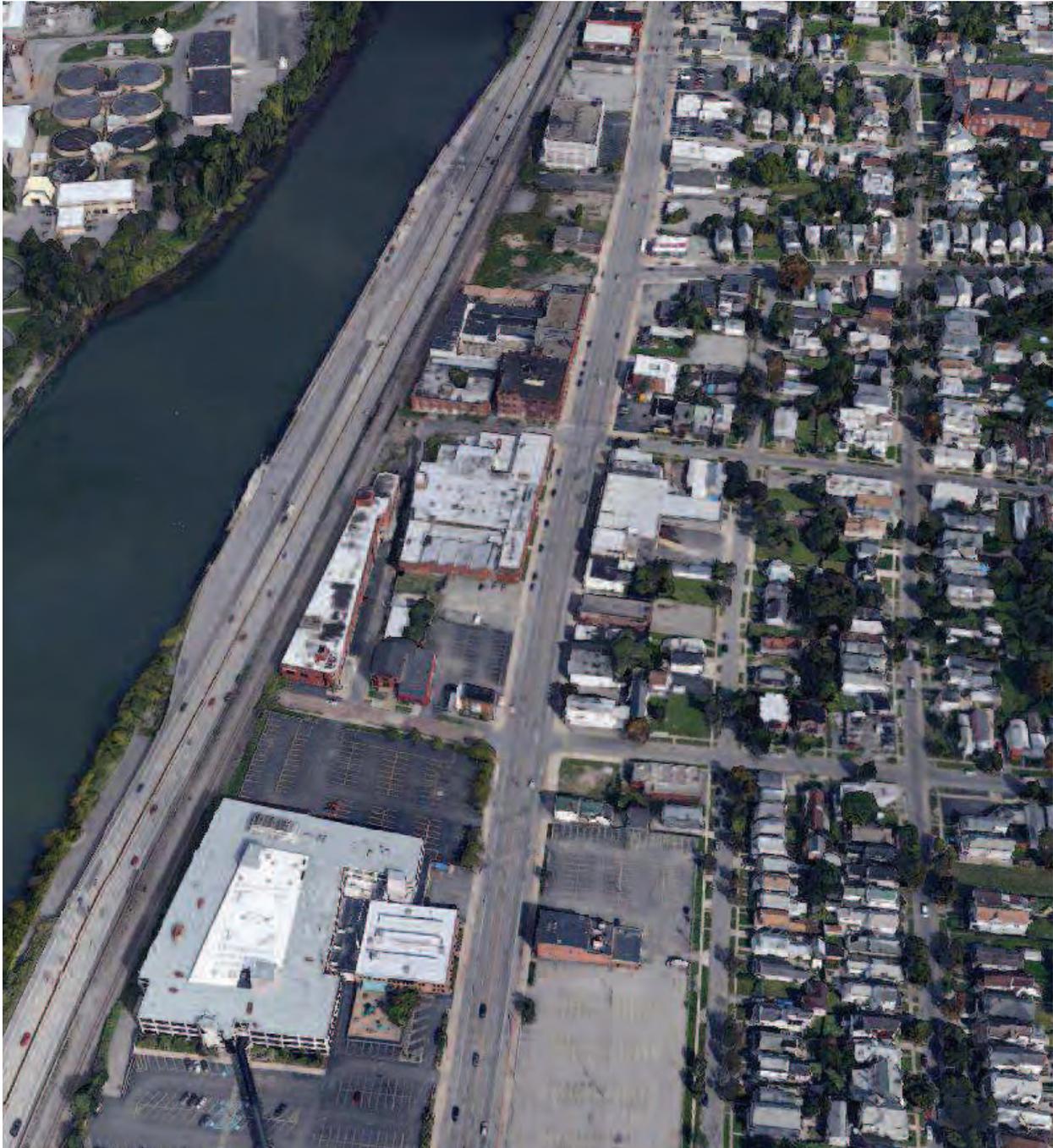




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with kta preservation specialist



Architecture Engineering Interior Design

Niagara Street Corridor Study

Buffalo, NY

10.01.2014

eco logic^{STUDIO}

UB University at Buffalo



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Niagara Street Corridor Feasibility Study Focusing on the 1200 Block, between Breckenridge and Auburn

In June of 2014, *Carmina Wood Morris, D.P.C.* (CWM) was engaged by Vision Niagara and Buffalo Neighborhood Stabilization Company to conduct a feasibility study for a portion of Niagara Street to provide data for a subsequent application for a New York State Main Street Grant, a program aimed at spurring development by reimbursing building owners for costs incurred for improvements to their properties. While the original study scope included the stretch of Niagara Street between Ferry Street to the south and Lafayette Street to the north, the primary focus was to be directed on three buildings on the east side of Niagara Street targeted for development – 1233/1235, 1237 and 1239. CWM engaged Kerry Traynor of *kta preservation specialists* (KTA) to provide the historical research and documentation that the study demanded.

Coincidentally, the owner of 1225 Niagara Street had retained CWM to design a redevelopment of that vacant building to house a ground floor restaurant with market rate apartments on the second and third floors. As a part of that project, CWM and KTA had preliminary discussions with representatives of the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) about the possible designation of an historic district within the feasibility study area given its intact assembly of extant structures and the unique history of the area's development near the Black Rock Harbor and paralleling the Erie Canal and the Belt Line Railroad. Successful designation of an historic district would allow the development of any contributing building within the district to be eligible for the federal and state Historic Preservation Tax Credit program, providing building owners tax credits equal to 40% of qualified reimbursable expenses incurred during redevelopment of their properties.

As the feasibility study progressed, Kerry Traynor's historic research confirmed our initial conversations with SHPO and it became clear that there was a strong case to be made for an historic district designation. KTA's efforts have resulted in two documents through this study, a broader scoped *Survey of Historic Cultural Resources: Niagara Street between Busti Street and Forest Avenue, City of Buffalo* and the more specific *Black Rock Canal – Belt Line – Niagara Street: Industrial Heritage Historic District, City of Buffalo*. Both of these comprehensive documents are provided in their entirety under separate cover; the historic descriptions of the properties described in this feasibility study document are excerpted with permission from KTA's second, more specific document.

There are two other concurrent efforts by others that have informed this study. Kevin Connors, AIA, PE of *eco logic studio* (ELS) was retained by the owner of 1239 Niagara

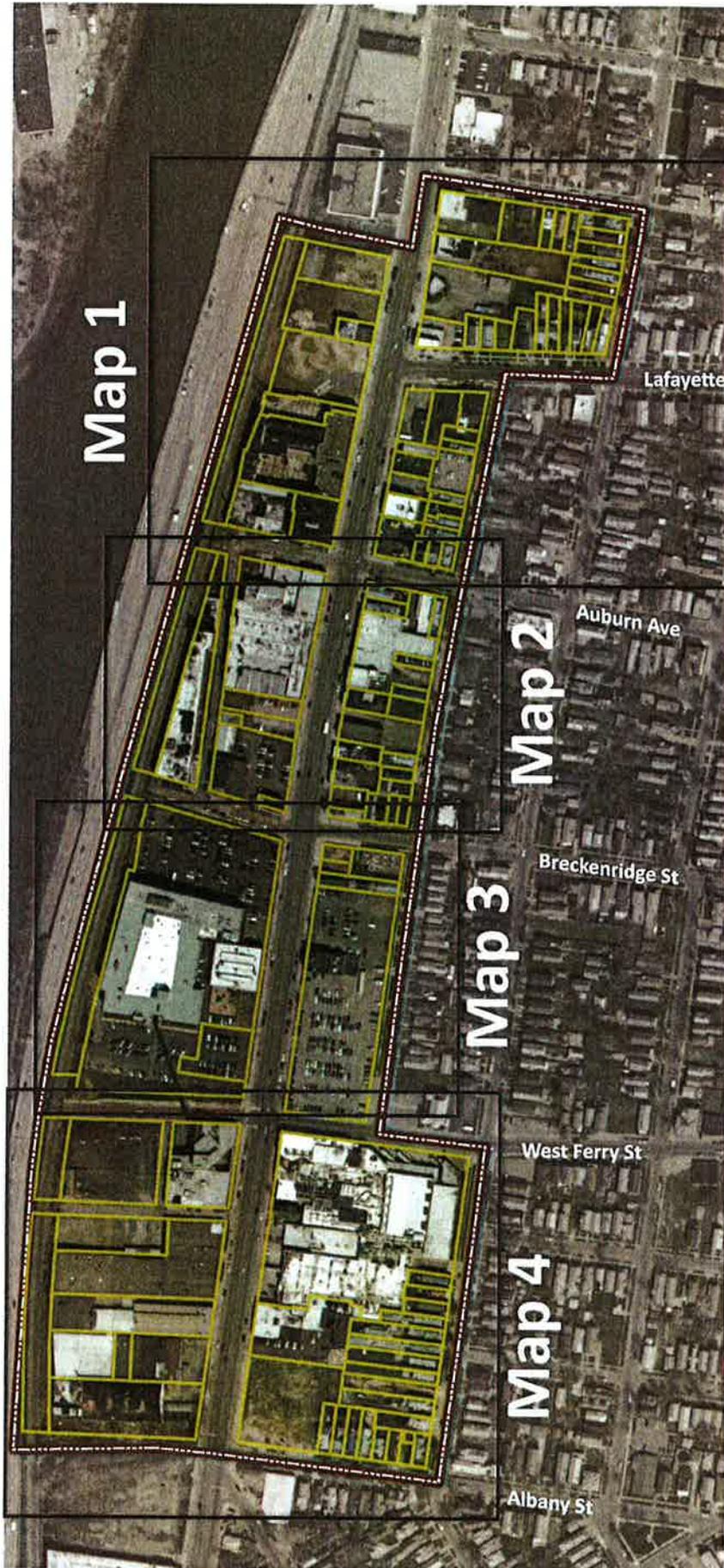
Niagara Street Corridor Feasibility Study
Focusing on the 1200 Block, between Breckenridge and Auburn

Page 2 of 2

Street to develop plans for reconstruction of that building for occupation by the *Sugar City Arts Collaborative*, a local organization devoted to promoting local artists and their works. ELS's plans and elevations for the currently ongoing reconstruction of 1239 Niagara Street are included in this study report with permission from Kevin Connors with our gratitude.

The other organization with whom we have been collaborating during the course of this study is *The State University of New York at Buffalo's Regional Institute (UBRI)*, specifically Brian Conley, GIS Research Analyst and his team who have been modeling the Niagara Street Corridor as part of the *Vision Niagara - One Region Forward Scenario Planning* initiative. We have provided UBRI with copies of our building models, plans, elevations and development data for use in their model; they have provided us with their maps for coordination of our two studies. The specific properties we address in this study are referenced to the UBRI maps' numbered properties for ease in referencing the related studies. We thank Brian Conley for this collaboration.

The following pages describe each of the properties on both sides of Niagara Street in the refined study area, extending from Breckenridge Street to Auburn Street. A brief narrative of development potential supplements the historic context excerpted from KTA's report. Existing conditions photographs are juxtaposed with elevation drawings depicting what a redeveloped facility might look like; floor plans are included for the three primary buildings on which the study focused as well as the 1225 Niagara building and a potential infill project. The format of the pages starts at the northeast corner of Niagara and Breckenridge and progresses in sequence north along the east side of Niagara street, then crosses over to the west side of Niagara Street and progresses south back to Breckenridge.



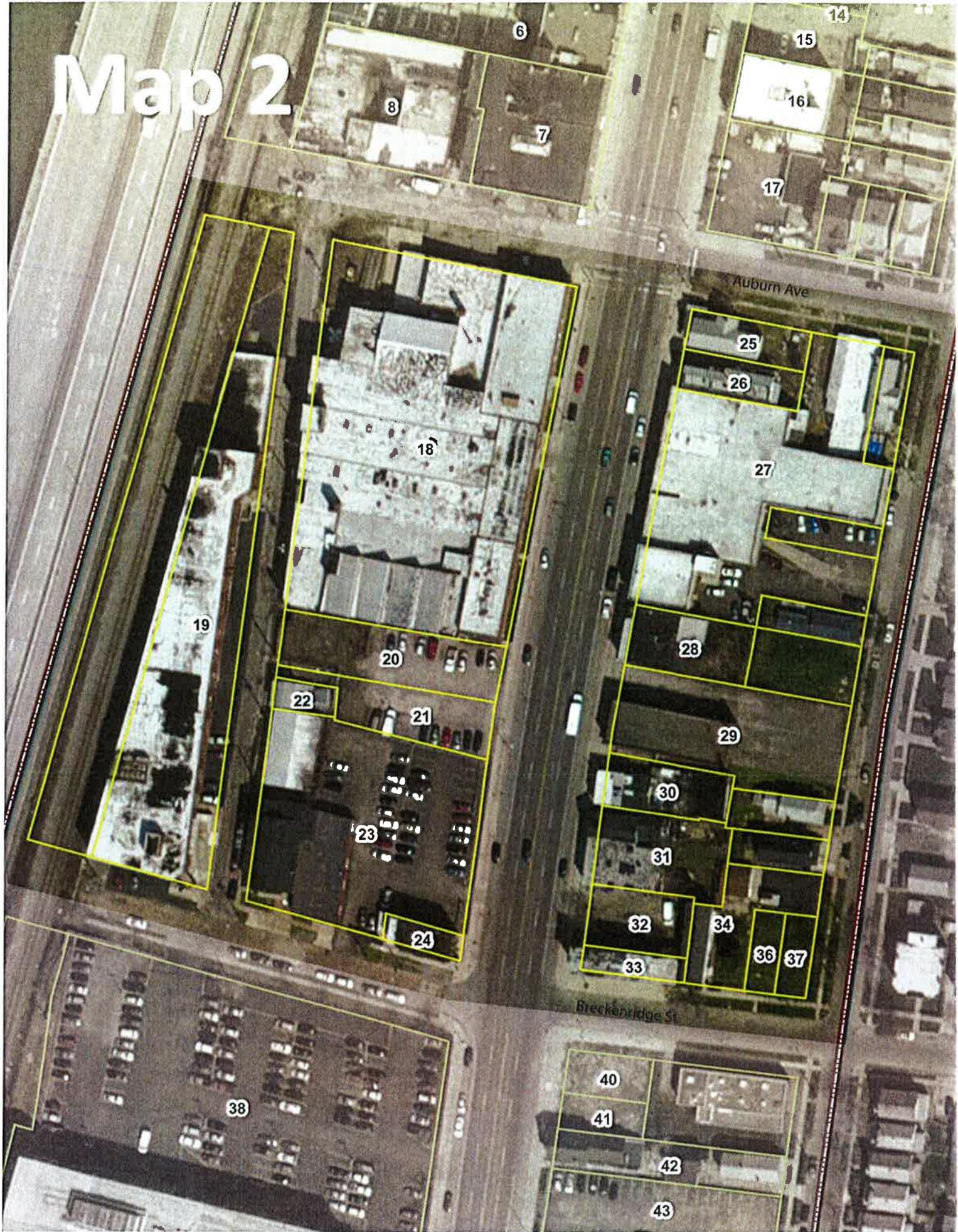
These maps are provided through the courtesy of:



This page depicts the overall limits of UBRI's modeling for the *Vision Niagara - One Region Forward Scenario Planning* initiative.

