.

Floor: The floor is covered in 9” vinyl tiles. These are probably vinyl asbestos tiles (VAT) and must be removed and disposed of properly in accordance with local regulations on hazardous waste.

Walls: The north wall is finished with plaster. The plaster has a sand-textured skimcoat, likely not original, and a large crack under the window. The east and south walls are covered in faux wood panels that continue to the floor; there is no baseboard. Several layers of wallpaper over the door on the east wall are visible. The west wall is plaster which is in poor condition with a very uneven surface.

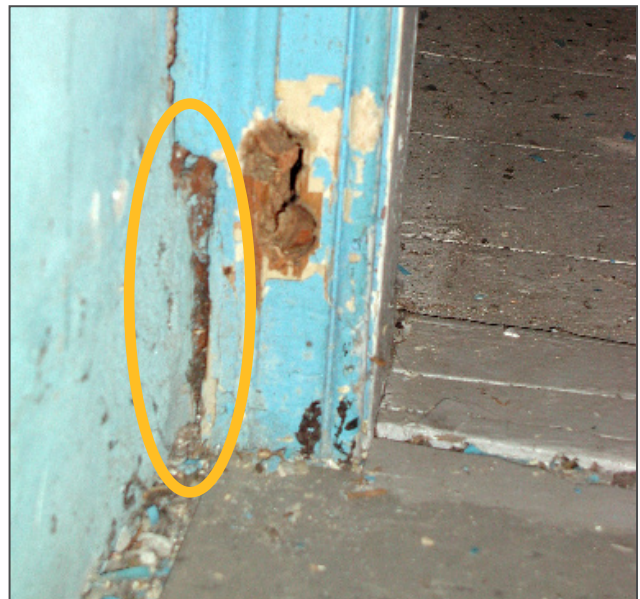


Figure 112: This cut in the door casing indicates that Room 205 once had baseboards similar to those found in Room 204.



Figure 113: Layers of wallpaper visible over the door trim on the eastern wall.

Ceiling: The ceiling is covered in 2-foot by 4-foot acoustic tiles installed with nails. A missing tile exposes the plaster ceiling above.

Doors: The door opening that leads to Room 201 retains original casings and trim yet the door is missing.

Trims: The extant casing around the door remains in good condition. A paint line on the door casing outlines the profile of removed baseboards. A cut in the north jamb records the profile of the missing baseboards.

Windows: The window in the north wall retains its frame, casings and one six-light sash, all of which are likely original. The second sash is missing.

Other: Holes in the floor indicate the location of a since-removed radiator.

4.2.4 Third Floor

The third floor is divided into four main chambers and an L-shaped hall. Two of the chambers have small closets and there is a third closet at the end of the hall. Posts that support the roof framing – visible in the attic – continue down through this floor and are concealed in the partitions. Since the posts are original, it is likely that the related partitions are as well.

It appears that a separate apartment was installed on the third floor sometime in the twentieth century. A kitchen was installed in Room 303 and a bathroom in Room 302.

Throughout the third floor, modern finishes such as gypsum wallboard, faux brick or wood panels, and vinyl tile are installed over the original, historic finishes. While these finishes hindered or prevented full examination of any extant original finishes underneath, they are at present protecting the surviving historic fabric from damage.

As on the lower floors, almost all of the baseboards have been removed and the space infilled with gypsum wallboard or cement parge. Although most of the original, four-panel doors are missing – some openings contain subsequent additions of late nineteenth or early twentieth century doors with five horizontal panels – a few remain in place.

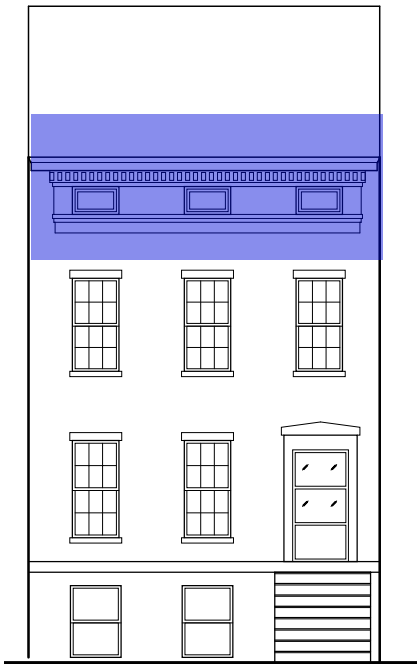


Figure 114: North facade elevation with the third floor highlighted in blue.

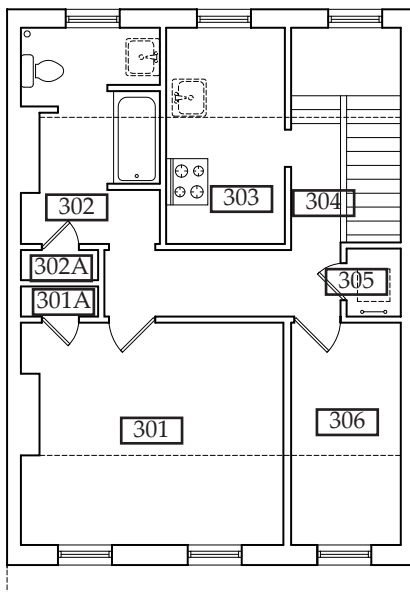


Figure 115: Existing Conditions Third Floor Plan.

Room 301

Room 301 is the largest chamber on the floor and occupies the northeast corner of the third floor.

Floor: The floor is painted, wide boards that run north to south and appear to be original. They are in good condition and can be retained.

Walls: The north and east walls are plaster on brick and the south and west walls are plaster on lath. While the walls appear to have endured

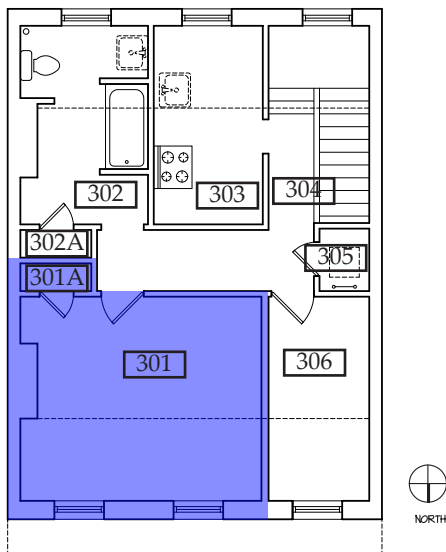


Figure 116: Existing Conditions Third Floor Plan with Room 301 and Room 301A highlighted.



Figure 117: Two north-facing windows and sloping ceiling.

previous repairs and visible damage such as holes or cracks, for the most part the plaster appears to be salvageable/repairable.

Ceiling: The ceiling is plaster on lath with a sand-textured skim coat and slopes along the north wall to accommodate the roof pitch above. Water damage is visible at the chimney breast – likely the result of water entering through failed chimney flashings – and entire sections of plaster are missing at the center of the room and along the west partition. It is not clear why the plaster failed in these areas.

Trims: A small area of baseboards remains between the two doors on the south wall. Trim around the doors on the south wall and the windows on the north wall is extant and in good condition.

Windows: This room is illuminated by two north-facing awning windows, dating from the 1970s.

Doors: There are two door openings in the south wall. One leads to a closet (Room 301A) and retains all of its trim and an original rail



Figure 118: Damage to the plaster ceiling along the east wall in Room 301 was likely caused by water entering through failed chimney flashings.

and stile door with four recessed panels. The second opening leads to the stair hall; while it retains original trim, the door itself is missing. This door casing has minor damage where a hasp was once installed. Both doors retain brass hinges with ball tips. The hinges and the doors are typical of late nineteenth or early twentieth century construction and are not likely original features

Fireplace/Heating: The room was once heated by a stove that vented through the chimney breast on the east wall. A hole in the chimney breast indicates the location where the stovepipe was connected. It is not clear how this room was more recently heated since no evidence of a radiator was found.

Other: A canopy on the ceiling indicates the location of a since-removed electric light fixture which was probably controlled by the switch that remains on the south wall, between the two door openings. A duplex outlet installed on the north wall is a late twentieth century addition.

On the east wall, a chimney breast projects into the room.

Room 302

Room 302 and Room 303 were most likely were once one large room, mimicking the layouts of the other floors. More recently, Room 302 was used as a bathroom.

Floor: The floor is covered with plywood and the underlying floor could not be observed or its condition assessed. It is likely that many of the floorboards were removed when installing

the tub. Sections of floor are missing along the south wall in the southwest corner.

Walls: The north and west walls are plaster on lath and the south and east walls are plaster on brick. All of the wall finishes are extremely deteriorated: paint is peeling, sections of plaster are bulging or missing, and much of the plaster is soft. The bottom rail of a thick door (possibly from the first floor) has been used as a nailing block on the south end of the west wall.



Figure 119: View looking south with tub and window in Room 302.

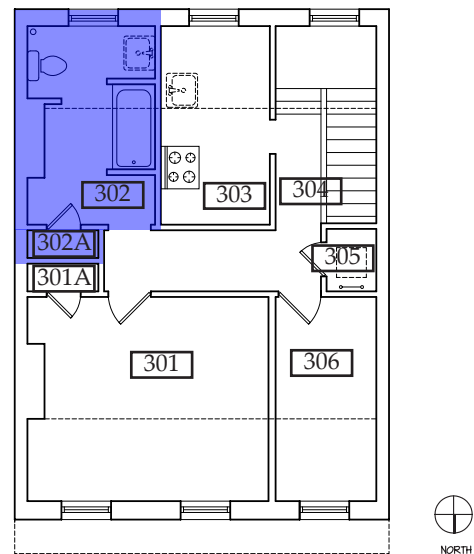


Figure 120: Existing Conditions Third Floor Plan with Room 302 and Room 302A highlighted.

The south wall is in especially poor condition from water entering through the exterior wall, and the plaster will require complete replacement in-kind. The east wall is also severely deteriorated and the plaster soft; the likely cause of this damage is water entering through failed chimney flashings.

Ceiling: Plywood sheets cover the ceiling. The joints are spackled, but the ceiling was never painted. If the original ceiling remains in place above the plywood, it is probably severely deteriorated and will require replacement.

Trims: Baseboards are missing throughout this room. When the baseboards were removed, plaster or plaster board was attached to the uncovered areas; therefore it is not known if the walls were plastered under the baseboards.

Doors: Two door openings in the north wall – one leading to the hall (304), the other to a small closet (302A) – retain their original frames and casings but both doors are missing.

Windows: This room is currently lit by a single, three-light awning window. The original sash is missing, but the window architrave remains.

Fireplace/Heating: The chimney breast on the east wall is an original feature. The room was once heated by a stove that vented to the chimney breast on the east wall. A hole in the chimney breast indicates the location of the former stovepipe.

Other: A very rusted, flush-mounted electric ceiling fixture remains in place on the ceiling.

Two electrical switches remain on the north wall, between the door openings. A cast iron pipe stands in the southeast corner; ghost marks on the wall surfaces indicate that at one time it was boxed out, but it is currently exposed.

Stud partitions were inserted to surround a bathtub and screen a toilet. A tub and sink were installed on the west wall and a toilet on the east wall (the sink has since been removed).

Room 303

Originally Room 302 and 303 would likely have been one large chamber; however Room 303 appears to have been used most recently as a kitchen.

Floor: The floor is covered in vinyl composition tiles (VCT). The VCT is in poor condition. Where a sink was removed on the east wall, the original floor boards are visible and are in good condition.

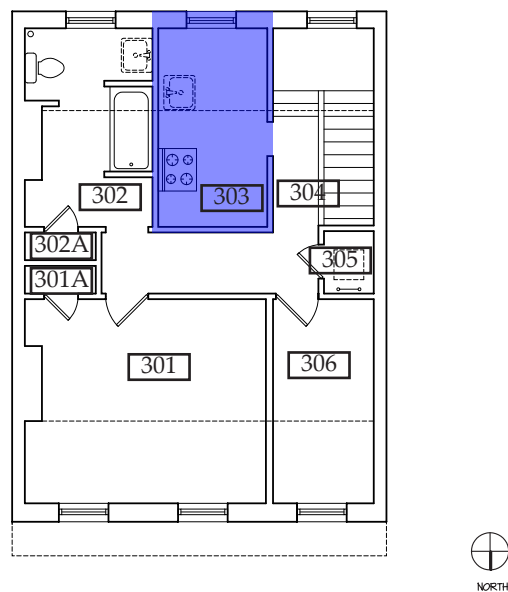


Figure 121: Existing Conditions Third Floor Plan with Room 303 highlighted.

Walls: The upper half of the north wall and the entire east wall are finished with a twentieth century faux brick wall covering; the substrate could not be determined or its condition evaluated. The lower half of the north wall is finished with gypsum wallboard. The south wall is plaster on brick; it is in very poor condition with soft areas, and the brick substrate is visible in some places. Past repairs executed in portland cement indicate that this damage has been a long-term problem. It is likely that this wall will require complete replastering. The west wall is finished with gypsum wallboard; it could not be determined if the original plaster or lath remains in place or if it was removed.

Ceiling: The ceiling is covered in two-foot by four-foot acoustic ceiling tiles installed with nails. Where the tiles are missing, a ceiling paper is visible. The original plaster ceiling may remain in place above the paper; however, it was not accessible.

Doors: The door opening in the east wall retains its original frame and casings but the door is missing.

Windows: A single, three-light awning window opening remains in place on the south wall. Although the sash could not be examined, the frame and casings are in good condition.



Figure 122: A modern stove in Room 303 indicates that this room was used as a kitchen in the late twentieth century.

Other: A ceramic ceiling fixture is located on the ceiling, and an electric switch on the east wall, north of the door, probably controlled this fixture. A single duplex is found on the east wall. A telephone jack and light switch are also present on the west wall. A four-burner gas stove/oven remains in place in the northeast corner, and remnants of gas piping are found along the east wall, as well as water lines for a sink. It is not clear how this room was heated either historically or more recently.

Room 304

Room 304 is an L-shaped hall that serves the third floor. The north-south oriented section is the stair hall while the portion that runs east-west is a hall that leads to the chambers.

Floor: The floor is covered with plywood; the type and condition of the underlying floor could not be determined.

Walls: The north wall of the stair hall is covered with faux wood panelling. Where visible, the underlying plaster is in poor condition. The east wall of the stair hall is also finished in wood panelling. Where the panelling is missing, much of the underlying plaster appears to be in good condition. A large gypsum wallboard patch at the north end of this wall is an easily reversed repair. At the south end, along the landing, the plaster is seriously damaged, most likely from water infiltrating through the exterior brick wall.

The south wall of the chamber hall is plaster on lath and was once covered in some sort of panelling; long smears of mastic indicate the location of the seams. The plaster is in good

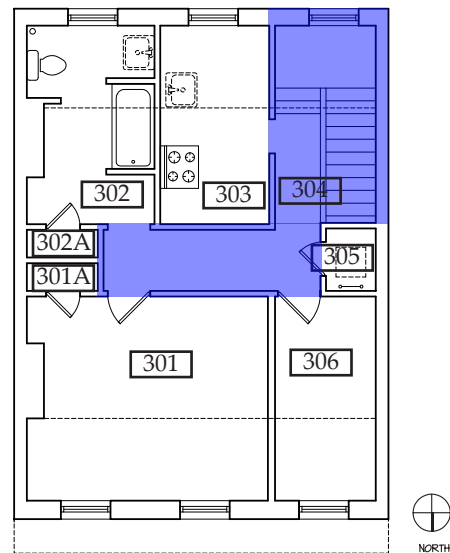


Figure 123: Existing Conditions Third Floor Plan with Room 304 highlighted.



Figure 124: In Room 304, the baseboards were removed and the exposed space parged with cement.

condition and can be retained and repaired. The baseboard has been removed and the exposed wall parged over in portland cement. The south wall of the stair hall is plaster on brick, and covered in faux wood panelling. This wall has been exposed to water infiltration for some time, and it is unlikely this plaster is in salvageable condition.

The west wall along the staircase has been finished with a rough textured, troweled-on plaster or gypsum coating. At the door to the

closet, the wall is covered with faux wood panelling.

The plaster on the outside southeast corner of the stair hall is damaged and has been repaired with historically inappropriate portland cement. The damage exposes a wood corner bead, possibly original.

Ceiling: The ceiling is covered with two-foot by four-foot acoustic panels with a metal grid. Where tiles are missing, the exposed plaster ceiling above is visible and in very poor condition. The plaster is missing and only the lath remains. Water stains are visible on the acoustic tiles, indicating ongoing moisture



Figure 125: View looking south into the north-south corridor of Room 304.

infiltration in the ceiling and suggesting that any surviving plaster is likely in very poor condition and will require complete replacement in-kind.



Figure 126: Ghost wall from a partition that separated the hall into two portions, likely to serve two apartments.



Figure 127: Damage to the outside corner in Room 304 exposed a wood corner bead.

Doors: The closet (Room 305) retains its original painted wood, four-panel rail and stile door in good condition. (The other doors on this floor open into the chambers and are described in the sections representing those rooms.) The edges of the rails and stiles are bevelled where they surround the recessed panels. This detail is similar to the bevelled edge on the top of the surviving baseboard in Room 204.

Windows: A twentieth century replacement awning window is found on the stair landing.

Other: The balustrade that once enclosed the stair opening has been removed and replaced with one constructed of plain lumber. Holes in the floor indicate the number and spacing of balusters in the original railing. A small section of the railing remains in place between the second and third floors. The faux wood panelling is covering any potential evidence for a railing height. All of the baseboards have been removed from this room.

There is no heating equipment extant or evidence of previous equipment in this room. Lighting fixtures were not found in this room nor evidence of how this room was originally lighted.

Room 305

Room 305 is small room at the end of the hall (Room 304). It was likely used for storage and contains a ladder that provides access to the attic.

Floor: The floor is currently covered in carpet.

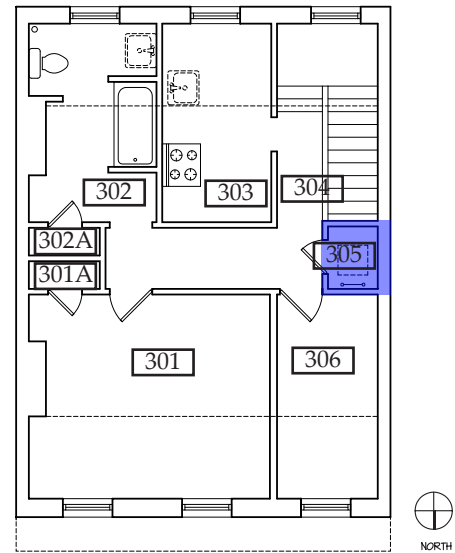


Figure 128: Existing Conditions Third Floor Plan with Room 305 highlighted.



Figure 129: An original door frame with a four-panel, rail and stile door remains in place in the west wall of Room 304.

Walls: All of the walls are plaster on lath, except the west wall which is plaster on brick. Overall, the plaster is in good condition.



Figure 130: The ladder in Room 305 that accesses the attic.

Ceiling: The ceiling is a rough finish of plaster on lath. The hatch to the attic occupies most of the ceiling, with most of the remaining plaster missing.

Trims: A 6” baseboard is present on the perimeter of this room, except on the east wall where it is missing.

Doors: A four-panelled door on original leaf hinges is hung on the east wall. This door opens into 304, the hallway.

Other: There is no evidence that this room was ever heated or lit.

The ladder leading to the attic has eight rungs, one of which is detached but present in the

room. This ladder leans against the north edge of a small opening in the ceiling. A coat hanger with six iron hooks is stored in this room.

Room 306

Room 306 is a smaller chamber that occupies the northwest corner of the third floor.

Floor: The floor is wide wood boards running north to south that appear to be original and are in good condition.

Walls: The north wall is plaster on brick. Portland cement repairs around the window indicate past damage, likely from water infiltration.

The east wall is plaster on lath. Large holes in the plaster have left the lath exposed. Prominent cracks are visible at the top of the wall, suggesting that it has moved.

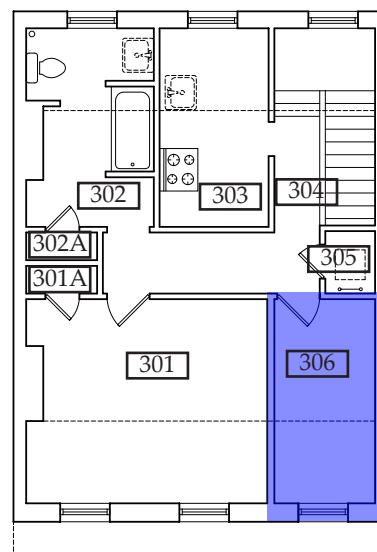


Figure 131: Existing Conditions Third Floor Plan with Room 306 highlighted.

The south wall is also plaster on lath. While it shows some significant cracks, it appears that the lath and keys are sound and thus the wall should be salvageable. The west wall is covered in gypsum wallboard; it could not be determined if the original plaster remains behind this finish. The gypsum wallboard continues to the floor, indicating it was installed after the baseboards were removed.

Ceiling: The ceiling is finished in gypsum wallboard with a sand-texture. The ceiling is sagging and has water stains and mildew, suggesting an ongoing water problem in the attic above. It is not clear if the original plaster or lath remain in place above the visible ceiling; however, the extent of the water damage indicates that any surviving plaster is likely damaged beyond repair.

Doors: A door opening in the north wall leads to the hall. The opening retains a frame and some trim, but the casing from the west leg is missing.

Windows: This room is illuminated by a single window in its north wall.



Figure 132: Water damage is clearly visible on the ceiling of Room 306.



Figure 133: A missing door casing in Room 306 reveals that the lath and plaster base coat continued behind the trim. The final coat of plaster was installed after the casing was in place.

Other: An electric light fixture consisting of a brass ceiling canopy, chain, and socket is found on the ceiling. The fixture has a pull chain socket, and there is no wall switch in this room. It is not clear how this room was heated historically as it is not contiguous with a chimney breast or a flue. A pipe in the floor on the west wall indicates the location of a former radiator from a more recent heating system.

The exposed door frame on the north wall offers an opportunity to observe how the plaster was installed: the base coat was applied over the lath and continues behind the casing. The second coat – a skim coat – was applied after the casing was in place. It appears that only these two coats of plaster (rather than the traditional three) were used; this supposition should be verified, and other rooms studied to determine if this room is an anomaly.

5. Building Systems

All of the existing building systems in the Myers Residence are obsolete and require replacement. This includes the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems.

It is not clear how the Myers Residence was originally illuminated. While an iron pipe in Room B01 may have been a pipe for gas, no evidence of gas lighting was found. Evidence of gas lighting – iron pipes in the walls and ceilings – may be revealed during restoration work in likely gas lighting areas.

The existing electrical system appears to date to the mid-twentieth century and is inadequate for current residential or museum use. The wiring is obsolete and many rooms have no electrical switches. Also, the type and number of outlets is inadequate.

There is no heating system in the Myers Residence at present and the most recent system has been completely removed. Originally, the building would have been heated by individual stoves or grates in each room that had a chimney breast. The fuel most likely would have been coal. In either the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, a hot water or steam radiator system was installed. The radiators, which are the most useful clue in dating this type of system, were removed. Holes from the installation of the piping for this system are visible throughout the house, although the actual radiators are no longer in place.



Figure 134: This iron pipe in Room B01 was likely a gas pipe.



Figure 135: Former location of a stove hole in the chimney breast on the east wall of Room 302 is evidence of an original or early use of a stove to heat this space.

There are no fire detection, alarm or suppression, or other life safety systems currently in the building.

6. Recommendations for a Phased Restoration

We recommend that the restoration of the Stephen & Harriet Myers Residence occur in four phases:

- **Phase One:** Stabilization, Shoring and Material Testing and Investigation
- **Phase Two:** Masonry Reconstruction, New Framing and Exterior Envelope Restoration
- **Phase Three:** Building Systems
- **Phase Four:** Interior Restoration

A phased approach for the restoration is necessary for several reasons including public safety, logical construction activity sequencing, and grant and funding flow, all of which are typical for projects of similar condition and scope. The recommendations below are arranged by priority in phases and assume that funding will support this sequence; however, the scheduling and limits of funding sources may ultimately determine the extent of work that may be completed in any phase, and the phases may need to be reconsidered accordingly.

The sequencing can also be broken down further to accommodate smaller tasks within the four phases. Work within each phase sets a precedent for subsequent phases. An architect and historic preservation specialist should be involved throughout the entire project to oversee and coordinate the phases

as they progress. A structural engineer may be required to address issues encountered during construction.

The primary recommendations for the work address structural problems. A majority of the exterior restoration is stabilization work, which is required to ensure structural stability for the building envelope and prevent further deterioration. Stabilization is the first priority.

Arresting water infiltration from the roof to the ground is a goal of the initial stabilization efforts. A large portion of the exterior work will include rebuilding failing elements or replacing missing components.

Concurrently with the physical restoration work, the client should undertake a Feasibility/Master Planning Study to determine the future use of the building and ensure decisions related to programming (i.e. building systems) are appropriate.

Interior restoration should follow completion of exterior envelope restoration and the installation of building systems. Although the required interior restoration work is extensive, to compensate for loss of original fabric, where fabric is missing – such as doors or baseboards – at least one original sample of each element has survived and can be used as a pattern for replication.

After each phase is completed, a team consisting of the architect and the contractor should create a maintenance plan which the Myers Residence team should execute and

periodically update. Ongoing maintenance means less expensive and more environmentally favorable results in the long run, when compared to large efforts every few decades. Many of the problems with the structure now are the result of little or no maintenance, highlighting the importance of creating and following a logical maintenance schedule.

Properly documenting the building during all phases of restoration is necessary and important. When removing any historic fabric, the elements should be photographed and measured before removal. If salvageable, the materials should be stored and reused in the structure during the appropriate phase. If a unique assembly must be disassembled and moved, components should be tagged and labeled so it can be re-assembled in its original form.

Principles of sustainability should govern implementation of the entire project. The best current methods for energy conservation compatible with historic fabric should be used throughout the project.

In addition to the items listed in the phases below, the following sustainable practices should be considered for implementation during an appropriate phase:

- Air sealing through appropriate weather-stripping and insulation of the building shell
- High-performance specifications of mechanical equipment to ensure energy-efficient operations
- Window rehabilitation and the installation of new storm windows to prevent air infiltration
- Historically appropriate, low energy lighting and controls
- Advanced technology for mechanical systems such as fully modulating condensing boilers, energy recovery ventilators, and perhaps ground source heat pumps
- Renewable energy options such as building-integrated solar panels on the south-facing roof or a separate, freestanding array in the rear yard
- Locally recycled materials from salvaged yards or reclaimed/recycled lumber sources, and implementation of local labor with traditional building methods

6.1 Phase One: Stabilization, Shoring, and Material Testing and Investigation

The first priority is to stabilize the compromised structural elements before any further deterioration occurs or restoration work begins.

Shoring and Bracing

Interior Stiffening Wall

The highest priority is the shoring and bracing of the north-south cross wall in the basement. This stiffening wall has suffered partial collapse at its southern end and tilted out of plumb at its northern end. The shoring will extend the full length of the wall, from the front of the house to the back.

One of the reasons for the failure of this wall appears to be the placement of very poor original foundations underneath the wall.



Figure 136: Lally columns in the basement are temporarily supporting the collapsing stiffening wall, but shoring, bracing and reconstruction of this wall are needed to sustain the building's structural integrity.

During the shoring and bracing of this wall, the twentieth century concrete floor will be removed, and a new foundation will be installed.

When this floor is removed, the exposed areas should be carefully examined for evidence of an earlier floor. It is likely that the shoring work may cause further damage and loss of historic fabric. All of the surviving fabric, regardless of its condition, should be photographed in situ, carefully removed, catalogued, and, in some cases, stored for possible reinstallation, in particular, the bricks.

As of December 2008, implementation plans for temporary shoring and bracing are underway. The URHPCR has engaged a contractor and is currently determining the scope of work. Wall repair will occur in Phase Two.

South Exterior Wall

In addition to the interior stiffening wall in the basement, the south exterior wall also needs shoring and bracing as it is the most severely compromised side of the house. Currently, it is concealed behind a blue tarp and the exact extent of restoration work required is unknown.

Permanent repair for this wall will entail the careful removal of a substantial amount of masonry and the rebuilding of this wall. Before any masonry reconstruction can begin, the wall needs to be stabilized through temporary shoring and bracing.

A fully planned OSHA compliant scaffolding system should be erected, capable of providing

access and work platforms for the entire exterior envelope of the building. The scaffolding will assist in bracing the south exterior walls and in preparation for brick restoration in Phase Two.

Chimney Breast Stabilization

On the east wall, parallel to the collapsed stiffening wall in the basement, sections of masonry wall and the chimney breast have collapsed. Stabilizing these collapsed sections will provide a solid foundation for the first floor joists that rest upon them.

During stabilization, fallen bricks should be collected from the basement and stored for brick restoration in Phase Two.

Hazardous Material Testing and Abatement

Discovery and documentation of hazardous materials is a requirement. There are known asbestos tiles on the south façade and lead paint on the interior walls. Testing and a written report outlining these hazards should be completed in the preliminary stages and supplied to the contractor prior to any work.

Temporary Roof Protection

Wooden shingles found in the attic suggest that this was the original roofing material; a restoration to an original wood shingle roof can often be expensive. If funding is available, a wood shingle roof restoration is most desirable and advised. However, allowances will likely favor a stabilization option first. In the immediate future, temporary roof protection should be installed to arrest water infiltration.

Water infiltration through the roof and into the exterior walls has compromised the building's structural integrity. Over the years, failure of the built-in gutters and the removal of the leaders from the building have damaged the exterior walls. Water that should have been collected and diverted away from the building has instead flowed down over the walls and saturated the building.

During the deconstruction of the existing roof system, unstable and water-damaged rafters will be exposed and should be repaired or replaced. Years of water infiltration and alterations have left the roof framing asymmetrical. In the 2006 report by Robert Silman Associates P.C. (*Appendix E*), they noted that a post in one corner of the attic does not continue to the roof, as do the posts in the other three corners. A structural analysis of the roof framing would determine the likely extent of any overstress or excessive deflection. If needed, supplemental structural elements may be installed in the attic.

Installation of a rubber roofing membrane with temporary gutters and leaders that extends over the existing built-in gutters would successfully divert water away from the house and stop infiltration into the walls. Construction sequencing and available funding will determine an appropriate membrane roofing material.

Removal of Rear Porch on South Facade

After the south wall has been shored and braced with scaffolding, the south façade rear porch can be removed. Prior to any demolition, the rear porch will need to be fully documented and photographed.

Structural Investigation

The separation between the staircase and the west exterior wall requires investigation. Robert Silman Associates, P.C. recommends a survey to examine the plumbness of the west exterior wall, to determine if the west wall is leaning away from the house, if the rest of the house, or tilting toward the east, or both. Once a conclusion is reached, appropriate measures can be taken during masonry restoration in Phase Two.

Additional structural assessments, such as live load testing of the floors, are needed to fully understand the stability of the building and plan for future repair and uses.

Site Drainage Improvement

In addition to the failing roof system, concrete sidewalks and surfaces sloping toward the building have allowed water to enter the front of the building from the ground, accelerating the water damage. This concrete should be removed using hand tools as vibrations from a jack hammer and other power tools could damage the unstable building. A properly regraded area on the north facade will divert water away from the building and improve site drainage.

Material Testing

Proper material testing and investigation in Phase One would ensure compatibility of new materials with historic fabric. With extensive amounts of mortar repointing on the interior and exterior needed, the historic mortar should be analyzed, and both interior and exterior bricks should be tested for compression-strength.

The new mortar mix should have the same color, texture, and cooling properties as the existing, and should be softer than the masonry units. A test patch should be required as an excellent means to ensure continuity.¹

Paint analysis of the wall, ceiling, floor and trim finishes can provide critical insights as to the interior appearance of the home during the time that Stephen and Harriet Myers lived there. Testing the paint colors on the plaster walls, ceilings, and trims may reveal original paint schemes. Also, analysis of millwork and flooring would help in developing a more in-depth history of the building.

The wood components of the house, such as window stools, roof elements, and areas where joists rest on the masonry, should be inspected for water deterioration. Fungal and insect-related damage should be examined on all levels of the buildings by a licensed, trained wood pathologist. In some instances, exploratory demolition might be necessary to further investigate historic finishes and construction technology, and prepare for future work.

1. For detailed information on this topic see *Preservation Brief 2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings* available at www.nps.gov.

6.2 Phase Two: Masonry Reconstruction, New Framing, and Exterior Envelope Restoration

Brick Restoration and Repair

The reconstruction work for the interior and exterior brick walls is a high priority. Material testing completed in Phase One will specify compatible mortar and a replacement brick of appropriate size, color, texture and hardness for both interior and exterior walls.

During the reconstruction of the chimney breast and the stiffening wall in the basement, bricks collected from the basement should be reused if they are in good condition. There will likely not be enough bricks remaining to rebuild these missing sections, and compatible replacement bricks will be needed.

All of the masonry walls will need general repointing where the mortar has failed and brick replacement where they have fallen out or deteriorated.

Interior North-South Stiffening Wall Brick Reconstruction

Several choices are applicable for reconstruction of the stiffening wall in the basement. The replacement wall could be brick, reinforced concrete masonry units, or steel columns. Brick is historically accurate but is also the most expensive solution. As the wall structure will be covered in a historically appropriate finish and never seen by the public, a less expensive solution – concrete or steel – can be an appropriate choice. If historical authenticity is desired, the wall can be rebuilt



Figure 137: Water infiltration in the basement has severely damaged numerous bricks beyond the point of repair.

of brick. The suitability of these options should be thoroughly assessed through schematic designs, consultation with a structural engineer, and review by the URHPCR.

Chimney Breast Reconstruction in the Basement

As with the stiffening wall, rebuilding the chimney breasts with brick can be expensive. Funding might favor stabilization options first, such as limited rebuilding and keying together of old and new masonry. Although this would greatly help to further stabilize the wall and the structure, it should not be considered a final solution. The chimney breast will need a complete reconstruction, using salvaged and replacement bricks, to permanently stabilize the basement and floors above.

South Exterior Wall Brick Reconstruction

In the Robert Silman report it was anticipated that a permanent repair for this wall will involve the careful removal of a substantial amount of masonry and the rebuilding of this wall. The

exterior scaffolding erected during Phase One will serve as temporary shoring and bracing while the restoration/reconstruction of this wall continues. Once the face is stabilized and ready for work the tarp will be removed, the condition of the wall investigated and documented, and an accurate scope of work can be set.

Removing the asbestos-cement siding will likely expose severely deteriorated bricks and a substantial loss of mortar. Similar to the reconstruction in the basement, the degree of brick deterioration should be assessed; sound brick should be salvaged for reuse if possible. Any removal of bricks should be thoroughly documented. During this process the floor joists on the south end will be exposed, and any deteriorated joist ends should be replaced with dutchman repairs or replaced in-kind, if required. A new concrete foundation will likely be needed underneath the repaired wall.

Exterior Wall Repointing and Brick Infill

Large patches on the north and west walls need infill brick and repointing. In particular, the gable (west) face suffers from loss of mortar and brick. Horizontally bulging brick and previous poor reconstruction at specific sections of this gable will likely require dismantling and reconstruction with salvaged bricks.

The front (north) façade is built of a higher quality, denser brick. If existing bricks are unsalvageable and new bricks are required, all new masonry units should match the color, texture and consistency of the existing bricks.

Gutter

After all of the masonry walls have been restored and the temporary structural systems removed, the permanent gutter system should be repaired. The remaining gutters on the front façade should be investigated and documented. The design for a new gutter and leader on the north and south façades should reflect the historic characteristics of the intact system. The new gutters and leaders are an important step to divert water away from the newly restored walls. Storm water should be carried away from the building. Structures and/or conduits of storm water should comply with local regulations.

Framing

The connections between the existing floor joist and the exterior walls will require examination and possible reinforcement, repairs, or replacement. This will entail some removal of architectural fabric, such as floor boards, to determine if additional structural repairs will be necessary. Joist repairs can be addressed when the south wall is under repair.

Permanent Roof

While the temporary roof covering from Phase One will arrest water infiltration occurring at the roof, a permanent roof is essential to create a weather-tight building envelope. When funding is available, sheathing for the wood shingles can be applied over the roofing membrane installed in Phase One, or the membrane can be removed and new sheathing and shingles installed on the repaired roof rafters. The new roof cannot be



Figure 138: Deteriorated sandstone sill on the main entrance door will need restoration through limited patching.

installed before framing repairs to the rafters, rafter plates, and framing for the built-in-gutters are completed.

Sandstone

On the north (front) façade the water table, main door, and window sills are reddish-brown sandstone. Water infiltration on this façade has caused the sandstone to spall and deteriorate. A large section of the water table is missing on the northeast corner (directly above the missing brick area) and should be replaced in-kind. Salvaged sandstone from a demolished local building may provide an acceptable material match.

Unfortunately, there are no easy solutions to the problem of repairing other damaged areas of the building's sandstone. Composite patching will not weather the same as the surrounding stone, resulting in a "splotchy" appearance over time. Unless the material is an exact match (which is difficult to verify without documentation), stone dutchmen repairs may produce the same result.



Figure 139: When a temporary heating system is installed, the vent between the ceiling in Room B01 and the floor in Room 102 should be opened, allowing warm air to rise through the house.

Limited patching may be the best solution in small areas at the bottom of the spall at the main door sill. Damaged sandstone sills on the south facade could be removed and used to patch the north facade, ensuring a compatible match and a uniform appearance for the street elevation. The south facade sills could be replaced with new masonry as this facade is less visible from the street. Repaired sandstone will prevent water from collecting on the exposed brick horizontal face below the sill.

Temporary Heating/Electrical

If there will be a significant amount of time before interior restoration work begins, temporary heating, such as a gas-fired, hot air furnace, should be installed in the basement. This will allow hot air to rise to the first floor via the stair opening and the floor vent in Room 102 (once reopened). Until windows are restored, rigid foam panel insulation should be placed

in the window openings to minimize heat loss. Once the building envelope is completely sealed (which includes window restoration and building envelope work) a permanent heating system can be researched, specified, and installed in Phase Three.

The local utility company should be asked about the availability of underground service for the building. To restore electrical service to the building, an electric panel must be provided and sized for future needs, including air conditioning. The URHPCR should consider installing this panel during stabilization efforts in order to provide a safe power source for ongoing interior work.

Windows

After the masonry work is completed and the openings for the windows are sound, sashes and frames can be restored and appropriate replicas fabricated where needed. The architect should complete a window schedule and detailed specifications to describe the work necessary for every window, as each window in the structure has a different level of deterioration. The muntin profiles and rail and stile sizes from the windows in Room 101, which are in good condition, can serve as a pattern for any window replication required.

6.3 Phase Three: Building Systems

All of the existing building systems in the Myers Residence today are obsolete and require replacement with carefully considered permanent systems.

Heating

If the temporary, gas-fired hot air heating system recommended in Phase Two is installed, it should be replaced with permanent, contemporary, energy-efficient heating and cooling systems to regulate temperatures as well as enhance the efficiency of the overall building envelope.

At present, there is no heating system in the Myers Residence. The most recent heating system has been dismantled and removed from the building. Modern mechanical systems will improve energy efficiency, increase ventilation, and sustain a consistent climate control. As freeze-thaw cycles have caused severe damage to the masonry, maintaining a consistent temperature, especially in the cold months, is imperative.

If the owner wishes to restore the building to the condition and period when the Myers lived there, a visible modern heating and cooling system would be inappropriate.

Electrical/Lighting

It is unclear how the Myers Residence was originally illuminated, yet evidence of previous electrical systems may be discovered during selective demolition in the first two phases. If the URHPCR wishes to restore the building as

a house interpreted to its the nineteenth century occupancies, period lighting fixtures should be installed; in this case, visible switches would be inappropriate. For this purpose, the URHPCR may wish to install the switches in a centralized location rather than in each room. Argand burners, lit by electricity and not oil, would be appropriate fixtures for nineteenth century residential lighting. If the interior rooms will be used for exhibition space, modern lighting fixtures are appropriate.

Life Safety and Security

Because the building will be open to visitors, life safety systems (illuminated exit signs, egress lighting) must be installed before the building is made accessible to the public.

A fire detection and fire alarm system will be required, and minimal fire suppression (hand-held extinguishers) must be provided. Depending on the future use of the building, the URHPCR may be required to install a traditional sprinkler-type or high-pressure mist fire suppression system. This will be determined by code requirements and the extent of the building that will be open to the public. The local code official should be contacted and invited to make a site visit to advise the URHPCR on the number and location of required devices.

If vandalism is a problem, a temporary security system should be installed prior to Phase Four.

The permanent systems should be specified and designed before the interior restoration is completed, so that installation can be

coordinated with the restoration work. Careful planning will preserve historic fabric and be more cost-effective.

Plumbing

Depending on the programming and future use of the structure, rest rooms and modern plumbing may be required for code compliance. Installation of pipes should be designed before interior restoration begins in Phase Four.

6.4 Phase Four: Interior Restoration

The interior restoration should be the final phase in the restoration of the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence. Stabilization and exterior restoration must precede interior restoration to create a weather-tight and climate controlled building envelope. Prior to start of any interior restoration work, all of the doors, trims, windows and finishes should be surveyed again with detailed information provided on their existing state, as conditions may worsen over time.

Selective demolition will remove inappropriate and deteriorating finishes after which appropriate wall restoration and repair can occur. Material investigation completed in Phase One will determine paint schemes and historical finishes to complete the walls, floors, and ceilings.

Almost all the historic baseboards have been removed, with the exception of Room 204. This plain baseboard with a beveled top edge can be used as a pattern for the baseboards on the second and third floors. It is likely however that the baseboards on the first floor were more

ornate. Research on similar row houses in Albany can provide examples of historically appropriate baseboards that can be installed in the parlor floor rooms. It would be worthwhile to consider the interpretive strategies of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum when planning the interior of the Myers Residence.

A goal for the interior restoration is to create a safe place for visitors to experience the interior of the house. Subject to code restrictions, this will include repairing all staircases (including providing new balusters and handrails), meeting ADA requirements, such as ramps and compliant bathrooms (possibly in a visitor center separate from the house), and installing proper life safety systems.

Doors

Basement

Almost all basement doors are missing but most of the trim and frames remain in place. Doors stored in the basement may be original and can be repaired and used as patterns for replication of missing doors. The south and north doors exiting to the exterior from Room B03 are replacements, and historically appropriate doors should be installed in their place.

First Floor

Doors on this floor are either missing or contemporary and all need replacement. The frontispiece in the hallway (103) retains original trim, frame and sidelights in good condition and should be retained, while the door within it should be replaced with a historically appropriate one. On the southern end of the

hallway, the door should also be replaced. The interior doorways between the rooms are missing doors and also need replacements.

Second Floor

Only one door on the second floor remains in place. Historically accurate doors should be installed in the openings where doors are missing. Most of the trim, frames, and casings are original and in good condition. They should be kept, sanded and painted.

Third Floor

The two doors on the third floor in rooms 301A and 305 should be retained and repainted. The remaining openings should be fitted with historically appropriate doors. In general, all the casings, trims and frames are in good condition and need minimal repair.

Floors

Basement

The flooring in the basement is concrete and dirt. The non-historic concrete flooring in Rooms B01 and B02 was removed during the stabilization in Phase One and should be restored with wood. The floors in the hallway (B03) are covered with dirt and debris. During removal, the debris should be carefully examined and the floor inspected for evidence of an earlier or original floor.

