

**United States Department of 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 Appleton Woolen Mills

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number	218 East South Island Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Appleton	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Outagamie	code 087
			zip code 54915

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _ nationally _ statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official/Title

3/4/2016
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Office - Wisconsin

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 commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the

National Register

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the

National Register.

See continuation sheet

removed from the National

Register

other, (explain:)

by Barbara Wyo
Signature of the Keeper

5-3-16
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)

district

structure

site

object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources
in the count)

contributing

noncontributing

1

0 buildings

0

0 sites

0

0 structures

0

0 objects

1

0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property 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 Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE, CONCRETE

walls BRICK, CONCRETE

roof SYNTHETICS

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1890-1969

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property

County and State

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	Callen L. Schultz	date	August 26 th , 2015
organization	Keystone Development, LLC	telephone	(920) 303-9404
street & number	420 S. Koeller Street	zip code	54902-5560
city or town	Oshkosh	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 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.

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Section 7 Page 1Appleton Woolen Mills
Appleton, Outagamie Co., WI

Summary Description

The Appleton Woolen Mills, built in stages between 1881 and 1962, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with the Appleton Woolen Mills (later Appleton Mills), a locally-significant company manufacturing papermakers' felt, an unique and important product in the context of Appleton's industrial history. Situated in northeastern Wisconsin, the city of Appleton became a center of paper manufacture thanks to its abundant raw materials of wood and water. Papermakers' felt is essential in the industrial manufacture of paper, facilitating the shaping of pulp into continuous sheets of paper. The Appleton Woolen Mills was a local manufacturer of this essential papermaking product, and papermakers' felt was manufactured in this building from 1890, when the company's production of the material began, to 1969, when Appleton Mills moved to a new factory elsewhere in Appleton. Appleton Woolen Mills touted itself as the only source of papermakers' felt "west of Ohio." As such, its manufacture was a critical component in paper making for many papermakers during much of the twentieth century. The Appleton Woolen Mills prided itself on serving paper manufacturers nationally and internationally.

Narrative Description

Setting and Site

The Appleton Woolen Mills was built in several stages over roughly an 80-year period. This included the original building constructed in 1881 and additions built between 1893 and 1962, reflects the history of the company as it expanded and prospered as a significant manufacturer of papermakers' felt. The building with its contiguous additions exemplifies the Appleton Woolen Mills' historical importance as an Appleton manufacturer and as a significant company allied to the area's historically and economically significant paper industry. The property is located on the Fox River. Historically, this area adjacent to the river had a concentration of mills and other industry. While many mills have closed and the industries have changed, this area retains its industrial character. A water channel and adjacent railroad, visible at the south side of the building in historic Sanborn maps, have been removed. The building is now immediately surrounded by driveways, parking lots and other paved areas.

Exterior

The Appleton Woolen Mills consists of an original building from 1881 and subsequent additions built between 1893 and 1962. Together, they form a building that is roughly rectangular in plan and overall form. The 1881, 1893, and 1900 blocks have stone foundations. The later 1920, 1924-1962, and 1934 blocks have poured concrete foundations. The entire building has been visually unified by a coat of white

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paint. Constructed for industrial use, the Appleton Woolen Mills is visually plain with no applied ornament and it depends on its overall building forms, contrasting stone and brick walls, and fenestration for visual interest.

Building Chronology

The Appleton Woolen Mills is composed of the original 1881 block, altered and expanded with five additions between 1893 and 1962:

- **1881 Block**

The Appleton Woolen Mills original two-story stone and brick mill building was built in 1881 along the south bank of West's Canal. A third-story addition at its east end was added to the original 1881 block between 1924 and 1950. Later owners enclosed the remainder of the 3rd floor c.1990.

- **1893 Block**

A three and one-half story stone and brick addition, roughly square in plan and with a cross-gable roof, was added in 1893 to the south of the original 1881 block.

- **1900 Block**

A one-story stone addition was added in 1900 along the north side of the original building, bringing the building closer to West's Canal. A brick second story was added to this block between 1911 and 1924, obscuring the original 1881 block behind it.

- **1920 Block**

A three-story brick, concrete and steel addition was constructed southwest of the existing building in 1920, obscuring the original 1881 block to the north.

- **1934 Block**

A warehouse addition was added to the east end of the factory in 1934 and was designed by Orbison & Orbison, an Appleton-based industrial engineering firm.

- **1924-1962 Block**

Between 1924 and 1950, a one-story concrete addition was added to the west side of the 1881 block, with a new steel and reinforced concrete extension added in 1959. In 1962, another expansion of this block resulted in its current form.

Building Construction History

The Appleton Woolen Mills building was built in 1881 in the wake of an earlier woolen mill's destruction by fire, the subsequent dissolution of said earlier company, and the incorporation of the Appleton Woolen Mills. The subject building evolved over time with numerous additions but the original two-story block was constructed of stone and brick, 60 x 160 feet in dimension. At the time, 25 men were employed in the manufacture of fancy and plain knitting yarns. After five years the

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output of the company had grown to 250,000 pounds of knitting yarn annually.¹

In 1893, a three and one-half story stone and brick addition, roughly square in plan and with a cross-gable roof, was added to the south side of the original building. This addition doubled the mill's capacity.² Seven years later, in 1900, a one-story stone addition was added along the north side of the original building. This addition was added to meet the demand of the machinery sizes necessary to create papermakers' felt.³ Between 1911 and 1924 this addition was expanded with the construction of another story.⁴

In 1920, an addition to the south and west sides of the existing building was built. It was three stories high, 120 x 70 feet in dimension, and built of brick, concrete, and steel. Again, the purpose of this addition was to allow the company to keep up with demand for its felt.⁵ A warehouse was added to the east end of the factory in 1934 and was designed by Orbison & Orbison, an Appleton-based industrial engineering firm. This four-story concrete and steel structure replaced a more modest two-story structure built between 1881 and 1891.⁶ A third-story top addition was added to the original 1881 building between 1924 and 1950.⁷

Between 1924 and 1950, a one-story concrete addition was constructed to the west side of the 1881 building, and then expanded in 1959.⁸ To make room for the 1959 expansion, the old office of the Appleton Woolen Mills, housed in a free-standing cottage, was torn down. The steel and reinforced concrete expansion was one-story in height, 32 feet wide and 65 feet long. It was built to house two new looms. The looms, one 400 inch and the other 500 inch, increased the company's capacity by 10 per cent. The total cost of the project, including looms, was about \$130,000.⁹ Then, in 1961-62, this section of the building was expanded again at a cost of \$56,000.¹⁰

In 1968, Appleton Mills began construction of a new plant in a newly established industrial park in Appleton.¹¹ Leaving its historic building, the company moved into its new one-story building in

¹ *The Post-Crescent* (Appleton, Wisconsin) (November 6, 1922), p. 10.

² *Ibid.*; *Fibre and Fabric* (July 1, 1911), p. 22.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. maps, 1911 and 1924.

⁵ *Paper* (May 19, 1920), p. 40; *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* (June 24, 1920), p. 2406 (82).

⁶ Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. maps, 1924 and 1950.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Post-Crescent* (September 2, 1959), p. 33.

¹⁰ *Post-Crescent* (October 15, 1961), p. 14.

¹¹ *Post-Crescent* (March 24, 1968), p. 17.

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1969.¹²

The original 1881 Block was two stories in height and built of stone (first floor) and brick (second floor). In historic photos, raised brick outlines and delineates the building's structural bays. Windows were regularly-spaced and with 12-over-12 double hung sash. The roof was flat. This original building is no longer visible from surrounding streets due to later additions. In an appraisal of Appleton Woolen Mills assets conducted in 1924, the 1881 Block was listed as a "Mill and Wash House." Manufacturing functions undertaken here included various felt-making processes such as fulling, scouring, spooling, weaving, spinning felt yarn and carding felt yarn.¹³ An additional third floor, added between 1924 and 1950, can be seen from across West's Canal.

The 1893 Block is 2-1/2 stories in height and with a cross-gable roof. The first floor is stone while upper floors are brick, all painted white. Historic photos indicate that windows were originally 12-over-12, double-hung sash. Upper-floor window openings are now covered with vertical metal sheathing, but on-site examination has determined that historic sashes remain behind these panels. A first-floor pedestrian entrance on the east side of the south facade, seen in a historic photo, has been filled with masonry, as have first-floor windows. A loading dock entrance on the first floor shares a raised concrete loading dock pad with the adjacent 1920 Block to the west. The 1893 Block, once exposed on three sides, can now only be seen from the south as other blocks were added to the east and west. In an appraisal of Appleton Woolen Mills assets conducted in 1924, this portion of the larger building was listed as a "Mill." Manufacturing functions undertaken in the building included various felt-making processes such as dry finishing and singeing, fulling, spinning and spooling.¹⁴

The 1920 Block fills out the southwest corner of the mill. Three stories in height, this block is clad with white-painted brick. Windows are mostly filled with 25-paned industrial metal sash with operable hoppers, although some windows are infilled with masonry. A raised concrete loading dock platform extends across the southwest corner of the 1893 Block and the southeast corner of the 1920 Block, serving loading docks in both sections. A non-historic roof shelters the southwest part of the loading dock, while historic, wood-paneled double doors remain as part of the loading dock entrance. The southeast loading dock entrance is infilled with masonry and is paired with a pedestrian entrance, partially filled with masonry within which a smaller non-historic door has been inserted. In an appraisal of Appleton Woolen Mills assets conducted in 1924, this portion of the larger building was listed as a "Mill and Finishing Building." Manufacturing functions undertaken in the building included various felt-making processes such as weaving, packing and shipping, spinning and carding felt yarn,

¹² *Post-Crescent* (April 14, 1969), p. 11.