The focus area of this feasibility study is contained primarily on Map 2, with two properties on the west side of Niagara documented on Map 1. These maps are included on the following pages and provide the reference numbers for identifying the properties.

Map 2



Map 1



Historical context

The three-story Italianate commercial storefront located at the southeast corner of Breckenridge and Niagara Streets was constructed ca. 1877. John Bowers is noted in the city directory as having a grocery and meat market in the retail space and living in one of the apartments above. By 1905, Emory Smith had taken over the business that he maintained until 1914, when Edward E. Boylan opened his own grocery store at 1225 Niagara Street. By 1950, the storefront was a restaurant.

Architectural features

The three-bay, three story brick building features classical Italianate detailing. The storefront retains its original parti, defined by cast iron columns and pilasters. The windows at the second floor feature masonry arches with keystones, while segmental arches head the windows on the third floor. The original one over one double hung sash windows remain extant on the third floor. A cornice of broad overhanging eaves, detailed with brackets, turn the corner from Niagara Street to Breckenridge Street. A projecting rectangular bay window is located on the second floor of the Breckenridge Street elevation at the second bay in from Niagara Street. The windows, with segmental heads, are functionally located, relative to plan. There are only a few small, narrow windows at the east end of the north elevation since a building was historically located in the adjacent lot.

Redevelopment opportunities

Redevelopment plans call for a complete restoration of the exterior, including removal of paint from brick and cast iron, masonry repointing, window repair or replacement throughout, restoration of the bracketed cornice, new storefront glazing and roof replacement. Interior reconstruction has been designed to accommodate a new wood-fired brick oven artisan pizza restaurant on the ground floor. Upstairs, 3 market rate apartments are planned. A 2-bedroom, two-story "townhouse" unit will occupy the front of the second floor and the rear of the third floor, utilizing the building's restored historic wood stair for internal vertical circulation. A 1-bedroom unit will be located at the front of the third floor and another 1-bedroom unit will occupy the former hayloft above the carriage house at the rear of the second floor. A new addition is planned for the north side of the building housing code-compliant emergency egress stairs for all three apartments, new toilet rooms for the pizza restaurant at the ground floor and basement cooler and storage space for the restaurant kitchen.

(ref. floor plans on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

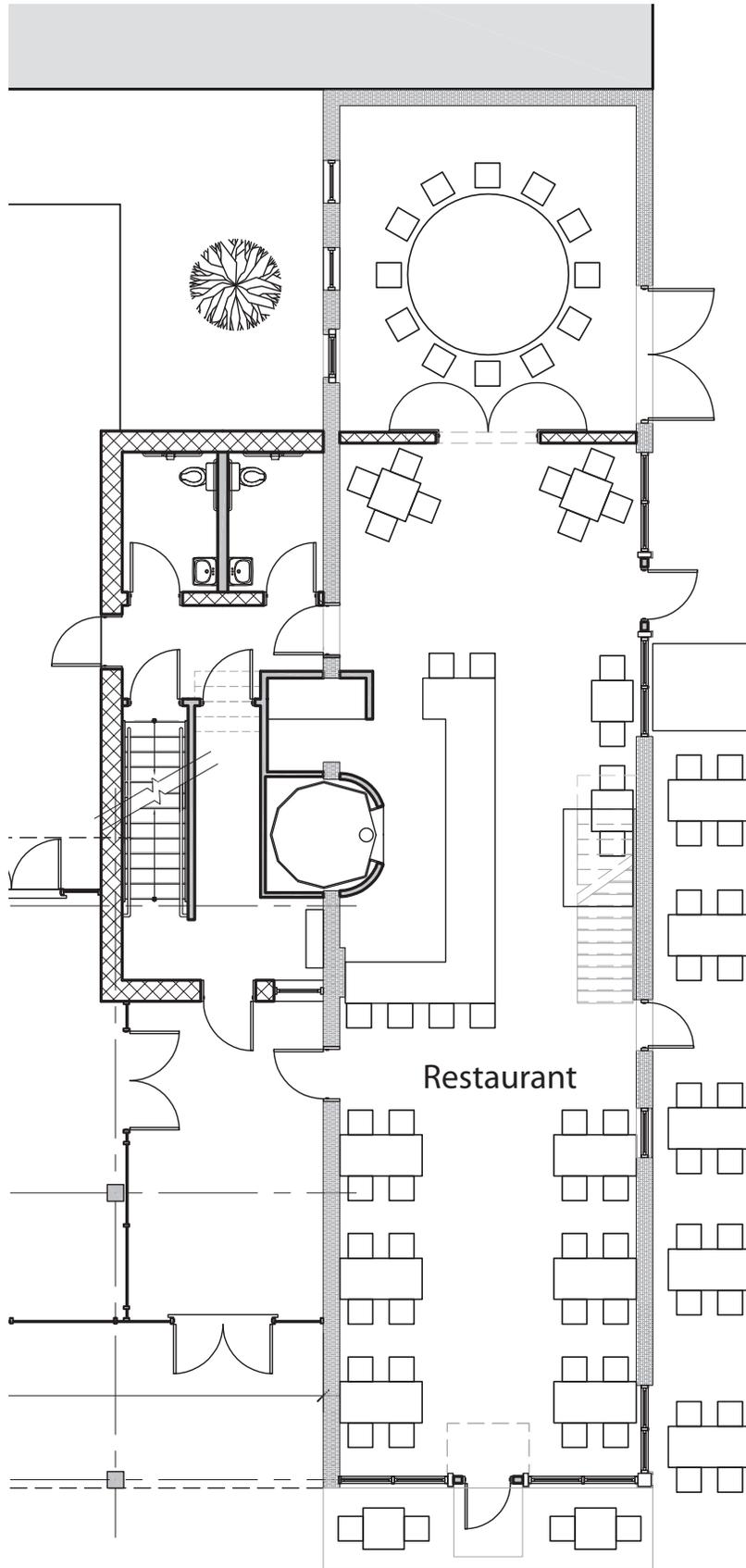
This project has a planning budget of \$400,000.

Code Analysis

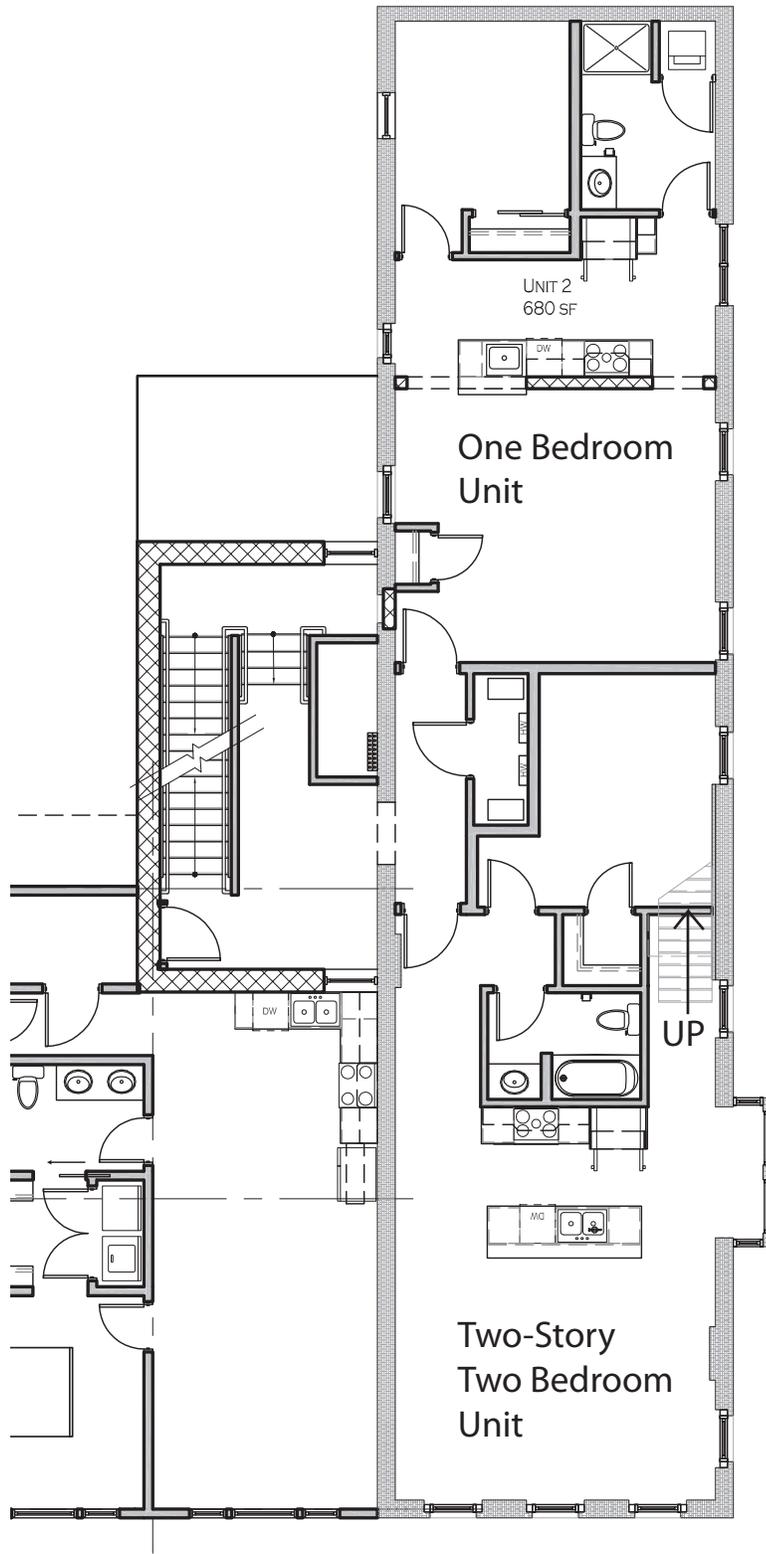
The major code issue with this building is the lack of compliant emergency egress from the upper stories. The project's stair tower addition remedies this non-compliance.

