NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 5/31/2012)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Shantz Button Factory

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 340 & 330 Rutgers Street, 795 Monroe Avenue | N/A not for publication

city or town Rochester | N/A vicinity

state New York code NY county Monroe code 055 zip code 14607

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide __x__ local

Ruth A Pierpont DSHPO 6/21/13
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

for Carol D. Beall 8.13.13
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Shantz Button Factory
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

x	private
	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

	building(s)
x	district
	site
	structure
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	0	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/factory
INDUSTRY/warehouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse
COMMERCE/TRADE/store
COMMERCE/TRADE/automobile repair shop
Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

No style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: masonry
walls: brick
roof: asphalt
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Shantz Button Factory is a group of three early twentieth century industrial buildings near the intersection of Monroe Avenue and Rutgers Street, in southeast Rochester, Monroe County. The three buildings constitute a button factory built between 1903 and 1920. The three properties, now on separate but contiguous parcels, are 340 Rutgers Street (1903-04; doubled in size 1920), 795 Monroe Avenue (1905), and 330 Rutgers Street (1916). All are all of timber frame construction with brick walls, large factory window openings, flat roofs, and decorative brick cornices. The complex is surrounded by late nineteenth and early twentieth century homes along the southern part of Rutgers Street and its dead-end extension, Adwen Place. Within a few blocks of the district along Monroe Avenue are several historic institutional buildings, including the Monroe Branch Library (809 Monroe Avenue), the Monroe Family YMCA (797 Monroe), and the Church of the Blessed Sacrament (534-546 Oxford Street). Monroe Avenue is a major route through the city of Rochester and the Monroe Avenue side of the factory has seen some recent changes. The complex retains integrity, especially in terms of size, massing, materials, feeling and association. All three buildings also retain historic interior features, such as wood floors, stairs and on the exterior, the brick cornice, stone sills and brick lintels.

Narrative Description

Located at Rutgers Street and Monroe Avenue, the Shantz Button Factory is a group of three early twentieth century elements of a button factory complex built between 1903 and 1920. The three properties included in the district are 340 Rutgers Street (1903-04 & 1920), 795 Monroe Avenue (1905), and 330 Rutgers Street (1916). These three buildings include the entire built portion of the historic factory complex. A small portion of the original property, some land along Monroe Avenue that served as an open front lawn, has been divided off and redeveloped as a gas station and parking area. The latter is not included in the proposed district boundaries. Except for this minor loss, this the factory retains integrity. The three buildings are of timber frame construction with brick elevations, large factory window openings, flat roofs, and decorative brick cornices. The older section of 340 Rutgers Street housed the entire factory operation at the time of construction, and at five stories, is the largest and most imposing element in the group of three. The second building in the complex, the 1905 two-story East Building (795 Monroe Avenue), resembles 340 Rutgers in its brick detailing and large paired windows. Backing up to the former Erie Canal at its south end, the East Building was the receiving point for the raw materials transported by the canal and housed the machinery for the early stages in the vegetable ivory button making process. The third building, 330 Rutgers Street (1916), is a one-story smaller-scale example of the same building type, built as a separate entity to house the operations of a secondary company making a different type of buttons under the same ownership. It resembles the two earlier components in its brick exterior and cornices, flat roof and large windows, although it employed industrial steel pivot windows rather than the wood sash of the earlier buildings. The five-story north wing of 340 Rutgers Street, the last

component of the complex to be built, has subtle design variations from the older wing in its window proportions and masonry trim elements, but is carefully crafted to form a cohesive whole with the earlier elements of the factory complex. The three buildings were originally linked by a common power plant to the rear of the complex, which has been lost. The buildings are now are individual freestanding elements with separate uses, but clearly sharing a common functional and architectural background.

340 Rutgers Street (1903-4 & 1920)

The building at 340 Rutgers Street is the largest of the three buildings that make up the Shantz Button Factory. The five-story L-shaped masonry block includes a south wing, built in 1903-04, as the original Shantz factory, and a north wing added in 1920. The south wing is oriented east-west, parallel to Interstate 490 to the south, which was the site of the Erie Canal in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The building is ten-bays wide in the east-west direction by two-bays deep in the north-south direction. It has a flat roof and large window openings with shallow arched heads made up of three rows of rowlock bricks. The window sills are rough stone. Most window sash have been removed, but historic images from 1915-18 indicate that most original openings were pairs of wood sash with four-over-four lights. There were also two bays of industrial steel windows with horizontal pivot ventilators, also present by 1918, and some examples of this window type remain intact, though in poor condition, on the south elevation. The north and west elevations have a brick cornice at the roof level and the west elevation features corbelling above the fifth floor windows. An early postcard view of the complex before the addition of the north wing in 1920 indicates the original entrance was in the second bay from the west of the north elevation. This entrance was eliminated as part of the north wing construction. The south wing has no entries other than an internal door at the second floor level into the 1960 loading dock wing, a concrete block addition with three west-facing truck loading bays extending to the south from the main block (non-contributing). There is a one-story brick penthouse above the stair and a fire escape on the south. The base of the original smokestack remains as a projecting element at the center of the east elevation, truncated at the roofline. There is assorted electronic equipment mounted on the roof, including a cellular phone tower.

The north wing overlaps with the south wing at its westernmost four bays and extends out to the Rutgers Street property line. It is three bays wide (east-west) by six bays deep (north-south). It also has a flat roof and a penthouse over the stair and matches the south wing in floor levels and in height. It has no cornice but has decorative corbelling above the fifth floor windows on three sides, concrete ornament at the tops of the corner piers, and concrete lintels and stone sills surrounding its large openings for banks of three windows, now mostly filled with plywood or concrete block. All elevations feature expressed pilasters between the windows, and the east and west sides have stone bands at the third and fourth floor levels, where the pilaster depth is reduced.