¹³ *Appraisal Summaries of the Appleton Woolen Mills, Appleton, Wisconsin* July 31, 1924, p. [1-2]; Blueprints of Appleton Woolen Mills buildings.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

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and splicing and burling.¹⁵

The four-story warehouse addition, the 1934 Block, built of white-painted concrete defines the building's east elevation. Windows have either been filled with non-historic sash or masonry infill. A loading dock with a non-historic roll up metal door and a smaller pedestrian entrance with a metal pent roof are on the east side. A former loading dock to the south has been infilled with masonry. A metal stair extends from a second-story entrance to the ground on the north side.

At the north side, the 1900 Block is a long two-story addition that stretches the length of the original 1881 Block. Built in two stages, the ground floor was constructed of stone in 1900 while the second floor, clad of brick, was built between 1911 and 1924. This portion has been painted white. A non-historic bump-out clad in vertical metal sheathing extends from the middle of the first floor. Windows are regularly spaced. First-floor openings and most second-floor windows have been covered with vertical metal sheathing (with historic sash underneath), although some second-floor windows have non-historic sash. In an appraisal of Appleton Woolen Mills assets conducted in 1924, this portion of the building was listed as a "Mill and Wash House." Manufacturing functions undertaken here included various felt-making processes such as dyeing, dry finishing and singeing, warping, and carding felt yarn.¹⁶ Above this, the third-floor addition to the original 1881 Block can be seen from across West's Canal.

West of the 1881 Block is a three-story addition identified in this nomination as the 1924-1962 Block. Built of white-painted concrete block, it was built in stages between 1924 and 1962. Windows are regularly spaced. Most have been filled with masonry or non-historic sash, but historic 25-pane industrial metal sash with operable hoppers remain in a few window openings. A metal fire escape is attached to the north side.

Interior

Typical of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century industrial buildings, the building has largely open interiors with no ornamentation, suitable for the company's looms and production methods. Structural systems and perimeter masonry walls are largely exposed and painted. Floors are either of wood or concrete. The building's structure includes modest wood trusses (in the 1881 Block and early additions) and concrete and steel in later additions.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

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1881 Block and 1900 Block

Inside, the combined 1881 and 1900 Blocks are highly utilitarian in character with no decorative elements. The 1st floor has concrete floors, exposed painted masonry walls, and exposed painted timber and steel structure with painted wood ceilings. The 1881 Block has a concrete 1st floor mezzanine that may have been a storage area. At the east end of the 1st floor is a raised concrete platform with non-historic industrial equipment and non-historic partition walls. The 2nd and 3rd floors have wood floors and exposed painted masonry walls. The east end of the 2nd floor has exposed painted timber and steel structure with painted wood ceilings; the west end has exposed metal ceiling structure and roofing above. The entire 3rd floor has exposed with metal ceiling structure and roofing above. A three and one-half story stone and brick addition, roughly square in plan and with a cross-gable roof, was added in 1893 to the south of the original 1881 Block. Inside, the 1893 Block is highly utilitarian in character with no decorative elements.

1893 Block

The 1st floor of the 1893 Block has painted concrete floors, exposed painted masonry walls, and exposed painted timber and steel structure with painted wood ceilings. The 2nd floor has wood floors, exposed painted masonry walls, and exposed painted timber and steel structure with painted wood ceilings. The 3rd floor is open to the gabled roof above and has a deteriorated and unstable loft accessed by a loft stair.

1920 Block

Inside, the three-story 1920 Block is highly utilitarian in character with no decorative elements. The 1st floor has painted concrete floors, exposed painted masonry walls, and exposed painted timber and steel structure with painted wood ceilings. The 2nd and 3rd floors are similar, but have wood floors throughout.

1934 Block

The four-story 1934 Block was a warehouse and as such, is highly utilitarian in character with no decorative elements. The majority of the 1934 Block is one large open four-story volume, housing non-historic industrial equipment. The north end of the block houses non-historic offices and equipment rooms with non-historic finishes. The block has painted concrete floors, exposed painted masonry walls, and exposed painted concrete and steel ceiling structure.

1924-1962 Block

Between 1924 and 1950, a one-story concrete addition was constructed, with a new steel and reinforced concrete extension added in 1959. In 1962, another expansion of this block resulted in its current form. Inside, the three-story 1924-1962 Block is highly utilitarian in character with no decorative elements. The 1st and 2nd floors have concrete floors, exposed painted masonry walls, and

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exposed painted concrete and steel structure with painted wood ceilings. The 3rd floor was converted to an office by previous owners with concrete floors, non-historic wall partitions and drywall furred perimeter walls, and non-historic suspended ceiling system with metal ceiling structure and roofing above.

Stairs and Elevators

The Appleton Woolen Mills retains nine stairwells and three elevator cores. The stairs are generally a mix of historic and non-historic and connect varying levels of the building, due to the many phases of the building's construction. Materials range from wood and metal to concrete. Stairwells are housed in either existing utilitarian spaces with exposed and painted masonry walls or in concrete block enclosures. Elevators are located in the 1893, 1934, and 1920 Blocks of the building.

Integrity

The Appleton Woolen Mills retains integrity to its period of significance. Its basic massing and window openings are intact, as well as much of the original industrial features of the building. Overall, the exterior and interior appear much as they did historically when the Appleton Woolen Mills occupied the space from 1890 to 1969. The building's features and finishes represent its use as an industrial manufacturing facility in Appleton, Wisconsin.

The Appleton Woolen Mills retains historic integrity of location, association, feeling, setting, design, workmanship, and materials and is visually distinct from the surrounding neighborhood.

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Appleton Woolen Mills
Appleton, Outagamie Co., WI

Summary Statement of Significance

The Appleton Woolen Mills, built in stages between 1881 and 1962, is locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with the Appleton Woolen Mills, a locally-significant company manufacturing papermakers' felt, an important product in the context of Appleton's industrial history. Situated in northeastern Wisconsin, the city of Appleton became a center of paper manufacture thanks to its abundant raw materials of wood and water. Papermakers' felt is essential in the industrial manufacture of paper, facilitating the shaping of pulp into continuous sheets of paper. The Appleton Woolen Mills was a local source of this essential papermaking product, and papermakers' felt was manufactured in this building from 1890, when the company's production of the material began, to 1969, when Appleton Mills left the building and relocated to a new factory elsewhere in Appleton. Appleton Woolen Mills touted itself as the only source of papermakers' felt "west of Ohio." As such, its manufacture made possible paper manufacture locally, nationally, and internationally during much of the twentieth century. The building's period of significance spans from 1890, when the Appleton Woolen Mills first began papermakers' felt production at this location, until 1969, when the company vacated the manufacturing facility.

Narrative Statement of Significance

History of Appleton and its Papermaking and Woolen Industries

Although French explorer Jean Nicolet and his party are believed to have passed through what would become the Appleton area in 1634, it was not until 1790 when Dominique Ducharme became the first person of European descent to live in the general Appleton area, building a home and trading post in what would become the city of Kaukauna. A treaty in 1827 between Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass and local Indian leaders gave the United States government control of almost all of the Fox River Valley.¹⁷

American settlement expanded in the 1840s when a new educational institution, the Lawrence Institute, was opened in the Fox River Valley in 1849 by New Englander Amos A. Lawrence in partnership with the Wisconsin Methodist Church. In response, a settlement began to grow up around the school site and was named in honor of Lawrence's wife, Sarah Appleton, and her cousin Samuel Appleton, who had donated money to the new Institute. Appleton was incorporated as a

¹⁷ "City of Appleton Timeline," Appleton, Wisconsin: Appleton Public Library website: <http://www.apl.org/communityhist/timeline>

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village in 1853.¹⁸

Although Wisconsin would become an important agricultural state touted as “America’s Dairyland,” it historically had important industrial areas, including the Fox River Valley. Fed by water from Lake Winnebago, the river provided the area with a consistent and abundant supply of water. Also, the river drops 170 feet over a distance of 35 miles between Lake Winnebago and Green Bay, with 150 feet (roughly 88% of this drop) occurring within Appleton’s Outagamie County and fully 50 feet within the city itself. There are eight rapids within a space of 28 miles.

Appleton settlers saw the industrial potential of the area and strived to utilize the latent power and transportation potential of the Fox River. In 1852, the Appleton Water Power Company was incorporated with the purpose of constructing dams and reservoirs on the river for both improved navigation past rapids and for water power. In 1856 the new system of locks and canals on the Fox River began operating, allowing a water connection between the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes. Large boats, including barges and passenger steamers, could pass along the river and its navigation system from Lake Winnebago, past Appleton, and on to Green Bay and the Great Lakes system.¹⁹ It was noted in the 19th century at the time of the construction of this system of water transportation improvements, that the completion of one of the dams “will afford water power to drive all of the mills and factories of a dozen Lowells and Rochesters. Add to this that our river never rises or falls but two or three feet during the year and one cannot dispute that we have the best and noblest river in the world for driving all kinds of mills and machinery.”²⁰ Groups of manufacturing plants, especially paper mills, historically used water from the Fox River as part of production processes and used the river itself for transportation of finished products. The river became the “industrial backbone” for the area.²¹

A 1949 history of the general Fox River area, *Land of the Fox*, noted that industry in and around Appleton went through three historical phases of development early on. First came lumbering, utilizing at its most basic level the abundant timber of northeastern Wisconsin; then came flour milling, followed by paper manufacture. These early industrial phases overlapped. The year 1853 saw the establishment of the Richmond Paper Mill, the first such industry in the Fox River Valley.²² In May 1854, it was noted that Appleton had the following industries: “Lumbering: 4 saw mills, 2

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Walter H. Brummond, “Industrial Outagamie County,” in Gordon A. Bubolz, managing editor, *Land of the Fox: Saga of Outagamie County*. Appleton, Wisconsin: Outagamie County State Centennial Committee, Inc., pp. 155-156.