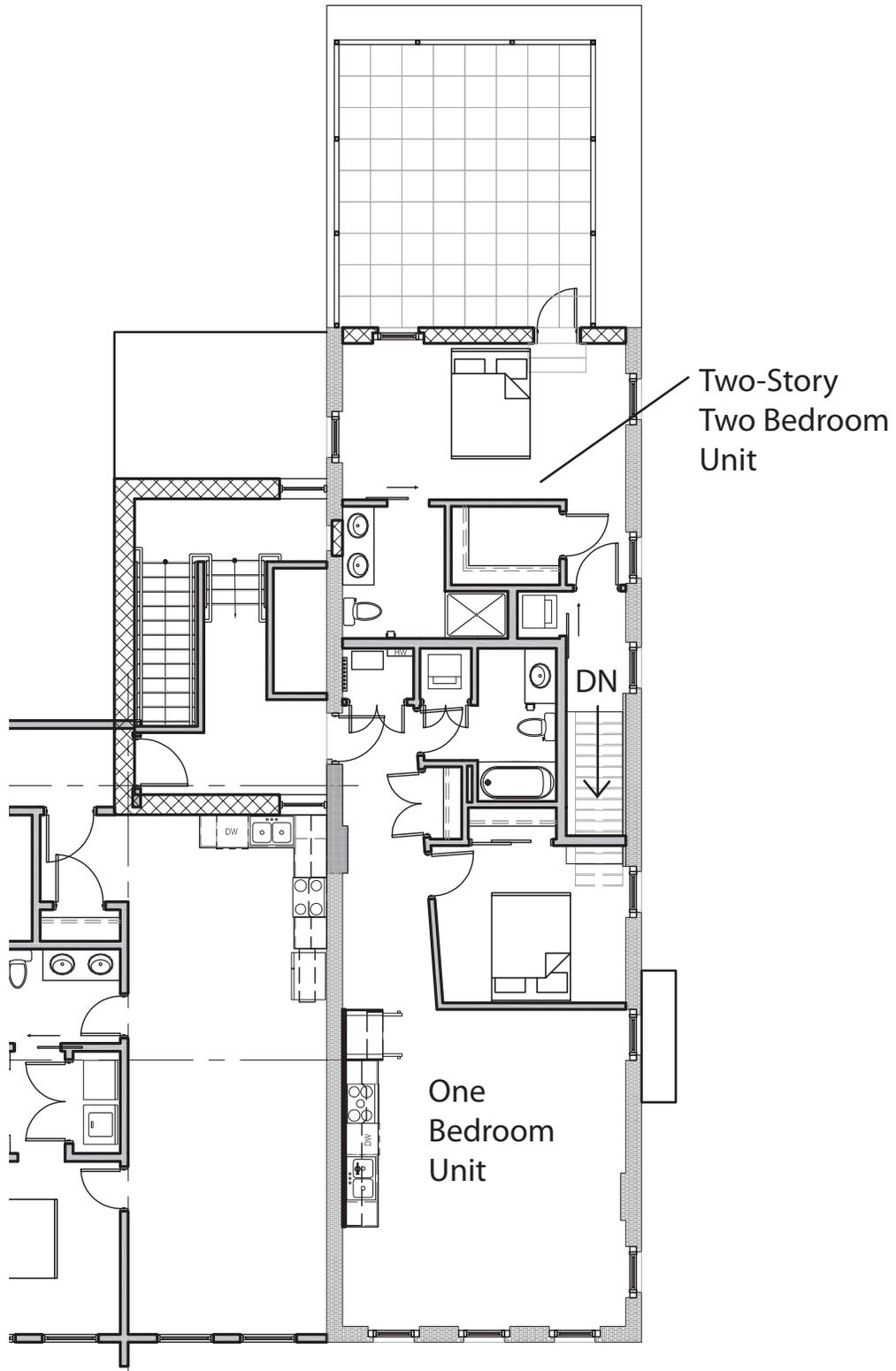
Redevelopment of the building will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.





Restaurant







Historical context

Our research of Sanborn maps revealed a 3-story brick structure once stood on what is now a vacant parcel, but we have no photographic evidence of what the building, or perhaps two connected buildings, looked like. Old permits on file in the City of Buffalo Building Department show that when the structures were demolished, the properties were put to use as a fenced contractor's storage lot.

Architectural features

N/A for existing building features. The proposed new infill building depicted in our plans and elevation drawings has been scaled to complement the neighboring structures and represents a possible design generated within a set of design standards that we recommend should be established for new buildings within the district:

- Buildings of 2-4 stories in height, built to the sidewalk / Niagara St. right-of-way
- Materials to be compatible with the district: wood, brick and/or stone masonry, steel/iron and glass and concrete; EFIS finishes not allowed.
- Strong first floor commercial storefronts with plate glass windows and continuous signboard band above, corresponding in height to average signboards throughout the district.
- Upper floor windows to be punched openings with individual or mullied window units. Window proportions should approximate a 3:1 height to width ratio with no more than three windows mullied together.
- Roof lines should present a strong cornice line to the street or be gabled with a 7:12 or steeper roof slope.

Redevelopment opportunities

Redevelopment plans call for a new infill project designed to house a bar for the new pizza restaurant next door in 1225 Niagara. The ground floor storefront is pulled back from the sidewalk edge and equipped with large glass doors that can open onto a covered sidewalk patio. The building's main entrance off Niagara Street leads into an expanded vestibule that provides access into the bar to the north, the pizza restaurant to the south and the 1225 Niagara Street stair tower addition to the east. This eastern doorway is the tenant entrance for the second and third floor apartments above. Two, 1-bedroom apartments are located on each of the upper two floors, for a total of four new market-rate apartments. The building is relatively shallow in depth to create an enclosed outdoor courtyard between the neighboring buildings on either side. The courtyard is envisioned as an outdoor dining space and garden within which vegetables and herbs will be cultivated for use in the artisan pizzas.

(ref. floor plans on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

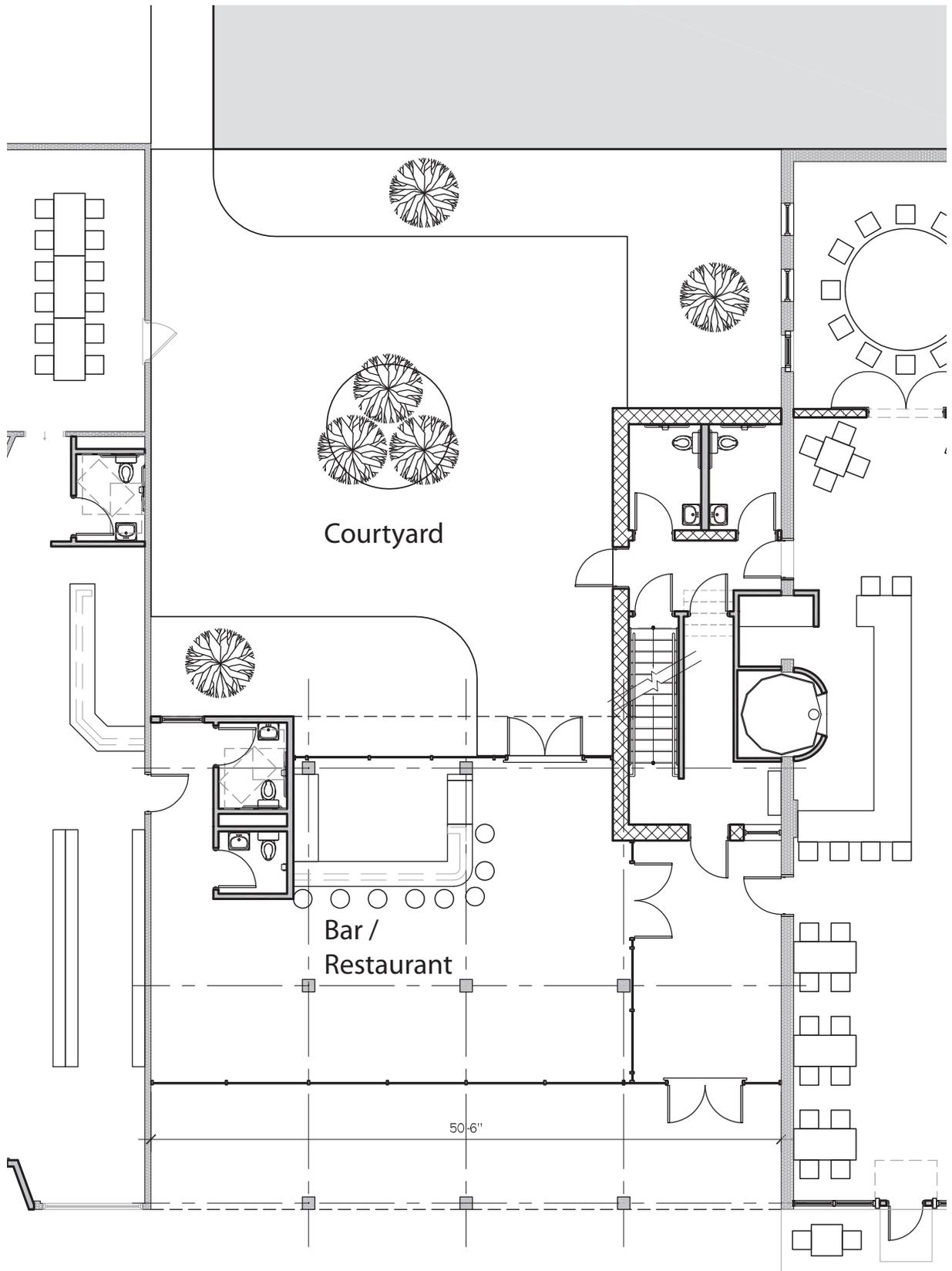
The total gross area of this proposed infill project is 5,000 s.f. The building has been conceived as a wood-framed structure with connections to the stair tower added onto 1225 Niagara Street (ref. property 33 on previous pages) and into the adjacent 1233 Niagara Street (ref. property 31 on following pages); these connections provide emergency egress from the upper floor apartments while avoiding duplication of stair construction. Given these cost-saving initiatives, we recommend that budget planning for new construction be calculated at \$200/s.f., yielding a planning budget of \$1,000,000. Interior fit-out if the first floor bar space would require an additional budget based on the tenant's requirements and desired level of finishes.

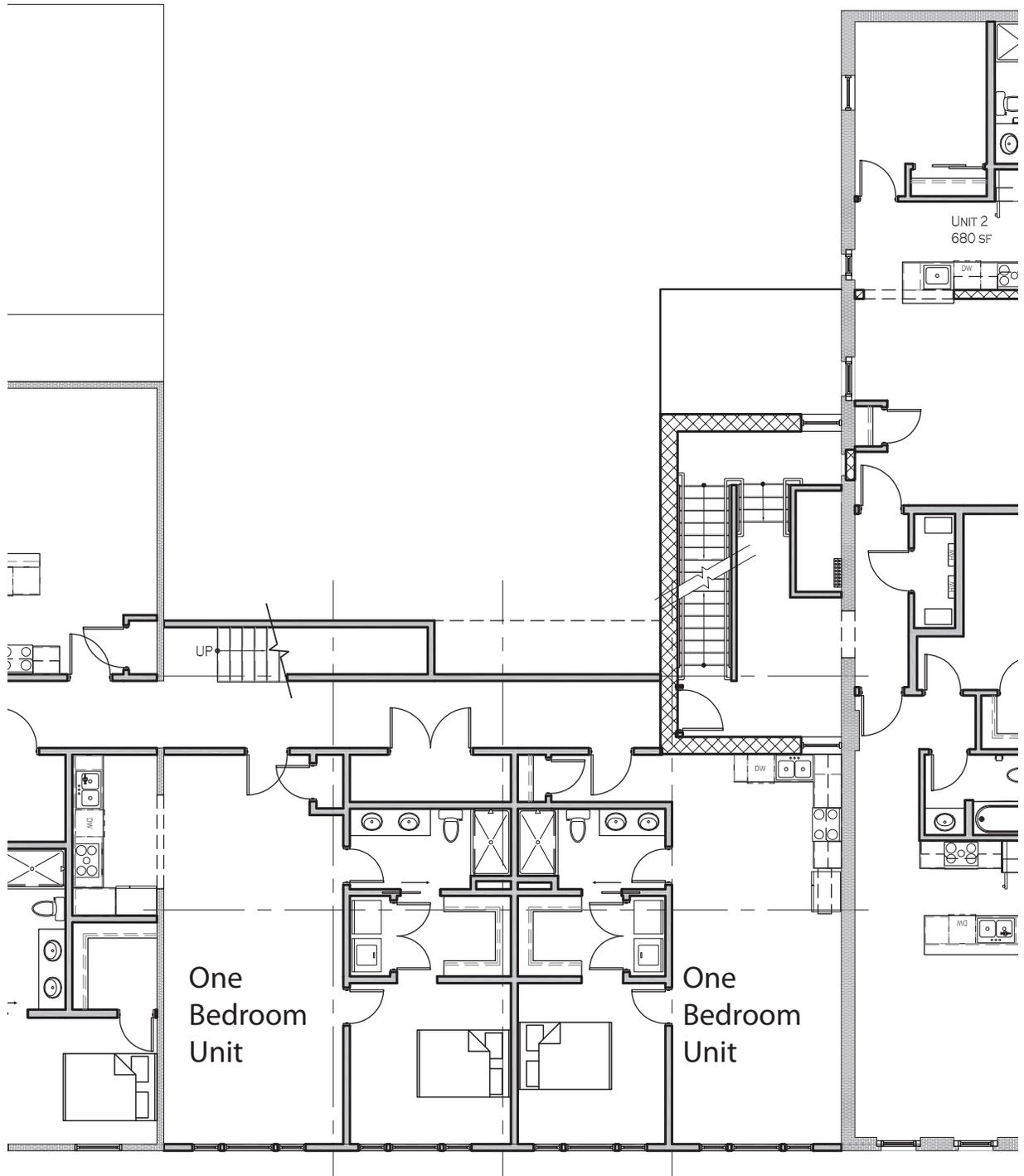
Code Analysis

As a new, ground-up building, the entire structure will comply with Building Code of New York State mandates.