The north (Monroe Avenue) façade of the north wing has been altered by painting the brick masonry white at all floor levels and by the installation of aluminum storefront windows at the first and second floor levels. At the east and west elevations, the brick masonry and trim have been painted brown at the lower two levels, but the original masonry is exposed on the upper levels. The main building entrance is in the southernmost bay of the west side of the north wing, also in-filled with aluminum and glass, with a canvas awning above. The third and fourth bays from the north on the west elevation are irregular, with one bay of surviving industrial steel windows and a stone-trimmed pedestrian entry in the third bay where the stairway is located. The fourth bay from the north has a loading door directly into the elevator and small window openings within the elevator shaft. There is a one-story brick sky-lit penthouse above the elevator.

The building interior in both wings is largely open space, most recently used as an office furniture retail store at all levels. The first floor has a suspended acoustic tile ceiling, carpet and drywall. The upper levels have most of the historic features exposed, including wood floors, exposed timber frames, floor joists, exposed brick walls at the exterior and the stair and elevator shafts, as well as steel fire doors.

330 Rutgers Street (1916)

The building at 330 Rutgers Street is a single-story block, added to the complex after the construction of the original factory and the East Building (795 Monroe), but before the north wing was added to the original factory at 340 Rutgers. It resembles the two earlier buildings in its construction type – brick masonry with large window openings – and is six-bays wide by three-bays deep, with a brick cornice and brick corbelling above the windows. The building is currently used as an auto service garage and the front (north) façade has been modified with the installation of overhead doors in the four westernmost bays and commercial storefront doors and windows in the easternmost two bays. The openings, however, fill the original bays. In addition, the brick masonry of the front façade, including the cornice, has been covered by a cement plaster finish and painted white. The south side has ghost marks from an adjacent gable roofed building extending to the south, which was the original power plant for the factory complex, demolished in the 1950s.

The interior of 330 Rutgers Street is finished as an office and waiting area in the easternmost two bays and is an open service room in the westernmost four bays. The original wood columns are exposed within the service room, which has a beam-and-panel ceiling. The windows are boarded up or have small double-hung replacement windows. All of the original openings in this building are discernible, even where they have been changed.

795 Monroe Ave. (1905)

The building at 795 Monroe Avenue is the second oldest and second largest of the three buildings that make

up the Shantz Button Factory. It is a two-story block forming the eastern edge of the factory complex and originally housed the equipment for the early stages of the button making process – drying and cleaning of the raw material and cutting and turning of buttons. It resembles the factory's other two buildings (340 and 330 Rutgers Street) in its original brick masonry with large window openings, flat roof and brick cornice, and open industrial interior.

The building is three-bays wide and nine-bays deep, oriented roughly north-south, with its north end facing Monroe Avenue and its south end facing Interstate 490 (the former Erie Canal). The building has a shallow-pitched roof sloping to the rear and brick cornices on the front and sides. The east and west elevations have nine equal bays with unornamented brick pilasters and recessed bays of windows with shallow arched heads, stone sills, and brick spandrels. The rear (south) elevation has several small brick and concrete block extensions of various ages, which house stairs, an elevator and storage space.

The Monroe Avenue (north) facade has been modified by adding two-story projecting two-sided bays with a dark metallic finish and quadrilateral windows at the second floor of the center and east bays. The western bay has a projecting canopy in the same configuration as the bay material above, with a central entrance flanked by glass block at the first floor level. These facade alterations were done in 1980 for the movie theater candy supplier which occupied the building at the time and were intended to evoke the appearance of a movie marquee. The 1980s alterations occurred within the window bays only and are reversible.

The building has a largely open interior space with exposed timber frame construction throughout the first floor and the rear section of the second floor. There is a partial third floor mezzanine and no basement, although most of the first floor is at 54-inches below grade. The windows along the two side walls are mostly boarded up with plywood and those which are functional include sliding, casement, double hung, glass block and fixed. All windows are replacements, with the exception of one west-facing wood double-hung window with nine-over-nine lights, which may be original.

The parcel includes a narrow strip along the eastern edge of the building used for diagonal parking, two rights of way giving access to Monroe Avenue and a small parking area off the southwest corner of the building. The area to the north, between the building and Monroe Avenue, is a parking lot owned and used by the adjacent property owner to the east, the Monroe Family YMCA.

Shantz Button Factory
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] 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.
- [x] 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry
Architecture

Period of Significance
1903-1920

Significant Dates
1903, 1905, 1916, 1920

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period begins with the initial construction of the factory in 1903 and ends with the final expansion/construction in 1920.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Shantz Button Factory is significant under Criterion A for its association with Rochester's button industry, part of the men's clothing industry that thrived locally in the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century. The Shantz Button Factory is one of only two surviving early twentieth century button manufacturing plants in Rochester. Its three factory buildings represent the different steps in the intricate button manufacturing process. The factory's founder, Moses B. Shantz, became an important figure in the rise of the vegetable ivory button business, which dominated the industry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century both in Rochester and nationally. In addition, the factory is one of a handful of surviving canal-front industrial properties built along the Erie Canal's original path through downtown Rochester.

The factory is also significant under Criterion C as an intact example of early twentieth century vernacular industrial architecture that shows the evolution of the factory type during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The period of significance for the district is 1903 to 1924, the period during which it was owned by and associated with the Shantz Manufacturing Company. The survival of all three of the buildings associated with the factory operation, along with clear documentation of the role of each one in the button making process, is of particular benefit in illustrating this piece of Rochester's industrial history. The site retains a high degree of integrity in location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, in spite of some degree of compromise to the setting on the Monroe Avenue side, the replacement of the Erie Canal with an interstate highway and the loss of many of the original windows. Significant surviving original features common to two or more of the three buildings include the brick masonry facades, stone trim, large window openings, brick cornices, timber frame structures, open factory layouts, original stairways and steel fire doors.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

SITE HISTORY: MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH ANALYSIS

Monroe Avenue, also known as NYS Route 31, is one of Rochester's principal commercial corridors and the main artery linking downtown Rochester with the suburban village of Pittsford to the east. Unlike East Avenue, which developed as a residential avenue for Rochester's wealthy, Monroe Avenue had mainly a commercial and mixed-use character throughout its history. The roughly one-mile section of Monroe Avenue between downtown Rochester and the Erie Canal crossing developed over the course of the nineteenth century with two- to four-story masonry commercial and institutional buildings along the avenue and smaller scale residential development along the nearby side streets.