²⁰ Unidentified writer quoted in Ibid., p. 156.

²¹ Ibid., p. 155-156; *Appleton, Wisconsin, Illustrated*, p. [3].

²² *Land of the Fox*, p. 155-156.

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lath mills, 1 planing mill, 2 sash and blind factories, 1 chair factory, 3 cabinet ware rooms, total 13; Flour Milling: 2 flour mills; Paper Making: 1 paper mill.”²³ The Genesee Flour Mill began production in 1858, a year after Appleton incorporated as a city.²⁴

In 1861, the Chicago & NorthWestern Railroad extended to Appleton, providing a second important transportation connection to the other markets.²⁵ Later, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul and the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western railroads knitted the burgeoning city more tightly into the growing nationwide web of railroads.²⁶

Appleton grew rapidly during the late nineteenth century. Appleton’s population of 4,518 in 1870 grew to 8,005 in 1880, 11,869 in 1890, and 15,085 in 1900. Over time, Appleton and surrounding Outagamie County became an even more significant center of industry in Wisconsin. Besides lumber, flour milling, and paper manufacture, other early industries included tanning, watch making, machine shops, agricultural implements, food processing, and woolen mills. Later companies included a casein plant, a paint factory, pattern works, an ornamental iron works, printing plants, a dairy products plant and manufacturers of electric arc welding equipment, generators and motors, a veneer plant and foundry, canning factories, a car mover factory, and companies that made milk by-products and hair pins.²⁷ A number of Appleton's companies directly served the Midwest farm economy. The Eagle Fork Company, founded in 1879, made a mechanical fork for unloading hay originally. Its successor company, the Eagle Manufacturing Company, along with the Fox River Tractor Company, continued making farm equipment into the 1940s.²⁸ *Land of the Fox* noted in 1949, “Today diversified industry as well as the paper and its related industries employs some 5,000 persons with a payroll averaging more than \$10,000,000.”²⁹

Paper Manufacturing in Appleton

From a meager beginning in Milwaukee around 1848, the paper making industry eventually grew to become Wisconsin's third largest industry by 1948, employing over 26,000 workers at 57 separate mill sites.³⁰ As stated in Wisconsin’s Cultural Resource Management Plan:

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ "City of Appleton Timeline."

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ *Appleton, Wisconsin, Illustrated*, p. [3].

²⁷ *Land of the Fox*, p. 161.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 162.

²⁹ *Land of the Fox*, p. 98.

³⁰ Phil Howard, *A History of the Wisconsin Paper Industry, 1848-1948*, p. 8, cited in Wisconsin CRMP statement on industry (pulp and paper production), 1986, unpaginated.

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From its early start in the southeastern corner of the state, the paper industry moved quickly northward into the Fox River Valley. There, in the communities of Appleton, Neenah, Menasha, and others, the industry was firmly established as a thriving economic enterprise. The valley was ideal for the establishment of industrial operations, evidenced by the large number of flour and saw mills that had located in the area. Lake Winnebago formed a natural reservoir for the necessary freshwater, essential to the paper industry as a source of power and in the actual papermaking process. Transportation to market via the Great Lakes was convenient, and railroad connections to the commercial centers of Milwaukee and Chicago were made early. Most importantly, when the industry began its dramatic shift to the use of ground wood and wood pulp in the late nineteenth century, the rich reserves of the northern Wisconsin forests were close at hand.³¹

Appleton, Wisconsin, Illustrated, published in 1892, noted that Appleton's "first and most important [industrial] interest is paper."³² At the time of the publication, the paper mills of Appleton produced about 250,000 pounds of paper every day.³³ Appleton had the raw materials for paper making, including abundant water for processing and power and abundant timber in nearby northern Wisconsin forests for wood.³⁴

According to author Walter H. Brummund, a paper mill manufacturing wrapping paper, the Edwin Atkinson Mills, was established at Appleton as early as 1853. It soon became known as the Appleton Mills of owner C.P. Richmond.³⁵ By 1857, the local Appleton newspaper, the *Crescent*, was printing its issues on locally-produced newsprint. A large paper mill was built in the nearby town of Kaukauna in 1872 to 1874 under the supervision of John Stevekin.³⁶ The Atlas Mill began operation in 1878, producing ground wood pulp for paper manufacturing. In 1882 two paper companies, the Appleton Paper and Pulp Co. and the Vulcan Paper Co., became two of the earliest buildings in the world lighted by water power-driven Edison system electric generators. The Fox River Paper Corporation opened for business in 1883.³⁷ In the 1940s it remained the largest single paper mill employer in the city.³⁸

³¹ Wisconsin CRMP statement on industry (pulp and paper production), 1986, unpaginated.

³² *Appleton, Wisconsin, Illustrated*, p. [2].

³³ *Appleton, Wisconsin, Illustrated*, p. 4.

³⁴ Joyce McKay, "Fox River Paper Company Historic District," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1989, section 8, p. 2.

³⁵ *Land of the Fox*, p. 159.

³⁶ "City of Appleton Timeline."

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

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The area's paper manufacturers made a wide variety of paper products. In 1883 the Thilmany Pulp & Paper Co. started operations in Kaukauna; it was in the 1940s an important manufacturer of sulphate fibre paper and employed 1,300.³⁹ The Kimberly-Clark Co. built a large paper mill in a portion of Outagamie County that then became the village of Kimberly. It made book paper.⁴⁰ Other companies include the Combined Locks Paper Company, which made similar grades of paper. The Thilmany Mill made bag and wrapping paper. The Fox River Paper Corporation made fine writing papers. The Riverside Paper Corporation also made writing papers. The Appleton Coated Paper Company coated paper for a variety of products including tickets and tags. The Atlas Mill made wall paper. The Badger Tissue Mills at Kaukauna made tissue products. The Tuttle Press at Appleton made crepe paper, table covers, and napkins.⁴¹

Thanks to this industry, Appleton and surrounding Outagamie County had a strong group of skilled craftsmen and artisans in all of the various fields of paper making. Also, these various paper manufacturers supported a graduate school and research center, the Institute of Paper Chemistry, that was located in Appleton and which specialized in the chemistry of paper.⁴² (The research center relocated to Georgia in 1989.)⁴³

Due to this strong paper manufacturing industry, Appleton also supported a number of companies that provided products that supported paper making, including the Appleton Woolen Mills and its papermakers' felts. These included paper mill machinery companies, wire cloth weavers, wood plugs for paper rolls, metal plates for paper mill machinery, and paper tubes and cores for paper rolls.⁴⁴ The 1857 blacksmith shop of Crosby Ketchum had been among the earliest suppliers of equipment and repair services to local paper mills. It became the Appleton Machine Company, which made paper mill machinery and had both a domestic and foreign market for it. The Valley Iron Works also made paper mill machinery as well as other heavy-duty equipment. Two wire weaver companies, the Wisconsin Wire Works (established 1900) and the Appleton Wire Works (1896), made Fourdrinier and cylinder wire cloth for paper mills.⁴⁵

Company consolidation and growth occurred in the paper industry in Wisconsin during the 20th century. In 1905, fifty-two companies operated 130 mills. By 1916, there were fifty paper mills in Wisconsin and the state ranked fourth in paper production. By 1939, thirty-eight paper companies

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ *Land of the Fox*, p. 159-160.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 160.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ "City of Appleton Timeline"

⁴⁴ *Land of the Fox*, p. 161.

⁴⁵ Ibid.; Wisconsin CRMP statement on industry (pulp and paper production), 1986, unpaginated.

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remained in the state.⁴⁶

Woolen Mills in Appleton, Wisconsin

The original development of the woolen industry in Wisconsin in the 19th century was linked to the widespread husbandry of sheep in the state. Sheep-raising provided a means by which farmers could utilize land not planted in crops, with the result being both meat and wool. Sheep production increased greatly during the Civil War with the demand for wool for army blankets and uniforms. By 1864, Wisconsin farmers sold four million pounds of wool.⁴⁷

Due to the availability of cheap water power, Appleton became a center of woolen mills, which was located on the northern edge of the sheep-raising area in Wisconsin. The first woolen mill was the Appleton Woolen Factory, established in 1862 and the predecessor firm to the Appleton Woolen Mills. Other woolen mills in Appleton were the Kelley Knitting Company (1880), which produced yarn. Going through some changes in ownership in the late 19th century, Kelley was purchased by John B. Courtney in 1904 and became the J.B. Courtney Woolen Mills. (This company's building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1993.) The Zwicker Knitting Mill was founded in 1906.⁴⁸

Unique in its connection with paper manufacture, the Appleton Woolen Mills made papermakers' felts. Other local woolen mills had no connection to the paper industry and manufactured clothing and bedding items such as mittens, hosiery, sweaters, and blankets.⁴⁹

At the time of the Courtney Woolen Mills National Register nomination in 1993, the three surviving woolen mills in operation were the Appleton Mills (the successor to the Appleton Woolen Mills), the J. B. Courtney Woolen Mills, and the Zwicker Knitting Mill. Firms no longer in existence include the Fox River Knitting Company (began operations in 1900), Appleton Knitting Company (circa 1900), Weber Knitting Mills (1919), Steinborg Knitting Mills (1925), and Superior Knitting Company (1938).⁵⁰ Based on available information, all of these other woolen mills concentrated on yarn, clothing, rugs, and blankets during their years of operation.