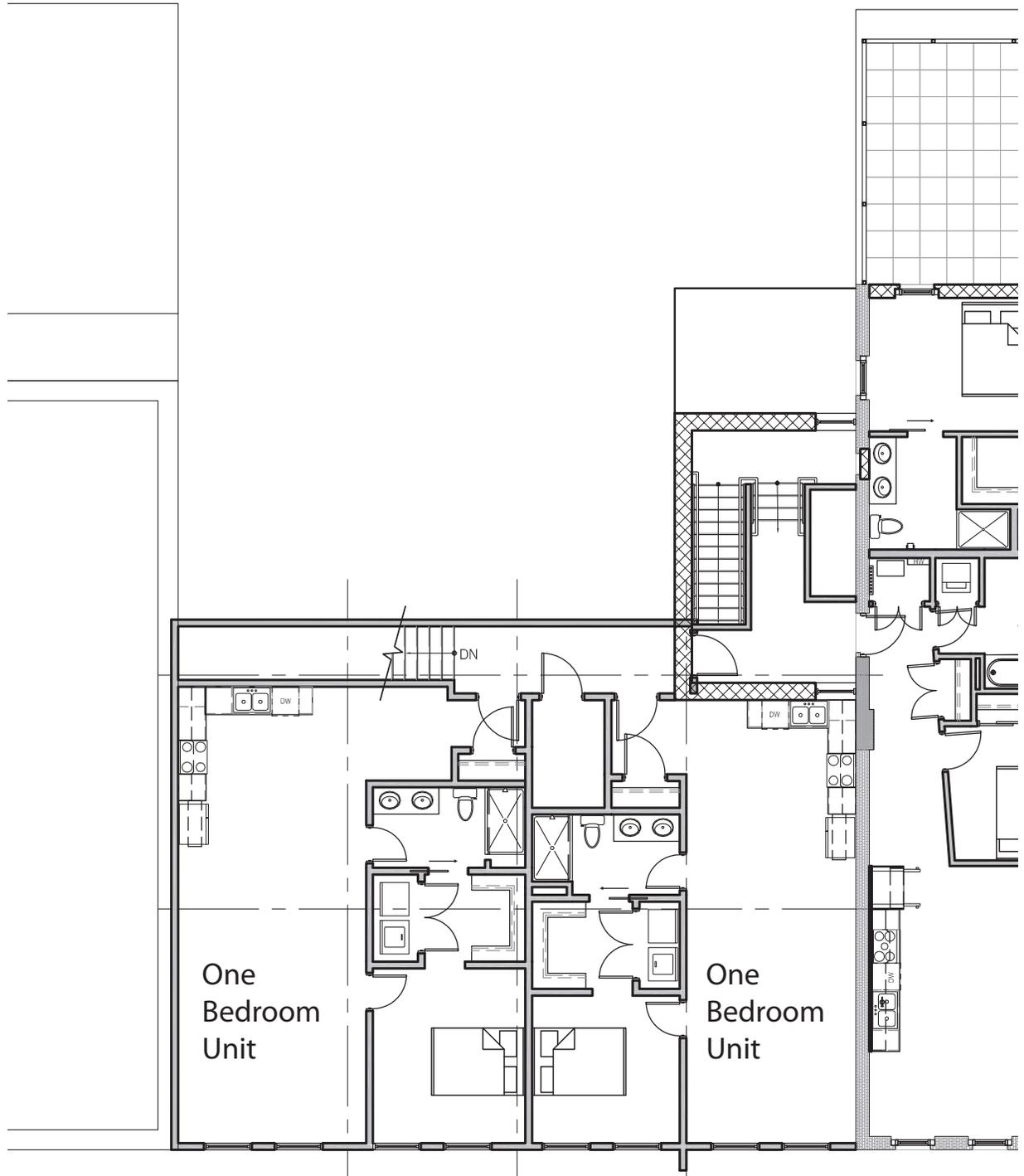
The building will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.







PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN



PROPOSED THIRD FLOOR PLAN

Historical context

Niagara Street property 31 is documented on the 1889 Sanborn map as 1233, 1235 and 1237. The two story frame building with commercial storefronts at 1233 and 1235 Niagara Street featured decorative engaged columns and a central stair accessing living space above; 1237 Niagara Street, also a frame building, is noted on the map as being two-and-one-half stories tall, with a front porch. Various enterprises were located in the storefronts including William Logan's plumbing business and Holsa Smith's Bakery. The businesses serviced the residential neighborhood located to the east.

Architectural features

The properties, specifically 1233 and 1235 have been altered with non-historic siding on the elevations and replacement windows. The original storefront parti remains extant, defined by decorative engaged columns believed to be cast iron. The two-and-one-half story frame building at 1237 has similarly been altered with non-historic siding and replacement windows. The original open front porch was reconstructed into a commercial storefront with access to the upstairs residences through the north door. This original parti remains extant, including the cast iron at the storefront. The combined properties are significant to the district as rare surviving examples of retail properties in the industrial neighborhood that would have provided everyday necessities for the working class community.

Redevelopment opportunities

Redevelopment plans call for the ground floor commercial spaces at all three addresses to be restored to viable use. The doorway at 1233 is the customer entrance into a retail market for foods prepared by the artisan pizza restaurateur in his adjacent commissary, housed in 1235 Niagara. Restored storefront windows provide display for the market's products and a view into the working commissary.

The doorway at 1235 Niagara is the entrance to the upper story residences, which includes two, 1-bedroom units on the reconstructed second floor. The central stair also serves as the second means of egress from the directly attached infill at 1227-1231 Niagara. The joint redevelopment of properties 33-31 creates a total of 9 new market-rate apartments.

Two additional apartments are planned for the reconstructed second and third floors of 1237 Niagara Street, which will require significant structural repairs to the failing upper porch as evidenced by the sloping third floor apartment space.

(ref. floor plans on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

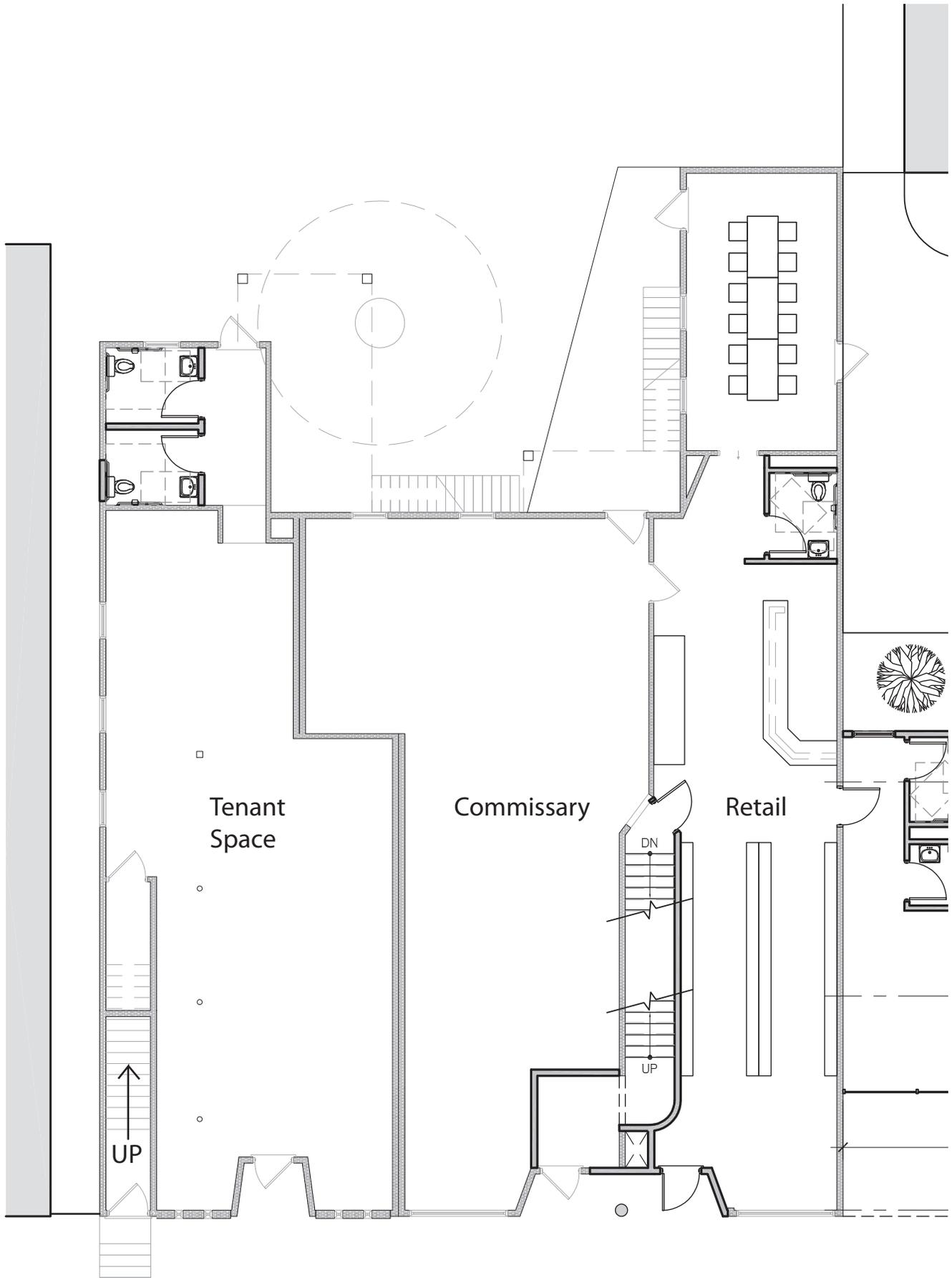
The total gross area of property 31 is the floor area of 1233/1235 Niagara Street at 4,640 s.f. plus the floor area of 1237 Niagara Street at 3,750 s.f., equaling 8,390 s.f. The plans depicted would require a complete gut/rehabilitation of both structures, including repair of damaged floor systems due to water infiltration, widening and reconstruction of the central stair, previously mentioned structural repairs to upper porch, new windows and doors, new storefronts and entirely restored exterior finishes. We recommend that budget planning for this level of reconstruction be calculated at \$175/s.f., yielding a planning budget of \$1,468,250. Interior fit-out of the first floor retail space (1233), commissary (1235) and speculative tenant space (1237) would require an additional budget based on the tenants' requirements and desired level of finishes.