Horse-drawn streetcars served the downtown end of Monroe Avenue in the nineteenth century and were upgraded to an electrified trolley system in the 1890s. Trolley service extended past the Erie Canal crossing, a half-block to the east of the Shantz Factory site. The 1900 *Plat Book of the City of Rochester* indicated that the site of the Shantz Factory was an undeveloped lot with frontage on Monroe Avenue, Rutgers Street and the Erie Canal, just east of Lock Number 66.[1] The owner at the time, Mrs. H. A. Filkins, was presumably related to the D.M. Filkins who owned the adjacent coal dealer business immediately to the east. By the time of the 1910 city atlas, the site had been purchased and developed by the M.B. Shantz International Button Company.[2] The southern section of the main five-story factory building was shown in the atlas, together with an angled wing on the east end, a small outbuilding to the south and a separate two-story building along the eastern edge of the site (now 795 Monroe Avenue), built in 1905 according to city assessment records.[3] A 1909 news article identified the construction date for the factory as March 1904, just five years prior to a fire on March 17, 1909 that extensively damaged the top floor.[4] The article named the two building occupants as the M.B. Shantz Button Company and the International Button Company, a separate company manufacturing pearl buttons and also owned by Shantz. It referred to the building as being four stories, but since the physical evidence does not indicate that the top story was added, it is surmised that the lowest level, now considered the first floor but a few steps below grade, was originally termed a basement. The news story indicates that the fire damage was limited to the fourth-floor machinery, although there was water damage to materials at other levels. The loss was covered by insurance.

A 1911-12 Sanborn Insurance Company map of the area showed several changes from the 1910 atlas configuration and provides additional detail about the interior operations of the button factory.[5] The angled addition at the east end of the main building has been replaced by a “Coal House,” presumably a power plant for the factory. Tunnels linked the power plant to the east building and the southern outbuilding. The map identified M. B. Shantz as a manufacturer of vegetable ivory buttons and as the principal occupant. The International Button Company, a manufacturer of pearl buttons, was listed as a tenant in the basement and first floor of the main building and occupying a “small section” of the secondary building. The building height for the main building was indicated as 4B (4-story plus basement), and for the east building as 1B (1-story plus basement).

The functions within the two buildings are identified in the 1912 Sanborn map as follows:

[1] *Plat Book of the City of Rochester, New York (*Philadelphia: J.M. Lathrop & Co, 1900), Plate 28.
[2] *Atlas of the City of Rochester, N.Y.(*G.M. Hopkins, 1910), Plate 31.
[3] City of Rochester Municipal Archives.
[4] *Democrat and Chronicle*, 4-18-1909, 14.
[5] *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Rochester, NY,* 1911-12, Vol. 4, 458.

East building (1905) – 795 Monroe Ave.:
Basement level – vegetable ivory drying and cleaning
First level – cutting and button turning

Main building (1904) – 340 Rutgers St.:
Basement - Polishing and button machines
First - Stock, sorting and carding
Second – Office and stock
Third – Press and Drilling
Fourth – Coloring and polishing

The Sanborn map also detailed fire prevention measures, such as watchman's rounds, a sprinkler system, fire pails, and chemical extinguishers.

Two photographs of Canal Lock 66 dated 1915 and 1918 showed the complex in the background facing northeast and revealing the original window configuration on the south side as pairs of wood windows in large openings with shallow brick arches. A 1918 image indicated a different window type in the center bay and the one to the west (the bays where industrial steel windows survived).

Another city map showed the Shantz factory in 1918, by which time the complex had been expanded to include a one-story block on the north side of the power plant, oriented parallel to Monroe Avenue.[6] This building was built in 1916 according to city assessment files and housed the operations of the International Button Company. Two bird's eye views of the plant from this time illustrate the complex from both the northwest and the northeast, one before the 1920 construction of the five-story north wing and one after, showing the complex with a grassy lawn and trimmed hedges in front. The new one-story building had six bays along the Monroe Avenue façade and three along the Rutgers Street side, but no entry. Presumably the door was on the south side, facing the main entry at the half level between the basement and first floors (now termed first and second) in the north façade of the main block. A rooftop water tank and a tall smokestack with the M. B. Shantz name were prominently featured. The windows in the five-story block were pairs of six-over-six-light sash with a horizontal pivot operation, in contrast to the four-over-four windows on the rear of the building seen in the 1918 photo. The windows in the new one-story central block appeared to be industrial steel pivot windows in banks of three per opening. The eastern building had large windows, apparently double hung, in pairs on the side and in sets of three at the front façade. There is no apparent entry to this building other than an exterior stair leading to a door in the center window bay on the second floor of the north façade.

Another view by the same postcard studio depicted a southwest view rather than the southeast and stated in the title block that the Rutgers Street wing was the "new building at the right, just completed." The view was taken after the 1920 construction date (from city assessment records) for the north wing but no later than May

[6] *Atlas of the City of Rochester, N.Y.,* 1918, Plate 31.

1924, when a news article stated that the Shantz Company had sold the property.[7] In addition to the new five-story wing, a skylight appeared on the one-story International Button building and a new entry drive curved across the front lawn. The windows on the east building were more clearly delineated in this image and appeared to be nine-over-nine double-hung sash in the second floor. The view lacked a clear view of the first floor window pattern.

A 1926 city atlas portrayed the building configuration similar to one seen in one of the bird's eye views, which included the new Rutgers Street wing, a gas station added in front of the east building (now identified as a separate parcel from the remainder).[8] Although the entire Shantz property was sold in May 1924 to the Hickok Company, the Shantz name remained on the atlas view along with the name L. Rae Hickok. A news article announcing the move described the property as "about 300 feet in Monroe Avenue, about 300 feet in Rutgers Street, and a considerable frontage in the new rapid transit subway, a station of which will be located at this point. The buildings consist of one, two and five-story units of brick and steel mill construction."[9] The article also stated that "the Hickok Company is said to be the largest manufacturer of belts and buckles in the world." Despite the apparent sale and announcement, city directories of the 1925 to 1930 period indicated that the Hickok Company never moved its operations to the site and that the Shantz Company continued at the address until 1927. M.B. Shantz was part of a five-company consolidation in 1926, under which five button manufacturers merged with Rochester Button Company.

