NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

904

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.

RECEIVED 2280
OCT 30 2015
Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Prospect Heights Housing Project

Other names/site number: 560 Prospect

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 560 Prospect Street

City or town: Pawtucket State: RI County: Providence

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide _X_local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

_X_A ___B ___C ___D

Edward Sanderson 10/23/2015

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

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**

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:) _____

12-15-2015

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: ☐

Public – Local ☒

Public – State ☐

Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) ☐

District ☒

☐

Site

Structure ☐

Object ☐

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
36	17	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
36	17	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Institutional Housing
Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

Institutional Housing
Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Modern Movement
No Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: brick, concrete, asphalt shingle

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Built by the Pawtucket Housing Authority (PHA) between 1941 and 1942, the Prospect Heights Housing Project comprises 36 brick and concrete block buildings set on a 21-acre lot in Pawtucket, Rhode Island (see Figure 1). Thirty-five of these buildings are two-story row house apartments set on concrete slabs. At the northwest corner and entrance to the property is a single-story Administration Building that houses offices, a community room, a laundry, and a maintenance facility. All of the original row house apartments survive with no alterations to footprint, height or window/door openings; modifications include new roof structures, replacement of windows, doors, and interior finishes due to wear and tear, and limited changes to interior floor plans when the number of units was reduced in 1971. Site changes include accommodations for automobile parking and access, and the construction of 16 small utility buildings. Prospect Heights retains integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling and association as an expression of the broad patterns of 20th-century social history and community development.

Narrative Description

In keeping with federal standards that buildings not occupy more than 25% of the total acreage, the combined building footprints at Prospect Heights occupy 15% of the PHA-owned parcel. With a few exceptions, building axes generally radiate from a point at the northeast corner of the property. Orientation and siting in this generally parallel pattern were intended to maximize the penetration of sunlight and the movement of air into each of the 310 original dwelling units.

Although there is some variation, a typical row house was oriented in relation to a neighboring building in such a way as to have a shared lawn on its "garden side," which provided the main entrance. The rear side of the building, accessible by way of individual unit kitchen doors, opened to sidewalks providing circulation throughout the project (see architect's rendering, Figure 11). By 1976, in a change from the original landscaping design, this arrangement had been reversed. The original "garden side" (and front entrance) now opens to a shared parking area and sidewalks. The original rear side now opens to a shared yard with some areas fenced in for the use of individual units. The original design included three open spaces for "sitting out" or recreational use; these remain, with some alteration.

As originally built, two interior roads traversed the facility. The main road began at the Prospect Street entrance and continued through to Notre Dame Avenue. A secondary road, a dead end, entered from Notre Dame Avenue. Circa 1990, both of the Notre Dame Avenue entrances were closed off. The Prospect Street entrance (at the Administration Building) now provides the facility's sole entrance and egress for normal use. The two former entrances can be accessed only in case of emergency.

Prospect Heights was sited along a public bus route to downtown Pawtucket. Because of the limited means of the original tenants, few owned automobiles and little provision was made for automobile parking in 1942 beyond a widened area along the two interior roads.

INVENTORY

The present-day numerical designation is in parentheses; see Figure 1 for original designation. All buildings have the address 560 Prospect Street and are considered contributing except where noted.

Administration Building (Building 1), 1941-1942

This is a single-story, brick-faced, concrete block building with a side wing and a deep basement (see Figure 2). The complex roof is deck-on-hip, the only building that departed in the original design from the flat roofs of the row houses. Window openings are rectangular, either single or paired, with a brick, flat arch lintel and a concrete sill. The main (front elevation) entrance

consists of double, modern steel and glass doors protected by a gabled, narrow porch supported by wooden columns. Although elements likely have been replaced, the current porch design is essentially the same as original construction. A duplicate porch designed for the office entrance was removed in the 1990s to accommodate a ramp built for handicapped access. Brick door surrounds utilize the same pattern of glazed brick and concrete corner blocks found on the row house entrances (described below).

Originally the 36-building facility was heated centrally by a boiler in the basement of this building. Steam was directed to the row houses by way of a network of underground pipes. The main boiler was removed ca. 1990 when sixteen utility buildings were constructed, each housing a pair of gas-fired boilers (as well as electrical service). The brick chimney stack remained in place until ca. 2002. The former boiler room is now used for plant maintenance. A single-story, concrete block garage was added to the northwest corner of this building ca. 1985.

As built, the main block of the Administration Building housed a 40' x 48' assembly hall with associated kitchen, coat room, and men's and women's bathrooms. The side wing, with a separate entrance, housed a general office, manager's office, "public space," and a vault. The basement housed a boiler room, storage room and repair shop. The building still provides community and administrative space, but has added a laundry room.