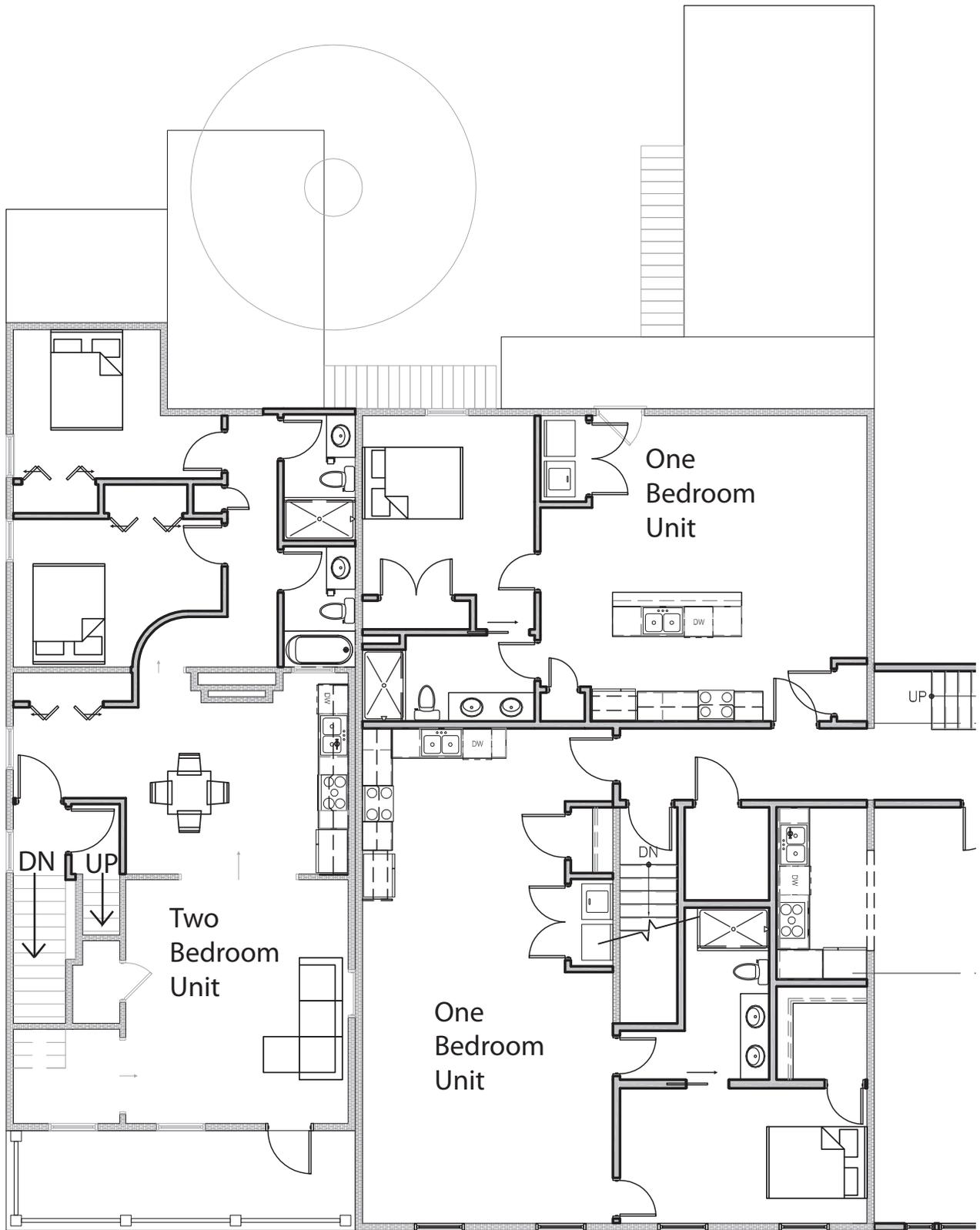
Code Analysis

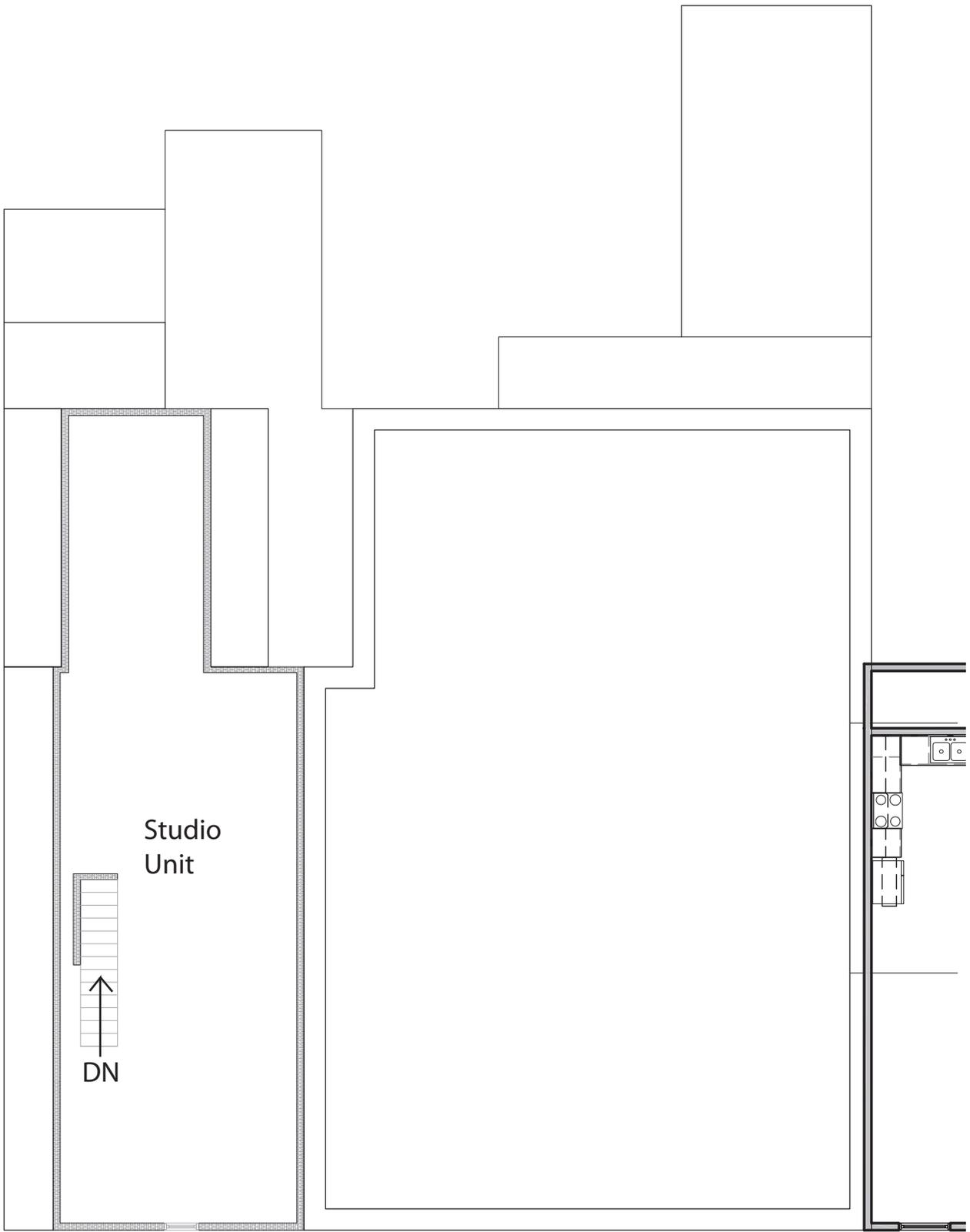
The major code issue with this building is the lack of compliant emergency egress from the upper story. The 1233/1235 project's connection through the adjacent proposed infill project (property 32) to the 1225 Niagara Street restoration project (property 33) and its new stair tower addition remedies this non-compliance.

Redevelopment of the buildings will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.









PROPOSED THIRD FLOOR PLANS

Historical context

The building located at 1239 Niagara Street is first noted in the city directory in 1868 as the home of Daniel C. Conger, a carpenter with Frank & Company. While it is possible that the building could be a contributing property to the district, the loss of integrity as a result of additions to the exterior masks the historic heavy timber frame residence. More research, specifically investigation of the existing material fabric and history of the property, would be necessary to determine the extent to which the historic residence remains.

Architectural features

The two-story frame building retains few architectural features; the façade massing hearkens back to the building's history as the "Western Paradise" bar and restaurant visible in an historic photograph dating from 1961 (ref. following page). The right edge of the photo shows a striated painted wood façade with projecting canvas awnings over storefront windows and a projecting vestibule entrance at the south corner. Above the vestibule is a wagon wheel sculpture and a Canastota wagon sits atop the projecting parapet wall. Three, second floor windows can be faintly seen in the photo. The current red siding has obscured what was there, none of which is historic fabric. Inside the building, exposed structure shows a steel beam where the original home's front wall might have been and where the commercial addition of $\pm 15'$ extended the building footprint westward to the sidewalk right-of-way. Hand-hewn beams and floor joists can be seen east of the steel beam that confirm the possible age of the original house documented in the Sanborn maps. Similar hand-hewn wood structure is visible in crawl space below the first floor, accessed through a floor hatch.

Redevelopment opportunities

Redevelopment plans currently being implemented include reconstruction of the building for the *Sugar City Arts Collaborative*, a local organization devoted to promoting local artists and their works. Floor plans and proposed concept elevations have been developed by *eco logic studio* for the work currently under construction. *Sugar City* will occupy the entire ground floor, with bar space and toilet rooms in the front half of the building and a large open performance space in the rear. A separate entrance on the north side of the building provides access to a stair leading to a single 1-bedroom apartment in the reconstructed second floor.

(ref. floor plans on following pages)

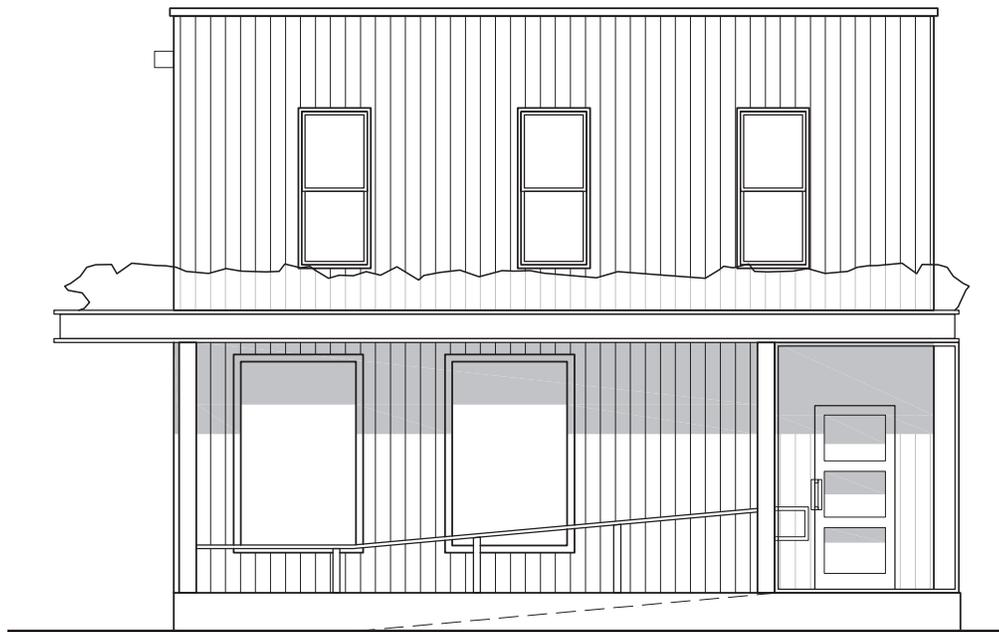
Opinions of Probable Costs

This project had a planning budget of \$50,000 when work began. To date, expenses for the ongoing interior reconstruction are nearly double that amount, as unforeseen conditions were uncovered that required repair and/or remediation. Work on the exterior has not yet begun and will likely be phased as income is generated that can be reinvested back into the building's rehabilitation. We would estimate that the total project expenditures might approach \$200,000 once all ground floor interiors are complete, the second floor apartment is finished and all exterior upgrades are finalized.

Code Analysis

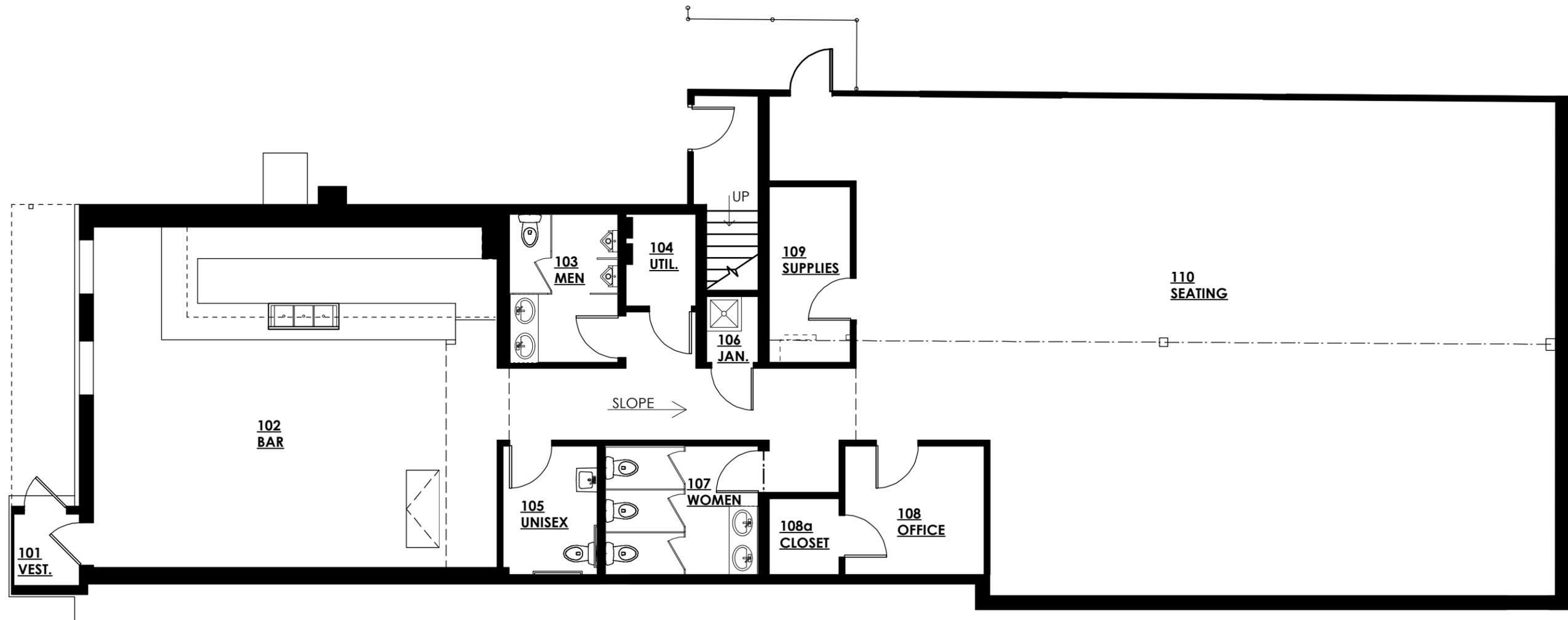
The major code issue with this building is the lack of natural light and ventilation for residential use of the upper story. The project's exterior envelope reconstruction, with new siding and windows will remedy this non-compliance.

Redevelopment of the building will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.