The gas station constructed in the front setback of the former button factory around 1925 was a sign of things to come. As automobile use increased dramatically during the 1920s, commercial property with frontage on major avenues became attractive to auto-related businesses. Two circa 1930 photos of the property pictured the complex in its post-Shantz form, with a large gas station canopy in front of 795 Monroe, the one-story building already converted to auto service use and the front yard of 340 Rutgers devoted to used auto sales.

A 1935 city atlas view of the site noted that the east building was the home of Uncle Sam's Stores, Inc., and the remainder of the plant was occupied by W.E. Biggers Rochester Corporation and an auto dealer named Graham.[10] Other occupants of the main factory building in the 1930s were Wetmore, Janes & Sugden, engravers, and Worden and Janes Studio Inc., a maker of greeting cards. The gas station noted on the 1926 plat was shown in greater detail as a small masonry building with a projecting canopy with another small wood frame building along the Monroe Avenue frontage. The owner of the main parcel was noted as Rochester H. Rogers, a local attorney, while the owner's name on the east building was listed as M. Takson.

[7] "Belt Manufacturer to Move into larger Quarters," *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 25 May 1924, 39.
[8] *Atlas of the City of Rochester, N.Y.,* 1926, Plate 35.
[9] A subway system replaced the old Erie Canal section through the city, but was short-lived.

Sanborn maps with updates to 1938-1950 showed little change from the 1935 configuration.[11] In the 1938 view there was no reference to the Biggers name, but the front lot was identified as "Used Auto Sales," with the one-story building used for "Auto Sales and Service." The five-story building was identified as a loft and the two-story building as a grocery warehouse. The 1950 view had the same uses, except that the two-story building was labeled as a candy factory and the gas station, canopy and other outbuildings along the Monroe Avenue frontage were gone. Since 1950, the major uses of the complex were warehousing for Mangurian's furniture store and, most recently, the Ted Cohen furniture store (in the five-story 340 Rutgers). Other buildings were used as auto repairs (at the one-story 330 Rutgers) and as the supplier of theater confections/movie theater candy (at the two-story 795 Monroe; 1960 through the 1990s). The power plant that linked the buildings was removed in the 1950s or 60s and the loading dock addition to the rear of 340 Rutgers was added in 1960. The subdivision of the Monroe Avenue frontage to create the Hess gas station lot was done in 1965.

CRITERION A: INDUSTRY

Rochester Clothing and Button Industries: In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the button industry developed in parallel with the men's clothing industry in Rochester and the two played an important role in Rochester's growth as a specialty industrial center with a reputation for high quality manufacturing. Beginning with tailors who cut cloth to patterns and employed garment workers to assemble clothing in their own homes, the industry expanded rapidly after the introduction of sewing machines and other technological improvements in the 1850s and later decades.[12] Clothing makers were among the city's top industries in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in terms of employment and total wages and the industry was one of several in which local firms sought to compete on quality more than price, adopting the motto "Rochester Made Means Quality." While the clothing industry was at times overshadowed by the women's shoe manufacturers and later by city's photographic and optical industries, it employed great numbers of Rochesterians, including women and immigrants, and was an innovator in the practice of developing nationwide business through sales agents in other cities. With the growth of the clothing industry, Rochester seemed like a natural site for the manufacture of buttons and there is some evidence of an unsuccessful attempt to establish a button business in the city in the early 1880s.[13] However, it was not until 1887 that an experienced button maker, Moses B. Shantz, set up shop in the community, establishing the city's first successful button making business.

[10] *Atlas of the City of Rochester, N.Y.,* 1926, Vol. 1, Plate 25.
[11] *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, *Rochester, NY*, 1924-38, Vol. 4, Sheet 452 and 1938-50, Vol. 4,Sheet 452.

[12] Blake McKelvey, "The Men's Clothing Industry in Rochester's History," *Rochester History*, Vol. XXII, No. 3, July 1960.
[13] Paul Grebinger, "The Button Industry in Rochester: a chronicle", 1983," 10.

Shantz Button Company History: Moses B. Shantz was a seminal figure in the nineteenth and early twentieth century button industry, first in Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario, Canada, and later in western New York and Rochester. Born in 1852 in Berlin, Canada to a Mennonite family, he learned bookkeeping and then the button manufacturing business from his father, Jacob Y. Shantz, owner of the Dominion Button Works of Berlin. Moses Shantz's entry in the *Encyclopedia of Biography of New York* stated that he personally trained "a large percentage" of U.S. button makers at the family's Berlin plant, which was known in the trade as the "Button Makers College."[14]

Moses Shantz oversaw the expansion of the family business into the U.S., beginning in Buffalo in 1886 and relocating to Rochester in 1887 with a factory at 111 North Water Street. The business was incorporated under the name of M. B. Shantz Company in 1891 and moved into progressively larger quarters as the business grew, which included branch sales rooms in other cities.[15] Shantz's company was among those that merged in 1904 to establish the Rochester Button Company, but he apparently preferred running his own show, as he promptly withdrew from the company and re-established himself under a new M. B. Shantz Company name and constructed a new plant at Monroe and Rutgers.[16] At the time, the new Shantz button plant was one of three in Rochester, along with the Rochester Button Company at 300 State Street and the German American Button Company, later known as Art in Buttons, at 10 Champeney Terrace. All three specialized in the production of vegetable ivory buttons. Shantz also had a sideline operation of manufacturing pearl buttons under the name of the International Button Company, which operated out of the one-story building at 330 Rutgers Street, part of the larger Shantz complex.