⁴⁶ McKay, section 8, p. 7.

⁴⁷ Steven R. Milquet, "J.B. Courtney Woolen Mill," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1993, section 8, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid., Section 8, p. 2-3.

⁴⁹ *Land of the Fox*, p. 161-162.

⁵⁰ Milquet, Section 8, p. 3.

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Papermakers' Felts and Paper Manufacturing

Felts for paper manufacture were first produced in the United States in the mid-19th century. Before this, such felts had been imported from Europe. A woolen mill in Hamilton, Ohio, made piece felts for paper mills as early as 1854. In 1866, endless felts (i.e. continuous belts of felt) were produced by this mill, owned by Asa Shuler and John W. Benninghofen. In 1872, a mill in Camden, Maine, was established, becoming in 1872 the Knox Woolen Company.

Other companies making papermakers' felt in the United States between 1870 and 1900 included H. Waterbury and F.C. Huyck, Rensselaerville, New York; the H. Waterbury Sons Company, Oriskany, New York; H.C. Huyck and partners in Bethlehem and Rensselaer, New York; the Acme Felt Company and the Albany Felt Company, Albany, New York; the Akron Woolen and Felt Company, Akron, Ohio; the Lockport Felt Company, Newfane, New York; the Megunticook Woolen Company, Camden, Maine; the Green Brothers, Cazenovia, New York; the Rumford Falls Woolen Company, Rumford Falls, Maine; L. Heathcote, Glen Rock, Pennsylvania; Weiss & Son, Charleston, Illinois; and the Appleton Woolen Company, Appleton, Wisconsin. As of 1916, five of these companies still produced papermakers' felt: Shuler & Benninghofen, the Lockport Felt Company, the Albany Felt Company, the Knox Woolen Company, and the Appleton Woolen Mills.⁵¹ The Appleton Woolen Mills in Appleton advertised itself as the only manufacturer of papermakers' felt "west of Ohio."⁵²

In a 1956 *Milwaukee Sentinel* article about the Appleton Woolen Mills, papermakers' felts were described as:

...huge endless woolen blankets. Their function is three-fold: to carry the wet web of paper to the press and dryer rolls of paper machines; to get a large amount of water out of the wet web; and to provide a finish on the paper. Felt is the only material which satisfactorily performs these vital operations. It is essential to the paper industry.⁵³

The Sentinel article continues,

The papermakers' felt industry is a custom operation. Each felt is made to order and each felt is different. No two paper machines are exactly alike and even a repeat order (another felt for the same machine) may call for variations in design

⁵¹ Lyman H. Weeks, *A History of Paper Manufacturing, 1690-1916*, New York: Lockwood Trade Journal Co., 1916, pp.181-182.

⁵² *Fibre and Fabric* (July 1, 1911), p. 22.

⁵³ *Milwaukee Sentinel* (April 29, 1956), p. 15.

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and manufacture due to new requirements and a new performance standard. Mass production techniques are out of place in the felt industry. Throughout the years felt-making has remained an art, demanding skilled employees with deft hands and seasoned judgment.⁵⁴

History of Appleton Woolen Mills

The history of the Appleton Woolen Mills began in 1860 when James W. Hutchinson, a local Appleton merchant, finalized plans for a woolen mill in Appleton. Construction of a four-story, 50 x 30 foot building was started in February 1861. The mill was in full operation in January 1862. In July 1863, the mill was totally destroyed by fire. The following year, it was rebuilt by Capt. George W. Spaulding, using Hutchinson as his agent and mill manager. The new mill was two and one-half stories and 65 x 45 feet in dimension. The new mill was completed and occupied in 1864.⁵⁵

In February 1866, Capt. Spaulding sold his interest in the woolen mill to Hutchinson and banker David Smith. Over the next 14 years, the mill was known variously as the Appleton Woolen Factory, Appleton Mills, Appleton Woolen Mills, and the firm of Hutchinson and Smith. During this period, in 1876, Frank J. Harwood, who would go on to become the mill's long-time general manager and president, and became a partner in the mill.

In 1881, the woolen mill burned down completely. That same year, the existing company was reorganized and incorporated by its owners as the Appleton Woolen Mills, and the subject mill was constructed on the same site. A.P. Harwood (the father of Frank J. Harwood) was the president of the new company, while Frank J. Harwood was general manager.⁵⁶

The Appleton Woolen Mills made "plain and fancy yarns" in its early years, and then expanded to include the manufacture of mackinaws and flannels in 1888. In 1890, the company first produced papermakers' felt through the installation of its first loom for such production. Late in 1902, the Reedsburg Woolen Mills in Reedsburg, Wisconsin, was bought by the Appleton Woolen Mills. It operated as a branch of the parent company. At this time all non-papermakers' felt production was moved to it, including men's and women's coats and suits and shirts. From 1902 on, the Appleton Woolen Mills building in Appleton exclusively made papermakers' felt.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ *Land of the Fox*, p. 266.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

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The October 24, 1930, issue of *The Paper Mill* had an advertisement for the Appleton Woolen Mills: "Manufacturers of Paper Makers' Felts and Jackets," noting, "We have demonstrated our ability to compete in FOURDRINIER, PRESS, CYLINDER AND PULP FELTS AND JACKETS, and solicit a trial order, especially for writing and book papers."⁵⁸ In the July 1, 1911, issue of *Fibre and Fabric*, the Appleton Woolen Mills was touted as the "pioneer mill west of Ohio in making paper makers' felts and jackets."⁵⁹ In 1910, Frank J. Harwood became president of the company while retaining the role of general manager. In 1940, Harwood relinquished the role of general manager, dying later that year.⁶⁰

In 1923, the Appleton Woolen Mills employed 200 people between its main Appleton plant and its Reedsburg satellite. Its papermakers' felts had both national and foreign distribution.⁶¹ In 1924, an appraisal of the Appleton Woolen Mills noted that the company's physical plant was worth \$361,296.59, of which \$203,797.31 was "building construction and building fixtures."⁶² In 1956, the company employed 135 people, with a ratio of men to women of 60/40.⁶³ In 1959, it had 180 employees. In 1961 the company renamed itself Appleton Mills, removing "Woolen" from the name. The change occurred due to the company incorporating synthetic fibers into its papermakers' felts and its desire to reflect this technological change in its name.⁶⁴ In 1965, the company employed 170 workers, with a ratio of men to women of 57/43.⁶⁵ Throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s, the company continued to be an important producer of papermakers' felts.⁶⁶

In 1968, Appleton Mills began construction of a new plant in a newly established industrial park in Appleton.⁶⁷ The company moved into the new one-story building in 1969.⁶⁸ The next year, a special four-page section of the *Post-Crescent*, the local newspaper in Appleton, celebrated the company's success, noting that the company had tripled sales and its workforce had increased from 163 to 207 during the 1960s. The article noted that this great growth necessitated the company's move to a new

⁵⁸ *The Paper Mill* (October 24, 1930), p. 14

⁵⁹ *Fibre and Fabric* (July 1, 1911), p. 22.

⁶⁰ *Land of the Fox*, p. 266.

⁶¹ *Post-Crescent* (Appleton, Wisconsin) (April 28, 1923), p. 41

⁶² *Appraisal Summaries of the Appleton Woolen Mills, Appleton, Wisconsin July 31, 1924*, p. [1].

⁶³ *Directory of the Principal Manufacturers in Appleton, Wisconsin*. Appleton, Wisconsin: Appleton Chamber of Commerce, 1956, not paginated.

⁶⁴ *Post-Crescent* (August 7, 1961), p. 21.

⁶⁵ *Directory of the Principal Industries in Appleton, Wisconsin*. Appleton, Wisconsin: Appleton Area Chamber of Commerce, 1965, p. 7.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Post-Crescent* (March 24, 1968), p. 17

⁶⁸ *Post-Crescent* (April 14, 1969), p. 11

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building. The article went on to discuss changes in the felt-making process, including the increased use of nylon and Dacron along with wool imported from New Zealand. The article finished with a discussion of the papermakers' felt manufacturing process.⁶⁹

The Appleton Mills (as the Appleton Woolen Mills is now called) remained one of 11 woolen mills still in operation in Wisconsin in 1991. Along with the J.B. Courtney Woolen Mills and Zwicker Knitting Mills, it was one of only three in Appleton and was the oldest woolen mill company in Wisconsin still in operation at that time.⁷⁰

Biographies of Frank J. Harwood and F. Harwood Orbison

Frank James Harwood (1855-1940), the long-time general manager and president of the Appleton Woolen Mills, was born in Crown Point, New York. He moved to Ripon, Wisconsin, in 1874, and then came to Appleton in 1876 to work for Hutchinson and Company. At the time of his death, he was president of the Eagle Manufacturing Company, a director of the First National Bank, Appleton; a director of the Northern Paper Mills, Green Bay; and president of the Appleton Cemetery association.⁷¹

F. Harwood Orbison (1920-1980) was the grandson of Frank J. Harwood and was the president of the Appleton Woolen Mills in the 1950s and 1960s as the company modernized. He remained president of the company when it moved to a new factory building in 1970.⁷²

Conclusion

The Appleton Woolen Mills was an important company that supported the regionally significant paper manufacturing industry. Located at 218 East South Island Street in Appleton, Wisconsin, the building is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the Appleton Woolen Mills, a local manufacturer of papermakers' felt between 1890 and 1969. Papermakers' felt like that made at the Appleton Woolen Mills was critical to the manufacturing of paper, also a major Appleton industrial product. Papermakers' felt's value to local, national and international paper makers helped Appleton gain recognition as central Wisconsin's main paper and papermakers' felt production center, and placed the Appleton Woolen Mills and mills like it at the center of the city's late nineteenth and

⁶⁹ *Post-Crescent* (July 5, 1970), pp. 39-42.