First Floor

The floors of rooms this level are covered with fiberboard panels which were likely an underlayment for a since-removed carpet. These should be left in place until the floor

restoration begins, for they are protecting the underlying floor. If the fiberboard sheets become wet for any reason during the exterior stabilization work or interior restoration, they must be removed immediately as they will hold moisture on the underlying floor and damage it. The south parlor (Room 102) has suffered extensive water damage, causing the fiberboard panels to buckle at the center of the room. These panels should be replaced with other protection, and the condition of the existing original floorboards below investigated and repaired or replaced as needed.

Second Floor

All the original wide boards running north-to-south on the second floor are in good condition and should be retained. The plywood in Room 203 and the vinyl tiles in Room 205 should be removed. If original flooring remains below, it should be retained and repaired. If not, appropriate wood flooring that matches the existing should be installed.

Third Floor

Similarly, all original wood flooring on the third floor should be retained and repaired where possible. Where the floor is covered with plywood, such as in Room 304 and 302, the condition of the underlying floor has not been examined. When the plywood is removed, the condition can be assessed and the flooring repaired as needed. A hole in the floor in Room 303 shows that the original floor boards below the vinyl composition tiles (VCT) are in good condition. When the VCT is removed, the

floors should also be retained and repaired.

Walls

Basement

In the basement, the severe deterioration of the plaster wall finishes will likely require their complete replacement. Remnants of wainscot and wood nailers in the hallways suggest the basement was originally covered with wainscot. A historically appropriate replacement could be fabricated and installed when the walls are replastered.

First Floor

The first floor walls are a combination of original plaster and laminated gypsum wallboard. Where the plaster is intact and in good condition, it should be retained. Small cracks on the plaster can be patched in-kind. The gypsum wallboard should be removed and the walls refinished with new plaster that matches the existing. When the wallboard is removed, the cornice and ceiling can be restored. In Room 102, pieces of the surviving molding should be salvaged for future replication. Wallpaper remnants in the hallway should be carefully removed and cataloged for study and possible replication.

Second Floor

Similar to the first floor, the second floor walls have seen various alterations. The intact plaster and lath should be retained and all cracks repaired. If the plaster is severely deteriorated beyond the point of repair, as it is on the south wall, these sections should be entirely replaced.

Gypsum wallboard and faux wood paneling should be removed and a new layer of plaster applied. In the areas where a skimcoat has been applied to the walls, it should be removed or repaired with another skimcoat.

Third Floor

Throughout the third floor modern finishes such as gypsum wallboard, faux brick, or wood paneling are installed over the original, historic finish. These materials should be removed to reveal the walls underneath. If the plaster is intact and in good condition, it should be retained and the small cracks on the plaster patched in-kind. If the plaster has deteriorated, it should be replaced. Some areas of this floor have original plaster and lath intact. Many walls, like the ones in Room 301, are likely salvageable and repairable. However, in some areas the plaster is so severely affected by water infiltration that complete replacement is necessary (Room 302).

Ceilings

Basement

The ceiling remaining in the basement is plaster on lath and large areas are missing. The intact areas in Room B01 are likely salvageable; however the plaster and lath in B02 and B03 show serious deterioration and will probably require replacement.

First Floor

Most of the ceilings on the first floor are gypsum wallboard and can be removed during this phase and replastered. Lath appears in Room 102, yet it is unclear if any plaster remains beneath



Figure 140: Removing modern materials, such as the acoustical tiles in Room 205, will reveal the condition of historic plaster and determine the level of restoration needed.

the new wallboard. The large areas devoid of plaster in the hallway (Room 103) should be replastered.

Second Floor

The ceiling on the second floor is a combination of original plaster on lath, acoustic tiles and gypsum wallboard. In the areas where the plaster has survived (Room 201 for example), all intact pieces should be retained. Where large sections are missing, the ceiling should be repaired with matching plaster. For the three spaces where new finishes have been applied to the ceilings, these modern materials should be carefully removed.

Third Floor

Many of the rooms on the third floor have water stains and mildew on the ceiling, suggesting an ongoing water problem in the attic. In areas where the original lath and plaster finish is

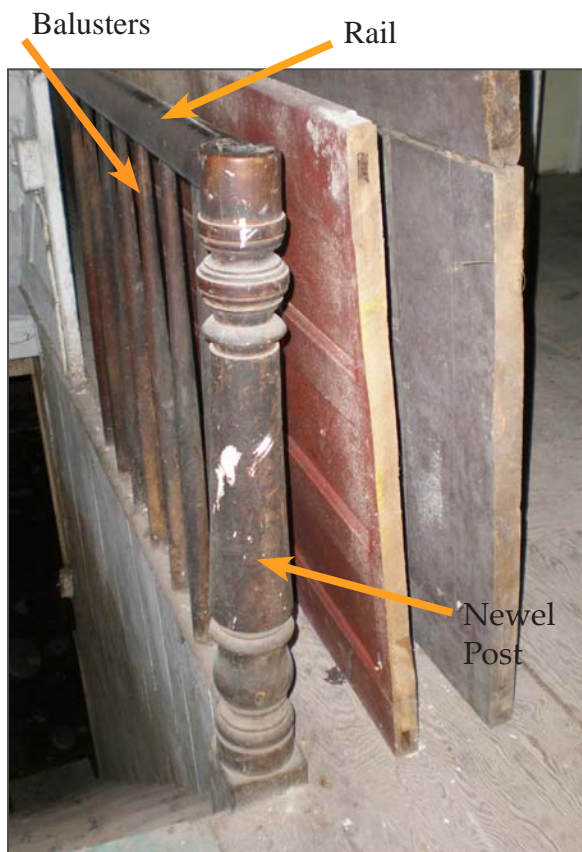


Figure 141: An intact railing section with rail, newel post and balusters from the staircase to the basement should be retained, repaired, and can be used as a pattern for replication.

visible, it is generally in poor condition and requires replacement. In the rooms where contemporary materials were installed over the historic finish, the condition of any remaining historic fabric is unknown. After the modern materials are removed, the extent of remaining fabric and required restoration will be known and an appropriate restoration treatment can be established.

Stairs

The staircase from the basement to the first floor requires stabilization. The ends of the stringers are deteriorated and should be replaced in-kind with a Dutchman-type repair. The treads, which are the most worn elements, should also be replaced in-kind. The railing

around the stair opening to the basement remains in place. This feature should be retained and new railing elements fabricated to match the surviving examples.

The staircases to the second and third floors also need to be secured and repaired. The missing balusters and railings need replacement. A small section of railing remains at the landing between the second and third floors and can be used as a pattern for the construction of the missing sections. The staircase is pulling away from the west wall and that condition was addressed in Phase One.

Permanent Security System

Based on the functionality and needs of the building and its contemporary uses, a permanent security system should be installed to replace the temporary system recommended in Phase Three. Installation should be coordinated with the interior restoration work, often preceding application of final finishes.

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Maps

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APPENDIX A:
HISTORIC MAPS

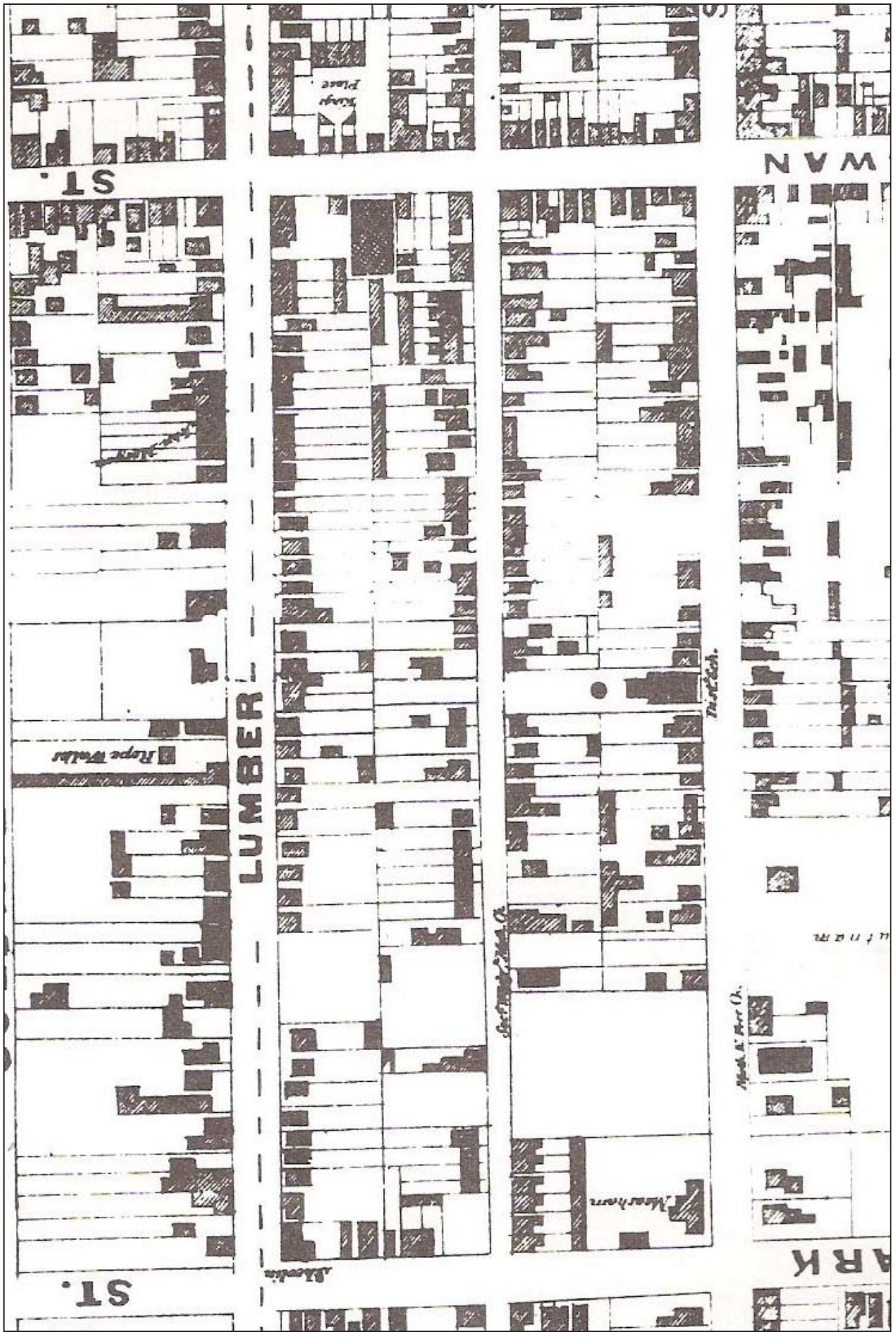
Published by
103 Fulton Street
1850.

Scale 300 feet to an inch

Little, A. & Wilson, Philad. - B. Campbell

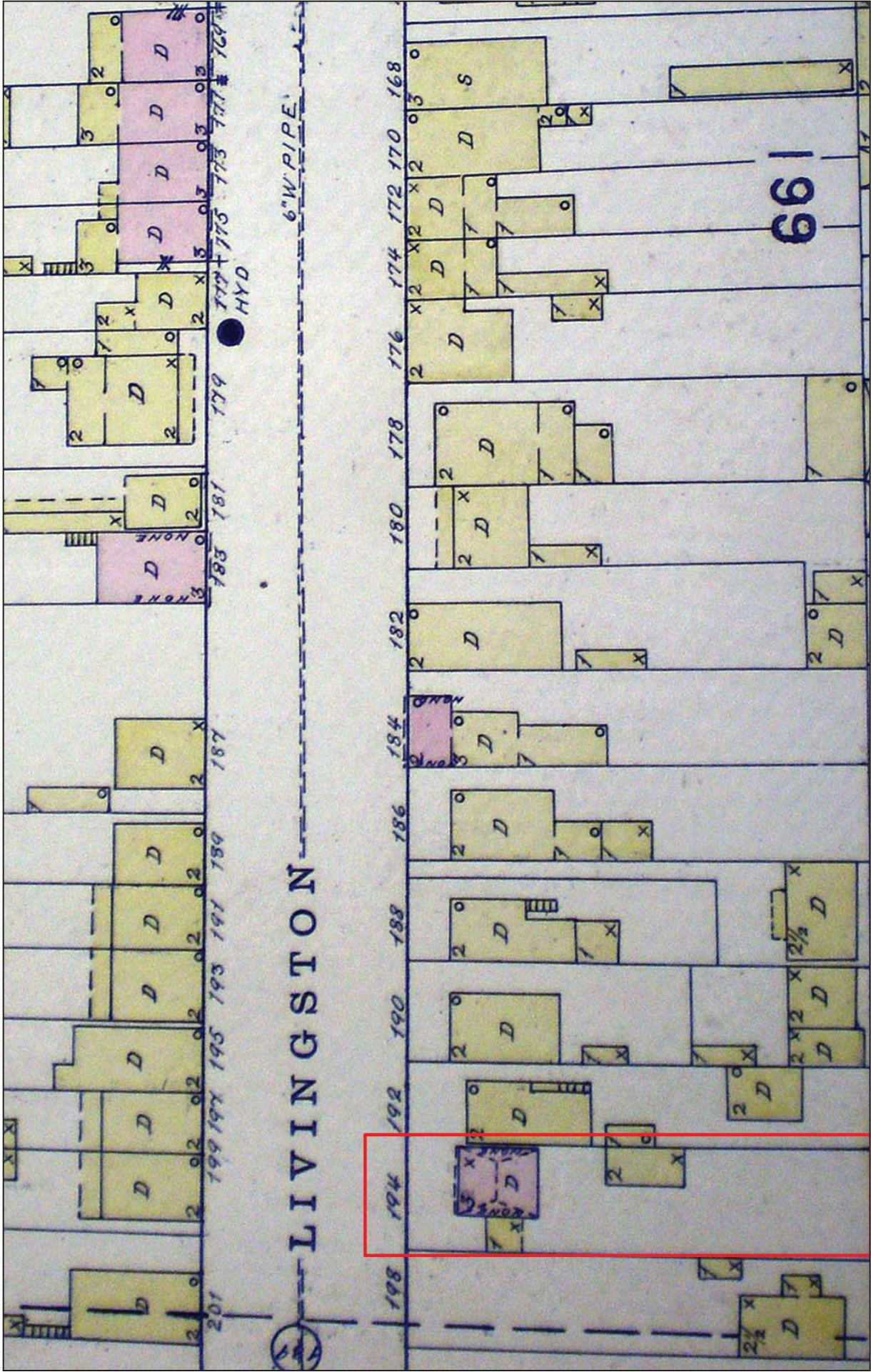


Detail of 1850 map with the Myers Residence highlighted.
Map of the City of Albany, 1850. Survey by J.C. Sidney. New York: M. Dripps.



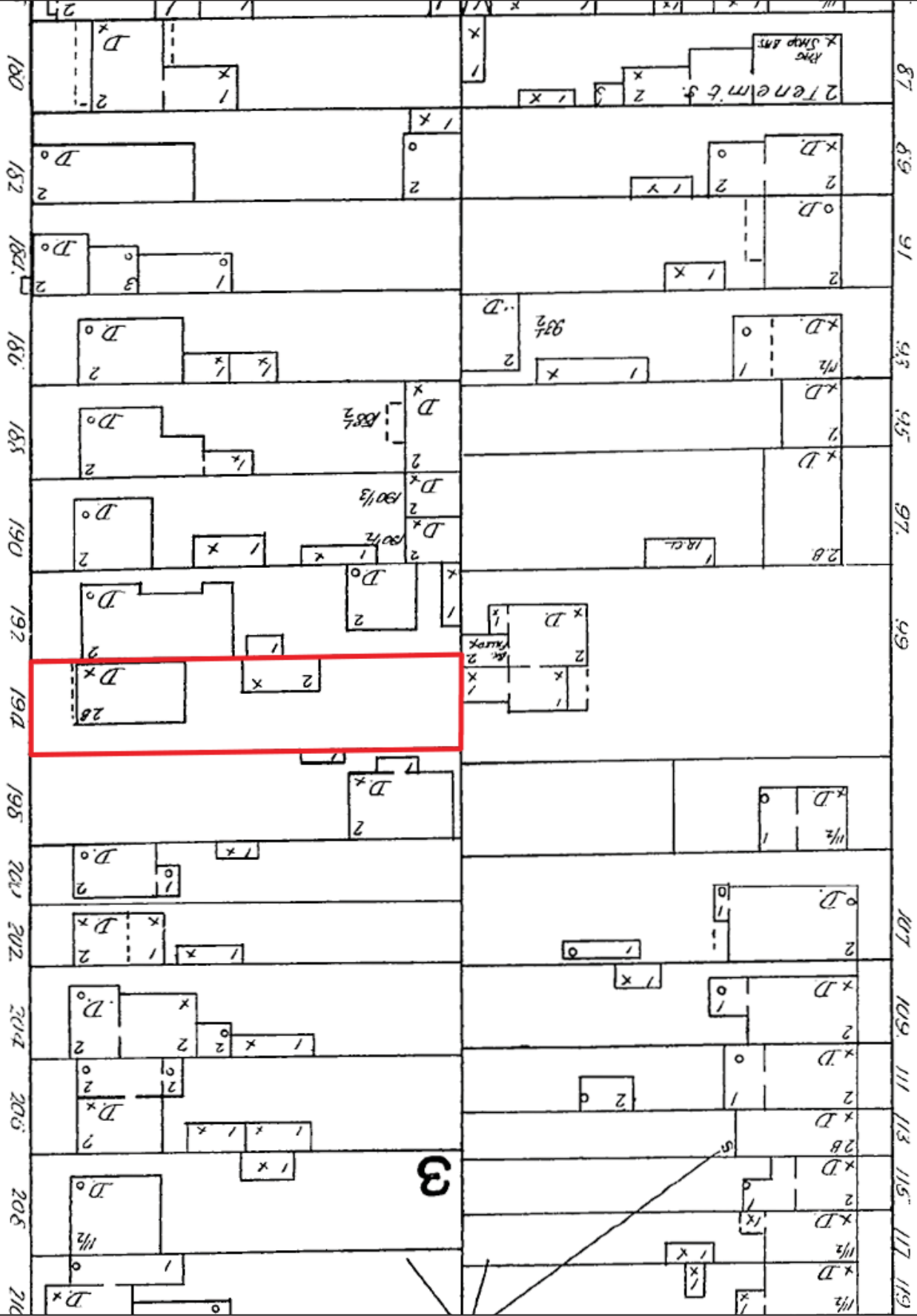
Detail of 1857 map of the City of Albany showing Lumber Street.

Map of the City of Albany, 1857. Surveyed and drawn by E. Jacobs. M. Dripps/Sprague & Co.



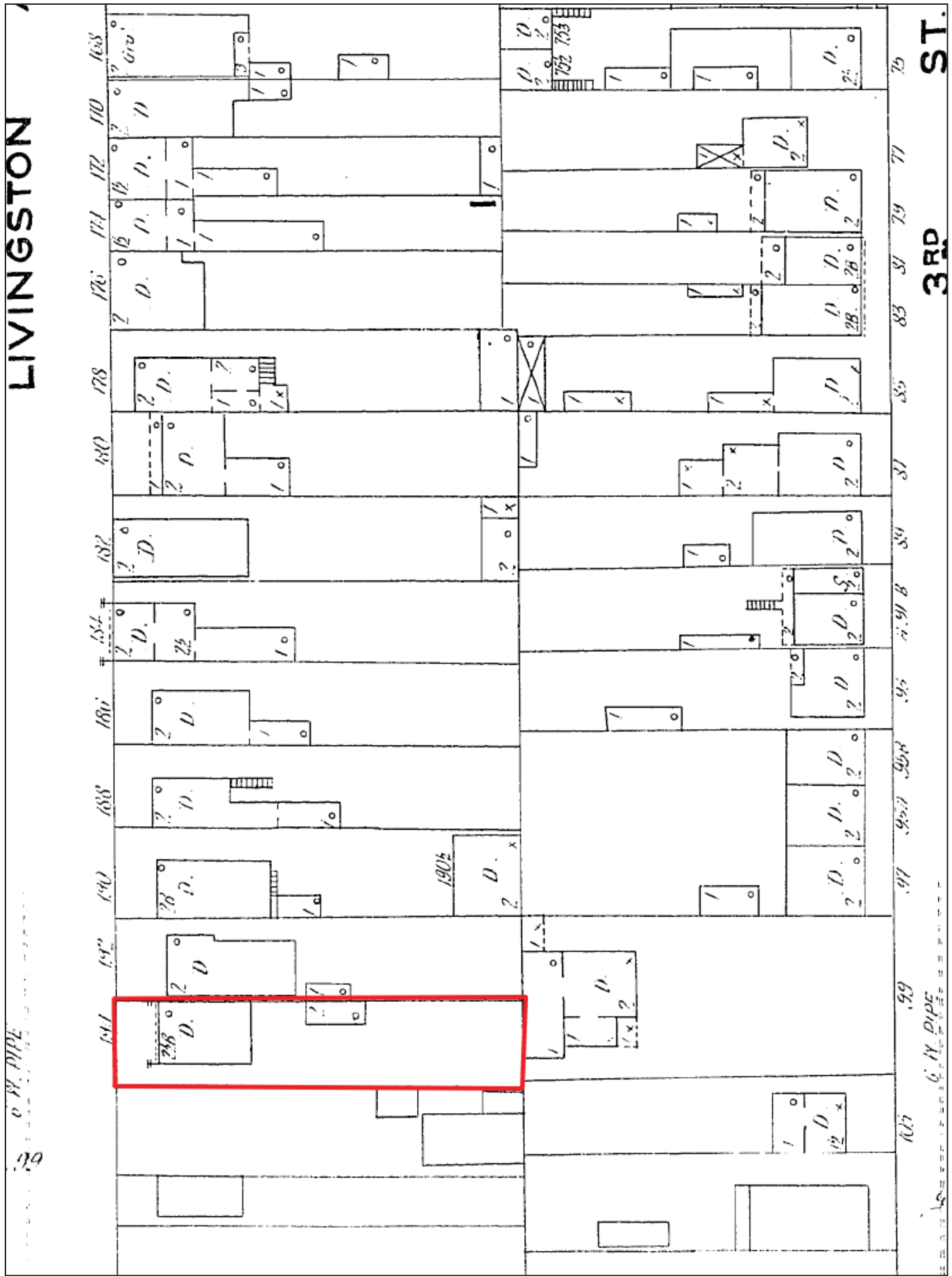
Detail from 1891 map. Masonry structures are indicated in pink; wood frame in yellow.
 Scarlett & Van Wagoner, Albany Fire Map, 1891

WILKINSON

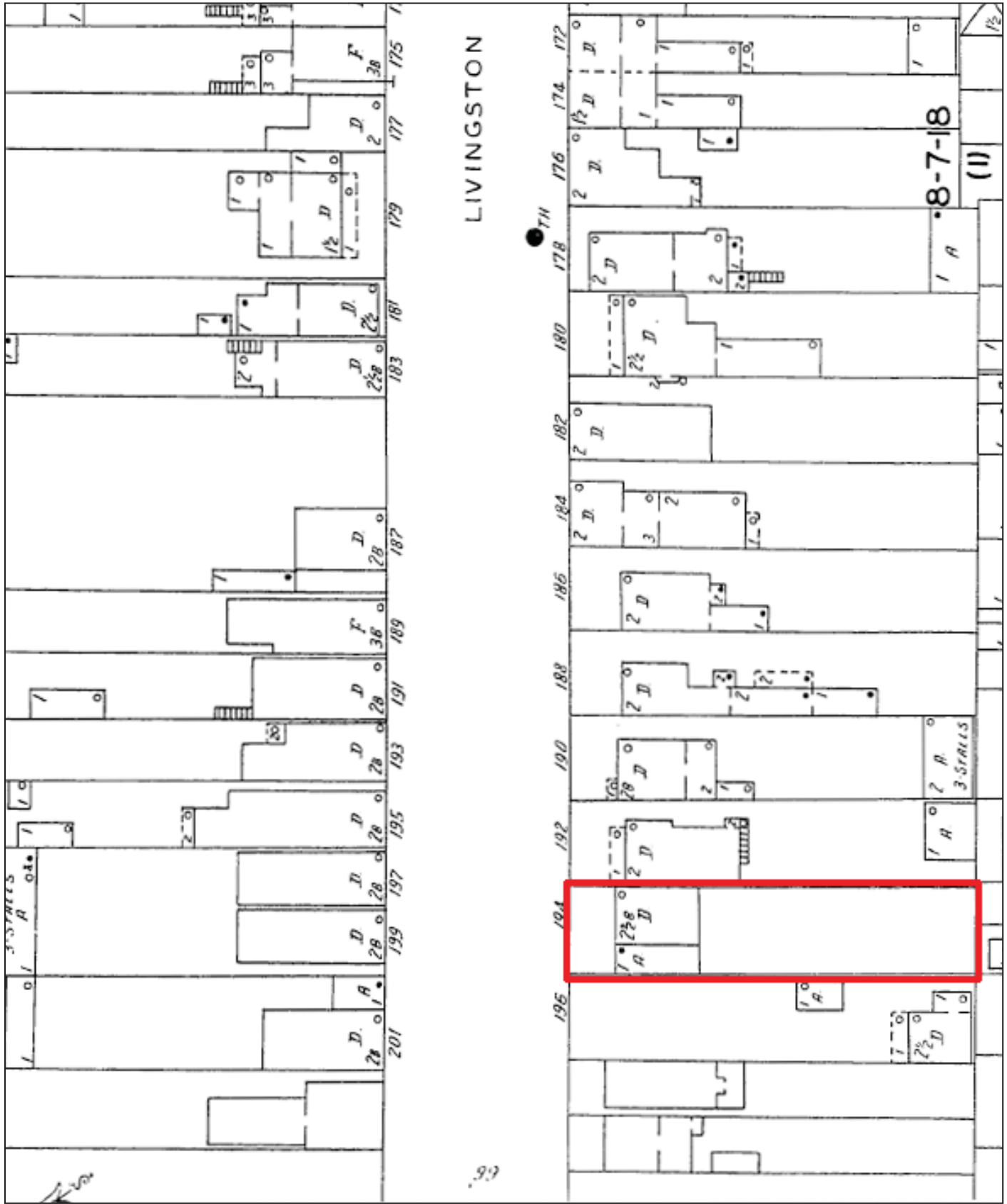


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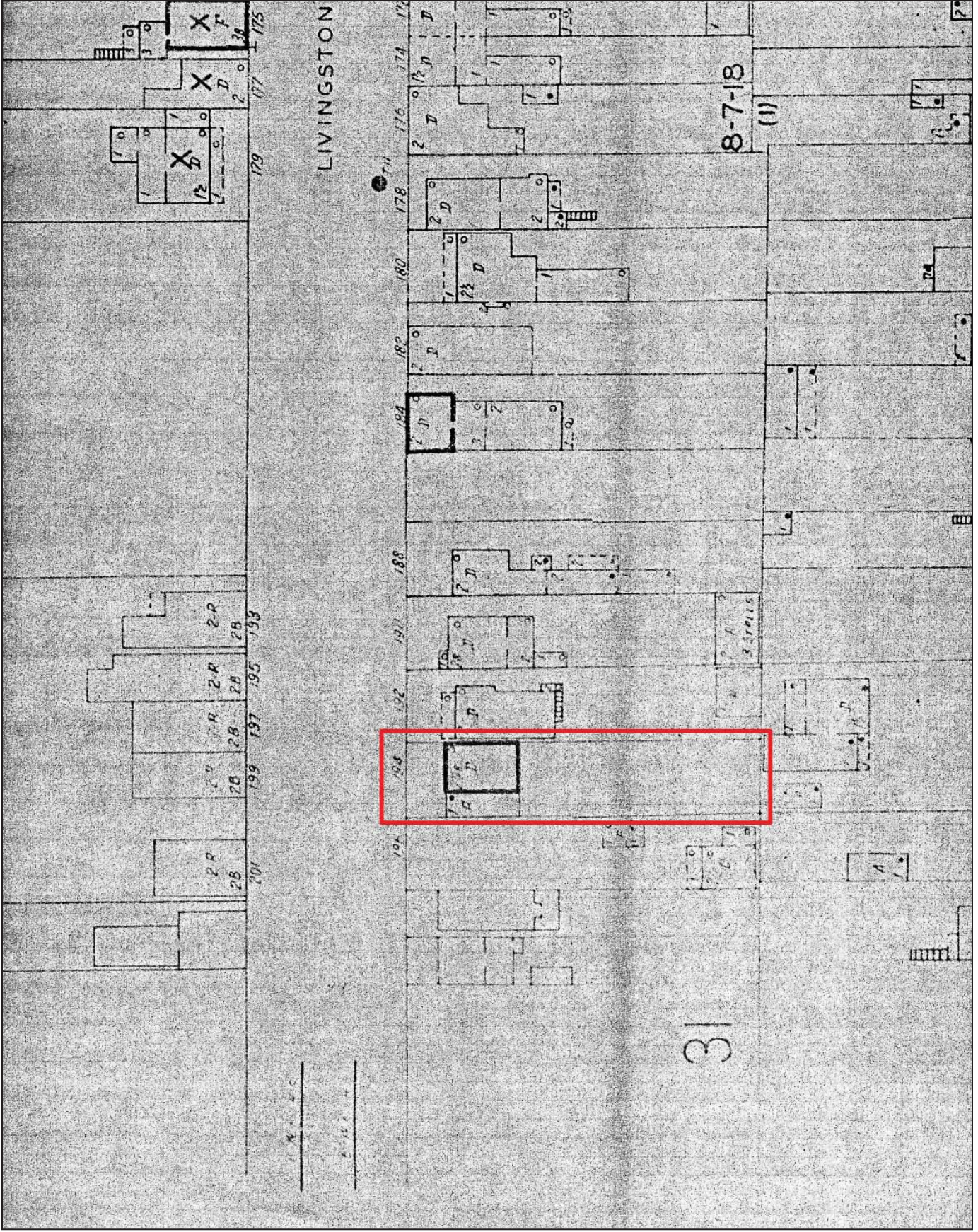
Detail from 1892 map
Insurance Maps of Albany, Sanborn Map Company, 1892



Detail from 1908
 Insurance Maps of Albany, Sanborn Map Company, 1908



Detail from 1930s map.
 Insurance Maps of Albany, Sanborn Map Company, 1934-1935



Detail from 1965 map.
Insurance Maps of Albany, Sanborn Map Company, 1965/1970

APPENDIX B:
DEEDS, CITY DIRECTORY &
MUNICIPAL INFORMATION

Year	Month	Date	Grantor	Albany Deed Book	Grantee	Albany Deed Book	Notes
1842	7	1	Nicholas N. Quackenbush et al	Bk 103 - P 442	John Johnson Jr.	Bk 103 - P. 442	subdivision of Lot 9, S. Side Lumber Street Lots 61 and 62
1858	9	15	John Johnson	Bk 152 - P. 493	Blake, et. Al.	Bk 152 - P. 493	subdiv of Lot 9 of Lots 61 & 62 SS Lumber
1864	1	5	Adam Blake, Wife Catherine, et al	Bk 184 - P. 442	Philip Van Rensselaer	Bk 184 - P. 442	sundiv of Lots 9 of lots 60 & 62 SS Lumber
1867	7	8	Philip Van Rensselaer	Book 210 - P. 119 (rec 7/23/1867)	Sarah E. Hascy, Wife of Nelson	Bk 219 - P. 72	subdiv lot 9 ss Lumber
1867	7	8	Philip Van Rensselaer	Bk 219 - P. 72	Sarah E. Hascy	Bk 210- P. 119	Also described in deed 12/9/1897
<i>Deed information for the years 1867-1897 could not be determined.</i>							
1897	12	31	Lewis Thayer, Sheriff of Albany Co.	Bk 492 - P. 405	Stephen Parsons	Bk. 492 P. 405	
1910	5	29	Jennine A. Parsons Alb 1st	Bk 589 - P. 410	John P. Donohoe Alb 2nd		
1926	12	14	Being Donohoe	Bk 790 - Page 27	Port Realty	Bk 790 - P. 27	Holder of second mortgage
1927	10	11	Port Realty	Bk 790 - P. 27	John and Marie Quinn	Bk 790 - P. 415	
1930	1	23	John & Marie Quinn of Coxackie	Bk 821 - P. 427 (428)	Catherine Mattimore of Coxackie	Bk 815 - P. 288	
1930	9	17	Catherine Mattimore	Book 821 - P. 427	Estelle Martin	Bk 832 (3) - P. 296	
1976			Estelle Martin		Albany County		
1976	12	28	Albany County	Book 2162 - P. 309	James and Mary Lownes	Book 2079 - P. 1	
1989	11	3	James and Mary Lownes	Bk 2403 - P. 569	James Lownes		Parcel W-7-72-72 Estelle Martin
2001	8	9	James Lownes		Albany County		
2004	10	5	Albany County	Bk 2782 - P 47	Underground Railroad History Project		

*Deed information, 194 Livingston Avenue
Deed books located at the Albany Hall of Records in Albany, New York on microfilm*

City Directory Research, Albany, New York, 1830-1868

DATE	NAME	OCCUPATION	ADDRESS
1830	John Johnson	Skipper	Bassett
1831-32	John Johnson	Sea skipper	Bassett
	John Johnson Jr.	Skipper	Bassett
1832-33	John Johnson	Sea skipper	87 Bassett
	John Johnson Jr.		29 Bassett
1833-34	John Johnson	Skipper	97 Bassett
	John Johnson Jr.		99 Bassett
	Stephen Myers	Grocer	266 S. Pearl Street
1834-35	John Johnson	Skipper	97 Bassett
	John Johnson Jr.		99 Bassett
1837-38	John Johnson	Skipper	99 Bassett
	John Johnson Jr.		99 Bassett
	Stephen Myers		167 S. Pearl Street
1838-39	John Johnson	Skipper	99 Bassett
	John Johnson Jr.		97 Bassett
	Stephen Myers	Boatman	118 Lydius
1839-40	John Johnson	Skipper	99 Bassett
	John Johnson Jr.		97 Bassett
1840-41	John Johnson,	skipper	Lydius, near Knox (<i>italics</i>)
1842-43	John Johnson		Knox near Lydius (<i>italics</i>)
	Stephen Myers		68 Chapel (<i>italics</i>)
1843-44	John Johnson		Lumber, Arbor Hill (<i>italics</i>)
1844-45	John Johnson		204 Lumber, Arbor Hill (<i>italics</i>)
1845-46	Stephen Myers		445 Lydius Street
1846-47	John Johnson		202 Lumber, Arbor Hill (<i>italics</i>)
	Stephen Myers		Basement, 128 Slate (<i>italics</i>)
1847-48	John Johnson, Jr.		202 Lumber (<i>italics</i>)
	Stephen Myers		445 Lydius (<i>italics</i>)
1848-49	John Johnson Jr.		202 Lumber (<i>italics</i>)
	Stephen Myers		445 Lydius (<i>italics</i>)
1849-50	John Johnson Jr.		202 Lumber (<i>italics</i>)
	Stephen Myers		445 Lydius (<i>italics</i>)

City Directory Research, continued

DATE	NAME	OCCUPATION	ADDRESS
1850-51	John Johnson Jr.		202 Lumber (italics)
	Stephen Myers		157 Spring (italics)
1851-52	Stephen Myers		50 Fayette
1852-53	John Johnson		198 Lumber, Arbor Hill
	Stephen Myers	Publisher Tel. & Tem. Jour	168 Third (italics)
1853-54	Abraham Johnson	Skipper	192 Lumber, Arbor Hill
	John Johnson	Seaman	271 Bower
	Stephen Myers	Publisher Tel. & Tem. Jour	168 Third
1854	John Johnson	Skipper	198 Lumber
	Stephen Myers	Publisher Tel. & Tem. Jour	168 Third
1855	John Johnson	Skipper	200 Lumber
	Stephen Myers		168 Third
1856	John Johnson	Skipper	200 Lumber
	Stephen Myers	Publisher Tel. & Tem. Jour	200 Lumber
1857	John Johnson	Skipper	198 Lumber
	Stephen Myers		House, 200 Lumber
**1858	John Johnson	Skipper	h. 198 Lumber
	Stephen Myers	Agent	h. 10 Lark
1859	John Johnson	Skipper	h. 198 Lumber
	Stephen Myers	Agent	h. 10 Lark
	Adam Blake		h. 109 Third
1860	John Johnson	Captain	House, 198 Lumber
	Stephen Myers	Agent	House, 10 Lark
	Adam Blake		House, 109 Third
1861	John Johnson	Captain	House, 198 Lumber
	Stephen Myers	Agent	h. 10 Lark, Arbor Hill
	Adam Blake		House, 109 Third
1862	John Johnson	Captain	H. 196 Lumber
	Adam Blake		House, 109 Third
	Adam Blake		Restaurant 84 State, h. 198 Lumber
	Stephen Myers	Agent	h. 10 Lark, Arbor Hill
1863	Adam Blake		Restaurant 84 State, house do
	Stephen Myers	Agent	h. 10 North Lark

City Directory Research, continued

DATE	NAME	OCCUPATION	ADDRESS
1864	Adam Blake		Restaurant 84 State, house do
	Stephen Myers	Agent	h. 10 North Lark
1865	Stephen Myers	Agent	h. 10 North Lark
1868	Stephen Myers		217 Jefferson

** The research information that STA received from the URHPCR 1858 for stated that Stephen Myers lived at 200 Lumber Street. However, when STA went to the Hall of Records in Albany on December 10, 2008, it was determined that Stephen Myers was listed as living at 10 Lark. For 1858, the Albany Hall of Records does not have a bound city directory, so STA looked at the microfilm. The State Library of New York in Albany also looked at their microfiche City Directory records for 1858 and also found that for this year, Stephen Myers lived at 10 Lark Street.