Vegetable ivory supplanted earlier button source materials, such as metal, wood, glass, bone and horn. This was one aspect of technological advances during the late nineteenth century American industrial age, when industrial production replaced handmade products in a host of fields. Vegetable ivory buttons were made from the nuts of the Tagua palm tree, imported from South America. This type of button manufacture was introduced in Europe in 1859. [17] The Shantz family, which ran a sawmill and a construction business in addition to farming operations, happened on the business after constructing a button factory in Berlin, Ontario, Canada for German immigrant Emil Vogelsang in 1870.[18] When the original financier left the business, Jacob Y. Shantz assumed the role of silent partner and eventually bought and expanded the business. The Tagua nut material was made into buttons by a series of mechanized processes including drying, shelling, cutting, coloring,

[14] Charles Elliott Fitch, *Encyclopedia of Biography of New York: A Life Record of Men. (n.p., 1916), 337.*
[15] William F. Peck, *History of Rochester and Monroe County, NY (n.p.* 1907), 1429.
[16] "Research Boosts Rochester Button Company to Top of Industry," *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 8-8-48, C- 1.
[17] http://jerileewei.hubpages.com/hub/The-Story-of-Buttons.
[18] Samuel J. Steiner, *Vicarious Pioneer (*Winnipeg, Canada: Hyperion Press Limited,1988), 55-56.

drilling, polishing, sorting and carding. A set of 1917 interior photographs of the Shantz plant pictured the machinery and working conditions of the factory, which employed 350 in 1895 and presumably more after the 1904 move to the new plant.[19]

While the men's clothing industry provided the original impetus for locating several button factories in Rochester, by 1910 the city was a major center for the manufacture of vegetable ivory buttons, which were being exported around the country and the world for women's clothing as well as men's.[20] World War I further boosted demand, as the army purchased great numbers of buttons for shirts and uniforms. However, the 1920s posed challenges to the industry, as the wartime demand ceased. The price of raw materials increased, as did labor costs. The introduction of the zipper led to a further decline in demand as women's fashions no longer used buttons in great volume. The Rochester Button Company, which absorbed the assets of M. B. Shantz in the 1926 merger, remained a top national button producer by adjusting to new technologies and materials, abandoning vegetable ivory for milk-based casein and finally plastics. The Rochester Button Company continued in operation at its 300 State Street plant until 1991 with Alson Shantz, one of Moses Shantz's sons, among the executives.

The Shantz Button Factory complex is significant as one of only two early twentieth century button factories to survive in Rochester. The surviving Rochester Button Company buildings, including 300 and 296 State Street, are contributing properties within the Brown's Race Historic District (NR listed 1989). The third early-twentieth century local button manufacturers, the German American Button Company, closed around 1920 and its plant is no longer extant. The Shantz factory is also among Rochester's few surviving intact examples of an industrial complex built along the Erie Canal. The canal access was certainly an important factor in the selection of the site, as receiving raw materials and shipping finished goods could be accomplished economically by the canal. Other surviving industrial structures from the canal era are the Lowenthal Knitting Mill (now Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired) at 422 S. Clinton, the Cunningham Carriage Factory (NR listed 1988) at Canal Street and West Main (located near the turning basin where the Erie and Genesee Valley canals intersected), the former Van Bergh Silver Plate Company (later Josh Lofton High School, recently renovated as Bridge Square office building and lofts—NR listed 1988) at 442 W. Main St., and the I. H. Dewey Factory (most recently Tent City) at 280-286 Lyell Avenue. Even after the conversion of the canal bed to the Interurban railroad in 1924, the access to public transportation, both on the former canal and on Monroe Avenue, was an advantage for company workers. The demise of the interurban and the Great

[19] Paul Grebinger, p. 13. Copies of some of these images are available at the Rochester Museum and Science Center Library.
[20] Ibid, 1.

Depression in the 1930s were common for urban industrial buildings and the conversion of the Monroe Avenue frontage to automotive use indicated the preferred mode of transportation.

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

In addition to being one of Rochester's surviving button factories, Shantz is distinctive in illustrating a vernacular form of industrial architecture and showing the evolution of the vernacular during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The Shantz plant uses the mill construction techniques and design vocabulary common to industrial buildings of the late nineteenth century, although the large paired windows in the original five-story 1904 block reflect the early-twentieth century trend toward introducing more light and air into factory spaces. The four components of the Shantz Factory include the original 1904 five-story block, the 1905 east building, the 1916 one-story building and the 1920 five-story north wing of the 1905 building. The buildings offer an instructive view of the changing norms in the construction of factory buildings while still holding together as a coherent complex through the common use of brick facades, decorative brick cornices, flat roofs and large windows. Changes in window technology, moving from wood sash windows to pivoting industrial steel windows, are typical of the 1904-1920 time period. In the same vein are the variations in the brick façade treatment, moving from the flat plane with shallow brick arches of the 1904-05 blocks to larger openings with steel lintels exhibited in the 1916 building and then to the boldly expressed concrete lintels and trim of the 1920 north wing of the 1905 building.

The State Street buildings of the Rochester Button Company, the city's other surviving button factory, are very different from the Shantz factory buildings, despite being built within a few years of each other. The Rochester Button Company is in a much more high-profile location and uses a more sophisticated design vocabulary with the classical façade elements and steel structural grid characteristic of many high style institutional and commercial buildings of the first decade of the twentieth century. Numbers 300 and 296 State Street and the surviving Rochester Button Company buildings are contributing properties within the Brown's Race Historic District (NR listed 1989). The Shantz Factory provides physical evidence of a more modest and vernacular button manufacturing facility operating during the same period.

The period of significance for the Shantz Button Factory is 1903 to 1924, the period during which it was owned by and associated with the Shantz Manufacturing Company. Within a few years after the Shantz sale the property was subdivided and the later uses of the three buildings followed separate paths no longer associated with industry in Rochester. The Shantz factory complex retains a high degree of integrity in location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, in spite of some alterations to the buildings themselves and a

slightly comprised setting. Renovations to modernize the Monroe Avenue facades of the three buildings include the white paint and lower level storefront treatment at 340 Rutgers, the white-painted cement plaster obscuring the original brick masonry at 330 Rutgers and the sheet metal bay windows at 795 Monroe. In addition, the rooftop communications equipment at 340 Rutgers also detracts from its historic appearance; however, these alterations are largely reversible. The side and rear facades of each building retain their original character and the interiors reflect the original open layouts and exposed structures. In spite of the loss of most of the original windows, a few original windows survive, which can provide templates for a replacement window program.