⁷⁰ *Directory of Wisconsin Manufacturers, 1991*; cited in Milquet, section 8, p. 4.

⁷¹ *Post-Crescent* (Appleton, Wisconsin) (August, 20, 1940), p. 1.

⁷² *Milwaukee Sentinel* (April 29, 1956), p. 15; *Post-Crescent* (July 5, 1970), pp. 39-42; "Find-A-Grave" website: <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=findagraveus&h=77871099&new=1>; accessed November 16, 2014.

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early twentieth century success

Acknowledgments

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Milwaukee Sentinel (April 29, 1956).

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Joyce McKay, "Fox River Paper Company Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1989.

Steven R. Milquet, "J.B. Courtney Woolen Mill," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1993.

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___End of References

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___Insert Boundary Descriptions

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary is the entire parcel associated with Appleton Woolen Mills and the address 218 E South Island Street.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries encompass the entire parcel of land associated with the Appleton Woolen Mills building in Appleton, Outagamie County, Wisconsin. The current boundaries correspond to the historic boundaries of the nominated property.

___End of Boundary Descriptions

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Insert Photo Descriptions

Name of Property: Appleton Woolen Mills

City or Vicinity: Appleton

County: Outagamie State: Wisconsin

Photographer: John Cramer
MacRostie Historic Advisors
53 West Jackson Blvd, Suite 1323
Chicago, IL 60604

Date Photographed: June 9th, 2015

Location of Original Image Files: Historic Preservation Division, Wisconsin Historical Society,
Madison, WI 53706

Description of Photograph(s) and Number:

- 1 of 14: North façade, looking east
- 2 of 14: North and West facades, looking southeast
- 3 of 14: 1900 Block- North façade looking south
- 4 of 14: 1934 Block- North and West facades
- 5 of 14: South façade looking northeast
- 6 of 14: West façade looking north
- 7 of 14: South façade looking northwest
- 8 of 14: 1934 Block – south façade looking north
- 9 of 14: South and East facades looking northwest

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10 of 14: East façade looking west

11 of 14: First floor- 1962 Block, looking east

12 of 14: First floor- 1920 Block looking southeast

13 of 14: Second floor- 1893 Block looking southwest

14 of 14: 1934 Block- looking northeast

End of Photo Descriptions

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Insert Figures

List of Figures:

Image A: Site Plan, Existing Lower Level Plan

Image B: Site Plan, Existing First Floor Plan

Image C: Site Plan, Existing Second Floor Plan

Image D: Site Plan, Existing Third Floor Plan

Image E: Site Plan, Existing Fourth Floor Plan

Image F: Site Plan, Existing Roof Plan

Image G: Building Chronology Plan

Image H: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1895.

Image I: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950.

Image J: View of Appleton Woolen Mill looking northeast, 1892. (Published in: George McNamee, *Appleton Wis., Illustrated*, 1892).

Image K: South and west facades, ca. 1893. (Courtesy of: Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-52558)

Image L: South façade viewed from river, undated. (Courtesy of: Appleton Public Library, PP-4-8)

Image M: View of mill district with Appleton Woolen Mills toward background, 1908 postcard.
(Fox Valley Memory, Owned by: Rosemarie De Bruin, I-408-06)

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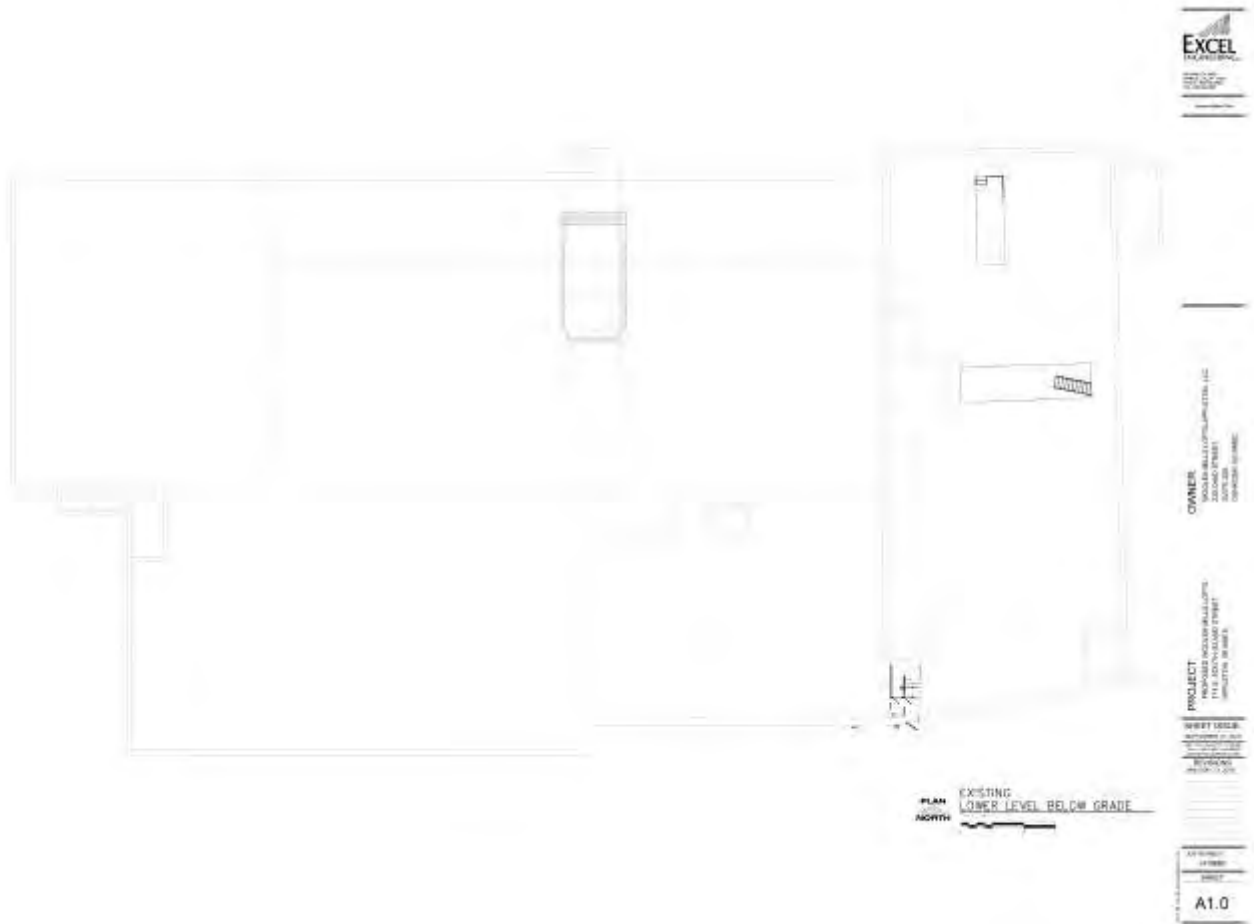