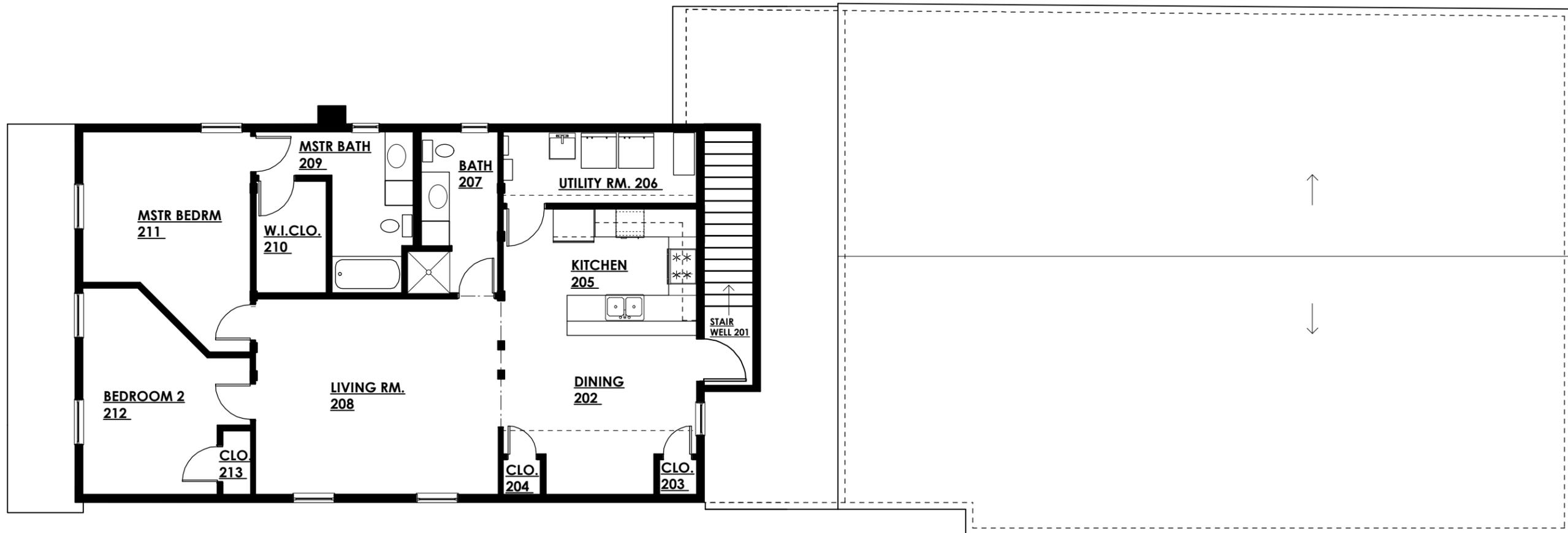
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GROUND FLOOR PLAN

0 4' 8'



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



Historical context

1245 Niagara Street was constructed ca. 1910 and the 1911 city directory notes Phelps Auto Top and Trimming as occupying the space. New Method Laundry is listed as a tenant in 1915 and in 1916 Reed Chocolate Company Candy Factory occupies the space. By 1922 Orgasco Inc., manufacturers of dodge gas burners occupied the space. In 1950 a fire protection equipment warehouse occupied the space.

Architectural features

The commercial/factory brick building is two stories tall and two bays wide. Engaged pilasters and a corbelled frieze define the bays on all elevations. The first floor storefront appears to have been altered, as the brick masonry appears to be a slightly darker red tone in locations. In each bay at the second floor are two paired sash windows with precast surround, header and sill. The first two bays on the north and south elevations have windows similar to those on the Niagara Street elevation. The window openings in the bays to the east on the north and south elevations have been infilled. Small, non-historic window openings are located in some of the infilled bays.

Redevelopment opportunities

The property has been recently renovated to house two new animal care businesses. The *West Side Pet Clinic* and *Pawprint by Penny* opened this year in ground floor space and are reportedly doing well enough that expansion plans are being discussed to renovate additional space on the building's second floor. Potential modifications to the Niagara Street façade include re-establishing the building's traditional storefronts and signboard and replacing the projecting shingled roof canopy with a canvas awning to address the scale of the building and enliven the façade on Niagara Street.

(ref. elevation study on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

Restoration of original storefronts on this building can be budgeted at \$40/s.f. Two storefront sections at ±200 s.f. each yield a planning budget of \$16,000. Demolition costs for the existing roof structure and allowances for interior modifications could likely add another \$8,000. The canvas awning pictured could likely cost an additional \$3,000, installed.

Code Analysis

We have not seen the inside of this building. Additional redevelopment of space on the second floor will require an analysis of emergency exiting to determine adequacy for the commercial use.

Redevelopment of the building will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.



Historical context

Our research of Sanborn maps revealed a 2-story wood framed structure once stood on what is now a vacant parcel. The building was demolished relatively recently and photographic evidence depicts a building that likely dates back to the late 19th century given its similarity to the building on property 31 at 1235, 1237 Niagara Street. One of the previous tenants was listed as a bicycle repair shop.

Architectural features

The 2-story frame structure pictured had two district storefronts with a recessed center doorway that presumably opened to a stair leading up to second floor residential space. It is unknown how deep the building was or how many apartment units occupied the building. The storefronts pictured give us a good example from which to pattern replacement storefronts on other buildings in the district.

The design of a proposed new infill building depicted in our elevation drawing was clearly informed by the historic photograph of the lost building, but has been conceived as a 3-story building to increase the potential economic return on the project. Scaled to complement the neighboring structure at 1255 Niagara Street, the elevation represents a possible design generated within a set of design standards that we recommend should be established for new buildings within the district:

- Buildings of 2-4 stories in height, built to the sidewalk / Niagara St. right-of-way
- Materials to be compatible with the district: wood, brick and/or stone masonry, steel/iron and glass and concrete; EFIS finishes not allowed.
- Strong first floor commercial storefronts with plate glass windows and continuous signboard band above, corresponding in height to average signboards throughout the district.
- Upper floor windows to be punched openings with individual or mullied window units. Window proportions should approximate a 3:1 height to width ratio with no more than three windows mullied together.
- Roof lines should present a strong cornice line to the street or be gabled with a 7:12 or steeper roof slope.

Redevelopment opportunities

Redevelopment of the vacant parcel as depicted in our elevation drawing is conceived as providing new commercial/retail space on the ground floor with eight market-rate apartment units above.

(ref. elevation study on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

The total gross area of this proposed infill project is 8,400 s.f. The building has been conceived as a wood-framed structure with traditional detailing and moderately priced interior apartment finishes. Accordingly, we recommend that budget planning be calculated at \$200/s.f., yielding a planning budget of \$1,680,000. Interior fit-out of the first floor retail spaces would require an additional budget based on the tenant's requirements and desired level of finishes.

Code Analysis

As a new, ground-up building, the entire structure will comply with Building Code of New York State mandates.

The building will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.



Historical context

The building at 1255 Niagara was home to the American Body Company, which produced Model L bodies and other medium-priced auto bodies in aluminum, steel and wood. The company's main office was at 1200 Niagara Street, with factories at 1088, 1095, 1200 and 1255 Niagara Street. The company first appears listed at the 1255 Niagara Street address in 1911. The company produced bodies for Lincoln and continued that contract until late 1926. The company's experimentation drew the attention of the U.S. Aluminum Company (ALCOA) in the hopes of producing cost-effective stamped aluminum automobile bodies and, in 1927, American Body was renamed U.S. Aluminum Co.; Fabrication Division. At this time, volume automobile body production ceases and the company focused on producing experimental aluminum bodies in the Buffalo factories through the 1950's. By 1950, the factory at 1255 Niagara Street was no longer manufacturing aluminum auto bodies and lists the various uses in the building as storage on the second floor, used car storage, auto repair and a pattern shop.

Architectural features

The factory constructed for the American Body Company consists of a 3-story block to the south and a 2-story block to the north. The 3-story block is nine rank with no definition of individual bays. Historically, offices and a stock room were located on the first floor and assembly space on the second and third floors. The block to the north is eight bays long, with each bay defined by paired windows at the second floor and paired windows of loading docks on the first floor. The windows at the first floor and in the five bays from the south on the second floor are all four over four double-hung sash units. The second story windows in the three bays to the north are industrial steel units. The change in window type might be a reflection of function. In the three bays to the north, metal work was performed while in the bays to the south, woodworking was done on the first floor and assembling on the second floor.

Although the windows in the 3-story block have been replaced on the first and second floors and infilled on the third, the building retains a high level of integrity. The original stone sills remain extant throughout.

Redevelopment opportunities

The property houses Better Wire Products, a thriving commercial fabricating business. The owner is currently reconstructing second floor space for business expansion. Potential modifications to the Niagara Street façade include brick repair/cleaning, window repair/replacements and new entrance storefront with awning.

(ref. elevation study on following pages)

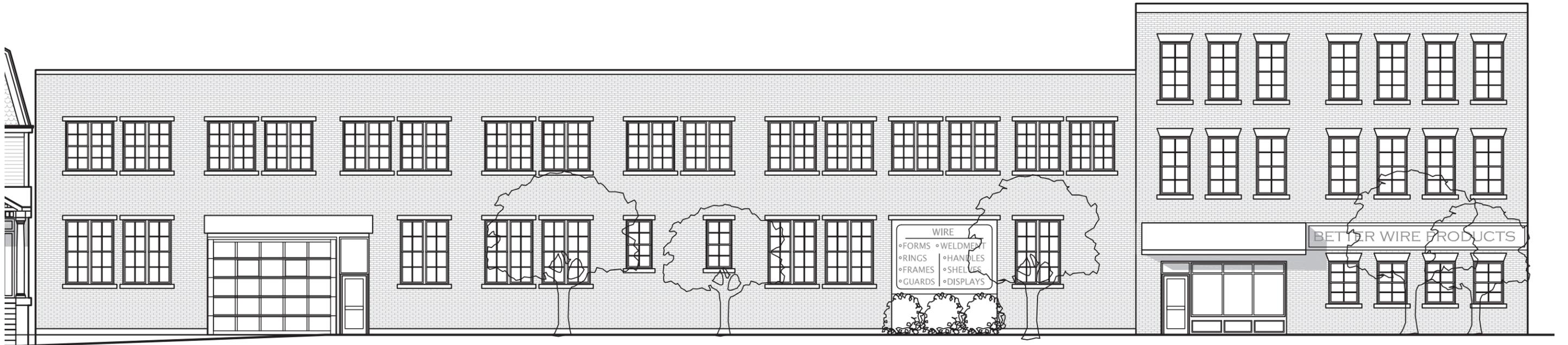
Opinions of Probable Costs

Restoration of an original storefront on this building can be budgeted at \$40/s.f. At ±200 s.f. in area, a planning budget of \$8,000 would be realistic. Demolition costs for the existing roof structure and allowances for interior modifications could likely add another \$8,000. The canvas awning pictured could likely cost an additional \$3,000, installed. The overhead door pictured can be budgeted for \$2,500 - \$4,000, depending on type of door, operators, materials, glazing, etc. Window replacements with new, aluminum-clad wood units can be budgeted at \$675 each; accordingly, the two-unit mullied windows required at the second floor can be budgeted at \$1,350/opening. Brick masonry repointing can be budgeted at \$8.00/s.f. of wall area for planning purposes.

Code Analysis

We have conducted a cursory interior tour of this building. Additional redevelopment of space on the second floor needs to include an analysis of emergency exiting to determine adequacy for the office occupancies and consideration of fire separations between the business and manufacturing uses.

Redevelopment of the building will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.



Historical context

The residence located at 1273 Niagara Street first appears on the 1900 Sanborn Map. The Queen Anne style building with gambrel roof is not typical of this section of Niagara Street, which tended to be more industrial in the late 19th century. James Burgess, a real estate agent and his wife Martha lived in the house between 1899 and 1911 when James died. Martha continued to live in the house until 1917. The history of residency in the house after the Burgess' leave is consistent with the working class neighborhood. In 1918, Henry Pyle, a carpenter, lived in the house, followed by John forgetter, a machinist in 1920. The Troglauer family occupied the residence next. Theresa, the mother lived with her three sons, a woodworker, metalworker and machinist, and two daughters who were both clerks. By 1950 the residence had been converted into apartments.

Architectural features

The Queen Anne style residence at 1273 Niagara Street retains a high level of integrity. The fish scale shingle siding and Palladian window in the gambrel remain extant, as do the brackets at the eaves. The original siding remains extant, as does the Eastlake detailing at the porch frieze. The original porch posts and rails have been removed. The windows have been covered with plywood, but remain extant in a number of locations. The massing features full and partial story bay windows on the side elevations.

Redevelopment opportunities

Redevelopment of the property being considered by the current owner includes a restoration of the historic home with plans for an adaptive reuse into commercial office space; potential residential occupancies could be included on the upper floors depending on market conditions and demand. To make the project more economically viable with better leasable tenant space, connection to the adjacent former residence (property 25) is being considered, combining the two properties into one.

(ref. elevation study on following pages)

Since the proposed redevelopment entails reconstruction and inter-connection of both properties 26 and 27 (1273 and 1277 Niagara Street), we are providing our analysis for both properties as one combined project.