The principal compromise to the setting is the evolution of the parcel to the south of the complex from the Erie Canal to the Interurban Railroad (circa 1924) and then to Interstate 490 in the 1960s. A concrete sound barrier currently buffers the site from I-490. Likewise, the north side of the site changed from the factory's front lawn during the Shantz period to a gas station and a used car lot shortly after the Shantz closure in the mid-1920s. It continues in auto-related use (gas station and parking) today. Both of these setting changes reflect social developments which were already underway during the period of significance. The change of character at the Monroe Avenue frontage makes it difficult to recognize the historic link between the three component buildings at first glance from Monroe Avenue. However, the historic industrial character of the site and the design continuity between the three buildings is quite clear when the site is viewed from Rutgers Street or from the interior of the site, especially from the alleys between the three buildings. Significant surviving original features common to two or more of the three buildings include the brick masonry facades, stone trim, large window openings, brick cornices, timber frame structures, open factory layouts, original stairways and steel fire doors.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

"Belt Manufacturers to Move into Larger Quarters." *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 25 May 1924, 39.

City of Rochester Plat Books, at Local History Room of Monroe County Public Library.

Fitch, Charles Elliott, *Encyclopedia of Biography of New York: A Life Record of Men & Women of the Past.* Boston, MA: American Historical Society, 1923.

Grebinger, Paul, "The Button: Not a Simple Notion", in Clare L. Boulanger, ed., *Reflecting on America; Anthropological View of U.S. Culture.* Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, 2008.

Grebinger, Paul, "The Button Industry in Rochester: a chronicle", 1983. Background research for an exhibit on the button industry in Rochester, prepared for Rochester Museum and Science Center and available in its library.

McKelvey, Blake. "The Men's Clothing Industry in Rochester's History." *Rochester History*, Vol. XXII, No. 3, (July 1960), 1-32.

"Brown's Race Historic District", *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form,* 1989.

Peck, William F. *History of Rochester and Monroe County, Volume 2.*, New York: The Pioneer Publishing Co, 1908.

"Research Boosts Rochester Button Company to Top of Industry." *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle,* 8 August 1948, C-1.

Steiner, Samuel J. *Vicarious Pioneer: The Life of Jacob Y. Shantz.* Winnipeg, Canada: Hyperion Press Limited,1988.

"Two Button Companies Lose $175,000 by Fire." *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 18 April 1909, 14.

Wei, Jerilee. *The Story of How Buttons are Made*. Online at http://jerileewei.hubpages.com/hub/The-Story-of-Buttons.

Shantz Button Factory — Monroe County, NY
Name of Property — County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

__X__State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
__x__Local government
____University
__X__Other
Name of repository: **Monroe County Public Library**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ±1.09 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18N	289527	4779910	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property boundary is the same as during the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Saralinda Hooker, Consultant in Planning & Preservation
organization _____ date 13 June 2013
street & number 3414 West Lake Blvd telephone 585-394-5052
city or town Canandaigua state NY zip code 14424
e-mail sh73sh73@yahoo.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Shantz Button Factory
City or Vicinity: Rochester
County: Monroe State: New York

Photographer: Saralinda Hooker
Date Photographed: 20 March 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

0001 of 0014. Historic Image of Shantz Factory after expansion (1920).
0002 of 0014. Complex viewed from Monroe Ave. Left to right are 795 Monroe, 330 Rutgers (1-story), 340 Rutgers
0003 of 0014. East elevation of 340 Rutgers, partially obscured by gas station & 330 Rutgers.
0004 of 0014. North and west elevations of 340 Rutgers, view looking southeast.
0005 of 0014. South and partial view of west elevation of 340 Rutgers, view looking northeast.
0006 of 0014. Representative interior view of 340 Rutgers.
0007 of 0014. North elevation of 330 Rutgers, view looking southwest.
0008 of 0014. Interior view of 330 Rutgers.
0009 of 0014. South elevation of 330 Rutgers (left) looking east toward 795 Monroe.
0010 of 0014. North and east elevations of 795 Monroe, view looking southwest.
0011 of 0014. Detail view of east elevation of 795 Monroe.
0012 of 0014. West elevation of 795 Monroe.
0013 of 0014. South elevation of 795 Monroe, view looking northeast.
0014 of 0014. Representative interior view of 795 Monroe.

Shantz Button Factory
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

Property Owners:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Button Lofts LLC (340 Rutgers St)

street & number c/o DHD Ventures
620 Park Avenue telephone N/A

city or town Rochester state NY zip code 14607

name Frank Amico (330 Rutgers St)

street & number 36 Doris Rd telephone N/A

city or town Rochester state NY zip code 14622

name Classic Automation LLC (795 Monroe Ave.)