Image A: Site Plan, Existing Lower Level Plan

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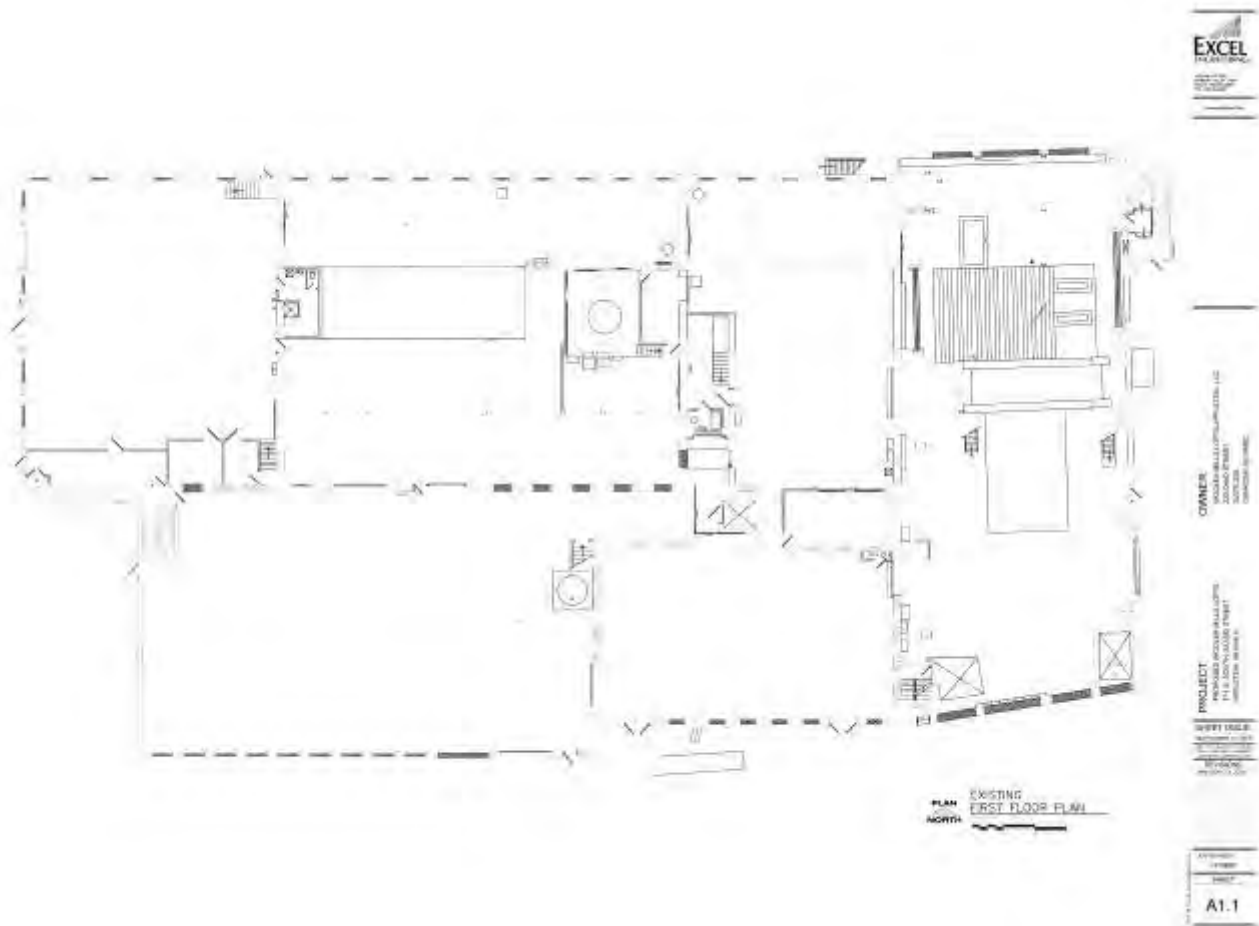


Image B: Site Plan, Existing First Floor Plan

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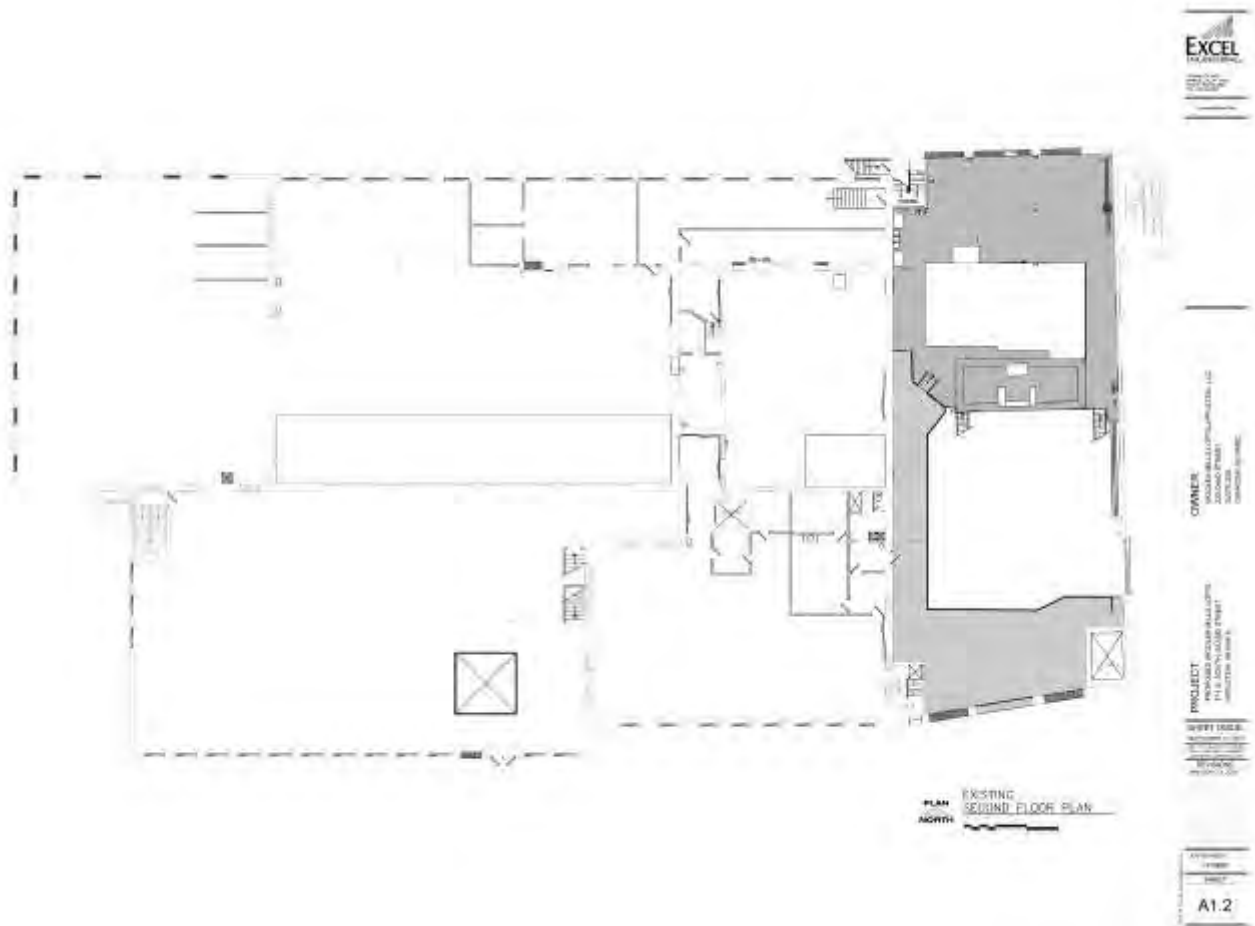


Image C: Site Plan, Existing Second Floor Plan

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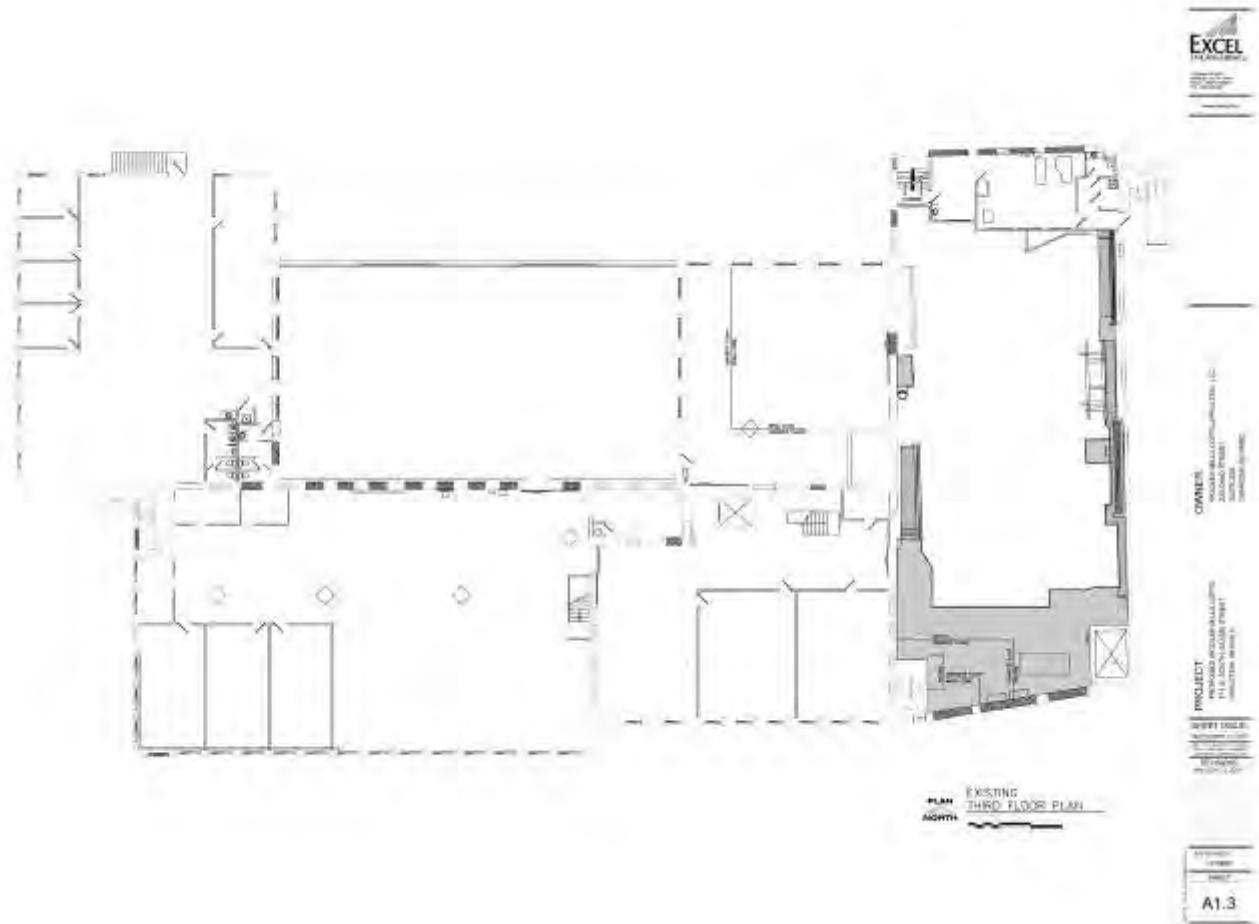