Row Houses (Buildings 2 through 36), 1941-1942

General Description:

There are thirty-five two-story row houses of four building types providing different numbers of dwelling units ranging from six (Type A) to ten (Types B, C and D). Specific features are discussed in the typologies below.

All row houses are set on a concrete slab and built of concrete block surfaced with 4" red brick. The original flat roofs leaked and were replaced by combination hip-and-gable roofs installed ca. 1989 along with bracketed door hoods on the main entrance (parking) side of the building. In the spirit of a cost-efficient "functional modernism,"[1] minimal decorative treatments were limited to shallow, chevron motif, cast-concrete bands over all exterior doorways and the placement of alternating brown-glazed brick and square concrete corner blocks in the door surround. Original metal casement windows were replaced in 1989-91 with the current more energy-efficient, aluminum double-hung windows. At that time original wooden doors were replaced with flat steel types. Interior floors (1st and 2nd floor) are smooth concrete with a tile surface in the kitchen-dining area. The first floor ceilings are concrete; the second floor ceilings are plastered.

[1] This term was used by the National Park Service in its draft context statement, *Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949.*

As built, most units were two-story, with the number of rooms ranging from 3½ rooms (one bedroom) to 6½ rooms (four bedrooms).[2] Except for the 2nd-story flats, the main entrance for all units was located on the "garden," or front side of the buildings.

Although there is some variation, the following is a description of a typical two-story apartment in a Type A building (see Figure 3).

Entryway/Stairs. A ground-floor front entrance opens to a small front hallway and a staircase leading to the second floor. The staircases are steel framed; treads are concrete.

Living Room. The front hallway opens to a living room measuring roughly 12'-square. The floor is smooth concrete. A double window looks out onto the original "garden side," now reconfigured for parking. An oversized open doorway leads to the kitchen-dining area.

Kitchen-Dining. A combined kitchen and dining area measuring roughly 11' x 13' provides space for a table and, originally aligned against one wall, a gas stove, electric refrigerator, and double sink (see Figure 4). The current layout of kitchen appliances, cupboards, and counter typically forms an *L* against two walls. The original sheet linoleum floor set on the concrete slab has been replaced with vinyl composite tile. Although cabinetry and appliances have been reconfigured a number of times since 1942, the physical dimensions of the kitchen-dining area have not changed. As a cost-saving feature, closets and most cupboards were open, originally. Kitchens now have a mix of open and closed cabinets. Kitchen windows open to the rear side, now a shared lawn with some private, fenced-in areas. Egress is provided by a rear door off the kitchen.

Bedrooms. On the second floor, a typical master bedroom measures roughly 11'square. A secondary bedroom measures roughly 11' x 9'.

Bathroom: A modest bathroom (typically located on the second floor) measures roughly 5½' x 8', providing a tub, toilet, sink and linen closet. Despite successive renovations over 75 years (including the replacement of bathtubs with showers in 1989-91), the bathroom dimensions have remained the same.

Row House Typologies

Note: In 1971 the Pawtucket Housing Authority reduced the total number of dwelling units from the original 310 to 292. Affecting 36 units, this project created 18 larger units distributed among thirteen row houses of each of the four types. In each case, a doorway was cut through a concrete block party wall to combine two units. The affected buildings and units are noted below.

[2] The "½ room" designation refers to the combined kitchen and dining area as 1½ rooms. These are designated on the original O'Malley drawings as "K-D." E.g., a 4½-room apartment comprised a living room, two bedrooms, and the combined kitchen-dining area. This term was used by the architect and has been used by PHA since that time.

Type A (Buildings 2A, 14A, 15A, 20A, 21A, 22A, 25A, 33A, 34A, and 35A)

There are ten buildings of this type (see Figure 5). Dimensions are 97' long x 27' wide, originally divided into six two-story apartments. The first floor of each apartment provides a living room, kitchen/dining area, a utility room and open closet/storage space. The four outermost apartments provide two upstairs bedrooms. The two center apartments—through the use of an "interlocking" design as promulgated by the Federal Housing Administration in 1935—have larger second-floor plans than the first floor and provide three bedrooms, thus hanging partially over the first floor of the adjacent apartment. All access and egress is provided on the long dimension.

In 1971 the six original dwelling units of Buildings 20A and 22A were reduced to four units. The six units of Buildings 33A, 34A, and 35A were reduced to five units.