Albany (Tax) Assessment Rolls for 194 Livingston Street, 1846-1990

<i>Year</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Ward</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions (in feet)</i>	<i>Value</i>
1846	John Johnson	196 Lumber Street	8	Vacant		
1847	John Johnson	Lumber Street (no number listed)	8	2 ½ brick	31 x 139	
1848	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson)	Lumber Street (no number listed)	8	2 ½ brick dwelling	31 x 139	
1850	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson)	196 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	
1851	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson)	196 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$1700
1852	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson) *no listing for 200 Lumber St.	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$1800
1853	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson) *no listing for 200 Lumber St.	196 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$1800
1854	John Johnson *no listing for 200 Lumber St.	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$1800
1855	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson) *no listing for 200 Lumber St.	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$2000
1856	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson)	298 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$2000
1857	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson) *no listing for 200 Lumber St.	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 140	\$2000
1858	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson) *Anne Profit is listed at 202; no listing for 200	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$2000

<i>Year</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Ward</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions (in feet)</i>	<i>Value</i>
1859	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson) *Anne Profit is listed at 200	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$2000
1860	John Johnson	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 139	\$2000
1862	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson) *Anna Profit is listed at 200	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick		\$2000
1863	John Johnson (noted as occupied by Johnson) *Anna Profit is listed at 200	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ brick	30 x 140	\$2000
1864	S. Van Rensslear *it is noted that building is occupied by “tenants”	198 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ (wood) *incorrect description	30 x 140	\$2000
1866	L. VanRensslear *it is noted that building is occupied by “self”	200 Lumber Street	8	2 ½ (wood) *incorrect description	30 x 140	\$2000
1867	S.E. Hascy *it is noted that building is occupied by “tenants”	200 Lumber Street		2 ½ (wood) *incorrect description	30 x 140	\$2000
1870	S.E. Hascy *it is noted that building is occupied by “tenants”	194 Lumber Street	11	2 brick	30 x 140	\$2100
1871	S.E. Hascy *it is noted that building is occupied by “tenants”	194 Lumber Street	11	2 brick	32 x 140	\$2100

<i>Year</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Ward</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions (in feet)</i>	<i>Value</i>
1872	S.E. Hascy *it is noted that building is occupied by “tenants”	194 Lumber Street	11	2 brick	32 x 140	\$2100
1873	S.E. Hascy *it is noted that building is occupied by “tenants”	194 Lumber Street	11	2 brick	32 x 140	\$2100
1874	S.E. Hascy *it is noted that building is occupied by “tenants”	194 Lumber Street	11	2 brick	32 x 140	\$2100
1875	S.E. Hascy	194 Lumber Street	11	2 brick	32 x 140	\$2100
1876	S.E. Hascy *it is noted that building is occupied by “tenants”	194 Lumber Street	11	2 brick	32 x 140	\$2100
1880	S.E. Hascy	194 Livingston Avenue	11	Brick	30 x 140	\$2100
1885	William P. Scott (Also owned 202 Livingston Avenue)	194 Livingston Avenue	11	Brick	32 x 130	\$3800
1890 ¹		194 Livingston Avenue	11	Brick		
1891		194 Livingston Avenue	11	Building and Stable		
1892		194 Livingston Avenue	11	Building and Stable		
1893		194 Livingston Avenue	11	Building and Stable		
1894		194 Livingston Avenue	11	Building and Stable		
1895	Joseph Belser	194 Livingston Avenue	8	Building and Stable	32 x 150	\$2000
1900	Stephen Parsons	194 Livingston Avenue	8	2 and wood rear		\$2300
1918	John P. Donohoe	194 Livingston Avenue	8	2 ½ brick and stable	31.95 x 150	\$2900
1920	John P. Donohoe	194 Livingston Avenue	8	2 ½ brick and stable	31.95 x 150	\$2900
1925	John P. Donohoe	194 Livingston Avenue	8	2 ½ brick and stable	31.95 x 150	\$2900

For years 1890-1894, only address, building forms, and ward number were recorded by researcher.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Ward</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions (in feet)</i>	<i>Value</i>
1930	Catherine Mattimore *the original name written was "John B. Quinn and wife" but their names were crossed off and Mattimore was penciled in	194 Livingston Avenue		2 ½ brick and stable	31.95 x 150	\$5900 *although the amount is illegible, the city appears to have a certain tax amount levied against the property
1935	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	8	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick and stable	31.95 x 150	\$5900
1940	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	8	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick and stable	31.95 x 150	\$5900
1941	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	8	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick and stable	31.95 x 150	\$5900
1942	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	8	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick and stable	31.95 x 150	\$5900
1943	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	8	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	\$5900
1945	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	8	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	\$5900
1955	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	8	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	\$5900
1960	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	8	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	\$5900
1965	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	7	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car garage	31.95 x 150	\$4900
1970	Estelle G. Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	7	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	\$4900
1975	County of Albany/ Martin	194 Livingston Avenue	7	Lot #9 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	
1980	James W. Lownes	194 Livingston Avenue	7	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	\$4900

<i>Year</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Ward</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions (in feet)</i>	<i>Value</i>
1985	James W. Lownes	194 Livingston Avenue	7	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	\$4900
1990	James W. Lownes	194 Livingston Avenue	7	DWLG/ 2 ½ brick w/ 1 car wood garage	31.95 x 150	\$4900

Albany Water Rents for 194 Livingston Street, 1852-1895

<i>Year</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1852	John Johnson (listed as owner and occupant)	198 Lumber Street	
1853	John Johnson (listed as owner and occupant)	198 Lumber Street	
1855	John Johnson	198 Lumber Street	Ann Profit owns 200 and 202 Lumber Street
1856	John Johnson	198 Lumber Street	Ann Profit owns 200 Lumber Street
1858	John Johnson	198 Lumber Street	Ann Profit owns 200 and 202 Lumber Street
1859	John Johnson	198 Lumber Street	Ann Profit owns 200 and 202 Lumber Street
1860	John Johnson	198 Lumber Street	
1868	S.E. Hascy	194 Lumber Street	
1870	S.E. Hascy	198 Lumber Street	
1875	S.E. Hascy	198 Lumber Street	
1880	S.E. Hascy	194 Livingston Avenue	
1884	William B. Scott	194 Livingston Avenue	
1890	Thomas H. Greer and wife	194 Livingston Avenue	
1895	Joseph Belser	194 Livingston Avenue	

APPENDIX C:
HISTORIC LETTER: STEPHEN MYERS
TO JOHN JAY

Antislavery Office
No. 10 Lark Street
Albany
December 17, 1858

Mr. John Jay:

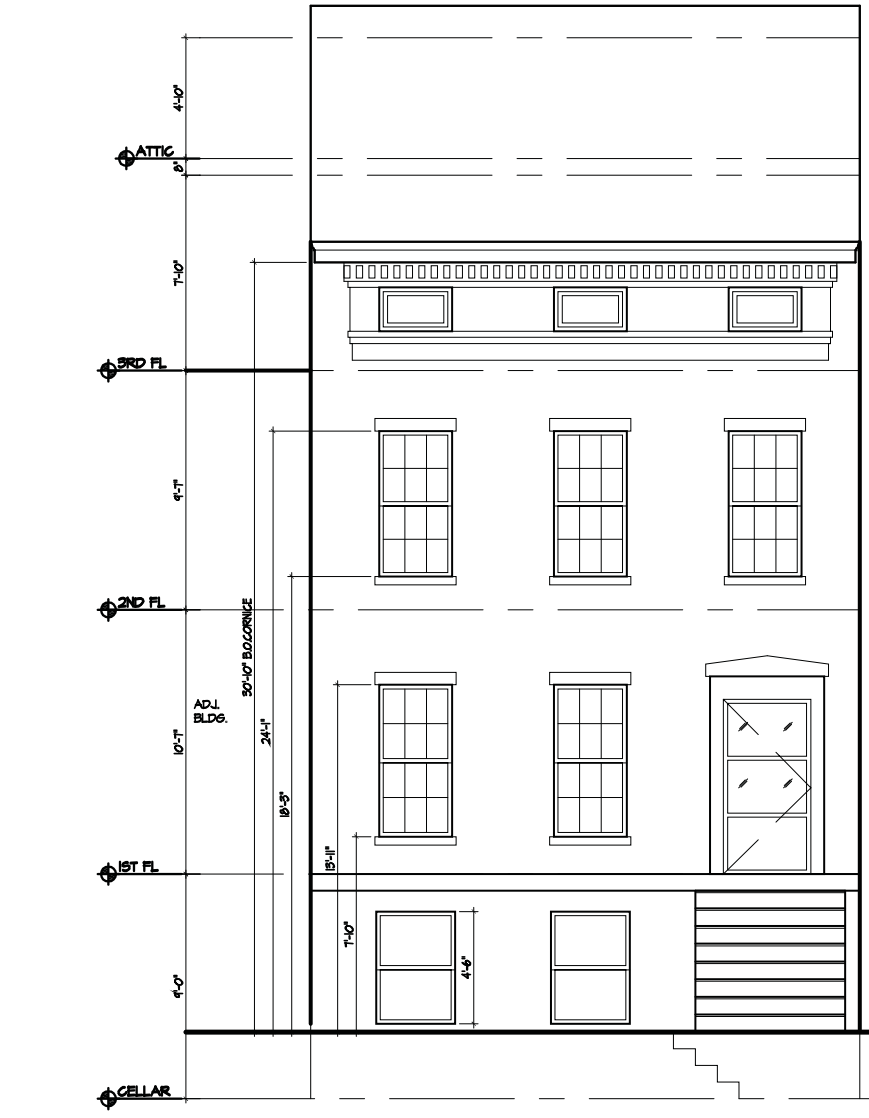
Sir your kind letter came to hand on the 11th which was written on the 9th, forwarded sir by you for the aid and comfort of fugitives. I thank you and it shall be faithfully appropriated for that object which you specify. On the 6th Marcus Custerlow of Colchester, Maryland, on the 7th William Locks of Oldchester, Maryland, on the 10th in the evening 3 fugitives came in a vessel to New London and they were forwarded to me by T. Holly of Springfield. Their names and places are John Mical, James Sims, and Peter Common from Colchester, Maryland and this being sir a central point they are sent to me by Francis Jackson of Boston when they arrive in Boston. There are many that stray up here that do not come through Philadelphia or New York. Those I have named above I have sent on. Each passage to Syracuse is two dollars and fifty cents as the passage has risen. While they remain here I pay one shilling per night for lodging, and 18 cents each meal. I have made it a rule when I can to send them in to the country among farmers. I will inform Mr. Jay what my arrangements are for my services. I receive ten percent on each dollar I receive as I devote my whole time to this business. The committee of gentlemen who inspect my books once a month agreed that if I could not collect money enough to make my services pay four hundred and fifty a year that they would assist me in getting that amount after my paying al board and passage and forwarding them on. I gave Mr. Jay a correct statement of the way that I manage my business. I have to collect every dollar myself and have for the last nine years. In Philadelphia and New York they have a different way of managing their business. They raise their money through anti-slavery societies and fairs. Unfortunately we have no such society here, but the members of the Republican Party have always been very good to assist me. But I have to collect from this one set of men all the time and it becomes very hard on them some times. Mr. Weed gives me for that purpose about one hundred dollars a year. Governor King has given about twenty five dollars a year, and Mr. William Nuton, Deacon of the Baptist Church about thirty dollars a year. Governor Seward sends about fifteen dollars a year, Mr. James Wadsworth about twenty dollars a year, Simon Draper about ten dollars a year, Mr. M. Grennell 20 dollars a year, Mr. R. Minturn ten dollars a year, Mr. H. Greely eight a year, E. D. Morgan fifteen a year, Mr. James W. Beekman five dollars, Mr. J. P. Cunningham of New York twenty a year. Mr. John Jay since 1851 if my memory serves me has given me your check on the bank on the corner of Wall and William Street for 20 dollars and in 1852 you gave me ten dollars at your office; in 1854 I was in New York you gave your check on the same bank for fifteen dollars; in fifty six you gave at your office ten dollars, and last winter in 1857 at the Capitol here Mr. Jay gave me ten dollars. When I called last summer in New York to pay Mr. Jay a visit out of respect, without asking you presented me with a check on the same bank for ten dollars, all of which I thank Mr. Jay Kindly for. If Mr. Jay should visit Albany this winter during the legislative session I should like Mr. Jay to see our books, how much received and how much expended.

I will just give a statement of the number of fugitives that your father has sent here within the last eight years before his death: 3 from Norfolk, Virginia; 2 from Alexandria; 2 from New Orleans; the last two he sent me were from North Carolina. The several checks your father sent me from time to time amounted to fifty dollars on the Albany State Bank. In his death all lost a true friend to humanity. And yet he remembered the poor fugitives in defiance of the Law.

Yours very Respectfully,
Stephen Myers
Superintendent of the Underground RR

Note: Some of the language has been adjusted to make it more readable, as nineteenth century writing may be unclear to contemporary readers.

APPENDIX D:
DRAWINGS - FLOOR PLANS AND
ELEVATIONS



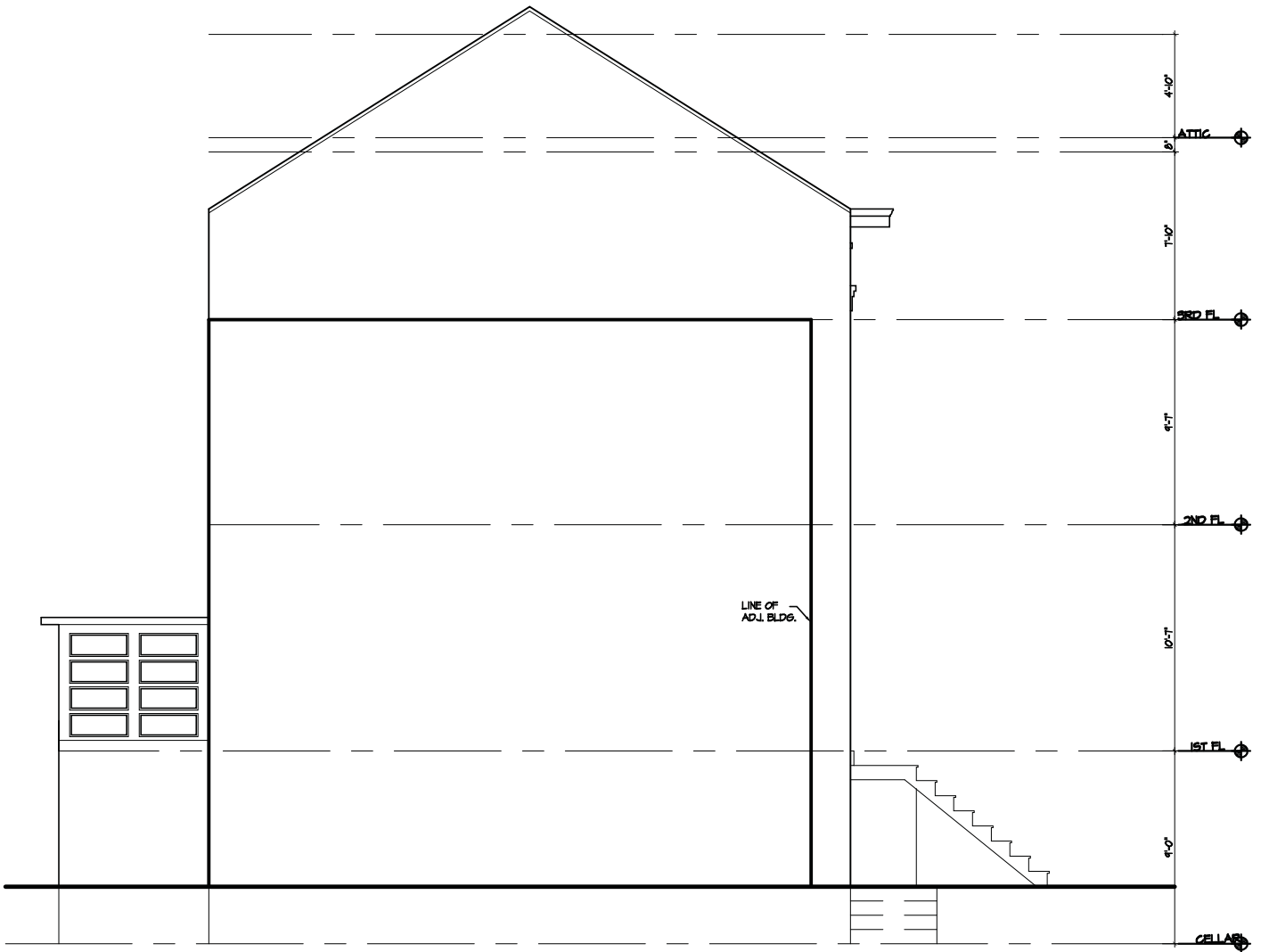
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
 22 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
 914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
 194 Livingston Avenue
 Albany, New York 12210

Title: Existing Conditions
 North Façade Elevation

Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*



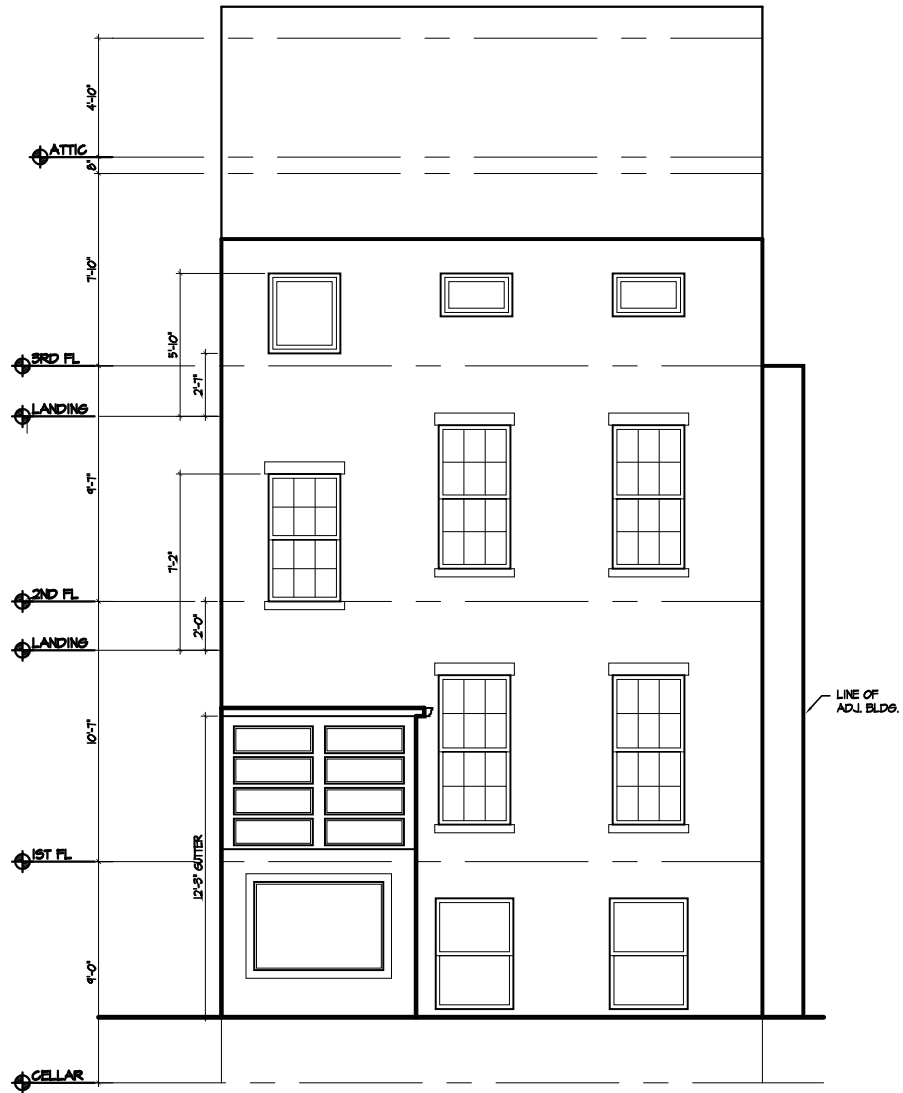
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
 22 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
 914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
 194 Livingston Avenue
 Albany, New York 12210

Title: Existing Conditions
 East Façade Elevation

Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*



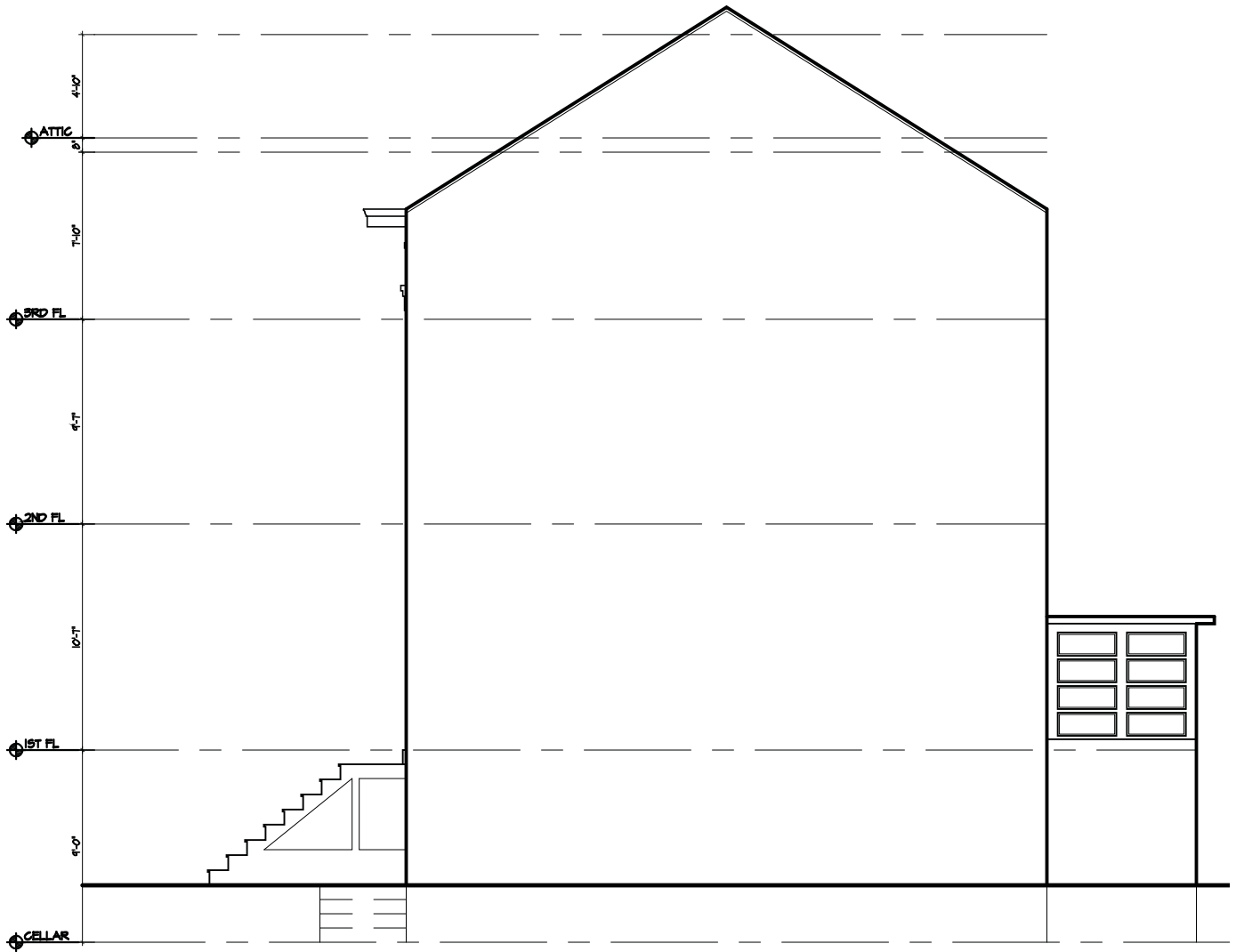
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
 22 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
 914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
 194 Livingston Avenue
 Albany, New York 12210

Title: Existing Conditions
 South Façade Elevation

Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*



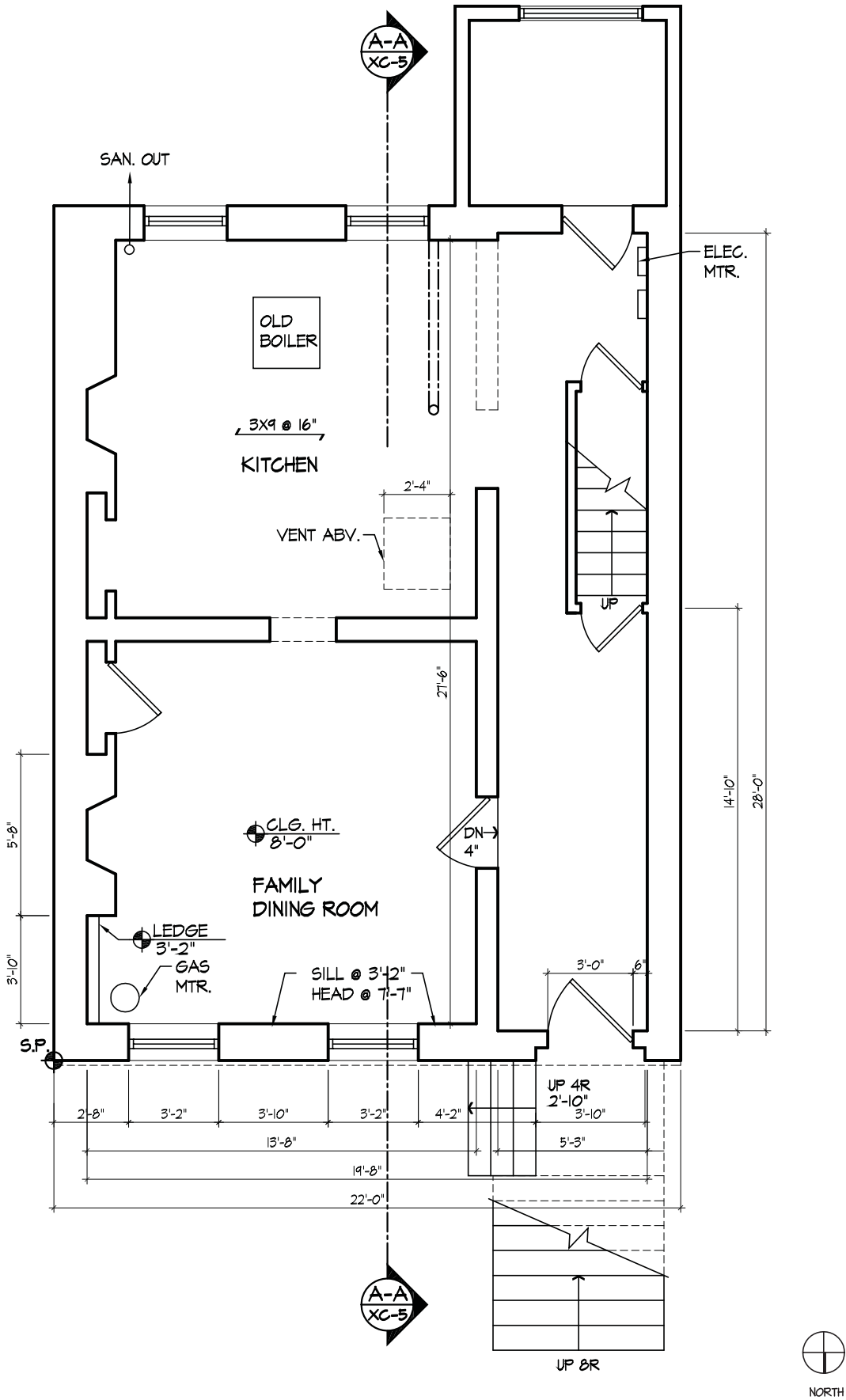
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
 22 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
 914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
 194 Livingston Avenue
 Albany, New York 12210

Title: Existing Conditions
 West Façade Elevation

Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*



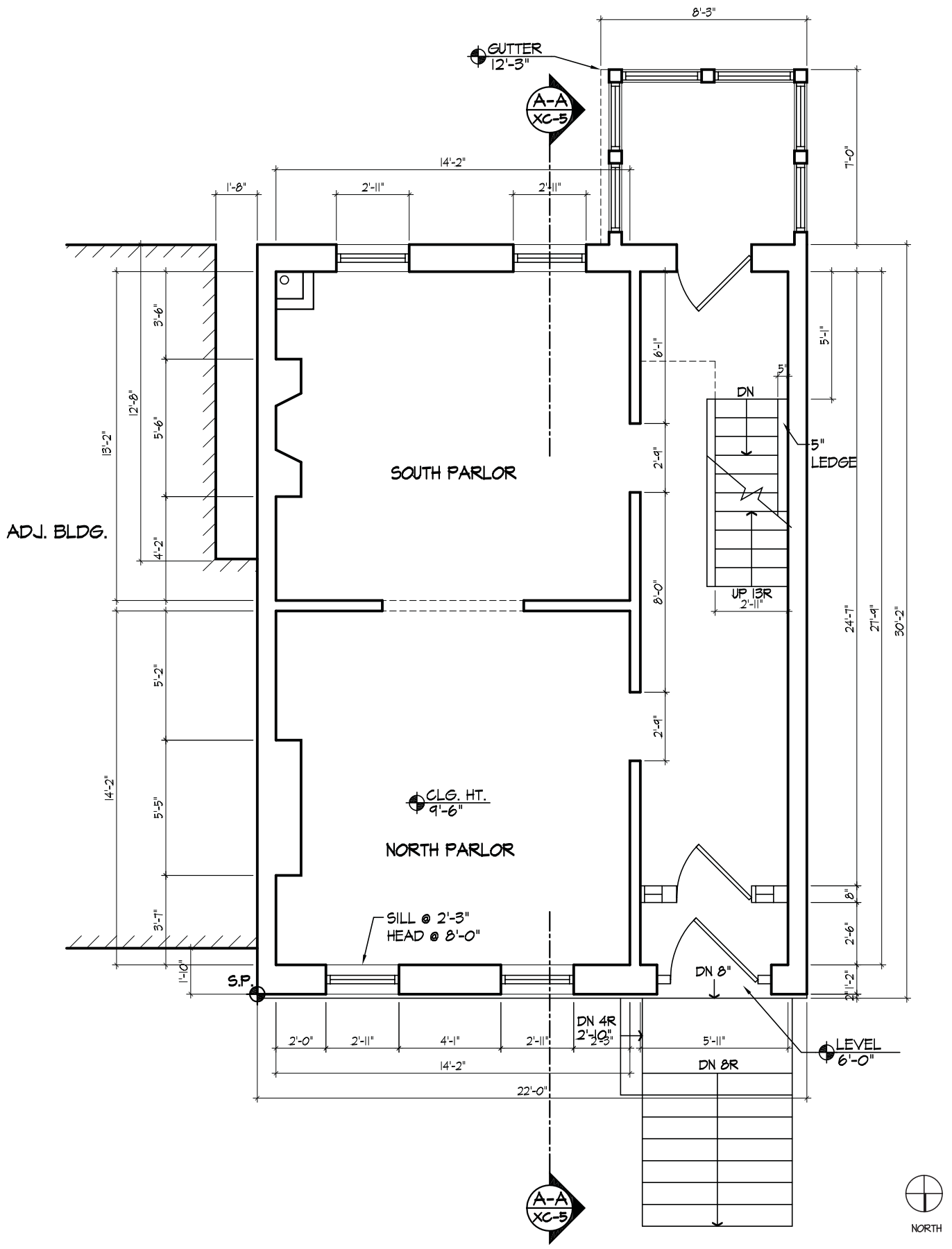
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
 22 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
 914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
 194 Livingston Avenue
 Albany, New York 12210

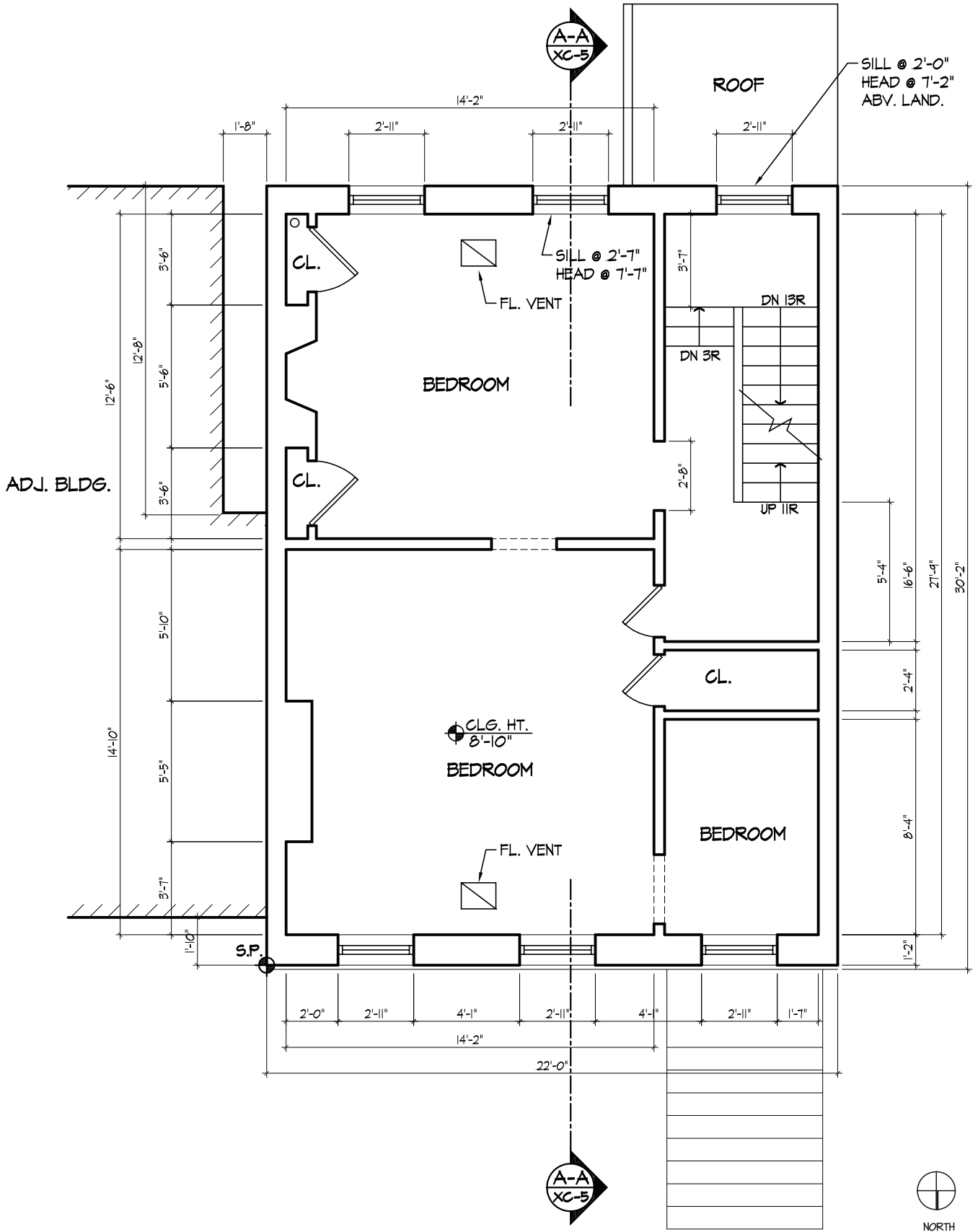
Title: Existing Conditions
 Basement Plan

Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*



<p>STEPHEN TILLY, Architect 22 Elm Street Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522 914-693-8898</p>	<p>Project: Myers Residence HSR 194 Livingston Avenue Albany, New York 12210</p>	<p>Title: Existing Conditions First Floor Plan Date: 2008</p>	<p>Scale: <i>These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.</i></p>
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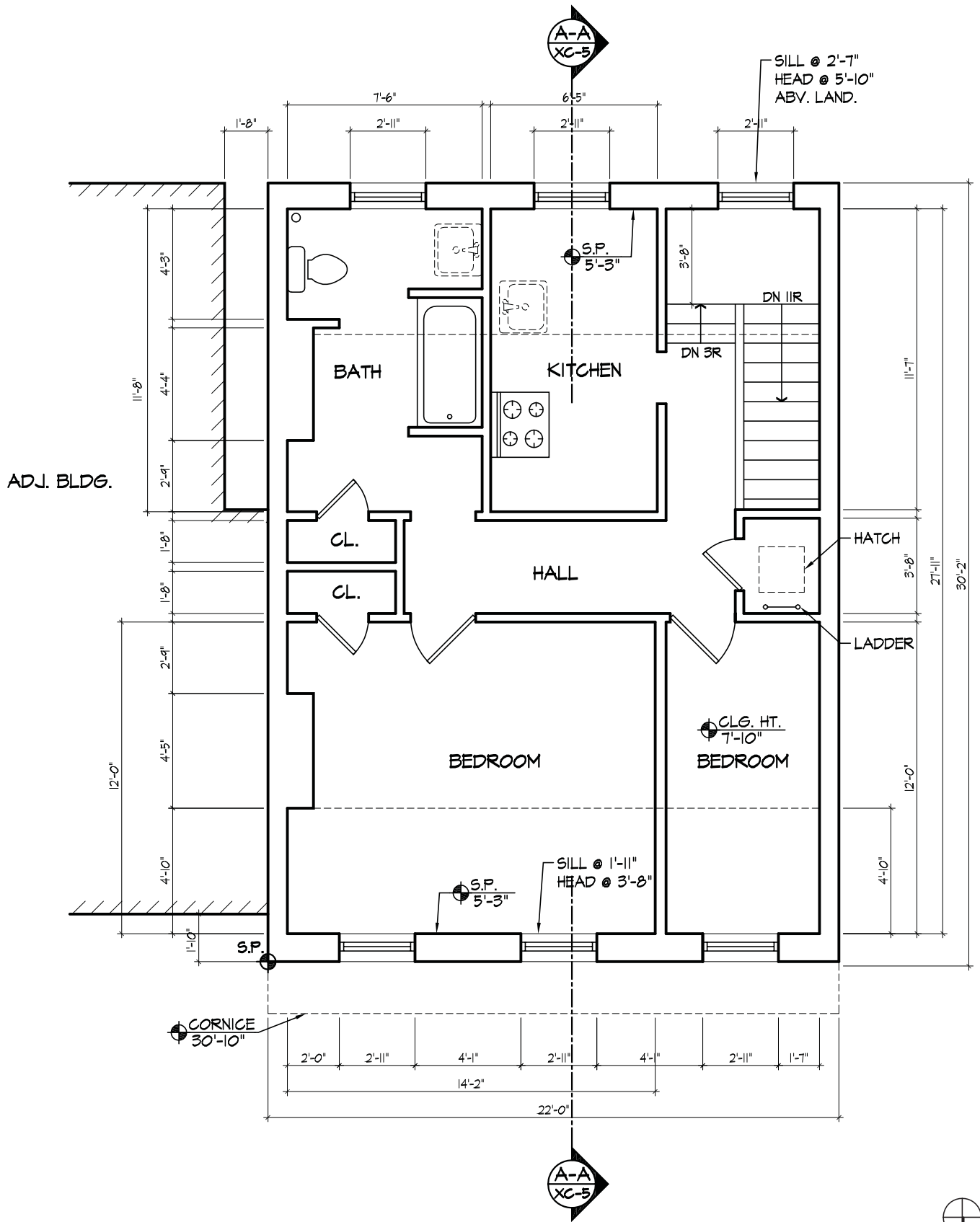
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
22 Elm Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
194 Livingston Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

Title: Existing Conditions
Second Floor Plan

Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*



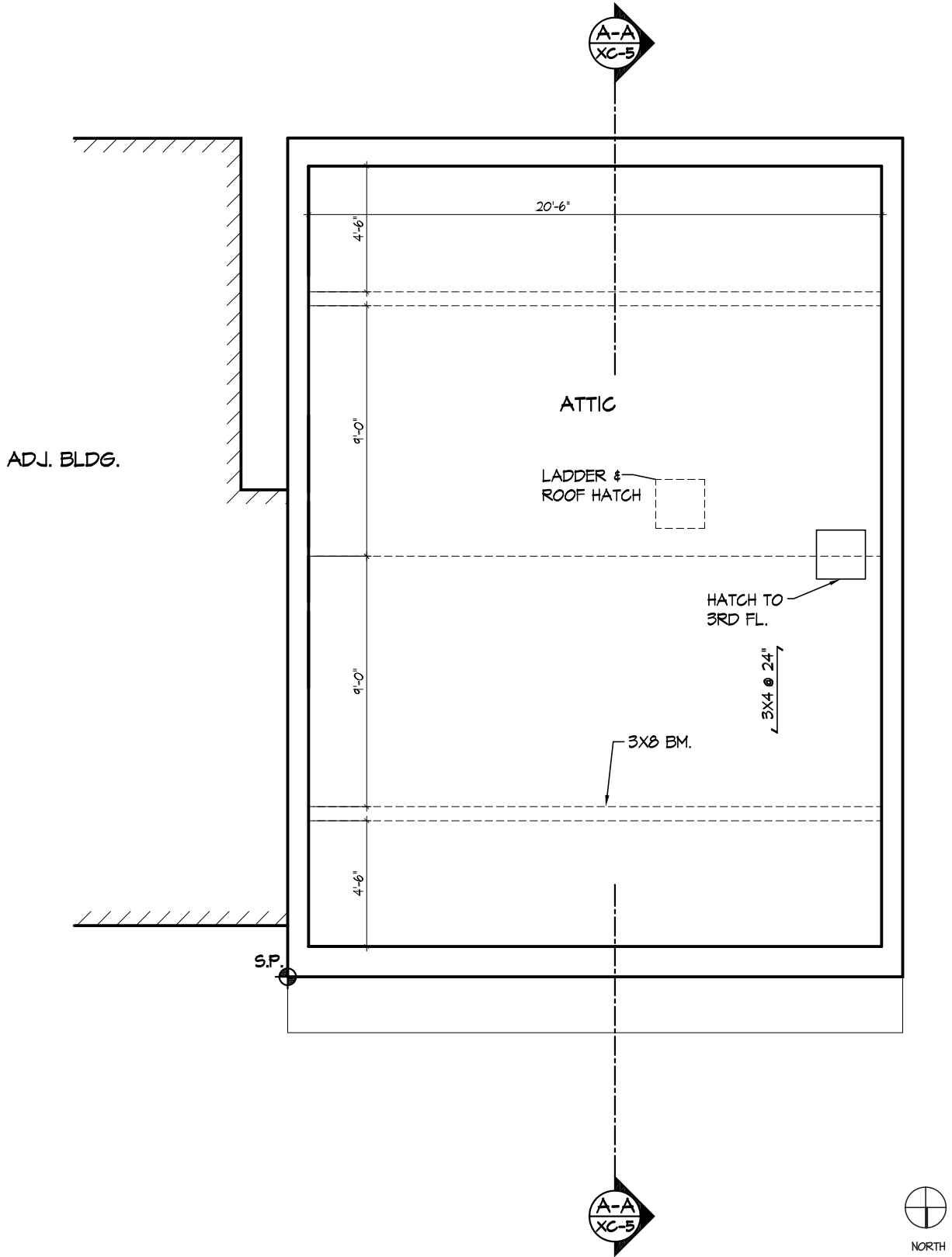
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
 22 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
 914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
 194 Livingston Avenue
 Albany, New York 12210

Title: Existing Conditions
 Third Floor Plan

Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*



STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
 22 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
 914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
 194 Livingston Avenue
 Albany, New York 12210

Title: Existing Conditions
 Attic Plan
Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*



STEPHEN TILLY, Architect
 22 Elm Street
 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
 914-693-8898

Project: Myers Residence HSR
 194 Livingston Avenue
 Albany, New York 12210

Title: Existing Conditions
 Section A

Date: 2008

Scale: *These drawings are for general reference only and are not to scale.*

APPENDIX E:
ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.
SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
& STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS SURVEY

ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.

CONSULTING ENGINEERS

88 UNIVERSITY PLACE, NEW YORK, NY 10003-4542
(212) 620-7970

www.rsapc.com
FAX (212) 620-8157

Myers House
Stephen and Harriet Myers House
194 Livingston Avenue
Albany, New York 12210-2512

Summary of Observations and Recommendations
Structural Conditions Survey

Date of Report: June 12, 2006

Report Prepared by:

ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.
Consulting Engineers
88 University Place
New York, NY 10003
(212) 620-7970 phone
(212) 620-8157 fax
www.rsapc.com

Report Prepared for:

Stephen Tilly, Architect
22 Elm Street
Dobbs Ferry NY 10522
914.693.8898 phone
914.693.4235 fax
www.stillyarchitect.com

ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.

CONSULTING ENGINEERS

88 UNIVERSITY PLACE, NEW YORK, NY 10003-4542
(212) 620-7970

www.rsapc.com
FAX (212) 620-8157

I. Introduction.

The Myers House is a 19th Century townhouse located in Albany, New York. We examined the building on March 3, 2006. The house consists of three stories above ground and a basement that is partially in ground and partially above ground. It has exterior load bearing brick walls, interior wood stud partitions, and interior wood floor joists. Some of the interior walls are made of brick (notably in the cellar) and the roof is framed in wood.

It is important to note that no probes were made during the course of our site visit. Thus this report is based entirely on the conditions that were visible to the naked eye of the observers. Original drawings of the house are not known to exist. Thus all noted sizes of framing members are approximate and are based on very limited field observation. Prior to the start of a subsequent design and construction phase additional confirmation and measurement of the sizes of structural members will need to be performed.

The balance of this report provides a summary of our observations and recommendations following from our fieldwork and subsequent office time evaluating our findings. The recommendations are also listed in a priority order of urgency (whether for repairs or further investigation/ evaluation).

This report focuses on the structural condition of the observed elements. It does not represent a systematic examination of the building for the performance of water drainage or roofing systems; the fire safety or egress requirements; the electrical, plumbing, or mechanical systems; or the presence or absence of hazardous materials (such as asbestos or lead). It is also important to note that we have performed no structural analysis of the building (including roof and floor live load capacities). Again, prior to the start of restoration such analysis of the building should be completed.

Our observations of the exterior were limited. Where the condition of these materials was observed, such condition is noted in this report. The façades are constructed of brick masonry. The south exterior wall of the building was mostly covered over with temporary blue plastic tarps to help keep the wall watertight. Underneath the blue tarps were 20th Century cement tiles laid on wood nailing strips; these tiles appeared to cover the majority of the south façade.

The report contains two appendices; one has our field sketches of existing conditions that were translated into CAD drafted drawings (labeled SK-1 to SK-4, inclusive); the other is a selection of twenty-two photographs referenced in our report. The CAD drafted drawings are based on the base architectural plans, provided by the office of Stephen Tilly, Architect. These plans were prepared by the Troy Architectural Program and are dated June 22, 2004. Our drawings are transcriptions of our field notes; neither the drawings from the Troy Architectural Program or those prepared by RSA are drawn to scale. The size of openings such as windows and doors are drawn approximately.

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In all cases the use of the term “immediately” implies in the next two to three months. In cases where the term “as soon as possible” is used, we recommend that the suggested actions be taken within the next three to four months.

II. Observations and Recommendations.

As noted above, this report is accompanied by four drawings that locate the primary areas of structural deterioration of the building. Please refer to those drawings for additional information.

A. Basement Observations and Recommendations.

The primary type of deterioration in the basement is the deterioration of brick masonry walls. This deterioration includes the complete loss of the south end of the north/ south load bearing interior brick wall. This section of wall must be rebuilt. Its reconstruction will require the construction of new foundations for the brick wall. See Photographs No. 4 and No. 7 for views of this area.

The combination of water infiltration, use of a likely non-hydraulic lime for the original construction, and potentially poor details and maintenance has lead to most of the deterioration that is visible in the basement. Indeed the amount of water infiltration through the exterior walls and the roof is so significant that it is saturating the masonry. During our winter visit we noticed ice deposits growing on the surface of the brick and mortar. This is leading to severe physical threats to the masonry. Not only is the mortar eroding because of liquid water, but the freezing and thawing of water in the walls during the winter are also destroying the masonry. See Photograph No. 8 for a view of the ice buildup on the interior of the east basement wall.

The northern and central sections of this same north/ south load bearing interior brick wall are also in very poor condition. See Photographs No. 3 and No. 9 for illustrations of this wall. Because of the extent of its deterioration and the expense associated with retaining the masonry this section of wall will likely need to be rebuilt. As with the southern section of this wall, their reconstruction will require the construction of new foundations for the brick wall. One of the reasons for the failure of this wall appears to be the placement of very poor original foundations underneath the wall. There are several alternative structural design options available to the Owner for the reconstruction of this wall—including complete removal and rebuilding with concrete masonry units and/ or steel beams and columns. If a more historically authentic look is desired, it is possible that the wall can be rebuilt almost entirely of brick. The suitability of each of these options should be evaluated prior to undertaking any extensive design effort.

It is important to note that the central section of the north/ south load bearing interior brick wall has rotated and its long-term stability cannot be verified. Either the top portion of the wall has moved east or the bottom of the wall has moved west; it is possible that a combination of both types of movement have occurred. This north/ south wall supports the upper floors because it helps to

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provide support for wood stud walls that are above it; these upper walls then, in turn, support the floor joists. This entire assemblage of north/ south interior walls (parallel to the exterior north/ south walls) is known as a “stiffening partition” because it helps to support and stiffen the upper floors of the building. We recommend that temporary shoring and bracing be installed on either side of this north/ south interior brick wall. The temporary shoring and bracing would include the placement of shoring jacks to the underside of the first floor joists (for the full length of the wall) as soon as possible.