Image D: Site Plan, Existing Third Floor Plan

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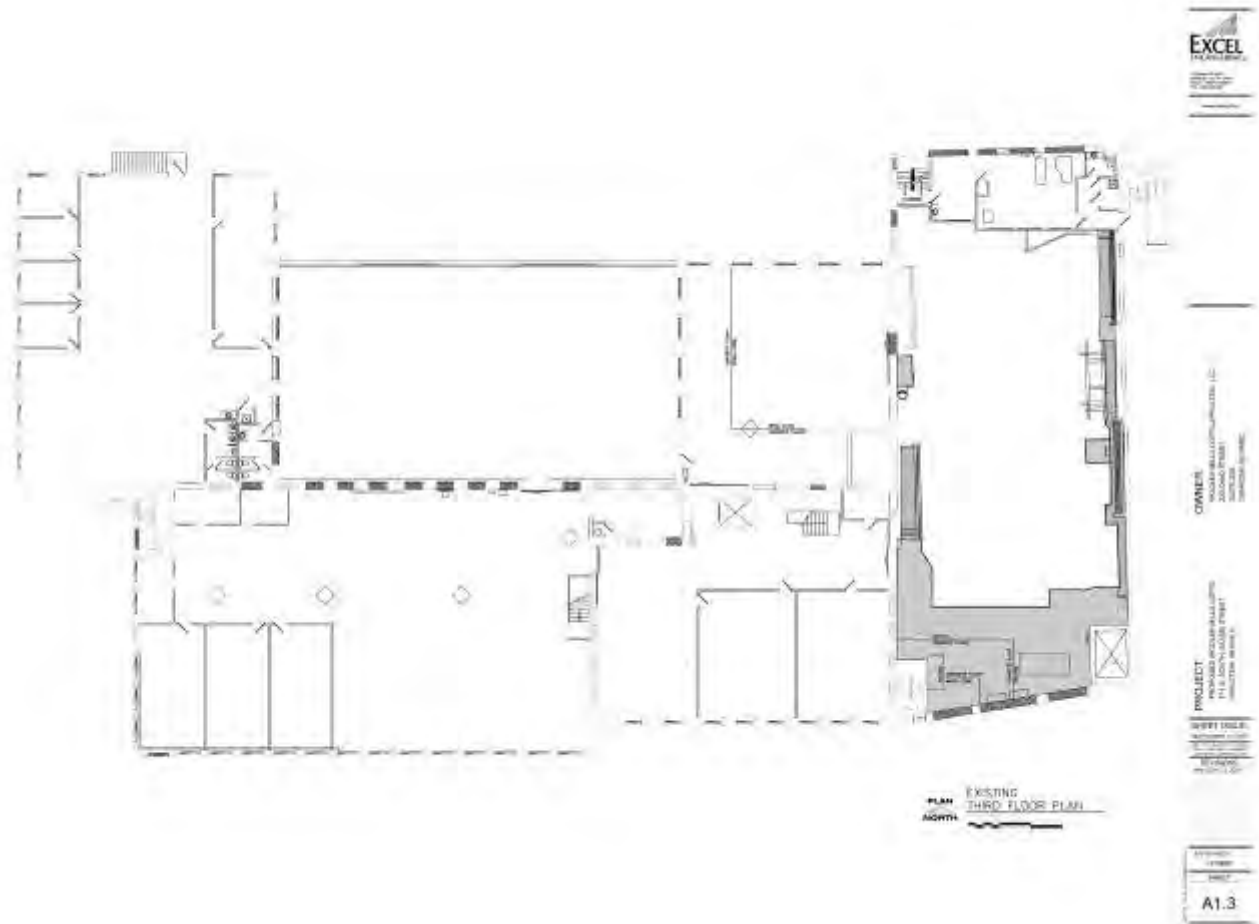


Image D: Site Plan, Existing Third Floor Plan

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Image E: Site Plan, Existing Fourth Floor Plan

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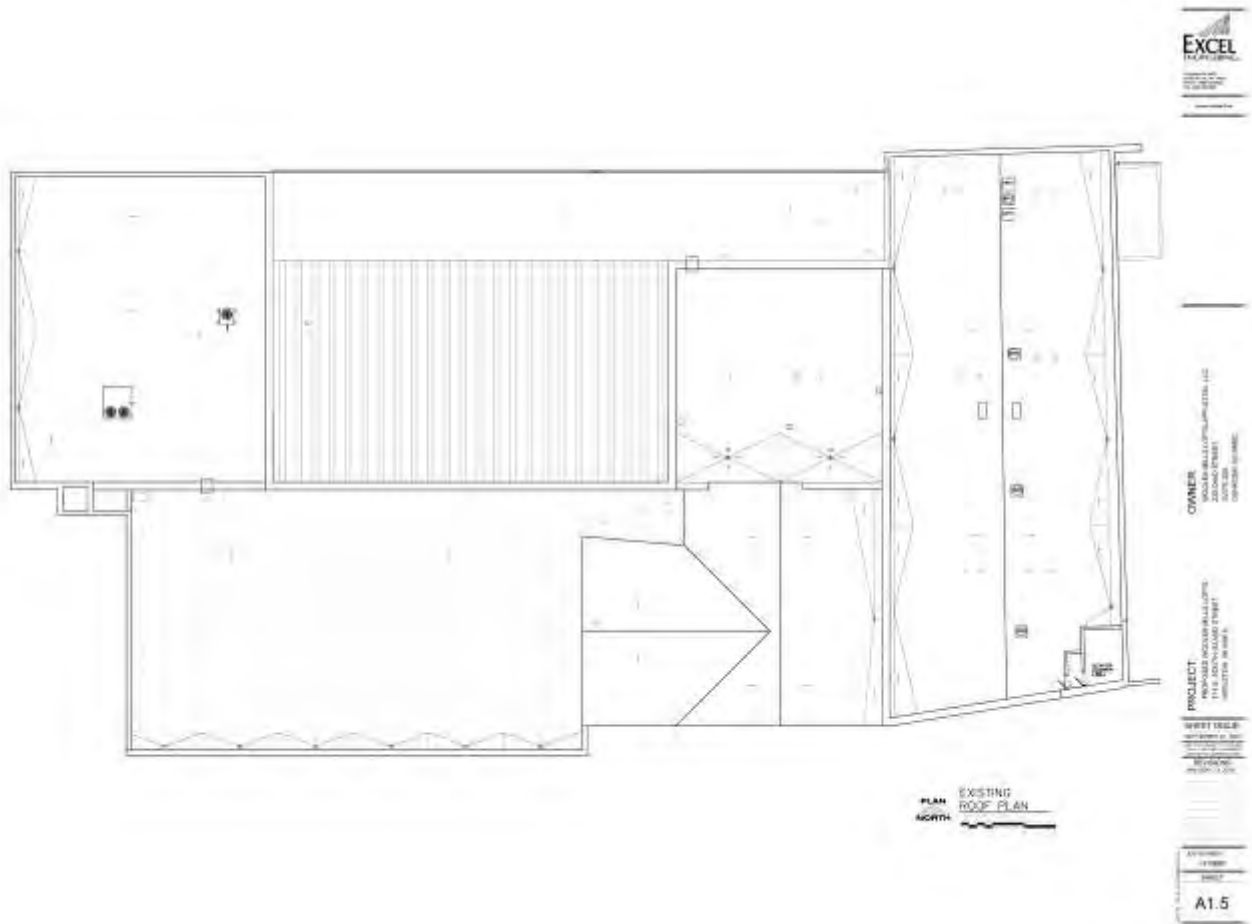


Image F: Site Plan, Existing Roof Plan

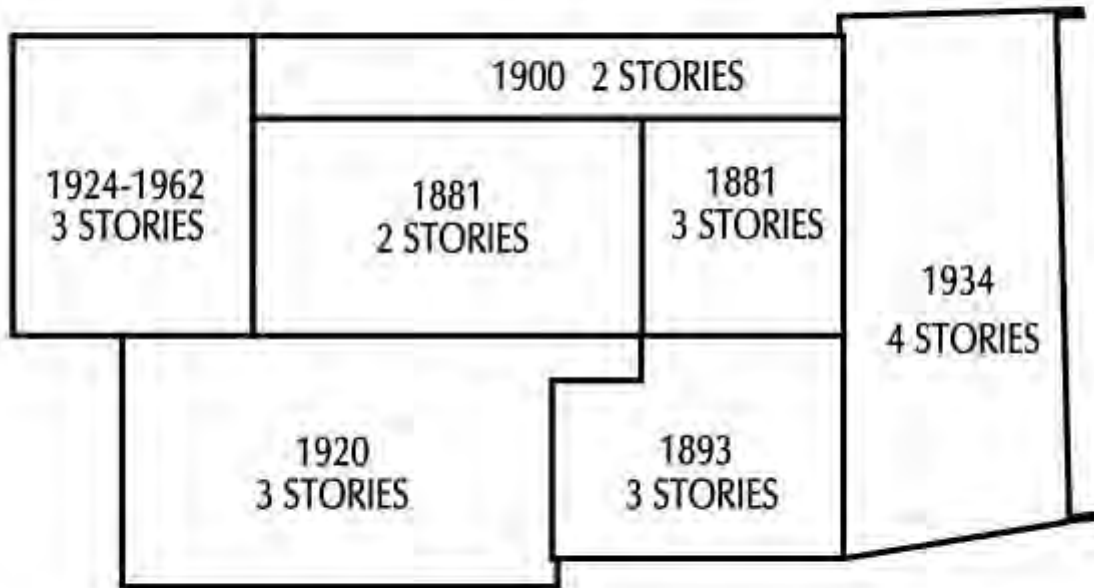
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HISTORIC KEY