Type B (Buildings 5B, 6B, 7B, 16B, 19B, 23B, 26B, 27B, 28B, and 29B)

There are ten buildings of this type (see Figure 6). Dimensions are 139.5' long x 27' wide, originally divided into six two-story apartments and four single-story flats. The 3½ room, one-bedroom flats are placed at each end of the building, one on each floor. The first floor flat is accessed from the front of the building; the second floor flat is accessed by a side door and staircase. The remaining units are four 4½-room (two bedroom) apartments and two 5½-room (three bedroom) apartments.

In 1971 the ten original dwelling units of Building 16B were reduced to eight and the ten original dwelling units of Building 23B were reduced to nine units.

Type C (Buildings 3C, 4C, 12C, 13C, 17C, 24C, 30C, 31C, 32C, and 36C)

Similar to Type A, there are ten buildings of this type (see Figure 7). Dimensions are 155' long x 27' wide, divided into ten two-story apartments. Six units provide three upstairs bedrooms (using the "interlocking" design seen in Type A). Four units provide two upstairs bedrooms. In the middle of the building are two 3-bedroom apartments.

In 1971 the original ten dwelling units of Buildings 4C, 13C, 24C, and 36C were reduced to nine units.

Type D (Buildings 8D, 9D, 10D, 11D, and 18D)

Similar to Type B, there are five buildings of this type (see Figure 8). Dimensions are 146' long x 27' wide, divided into six two-story apartments and four single-story flats. The four 3½ room, one-bedroom flats are placed at each end of the building, one on each floor. The first floor flat is accessed from the front of the building; the second floor flat is accessed by a side door and staircase. The remaining units are two 4½-room (two bedroom) apartments adjacent to the flats,

two 5½-room (three bedroom) apartments, and, at the center of the building, two 6½-room (four bedroom) apartments. One bedroom is located on the first floor; the remaining three are on the second. The second floors of the six center units utilize an "interlocking" plan similar to that of the Type A building.

In 1971 the original ten units of Buildings 8D and 9D were reduced to eight units.

Non-Contributing Buildings:

Security Building (ca. 1990)

This is a small, single-story building with a frame, vinyl-sheathed enclosure set on a brick knee wall. The roof is hipped. It is set on a small island bound by granite curbing.

Utility Buildings (ca. 1990)

There are sixteen single-story, pyramidal-roofed, brick utility buildings, each containing two gas-fired boilers and electrical service, and each serving two or three row houses.

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.

[ ] 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.)

[ ] 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.)

Social History
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance
1939-1965

Significant Dates
1939
1942

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

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
John F. O'Malley, architect
Charles A. Maguire, engineer
Chain Construction Company, builder

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Prospect Heights Housing Project, built in 1941-1942 by the Pawtucket Housing Authority (PHA), is significant on the local level under National Register **Criterion A** in the areas of Social History and Community Planning and Development as Pawtucket's first and only New Deal-era, federally-funded public housing project. The city was already in dire economic straits due to its declining textile industry when the Great Depression hit, and by the 1930s Pawtucket suffered from massive unemployment and a long-term, severe shortage of decent, affordable housing for low-income residents. To address this crisis, the City Council established a Housing Authority in 1939, under the auspices of the federal Housing Act of 1937 and corresponding state enabling legislation. The Housing Act had empowered local housing authorities to negotiate directly with the newly-established U.S. Housing Authority (USHA) for long-term loans for site acquisition, design, construction, and management of low-income housing projects. In early 1941, the PHA became the first and only housing authority in Rhode Island to gain approval for a 60-year USHA loan, which the PHA used to develop Prospect Heights on a former industrial site. This large complex of multi-family apartment buildings, with income and other eligibility criteria for residents, introduced a new type of housing in Pawtucket. While five other public housing projects (utilizing other federal funding programs) were constructed in Rhode Island in the early 1940s, Prospect Heights is the state's most intact surviving example of its type, and embodies the expanding role of government in the arenas of public housing and community development during the middle decades of the twentieth century. The period of significance, 1939 to 1965, begins with the conception of Prospect Heights, and ends 50 years ago, at which time Prospect Heights still had income guidelines for residents, and no major interior or exterior alterations had yet occurred to the site or to the individual buildings.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Prospect Heights represents the combined efforts of the federal, state, and local governments across America to address the problem of substandard housing for low-income residents in urban centers like Pawtucket in the early to mid-20th century. By that time, the combined forces of industrialization, immigration, and urbanization had transformed the living conditions of many Rhode Islanders, including, to a significant degree, those in Pawtucket. As a rapidly expanding population created a huge demand for housing, particularly near factories and places of commerce, higher densities also placed an enormous strain on municipal services, which engendered soaring rents as landlords sought compensation for their increased costs. As a result, local communities struggled to provide decent, safe, and affordable dwellings for low-income families. By the 1920s, much of the stock of older multi-family (2 or 3 unit) dwellings still lacked electricity, indoor plumbing, and modern heating systems. Speculative new construction aimed at low-income renters was rare (developers could profit more by building single-family

homes for middle- and upper-income homebuyers), and often shoddily built, even dangerous. Low-wage earners had few good housing choices.