The deterioration of the north/ south bearing wall in the interior of the basement extends to the north side of the house. See Photograph No. 2 for a view of this deterioration. This section of the north/ south wall will also require reconstruction for their long-term stability.

The other types of deterioration in the basement include the loss of significant amounts of brick and stone masonry from the interior surfaces of the exterior masonry walls. See Photograph No. 1 for a view of the deterioration on the interior face of the west elevation exterior wall. These elements must be repaired by either selective or complete rebuilding (depending upon the extent of deterioration).

The area of the most apparent damage is in the southeast corner of the basement (Room B02). See Photograph No. 6 for an overall shot of the deterioration in the portion of the basement. Portions of these walls, which are immediately below the chimney and the hearth of the first floor fireplace, will definitely require reconstruction. Because of the severity of the damage to the masonry in the southeast corner we strongly recommend that the brick be repaired in this area as soon as possible. Even if this repair were temporary (such as limited rebuilding and keying together of old and new masonry) such work would help to stabilize the wall.

In addition to the masonry deterioration in the basement, there is also noticeable rot, insect damage, and loss of materials at the wood staircase (from the first floor to the basement). The repair of this stair will likely require complete removal and replacement with new sound materials. See Photograph No. 5 and No. 9 for views of this staircase.

B. First Floor Observations and Recommendations.

There are areas of bulging, loose, and/ or missing brick masonry on the exterior surfaces of the exterior walls on each of the four sides of this building. The south wall is in the worst condition and will likely require significant rebuilding. The loss of mortar between the bricks on the south elevation probably extends to more than 50 percent of the exterior brick (the exact extent is impossible to tell because of the tarps that cover this portion of the building). The north wall will require limited removal and replacement of brick. Repairs to the north wall will be concentrated at the base and the cornice level of the northeast corner of the exterior. In these areas limited rebuilding of masonry will be required.

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See Photograph No. 17 for a view of the ground level portion of the northeast corner at the exterior wall and see Photograph No. 18 for a view of the cornice deterioration at the northeast corner. See Photograph No. 13 for a partial view of the masonry that is immediately below a second floor windowsill on the south elevation. Note that the mortar is almost completely missing from the bricks in this area. Photograph No. 22 shows another portion of the south elevation; in this case the view is located just a few feet below the first floor.

Because of the fact that there are areas of cracks and/ or significant bulging of the masonry, limited rebuilding and other repairs to the east wall and the west wall will be required. In some instances the bulging of the masonry on the exterior correlates with damage to the interior surfaces of the masonry. In virtually all cases the infiltration of water has caused the loss of mortar and the general shifting of bricks. The deterioration on the southeast corner of the building (inside and outside) represents a threat to the stability of that portion of the building. We recommend that the reconstruction of the southeast and northeast corners of the exterior masonry be completed as soon as possible.

At each of the four perimeter walls, it is possible that the connections between the existing floor joists and the exterior walls will require reinforcement. Investigation of the extent and severity of this condition should be completed in the next phase of work. This will require some removals of architectural fabric (especially at upper floors) to expose the wood joists. If deterioration of the masonry, the floor joists, or the connections between the floor joists and the masonry walls is discovered by making these recommended probes, then some additional structural repairs will be required.

We recommend that the condition of the mortar and mechanical bonds between the interior and exterior wythes of masonry be investigated on all four sides of the building. This will require completion of structural probes, use of fiberoptic borescopes, and materials testing of the bricks and mortar (details of this testing are further discussed in later portions of this report). Depending upon the results of these investigations, it may be necessary to insert new stainless steel ties to help hold the interior and exterior portions of the brick walls together. It may be required to combine rebuilding of masonry, with pinning together of masonry (with new ties between interior and exterior wythes), with localized grouting, with deep raking and repointing of interior and exterior mortar joints.

While raking and repointing of mortar joints on the exterior is relatively straight forward (requiring mainly good scaffolding) the raking and repointing of interior masonry mortar joints is more problematic. If there are good condition interior finishes (such as plaster and lath) a serious evaluation must be reviewed as to the available options (i.e., complete rebuilding from the exterior versus partial rebuilding combined with more extensive raking and repointing). Both may have effects on the plaster that is in place.

In addition to the already noted deterioration of the exterior masonry walls (especially at the south

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façade, but also at the northeast corner of the building, portions of the west façade, and the southeast corner), there was evidence of water damage penetrating all of the way through portions of the exterior walls. As at the second and third floors, this water penetration has led to damaged plaster. This deteriorated plaster and the wood lath behind it will likely require removal and replacement. Some signs of differential movement of the interior and exterior walls are also evident. While not appearing to be too significant in most areas, they should nonetheless be monitored. This type of cracking of plaster can be seen in Photograph No. 10.

At the intermediate floor landings of the staircase there was some noticeable separation between the staircase and the west exterior wall of the house. See Photographs No. 11, No. 12, and No. 15 for views of this type of separation. We recommend that a probe be completed in this area to expose the condition of the staircase elements and the masonry wall. Once the conditions are visible then a structural repair can be designed. It appears likely that the connection between the wood header and the brick wall will need to be reinforced. Photograph No. 14 shows some additional cracking of plaster.

It is important to note that we do not know if the west exterior wall (especially adjacent to the interior staircase) is moving horizontally to the west or if the remainder of the house has shifted slightly to the east. Given the movement and rotation of the north/ south masonry wall in the basement (a.k.a., the stiffening wall) it is very possible that the other interior north/ south walls in the house have moved horizontally somewhat. We recommend that the plumbness of the west exterior wall be surveyed during the next phase of design and investigation. If the west exterior wall is plumb then surveys of the plumbness of the other north/ south interior walls should also be completed. Since the interior surface of the west wall consists of about 60 percent interior staircase, it is fair to say that there is not much lateral connection between the west exterior wall and the rest of the house.

Indeed, the strength of this type of “row house” construction derives partially from when there is a whole row of similar houses that would have braced and held each of their neighbors together. Whether or not the Myers House ever had a physical connection to a neighboring house on its west side, it does not have one now and the west exterior wall is not well connected to the rest of the house. The lateral stability of the west exterior wall should be analyzed in the next phase of work; the potential need for supplemental attachment/ bracing between the staircase and the wall should be evaluated. Such reinforcement could likely be accommodated in the repaired/ reinforced staircase framing.

C. Second Floor Observations and Recommendations.

As at the first floor, there was deterioration of the exterior masonry walls (especially at the south façade) and damage to interior plaster walls.

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And also as at the first floor, at other intermediate floor landings of the staircase there is some noticeable separation between the staircase and the west exterior wall of the house. It is likely to be tied to some of the cracking and masonry deterioration that is visible on the exterior face of the west elevation wall. Again, see Photographs No. 11, No. 12, and No. 15 for views of this type of separation. Photograph No. 20 illustrates one of the types of cracking that can be found on the north end of the exterior of the building; in this case it is at the ground level of the west elevation. Similar deterioration extends up the rest of the west elevation; because we could not gain close-up access for the height of the wall, we cannot verify if it is just as severe, but it appears that some cracking, displacement, and loss of materials does extend up the wall. Similar cracking occurs at the south end of the west exterior wall. Some of this cracking also appears to be exposing portions of interior wood framing (such as at the staircase landings) to exterior sources of moisture.

We recommend that a probe be completed in this area to expose the condition of the staircase elements and the masonry wall. Once the conditions are visible then a structural repair can be designed. It appears likely that the connection between the wood header and the brick wall will need to be reinforced. See First Floor Observations and Recommendations for additional discussions related to this area.

D. Third Floor Observations and Recommendations.

At the third floor level we noted already discussed exterior masonry deterioration and the slight horizontal separation of the west exterior wall of the house from the interior wood-framed staircase. The deterioration of the exterior masonry includes some significant areas of lost and/ or poorly rebuilt exterior masonry and the horizontal bulging of the brick near the east gable. See Photograph No. 19 for an exterior view of the east elevation (from a distance) and Photograph No. 21 for an exterior view of the east elevation (from the ground level looking steeply up to the top of the gable).

While we did not observe close-up the condition of the brickwork near the top of each of the walls, the loss of mortar on the interior and exterior surfaces of the masonry walls is likely to extend all of the way to the top of the house. Indeed, see Photograph No. 16 for a view of the loss of mortar at the top of the east gable; this view of the interior surface of the brickwork also shows the hole at the top of the gable that undoubtedly lets water into the building.

Because the damage to the brick and mortar is so extensive each of these areas will require localized rebuilding of the masonry.

E. Attic Observations and Recommendations.

Beside signs of water infiltration through the roof, eaves, and gables it also appears that there is some unusual or at least asymmetrical roof framing. The posts that are in three corners of the attic

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do not continue in the fourth “corner” of the roof. As noted under the previous section of text (under the “Third Floor Observations and Recommendations”, above) the southeast corner of the roof (at the east gable) appears to have significant deterioration of the brick masonry exterior wall. There is notable bulging, loss of mortar, loss of bricks, and poor reconstruction at different portions of the east gable elevation. This area will likely require dismantling and reconstruction with salvaged brick.

It is possible that additional areas of such masonry repairs will be needed on other portions of the east gable and the west gable; since close-up examinations of the exterior surfaces of these areas were not possible during our site visit, the scoping and probing of such deterioration should occur during the next phase of site investigation and design work.

We recommend that a structural analysis of the roof framing be performed to determine what is the likely extent of any overstress or excessive deflection. If such deficiencies are identified they can be addressed by the design and installation of supplemental structural elements within the attic. Some of this reinforcement may need to go into the wall and floor framing beneath the attic floor, but the extent of any such work can be verified with probes and structural evaluation during the next phase of work.

It is important to note that because of access limitation the condition of the roof itself could not be observed up close.

III. Additional Comments and Conclusions.

A. Priorities.

The priorities for the protection of the structural integrity of the house are as follows:

1. Roof. Placement of a temporary watertight roofing membrane over the entire house is the highest priority. Areas of water penetration in the attic and the third floor ceiling are evident.
2. Installation of Temporary Shoring and Bracing in the Basement. The north/ south load bearing masonry wall (between the stair hall and the adjacent rooms) has failed in some areas and has tilted substantially to the west (at its top; i.e., underneath the first floor joists). The installation of this temporary shoring and bracing is also of the highest priority. The existing temporary shoring and bracing should also be removed and replaced. This work should be done as soon as possible.

Failure to install this shoring risks the stability of the masonry wall in the basement and the support (at least for stiffening, but also for live load capacity) for the upper floors. It is important to note that

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we do not know that all of the floor joists (above the basement) are continuous through the interior north/ south masonry wall (and the stiffening partitions on the floors above it). Thus we do not know if the floors can stand up by themselves without the presence of this masonry wall and the stiffening partitions above it.

When the temporary shoring and bracing is installed it should, as noted above, be placed on properly compacted bare soil or on suitable wood grillage beams. It is also possible, but not required, to make use of temporary reinforced concrete pads to support the temporary shoring and bracing in the basement.

3. Repairs to the Chimney “breast” and adjacent brick wall elements in the basement (in the southeast corner of the basement). The masonry wall that is underneath the first floor fireplace in the rear of the house has partially collapsed. This deterioration is threatening the stability of the first floor mantelpiece and the adjacent sections of exterior masonry walls. This wall should be stabilized and then repaired as soon as possible. The stabilization may include some temporary brick rebuilding of the most damaged areas. Full restoration of the chimney and the adjacent masonry walls would likely require some temporary shoring and bracing, more extensive removal of loose or damaged masonry, and subsequent rebuilding, repointing, and/ or regrouting of the masonry walls.

The reason that some temporary shoring and bracing will be required for the full (a.k.a., permanent) restoration of the masonry in the southeast corner of the building is that floor joists rest on the masonry walls. In order to properly rebuild the walls it will likely be required to remove substantial portions of the masonry. Removal of this masonry will temporarily remove the supports for the existing floor joists.

4. Repairs to the exterior masonry wall on the South Façade. Because of the blue tarp and the underlying cement tiles on the exterior of this wall, the exact extent of repairs is uncertain. Based on the limited areas that are visible on the interior face of the wall (especially at the second floor window sill level) and our experience with comparable buildings, it appears quite possible that the permanent repair of the wall will require careful removal of all loose masonry and then subsequent rebuilding of the brick wall.

Wherever possible the new wall would consist of the re-use of the historic brick that will come apart when the wall is dismantled. The new brick should be toothed into the existing masonry elements that are to remain. It is possible that these repairs will require construction of new concrete foundations to help support the rebuilt section of wall.

In advance of the permanent restoration of this wall it may be necessary to install some temporary shoring and bracing to support/ brace the exterior wall. The installation of this temporary bracing and shoring should be completed as soon as possible. The temporary shoring and bracing will need to be phased with the demolition and reconstruction of the wall. It will be important for the Owner

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to consider the installation of temporary exterior scaffolding to both use as temporary shoring and bracing and as the access for completing the stabilization and eventual restoration/ reconstruction of this wall.

Also, even though the existing floor joists are believed to mostly run in the east/ west direction and not bear directly on the south elevation exterior wall, it may be prudent to provide some temporary shoring underneath the wall (at the interior face of the exterior wall). This will also permit simpler methods and fewer constraints on the demolition of the south exterior wall.

B. Details Regarding Temporary Shoring and Bracing.

The design, fabrication, installation, and in-field observation during construction of the proposed temporary shoring and bracing will be the responsibility of the professional engineer hired by the contractor. Our office has a contract to review the design of the proposed shoring and bracing for its impact on the permanent structure. Our review will include an examination of the professional engineer's drawings and calculations for the temporary shoring and bracing.

The new temporary shoring and bracing must be designed and fabricated so that it is more appropriately bearing on the ground underneath the basement floor slab. The existing shoring (on the east side of the southern end of the collapsed section of brick wall in the basement) is currently out of plumb and its support on the basement floor slab has resulted in the cracking and displacement of the concrete slab on grade.

The new temporary shoring and bracing should bear either on properly compacted bare soil (which would necessitate removal of the cracked concrete floor slab) or on properly sized grillage beams. These grillage beams would help to more uniformly distribute the loads from the shoring onto the floor slab. Because of the extent of damage to the basement concrete floor slab it is likely that re-use of some of the concrete floor may not be possible. Because having the grillage beams be in direct contact with the bare soil is not the best thing for the longevity of the beams, we recommend considering use of a temporary six inch thick slab on grade in those areas where the basement concrete floor slab is severely cracked and placed. The Owner should be made aware of the likelihood, however, that this "new" slab on grade will have to be replaced when the proper replacement of the basement load bearing wall is undertaken. If costs or the order of construction do not permit the use of temporary concrete pads and the temporary shoring would need to bear directly on compacted soil it may be possible to make use of preservative treated wood cribbing.

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C. Future Material Tests and Investigations.

Since there are a number of areas where water infiltration has contributed to the deterioration of masonry elements and many of these walls support wood members, it is quite possible that there are hidden areas of wood deterioration. This is especially true in areas such as sill plates (e.g., at the roof eaves) and areas where wood joists bear on masonry walls. The most likely areas of wood deterioration are at joist or beam pockets in areas where significant amounts of water have entered the masonry walls.

Deterioration of wood members can be caused by fungal damage that is exacerbated by the infiltration of water and it can also be caused by insect damage.

We recommend that a thorough set of tests of the existing wood members be completed on each level of the building (including the roof). This testing should include inspection of the wood for fungal and insect related damage; all areas where such damage is identified must be removed, treated, and/ or replaced with new sound wood.

We recommend that this inspection be performed not by a wood pest treatment company, but rather by a licensed, trained wood pathologist. We also believe that proper execution of this wood testing (prior to the start of construction; i.e., as part of the design process) would help us to develop an accurate scope of work for the repair of the timber structural members.

If extensive areas of wood deterioration are identified (say perhaps after removal of deteriorated masonry elements or limited removal of architectural finishes) it would be prudent to have a discussion between the design team and the Owner about the relative historic, architectural, and structural merits of retaining versus replacing the deteriorated elements. For purposes of budgeting and estimating the scope of repairs, based on our experience with comparable buildings, we recommend making an allowance for replacing/ sistering approximately 10 percent of all joists and approximately 20 percent of all roof rafters. We recognize that it may not be possible to probe all of the wood in the building (joists, beams, sill plates, rafters, etc.). Therefore the probing of representative samples of the wood is the most prudent (from a time and cost perspective). Further testing and examination of the wood elements can then be done during the construction phase operations.

In addition to the testing of the wood elements of the building we recommend that the masonry be tested. This testing of the masonry should include composition analysis of the mortar (with the development of an estimated compression strength of the original mortar as well as the development of a matching mortar to replace the missing portions). The testing should also include a testing of

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the compression strength of both the exterior (finish brick) and the common brick on the interior of the wall. Depending upon the recommendations of a materials conservator it may also be prudent to undertake a petrographic analysis of the original brick types to confirm that the clay in the bricks has been completely vitrified (into a ceramic) and, if not, to determine what are the consequences of this condition for the building.

Depending upon the results of these masonry tests and other potential tests, such as non-destructive evaluation techniques (like infrared thermography), it is possible that the repairs to the exterior masonry walls of the building may be a combination of rebuilding and re-grouting of cavities or voids within the walls. Study of such alternatives should be explored during the next investigative phase of design work. Careful and proper grouting of older masonry walls has become more common in North America, but it is still performed relatively rarely. As such, grouting repairs require careful testing of the historic masonry walls, selection of appropriate structural reinforcement techniques (including design of the grouts), and mockup testing of the proposed solutions before repairs are put out to bid. This pros and cons of this alternative should be carefully reviewed with the Owner at the start of the next design phase.

When the next phase of design and investigation is being planned, we recommend that the schedule of the investigations include at least a few days of close-up examination of the exterior masonry walls. The examination of the exterior surfaces of these walls should be done with a personnel lift to allow the architects and engineers time to personally examine, sound, and document the condition of the masonry. This will permit the design team to not only record the condition of materials and to obtain samples for subsequent testing, but it will also permit the designers to create a more complete of construction documents for the eventual repair of the building.

D. Additional Comments.

The failure to maintain the water tightness of the exterior envelope of the building has contributed to the deterioration of the structure. We recommend improvement of the water drainage off the roof, over the exterior walls, and around the perimeter of the base of the building as soon as possible.

Once the drainage has been improved, temporary repairs to the roofing and flashing membranes have been completed, and the temporary shoring and bracing has been installed in limited portions of the buildings, then the buildings should be stable for a significant period of time. As discussed the structural repair priorities include the replacement of damaged masonry foundations, interior and exterior load bearing masonry walls, and the repair/ replacement of deteriorated or possibly overstressed wood framing elements.

Overall the condition of the house is fair to good. There are several portions of the house, notably the basement interior load bearing brick wall and several portions of the exterior brick walls that are

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in very poor condition. As noted, those elements must be secured immediately to prevent further damage occurring to the building. The shoring of these elements will help the Owner to stabilize the building and then begin a phased repair/ reconstruction of the damaged walls.

It is important to emphasize that this building is in very salvageable condition. It can be structurally stabilized and repaired and brought back to a long, usual life of service to its community. We have structurally restored hundreds of comparably designed buildings that were in significantly worse condition.

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph No. 1. View of interior face of exterior wall at NW Corner of Basement.



Photograph No. 2. View of interior wall in basement (north end of the north/south bearing wall); opposite side of hallway from Photograph No. 1.



Photograph No. 3. View of west elevation of the north/south bearing wall in the basement. Note the severe deterioration/loss of masonry at the bottom of this wall.



Photograph No. 4. View of the south end of the north/south bearing wall in the basement. Note the significant loss of bricks and disintegration of the wall.

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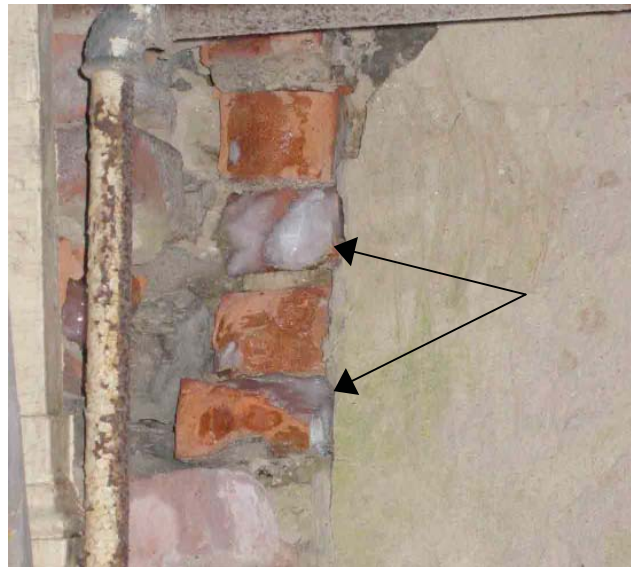
Photograph No. 5. View of underside of wood stairs in the basement.



Photograph No. 6. View of brick wall failure at the SE corner of the basement; note pile of brick, mortar, and other debris from the collapsed portions of this brick wall.



Photograph No. 7. View of eastern side of the north end of the north/south bearing wall in the basement. Note that even the temporary screw jacks appear to have displaced horizontally.



Photograph No. 8. View of severe moisture in the brick walls of the basement. This photograph was taken at the east wall of the building (i.e., the party or common wall with the adjacent row house). Arrows point to ice deposition on the brick surfaces.

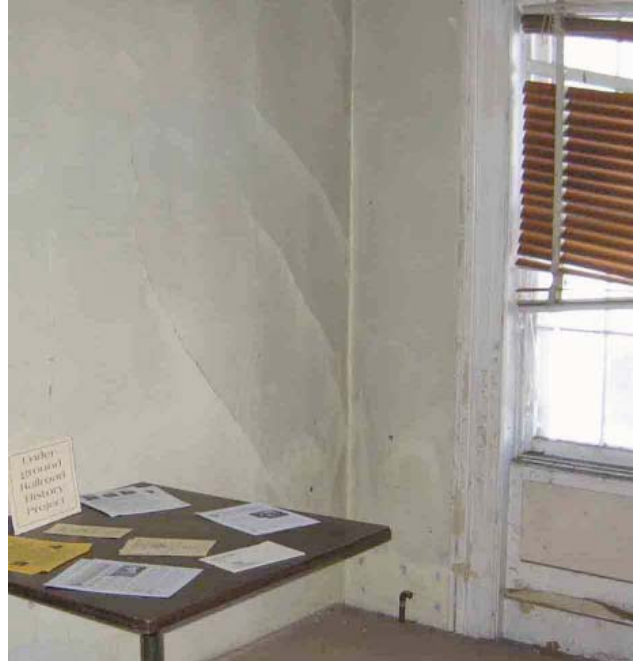
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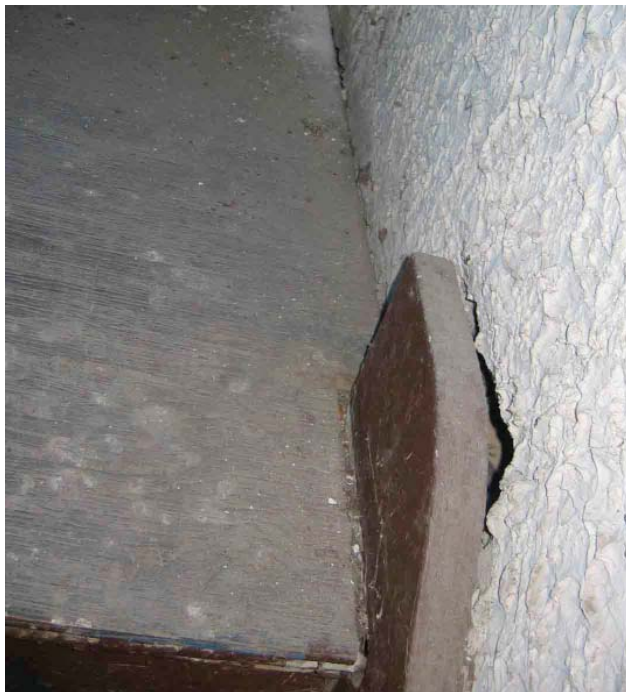
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Photograph No. 9. View of basement hallway looking south. The north/ south bearing wall is on the left side of this image; note that the wall is no longer plumb and has moved sideways.



Photograph No. 10. View of typical diagonal cracking in the upper floors of the house. This occurs on the first floor (near the north wall of the house).



Photograph No. 11. View of stair landing at upper floor where the stair has pulled away from the interior surface of the exterior wall.



Photograph No. 12. View of header and side of stair landing at upper floor where the stair has pulled away from the interior surface of the exterior wall. This is a close-up of

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph No. 13. View of the exterior brick below a second floor window sill (on the south elevation).



Photograph No. 14. View of crack in the interior plaster near the SW corner of the building.



Photograph No. 15. View of another landing of the main staircase where the header and the stair have moved away from the interior face of the exterior wall.



Photograph No. 16. View of interior surface of the west gable as viewed from the attic. The arrow points to where light (and water) enters the attic.

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Photograph No. 17. View of localized failure of exterior wythes of brick masonry at the NE corner of the building.



Photograph No. 18. View of missing mortar, missing bricks, and loose masonry at the cornice level (at the NE corner of the building).



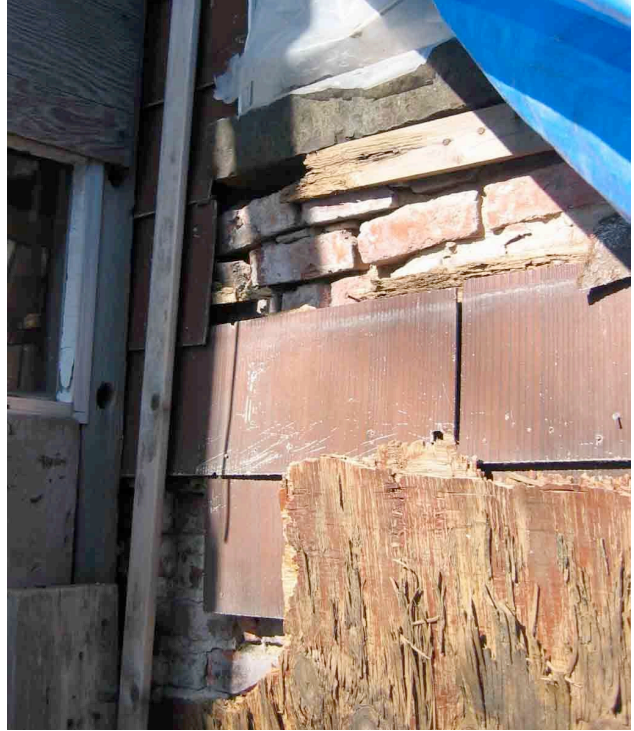
Photograph No. 19. View of missing masonry and poorly reconstructed masonry on the exterior of the East elevation.



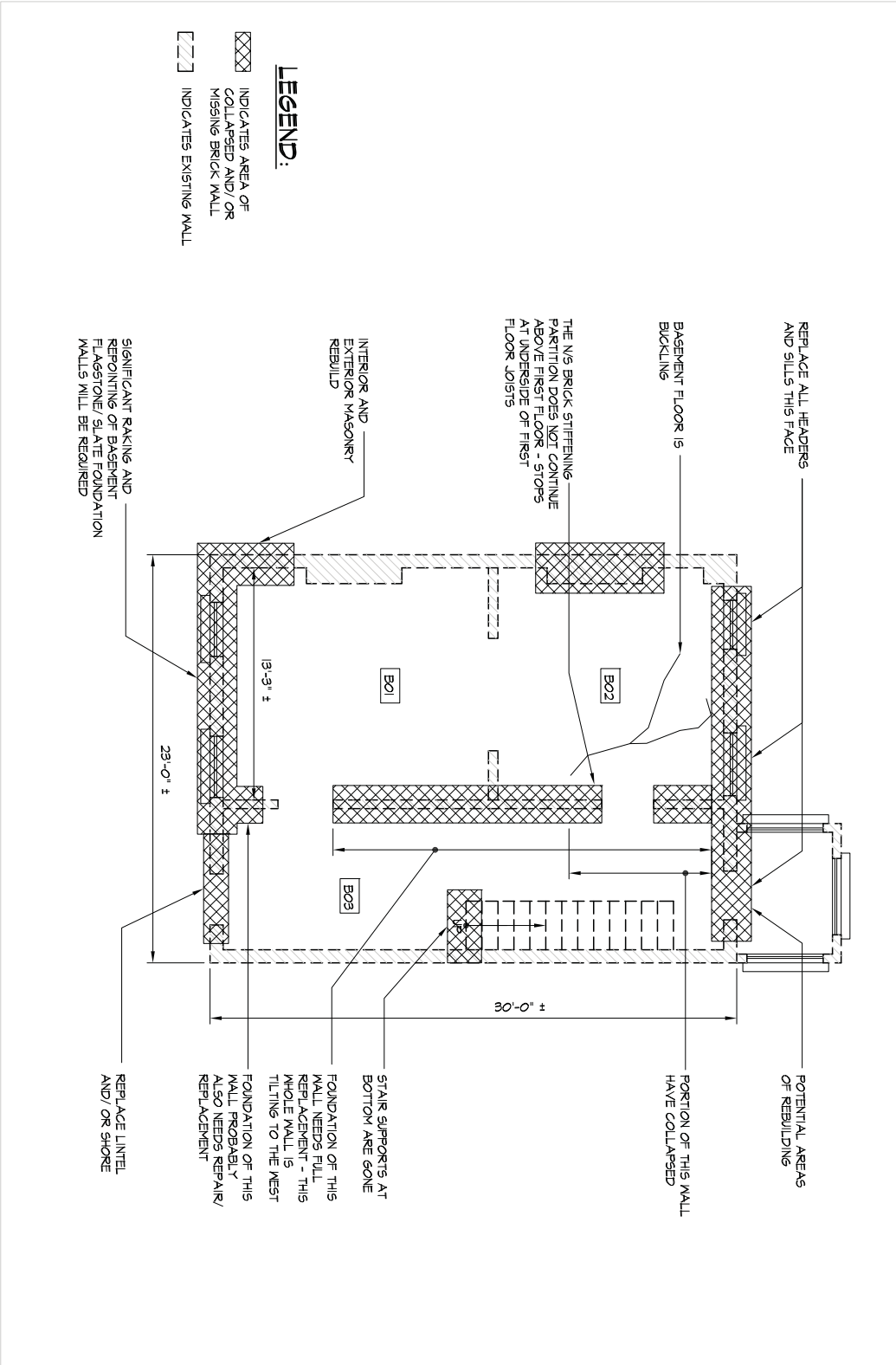
Photograph No. 20. View of one of the cracks in the masonry at the base of the West elevation wall (near NW corner of the building).



Photograph No. 21. View of one of the bulges in the exterior brick masonry. This view is at the SE corner looking up. The arrows point to the most severe bulging.



Photograph No. 22. View of the severely deteriorated masonry at the first floor window of the south elevation. Note almost complete absence of mortar between the bricks below the sill and behind the missing exterior siding.



LEGEND:

- ▣ INDICATES AREA OF COLLAPSED AND/OR MISSING BRICK WALL
- ▤ INDICATES EXISTING WALL

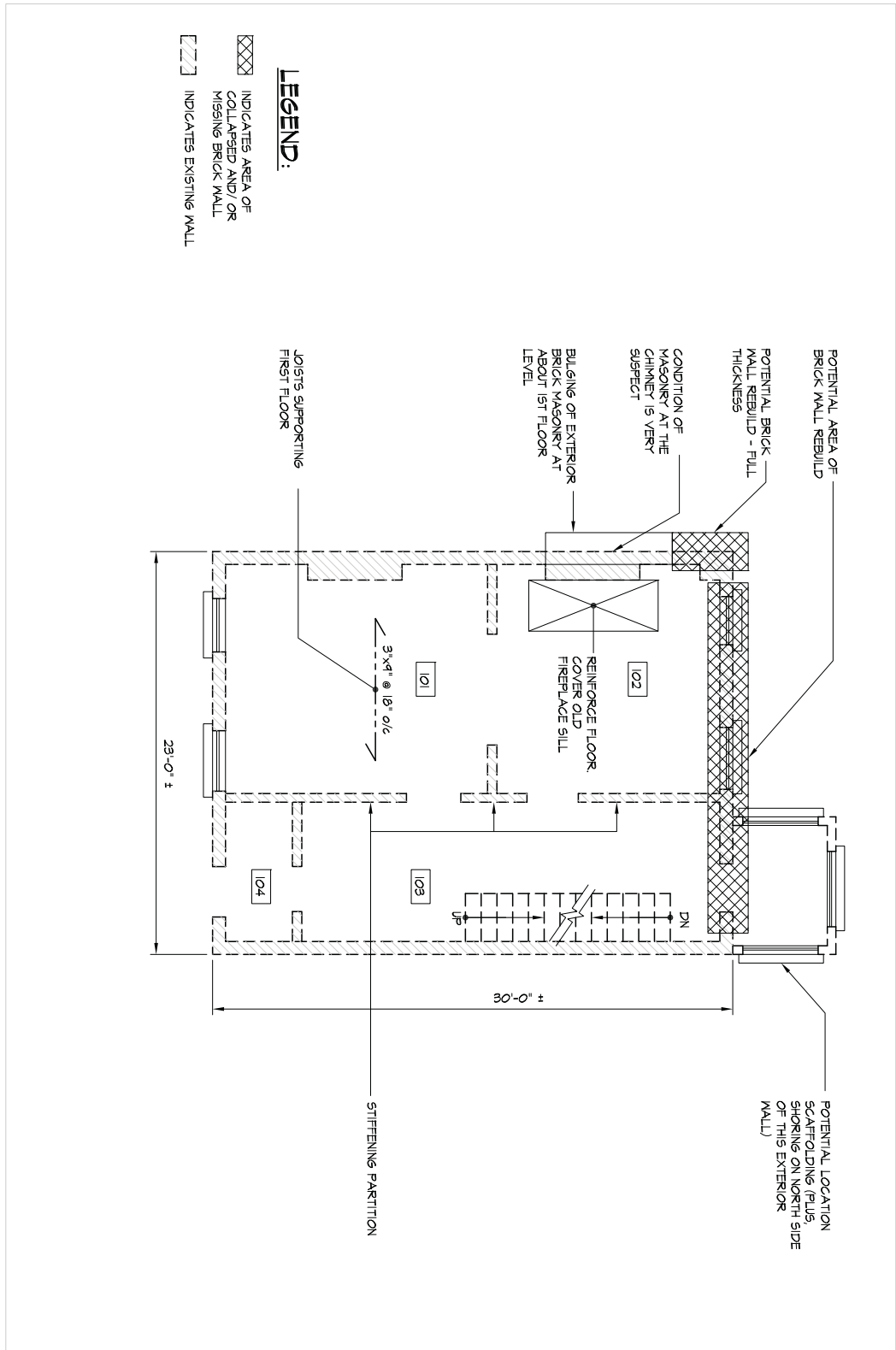
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RSA JOB NO.: 10692
 REFERENCE DWG.: N/A

PROJECT: THE MYERS HOUSE, ALBANY, NEW YORK
 TITLE: BASEMENT PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE: AS NOTED

SK-1
 DATE 03/23/06



LEGEND:

▣▣▣▣ INDICATES AREA OF COLLAPSED AND/OR MISSING BRICK WALL

▤▤▤▤ INDICATES EXISTING WALL

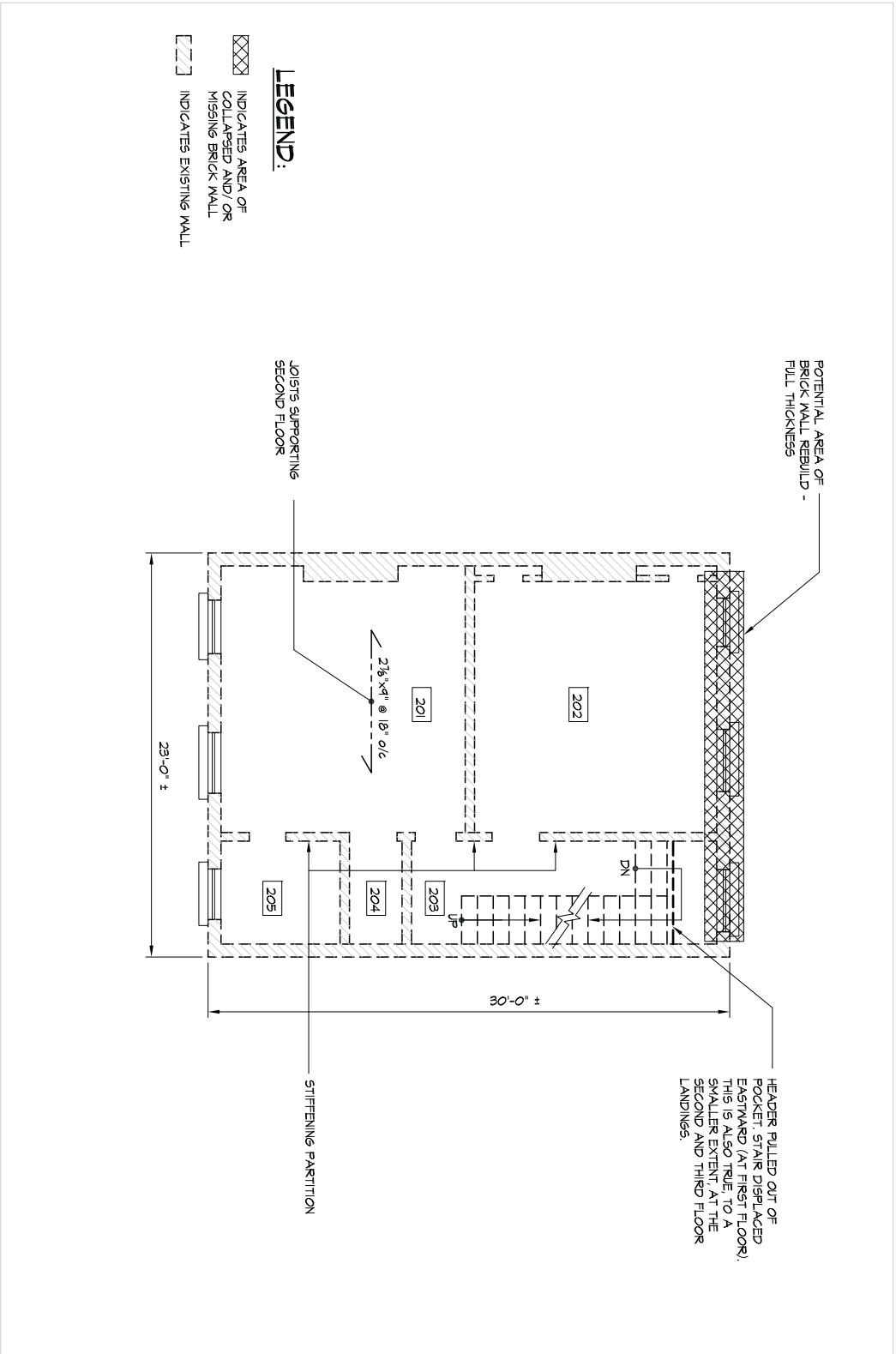
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RSA JOB NO.: 10992
 REFERENCE DWG.: N/A

PROJECT: THE MYERS HOUSE, ALBANY, NEW YORK
 TITLE: FIRST FLOOR PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE: AS NOTED

SK-2
 DATE 03/23/06





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 CONSULTING ENGINEERS
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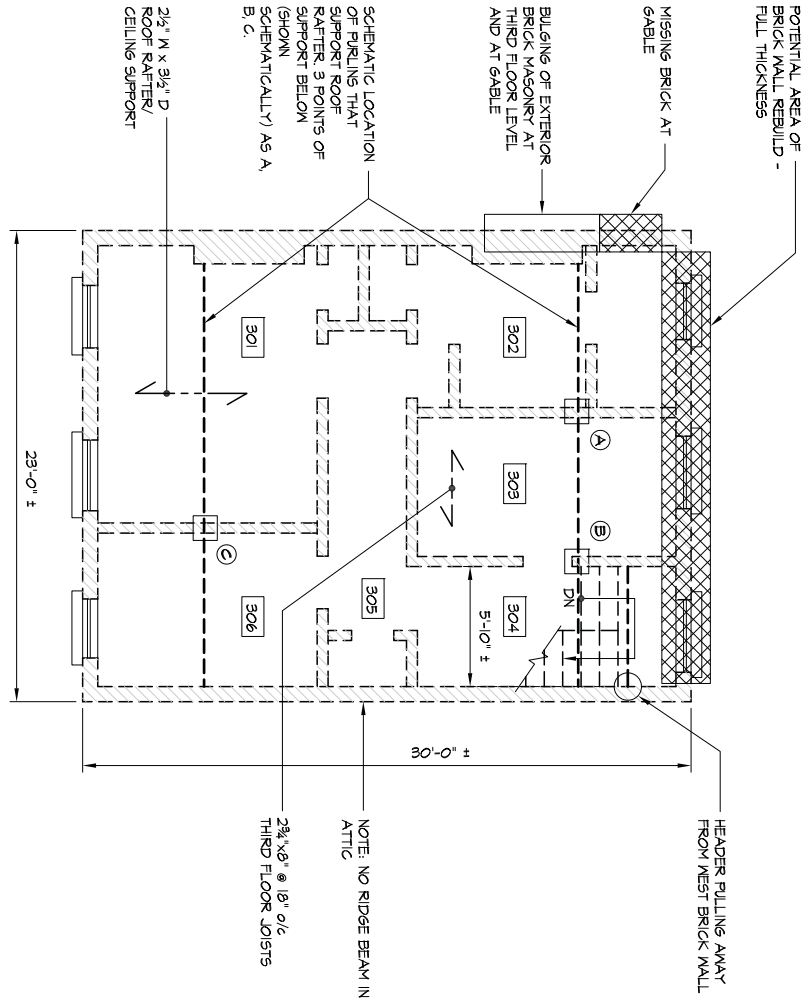
RSA JOB NO.: 10992
 REFERENCE DWG: N/A

SCALE: AS NOTED

PROJECT: THE MYERS HOUSE, ALBANY, NEW YORK
 TITLE: SECOND FLOOR PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS

SK-3
 DATE 03/23/06

- LEGEND:**
-  INDICATES AREA OF COLLAPSED AND/OR MISSING BRICK WALL
 -  INDICATES EXISTING WALL



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RSA JOB NO.: 10992
 REFERENCE DWG.: N/A

PROJECT: THE MYERS HOUSE, ALBANY, NEW YORK
 TITLE: THIRD FLOOR PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE: AS NOTED

SK-4
 DATE 03/23/06

APPENDIX F:
NATIONAL REGISTER
NOMINATION FORM

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence

other name/site number Vigilance Committee Office

2. Location

street & number 194 Livingston Avenue not for publication
city or town Albany vicinity _____
state New York code NY county Albany code 001 zip code 12210

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mildred Carter, SAPO 5/9/04
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
Name of Property

Albany County, New York
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- public-local
- private
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(check only one box)

- district
- building(s)
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC Single dwelling

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC Multiple dwelling (vacant)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century Greek Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls brick
roof asphalt
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Stephen & Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co, New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

The building now addressed as 194 Livingston Avenue was constructed in 1847 and is situated on the south side of the street within the long block between Swan and Lark streets in Albany's Arbor Hill neighborhood. The house stands about where the long hill sloping up from the Hudson River to the east begins to flatten out and Livingston Avenue continues on its straight westerly path, ending more than one mile away. 194 Livingston is the only brick building in the immediate vicinity on the south side of the street. It is surrounded by frame houses of the same approximate age, most of which have been altered through the application of modern siding materials and non-historic windows.