street & number 800 Salt Road telephone N/A

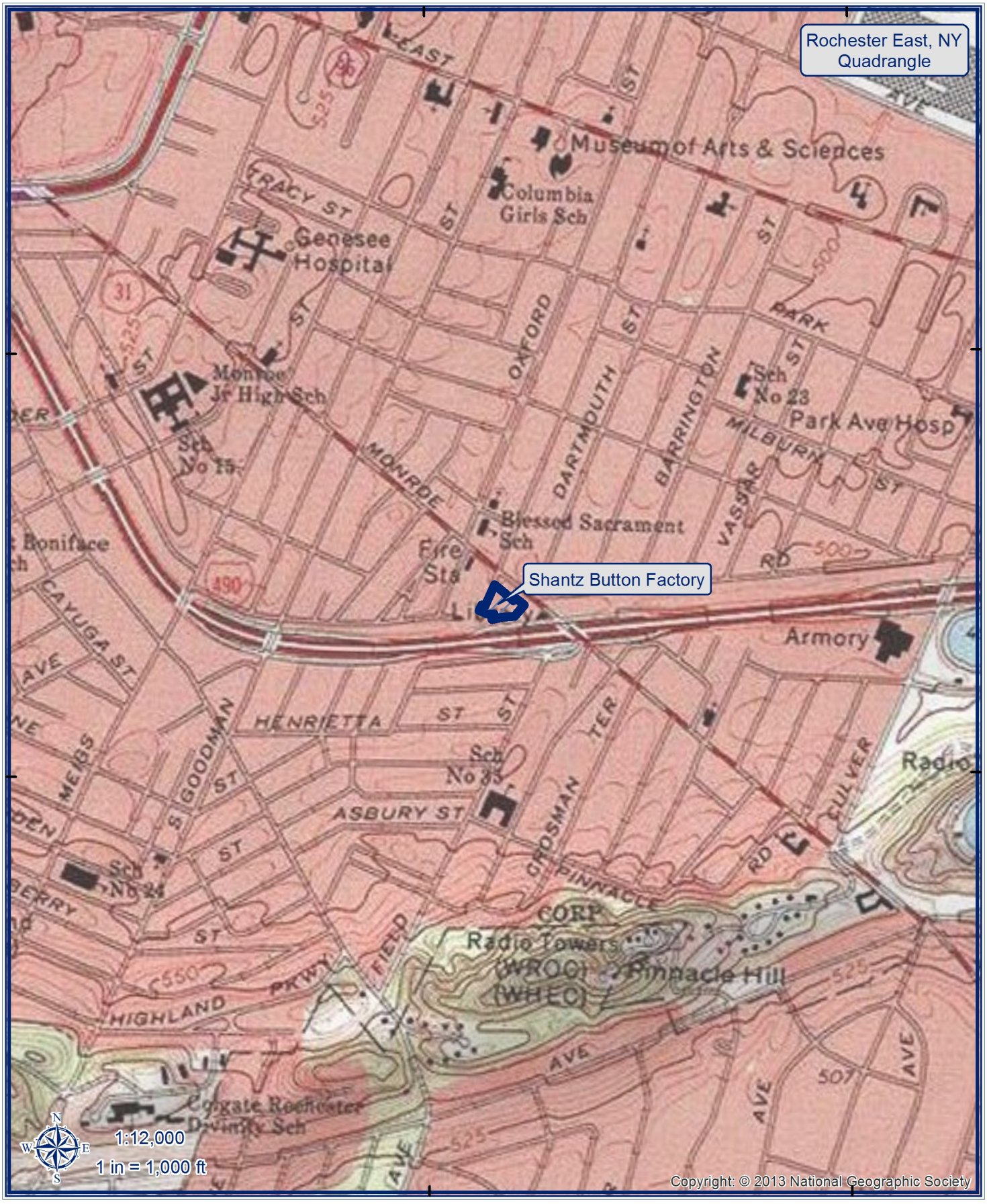
city or town Webster state NY zip code 14580

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Shantz Button Factory
Rochester, Monroe Co., NY

340/330 Rutgers St.
Rochester, NY 14607



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Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

Feet
0 345 690 1,380

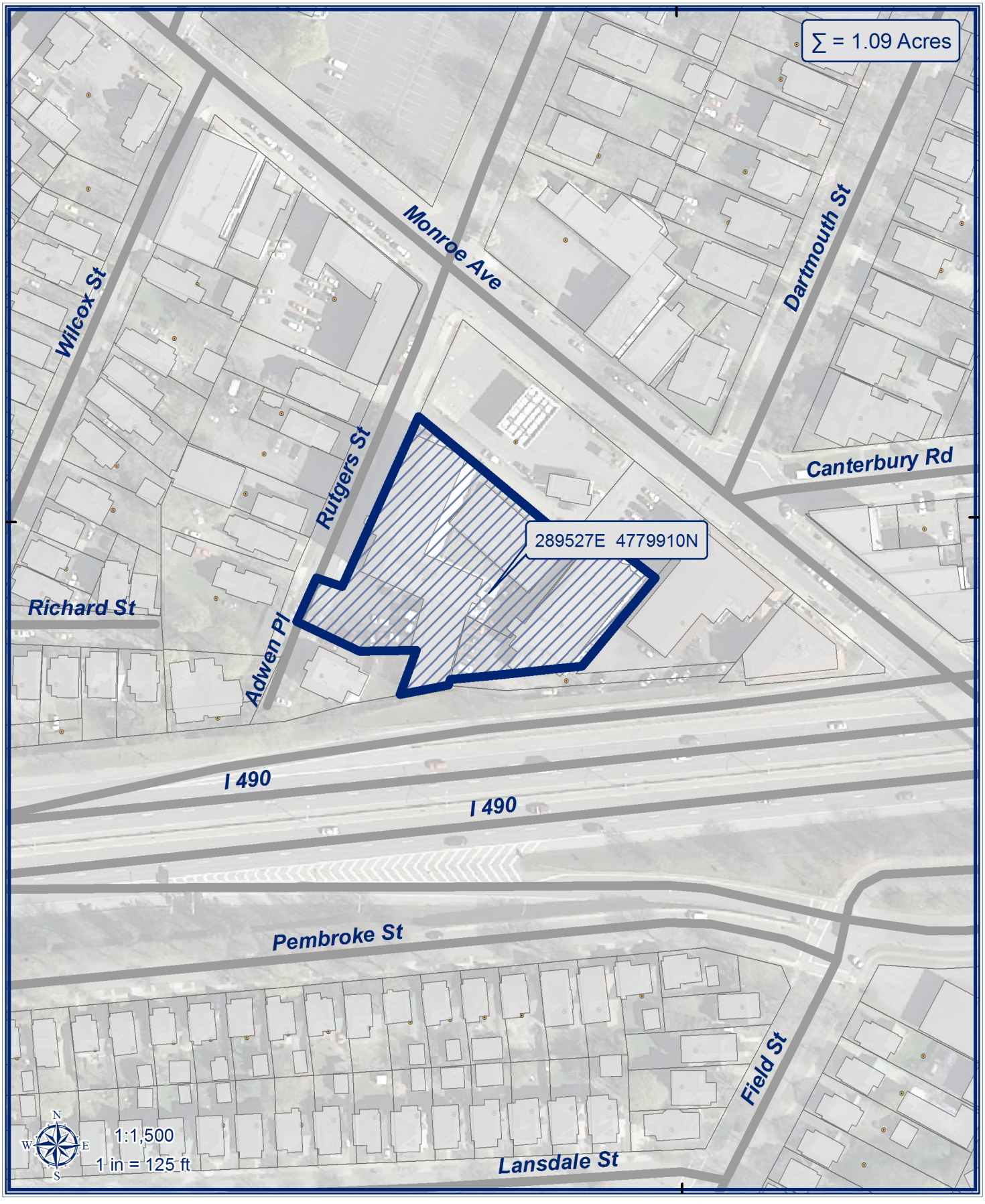
Shantz Button Factory

Tax Parcel Data:
Monroe County RPS
http://www.monroecounty.gov

OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION, HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE

Shantz Button Factory
Rochester, Monroe Co., NY

340/330 Rutgers St.
Rochester, NY 14607



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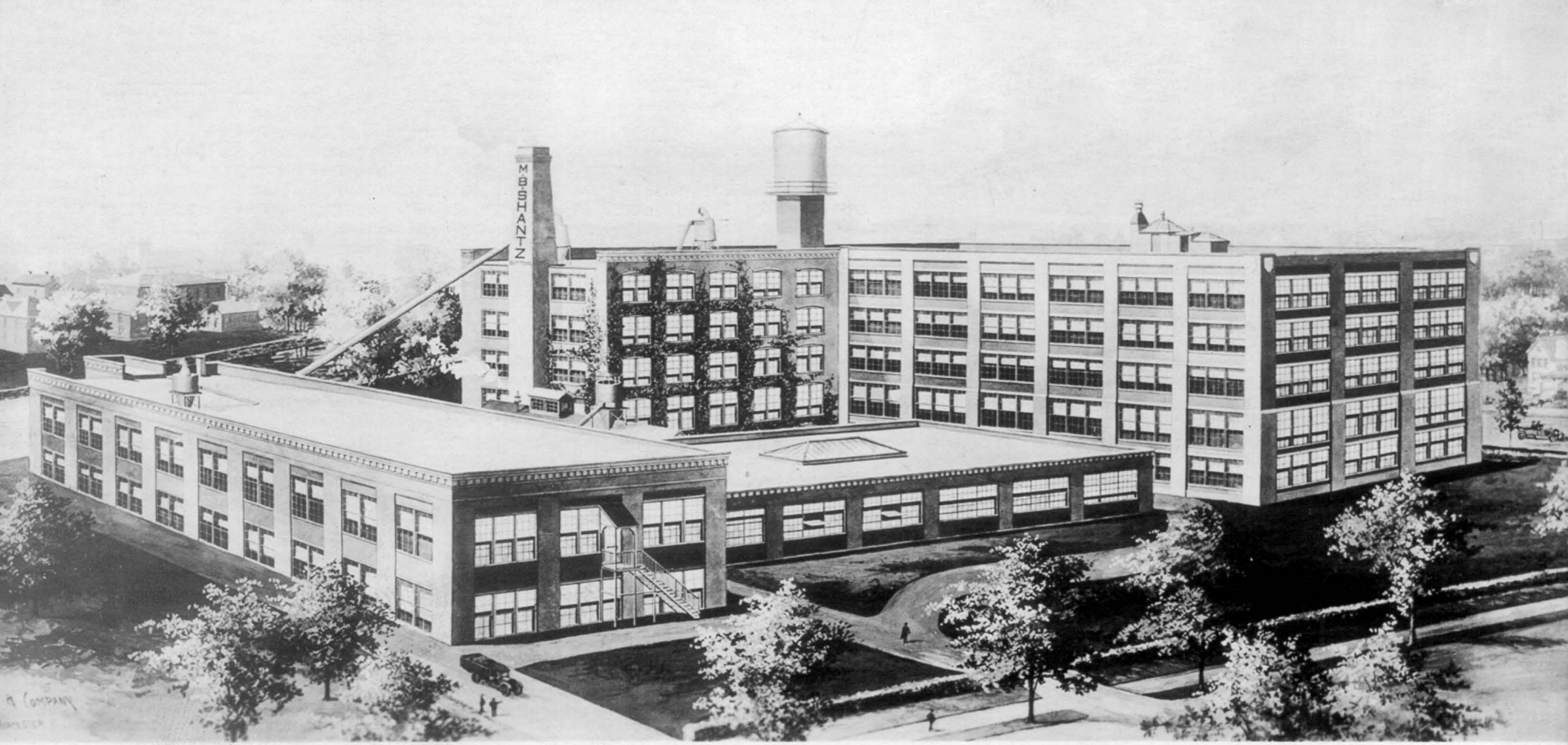
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 40 80 160 Feet

Shantz Button Factory

Tax Parcel Data:
Monroe County RPS
http://www.monroecounty.gov

OFFICE OF PARKS · RECREATION · HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE



PLANT OF M. B. SHANTZ INC., BUTTON MANUFACTURERS, ROCHESTER, N. Y.

NEW BUILDING AT THE RIGHT, JUST COMPLETED,
ADDS 27,500 SQUARE FEET OF SPACE TO FACTORY

795 MONROE AVE
TEMSTAD
TEMSTAD

HESS
MOUNTAIN TOP COFFEE SHOP
8.08
CIGARETTES
MONROE AVENUE
OFFICE FURNITURE
pepsi

TED COHEN'S ECONOMY OFFICE FURNITURE
ENTRANCE
749 Monroe Avenue
LA-Z-BOY BUSINESS FURNITURE GALLERY
WP HOBBIES & MORE
NO PARKING ANY TIME

TED CO
749
Monroe
Avenue
TEMSTAD
TEMSTAD
REMOTE S
SOLD & INSTALLED
PRESTIGE
REYES TOWING INC

795 MONROE AVE

CLASSIC
AUTOMATION
PARKING
ONLY

795 MONROE AVE

ELEVATOR
SHAFTWAY