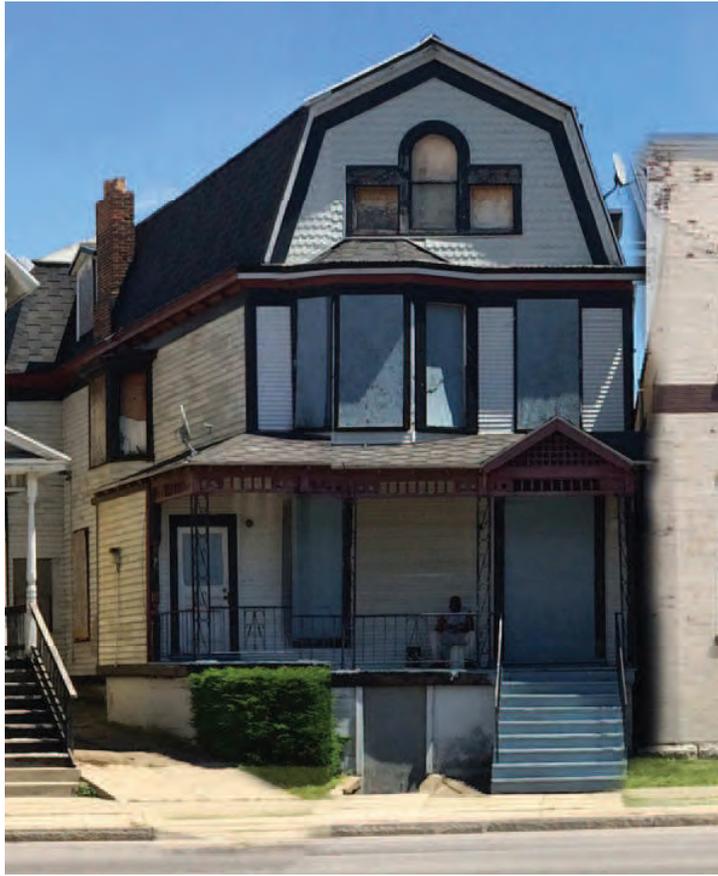
Opinions of Probable Costs

The total gross area of the project is the area of 1273 Niagara at $\pm 4,800$ s.f. (1,600 s.f./floor x 3 floors) plus the area of 1277 Niagara at $\pm 3,900$ s.f. (1,600 s.f./floor x 2 floors + 900 s.f. third floor), equaling 8,700 total floor area. Redevelopment plans have not yet been specifically defined, but given the long-abandoned nature of the buildings, we would expect a complete gut/rehabilitation of the structures, including anticipated repair of damaged roof, ceiling and floor systems due to water infiltration, reconstruction of stairs to meet exiting requirements, reconstruction of the front porches (including demolition of the store at 1277), new windows and doors and entirely restored exterior finishes. We recommend that budget planning for this level of reconstruction be calculated at \$175/s.f., yielding a planning budget of \$1,522,500. Construction of a two-story infill connector between properties 26 and 25 would serve both structures and likely contain an exit stair, an elevator and grade-level entrance for mandated handicapped accessibility and corridor space to physically connect the adjacent leasable tenant spaces. A minimal footprint for this connector would be 400 s.f./floor x 2 floors = 800 s.f. total area of new construction. At \$200/s.f. for new construction, the connector could likely cost \$160,000. The total planning budget for the redevelopment project should be \$1,682,500.

Code Analysis

We have not seen the inside of these buildings, but our experience with similar projects would suggest that conversion of residential buildings to commercial use always involves upgrading the structures to meet Building Code of New York State mandates for fire safety, exiting, handicapped accessibility and toilet facilities. The infill connector discussed above is conceived to resolve most of these issues for both structures. If residential occupancies are mixed with the commercial office occupancies in the same building, separations between the occupancies will also need to be addressed, from both fire-safety and security perspectives.

Redevelopment of the building will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.



Historical context

The residence at 1277 Niagara Street first appears on the 1889 Sanborn Map. The Stick style building is not typical of this section of Niagara Street, which tended to be more industrial in the late 19th century. Frederick Ogden, who worked at the Banner Milling Company lived in the residence in 1888. Douglas Joyce, a dentist, and his wife Jessie moved into the house in 1894 where they lived until they moved to 142 Englewood Avenue in 1915. The city directory lists a number of occupants in the house in 1917 including John Dedona, a lab worker; Alexander Scott, a molder and Marie Misconde, a widow. In 1920 the residents remain unchanged, however John Dedona's occupation is listed as a grocer with the business located at 1277 Niagara Street. His sons, a soldier, artist, mechanic and trainsman also live in the house. By 1922, the Dedona's had moved out and Thomas Barth, a grocer, moved his business and family into the residence. An addition was added to the front of the building and a restaurant opened by 1950.

Architectural features

Despite the later addition to accommodate a restaurant, sufficient historic fabric remains extant to convey the Stick style detailing. The turned posts and frieze at the porch remain extant, as does the detailing of at the open pediment of the front-facing gable above the dwelling's second floor windows. The clapboard and original windows remain extant.

Redevelopment opportunities

Redevelopment of the property being considered by the current owner includes a restoration of the historic home with plans for an adaptive reuse into commercial office space; potential residential occupancies could be included on the upper floors depending on market conditions and demand. The restoration would include removing the 1950's restaurant addition and reconstruction of the historic front porch. To make the project more economically viable with better leasable tenant space, connection to the adjacent former residence (property 26) is being considered, combining the two properties into one.

(ref. elevation study on following pages)

Since the proposed redevelopment entails reconstruction and inter-connection of both properties 26 and 27 (1273 and 1277 Niagara Street), we are providing our analysis for both properties as one combined project – refer to analysis under property 26.





1300 Niagara Street

Historical context

The building at 1300 Niagara Street was previously a factory for Sowers Manufacturing Company, constructed in 1914 as documented on the 1916 Sanborn Map. In 1916, the lot to the south was owned by Seneca Clay Company and used as a sewer pipe yard. It is likely that before construction was completed, the sewer pipe yard was purchased and the building expanded south given the seamless appearance of the east elevation.

Sowers Manufacturing made "DOPP" equipment for heating – cooling – mixing, including seamless jacketed and single shell kettles, mixers, soap crutchers, vacuum and pressure apparatus as noted in a ca. 1930 product publication. Dopp kettles and pans were constructed out of cast iron and used in the chemical industry. The company remained at the factory located on Niagara Street until 1942 when the property was sold. The 1950 Sanborn map notes the factory building with various occupancies.

Architectural features

The 2-story, fourteen bay brick masonry building is simply detailed with brick masonry piers that extend beyond the parapet defining each bay. A loading bay is located in the sixth bay from the south with pedestrian entrances in the flanking bays. A second loading bay is located at the northwest corner of the building. The nine bays to the north have cast sills and iron lintels whereas at the five bays to the south, the lintel is faced with brick. This detailing is consistent with the 1916 Sanborn map that shows the lot to the south as a storage yard for the Seneca Clay Company. The raised rusticated limestone foundation, Medina sandstone water table, engaged pilasters and corbelled, scallop frieze are consistent across the entire façade. There are no windows on the north elevation. The west elevation has been faced with a stucco material.

Redevelopment opportunities

The property is currently home to the *Westside Community Mental Health Clinic*, a viable social service organization serving the local population. There are no known plans for changes in the facility at this time. Potential modifications to the Niagara Street façade include brick repair/repointing, window repair/replacements and improvements to the sidewalk and building entrance.

(ref. elevation study on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

Window replacements in this building's large masonry openings can be budgeted at \$40/s.f. of opening for new, aluminum storefront systems. Brick masonry repointing can be budgeted at \$8.00/s.f. of wall area for planning purposes.

Code Analysis

We have not been inside this building and are therefore unaware of any code violations needing attention. As an operating medical service facility, we would expect the building to be code compliant.





1280 Niagara Street

Historical context

The Buffalo Gasoline Motor Company, in two building campaigns, constructed the manufacturing buildings located at 20 Auburn Avenue and 1280 Niagara Street. The building at the corner of Niagara and Auburn Streets was constructed ca. 1903, the year the company is first listed at the Niagara Street address. By 1916, the building to the west, facing Auburn Street and the Belt Line was constructed. The company manufactured marine engines.

Fedders-Quigan Corporation ran their unit air conditioner division out of the property by 1947. Fedders began as a metalworking shop in Buffalo in 1896, making milk cans, kerosene cans for Standard Oil Co. and bread pans for National Biscuit Company. The company converted their metalworking shop over to radiators in response to the automobile industry. After World War II, Fedders merged with Frank J. Quigan to form Fedders-Quigan Corporation. By 1947, the company moved aggressively into room air conditioners and electric water coolers. In 1957, the company began making year-round central air conditioners for five and six-room ranch-style houses. At this time, the company peaked in sales at \$70.7 million. Sales began to stagnate in the mid-1960's, although the company was still the largest producer of room air conditioners. Despite periods of loss and prosperity over the next decades, the company continues to manufacture room air conditioners among other products.

Architectural features

The red-brick masonry building constructed ca. 1903 is three stories tall and eight bays wide, raised on a rough-faced limestone foundation. The fenestration on the first floor shows no regular pattern. The windows in the four bays to the south all have segmental headers, however the one-over-one sash units vary in width and height. The main entrance is at the fifth bay from the south. The pedimented entrance is simply detailed. North of the entrance are paired, one-over-one double-hung sash units in each of the three bays. The fenestration on the second and third floors is organized with a window triplet in the four bays to the south and paired windows in the four bays to the north. The bays to the north, which have a different window configuration were added after 1916 as indicated on 1916 Sanborn map that shows the lot to the north as a sewer pipe yard for the Seneca Clay Company. The windows on the second and third floor are all headed with an iron lintel. The windows throughout have Medina sandstone sills. While the windows are all older wooden sash units, one pair at the outer bay to the north on the second floor features twelve-over-twelve lights. This is likely the original sash configuration.

The elevation facing Auburn Avenue is six-bays wide. The first floor features a variety of windows with segmental heads and iron lintels on the first floor. There is also a

loading dock in the fourth bay from the east. There are paired and triplet units on the second and third floors. The windows at the sixth bay from the east on the first and second floors retain the original multi-light double hung sash. Although only visible along the alley separating 1280 Niagara Street from 20 Auburn Avenue, the window units on the west elevation retain the original multi-light double hung sash.

20 Auburn Street was constructed by 1916 and was historically connected by fireproof passages to the north and south on the second floor. The 2-story brick masonry building has eight bays along Auburn Street and six bays along the Belt Line. Engaged masonry pilasters define the bays. Although the windows have been infilled, construction drawings indicate that the sash were all twelve-over-twelve double hung units. The sash at the second floor, second bay from the east have been restored.

Redevelopment opportunities

The property currently houses a chemical laboratory that appears to be a viable business enterprise. There are no known plans for changes in the facility at this time. Potential modifications to the building façades include brick repair/repointing, window repair/replacements and improvements to the sidewalk and building entrance.

(ref. elevation study on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

Window replacements with new, aluminum-clad wood units can be budgeted at \$675 each; accordingly, the two-unit and three-unit mulled windows can be budgeted at \$1,350/opening and \$2,025/opening respectively . Brick masonry repointing can be budgeted at \$8.00/s.f. of wall area for planning purposes.

Code Analysis

We have not been inside this building and are therefore unaware of any code violations needing attention. As an operating laboratory facility, we would expect the building to be code compliant.



Historical context

The Sterling Engine Company was a dominant presence on Niagara Street, between Breckenridge and Auburn Avenue for much of the 20th century. The company, which manufactured gas engines, constructed a factory building at 1252-1278 Niagara Street in 1907 (currently 1270 Niagara Street). The “semi-fireproof” building featured steel frame, not covered construction with brick walls and concrete floors and roof, and consisted of stock and locker rooms to the south, an assembling room to the north and drafting rooms, stock rooms, machine shops and a testing building. Neighboring properties on the block between Breckenridge Street and Auburn Avenue, and along Mason Street were residential, with the Buffalo Detention Home & Children’s Court located in the former First Presbyterian Church of Black Rock. To the west were the Black Rock Canal, the Belt Line and the Niagara Falls Branch of the New York Central Rail Road.

By 1925, Sterling Engine’s address had expanded to the south to include 1246 Niagara Street. More significantly, by 1925, Sterling Engine had usurped the entire residential area on Mason Street and had constructed a second factory building at 42 Breckenridge Street, which ran the entire length of Mason Street adjacent to the rail way lines. On this block of Niagara Street from 1925 until 1951, only 12 structures stood that were not owned and operated by Sterling Engine. Sometime in the late 1950’s, Phillips Petroleum Company of Bartlesville, Oklahoma purchased Sterling Engine. Phillips Petroleum moved Sterling Engine’s production facilities to Paola, Kansas, and left a large gap on Niagara Street.

In a 1946 advertisement, Sterling Engine provides three addresses besides their Buffalo location: 900 Chrysler Building in New York City, 806 Evans Building in Washington, D.C., and 855 Board of Trade Building in Chicago. Sterling Engine was producing in every major city in America, including Buffalo. Sterling Engine prided itself on modernizing old equipment. As early as 1908, Sterling Engine was utilizing interchangeable parts in its marine engine construction. At that time, Sterling Engine’s “only goal” was marine construction, but by 1946, the company was producing engines for ships, airplanes, cars, and trains. Sterling Engine produced engines that powered ships, such as the 83 *Footer* and landing craft in World War II. In a 1908 issue of the journal *Motorboat*, Sterling Engine claims, “aggressiveness, individuality, and honest endeavor are the principles under which business is conducted.”

Architectural features

The two buildings associated with Sterling Engine in the block between Breckenridge Street and Auburn Avenue remain extant. The older building facing Mason and Niagara Streets is a 2-story brick masonry building comprised of three main blocks.

The block to the south features five bays, each defined by a window triplet. The bay to the north has an entrance door. While the steel lintels remain extant, the window opening has been reduced and infilled with brick. The middle block was also five bays with large window openings that have also been infilled and divided into two window triplets. A continuous steel lintel suggests that the windows were quite large, likely to provide daylight into the manufacturing space. An overhead door is located at the fourth bay. The block to the north at the intersection of Niagara Street and Auburn Avenue is also five bays with large window openings that have been reduced. The original steel lintels and precast sills remain extant in this block. The bay to the north features the main public entrance to the building, classically detailed with precast Doric pilasters and full entablature. The tripartite entrance has a door to the north, with six-light transom above. To the south are two six-over-six double hung wooden sash windows. Above the entrance are three six-over-six double hung sash windows, with embellished precast surround, lintel, sill and mullions. The elevation along Auburn Avenue features similar alterations to the window openings. The steel lintel and precast sills remain extant, however the first floor windows have been infilled with block. Three bays of the elevation to the north are two stories in height, while to the south the building is a single story tall and features a large loading bay. The grade drops along Auburn Avenue and, as a result along Mason Street the building varies between three and four stories in height. The south elevation of the building reveals the saw tooth roof profile and skylights.