Directly across the street from this building are several frame residential buildings dating from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and just east of those is a series of late-twentieth century single-family residential buildings built on land originally acquired for the federally-funded Arbor Hill Urban Renewal Program beginning in 1962. Behind the building on Third Street, parallel to Livingston, are scattered, mostly frame buildings that have survived the numerous demolitions that have taken place in this section of Arbor Hill over the last 40 years. Some appear to be even older than 194 Livingston but are in seriously dilapidated condition. About 200 yards east of 194 Livingston is the intersection of Swan Street, the western boundary of the Arbor Hill Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. At that time, the decision was made to exclude properties to the west because of substantial demolition, significant loss of architectural integrity for many that remained, and scattered new construction in the area. 194 Livingston Avenue is being nominated individually because of its overriding historical importance in the Underground Railroad in the city of Albany. Coincidentally, it also retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

The two-and-one-half-story brick townhouse in form and detail is typical of hundreds of such buildings constructed in Albany between the turn of the nineteenth century and the Civil War. It stands on a high brick basement and is three bays wide with the entrance in the western bay. The basement is separated from the first story by a sandstone water table, and rectangular sandstone lintels and sills are present on all openings of the basement, first and second stories. The doorway lintel is larger in size and has a triangular shape.

The first story is reached by a modern wooden stoop, and typical of Greek Revival buildings of the period, the front door is contained within a small recessed vestibule. The entrance is characterized by Doric pilasters on either side of the door, and multi-paned sidelights and transom. The original door does not survive. In the first story windows are six-light sash which are probably original. Above that, sash are missing, although they may be stored somewhere in the building. Above the second story is a half-story that contains eyebrow windows within a brick frieze cornice, and there is a side-gable roof.

Stephen & Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co., New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

To the east, the building abuts 192 Livingston and contains no openings. To the west, the wall also contains no openings, as if another house were expected to be built on the lot. At the time 194 Livingston was constructed in 1847, however, a house described in city assessment rolls as "old" was already located on the back part of the lot to the west, replaced by the current building in 1872. It seems that in this case, builders of 194 Livingston were more concerned with constructing a typical Albany "rowhouse" with windowless sides than with the fact that they could deviate from this plan since there was little likelihood that another house would be built adjacent to 194.

The rear of the building is covered with asphalt shingle siding, but the deep window reveals show the presence of a brick wall behind the siding. Present at 194 Livingston is a feature that is typical of Albany rowhouses of this period but not those in nearby Troy. In the interior hall, the staircase is placed at the rear of the hall and includes landings and 180-degree turns in the staircase, thereby resulting in the placement of stairhall windows on the landings at a lower level than those in the adjacent rear rooms.

The interior, although deteriorated, includes a significant amount of architectural fabric that dates from the original construction period of the building.

The basement entrance under the stoop provides access to a long side hall that runs the length of the building. The staircase to the first floor is contained within a characteristic plank enclosure. East of the hall is the front room which most likely functioned as the dining room. It includes a deteriorated wainscot around the perimeter and a wood mantelpiece that has pilasters supporting a panel and mantel shelf, most likely dating from 1847. This fireplace was apparently never functional as there is no hearth and the opening is bricked in, in what appears to be an original condition. There is, however, a chimney that served fireplaces on the upper floors.

The rear room of the basement, probably the original kitchen, is devoid of finishes and currently houses a deteriorated heating plant. Part of the brick wall separating the rear room from the stairhall has collapsed.

The first, or parlor, floor plan is essentially identical to that of the basement, with two large rooms and a side hall, but the architectural treatments are more grand. The ceiling is significantly higher than that of the basement. The hall and both parlors have plaster cornice at the ceilings, and in the stairhall, a simple circular medallion is present. It is likely that both parlors originally had medallions, but they are missing. Also present in the hall is the short run of stair rail and newel post adjacent to the basement staircase. The newel at the foot of the main staircase is present but the entire balustrade up to the attic is missing. (It may be stored somewhere in the house.)

In both parlors, chimney breasts are present. They have been stripped of plaster for the "exposed brick" look popular in the 1970s, and mantelpieces are missing. On both the front and rear walls of the parlors and in doorways to the stairhall, all original Greek Revival casings are intact. Beneath

Stephen & Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co, New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3

the front windows, original wood panels also remain. All historic baseboard has been removed, but original floor boards are in place.

The second floor plan again echoes those of the lower floors with a side stairhall and two large rooms in the eastern part of the building. The second floor also includes a small room above the front entrance reached through the large front room. There is also a closet present above the first floor entry hall, accessed through the large front room. In both front and rear rooms, original wood trim is present, but neither room includes a mantelpiece. On either side of the chimney breast in the rear room are shallow closets.

The attic is reached by the final flight of stairs in the stairhall. It has a slightly different plan from the lower floors and includes a transverse hall directly beneath the roof ridge, along with the stairhall parallel to those of the lower floors. The front portion of the building is divided into a small and a large room and the rear has a room above the rear bedroom. It includes historic wood trim but most of the walls have been covered with modern paneling.

At present the house has some structural problems due to masonry deterioration. These include some missing bricks in the eastern corner of the front wall, the collapse of the rear section of the interior bearing wall at the basement level, and some failure of the rear wall at the attic level. Despite the deterioration, however, the house retains a high degree of architectural integrity to its period of construction and remains as the most substantial residence on the block during its early development period.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
Name of Property

Albany County, New York
County and State

8. Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1847-1858

Significant Dates

1847, 1855-1858

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Myers, Stephen and Harriet

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: _____

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 1

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The building now known as 194 Livingston Avenue in the Arbor Hill section of Albany, Albany County, New York, is significant under Criterion A as the one-time office of the Vigilance Committee of Albany. This group was active in the underground railroad from the early 1840s into the 1850s and assisted hundreds of fugitive slaves on their way to freedom in the northern United States and Canada. Albany was a critical link on the trail northward, and the Vigilance Committee was the primary group for ushering freedom seekers through Albany on their way to Canada.

In addition, 194 Livingston is significant under Criterion B as the home of Stephen and Harriet Myers. He was Chairman of the Vigilance Committee during the 1850s and perhaps the most significant figure in Albany's Underground Railroad history. Myers had actively assisted escaped slaves for nearly 30 years, beginning in 1831, and was a vocal proponent of education and self-sufficiency for African-Americans. And according to the obituary of Harriet Myers following her death in 1865, "during the many years her husband was devoted to the superintending of the underground railroad, she was kind and unremitting in her attendance on the unfortunate passengers..." In addition, "...she did perform much of the editorial labors upon the 'Northern Light,' published some years since by Mr. Myers, and was entrusted with the reading of the proof sheets for its columns."¹

Stephen and Harriet Myers lived in the house during part of the time when he was chairman of the Vigilance Committee and maintained the group's office in the building at the same time. Myers' importance in the national movement was highlighted many years after emancipation, when author Wilbur Siebert, in his 1898 book called The Underground Railroad, said the following:

Frederick Douglass, who was familiar with this Albany route during the period of his residence in Rochester, described it as running through Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Rochester, and thence to Canada; and he gives the name of the person at each station that was most closely associated in his mind with the work of the station. Thus, he says that the "fugitives were received at Philadelphia by William Still, by him sent to New York, where they were cared for by Mr. David Ruggles, and afterwards by Mr. Gibbs, ... thence to Stephen Myers at Albany; thence to J. W. Logan, Syracuse; thence to Frederick Douglass, Rochester; and thence to Hiram Wilson, St. Catherines, Canada West."²

In addition, Myers is cited frequently in newspapers of the 1840s and 1850s as a speaker and representative at multi-state conferences well beyond the Albany area, and often shared the podium with Frederick Douglass, both when Douglass spoke in Albany and in other locations. Therefore, because of Stephen Myers' close connection with Frederick Douglass and the importance of Albany

¹ The Christian Recorder, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 2, 1865.

² Wilbur H. Siebert, The Underground Railroad: From Slavery to Freedom (1898, Macmillan Company), reprinted by Peter Smith Company, Gloucester, MA, 1968, pp. 125-6.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 2

as a link in the chain of stations in this eastern route through New York State, this property is being nominated for national significance.

Finally, the property is significant under Criterion C as a highly intact example of a mid-nineteenth century brick Greek Revival style townhouse built in many other areas of Albany during the period but relatively rare in this part of Arbor Hill.

The City of Albany and the growth of Arbor Hill

The City of Albany traces its European roots to 1624 with the establishment of Fort Orange by the Dutch West India Company following Henry Hudson's voyage of 1609. Hudson claimed the river valley that bears his name, and lands east to the Connecticut River and southwesterly to the Delaware River for Holland, and the colony was known as New Netherland. Fort Orange was intended only as a fur-trading post, not a permanent settlement; rather, a medieval land-holding system known as the Colonie (original spelling) of Rensselaerswyck was organized surrounding the fort in 1630 to provide for permanent settlers who were expected to engage in farming, milling and other more stable occupations. That colony originally comprised over 240,000 acres east and west of the Hudson, in what are now Albany and Rensselaer counties, and its residents paid land rents in agricultural products to the "patroons" of the Van Rensselaer family each year.

By 1652, a small village named Beverwyck, Dutch for "beaver place," had grown up north of Fort Orange. This village was the home of those who desired a more settled existence in close proximity to the fort. In 1664, the British took over all Dutch claims in North America and New Netherland was thenceforth known as the colony of New York and Beverwyck as Albany, named for James, Duke of York and Albany.

Despite the fact that the stockaded settlement comprised less than a square mile, a rectangular tract of land measuring approximately two miles along the Hudson and sixteen miles inland surrounding the stockade was chartered in 1686 by the English crown as the City of Albany. For the next hundred years, additional population growth was slow, and continued to be heavily influenced by Albany's Dutch origins, as descendants of the original Dutch outnumbered settlers of other nationalities.

After the French and Indian War ended in 1763, the stockade was removed, but only after the American Revolution, as New Englanders began moving westward, did Albany begin to grow. The city became a major stopping point for travelers, as a series of turnpikes that provided new routes into the interior of New York State and beyond started in Albany. In the early years of the nineteenth century, the city's population increased rapidly as many ended their journeys in Albany and settled permanently in the growing city.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 3

Shortly after 1800, new sections were opened for development, including the area immediately adjacent to the northern city line separating Albany from the Van Rensselaer land holdings. This area, designated as early as 1794 as Arbor Hill and outside city limits, included the main road north to Lake Champlain nearly 100 miles north of the city, and was urbanized enough by the early 1810s that residents petitioned for annexation to the city. At the time annexation came in 1815, this new ward was a neighborhood of coopers, boatmen, and other types of laborers, mainly employed in Albany's important Hudson River trade.

In 1825, the Erie Canal, connecting the Hudson River with Lake Erie 350 miles to the west at Buffalo, opened, and entered the Hudson River at the foot of Arbor Hill in Albany. The effect of the canal on Albany and the entire state of New York was nothing short of remarkable. Both the city and state populations grew rapidly, and soon New York City became the most important port along the Atlantic Seaboard. Albany's population grew tremendously in the early nineteenth century, and immediately after the canal opened, workers engaged in the operation of the canal and industries that grew as a result of it joined other working class residents of Arbor Hill.

At the same time, some members of Albany's small African-American population, most of whom were also members of the city's working class, settled in Arbor Hill alongside white working class families. This can be determined because African-Americans are listed in italics in the city directories of the period between 1813, when the first directory was published, until 1853 when the practice was discontinued. At this time, contrary to popular belief, Albany's black population was not racially segregated, but rather lived side-by-side with white families of the same economic status.

In this setting in 1847, John Johnson, an African-American ship owner, constructed the brick townhouse now known as 194 Livingston Avenue in the middle of a neighborhood of more modest workers' frame dwellings. Although Johnson's personal story and the construction of a brick townhouse with architectural pretensions outside the more middle- or upper-class neighborhoods of Albany are interesting, little is known of him at this time. Further development of that research topic may take place in the future, but at present it is the importance of Stephen Myers and his connection with this building that is the subject of this nomination.

When 194 Livingston Avenue was constructed, the street was known as Lumber Street, so named because it originated about one-half mile down the hill to the east of this building at the location of

Albany's thriving Lumber District. This district, located just north of where the Erie Canal entered the Hudson River, was characterized by a series of more than 50 narrow slips cut perpendicularly into the canal wall and used for storing lumber. Several mills and lumber processing buildings also populated the area.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 4

Many of the merchants who made large fortunes harvesting lumber from New York State's Adirondack Mountains and processing and shipping it from Albany to markets all over the United States and beyond made their home just east of 194 Livingston Avenue. The neighborhood of many of these so-called "lumber barons" was developed in the period after 1850 along Ten Broeck Street and surrounding streets and was originally listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 as the Ten Broeck Triangle Historic District. In 1984, the Arbor Hill Historic District was listed, encompassing the original listing and extending beyond the Ten Broeck Triangle one long block west to North Swan Street. Because of substantial alterations to buildings to the west of Swan Street and their more modest scale, however, the district boundary was established there, about 200 yards east of 194 Livingston.

Stephen Myers and Anti-Slavery Activities in Albany

Stephen Myers Photograph, from Autobiography of William Henry Johnson. 1900.



According to Irvine Garland Penn's 1891 book, The Afro-American Press and Its Editors, Stephen Myers was born into slavery at Hoosick Four Corners in Rensselaer County in 1800.³ Although little is known about his parents, it is certain that his name comes from his owner's wife's family. According to the New York State Museum's Colonial Albany Project website,⁴ her name was Alidia Wynkoop, and she and her family came to Albany from Manhattan when she was a girl of five. It is very likely that the family brought their slaves with them to their new home in Albany. Her father was a merchant named Johannes Wynkoop and her mother was Anna Koens Myers. It was a common practice, although not universal, for slaves to take the surname of their owner's family, and thus the Myers name. Stephen Myers was born into the home of Jonathan Eights, a well-known

³ Penn, Irvine Garland. The Afro-American Press and Its Editors. Wiley & Com., Springfield, Mass. 1891, pp 48-51.

⁴ Belinski, Stephan. "Johnathan Eights". (www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/joeights7933.html). Colonial Albany Project, New York State Museum.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 5

Albany physician who was married to Alidia Wynkoop. So it could be guessed that a slave taking the name Myers was passed along from Anna Myers Wynkoop to her daughter Alidia, who then married Eights, and at that time the female slave named Myers bore a child, Stephen.

Penn's 1891 book also suggests that at the age of 12, Myers was a servant to Major Warren in the War of 1812. It is not clear what he did in this capacity, but he likely secured Major Warren's food, tended to his horse, and kept the officer's refinement in order.⁵

At the age of 18 (c.1818), Myers was manumitted from slavery in Albany by Major Warren. Although secondary sources state this, the Albany County manumission records do not include Myers' name.⁶ Myers is known to have worked as a steamboat steward and a grocer over the next decade or more.⁷

In 1827, Stephen Myers was married to Harriet Johnson in Troy by the Rev. J. Steel,⁸ and the couple had four children. Stephen Junior was later identified in city directories as a waiter, and another child, Abram, appears to have been named after Harriet's father, Abram Johnson.⁹ In 1856, a person named Abram Johnson lived on Lumber Street in Arbor Hill just a few doors from the home of Stephen Myers, and operated a sloop on the Hudson River known as *Miriam*. An Abram Johnson also appears on the list of 1857 Vigilance Committee members. At present it is not clear whether all persons named Abram Johnson are the same or what their relationship to Harriet Johnson Myers is. The John Johnson who owned (now) 194 Livingston Avenue where the Myers family lived, and the neighbor named Abram Johnson may actually be Harriet's brothers, but federal and state census data are not clear on these points. Conclusive information may come to light as further research is conducted.

Stephen Myers was a fervent activist who helped build up the community of free blacks in Albany by assisting fugitives from slavery, as well as through his advocacy for work, education, and general betterment of the local population. According to Marion Hughes, Myers was one of the leading players in developing one of the first black schools in Albany and later became its superintendent.¹⁰ The school was associated with Israel African Methodist Episcopal Church on Hamilton Street, about one mile from Arbor Hill and itself a major Underground Railroad center in Albany. (This church is listed in the National Register as part of the Center Square-Hudson/Park Historic District, 1980).

⁵ Penn, Op. Cit.

⁶ Slave Manumissions Register 1800-1828, Albany County Hall of Records, Albany, New York.

⁷ Ripley, C. Peter. The Black Abolitionist Papers. North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1991, V. 3, note page. 378-9.

⁸ Freedom's Journal, New York, New York, June 22, 1827.

⁹ Ripley, Op. Cit.

¹⁰ Hughes, Marian I. Refusing Ignorance: The Struggle to Educate Black Children in Albany, New York, 1816-1873. Albany, N. Y., Mt. Ida Press, 1998.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 6

According to Myers' own testimony in the *Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate* during the 1840s, he was involved in assisting fugitive slaves on their journey north as early as 1831.¹¹ In addition, during that same time, he established a number of newspapers, including what may have been his first venture, *The Elevator*, which was, according to Penn, published only for a short time.¹²

During the 1830s and 1840s, groups of citizens formed committees in many cities in the United States with the goals of protecting fugitive slaves from re-enslavement and assisting them in their flight to northern states or Canada. As slave catchers sought to recapture fugitives, these committees provided medical and legal assistance, food, clothing, money, temporary shelter, and sometimes employment, and assisted escaped slaves in making their way to freedom. One such committee had been formed in Albany in the early 1840s and a later committee continued to exist up to the time of the Civil War.

These vigilance committees were not an exclusive group that made up the opposition that was known collectively as the Underground Railroad, but they were a key element. Among other organized groups were Wesleyan churches, Quakers, Free Will Baptists, African Methodist Episcopal and African Methodist Episcopal Zion churches. The Liberty Party, the Eastern New York Anti-Slavery Society, Unitarians, and many members of Congregational and Presbyterian churches were also organized in opposition to slavery. At the same time, however, the movement included individuals with no organizational or denominational affiliation.

Significant Albany groups who assisted fugitive slaves were also linked to two newspapers published in the early 1840s, the *Tocsin of Liberty* and the *Albany Patriot*. At the same time Myers was associated with another group called the Northern Star Association which published *The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*, a newspaper that focused on self-help for the African-American community as well as abolition and temperance. In its pages Myers argued against slavery and for education for African-Americans as well as for employment and any other endeavors that would improve their economic condition, moral stature, or education.¹³

Around the same time, another anti-slavery group, known as the Vigilance Committee, was identified in Albany's *Tocsin of Liberty* newspaper. In an 1842 issue, ten members of its executive committee were named, and comprised an integrated group of blacks and whites. Some of the names of the executive committee were prominent members of Albany's African-American population, such as Thomas Paul, and Benjamin Lattimore, whose families dated back several generations in Albany. The actual membership of the Vigilance Committee, however, included all those who made financial contributions to its work. The Constitution of the Vigilance Committee

¹¹ *The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*. January 2, 1843.

¹² Penn, Op. Cit.

¹³ *The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*, December 2, 1843 – and many other numbers of this paper illustrate this point.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 7

published in the December 22, 1842 edition of the *Tocsin*, stated that it was the right and duty of citizens to help those escaping slavery and to do so promptly.¹⁴

While the paper was still young, there was a controversy between the *Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate* and *The Tocsin of Liberty*, as to which group was doing a better job in assisting fugitive slaves and free blacks in Albany. The *Tocsin's* editors, along with the Reverend Charles Torrey, an Albany Underground Railroad figure, accused Stephen Myers of taking money that was meant for the Vigilance Committee, when in fact Myers had only accepted the money for the Northern Star Association to assist fugitives through it, rather than the Vigilance Committee.¹⁵

This apparent rivalry between the two groups continued for a few years, but by the middle of the 1840s, two key players in the Vigilance Committee, Abel Brown and Charles Torrey, met untimely ends. Brown, who was a Baptist minister who campaigned tirelessly against slavery, died of pneumonia in Western New York in 1844 while on a preaching campaign. Torrey was imprisoned in 1844 for assisting fugitive slaves in Maryland and died in prison in 1846.¹⁶ After their demise, hostility between the groups subsided, and leadership of the Vigilance Committee was turned over to Stephen Myers. He served as the committee's chairman for at least three years and as a member for more than twelve.

Myers' *Northern Star* newspaper lasted until 1849 when it merged with another publication, *The True American*, published in Cortland by Sam Ringgold Ward, another key black abolitionist. The new publication was based in Syracuse and was called *The Impartial Citizen*. It lasted only until 1851 when it declared bankruptcy.¹⁷ In 1855, Myers asked readers of yet another of his papers, the *Telegraph and Journal*, to subscribe to Frederick Douglass' Paper because he (Myers) was ceasing publication and felt that it would advance the anti-slavery cause to receive Douglass' paper.¹⁸

The 1850s were particularly challenging following the passage of the Fugitive Slave law that increased the penalties for people caught assisting freedom seekers. During the period, however, Myers continued his work and in 1856 was recognized by the Vigilance Committee through a resolution that survives on a broadside published that year. The resolution honors Myers' role in assisting 287 freedom seekers in a ten-month period ending in 1856. At the time he was chairman of the committee, and additional members were identified in the flier.

¹⁴ *The Tocsin of Liberty*, December 22, 1842.

¹⁵ *The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*, December 8, 1842.

¹⁶ Brown, C. S., *Memoir of Abel Brown*, Worcester, Mass.:Brown, 1849, pp 216-223; Lovejoy, J. C., *Memoir of Rev. Charles T. Torrey*, Boston: John P. Jewett & Co., 1847, pp 282-294.

¹⁷ Ripley, Op. Cit.

¹⁸ Frederick Douglass Paper, Rochester, New York, May 4, 1855.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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During the 1850s, Stephen Myers was cited in notices in many contemporary newspapers as having spoken around the region on behalf of anti-slavery activities, and having collected money on behalf of the Northern Star Association to assist fugitives. Often, he shared the podium with Frederick Douglass.¹⁹

In 1850, Myers was elected to the executive committee of the American League of Colored Laborers at their meeting in New York City. This organization was dedicated to "improvement and elevation" of African American workers of the period and its officers included S.R. Ward of New York, president, L. Woodson and Frederick Douglass, Vice Presidents, and an executive committee comprised of men from New York State, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Michigan.²⁰

In The Black Abolitionist Papers, editor C. Peter Ripley states that, "despite his detractors, Myers was widely recognized for his achievements in antislavery and civil rights reform. His Albany station had the reputation of being the best-run part of the underground railroad in the state. He sheltered many fugitives in his own home and personally raised funds to sustain the Albany Vigilance Committee. He helped lead the struggle to expand black voting rights in New York. Beginning in the 1830s, he coordinated petition drives, organized the Albany Suffrage Club, participated in several black state conventions, and served as president of the New York State Suffrage Association. His skillful and persistent lobbying of the state legislature in Albany strengthened the voting rights campaign. Myers also spoke out against proposals to subsidize African colonization with state funds. He sat on the executive committee of the American League of Colored Laborers in the 1850s, and was a delegate to black national conventions in 1847, 1855, and 1864. During the Civil War, Myers recruited soldiers for the black Massachusetts regiments."²¹

Financial support for the work Myers did came from many sources at different times. In 1856 the Vigilance Committee circulated a flyer appealing to the public for money and supplies to help the large volume of people coming through Albany.²² Some evidence suggests that Myers received financial support from a number of prominent New Yorkers who opposed slavery or had a concern for the poor. In one letter from Myers to John Jay, grandson of Justice John Jay, and reproduced in The Black Abolitionist Papers, Myers outlines how half a dozen fugitives had recently come to him for help. Myers also indicates how he spent the contribution provided from Jay. He even provides details on his bank arrangements.²³ At the same time, Mr. Myers worked with the New York State Temperance Union, and while involved with this group, he was known to have published the *Telegraph and Temperance Journal*.²⁴

¹⁹ Frederick Douglass: The North Star, Rochester, New York, February 16, 1849.

²⁰ The North Star, Rochester, New York, June 13, 1850.

²¹ Op. Cit., Ripley

²² Handbill "Vigilance Committee Flyer", original held by American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

²³ Op. Cit. Ripley, pp. 407-411.

²⁴ Op. Cit., Ripley, pp. 378-9.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany Co. New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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In 1863, Stephen Myers served on the organizing committee of a group that arranged for a celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation. According to a historic poster in the collection of the Albany Institute of History and Art, the program was held at Israel African Methodist Episcopal Church and featured Frederick Douglass as the principal speaker.²⁵ It is likely that Myers took the podium along with others, as it was a common practice for the two men to appear together at such meetings. In fact, Frederick Douglass identified Myers as a key individual related to the Underground Railroad in his reflections on it many years later. According to Wilbur Siebert, Douglass notes "fugitives were received in Philadelphia by William Still, by him sent to New York, where they were cared for by Mr. David Rugeles, and afterward by Mr. Gibbs, ... thence to Stephen Myers at Albany ...".²⁶

After the close of the Civil War, not much is known about Myers' life. William Henry Johnson, a long time African-American activist and Albany resident, provides the only known photograph of Stephen Myers. Johnson published it in his autobiography along with scores of pictures of others from the period.²⁷ As mentioned above, it is known that his wife died in 1865. In the early 1870s Myers' name disappears from the City Directories. There is no record of his burial at Albany Rural Cemetery nor at Hoosick Four Corners. Even Ripley merely places a question mark where the date of Myers' death should be. No one seems to know what Myers' final resting place or date of death.

Regardless of his obscurity by the time of his death, there is no question as to the importance of Stephen Myers during his lifetime. His dedication to the cause of freedom for fellow African-Americans was well known to citizens of Albany and beyond, and the building at 194 Livingston Avenue stands as the only known site where Myers lived and worked during the period.

Conclusion

Presently, the building is privately owned. The nomination sponsor, Albany's Underground Railroad History Project, hopes to acquire the building and interpret it as the home and office of Stephen Myers. Listing the property in the National Register will recognize the importance of Myers and the whole Underground Railroad in Albany. At the same time, 194 Livingston Avenue will become eligible for rehabilitation grants provided by the State of New York and other entities, to restore this property and showcase its architectural and historical significance for residents of Albany and beyond.

²⁵ Emancipation Proclamation poster of celebration at Israel Church of Albany, N.Y. for January 1, 1863. Held at Albany Institute of History and Art, Ruth Roberts Collection.

²⁶ Siebert, Wilbur. The Underground Railroad From Slavery To Freedom. The Macmillan Company, 1898 pp.125-6 (Reprinted, Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass. 1968).

²⁷ Johnson, William Henry. Autobiography of William Henry Johnson. Albany, N. Y.:Argus Press, 1900.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence
Name of Property

Albany County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 602030 4723714
Zone Easting Northing

2 18
Zone Easting Northing

3 18
Zone Easting Northing

4 18
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark L. Peckham, Historic Preservation Program Coordinator (See continuation sheet)
organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation date July 2004
street & number PO Box 189 telephone 518-237-8643
city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188-0189

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Stephen & Harriet Myers Residence
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany County, New York

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 1

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Stephen and Harriet Myers House
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany County, New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property boundary is outlined on the attached tax map.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the boundary that has been associated with the 194 Livingston Avenue since it was constructed in 1847.

Stephen Myers Residence, 194 Livingston Avenue
Albany County, New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 11 Page 1

Draft prepared by:

Paul and Mary Elizabeth Stewart
Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc.
PO Box 10851
Albany, NY 12201

Stephen and Harriet Myers House
194 Livingston Ave., Albany, Albany County, New York

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Photographs

Photograph key

Pictures taken May 2004

Photographer: Paul Stewart

Negatives: Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital District, Inc., Albany, NY

1. View of front façade and west wall
2. View of the rear of the building
3. Interior 1st floor looking toward front (north) wall in stairhall
4. Interior 1st floor front hall medallion detail
5. Interior 1st floor looking toward front (north) wall in front parlor
6. Interior, basement staircase
7. Interior 2nd floor rear room

SEE SHEET NO. 06.18
IN DISTRICT

207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300
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194

PART OF
ALBANY COUNTY
TAX MAP



ALBANY COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE
ASSESSOR

501	502	503	504	505	506	507	508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516	517	518	519	520	521	522	523	524	525	526	527	528	529	530	531	532	533	534	535	536	537	538	539	540	541	542	543	544	545	546	547	548	549	550	551	552	553	554	555	556	557	558	559	560	561	562	563	564	565	566	567	568	569	570	571	572	573	574	575	576	577	578	579	580	581	582	583	584	585	586	587	588	589	590	591	592	593	594	595	596	597	598	599	600
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ARBOR HILL HISTORIC DIST.

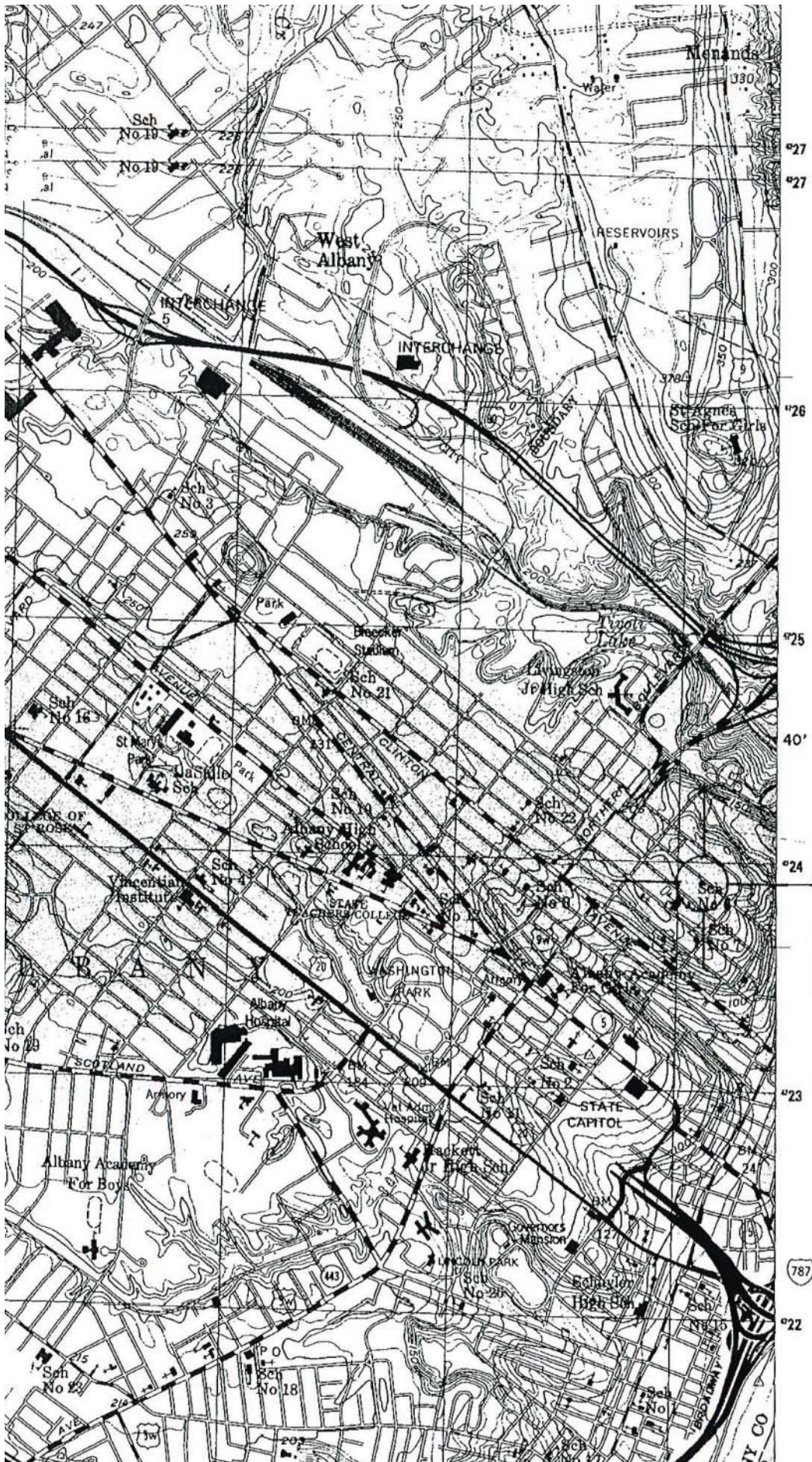
LIVINGSTON

STREET

THIRD

EAST

SEE SHEET NO. 06.19
IN DISTRICT



STEPHEN + HARRIET
 MYERS RESIDENCE
 194 LIVINGSTON AVE,
 ALBANY, ALBANY CO.,
 NEW YORK
 ALBANY QUAD
 ZONE 18

APPENDIX G:
EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT
BY: WALTER R. WHEELER
SEPTEMBER 8, 2005

Part III: Existing Conditions (Draft)

Introduction

The Myers house was surveyed on 7 and 13 November 2004 for this existing conditions report. Matt Kirk helped with measurements and note taking on 7 November and Bill Krattinger assisted on 13 November 2004.

The house was revisited on 20 August 2005, during which time the notes were revised and augmented. Changes in the existing conditions between site visits are noted. This draft report was completed from notes taken on those dates, and was completed on 8 September 2005 by Walter R. Wheeler.

Exterior

Yards

Front- The front (north) yard is comprised of a grassy area, 13'-6" wide and 13'-0" deep, extending across the east half of the front of the lot. A 3 ½" wide bluestone curb extends along the Livingston Avenue side of the grassy area. The remainder of the area in front of the house, including a narrow driveway and a 3'-0" wide slab between the grassy area and the house, is covered with concrete. This slab, which appears to date to the third quarter of the 20th century, is holding water against the building, and its surface is even with the sills of the basement windows. As a result the sills have rotted. They were covered with approximately 1" of silt as late as December 2004, when debris were removed from this area.

A 9'-6" wide concrete sidewalk extends the full width of the lot. Except in the area of the driveway and stoop, the sidewalk is separated from the 6" granite curb by a 4'-6" wide grassy area.

Back (south) yard- Several cleanup campaigns, the most recent held on 20 August 2005, have resulted in the removal of much debris and vegetation from the back yard. A few trees remain, the largest being a box elder (a.k.a. ashleaf maple) measuring 3'-0" in diameter and 9'-8" in circumference at about 4'-0" above grade. A

Stephen and Harriet Myers House Historic Structure Report

large elm stump is located approximately 20 feet from the south side of the house, on axis with the pier between the two south parlor windows. Its size, and that it likely is the remnant of a tree that died more than 20 years ago, mean that it was probably planted in the 19th century. A paved path extends approximately 32 feet from the south side of the current back porch. It is comprised of closely laid bluestone pavers 3'-0" wide, decreasing in width as the path gets further from the back of the house. This path may have originally terminated at a privy or other outbuilding.

West yard- This area was originally covered by the now-raised shop or small carriage shed associated with the Myers house. The fence formerly extending from the northwest corner of the house to the northwest corner of the property but now (August 2005) lying on the ground in pieces, incorporated two board and batten doors which likely were a part of a later version of that structure. The hardware on these doors dates to the late 19th or early 20th century, and so represents a replacement of the original carriage shed doors after the period of the Myers' occupancy. Several bluestone pavers were laid on the ground surface after the removal of the shed; they create an informal path to the rear yard.

Stairs, stoop, and porch

The original exterior stairs to the basement on the north side of the house were largely sheltered by the stoop. Three bluestone treads remain from this feature. The current stoop is wood, and appears to have been constructed c.1975. Poor repairs undertaken to the masonry in this area have removed any indication of connections or support of the original stairs, but it is likely that they were wood, and of similar form to those now in use. The west wall of the stoop's stone foundation has failed. Wood nailers and a paint line on the facade of the house at its juncture with the east wall of the stoop suggests the former location of a jamb for a door closing off the area under the stoop, and supports the interpretation that the stoop is approximately the same size as the original.

A small enclosed wood porch is located at the southwest corner of the house. None of its elements appear to predate the third quarter of the 20th century. It is in a poor state of repair. Doors and possibly other elements from the house are stored in this space, which could not be entered for this survey. Architectural salvage, including a large window frame and five late-19th century wrought iron stair railings, remain where they were found leaning against the south wall of the porch. Two of the railings may have originated from a late- 19th century version of the front stoop.

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The stairs leading to the back porch appear to date to c.1975, and survive only in fragments. Access to the basement is through steps underneath the porch. Because a substantial amount of debris remain in this area, their exact configuration and size remain unknown, but they appear to be constructed of bluestone (at least in part) and rise toward the south. Because of the current porch configuration above, access to this area is limited, and use of the stairs even if cleared of debris would be difficult because of poor headroom. Thus it appears that the current configuration of the back porch does not represent the original mid-19th century version of this feature.

Facades

Bricks on the front (north elevation) of the house are rubbed and are 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 4" laid in $\frac{3}{8}$ " mortar beds. Many of the mortar joints retain their original vining. The brick presents a running bond but is laid so that bricks measuring 8" square key into the center wythe of the front wall, which is three wythes thick. An area under the front stoop protects a small area of wall which retains multiple layers of dark brown, cream, and ochre paint.

The body of the house is constructed of molded brick 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ " in size with irregular joints generally $\frac{5}{8}$ " in thickness. The brick is laid in common bond with five courses of stretchers between headers. Window sills and lintels, and water table are brownstone.

North elevation- Brick is damaged and has fallen out particularly at the east end of this elevation, due to failure of the cornice gutter. Mortar has leached out of the upper portions of the facade, allowing a number of the remaining bricks in those locations to become de-articulated. Inappropriate repairs of the mortar joints, made with Portland cement or inappropriate bricks, were attempted in the lower part of the facade at both the east and west ends. The repair at the west end measures approximately 2'-0" x 8'-0" and has been patched with inappropriate bricks and mortar.

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At the east end an approximately nine square foot area was replaced during an aborted repair attempt which was halted before the outer wythe of brick was laid. There is a loss of approximately a 3'-0" x 6'-0" area of face brick, with an additional area nine square feet in extent of poorly repaired wall or areas repaired with improper bricks and/or mortar at the east end. There is additional mortar loss at the base of the north wall. An area east of the exterior stairs, approximately 24 square feet in size, has spalled.

A c.1975 screen door fills the opening of the original open vestibule. Aluminum storm window frames dating to the same era cover the basement, first and second floor windows. All are in a poor state of repair and much of the glass has been broken out, or the sash removed. Scars in the masonry to the right and left of the first floor door indicate the former locations of exterior light fixtures. These appear to have dated to the earlier 20th century; their removal has resulted in damaged areas of brick and mortar.

There are areas where mortar has been leached out under each window sill on the first, second, and third floors. There are approximately 30 spalled brick in the body of the wall in addition to those already noted. The second floor center, second floor west, and first floor east window sills, and lintels of both the basement windows have partially delaminated. Approximately 3'-0" of the east end of the watertable is missing.

West elevation- An area approximately 11'-0" high appears to have originally been covered by the carriage shed. Three wrought iron joist hangers remain attached to the wall; their sloping elevations indicate the shed roof of the former outbuilding. The mortar used in the areas of the wall intended to be covered by the shed is of a different type than the lime mortar used on the facades intended to be exposed to the elements. The mortar here is of a muddy consistency and absorbs water; a strong indication that this part of the wall was intended to be covered, and that the carriage shed was constructed at the same time as the house. There are some individual bricks which have spalled. There is visible bowing of the wall at the southwest corner of the building. Loss of brick along the bottom 2'-0" of about 6'-0" of the south end of the wall. A crack runs from about 4'-0" from the ground and 7'-9" from the southwest corner of the house. It widens as it rises to the top of the wall and is evidence of failure of the foundation at this location. A second crack, about 5'-0" long is located closer to this same corner. Original wrought iron wall ties remain in place on this elevation.

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South elevation- This wall is largely covered with cementitious or asbestos tiles. In the locations where these tiles have fallen or have been removed areas of failure of the brick wall underneath are evident. This condition was caused by poor maintenance of the south gutter, resulting in water traveling through the wall. A tarp currently covers this elevation; it was installed during the autumn of 2004 as part of the initial stabilization of the house.

East elevation- Substantial loss of mortar at the south end and at the top of this elevation due to water infiltration and failure of the two chimneys, which have both been removed down to the surface of the roof. An area approximately 64 square feet in extent is bowing at the second floor level behind the south chimney. An area of brick about 25 square feet in extent was removed or dropped out at the top of the wall where the south chimney formerly rose above the roof; about two-thirds of this area was poorly patched with inappropriate brick and mortar, and the repair left incomplete. Mortar has washed out of a similarly-sized area in the same location at the north chimney.

Interior

Basement

Rm B01

History

This space appears to have originally been used as a family dining room. This interpretation is consistent with Albany rowhousing of the period, and remained the typical use pattern for Albany houses into the early 20th century. More recently the room appears to have been used as an ancillary space to the kitchen (B02) and for storage.

Floor

Poured concrete which appears to have been laid within the past 20 years or so. The top of this floor is approximately 1½" above the original floor in this location, and so its installation has damaged the bottom portion of most of the woodwork in this room. The original floor finish is not known, but typically would be a wood floor over sleepers during this period.

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Walls

General- Door and window architraves are 4 ½" wide with a ⅝" beaded molding on the inside edge.

East- Plaster applied directly to brick. Northeast corner has signs of shelving in this location, but no indication of its having been enclosed. Failure of the plaster along most of this wall. Mantle in this room is the only original one present in the house, and is a late Greek revival type, apparently fabricated from pine. The capitals of its Doric pilasters show some influence of the Italianate style. Fragment of a chair rail and wainscot survives between the mantle and the closet door on this wall. Top of chair rail is 3'-2" above current finished floor. The mantle is likely to have been ornamental since the room appears to have originally been heated by a stove. Some bottom portions of the mantle are missing.

North- loss of wainscot, baseboard and chair rail. Window architraves are present, water damaged, due to raising of exterior ground surface. Lost of plaster on brick about 50% of wall area. Some failure of the brick in the northeast corner due to drainage problems (see exterior notes) Bricks have been removed in the east end of this wall for the installation of a meter.

West- Door architrave present. Plaster is on brick except over the door, where it is on machine-cut lath. Wainscot, baseboard and chair rail are all present, except between the door and the north wall, where the base and wainscot are largely missing. Early wrought iron hardware of unknown function located in this wall about 1'-0" from the ceiling and 4'-0" from the south wall.

South- Plaster on a non-structural brick wall, two wythes (9") thick. Angling of east jamb of door indicates failure in this cross-wall. Surface of the plaster is about 80% intact, much of surface has delaminated however. Door architrave present, door missing. Bottom parts of architrave missing. Jambs of door are splayed; the result of partial failure of this wall. The brick at the bottom part of this wall west of the door to the hall wall has all decomposed due to water damage. Wainscot, chair rail and base are largely intact.

Ceiling

Plaster on lath, largely intact except where later mechanicals have been cut through, notably in the northeast and southeast corners.

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Baseboard

Extensive debris in this room make it unclear if any baseboard survives.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

Door to closet B01A is extant. It is a four-panel door painted light yellow, which retains late-19th century hardware and what may be its original hinges. The door connecting B01 and B03 is extant. It has a surface-mounted lock of late 19th-century vintage.

Windows

The original sash are missing. The frames of anodized aluminum storm windows dating to the third quarter of the 20th century are affixed to the outside of the sash frames.

Heating

A closed stove pipe hole is located in the chimney breast. Given that there does not appear to have ever been a fire box in the chimney at this level it would appear that this space was always heated with a stove. A 1'-5" x 2'-0" cast iron grille is located on the south wall, west of the door. It appears to date to c.1885-1910, and likely was part of the first central heating system.

Lighting

An electrical outlet is located between the windows on the north wall. A fragment of a switch box is located on the south wall, east of the door.