NORTH

Image G: Building Chronology Plan

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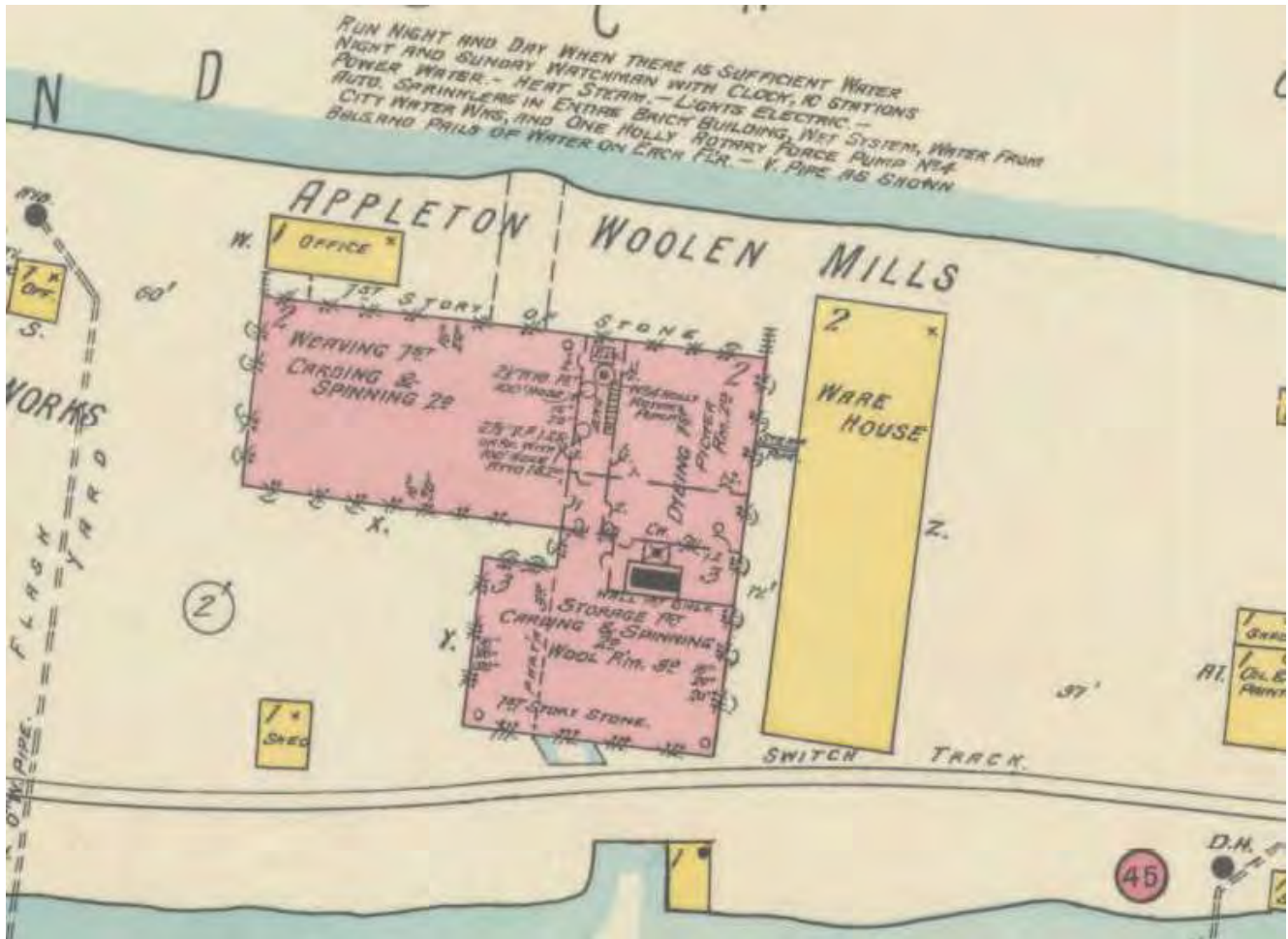


Image H: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1895.

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Image J: View of Appleton Woolen Mill looking northeast, 1892. (Published in: George McNamee, *Appleton Wis., Illustrated*, 1892)

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Image K: South and west facades, ca. 1893. (Courtesy of: Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-52558)

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Appleton Woolen Mills
Appleton, Outagamie Co., WI



Image L: South façade viewed from across river, undated. (Courtesy of: Appleton Public Library, PP-4-8)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 15

Appleton Woolen Mills
Appleton, Outagamie Co., WI



Image L: View of mill district with Appleton Woolen Mills toward background, 1908 postcard.
(Fox Valley Memory, Owned by: Rosemarie De Bruin, I-408-06)

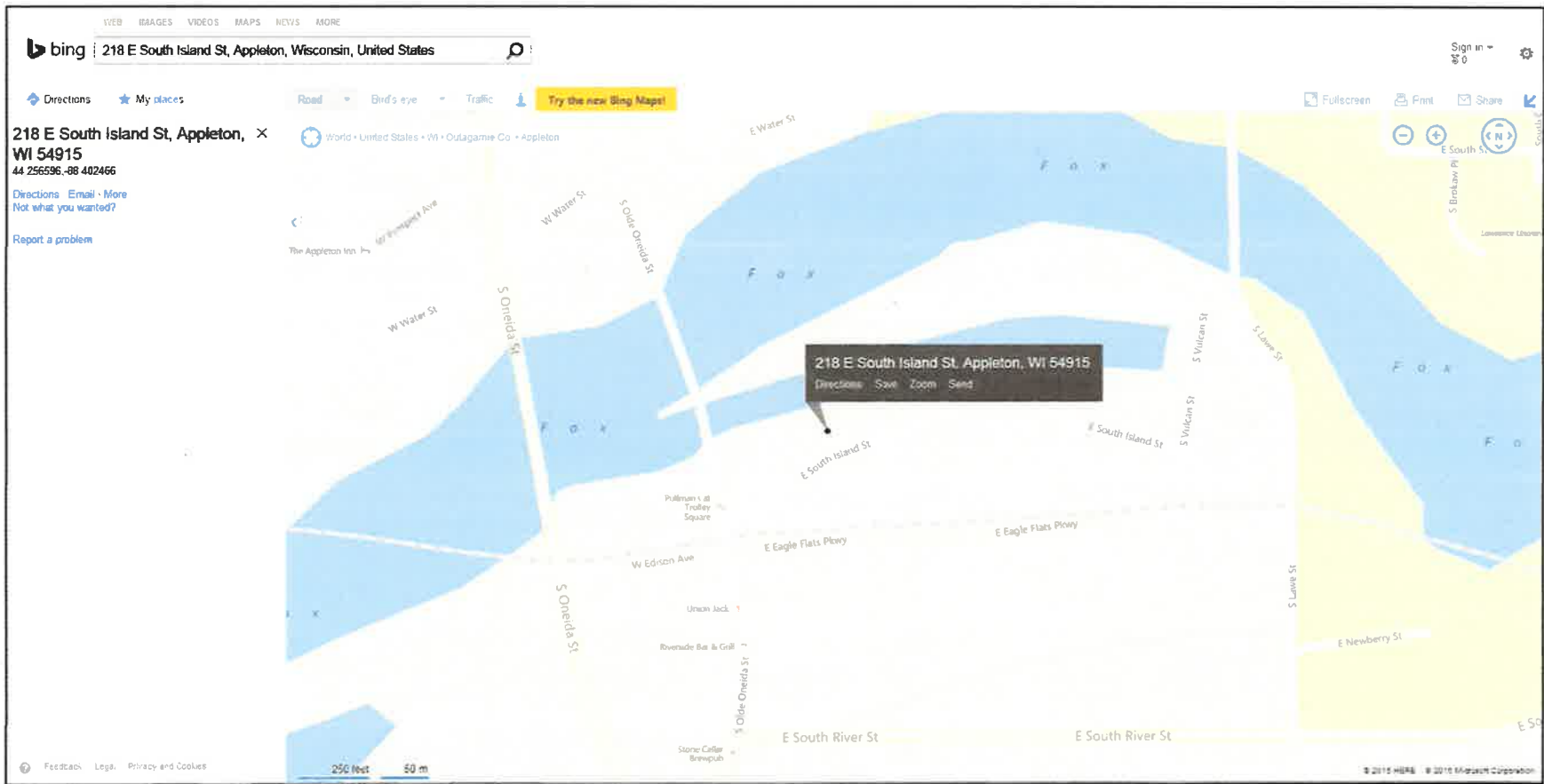
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Appleton Woolen Mills
Appleton, Outagamie Co., WI

__End Figures



Appleton Woolen Mills

218 E South Island St, Appleton, WI 54915

Latitude: 44.256596

Longitude: -88.402466

**Coordinates based on WGS 84*



250 feet 50 m













S A D O F F & R U D O L P H

F O N T D U L A C , W I







 River Flats
Testing Corp.
Test Center Bldg. 1

218



 **River Flats**
Testing Corp.
Test Center Bldg. 1

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