The 3-story brick masonry second factory building constructed between Mason Street and the Belt Line occupies the entire block between Breckenridge Street and Auburn Avenue. The building retains a high level of integrity with the original steel industrial windows remaining extant on all elevations. At some locations on the first floor, the windows have been infilled.

Redevelopment opportunities

The property is currently home to the *Smith McDonald Corporation*, a thriving commercial fabricating business. The building also houses employees of Better Wire Products across the street (property 27), where currently ongoing renovations will allow for consolidation of those employees, freeing up expansion space for current or future tenants in 1270 Niagara.

The ground floor of the complex at the south end of the building was recently reconstructed for *Resurgence Brewery*, a local microbrewery that has enjoyed great success since their opening this summer in the open, high-volume space, daylighted from the saw tooth roof monitors. Expansion plans for *Resurgence* are already being discussed.

Potential modifications to the Niagara Street façade include brick repair/repointing and restoration of historic windows.

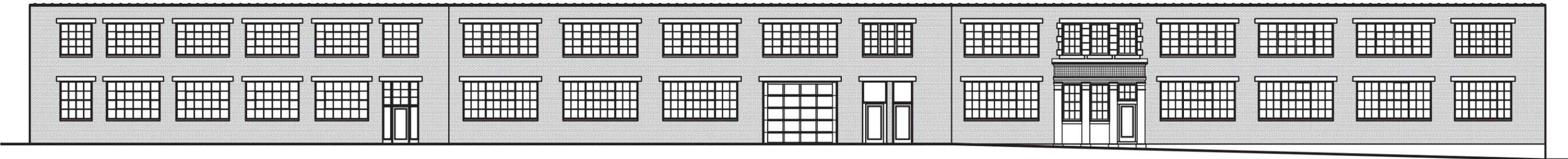
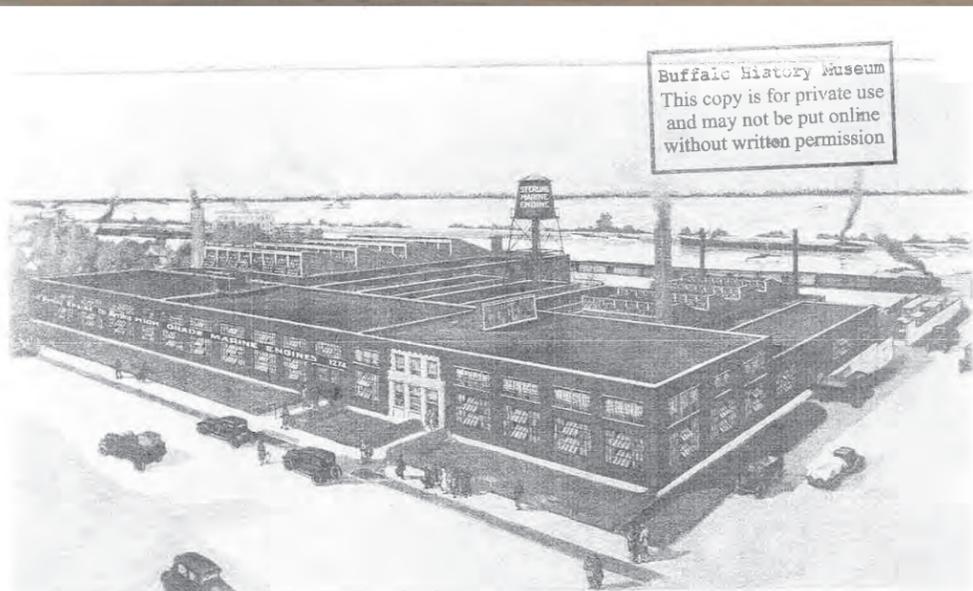
(ref. elevation study on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

For budget planning purposes, window replacements can be budgeted at \$45/s.f. of opening for new, aluminum storefront systems that replicate the building's original historic industrial sash units. Masonry demolition and reconstruction required to recreate the original, historic window openings can be budgeted at \$22/s.f. of affected wall area. Brick masonry repointing can be budgeted at \$8.00/s.f. of wall area.

Code Analysis

We have only briefly toured inside this building and are unaware of any code violations needing attention. As an operating commercial office and manufacturing facility, we would expect the building to be code compliant.



Historical context

Research of property 23 using Sanborn maps and photographs from the Buffalo History Museum revealed a 3-story masonry structure at 1228 Niagara and two, 2-story masonry structures at 1232-1240 Niagara. The listed occupancies included a “motor scooter” retailer and Avena Plumbing. The entire lot is now vacant and being utilized by Rich Products and Resurgence Brewery for surface parking.

Architectural features

N/A for existing building features. The proposed new infill building depicted in our rendering and elevation drawings has been scaled to complement the neighboring structures and represents a possible design generated within a set of design standards that we recommend should be established for new buildings within the district:

- Buildings of 2-4 stories in height, built to the sidewalk / Niagara St. right-of-way
- Materials to be compatible with the district: wood, brick and/or stone masonry, steel/iron and glass and concrete; EFIS finishes not allowed.
- Strong first floor commercial storefronts with plate glass windows and continuous signboard band above, corresponding in height to average signboards throughout the district.
- Upper floor windows to be punched openings with individual or mullied window units. Window proportions should approximate a 3:1 height to width ratio with no more than three windows mullied together.
- Roof lines should present a strong cornice line to the street or be gabled with a 7:12 or steeper roof slope.

Redevelopment opportunities

Redevelopment of the vacant parcel as depicted in our rendering and elevation drawing is conceived as providing new commercial/retail space on the ground floor with 16 market-rate apartment units on floors 2 and 3 above. Given the topography of the site, we believe that the Niagara Street floor elevation can be extended back to Mason Street as an elevated parking deck accessed from Breckenridge Street with another level of parking constructed below, accessed from Mason street and extending into basement space below the Niagara Street commercial space. The north end of the parcel is retained as surface parking for Resurgence Brewery.

(ref. elevation study on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

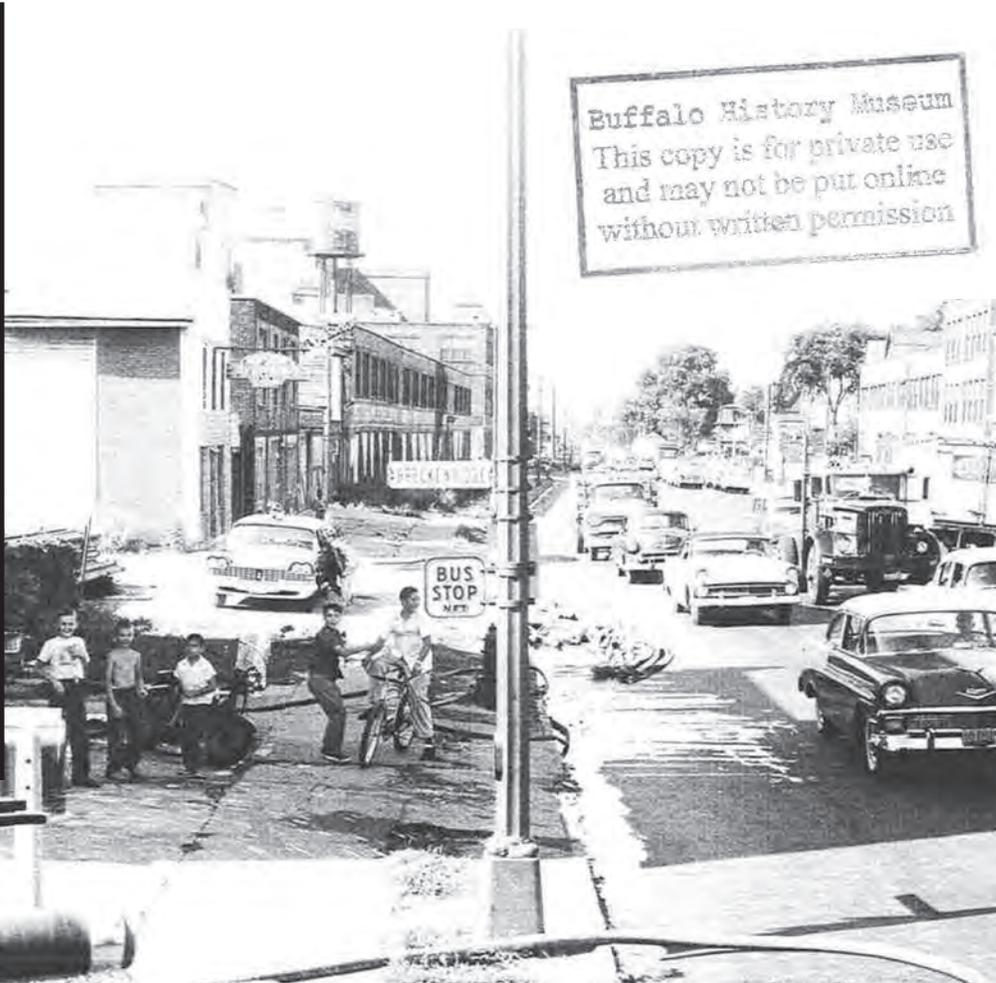
The total gross area of this proposed infill project is 21,000 s.f. (7,000 s.f./floor x 3 floors). The structured parking discussed could approach 18,000 s.f., depending on the extent of the plans. The building has been conceived as a steel-framed structure with contemporary detailing with concrete, wood and brick masonry exteriors. Interiors are conceived as upscale, market-rate apartments with appropriately upgraded finishes. Accordingly, we recommend that budget planning be calculated at \$225/s.f., yielding a planning budget of \$4,725,000 for the building; the parking structure can be budgeted at \$150/s.f., adding \$2,700,000 to the project planning budget for a total of \$7,425,000. Interior fit-out of the first floor retail spaces would require an additional budget based on the tenant's requirements and desired level of finishes.

Code Analysis

As a new, ground-up building, the entire structure will comply with Building Code of New York State mandates.

The building will also require new construction that is compliant with the Energy Conservation Code of New York State as it pertains to insulation levels and performance of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.





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Historical context

1226 Niagara Street is located on the northwest corner of Niagara and Breckenridge Streets. The 3-story, three bay brick commercial building was constructed ca. 1885 and is noted as a drug store on the 1889 Sanborn map. John C. Prong lived at 1226 Niagara Street and opened a boot and shoe repair shop in the retail space, a business he maintained at this location for thirty-years. The property has a history of long-term tenants. In 1961 a bait store, which remains today, occupied the storefront.

Architectural features

The building is simply detailed. The storefront has been infilled with brick, however the corner cast iron column and signboard remain. An oriel bay window on the south elevation is documented on the 1889 map, and the addition to the west appears by 1916. The simple composition is terminated by a scalloped corbelled frieze..

Redevelopment opportunities

The property currently houses a viable business enterprise on the ground floor. The upper floors contain residences with unknown vacancy conditions. There are no known plans for changes in the facility at this time. Potential modifications to the building façades include restoration of the historic storefront and signboard, brick repair/repointing, window repair/replacements and improvements to the building entrances.

(ref. floor plans on following pages)

Opinions of Probable Costs

Window replacements with new, aluminum-clad wood units can be budgeted at \$675 each. Storefront replacement can be budgeted at \$40/s.f. of area. Brick masonry repointing can be budgeted at \$8.00/s.f. of wall area for planning purposes.

Code Analysis

We have not been inside this building and are therefore unaware of any code violations needing attention.



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Evaluation of Green and Sustainable Technologies

The possibilities for incorporating environmentally sustainable “green” technologies into a comprehensive Niagara Street redevelopment initiative are varied and diverse.

The most readily apparent consideration is the management of storm water run-off through rainwater collection and filtering. The planned “Complete Streets” project that will be reconstructing Niagara Street in 2016 includes rainwater diversions from pavements into landscaped planting beds that filter, absorb and reduce run-off, lessening the impact on the City of Buffalo’s storm sewer capacity.

Individually, options available to building owners pursuing the redevelopment projects discussed on the previous pages include re-roofing flat roof structures with green, vegetated roofing materials to reduce heat-island effects and storm water run-off. Installation of solar collectors for photovoltaic electricity production is also an option for the large expanses of flat roof areas.

Mechanically, HVAC equipment is available that exceeds standard energy code mandates for efficiency and power usage. Similarly, highly efficient electrical systems, lighting and plumbing fixtures are available that reduce consumption of publicly supplied utilities. Programs through NYSERDA contribute funding towards inclusion of these more efficient, and generally more expensive, infrastructure upgrades.

The biggest impediment to incorporation of green and sustainable technologies in building projects remains cost. Developers and/or building owners are always faced with making difficult decisions to bring their redevelopment projects into line with available resources. Particularly in Buffalo, where rental rates are comparatively low, financial models for determining a project’s viability are always dependent on minimizing construction expenses and identifying alternate sources of equity, e.g. tax credits, grant funding and/or tax liability reductions, to off-set the development costs not covered by rental income alone. As the City of Buffalo continues to be regenerated, increasing property values and higher rental rates corresponding to the demand for better properties should help alleviate this shortfall dilemma and opening the door to increased funding for green infrastructure.