Furnishings and Fittings

A number of the original doors for the house, and other architectural fragments found during the building clean-out, are stored in this room. Among these are four-4-paneled doors, likely from either the second or third floor since none are of the right size to fit the first floor door openings. One of the doors, which appears to date to the initial construction of the house, retains a small box lock with brass knob. An embossed metal patent disk records the manufacturer's name as "John Harper/Manchester."

Curtain rod holders, from the late 19th or early 20th century remain over the windows.

Rm B101A

History

This room serves as a closet for B101.

Floor

Not visible at time of survey, but it is likely to be an extension of the poured concrete slab in Room B101.

Walls

Plaster on brick on the north, south, and east sides; plaster on lath on the west wall. The condition of the wall surfaces could not be closely examined.

Ceiling

Plaster on lath.

Baseboard

Not visible at time of survey.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this space.

Doors

A four panel door, described under Room B01.

Windows

There are no windows in this space.

Heating

There is no provision for artificial heat in this space.

Lighting

There is no artificial light or electrical service to this space.

Furnishings and Fittings

Three shelves supported by pairs of wood cleats span the width of the closet. All appear to be original or early.

Rm B02

History

This space was the original kitchen of the house. Typical use patterns in the City of Albany suggest this, and the configuration of the chimney confirms this interpretation. The broad fire box, which likely originally contained a cast iron range or stove, would have been typical of the cooking facilities of the 1840s. The first furnace installed in the house (c.1885-1910) was located in the northwest corner of this room; subsequent installation of a 20th century furnace and hot water tank relegated this space to a utility room.

Floor

Concrete as in B01. Northwest corner cut back for furnace location.

Walls

General- Door and window architraves are 4 ½" wide with a ⅝" beaded molding on the inside edge. Wainscot, chair rail and base are the same as in Room B01.

South- Originally plaster on brick, but all plaster gone at present due to persistent water infiltration problems. Failure of wall at the southwest corner has involved the window and its architrave. Portions of the wainscot and window shelf appear to survive under plywood applied during an earlier repair attempt, but both window sills appear to have rotted. Fiberboard panels probably dating to the first quarter of the 20th century may represent the earliest attempt to deal with water damage in this area.

East- Near-total collapse of chimney breast. Some indication of location of flue and back of firebox remain, so these features could be reconstructed. The plan of the firebox is retained on the floor. Plaster on this wall, which was laid directly on the brick, is almost entirely gone. The north end of the wall at the closet retains plaster, wainscot, baseboard and chair rail.

West- 50% of the wall is in a state of collapse. It has been stabilized by two lally columns (installed in 2004) and a 4" x 6". Door architrave is largely intact, but dislocated by the failure of the wall. Fiberboard panels cover much of the remaining portions of this wall at present, but areas where they have been removed reveal the original plaster on brick finish.

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The area over the door lintel was framed and finished with plaster on lath. The extent of plaster preservation on the remaining portions of this wall is unknown but is probably limited. This wall probably also had a wainscot like that on the other walls in this room.

North- This brick wall was originally covered with plaster on its upper half and a wainscot along its lower portion. Much plaster in the area below 6'-0" above finished floor is gone. The plaster is largely covered by an early 20th century fiberboard product which conceals extensive failure of this wall, particularly at its west end. Wainscot, baseboard and chair rail are present only east of the door on this wall, but they are detached from the wall.

Ceiling

Originally plaster on lath. Lath was set on shims oriented north-south, nailed to the east-west laid first floor joists. Shims are continuous and generally in good condition, but lath and plaster were subsequently largely removed and replaced by gypsum board which has, in turn been partially removed.

Baseboard

Simple board trim with remnants of a quarter round foot.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

No original doors are present. An early 20th century door communicates with Room 301.

Windows

The original double hung sash are missing. Sash frames are present but much damaged by water. Sash weights have fallen out of the window frames.

Heating

This room was originally heated by the stove or range fit into the chimney. A central hot air furnace was installed in the northwest corner of this room, c.1885-1910 judging on the fragments of the system that remain in the house. This early furnace remained in situ when the concrete floor was laid, but was likely removed soon afterward. That system was replaced by a gas-fired furnace and hot water tank dating to the third quarter of the 20th century, installed in the southeast corner of the

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room. These were removed c. November 2004 as part of the overall building cleanup undertaken at that time.

Lighting and electric

A fragment of a pendant light fixture of nickel-plated metal remains in place in the center of the ceiling. Electric insulators survive on the west jamb of the north door. Two (3x and 2x) outlets on the north jamb of the west door and an electrical box over the same door. A duplex outlet is attached to the east jamb that door as well. One duplex outlet is mounted on the architrave of the west window on the south wall. Another is mounted on the south side of the southern architrave of the closet on the east wall. Most are surface mounted.

Furnishings and Fittings

Numerous remnants of the former heating systems and supply lines for various appliances remain in this room.

Rm B02A

History

This space served as a closet or pantry for the kitchen.

Floor

Debris covered the floor of this space at the time of the survey.

Walls

Original finish was plaster on brick or stone. Almost total loss of the plaster on the walls of this space. Some plaster on upper part of walls. Failure of the chimney to the south has involved the south wall of this space. There is no architrave on the door.

Ceiling

Plaster on lath, largely intact except at the south end.

Baseboard

None noted.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

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Doors

Missing.

Windows

There are no windows in this room.

Heating

There is no provision for artificial heating of this space.

Lighting

There is no artificial light or electric service in this room.

Furnishings and Fittings

Three shelves, which appear to be original. Bottom shelf is mounted about 3-6" above finished floor, at the top of the stone part of the foundation.

Rm B03

History

This room served as a hallway, connecting the basement level rooms with the exterior and the rooms above.

Floor

The floor appears to be dirt, with much rotten plaster lying on top of it. Typical finish for this space would have been a wood floor laid on sleepers. In some cases brick was laid as flooring. Portions of the original flooring materials may survive under the debris.

Walls

General- Plaster on brick and stone (lower 3-4 feet) walls on the north, west and south sides. Plaster has fallen off of the walls from a height approximately 5'-0" down to the floor. This probably caused by water infiltration. In some areas the presence of wood blocking in the walls is suggestive of this space having had wainscot similar to rooms B01 and B02. Some brown-coat plaster remains on the lower portion of wall B03 west.

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East- The southern 1/3 of this wall is in a state of total failure. Large crack north of the north door. Much of the bottom 2'-0" of this wall has deteriorated to the point where the brick will require replacement. Architraves of both doors are present, and apparently intact, although distorted by failure of the wall.

North- A concrete lintel replaces the original over the door in this wall. Plaster survives in part to the east of the door at a point 5'-0" above the finished floor. Poor repair of brick wall this location.

West- Some bowing at the bottom of the wall. Bottom 3'-0" + is stone. Plaster with light grey paint largely intact above a height 4'-6"/ 5'-0" above finished floor.

South- Bad repairs with Portland cement of brickwork. Large crack in wall to the east of the door. Original wood lintel in place. The present door is smaller than the original and the area around the present door frame has been filled with concrete on three sides. Southwest corner of the foundation bows out in this location, towards the top.

Ceiling

Plaster on lath on spacers oriented north-south. The lath is oriented east-west. Plaster is approximately 90% intact. Much of the plaster at the north end of the room, under the exterior vestibule (Room 104), has fallen. A total of approximately two square feet of plaster and lath were removed from two areas of the ceiling for the installation of pipes for a radiator in the hall (Room 103) above.

Baseboard

There is no baseboard in this room.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

Both original doors have been removed and replaced with hollow steel doors, c.1975. The present doors are not of the correct size for the original openings.

Windows

There are no windows in this room. It is likely that one or both of the doors in this space had sidelights or were fitted with glazed panels.

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Heating

No provisions for the artificial heating of this space are evident.

Lighting

Three pendant light fixtures survive as fragments. These fixtures date to the first quarter of the 20th century. What appears to be a doorbell or call button is located on the west wall of the stair enclosure.

Furnishings and Fittings

None noted.

Rm B04

History

The upper portion of this space serves as an enclosure to the basement stairs, providing a separation from the first floor hall. The bottom half of the enclosure forms a room under the stairs, apparently used as either a pantry or a closet.

Floor

Dirt. It may have been wood laid on sleepers originally but none of this material remains. The treads and risers of the staircase connecting the basement and first floor form the floor of the upper part of the stair enclosure. The treads show much wear. Most of the nosings have been worn off. The bottom step has collapsed.

Walls

General- North, south and east walls are beaded board partitions. Loss of support at the northeast corner makes bottom of stairs unstable.

West- Plaster (largely gone or delaminated) on stone or brick with whitewashed surface.

East, North and South- Upper and lower portions of the wall are painted beaded boards.

Ceiling

Area under the staircase forms the ceiling for the lower half of this space. It is whitewashed and fitted with shelves.

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Baseboard

There is no baseboard in this room.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

The original door in the lower half of this space (south end) is largely gone except for its hinges and a single rail which remains attached to them. A narrow door, probably for one of the closets in the house, is stored here. There is no architrave on the door.

The door leading to the first floor at the north end of the enclosure is present. It appears to date to the early 20th century, and is fitted with a glass panel. It has a simple board architrave and a box lock.

Windows

There are no windows in this space.

Heating

There is no provision for artificial heat in this space.

Lighting

There are no lighting or electrical fixtures in this space.

Furnishings and Fittings

Cleats for the support of shelving remain nailed to the undersides of the stringers.

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First Floor

Rm 101

History

This room appears to have always served as a parlor.

Floor

Decayed fiberboard, presumed to be laid over original 1" thick floor boards. No visible indications of a hearth at present.

Walls

East- Plaster on brick exterior walls. Chimney breast has either been rebuilt or repointed at this level and has been stripped of its plaster finish. That work has obscured the original stove hole location, opening size, etc. It appears that some of the rubbed brick utilized in the facade of the house has been incorporated into the chimney breast. It is unknown at present if they were introduced here when the chimney breast was renovated or during the original construction campaign.

North- Architraves of the two windows and their recessed panels are intact. Plaster is largely intact, and laid directly on brick.

West- Door architrave is intact. Baseboard missing, outline is present on the south side of the architrave.

South- architrave for double doors intact and measure 7 ½" wide. Plaster intact. Line of baseboard (although missing) is visible and will assist in its replacement. When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were plastered under the baseboards.

Ceiling

Recent gypsum board, possibly over original plaster and lath. No current indications of a ceiling rosette.

Baseboard

Baseboards have been removed from this room, but paint outlines on the door and window architraves will facilitate their replacement. The baseboards were 9 ½" high.

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Cornice

Heavy Greek revival run-in-place plaster cornice extends around room and chimney breast. The cornice is approximately 8" wide. Some damage, particularly at chimney breast and at northeast corner.

Doors

All doors in this room are missing.

Windows

Two double hung six-over-six sash light this room. Both sash of both windows are intact.

Heating

This room appears to have originally been heated with either a wood- or coal-burning stove. Few signs of this original heating system remain however. The central heating system later installed warmed this room by means of a large floor grille in the northwest corner of room 102. This was subsequently covered over, and baseboard hot water radiators were installed along the north wall c.1975. This radiator, and the board to which it was secured, was removed in December 2004.

Lighting

Outlet in the east side of the south wall. Stem for chandelier and some wiring for a pendant light fixture is located in the center of the ceiling. An outlet north of the north jamb on the west wall. Thermostat control in same location.

Furnishings and Fittings

A late 19th-or early 20th-century molded picture rail abuts the bottom edge of the plaster cornice. It extends around the entire room.

Rm 102

History

This room appears to have been used as a second parlor and dining room when the house was first occupied. Its later uses are not known at present.

Floor

Fiberboard measuring $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick, largely decomposed. In part it is laid over the original 1" thick floor boards, in some areas over late 19th or early 20th century heating

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grille, in some areas just over the joists. Late 20th century imitation wood paneling was also used in some areas.

Walls

East- Original plaster on exterior brick wall. Southeast corner of house has a cast iron drain, enclosed in an approximately 1'-6" square plywood enclosure. Chimney breast rebuilt or repointed, and has no plaster on it at present. A curb composed of two rows of stretchers has been created c.1975 around the hearth. Hearth measures 1'-9" deep and extends 1'-4" beyond the sides of the chimney. No hearth noted, no baseboards. The plaster has pulled away from the brick in some areas. Walls are presently (August 2005) dry, but very punky.

North- Only architrave around double doors, which are missing, is intact. Gypsum board laid over original plaster and lath.

West- Gypsum board over original plaster and lath. Door architrave intact, baseboard missing. Black mold at south end of this wall.

South- Original panels under windows are covered by plywood, but appear to be intact. They are presumed to be of the same design as those on the north wall of room 101. Original architraves are present. Plaster on masonry present, but with much spalling and water damage. It was retaining water in November 2004 but has dried out after the tarping of the building (August 2005). Much of the plaster has separated from the brick wall. Southeast corner is drain enclosure as noted above. When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were plastered under the baseboards.

Ceiling

Gypsum board screwed over original lath, possibly some of the original plaster remains. Evidence for a ceiling rosette, if one was installed, is not visible now.

Baseboard

Baseboard missing. Outline of baseboard is visible in the form of a paint line on the outside edge of the architrave.

Cornice

About half of the original run-in-place plaster cornice (which appears to be similar to the one in Room 101) is present. Interior edges are missing.

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Doors

No doors survive in this room.

Windows

This room is lit by two double-hung sash in the south wall. The east window has late 19th or early 20th century two-light upper sash with glass intact; the lower sash is missing. The west window has a two-light sash of similar vintage over a one-light sash, glass missing.

Heating

Heat may have originally been provided by a wood-burning fireplace. Broken brick in the approximate location where a flue hole could be expected to be located suggests that at one time the room was heated with a wood or coal burning stove. When central heating was installed in the house during the late 19th or early 20th century, a large grille was installed in the floor at the northwest corner of the room. This grille was covered over c.1975 when a baseboard radiator was installed on the south wall. This radiator, and the wood support it was attached to, were removed in December 2004.

Lighting

A fragment of a pendant light fixture is located in the center of the ceiling. Surface-mounted outlets are located on the west wall and on the east side of the north wall.

Furnishings and Fittings

None.

Rm 103

History

This room has always served as a stair hall. It contains a stair which rises to the third floor. The separate staircase leading to the basement is located under this staircase.

Floor

½" Plywood laid over original 1" floor boards.

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Walls

General- When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards.

West- Plaster on exterior masonry wall, largely intact, two large cracks at about 1/3 point from south end. Baseboard is missing. Stair goes up this wall. Most of the facings to the stringer are missing (2 nosing pieces survive) as are most balusters and much of the rail. Turned newel is present although detached, along with a portion of the bottom tread. Rail, balusters and newel to basement stairs are present and in a good state of preservation; wants two balusters. Approximately thirty balusters are missing from the run of stairs from the first to the second floor. Five treads of the first floor run of the stairs are damaged. The stairs have become detached from the west wall due to failure of the foundation at the southwest corner of the house. In August 2005 the space between the stringer and surface of the west wall measured about 1½" at the top of the stairs at the second floor level. Scattered spalling of surface layer of plaster, approximately 16 square feet total.

South- Door architrave is in place, but has been extensively damaged by careless installation of numerous locks and security devices. Plaster under the landing is intact. Baseboard radiator nailed to board (November 2004); radiator removed, board remains (August 2005). Substantial cracks in wall above landing. No baseboard at landing.

East- Original lath on plaster wall is largely intact, excepting an 8" x 6" hole. Door architraves intact. Plaster is water damaged at the base of the wall (August 2005) above area where wall has failed below, to a point approximately 4'-0" above the floor. Scattered spalling of surface layer of plaster, approximately 22 square feet total this wall.

North- Original door missing. Side lights are present; glazing on three of them is damaged, and all need re-puttying. Transom is intact. Plaster is intact over transom.

Ceiling

Plaster on lath. Ceiling rosette is of a simple turned design, and is intact. A 2' x 5' area of plaster has fallen.

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Baseboard

No baseboard present. It is believed that the baseboard was substantively like that in rooms 101 and 102. Paint lines survive on door architraves. The molding which formerly covered the top of the stair stringer at the west wall is missing; it may have had the same profile as the baseboard.

Cornice

Run-in-place plaster cornice is intact and appears to match those in rooms 101 and 102.

Doors

Door in south wall dates to c.1975 and does not have the same swing as the original. The front door is a six-panel Colonial Revival type door, dating to c.1975.

Windows

Two side-lights and a transom provide natural light to this space. Two of the lights are broken and one has a small crack. The glazing in the transom is all intact.

Heating

This space appears to have gone unheated until a baseboard radiator was installed c.1975. This radiator was removed by November 2004.

Lighting

An outlet and switch are mounted on the east jamb of the door on the south wall. Remains of a pendant light fixture dating to the early 20th century are centered in the ceiling rosette located above the base of the stairs.

Furnishings and Fittings

The stair newel at the top of the stairs leading to the basement is in place. Its cap is missing. Based upon the observed wear pattern, it has been missing for a long time.

Rm 104

History

This room has always served as a vestibule entrance to the first floor of the house.

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Floor

Plywood over tongue and groove boards. A large brownstone sill covers the thickness of the masonry wall at the north. Drainage problems have resulted in damage to the sill's inside surface.

Walls

General- cursory examination suggests that the original paint color was cream.

East- Plaster on lath. Chair rail, plaster 2" high, top is at 4'-5" above finished floor. Baseboard is missing, may have been same as that which forms a base for the pilasters on the door surround. Bottom 1'-0" of plaster is decayed. Area below the chair rail is cored into square panels imitative of ceramic tile. This work may date to the late 19th or early 20th century.

West- Same as east wall, substantial damage to surface of plaster, spalling and buckling.

North- 20th century door fit into original larger opening. Chair rail continues on both sides to jambs of door. No architrave ever on this door. Base missing as on east and west walls. Substantial cracking above door. Plaster has fallen away along the edge of the east jamb.

South- Wood door frontispiece, cornice with dentils, two square pilasters, transom overhead. Plaster present, in good condition generally. All components of frontispiece are present. Italianate molded caps.

Ceiling

Plaster on lath, intact but cracked.

Baseboard

None.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

The door is described in the text relating to Room 103.

Stephen and Harriet Myers House Historic Structure Report

Windows

There are no windows in this space.

Heating

There is no provision for the artificial heating of this space.

Lighting

There is no provision for artificial light in this space.

Furnishings and Fittings

Scars on the west pilaster on south wall indicate the former locations of a door bell and a mailbox. Two screws on the east pilaster mark another mailbox location.

Second Floor

Rm 201

History

This room appears to have always been occupied as a chamber or bedroom. It is currently painted blue.

Floor

Original wide (7 ½" to 8 ½") tongue and groove pine boards oriented north-south, no hearth. Boards run continuously under the partition between this room and 202. The floor retains traces of light grey paint.

Walls

General- When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards. Door architraves measure 4 ¾" wide; window architraves are 5" wide.

East- Plaster on brick. A 1'-4" x 2'-5" area is missing on the chimney breast at the stove hole location. No cornice in this room. Possibly there was one originally, about 1" high and 2" across along the ceiling. Some spalling due to water near the northeast corner of this wall.

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North- two windows architraves and sills are intact. Windows missing. Baseboard missing, plaster on brick, largely intact. Some buckling and spalling in the northeast corner.

West- Three doors with architraves are intact. That to Room 203 is the only one present. It has late 19th century or early 20th century rim lock. Baseboard is missing but can be reconstructed from outline on door architraves. Plaster on lath wall largely intact, some surface blemishes and gouges.

South- Gypsum board over plaster and lath. Door architrave present.

Ceiling

Plaster on lath has fallen in three areas totaling about 80 square feet.

Baseboard

No baseboard, but paint outline exists.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

The four-panel door to Room 202 is present but damaged and is currently stored in Room 202. Door to room 203 is a four-panel door with a late 19th or early 20th century box lock. The door is hung on later leaf hinges with globe-form drops.

Windows

This room is lit by two windows in its north wall. Both are [].

Heating

The chimney breast on the east wall of this room does not appear to have been fitted with a firebox. The now-closed stove flue hole suggests that an early if not original method of heating this space was with a freestanding coal or wood burning stove. In the late 19th or early 20th century a register for a hot air central heating system was installed in the floor between the two windows at the north end of the room, approximately 2'-0" from the wall. The grille measures 12" x 14". A baseboard radiator was later (c.1975) nailed to a board on the north wall; it was largely removed November 2004.

Stephen and Harriet Myers House Historic Structure Report

Lighting

A double outlet is located on the north end of the west wall and a second in the center of the south wall. No pendant light fixture was noted, but this portion of the ceiling has been damaged.

Furnishings and Fittings

The mantle formerly located in this room was approximately 4'-2" high according to remaining evidence.

Access to the chandelier located in Room 101 was via a removable board in the center of this room.

Rm 202

History

This room appears to have always been used as a bedchamber.

Floor

Original wide (7 ½" to 8 ½" wide) tongue and groove pine boards oriented north-south, continuous with those in Room 201. Traces of brown paint. Saddle is missing from door communicating with Room 203. Part of floor covered by 20th century brick hearth, laid directly on floor boards. A sheet metal patch about 1'-0" x 3'-0" in size and a second, approximately 2" x 5'-0" cover areas of damaged floorboards. Both appear to be quite old. A small area of the floor near the north jamb of the door communicating with Room 202B has been removed.

Walls

General- When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards. Door architraves measure 4 ¾" wide; window architraves are 5" wide.

East- Two closet doors gone. Architraves present. Baseboards missing throughout this room. Mantle missing, but its outline is present, as is the curved cast iron grille border. Plaster on lath/ brick is largely intact, but several large cracks caused by movement in the southeast corner are evident.

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North- Plaster on lath largely intact. Some spalling and some large cracks no baseboard, door architrave intact. There are several punky areas.

West- Door architrave intact. Large cracks in plaster, spalling. A 1' square area of plaster is missing.

South- c.1970s novelty paneling over spalling, water soaked, plaster. (This was removed c. November 2004). Window architraves and sills are missing. The plaster under the windows has extensive water damage.

Ceiling

Gypsum board (40% gone) secured to north-south oriented splines secured to the original lath, which remains in a good state of preservation. No plaster remains.

Baseboard

The baseboards have been removed from this room. Examination of the door architraves may reveal enough evidence to reconstruct their size and shape.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

The door communicating between this room and the hall (Room 203) is missing. It was likely a four-panel door like those that remain on this floor. It may be one of those stored at present (August 2005) in Room B01.

Windows

This room is lit by two windows in its south wall. Their undivided double-hung sash date to c.1975. They are currently covered by sheet plastic and tarp, and could not be examined.

Heating

The chimney in this room has a firebox, apparently for the insertion of a stove. The flue pipe survives under a later mirror which remains on the wall. In the late 19th or early 20th century a grille for a hot air heating system was installed in the floor near the south wall. Its size and alignment are similar to that in Room 201. Late 20th century baseboard radiators have been removed from the south wall (c. November 2004).

Stephen and Harriet Myers House Historic Structure Report

Lighting

A duplex outlet on the center of the north wall. A pendant light fixture in the center of the ceiling lacks a globe.

Furnishings and Fittings

On 20 August 2005, a fragment of a painted slate mantle was found in the back yard. It appears to date to c.1875-1890, is of similar style to the cast iron surround which survives in the room, and its shape suggests an opening of the same type and size as that indicated by the surround. These two fragments may have been installed in this room, or may represent a remodeling to a first floor mantle, which was later brought upstairs. Plaster on the face of the chimney over recent paint is evidence of a c.1975 renovation during which a stone mantle was installed, or reinstalled, in this location. This mantle was 3'-10" high and 4'-1" wide. An earlier paint line indicates the former presence of a mantle whose shelf was 4'-3" above finished floor. A recent (c.1975) brick hearth has a curb measuring 1'-5" x 4'-5"; its relationship to the original hearth in this location is not presently known.

A small portion of the floor is removable to provide access to the former gas chandelier in Room 102. A five-arm cast iron coat hanger is attached to the south jamb of the door to Room 202A. One of the arms is broken. It appears to date to c.1890. A telephone hookup is located on the south jamb of the door communicating with Room 202B.

Rm 202A

History

This space serves as a closet for Room 202. It appears to be part of the original fabric of the house, and to have always served this function.

Floor

Grey pvc tile over the original floor boards.

Walls

North wall is plaster on lath. South and east walls are plaster on brick. West wall is a plank wall. Some surface damage to plaster, otherwise largely intact. Fragments of wallpaper throughout. A 3" diameter hole on the east wall. Cracks and surface problems scattered throughout.

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When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards.

Ceiling

Wallpaper over pine boards. Traces of several layers of wallpaper throughout. Ceiling is lower in this room, it is not known if this is the original condition, but appears to be the case through comparison with Room 202B.

Baseboard

The baseboard, which extended into this space from the adjacent Room 202, has been removed. Its outline is preserved on the west wall.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

Windows

There are no windows in this room.

Heating

There is no provision for the artificial heating of this space.

Lighting

There is no provision for artificial light or electricity in this space.

Furnishings and Fittings

Wood cleats for shelving are present on north and south walls. Scars on the walls indicate the former presence of three shelves extending the width of the closet.

Rm 202B

History

Like 202A, this space appears to date to the original construction of the house, and appears to have always served Room 202 as a closet.

Stephen and Harriet Myers House Historic Structure Report

Floor

North-south oriented boards measuring 3" and 3 ½" in width, over earlier floor boards.

Walls

General- When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards.

Plaster on brick on north, east and south walls. Plaster is mostly gone on the south wall, approximately 50% missing. Water damage. No wallpaper, white and grey wash paint. Signs of shelving on west, north and south walls. Baseboard is missing. Large cracks in the east wall, other general surface problems.

Ceiling

Missing, but clearly originally dropped as in Room 202A, walls aren't plastered above it.

Baseboard

Missing.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

The door to this room is missing, but may be among those stored in Room B01.

Windows

There is no window in this room.

Heating

There is no provision for artificial heat in this room.

Lighting

There is no provision for artificial light in this space.

Furnishings and Fittings

A cast iron waste water pipe descends in the southeast corner of this space. It is 4" in diameter and is embossed "M. I. B. Co. AV. WT. 65 LBS" A 1" water pipe is also located in this corner. Both descend through holes cut in the floor.

Rm 203

History

The stairs from the first floor (Room 103) ascend into this space, which has always served as a stair hall.

Floor

Plywood nailed to original floor boards. Two stair treads on the run from the second to the third floors are damaged.

Walls

General- Plaster or plaster board was used to patch areas of the wall formerly covered by the baseboard when it was removed c.1975.

East- Door architraves are present; baseboard missing. Plaster at the south end of the wall is extensively damaged.

North- Pressed wood paneling over plaster on lath. No baseboard. Condition of wall uncertain.

West- Spackle coated plaster on brick. Some bulging, some cracks, needs replacement of top coat. No baseboard.

South- Below 3rd floor landing (see 103) above 3rd fl landing. Paneling over plaster on brick, no base present. There was one though.

Ceiling

Fiberboard acoustical tiles nailed to gypsum board (apparently), over lath and fragments of plaster. Approximately 50% of the tile is gone. No indication of a cornice in this room.

Baseboard

The baseboard has been removed from this space; paint lines indicate it was 8" high and preserve its outline.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

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Doors

The saddle form sill of the door between rooms 202 and 203 is missing, leaving the a hole open to the joists and lath of the room below.

Windows

This room is lit by a single window in its south wall. Its type and form are not currently known as it was covered on both sides at the time of the survey.

Heating

There is no provision for the artificial heating of this space.

Lighting

A light switch is located south of the door to Room 202 on the east wall. A fragment of a pendant light fixture dating to the early 20th century survives; it is located near the top of the dogleg part of the stairs.

Furnishings and Fittings- Staircase

About 4' length of rail present and seven balusters. The balance are missing. Face of stringer intact all way to top. Most nosings are in place, although several are missing.

Rm 204

History

This room served as a closet for Room 201. Due to its size, it may also have been used for the storage of documents during the Myers occupation.

Floor

Wide floor boards oriented north-south.

Walls

North- Plaster on lath, intact. Cleats for three shelves nailed into surface. Evidence of an earlier shelf arrangement in the form of nail holes for now-removed cleats.

West- plaster on brick, crack at bottom of wall about 1'-6" up. Base as above. One or two present cleats may be 19th century.

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South- shelving cleats nailed to plaster on lath. Baseboard, Same. 6'-4" ht. Clothes hooks nailer, extends along south and north walls. Plaster in this room is fairly rough, but intact.

East- simple 3" x 7/8" board architrave and door. Plaster on lath above door, intact.

Ceiling

Lath on plaster. Approximately seven square feet have fallen.

Baseboard

Simple 7" x 7/8" baseboard with beveled top.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

Missing.

Windows

There are no windows in this room.

Heating

There is no provision for the artificial heating of this room.

Lighting

There are no light fixtures or electrical service to this room.

Furnishings and Fittings

The east end of the floor has been cut to facilitate access to the chandelier in Room 103. Cleats and shelving as noted above.

Rm 205

History

Room 205 appears to have served as a dressing room or bed room.

Floor

PVC tile, apparently laid over original floor boards.

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Walls

General- When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards.

South- Paneling over lath on plaster. West half of wall is covered with paneling as above, half roughcast plaster on brick, some cracks and chinks. Some areas of detached plaster.

North- A wide crack extends from the southeast corner of the window to the floor. Window architrave is intact. Plaster on brick, intact, rough finish over coat of paint.

East- Door architrave intact but north jamb is damaged having been drilled for the installation of electrical service in this room. Several layers of wallpaper over the door on plaster and lath is visible. Greater part of wall is covered with paneling and a closet unit composed of plywood.

Ceiling

Acoustical tiles over plaster on lath. Plaster appears to be largely intact.

Baseboard

None. A paint line on the door architrave indicates the former size and outline of the now-removed baseboard. It appears to have been the same as that in Room 204.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

Missing.

Windows

This room is lit by a single double-hung sash in the north wall. The original top sash with six lights is present. The bottom sash is missing.

Heating

Baseboard radiator attached to a board along the north wall, removed c. November 2004.

Lighting

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The remains of a pendant light fixture are located in the center of the ceiling. There are no electrical outlets in this room.

Furnishings and Fittings

A large closet constructed of plywood and studs occupies the southeast corner of the room.

Third Floor

Rm 301

History

This room appears to have always served as a bedroom.

Floor

Original 8 ½" wide boards, oriented north-south, painted brown.

Walls

East- Plaster on brick, stove hole, no base. Generally in good condition. Much chipping at the corners of the chimney, and many small holes.

North- Plaster on brick. Board used as nailer for heater, no base.

West- plaster on lath, base removed. Several punky areas about 1'-0" total in area.

South- Simple door architraves measure 4 ¾" x ¾" with a ⅝" bead. Lath on plaster largely intact, two 3" dia. holes. Original base is preserved between the two doors. Some damage on door architrave to door leading to Room 305 caused by later installation of a lock. Some lost plaster about one square foot total (August 2005). When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were plastered under the baseboards.

Ceiling

Plaster on lath, about 50% is missing or in a state of fail

Baseboard

Simple 9" high base, possibly with bevel at top. Only a small area of baseboard remains, between the two doors on the south wall.

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Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

The door opening into this room from Room 304 is missing. The door communicating with Room 304A is a four-panel door with a box lock. Only the knob on the Room 304A side of the door survives; it is stamped brass.

Windows

The room is lit by two casement windows. They appear to date to c.1975. They were covered with plastic at the time of this survey.

Heating

Indications of a stove hole in the chimney breast suggest that this room was originally heated by a coal burning stove. There is no indication of a hearth.

Lighting

A light switch between the two doors on the south wall; a duplex outlet in the center of the west wall. Fragment of an early 20th century pendant light fixture in the center of the ceiling.

Furnishings and Fittings

None.

Rm 301A

History

This room serves as a closet for Room 301.

Floor

Wide boards painted brown.

Walls

General- Plaster on lath, except east wall. Each surface has substantial cracks, gouges and on south side two slices, but all seems to be stable. Door architrave is simple 3" x 7/8" board.

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Ceiling

Acoustical tiles on plaster and lath.

Baseboard

Simple baseboard, now missing all around. Its dimensions may be determined from paint lines.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this space.

Doors

Described under Room 301.

Windows

There are no windows in this space.

Heating

There is no provision for artificial heat in this space.

Lighting

There is no provision for the artificial lighting of this space.

Furnishings and Fittings

Apparently recent cleats in east to west wall for clothes rack/ Cleat in north and south walls for shelves high up-it is unclear re dates, although the upper pair appear to be early.

Rm 302

History

This room appears to have originally served as a bedchamber. Its most recent use was as a bathroom; it appears to have been converted to this use c.1975.

Floor

Plywood over original boards, but it is clear that at least 25% of boards have been taken up, particularly under the tub and in the southwest corner of the room.

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Walls

East- Plaster on brick. Plaster on lath above plate (poss same as in 301). Mostly intact but some areas of bad repairs. Also, substantial cracking on the west and north face of the chimney and on the wall north of the chimney. Plywood covered stud wall abuts the south face of the chimney.

South- Baseboard missing throughout this room. Plaster scar here. When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were plastered under the baseboards. Southeast corner blocking one foot square for former enclosure of the waste and vent pipes (also on east wall). Window architrave present. Fragment of baseboard radiator present. Plaster on brick, most present but covered with plastic sheeting. Most punky from water saturation. Walls dry but plaster has delaminated (August 2005).

West- Base missing. Tub enclosure covers much of this wall at present. Plaster on lath, largely intact, except bottom 1'-0" of wall, totally missing, including lath. One substantial crack, badly repaired. Bottom rail of a thick door (possibly from the first floor) has been used as a nailing block on the south end of this wall. It should be salvaged.

North- Simple 4 ½" wide board architrave with ⅝" bead survives around both doors. Plaster on lath, largely intact. Three large crack, one very badly repaired. About 2 square feet lost or punky.

Ceiling

Plywood over lath, most of the plaster is apparently gone.

Baseboard

Original 8 ½" x ¾" baseboard survives between two doors and east of east door of the north wall.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

Both the door communicating with the hall (Room 304) and that for the closet (Room 302A) in this room are missing.

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Windows

This room is lit by a single three-light casement window. The original sash are apparently missing; the window was covered by plastic and tarp at the time of this survey.

Heating

The former location of a stove hole in the chimney breast on the east wall of this room is evidence of an original or early use of a stove to heat this space.

Lighting

A single bulb pendant light fixture mounted in the center of the ceiling. Light switch between the two doors on the north wall. No outlets.

Furnishings and Fittings

A tub and toilet appear to date to c.1975. Pipes located on the east wall indicate the former location of a sink.

Rm 302A

History

This room appears to date to the original construction campaign, and appears to have been intended for use as a closet.

Floor

Wide boards painted brown.

Walls

General- Plain 3" board architrave. Plaster on lath all but east wall. Fairly rough finish. Painted white. Several substantial cracks on the north wall, gouge on the west wall. When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were plastered under the baseboards.

Ceiling

Acoustical tile, probably over lath and plaster.

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Baseboard

Baseboard has been removed. It may be possible to reconstruct it from paint lines. It was likely the same as that in Room 301A.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

Missing. The keeper to a box lock dating to the late 19th century remains attached to the door frame.

Windows

There are no windows in this room.

Heating

There is no provision for artificial heat in this room.

Lighting

There is no provision for artificial light or electrical service in this room.

Furnishings and Fittings

None.

Rm 303

History

This room appears to have been designed to serve as a small bedchamber. It most recently served as a kitchen.

Floor

Red pvc tile over 9" and 9 ½" wide boards painted brown (80%) of surface. PVC covers earlier linoleum.

Walls

General- When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards.

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East- Faux brick paneling over plaster on lath. No indications of survival of a baseboard in this room.

North- Three fifths of the wall is covered with faux brick, the balance gypsum board. Both probable laid over plaster on lath.

West- gypsum wall board over plaster on lath. Architrave is a simple 4 ½" board with ⅝" bead. Base may survive in the form of a paint line.

South- Window architrave and shelf survive. Plaster on brick largely present but 50% down to grey coat and delaminating.

Ceiling

Acoustical tile over plaster on lath. One tile was removed (August 2005) to reveal cracked plaster largely detached from lath.

Baseboard

There is no baseboard in this room. It is likely that there was one originally however, and that it could be reconstructed from paint lines on the door architrave. The edges of the architrave are at present obscured by later wall treatments.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

The door opening into this room is missing.

Windows

This room is lit by a single three-light casement window. Its condition and period are obscured by the present covering of plastic and tarp.

Heating

There is no evidence to indicate that this space was artificially heated prior to the installation of a baseboard radiator nailed to board at base of south wall, c.1975. Removed c. November 2004.

Lighting

Pendant porcelain-based light fixture mounted on the center of the ceiling. Light switch north of the north jamb of the door on the west wall. Telephone hookup south

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of the south jamb on the same wall. A duplex outlet on the east wall. Gas hookup on the east wall. Water hookup for a sink on the east wall.

Furnishings and Fittings

None.

Rm 304

History

This space was originally designed as a hall, giving access to the four bedchambers on this floor and the small room that contains the ladder to the attic. The room was divided in two when this floor was converted to an apartment, probably c.1975. The partition separating the two portions of the hall was removed some time before December 2004.

Floor

Plywood over original boards (presumed).

Walls

General- When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards. Door architraves measure 4 ½" x ¾" with a ⅝" bead, and have a 1 ¾" molded edge.

West- Plaster on brick, with later roughcast top coat in good condition. At the north end of this wall (fronting Room 305) the wall is plaster on lath, covered with plywood paneling. Part of the architrave to the door for Room 305 has been chopped out.

South- Plywood paneling covers plaster on brick, probably water logged. Window architrave and shelf intact. Landing is plywood over boards. Railing is recut wood boards, nailed to what seems to be a recent 4" x 4" piece of wood.

East- Plaster on lath. At the south end of this wall, at the landing between the second and third floors, the plaster and lath is extensively damaged. Much of the wall is covered with plywood paneling. Plaster at the interior corner has mostly fallen out where the corner bead trim is mounted.

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North- Original plaster on lath, much of which is currently covered with plywood paneling. Two door architraves intact. Some loss to top coat of plaster. Pressed wood paneling on 30% of wall.

Ceiling

Acoustical tiles on spacers nailed to plaster on lath. Large areas of visible lath. Much plaster either detached or missing (~30%).

Baseboard

Removed. Paint lines remain on the sides of various door architraves.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

Doors are described in the texts relative to the rooms they open into or give access to.

Windows

This room is lit by a single six-light casement window, apparently dating to c.1975. It fits poorly in the masonry opening. The original window was likely a double hung window.

Heating

There is no provision for artificial heat in this room.

Lighting

None noted.

Furnishings and Fittings

Two riser facings are missing on the staircase. The handrail and all of the original balusters are missing, and have been replaced with a poorly constructed rail constructed from scraps of wood. Approximately 20 balusters are needed on the third floor.

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Rm 305

History

This room houses a ladder that provides access to the attic.

Floor

Boards with carpet attached over it.

Walls

General- The original finish of the plaster in this room appears to be a grey coat.

East- Plaster on lath. Simple 2" architraves, baseboard missing, present on all other walls. Rough plaster in this room, whitewashed. Some bowing to plaster above door.

North- Plaster on lath, largely intact, three 1/16" wide cracks.

West- Plaster with rough finish, on brick. Many areas delaminating, 10% of plaster is in a state of total failure.

South- Plaster on lath, rough, largely intact. Some gouges.

Ceiling

Lath and plaster with a rough finish. About 90% of plaster has fallen. Hatch to attic occupies most of ceiling. It is trimmed with simple [] boards.

Baseboard

A 6" x 1" board with beveled top.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Doors

A four-panel door, on original leaf hinges. No lock set. Current knob lock possibly over a box lock on outside.

Windows

There are no windows in this space.

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Heating

There is no provision for the artificial heating of this space.

Lighting

There is no provision for artificial light in this space.

Furnishings and Fittings

A ladder with eight rungs (one of which is detached but present in the room) gives access to the attic. It leans against the north edge of a small opening in the ceiling. A coat rack measuring 2 ½" x 7/8" x 3'-10" with six iron hooks is stored in this room, and may have originated in this space.

Rm 306

History

This room was used as a bedroom.

Floor

Wide (10") boards with brown and red paint. Hole cut in floor for gas chandelier access below.

Walls

General- When the baseboards were removed plaster or plaster board was installed in their place. It is not currently known if the walls were originally plastered under the baseboards.

East- Plaster on lath. Substantial cracks, several holes but largely intact.

North- Plaster on brick, largely intact, some spalling, 25% some holes. Substantial crack, ¼" wide under window extending to floor.

West- Gypsum board over plaster on brick. The small areas of plaster currently visible are in poor condition.

South- Plaster on lath. West jamb of door architrave gone, remainder is simple board trim with beaded inside edge. Three cracks, several digs in the wall, some small areas of loss. Otherwise the plaster is intact.

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Ceiling

Gypsum board, probably mounted to plaster on lath.

Baseboard

The baseboard has been removed in this room. It is unknown if the door architrave preserves its outline.

Cornice

There is no cornice in this room.

Door

A c.1925 five-panel door replacing the original in this location is present but detached from the door frame. The saddle-sill is missing. [All saddles are missing on this floor.]

Window

The room is lit by a single casement window in the north wall. It appears to date to c.1975. Indications of an earlier casement type window are evident.

Heating

Baseboard radiator attached to a board on the north wall. Removed sometime after November 2004 (August 2005).

Lighting

Fragment of a pendant light fixture dating to the early 20th century, similar to those seen in rooms 103 and 203. There is a duplex outlet in the center of the east wall.

Furnishings and Fittings

None.

Attic

General notes

The attic is unfinished. Roof is comprised of plywood laid over the original spacer boards, which supported wood shingles or possibly a metal roof.

A two-step ladder to the scuttle and roof hatch (now covered with plywood) is located just to the east of the ladder leading from Room 305. A few loose boards laid across the joists serve as flooring. Brick exterior walls on east and west sides were left exposed, not covered with plaster.

APPENDIX H:
THE MYERS RESIDENCE: EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT
STEPHEN TILLY, ARCHITECT
AUGUST 28, 2006

Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence



Existing Conditions Report

August 28, 2006

Stephen Tilly, Architect
22 Elm Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
914-693-8898
www.stillyarchitect.com

Prepared for the
Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc.
by:

Stephen Tilly, Architect
22 Elm Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
914-693-8898
www.stillyarchitect.com

STEPHEN TILLY, ARCHITECT PROJECT TEAM

Stephen Tilly, Principal
Margaret Gaertner, Preservation Specialist
Alison Napoli, Architectural Intern
Prentice V. Clark, Administrator

Existing Conditions Report

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completed by Robert Silman Associates, P.C.	



PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

This study was commissioned by the Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc. in October, 2005 and completed by the firm of Stephen Tilly, Architect (STA) based in Dobbs Ferry, NY. It examines the structure known as the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence, located at 194 Livingston Avenue in Albany, New York. The building is a mid-nineteenth century, three story brick structure with brownstone trim and wood joists, rafters and interior framing.

Members of our staff, including Preservation Specialist Margaret Gaertner and the firm's principal, Stephen Tilly, visited the site on March 3, 2006 and April 27, 2006 to compile the information contained in this report. The survey of existing conditions is based solely on a visual examination of readily accessible spaces; no openings were made to reveal concealed conditions, no systems were tested, and no materials analyses were conducted. Each of the topics addressed in this report should be studied more thoroughly both individually and as part of a broader study and planning effort encompassing the entire site.

The report is divided into exterior and interior sections. Descriptions of the interior of the building include a brief narrative description of the conditions found in each room and the building systems. Following the descriptions are recommendations and a prioritized list of critical work. Existing condition plans are based on those drawn by TAP (Troy Architecture Project) on June 22, 2004 and provided to STA by the client. All photographs were taken by the staff of Stephen Tilly, Architect, except those appearing in the Structural Report completed by the structural engineering firm of Robert Silman Associates, P.C.

Based on our site visits and the analysis involved in preparing this report, it is likely the restoration of the Myers Residence will occur in two phases: Stabilization and Restoration. Stabilization will include work necessary to stabilize the building, such as correcting structural issues, sealing the building, and arresting deterioration. At some point after the building is stabilized but before interior finishes are restored, building systems such as mechanical equipment, plumbing and electrical wiring will be installed. Restoration will involve interior work such as restoring plaster, millwork and other finishes. These two phases will be referred to throughout this assessment.



The front or north façade of the Myers House faces Livingston Street in the Arbor Hill neighborhood of Albany, New York.

Exterior



Wrought iron ties visible on the west façade strengthen the connection between the joists and the masonry.

The Myers House is a two-and-a-half story structure on a raised cellar. The front façade is three bays wide, with a side hall entrance. The front has regular fenestration and Greek Revival details, including a cornice and an entablature over the entrance. The exterior is brick, with a brownstone water table, lintels and sills. The window frames, sash and cornice are wood. The shallowly pitched gable roof is currently finished with asphalt shingles.

The front (north) façade is built of high quality, dense bricks with sharp edges laid in running bond (no headers are visible); eight-inch square bricks knit the three wythes together. The side and rear walls are built with lesser quality bricks laid in common bond. On the front façade, the bricks are slightly corbelled to form a cornice that conceals a built-in gutter. It is not known how the rear gutter was constructed as this side is covered in blue tarps and could not be inspected. Before selective removals begin, this condition should be investigated and documented.

The floor joists and roof rafters are sawn lumber; the joists run east-to-west as does the ridge of the roof. Wrought-iron ties fixed to the joist ends and rafter plates run through the masonry and secure the east and west walls to the framing. These ties are clearly visible on the west façade of the building and in the interior of the attic. It is likely that the roof was originally covered in wood shingles, which are visible in the attic, but it is now covered in asphalt.



Door and window openings on the north façade are enriched with brownstone lintels and sills.

GENERAL EXTERIOR

The exterior walls have suffered extensive damage due to the failure of the built-in gutters and the removal of the leaders from the building. Water that should have been collected and diverted away from the building has instead flowed down over the walls and saturated the building materials. Repeated wetting has caused the lime to leach out of the mortar. In some places, the breakdown on the lime binder is so severe the mortar is reduced to sand. Repeated freeze-thaw cycles have broken down both bricks and mortar, further weakening the walls.

The water has entered the building via three primary routes. First, failed gutters allowed the roof runoff to dump onto the north and south walls. On the south façade, the water soaked into to the ground, damaging the foundations; on the north façade, a concrete surface prevented the water from soaking into the soil. Instead, the water splashed off the hard surface back onto the building. This water caused extensive damage to the rubble stone foundations and the interior masonry (see Cellar, page 7).

Second, water entering the tops of the brick walls through failed gutters has deteriorated both the bricks and the mortar, causing weakened masonry at the tops of the north and south walls. This damage is evident at the cornice on the north wall, where mortar joints have eroded and bricks have shifted out of alignment. However, the damage is most severe in the south wall, several areas of which appear to be near collapse.

Finally, water that was collected by the gutters has flowed into the inlets, but since there were no leaders to direct it, the water flowed down the corner of the building and eroded the mortar joints. This damage is most evident at the northeast corner of the building. The lower portion of this wall has suffered partial collapse, probably the result of weakened mortar joints. Similar damage will certainly be exposed on the south façade when the tarps are removed. During the Stabilization Phase, extensive repointing and some areas of rebuilding will be necessary.

NORTH FAÇADE

The higher quality bricks used to construct this face are generally in good condition with minimal areas of spalling. The mortar, however, is in poor condition due to the failure mechanisms previously discussed. An entire section of brick masonry is missing at the east end of the north façade and requires rebuilding. Although presently braced by temporary supports, this area should be reconstructed immediately as the wall is precariously thin. The brick cornice also requires serious repair work (repointing, possible partial reconstruction) which will be completed during the Stabilization Phase.

The brownstone water table, sills and lintels are all deteriorated (spalling), and at the east end, above the collapsed area of brick, an entire piece of the water table is missing. The damage is generally worst at the east end, where the leader was removed.

The missing watertable section should be replaced in-kind during the Stabilization Phase. The best source for replacement material is stone recycled from a less prominent part of the structure – from a rear façade, for exam-



Brickwork at the east corner of the north façade has partially collapsed and requires immediate attention (note temporary support).

ple – which is not an option for this building. Salvaged brownstone from a demolished local building may provide an acceptable material match.

Unfortunately, there are no easy solutions to the problem of repairing other damaged areas of the building's brownstone. Composite patching will not weather the same as the surrounding stone, resulting over time in a splotchy appearance. Unless the material is an exact match (which is difficult to verify without documentation), stone dutchmen repairs may produce the same result. Limited patching – small areas at the bottom of the spall, as needed to prevent water from collecting on the exposed horizontal face of the brick below – may be the best solution.

Beneath the stoop is an entrance to the cellar. The door has been replaced, and the surrounding opening has been inappropriately repaired and remains unstable. The opening will be rebuilt during the Stabilization Phase and then an appropriate door and frame can be installed.

The concrete surface along this face is accelerating the water damage. It will be removed prior to the Stabilization Phase so the concealed masonry behind it can be repaired. The Owner may wish to remove this surface sooner rather than later. The concrete should be removed using hand tools because vibrations from a jackhammer could damage the unstable building.

During the Restoration Phase, cosmetic and historically inappropriate elements will be addressed. These include repairs to the cellar windows which have rotted due to the raised grade and concrete surface. The existing entrance stoop is a historically inappropriate replacement from the 1970s. The stoop is in good repair and should be serviceable through the Stabilization Phase; during the Restoration Phase, it will be removed and replaced with a historically accurate version, perhaps patterned after a historic image or a surviving example in the neighborhood.



Weakened masonry at the south end of the west façade (note severely eroded mortar joints) has partially collapsed.

WEST FAÇADE

The west façade is the gable wall and has no windows or other openings. At the south end, the lowest courses of bricks have suffered partial collapse. This weakened area likely resulted from the same roof runoff and foundation issues that affected the south façade. The missing and compromised masonry must be rebuilt during the Stabilization Phase. In addition, much of the

150-year-old mortar on this wall will require repointing during the Stabilization Phase.

From the interior of the building it is evident that the stair has pulled away from this wall. A large crack visible on the exterior is also apparent on the

interior plaster in the same location. It is not clear whether the separation was a result of the stair moving or the exterior wall moving/settling; however, during the planning for the Stabilization Phase this question should be further investigated.

SOUTH FAÇADE

The south wall is severely compromised. During the site visit it was covered in tarps, making the survey process difficult; most of the observations were made by pushing the tarps out of the way while standing inside the building. It should be noted that these tarps have successfully halted water infiltration and should remain in place.

Fenestration on the south wall is irregular, with the western openings depressed to accommodate the stair landings. Behind the tarps, the rear wall is covered with asbestos shingles over wood furring strips. The shingles were probably installed to hide the damage to the masonry wall. Unfortunately, they did nothing to correct the source of the damage – the water infiltration – and the deteriorated condition of modern finishes on the interior indicate that the water continued to enter the building. It is likely that the damage (dissolution of the lime in the mortar, material breakdown from freeze-thaw cycles) continued behind the shingle surface.

Inspection of the brick masonry revealed that the brickwork below the window openings is bulging. Water entering through failed and rotted wood window sills has weakened the mortar, allowing the bricks to move out of position. Water-generated damage in the cellar has moved beyond the exterior masonry into the contiguous partitions. In the cellar, entire areas of brick masonry have collapsed.

During the Stabilization Phase, shoring will be installed and the south wall will be repaired. Extensive repairs including partial rebuilding should be anticipated. If a new footing and foundation are required, archaeology work will also be completed. The wall must be thoroughly documented through measured drawings and photography after the tarps are removed and prior to any removals of historic fabric. The Owner may wish to determine the feasibility of having a stereo photogrammetric elevation made of this façade.

During the demolition removal work, all surviving historic fabric must be carefully removed, catalogued and stored for reinstallation. All the bricks should be carefully salvaged for reuse. New brick can be used on the inner



The south façade is presently covered in tarps to stop ongoing water infiltration. The rear porch, a later addition, is probably not salvageable.



The masonry at the gable end on the east façade is visibly bulging.

(hidden) wythes, and the salvaged brick can be used for the exterior wythe (assuming it matches, i.e. the same brick was used during the initial construction of the building). After the masonry repairs are completed, restored or replicated window frames and sash can be installed to advance the process of sealing up the building.

As the joists run east-west, only the first few will require replacement due to water damage (if the joists had run north-south and thus been pocketed into the south wall, much more costly repairs would have been needed).

The rear wood porch – not an original feature – is severely damaged. It will be removed during the Stabilization Phase to accommodate the shoring needed for the stabilization work. If the rear entrance is determined to be the best access point for wheelchair uses, a handicap-accessible ramp may be constructed along this façade. If not, a more historically appropriate stair and landing can be constructed during the Restoration Phase.

EAST FAÇADE

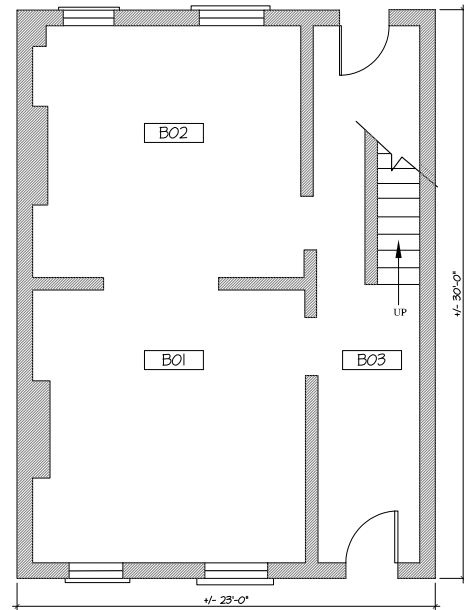
The east façade is partially concealed by an adjacent residential structure and thus only the exposed portions could be surveyed. The most obvious issue on the east façade is a bulge in the brick masonry in the gable end. The likely source of this damage is water infiltration through failed chimney flashings (the chimneys have since been removed). Bricks in this area have clearly shifted out of plumb and will require dismantling and reconstruction during the Restoration Phase. The Owner should consider rebuilding the chimneys when that work is completed.

The cellar is divided into two rooms (Rooms B01 and B02) and a side hall (Room B03). A north-south “stiffening” partition separates the hall from the two rooms; a second brick partition running east to west separates Rooms B01 and B02.

The north-south “stiffening” wall has suffered partial collapse at the north end and has shifted out of plumb at the south end. The partial collapse is likely the result of failed mortar resulting in a weakened masonry assembly. Due to failed gutters and roof runoff (the gable runs east to west, thus approximately half of the roof runoff is dumped on the south façade and foundation), the water entered through the porous exterior wall and saturated the south end of the contiguous stiffening partition. The water dissolved the lime in the mortar, causing it to lose cohesion. In recent years, the cellar has not been heated so the wet mortar has been undergoing freezing and thawing cycles in the winter, further accelerating its breakdown.

This partition requires complete reconstruction. When it is reconstructed, a proper footing must be provided. The replacement wall could be brick, reinforced concrete masonry units, or steel columns. Brick is historically accurate but is also the most expensive solution. As the wall structure will be covered in a historically appropriate finish and never seen by the public, a less expensive solution – concrete or steel – seems a more appropriate choice.

The brick masonry in the east-west partition has also suffered severe deterioration caused by moisture. During the March site visit, frost and ice were clearly visible in the bricks of the east-west partition. The source of the frozen



Schematic Cellar Floor Plan

NORTH
June 22, 2004



During a winter visit, ice was visible in the bricks in the east-west cellar partition.



During a spring visit, damage was visible in the bricks in the east-west cellar partition, where the ice has melted.



Repeat freeze and thaw cycles have left the bricks in the cellar walls brittle and friable.



The south end of the brick stiffening wall between the cellar hall (B03) and the former kitchen (B02) has suffered partial collapse.



Removal of the historic floor and deterioration of the stringers have left the bottom of the stair to the cellar unsupported and precarious.

moisture is not readily evident, but most likely its source is dampness rising from the underlying soil. Most of this moisture is sealed in by the relatively non-porous concrete floor; the trapped moisture looks for the easiest means of travel – the relatively porous old brick and soft mortar wall – to escape. A large diagonal crack in the brickwork near the door indicates settling of this partition as well.

Finishes throughout the cellar are deteriorated or missing. All of the original floors have been removed and a concrete floor poured in two of the rooms. When the concrete floor is removed, the exposed areas should be carefully examined for evidence of an earlier floor.

The walls are finished with plaster parged directly on brick and the ceilings are plaster applied over lath. Most of the plaster has failed, and sections of lath are missing as well. It is likely that necessary stabilization work will result in additional loss of plaster. Samples of wall and ceiling plaster from several locations in each room should be taken, catalogued and stored for future materials and paint analysis.

The stair to the cellar is severely deteriorated. Treads are worn and moisture damage has caused the bottom of the stringer to rot away. Removal of the historic wood floor has left the bottom of the stair unsupported and floating above the existing dirt floor.

Room B01

It is likely that Room B01 originally served as a dining room. It is finished with a wood wainscot and plaster walls and ceiling. The original floor – now missing – may have been wood. On the east wall, a chimney breast retains a Greek Revival wood mantelpiece, the only one found in the house. South of the chimney breast, a closet with original door and frames survives.

At an unknown date, a concrete floor was poured in the two main rooms of the cellar. This concrete floor remains in place and no evidence of an earlier or original floor is visible. During the Restoration phase of the current work, the concrete floor will be removed and a historically appropriate floor – likely, a wood floor over sleepers – will be installed. The sleepers should be of an environmentally friendly, treated lumber such as Timbersil and be installed over a heavy

gauge moisture barrier, with water-resistant rigid insulation such as extruded polystyrene inserted between the sleepers.

The walls in this room are plaster parged directly on brick. On the east and north wall, the bottom of these exterior walls are rubblestone and thicker than the brick sections above them. Much of the plaster in this room has severe moisture damage and has delaminated from the walls. On the south wall, a chair rail and a few remnants of a beaded board wainscot remain in place. Whitewash on plaster below the chair rails suggests the wainscot was installed after the initial construction of the building. Unfortunately, the severe deterioration of the plaster wall finishes will require their complete replacement.



Both plaster and lath are missing from the ceiling in B02.

The ceiling is plaster on lath. It does not have a cornice or other embellishments. It is largely intact and may be salvageable.

On the east wall, an original mantelpiece, closet door and trim remain in place. The closet fills the recess south of the chimney breast. A small section of wainscot and chair rail remains in place between the mantelpiece and the closet. All of the millwork is painted and in salvageable condition. Doors, mantel and door and window trim should all be documented, salvaged, catalogued and eventually restored during the Restoration phase.

Room B02

Historically, Room B02 was likely used as a kitchen. The chimney breast on the east wall has suffered partial collapse, making it difficult to determine the type of stove or range originally used here. More recently, a furnace was installed and this room served as a mechanical space.

At an unknown date, a concrete floor was poured in the two main rooms of the cellar. Temporary columns installed in the southeast corner of this room have overloaded the concrete floor and caused it to crack. The temporary columns sank and moved out of alignment; they should be adjusted immediately. It is likely that any stabilization work will require shoring, and the extant concrete floor will not be capable of providing support for a shoring system. When the concrete floor is removed, the exposed floor and lower walls should be carefully examined for evidence of the original or other earlier floors.



Ongoing water infiltration has destroyed many of the finishes in Room B02.

All of the finishes in this room are severely deteriorated. Wall and ceiling plaster is severely deteriorated or missing. Deterioration of surrounding masonry has caused displacement of window jambs, door frames, and casings. It is likely that necessary shoring work will cause further damage and loss of historic fabric. All surviving fabric – regardless of its condition –

should be photographed in situ, cataloged, and carefully removed. Samples of wall and ceiling plaster should be taken for future paint analysis.

Room B03

In this room, unlike in Rooms B01 and B02, no concrete floor was installed. The floor is dirt and covered in debris. The debris should be carefully examined and removed and the floor below inspected for evidence of an earlier or original floor.



All of the brickwork at the south end of the stiffening partition between B02 and B03 has collapsed. Temporary posts and beam support the first floor.

The walls were plaster parged directly on brick and all the plaster is severely deteriorated. Much is missing altogether and all will likely require replacement. Elevated moisture levels resulting from moisture rising through the dirt floor may have accelerated deterioration in this room. Physical evidence on the walls – a ridge in the plaster and wood nailers – suggests this room had a wood wainscot on the east wall, near the door. The ceiling is also severely damaged. Most of the plaster is missing and the exposed lath is deteriorated.

The stair to the first floor is severely deteriorated. Removal of the finished floor and deterioration of the stringers have left the bottom of the stair unsupported and unstable. The ends of the stringers should be replaced in-kind with a Dutchman-type repair, and the treads which are most worn should also be replaced in-kind.

The first floor is divided into two rooms and a side hall. The two rooms are connected with double doors and likely served as front and rear parlors. In the hall, a stair to the second floor ascends along the west wall towards the south.

Many of the first floor details and finishes, such as wood floors and plaster walls and ceilings, remain in place, as does the millwork, including door casings and window trim. However, as was found on the other floors, all of the baseboards have been removed. On this floor, all of the doors and their hardware are missing as well.

No light fixtures remain in place on the first floor. Only the junction boxes on some of the ceilings are still present to indicate the location of 20th-century electric light fixtures. Evidence of 19th-century gas lighting was not visible; during the Stabilization Phase, such evidence – in the form of gas pipes, for example – may be exposed.

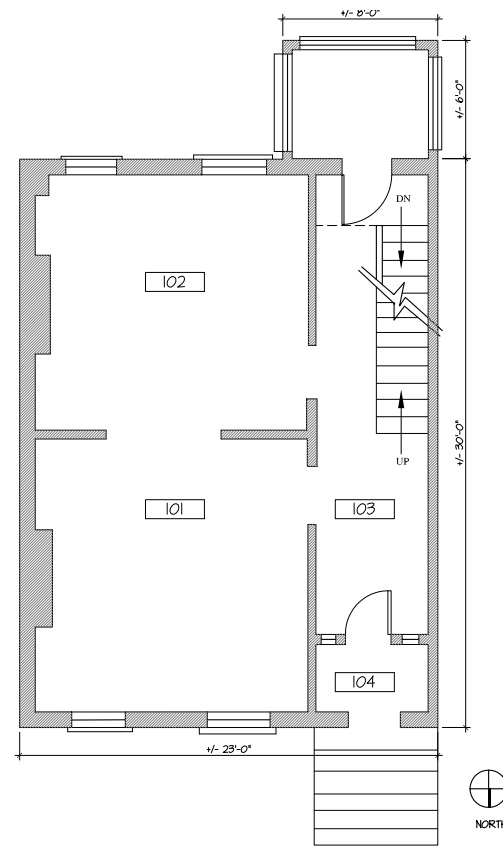
Room 101

Room 101 occupies the northeast corner of the first floor. Its location and the more elaborate design of its decorative elements suggest it served as a front parlor. The walls are plastered, and the plaster ceiling has a run cornice. The windows are surrounded by molded wood casings that continue to the floor; the space between the window and the floor has a recessed panel.

The floor is covered in fiberboard sheets, which probably served as an underlayment for a since-removed carpet. The original floor material and its current condition are concealed behind the fiberboard and could not be surveyed. This covering is protecting the underlying floor and should remain in place until the Restoration Phase begins. However, if the fiberboard sheets become wet for any reason, they must be removed immediately as they will hold moisture on the underlying original floor and damage it.

The walls are all finished with plaster. The north wall is plaster on brick and has suffered some water damage in the northeast corner. The east wall is plaster, likely on lath, and is in good condition. The south wall is also plaster, and remnants of an early or original distemper finish are visible where more recent paint is flaking away. The west wall is plaster and has some cracks but the keys appear to be sound and the wall should be salvageable.

The ceiling is gypsum wallboard; screws are visible through the paint. Peeling paint and mildew on the ceiling in the northeast corner of room indicate moisture damage in that area. At one time it appears that the cornice in this room matched the one in Room 102; however, the center piece (bordering the ceiling field) has been removed. During the Restoration Phase, the gypsum wallboard can be removed and the cornice and ceiling (if it remains) can be restored.



Schematic First Floor Plan

June 22, 2004



In Room 101, the front parlor has the most elaborate finishes in the house: a run plaster cornice and recessed wood panels below the windows. Diagonal cracks (at left in this photo) indicate settling.

Although the doors that once opened into this room are missing, all of the frames and trim remain in place. Both window openings retain 6/6 window sash hung on pulleys that are probably original. These muntin profiles and rail and stile sizes can serve as patterns for replica sash when the other windows are restored.

The baseboards have been removed. Some of the walls have portland cement patches in lieu of the missing baseboard.

The chimney breast has been rebuilt or repointed using a gray, portland cement-based mortar. Although historically inappropriate, the mortar is not damaging the adjacent brick and eventually will be covered with plaster. Removing the mortar may damage the bricks. If it is determined during the Restoration Phase that

the chimney breast was rebuilt rather than repointed and the existing dimensions and configuration are inaccurate, the chimney breast could be reconstructed using an appropriately soft, lime-based mortar.

Room 102

Room 102 occupies the southern half of the first floor. It was likely a rear or second parlor; the large door opening in the north wall allowed it to function as a double parlor with Room 101. Finishes in this room are more elaborate than those found on the other floors and are similar to those in the front parlor. The ceiling is embellished with a run plaster cornice, and beneath the windows recessed wood panels continue to the floor.



In the northeast corner of Room 101, peeling paint and soft plaster indicate moisture infiltration.

Unfortunately, ongoing water infiltration through the rear (south) exterior wall has left finishes in this room severely deteriorated. Failed plaster on the south wall, as well as mildew on the gypsum wallboard ceiling and on the south end of the west wall, indicate a history of water entering the building. Installation of a tarp on the south façade has halted the water infiltration; however, exterior restoration work is needed before the interior finishes in this room can be restored.

The floor is covered in fiberboard panels, which were likely an underlayment for a since-removed carpet. The fiberboard suffered water damage in the past and is buckled at the center of the room. In the northwest corner, the floor has a large patched area where a floor register was removed. This opening will allow hot air to rise from the cellar when the temporary heating

system is functioning and thus should not be repaired until the permanent heating system is installed (see Recommendations, page 28). The floor in this room will require extensive repairs during the Restoration Phase.

The north wall is laminated with gypsum wallboard. The east wall is plaster on brick. The plaster exhibits some cracks but appears to be otherwise sound. The south wall is also plaster on brick; it is severely deteriorated, and portions near the ceiling and between the windows have fallen from the brick substrate. This wall will require extensive replastering during the Restoration Phase. The west wall is also laminated with gypsum wallboard. At the south end, the gypsum wallboard displays heavy mildew growth indicating the presence of water. The water is likely entering through the exterior masonry. Only the south wall has a baseboard; it is a modern board. The other walls have no baseboards and the gypsum wallboard continues to the floor.



Water infiltration through the south wall damaged the plaster walls and cornice and left mildew stains on the ceiling of Room 102.

Centered on the east wall is a chimney breast that appears to have been completely rebuilt. The bricks are exposed and pointed with a hard, gray portland cement-based mortar. A curb of bricks on the floor was probably constructed when the chimney was rebuilt. The chimney breast may be reconstructed during the Restoration Phase if the existing footprint and configuration are determined to be historically inaccurate.

The ceiling is gypsum wallboard. A section of lath is visible at the chimney breast; however, it could not be determined if any of the original plaster ceiling survives anywhere in this room. Mildew on the gypsum wallboard indicates that previous water infiltration continued even after the newer ceiling was installed. If any of the original plaster ceiling survives, it is likely in very poor condition due to ongoing water damage.



The curb of bricks in front of the fireplace in Room 102 is an interesting alteration.

Most of an original, run plaster cornice remains in place and is in good condition. A section along the chimney breast is missing and the entire south wall cornice is severely water damaged. It is unfortunate that the south wall is so deteriorated because its cornice retains an extra molding at its bottom edge that has not survived on the other walls in this room. In all other cases, the bottom edge was either covered or removed when the gypsum wallboard was installed. Pieces of the surviving molding should be salvaged for future replication.

The window openings retain their original trim and recessed panels. In the east opening, one two-light sash remains and the other sash is missing. The two-light sash likely dates to the late 19th century and is not original. The western opening could not be surveyed as it was sealed with plastic sheets. New, historically appropriate sash must be provided during the Stabilization or Restoration Phase. All of the door openings in this room retain original frames and casings that are in good condition, but the doors have all been removed.

There is no light fixture in this room, only a junction box on the ceiling where an electric fixture was once installed. The room originally would have been heated by a stove connected to the chimney breast on the east wall. More recently it was heated by a radiator as evidenced by the pipes in the southeast corner of the room. Currently this room is unheated.

Room 103

The floor is covered in plywood, which is not an original finish, and the condition of the original floor (presumed to be hidden below) could not be inspected. As the plywood floor is protecting the original floor beneath it, we recommend it be left in place until the interior restoration work begins.



Room 103 retains an original plaster cornice. This cornice should be supported and protected from damage during the Stabilization work.

The walls are finished with plaster on lath or brick. The east wall is plaster on lath. It has minimal damage – a few holes – and is salvageable. The north and south walls are plaster or brick. The north wall is in good condition while the south wall is in fair condition, with areas of soft plaster. Remnants of wallpaper are visible on the south wall. These remnants should be carefully removed and catalogued for later study and possible replication.

All of the baseboards in this room have been removed. There is no baseboard on the north wall as the sidelights and their trim continue to the floor. On the west wall a plain wood baseboard has been installed, on the east wall gypsum wallboard has been installed, and on the south wall portland cement has been parged onto the brick.

This room does not show signs of water damage; however, large cracks in the plaster resulting from building movement are visible. A large crack in the plaster on the west wall mirrors one observed in the exterior brickwork in this location. After the exterior masonry issues are corrected, the crack can be cut out and patched in-kind.

The ceiling is plaster on lath with a run plaster molding and medallion. Entire sections of the flat plaster have fallen away, leaving the sawn lath exposed. A plaster molding runs around the perimeter of the room and is in good condition. A run plaster medallion remains in place near the center of the room. The medallion appears to be in good condition, is likely an original feature, and should be retained.



The stair to the Cellar retains most of its original balustrade.

The balustrade around the stair opening to the basement remains in place. Although it is missing a few balusters, this feature should be retained and new balusters fabricated to match the surviving examples. The stair to the second floor is missing its balustrade and is unstable. The stringer on the west wall is no longer tight to the wall. It is not clear if the stair settled or the wall shifted westward to create the gap along the stringer. The stair must be secured or repaired.

There are no windows in this room. The main entrance in the north wall retains its original side lights, transom and trim. The door in this opening is a replacement. Some of the side lights are broken and should be replaced. Although it would be historically inaccurate, the lights closest to the doorknob might be replaced with shatter-proof glass or Plexiglas for security reasons.

Second Floor

The second floor plan is similar to the first floor, with a side hall (Room 203) and two large chambers (Rooms 201 and 202). The large chambers each have two large windows and a closet. A small chamber occupies the northwest corner. Finishes are simpler than those on the first floor: there are no ceiling cornices or medallions and no wood panels beneath the windows. Windows on this floor typically have sills but no aprons.

As on the first floor, all of the baseboards have been removed and the space infilled with gypsum wallboard or a cement parge. One of the original, 4-panel doors remains hanging in its frame and another is stored in the rear chamber. All of the other doors are missing.

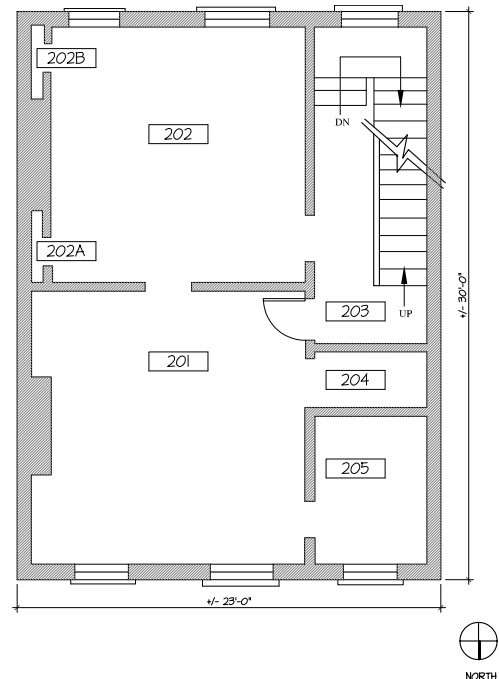
Room 201

This room occupies the north end of the second floor and likely was used as a bedroom. On the west wall, three doors lead to the hall (Room 203), a deep closet (Room 204), and a small chamber (Room 205). All the door openings retain original frames and casings that are in good condition, but only the door to the hall remains in place. A fourth opening in the south wall leads to the southern chamber (Room 202) and is also missing its door.

The floor is wide wood boards running north to south. They are painted, appear to be in good condition, and should be retained.

The north wall is plaster on brick. Water damage in the northeast corner has left the plaster there in a fragile state; however, the rest of the wall is sound. The east wall is plaster, and other than minor damage around the stovepipe hole in the chimney breast, is in good condition. The south wall is finished with gypsum wallboard (GWB); the baseboard has been removed and the GWB continues to the floor. The west wall is plaster on lath and is in good condition. All of the baseboards in this room have been removed.

The chimney breast in this room is missing its mantelpiece but is original. This appears to be the most intact chimney breast in the building, and thus it has the most potential to yield information about how the house's fireplaces and stoves were used. An upside down, U-shaped patch of portland cement indicates the location and size of a since-removed mantelpiece. In the center of this U-shaped patch there remains what appears to be original plaster. This plaster



Schematic Second Floor Plan

June 22, 2004



The chimney breast in Room 201 should be carefully studied.

shows remnants of an early distemper finish. The presence of this plaster and early finish suggest that this room may have been heated by a stove that stood in the room, rather than coal in a grate or insert.

The ceiling is plaster on lath. Water damage is visible in the northeast corner of the room – the result of roof runoff that should have been diverted by a leader but instead entered through the exterior masonry – and a large section of plaster is missing at the center of the room. After the exterior masonry is repaired, the ceiling can be repaired with matching plaster. There is no cornice in this room.

The room is illuminated by a pair of windows in the north wall. The window openings have original casings and sills.

A canopy on the ceiling is all that remains of an electric light fixture. There are no electric switches.

Room 202

Room 202 is a rear chamber. It can be reached via the hall or through a door in its north wall that leads to Room 201. It is illuminated by two windows in the south wall. On the east wall, a pair of shallow closets flanks the chimney breast.

This room has suffered severe water damage on its south wall. Years of water infiltration have not only ruined the original plaster but also stained the faux wood paneling subsequently installed to hide the plaster damage. Complete plaster replacement will be needed here.



Ongoing water infiltration through the south wall of Room 202 has damaged both the original plaster wall finish and the faux wood paneling installed to hide the ruined plaster.

The floor is wood boards running north to south. At the south wall, water staining indicates that the floor has been damp. This area may require replacement; the rest of the floor is in good condition. A floor register remains between the two windows, at the south end of the room.

The north wall is plaster on lath. Damage includes broken keys (evidenced by bulging plaster), holes, and peeling paint. It may be salvageable. The east wall is plaster on lath or brick. It is also in poor condition with holes, cracks and poorly executed patches. The south wall is seriously degraded. The entire wall is covered in faux wood paneling; the paneling has suffered ongoing water infiltration, and it has mildewed and delaminated. Where the underlying plaster is visible, it is degraded to the point of disintegrating to dust and thus the underlying bricks are exposed behind it. The west wall is plaster on lath. It is in fair condition, with cracks, holes, and bulges indicating broken keys.

The ceiling is gypsum wallboard installed on furring strips, which in turn are installed over the original lath. Sections of the gypsum wallboard are missing along the south wall and near the center of the room. It appears that the entire original plaster ceiling is missing. Stains visible on the lath suggest water damage was cause of the original ceiling's failure.

The two closets in the east wall retain original frames and trim, but the doors are missing. A four panel door stored in this room appears to be original to the building. Paint analysis may reveal its original location.

Unfortunately, it seems that when the wood paneling was installed on the south wall, all the window casings and sills were removed.



This lift-off hinge was found in Room 202. It was the only example of this type of hinge found in the building.



An original door with original hinges was found in Room 202.



Room 202 has a shallow closet on either side of the fireplace opening. The mantelpiece was removed at an unknown date and the wall repaired with portland cement.



In Room 202 all of the original ceiling plaster was removed and a gypsum wallboard ceiling was installed on furring strips.

A flush-mounted electric fixture remains in place on the ceiling. The fixture has a metal ceiling canopy, a single lamp, and a stem for a shade (the shade is missing).

Room 203

Room 203 is a hall that runs north to south along the west wall of the building. Parallel stairs on the west wall ascend south to the third floor and descend north to the first floor.

The floor is covered with plywood and the existence and condition of the underlying floor could not be determined.

The north and east walls are covered with faux wood paneling that continues to the floor; there is no baseboard. Plaster and early finishes remain in place behind the paneling. A section of paneling is missing at the south end of the east wall at the stair landing, and the exposed plaster and lath are severely deteriorated. The west wall is plaster parged directly onto brick. A heavily textured skimcoat has been added to this wall. After the exterior stabilization work is completed and the stair repaired, the skimcoat should be removed and a smooth skimcoat applied. The south wall is plaster parged directly onto brick. The plaster here is in very poor condition, with large cracks and bulges where the plaster has delaminated from the substrate. Complete replacement will be required during the Restoration Phase.

The ceiling is completely covered in acoustic panels, making survey of the original ceiling impossible. On the underside of the stairs, all the plaster is missing and only the lath remains.

The two doors in this room opened into other rooms and are described elsewhere. The window opening in the south wall has four aluminum-framed hopper sash. Pulleys on the frame indicate the window once had hung sash.

The staircase has pulled away from the west wall and most of the railing has been removed. The stair must be repaired and a temporary or permanent railing provided before visitors can be admitted to the third floor. A small section of railing remains at the landing between the second and third floors and can be used as a pattern for the replication of the missing sections.

An electric light fixture consisting of a ceiling canopy, chain and socket remain in place on the underside of the stairs. No evidence of earlier lighting was found. There is no evidence that this room was ever heated.

Room 204

Room 204 is a deep closet accessed via a door in the west wall of Room 201. The door opening retains its original frame and casings but the door itself is missing.

This space retains nearly all of its original finishes. The floor is wide wood boards running north to south and painted white. The walls retain original plaster that is all sound. This room also retains original baseboards on its north, south and east walls. The baseboards are plain boards with a beveled top edge. The ceiling is plaster on lath and is also original and in good condition.

There are no lighting fixtures or heating equipment or evidence of these items in this room.

Room 205

Room 205 is a small chamber off of the northern large chamber. It occupies the northwest corner of the second floor, and it is likely that it originally served as a storage space or perhaps a work or sewing room for the occupant of the large chamber. Modern clothes poles and shelves indicate that Room 205 was most recently used as a walk-in closet. The floor, the ceiling and most of the walls are covered in 20th-century finishes. These finishes are protecting any surviving historic fabric and should remain in place through the Stabilization Phase until the Restoration Phase begins.

The floor is covered in 9" vinyl tiles; these are probably vinyl asbestos tiles (VAT) and must be removed and disposed of properly in accordance with local regulations.

The north wall is finished with plaster. The plaster has a sand-textured skimcoat, likely not original, and a large crack under the window. During the Restoration Phase, the skimcoat should be removed or another, smoother skimcoat should be added and the crack repaired. The east and south walls are covered in faux wood panels that continue to the floor; there is no baseboard. The west wall is plaster, which is in poor condition with a very uneven surface. Extensive plaster repair and/or replacement should be anticipated in this room.

The ceiling is covered in 2-foot by 4-foot acoustic tiles installed with nails.

The door opening that leads to Room 201 retains original casings and trim. A cut in the north jamb records the profile of the missing baseboards. The door is missing. The window in the north wall retains its frame, casings and one six-light sash, all of which are likely original. The second sash is missing.

Holes in the floor indicate the location of a since-removed radiator.



Room 204 is the only room in the entire house that retains original baseboards. The baseboard is a plain board with a beveled top edge.

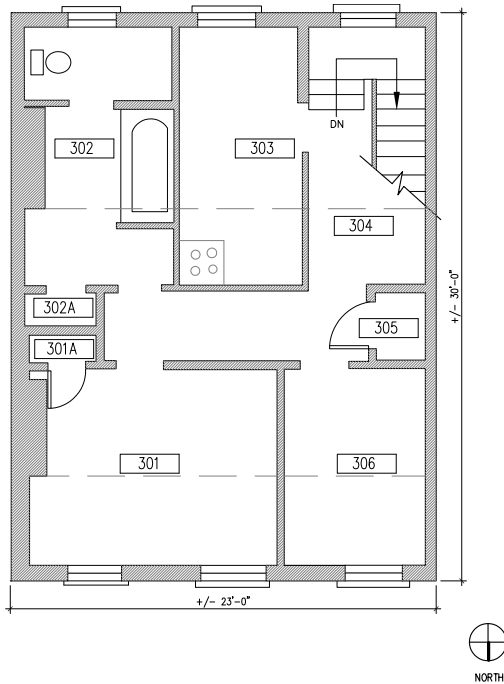


This cut in the door casing indicates that Room 205 once had baseboards similar to those found in Room 204.

Third Floor

The third floor is divided into four main chambers and an L-shaped hall. Two of the chambers have small closets and there is a third closet at the end of the hall. Posts that support the roof framing – visible in the attic – continue down through this floor and are concealed in the partitions. Since the posts are original, it is likely that the partitions are as well.

It appears that a separate apartment was installed on the third floor sometime in the 20th century. A kitchen was installed in Room 303 and a bathroom in Room 302.



Schematic Third Floor Plan

June 22, 2004

Throughout the third floor modern finishes such as gypsum wallboard, faux brick or wood panels, and vinyl tile are installed over the original, historic finishes. While these finishes hindered or prevented full examination of any extant original finishes underneath, they are at present protecting the surviving historic fabric from damage. Although the removal of some sections of these modern finishes may be desired for further investigation, we suggest that they remain in place to the greatest extent possible throughout the Stabilization Phase of the work.

As on the lower floors, all of the baseboards have been removed and the space infilled with gypsum wallboard or cement parge. Although most of the original, 4-panel doors are missing – some openings contain subsequent additions of late 19th- or early 20th-century doors with five horizontal panels – a few remain in place.

Room 301

Room 301 is the largest chamber and occupies the northeast corner of the third floor. It is illuminated by two north-facing windows. The ceiling along the north wall slopes to accommodate the roof pitch above. On the east wall, a chimney breast projects into the room.

The floor is painted, wide boards that run north to south and appear to be original. They are in good condition and can be retained.

The north and east walls are plaster on brick and the south and west walls are plaster on lath. While the walls appear to have endured previous repairs and visible damage such as holes or cracks, for the most part, the plaster appears to be salvageable/repairable.



Damage to the plaster ceiling along the east wall in room 301 was likely caused by water entering through failed chimney flashings.

The ceiling is plaster on lath with a sand-textured skim coat. Water damage is visible at the chimney breast – likely the result of water entering through

failed chimney flashings – and entire sections of plaster are missing at the center of the room and along the west partition. It is not clear why the missing sections of plaster failed. After the roof and exterior are repaired, this plaster ceiling can be repaired by installing new plaster on the existing lath. It may be possible to sand off the sand finish; however, if this causes the keys in the surviving original plaster to weaken or break, an additional skim coat may be preferred.

There are two door openings in the south wall. One leads to a closet (Room 301A) and retains all of its trim and an original rail and stile door with four recessed panels. The second opening leads to the stair; while it retains original trim, the door itself is missing. This door casing has minor damage where a hasp was once installed.

The room was once heated by a stove that vented through the chimney breast on the east wall. A hole in the chimney breast indicates the location where the stovepipe was connected. It is not clear how this room was more recently heated since no evidence of a radiator was found.

A canopy on the ceiling indicates the location of a since-removed electric light fixture. It was probably controlled by the switch that remains on the south wall, between the two door openings. A duplex outlet installed on the north wall is a late 20th-century addition.

Doors stored in this room are rail and stile wood doors with five horizontal panels. They retain brass hinges with ball tips. The hinges and the doors are typical of late 19th- or early 20th-century taste and are not likely original features.



The closet in the south wall of Room 301 retains its original door.

Room 302

Room 302 was once a small chamber; it was more recently used as a bathroom. Stud partitions were inserted to surround a bathtub and screen a toilet. A tub and sink were installed on the west wall and a toilet on the east wall (the sink has since been removed). The chimney breast on the east wall is an original feature.

All of the wall finishes in this room are in extremely poor condition. The floor is covered with plywood and the underlying floor could not be observed or its condition assessed. Sections of floor are missing along the south wall.

The north and west walls are plaster on lath and the south and east walls are plaster on brick. All of the walls are extremely deteriorated: paint is peeling, sections of plaster are bulging or missing, and much of the plaster is soft. The south wall is in especially poor condition from water entering through the exterior wall, and the plaster will require complete replacement in-kind. The east wall is also severely deteriorated and the plaster soft; the likely cause of this damage is water entering through failed chimney flashings.

The ceiling is covered with plywood sheets. The joints are spackled, but the ceiling was never painted. If the original ceiling remains in place above the

plywood, it is probably severely deteriorated and will require replacement. Two door openings in the north wall – one leading to the hall, the other to a small closet – retain their original frames and casings but both doors are missing.

The room was once heated by a stove that vented to the chimney breast on the east wall. A hole in the chimney breast indicates the location of the former stovepipe. A very rusted, flush-mounted electric ceiling fixture remains in place on the ceiling. Two electrical switches remain on the north wall, between the door openings. A cast iron pipe stands in the southeast corner; ghost marks on the wall surfaces indicate that at one time it was boxed out, but it is currently exposed.



A modern stove in Room 303 indicates that this room was used as a kitchen in the late 20th century.

Room 303

Originally a chamber, this room appears to have been used most recently as a kitchen. A four-burner gas stove/oven remains in place in the northeast corner, and pipes from a since-removed sink remain on the east wall. Nearly all the surfaces in this room have been covered by late 20th-century finishes: the north and east walls are covered in faux brick wall covering, and the ceiling is covered in acoustic tiles.

The floor is covered in vinyl composition tiles (VCT). The VCT is in poor condition. Where the sink was removed, the original board floor is visible. It is in good condition.

The upper half of the north wall and the entire east wall are covered in a 20th-century faux brick wall covering; the substrate could not be determined or its condition evaluated. The lower half of the north wall is finished with gypsum wallboard. The south wall is plaster on brick; it

is in very poor condition with soft areas. In some places the brick substrate is visible. Past repairs executed in portland cement indicate that this damage has been a long-term problem. It is likely that this wall will require complete replastering after the exterior wall restoration work is completed. The west wall is finished with gypsum wallboard; it could not be determined if the original plaster or lath remains in place or if it was removed.

The ceiling is covered in two-foot by four-foot acoustic ceiling tiles installed with nails. Where the tiles are missing, a ceiling paper is visible. The original plaster ceiling may remain in place above the paper; however, it was not accessible.

The door opening in the east wall retains its original frame and casings but the door is missing. A window opening remains in place on the south wall; although the sash could not be examined, the frame and casings are in good condition and should be preserved.

A ceramic ceiling fixture remains in place on the ceiling. An electric switch on the east wall, north of the door, probably controlled the fixture. A single duplex outlet remains in place on the east wall. It is not clear how this room was heated either historically or more recently.

Room 304

Room 304 is an L-shaped hall that serves the third floor. The north-south oriented section is the stair hall while the portion that runs east-west is a hall that leads to the chambers. Many modern finishes have been installed over the surfaces in this room. The floor is covered with plywood and the type and condition of the underlying floor could not be determined.

The north wall of the hall is covered with faux wood paneling. Where visible, the underlying plaster is in poor condition. The east wall of the stair hall is also finished in faux wood paneling. Where the paneling is missing, much of the underlying plaster appears to be in good condition. A large gypsum wallboard patch at the north end of this wall is an easily reversed repair. At the south end, along the landing, the plaster is seriously damaged, most likely from water infiltrating through the exterior brick wall.



In Room 304, the baseboards were removed and the exposed space patched with cement.

The south wall of the hall is plaster on lath and was once covered in some sort of paneling; long smears of mastic indicate the location of the seams. The plaster is in good condition and can be retained and repaired. The baseboard has been removed and the exposed wall patched over in portland cement. The south wall of the stair hall portion is plaster on brick, and covered in faux wood paneling. This wall has been exposed to water infiltration for some time and it is unlikely this plaster is in salvageable condition.

The west wall along the staircase has been finished with a rough textured, troweled-on plaster or gypsum coating. At the door to the closet, the wall is covered with faux wood paneling.

The plaster on the outside corner of the stair hall is damaged and has been repaired with portland cement. The portland cement is of course inappropriate and should be removed and the area properly repaired with matching plaster. However, the damage exposes an interesting detail: an original wood corner bead is visible here.



Damage to the outside corner in Room 304 exposed an original wood corner bead.

The ceiling is covered with two-foot by four-foot acoustic panels with a metal grid. Where tiles are missing, the exposed plaster ceiling above is in very poor condition. The plaster is missing and only the lath remains. Water stains are visible on the acoustic tiles, indicating ongoing moisture infiltration in the ceiling and suggesting that any surviving plaster is likely in very poor condition and will require complete replacement in-kind.

The closet (Room 305) retains its original painted wood, four-panel rail and stile door. (The other doors on this floor open into the chambers



An original door frame with a four-panel, rail and stile door remains in place in the west wall of Room 304.

and are described in the sections representing those rooms.) The edges of the rails and stiles are beveled where they surround the recessed panels. This detail is similar to the beveled edge on the top of the surviving baseboard in Room 204. This door is in good condition and can be used as a pattern for replication when other doors on this floor are replaced. The balustrade that once enclosed the stair opening has been removed and replaced with one constructed of plain lumber. Holes in the floor indicate the number and spacing of balusters in the original railing. A small section of the railing remains in place between the second and third floors and can be used as a pattern for replicating the missing railing in this room. When the faux wood paneling is removed from the closet enclosure, evidence for a railing height may be revealed. All of the baseboards have been removed from this room.

There is no light fixture in this room nor evidence of how this room was lighted, other than by light from the window on the landing. This window was covered with a tarp and could not be inspected during our visit; the draft Historic Structure Report indicates that it is a 20th-century replacement (Wheeler, p. 42). There is no heating equipment extant nor evidence of previous equipment in this room.

Room 305

Room 305 is small room at the end of the hall (Room 304). It was likely used for storage and also contains a ladder that provides access to the attic.

Room 306



Water damage is clearly visible on the ceiling of Room 306.

Room 306 is a smaller chamber that occupies the northwest corner of the third floor. It is illuminated by a single window in its north wall and does not have a closet.

The floor is wide wood boards running north to south. They appear to be original and are in good condition.

The north wall is plaster on brick. Portland cement repairs around the window indicate past damage, likely from water infiltration. After the roof, cornice and gutters are repaired, the portland cement should be cut out and the wall repaired with a historically appropriate plaster system.

The east wall is plaster on lath. Large holes in the plaster have left the lath exposed. Prominent cracks are visible at the top of the wall, suggesting that it has moved. There is no supporting wall on the second floor under this

partition, therefore the floor may have sagged in that spot, thus causing the cracks. The cracks should be monitored to ensure that the third-floor wall is no longer shifting.

The south wall is also plaster on lath. While it shows some significant cracks, it appears that the lath and keys are sound and thus the wall should be salvageable. The west wall is covered in gypsum wallboard; it could not be determined if the original plaster or lath remain behind this finish. The gypsum wallboard continues to the floor, indicating it was installed after the baseboards were removed.

The ceiling is finished in gypsum wallboard with a sand-textured finish. The ceiling is sagging and has water stains and mildew, suggesting an ongoing water problem in the attic above. It is not clear if the original plaster or lath remain in place above the visible ceiling; however, the extent of the water damage indicates that any surviving plaster is likely damaged beyond repair.

A door opening in the north wall leads to the hall. The opening retains a frame and some trim, but the casing from the west leg is missing.

The exposed frame offers an opportunity to observe how the plaster was installed: the base coat was applied over the lath and continues behind the casing. The second coat – a skim coat – was applied after the casing was in place. It appears that only these two coats of plaster (rather than the traditional three) were used; this supposition should be verified, and other rooms studied to determine if this room is an anomaly.

An electric light fixture consisting of a brass ceiling canopy, chain, and socket remains in place on the ceiling. The fixture has a pull chain socket and there is no wall switch in this room. It is not clear how this room was heated historically as it is not contiguous with a chimney breast or a flue. A pipe in the floor on the west wall indicates the location of a former radiator from a more recent heating system.



A missing door casing in Room 306 reveals that the lath and plaster base coat continued behind the trim. The final coat of plaster was installed after the casing was in place.

Building Systems

All of the existing building systems in the Myers House require replacement. The existing electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems are obsolete. Much of the most recently utilized heating system has been dismantled and removed from the building. When the building is opened to the public, additional systems such as fire detection, alarm systems and life safety systems must be provided as well.

It is not clear how the Myers House was originally illuminated. No evidence of gas lighting was found. Evidence of gas lighting – iron pipes in the walls and ceilings – may be revealed during the Stabilization and Restoration Phases.



This iron pipe in Room B01 was most likely a gas pipe.

The existing electrical system appears to date to the mid 20th century and is inadequate for current residential or museum use: the wiring is obsolete, many rooms have no electrical switches, and the type and number of outlets is inadequate. The Owner should inquire if the local utility (Niagara Mohawk) can provide underground service to the building. To restore electrical service to the building, an electric panel must be provided. If air conditioning is desired, a 200-amp panel will be needed. The Owner should consider installing this panel during the Stabilization Phase (after the building is weathertight) and before the Restoration Phase, in order to provide a safe power source for the ongoing work.

If the Owner decides to restore the interiors and present them as a house museum interpreting mid 19th-century life, then period lighting fixtures should be installed and visible switches will be inappropriate. For this type of use, the Owner may wish to consider concealing the switches

in a central location rather than installing them in individual rooms. If the interiors are used as galleries to display exhibits, modern display lighting fixtures and exposed switches may be acceptable. Modern outlets will be needed, the type and quantity again depending upon the proposed use.

There is no heating system in the Myers House at present. Originally, the building would have been heated by individual stoves or grates in each room that had a chimney breast. The fuel most likely would have been coal. More recently, in either the late 19th or early 20th century – the radiators, which are the most useful clue in dating this type of system, have all been removed, so a precise date cannot be determined – a hot water or steam radiator system was installed. Holes from the installation of the piping for this system are visible throughout the house, although the actual radiators are no longer in place.

It is critical that the building – especially the cellar, where repeated freeze-thaw cycles have caused severe damage to the masonry – be heated by next winter (2006-2007). A temporary, gas-fired hot air heating system can be installed in the cellar. Reopening the register in the northwest corner of Room 102 will allow the warm air to rise up to the first floor. Additional heat will enter through the stair opening. Some means of sealing the windows against drafts must be provided. If funding is available, the window openings could be restored and historically appropriate sash could be installed in some of the openings. (This should not be done on the south façade which requires more serious rebuilding.) If funding is not available or where serious rebuilding is anticipated, foam insulation panels cut to fit the window openings could be installed and secured.

There are no fire detection, alarm or suppression, or other life safety systems currently in the building. A security system will also be necessary. Because the building will be open to visitors, life safety systems (illuminated exit signs, egress lighting) must be installed before the building is made accessible to the public. A fire detection and fire alarm system will be necessary. Minimal fire suppression (hand-held extinguishers) must be provided; in addition, the Owner may also be required or may wish to install a traditional sprinkler-type or high-pressure mist fire suppression system, depending upon code requirements and the extent of the building that will be open to the public. The permanent systems should be specified and designed before the interior restoration is completed, so that installation can be coordinated with the restoration work. Careful planning will preserve historic fabric and will also save money for the Owner.

As the building will likely be open to the public before the final Restoration Phase is completed, temporary life safety (egress signs and lighting) and fire detection systems as well as hand-held fire extinguishers should be provided. The local code official should be contacted and invited to make a site visit to advise the Owner on the number and location of required devices. If vandalism is considered a problem, the Owner may wish to install a temporary security system prior to the Restoration Phase.

Recommendations

We anticipate that the necessary work will fall into two phases: a Stabilization Phase and a Restoration Phase. This is necessary for several reasons, including public safety, necessities of logical construction sequencing, and grant and funding flow. The following is a list of necessary work, arranged by priority.

Much of the exterior restoration work is actually stabilization work; it is necessary to ensure the stability of the structure and to prevent further deterioration. Stabilization is the first priority.



Stabilization of the exterior façades and structure must be completed before the Restoration work is begun.

Although the extent of the required interior restoration work is distressing as it reflects the loss of original fabric, most of it is cosmetic. Plaster requires repair, and new baseboards and wood floors need painting. Where fabric is missing – such as doors or baseboards – at least one original typically has survived and can be used as a pattern for replication. Perhaps the toughest puzzle will be determining how to interpret the chimney breasts and heating apparatus in the first floor rooms, where repointing and possible reconstruction have destroyed much physical evidence.

In the recommendations below, both short term and permanent solutions are given. The permanent solution is the ideal solution, but is typically more costly than the temporary option. However, the temporary option is not the most efficient means of utilizing the construction budget. For example, temporary gutters are an inexpensive means of collecting and diverting roof runoff. Because reconstructing historically appropriate built-in gutters must be coordinated with the roof restoration work, which in turn is dependant upon the restoration of the masonry walls that hold up the rafter plates, it is unlikely that the roof restoration will be completed until significant fundraising is achieved. Notes regarding sequencing are included in the following recommendations where appropriate.

STABILIZATION PHASE

The Stabilization Phase will focus on stabilizing the building: supporting unstable portions of the building and preventing further deterioration to the overall structure.

PRIORITY: IMMEDIATE

Stabilize compromised structural elements (north-south partition and south chimney breast) in the cellar.

- Temporary solution: Provide shoring along the entire length of the north-south stiffening partition in the cellar. Provide shoring in cellar beneath south chimney breast.
- Permanent solution: Provide temporary shoring as required to reconstruct collapsed chimney breast and provide new, north-south stiffening partition on a proper footing.

Note: Reconstructing this wall provides an opportunity to conceal plumbing lines, conduit for wiring, and perhaps ducts.

PRIORITY: BEFORE NEXT WINTER (2006-2007)

Heat the building, especially the cellar.

- Temporary solution: Provide temporary heating system in the building. Install a gas-fired, hot air furnace in cellar. Hot air should rise to first floor via stair opening and reopened floor register in Room 102. Install rigid foam panel insulation in window openings to minimize heat loss.
- Permanent Solution: If entire building envelope is sealed (including window restoration and building envelope work) then a permanent heating system can be researched, specified and installed. If forced air system is chosen, install ductwork prior to restoration of interior finishes.

Reconstruct missing brickwork at east end of north façade.

- The missing bricks have left this wall precariously thin. Mortar analysis should be completed and the missing section reconstructed.



Missing bricks have left the northeast wall very thin and action should be taken immediately to reconstruct the wall.

Correct roof runoff issues/divert water away from foundations.

- Temporary solution: Install temporary gutters and leaders. These can be plastic, with EPDM (“rubber roofing”) extending down over the roof edge and covering the existing built-in gutters. Provide extensions on leaders to carry water away from foundations.
- Permanent solution: Replace/restore roof, restore built-in gutters and provide new, historically appropriate gutters. Although this is the more cost effective solution over time, the built-in gutters and roof cannot be restored until after the masonry walls that support them are restored.

ADDITIONAL STABILIZATION WORK:

Exterior and Interior Masonry Restoration

- Document all existing conditions prior to removals. Extensive masonry work is needed and will likely include reconstruction of the rear (south) wall on a new footing/foundation.
- Archeology must be complete wherever foundation work is needed.
- Documentation and removal of the non-historic rear porch will likely be needed so shoring and scaffolding along the rear (south) wall can be reconstructed.
- Joists at the southern end of the building may have water damage due to their proximity to this point of long-term water infiltration.
- Exterior concrete surface north of building will be removed (by hand!) to facilitate repointing and to correct drainage so new work is not compromised.



Stairs at first floor require a railing and should not be used by public.

Roof Restoration

- Repair framing (rafter and rafter plates) and built-in gutters. Provide new, historically appropriate wood shingle roof (surviving shingles visible in attic may be original and can serve as pattern to determine length, thickness, taper, and exposure of original roof).
- Permanent roof should not be installed until after framing is repaired. The roof framing cannot be restored until after the masonry work is completed as its structure bears on the masonry.

Interior Staircase Stabilization

- Do not allow public upstairs.
- Provide a railing.

Window Restoration

- After the masonry work is completed and the openings for the windows are sound, the frames and sash can be restored and appropriate replicas fabricated where needed.

These tasks are necessary to create a weather-tight building envelope. Interior restoration cannot commence until after the exterior envelope is sealed and structural issues have been corrected.

During the Restoration Phase, efforts to protect surviving interior fabric will be needed. Installation of shoring will require limited removal of historic and modern fabric (plaster ceilings and the concrete floor in the cellar, for example) and can damage plaster and other finishes. Moving and storing equipment in the building can cause damage to door frames and flooring. Accidental damage from fire is always a concern: workers should never be allowed to smoke in or near the building, and flammable waste and materials must also be handled and disposed of properly. Temporary heating must have safety controls.



Once the Stabilization work is complete, attention can be paid to interior details such as moldings and light fixtures.

For additional information on protecting the building during construction, the following publications are helpful:

- Preservation Brief 31, "Mothballing Historic Buildings," by Sharon C. Clark. Available online:
www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief31.htm
This article focuses on protecting a building while it is closed up, but the protective measures cited apply to protection during construction as well.
- "Planning Projects to Prevent Damage during Construction: A Property Owner's Primer" by Michael F. Lynch, *APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology*, Vol. 34, No. 4, Dec. 2003, pp. 43-46
- "Specifying Temporary Protection of Historic Interiors During Construction and Repair," by Dale H. Frens, AIA
From the National Park Service's Technical Preservation Services, *Preservation Tech Notes*. Available online:
www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/technotes/PTN38/introduction.htm
- "Protecting Existing Components and Finishes," *Historic Preservation: Project Planning and Estimating* by Swanke Hayden Connell Architects (2002), pp. 177-193

BUILDING SYSTEMS, LIFE SAFETY AND ACCESS

As previously discussed, new building systems are needed. This work can be completed either at the end of the Stabilization Phase or during the Restoration Phase. Building systems should be installed after the building is weathertight and stable, but before the interior finishes are restored so that the work does not damage restored surfaces. This decision will likely be driven by the timing of funding. Since the installation of systems (including Life Safety) will facilitate opening the building to the public, access for the disabled should also be provided at that time.

This work should include the following: install electrical system; provide temporary, inexpensive fixtures; install (limited) plumbing. As the UGRR has acquired additional land, the Master Plan may locate space outside the Myers House for an ADA-compliant washroom, storage, and perhaps even mechanical equipment. Plumbing can likely be limited to the first floor or cellar.

RESTORATION PHASE

Only after the building is sealed and watertight and building systems are installed can finishes be restored and missing items replicated and replaced. In the meantime, research both inside the building and in archives and relevant documents can and should continue. This is the fun stuff!

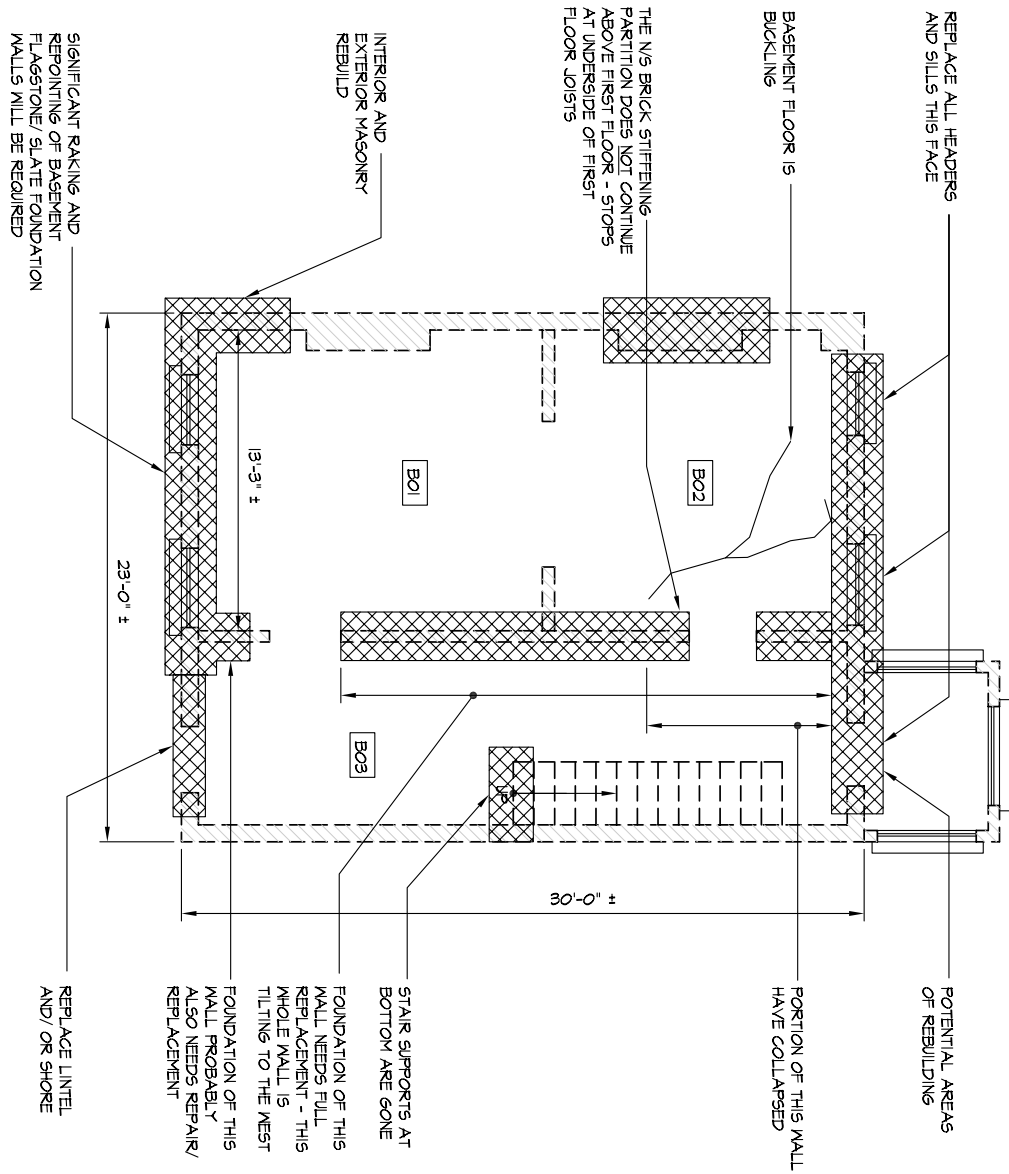
If funding flow requires it, the Restoration Phase could be divided into exterior and interior phases. Exterior redecoration work will include removing and replacing historically inappropriate details with more accurate versions: for example, the stoop for the front entrance and the missing exterior doors. The rear cellar entrance can also be reconstructed.

Throughout the interior of the building, plaster walls and ceilings need stabilization, repair and replacement; flat surfaces should be secured with washers or perhaps acrylic injection, and decorative elements should be re-adhered as needed. Finishes should be sampled and analyzed, which is another project that can begin immediately. Missing millwork (mantels, doors, windows, baseboards) must be specified and replicated. Floors will be repaired and finished as determined by finishes investigation. Lighting fixtures will be researched, specified and installed.

LEGEND:

[X] INDICATES AREA OF COLLAPSED AND/OR MISSING BRICK WALL

[Z] INDICATES EXISTING WALL





ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS
 88 UNIVERSITY PLACE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003
 TELEPHONE (212) 620-7970 FAX (212) 620-8157

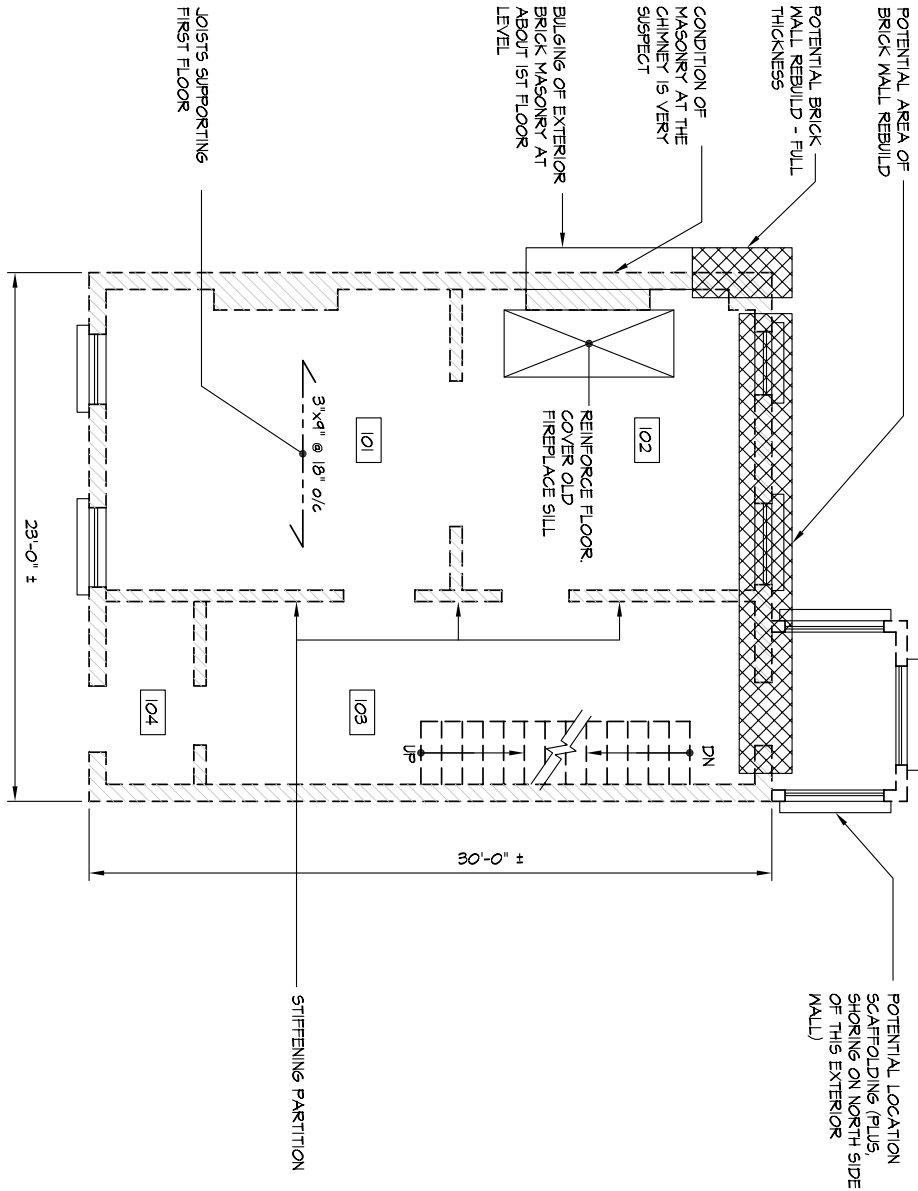
RSA JOB NO.: 10992
 REFERENCE DWG: N/A

PROJECT: THE MYERS HOUSE, ALBANY, NEW YORK
 TITLE: BASEMENT PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE: AS NOTED

SK-1
 DATE 03/23/06

- LEGEND:**
-  INDICATES AREA OF COLLAPSED AND/OR MISSING BRICK WALL
 -  INDICATES EXISTING WALL





ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS
 88 UNIVERSITY PLACE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003
 TELEPHONE (212) 620-7970 FAX (212) 620-8157

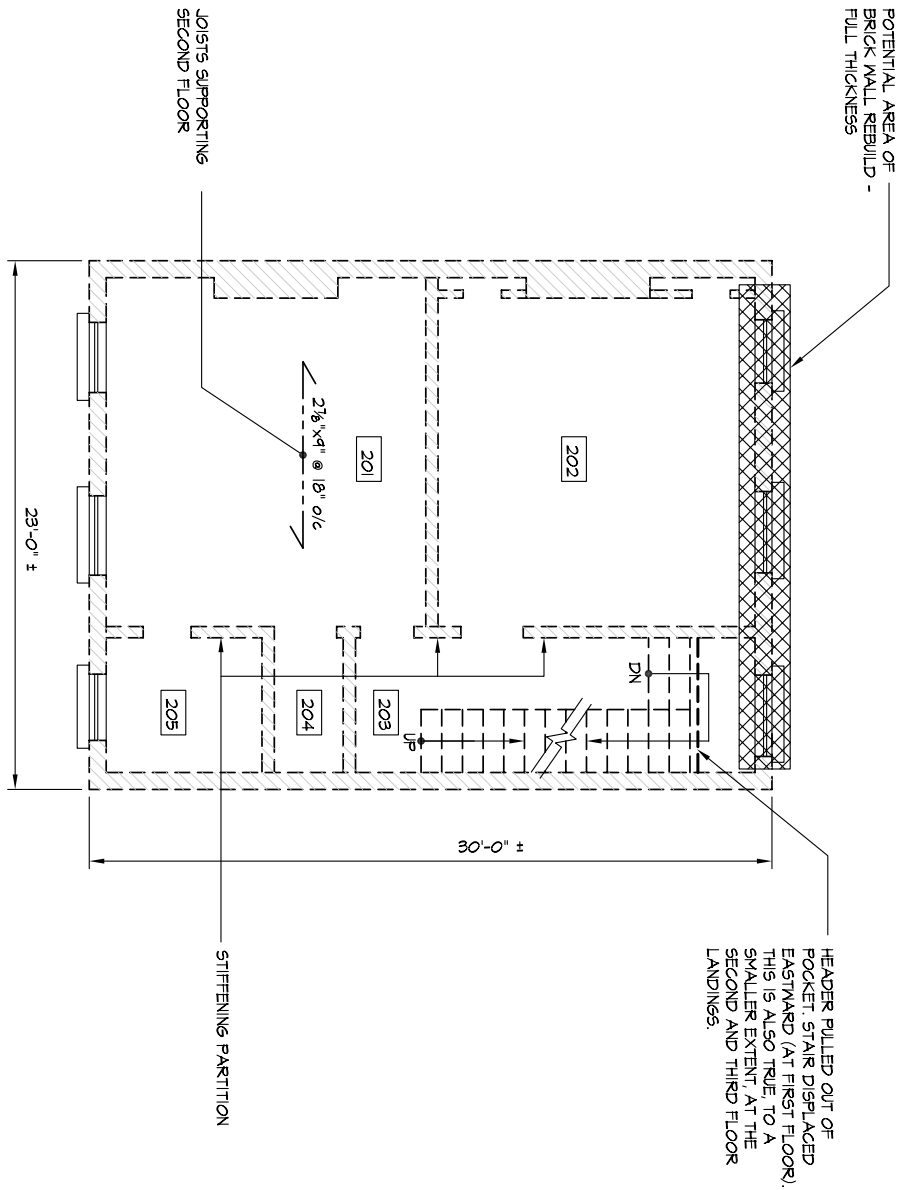
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 REFERENCE DWG: N/A

SCALE: AS NOTED

PROJECT: THE MYERS HOUSE, ALBANY, NEW YORK
 TITLE: FIRST FLOOR PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS

SK-2
 DATE 03/23/06

- LEGEND:**
-  INDICATES AREA OF COLLAPSED AND/OR MISSING BRICK WALL
 -  INDICATES EXISTING WALL





ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS
 88 UNIVERSITY PLACE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003
 TELEPHONE (212) 620-7970 FAX (212) 620-8157

RSA JOB NO.: 10992
 REFERENCE DWG: N/A

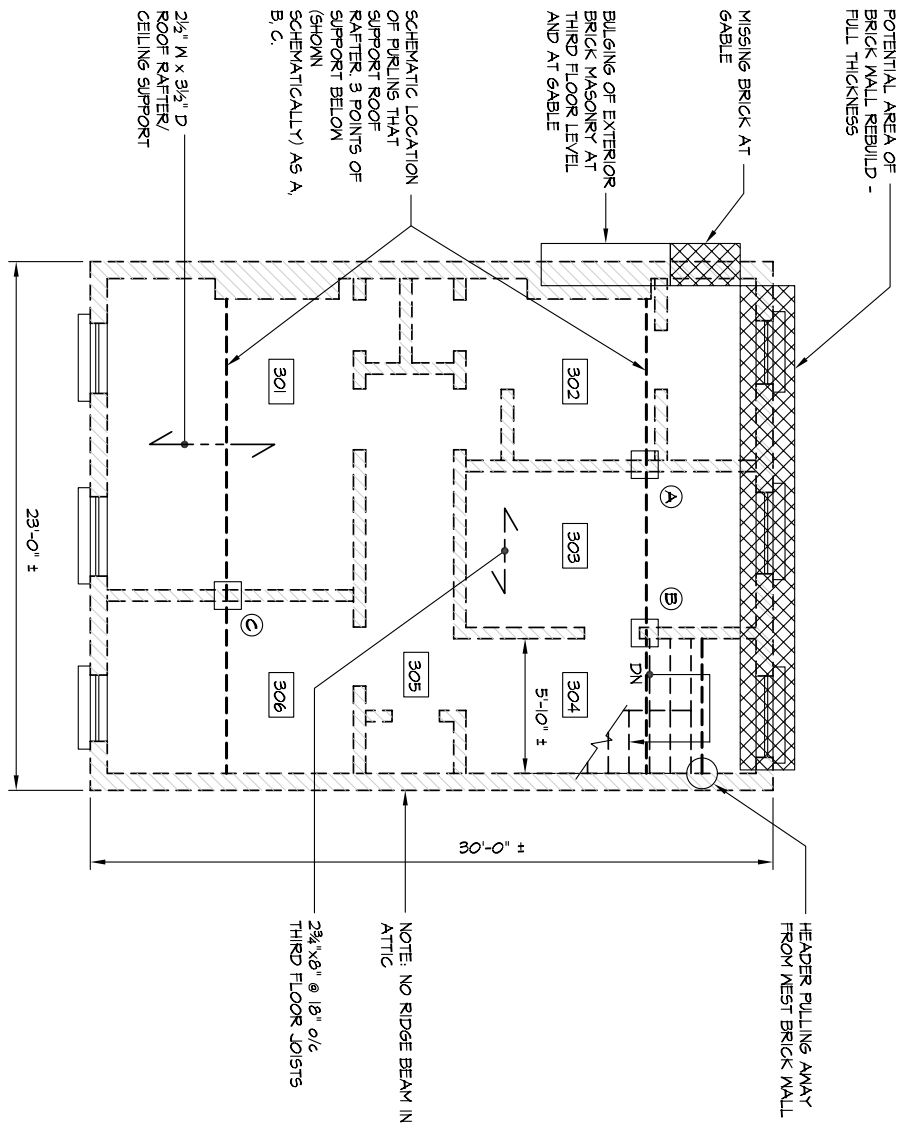
PROJECT: THE MYERS HOUSE, ALBANY, NEW YORK
 TITLE: SECOND FLOOR PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE: AS NOTED

SK-3
 DATE 03/23/06

-  INDICATES AREA OF COLLAPSED AND/OR MISSING BRICK WALL
-  INDICATES EXISTING WALL

LEGEND:



ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.

CONSULTING ENGINEERS 88 UNIVERSITY PLACE, NEW YORK, NY 10003-4542
(212) 620-7970

www.rsapc.com
FAX (212) 620-8157

PHOTOGRAPHS



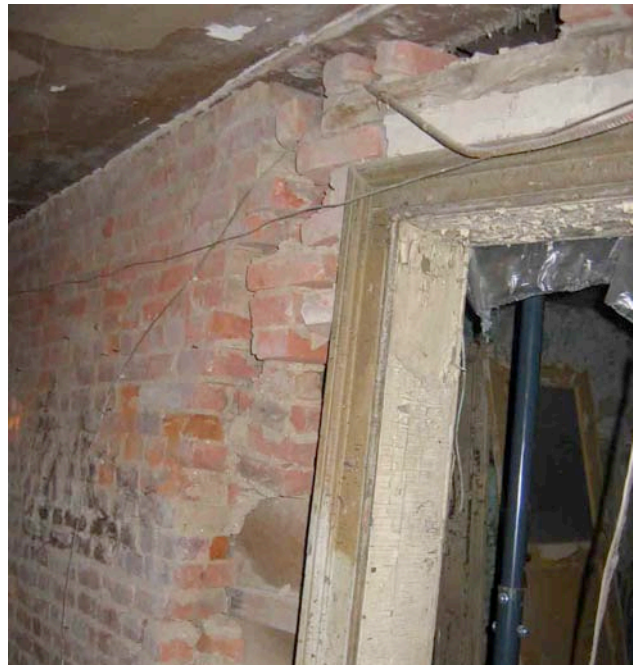
Photograph No. 1. View of interior face of exterior wall at NW Corner of Basement.



Photograph No. 2. View of interior wall in basement (north end of the north/south bearing wall); opposite side of hallway from Photograph No. 1.



Photograph No. 3. View of west elevation of the north/south bearing wall in the basement. Note the severe deterioration/loss of masonry at the bottom of this wall.



Photograph No. 4. View of the south end of the north/south bearing wall in the basement. Note the significant loss of bricks and disintegration of the wall.

ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.

CONSULTING ENGINEERS

88 UNIVERSITY PLACE, NEW YORK, NY 10003-4542
(212) 620-7970

www.rsapc.com
FAX (212) 620-8157



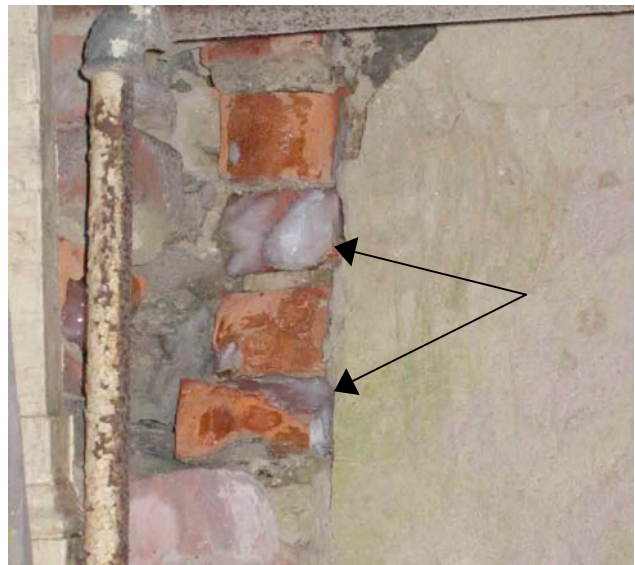
Photograph No. 5. View of underside of wood stairs in the basement.



Photograph No. 6. View of brick wall failure at the SE corner of the basement; note pile of brick, mortar, and other debris from the collapsed portions of this brick wall.



Photograph No. 7. View of eastern side of the north end of the north/south bearing wall in the basement. Note that even the temporary screw jacks appear to have displaced horizontally.



Photograph No. 8. View of severe moisture in the brick walls of the basement. This photograph was taken at the east wall of the building (i.e., the party or common wall with the adjacent row house). Arrows point to ice deposition on the brick surfaces.

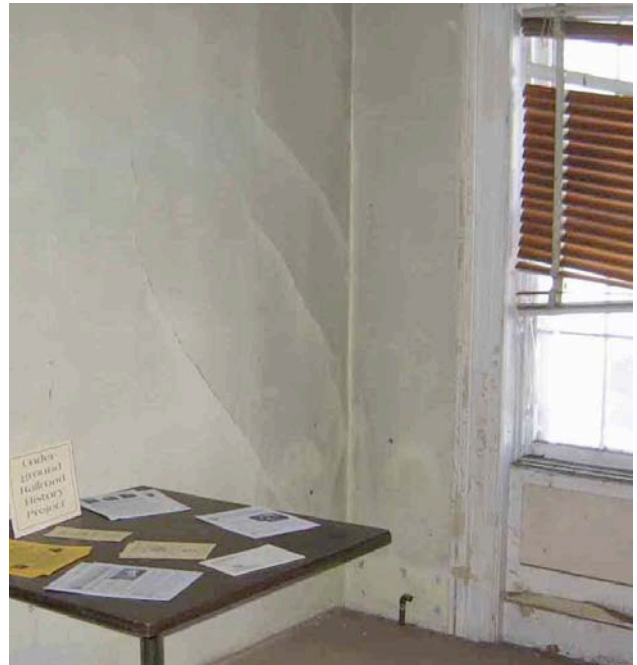
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(212) 620-7970

www.rsapc.com
FAX (212) 620-8157



Photograph No. 9. View of basement hallway looking south. The north/ south bearing wall is on the left side of this image; note that the wall is no longer plumb and has moved sideways.



Photograph No. 10. View of typical diagonal cracking in the upper floors of the house. This occurs on the first floor (near the north wall of the house).



Photograph No. 11. View of stair landing at upper floor where the stair has pulled away from the interior surface of the exterior wall.



Photograph No. 12. View of header and side of stair landing at upper floor where the stair has pulled away from the interior surface of the exterior wall. This is a close-up of Photograph No. 11.

ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.

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(212) 620-7970

www.rsapc.com
FAX (212) 620-8157

PHOTOGRAPHS



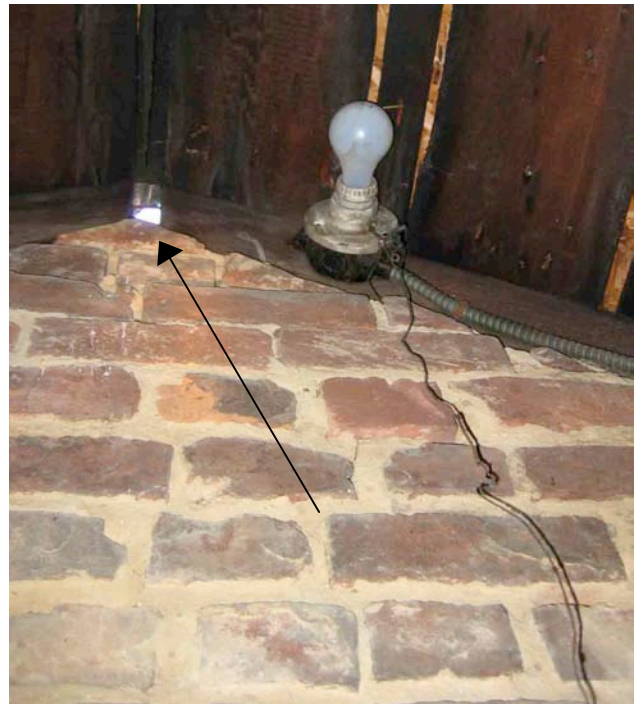
Photograph No. 13. View of the exterior brick below a second floor window sill (on the south elevation).



Photograph No. 14. View of crack in the interior plaster near the SW corner of the building.



Photograph No. 15. View of another landing of the main staircase where the header and the stair have moved away from the interior face of the exterior wall.



Photograph No. 16. View of interior surface of the west gable as viewed from the attic. The arrow points to where light (and water) enters the attic.

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Photograph No. 17. View of localized failure of exterior wythes of brick masonry at the NE corner of the building.



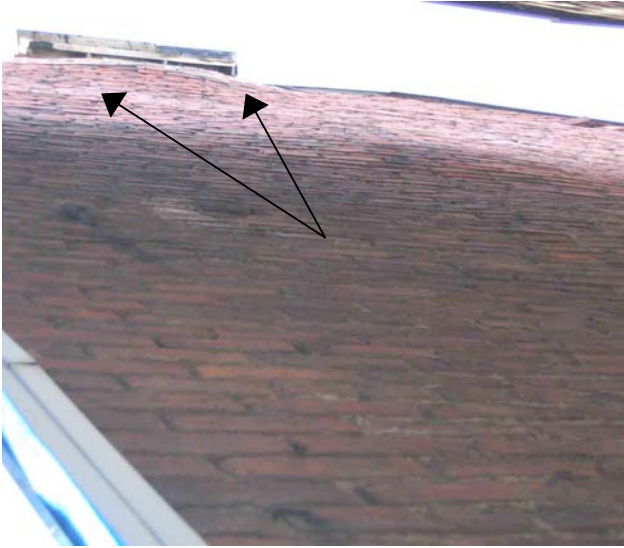
Photograph No. 18. View of missing mortar, missing bricks, and loose masonry at the cornice level (at the NE corner of the building).



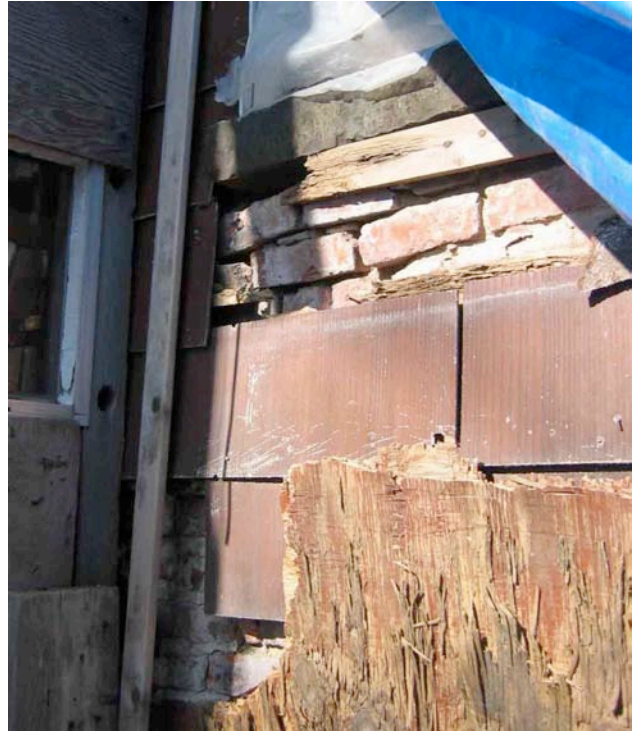
Photograph No. 19. View of missing masonry and poorly reconstructed masonry on the exterior of the East elevation.



Photograph No. 20. View of one of the cracks in the masonry at the base of the West elevation wall (near NW corner of the building).



Photograph No. 21. View of one of the bulges in the exterior brick masonry. This view is at the SE corner looking up. The arrows point to the most severe bulging.



Photograph No. 22. View of the severely deteriorated masonry at the first floor window of the south elevation. Note almost complete absence of mortar between the bricks below the sill and behind the missing exterior siding.