The dynamic behind the dramatic rise in housing costs and consequent shortage of adequate low-income housing in the 1920s was well-described by housing visionary Catherine Bauer:

> The potential market for new building got smaller and smaller, because a [smaller and smaller] proportion of people could pay the price. Finally, even in the prosperous twenties, it was only the richest third of the population. The other two-thirds, no matter how much they needed a decent modern home, were forced to live in castoffs. The middle group lived "decently" if not conveniently, for the most part, but the lowest-paid were reduced to shacks, basements, makeshifts on alleys and rear lots, and one-family houses converted for the use of several families.[3]

This lower third described by Bauer corresponded well to the Americans addressed by Franklin D. Roosevelt in his January 1937 second inaugural address: "I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished." In the New Deal a consensus emerged that government had not only the legal authority but the moral responsibility to address the elemental needs of that forgotten third of a nation.

Bauer was one of many "housers" working within or advising the Roosevelt administration to address something quite new—the role of government in alleviating the housing crisis. The Republican opposition and real estate interests on the local and national level argued that this could be addressed adequately by the private market. Furthermore, the encroachment of government into land acquisition and the conception of "housing projects" were, to these groups, nothing less than old world Bolshevism transplanted to America. These fears were not entirely unfounded. Much of the spectacular expansion of 1920s European housing developments was rooted in the socialist policies of the Western European democracies established after World War I. Fear of socialism notwithstanding, the American free market had failed conspicuously to build for the poorest third of the population.

Before the Great Depression, agitation for low-income housing in the U.S. was the province of social reformers. The first foray of the federal government into housing was a provision of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of 1933, in the early months of the New Deal. This law created the Public Works Administration (PWA) and, within it, a Housing Division. These early efforts—embodied in the Housing Act of 1934—addressed a severe national shortage of adequate, sanitary housing and were intended as emergency employment programs geared to the elimination of slums and provision of human shelter. The period from 1934 to 1937 was marked by construction of "public housing projects" under the direct financing, construction, and management of the Housing Division. The financial constraints that were to characterize federally-financed public housing late in the Depression (including Prospect Heights) were not as apparent during this first phase. Per-dwelling unit cost of most federal housing developments was about $6,000, with some variation. At Greenbelt, Maryland, for example, unit cost was

[3] Catherine Bauer. *A Citizen's Guide to Public Housing*, p. 8.

approximately $16,000, incorporating moderne design treatments, public art, and landscaping into the broader scheme—a far cry from the minimalist, Spartan dwellings necessitated by late-decade federal belt-tightening.

Despite the variety of design in the early examples, some regional in character, the PWA's Housing Division generally built and advocated for "functional modernist" housing developments. The division's Branch of Plans and Specifications (established in 1935) encouraged row house designs of from one to three stories in height, flat roofs, minimal ornament and landscaping, and, when possible, a superblock setting that departed from traditional grid street patterns and instead aligned buildings for the maximum penetration of sunlight and movement of air. These guidelines were published in 1935 as *Unit Plans: Typical Room Arrangements* (see Figure 9).

By the mid-1930s a rising sentiment was voiced—not only among F.D.R.'s Republican opposition but also by advocates for a stronger local role in public housing—that the federal government should restrict itself to the financial component of housing and remove itself from land acquisition, construction, and management of housing projects. This new relationship between the federal government and municipalities was embodied in a provision of the Housing Act of 1937 (enacted September 1, 1937) that enabled the creation of local "Housing Authorities." No longer a builder or landlord, the federal government, now represented in these matters by the USHA, made 60-year loans to local authorities for the purchase of land, contracting with local architects for design and engineering services. There was, however, a catch: the USHA had a number of requirements—legal, physical, and financial—to be met by the local authority before issuance of the loan. The first was the establishment of a municipal housing authority. During the period that the Housing Act was in effect (1937 to 1940), some 370 housing projects were built nationwide under the auspices of the USHA. Prospect Heights was the only public housing project in Rhode Island built under that authority.

Other Early Public Housing Projects in Rhode Island

The five other public housing projects built in Rhode Island during the years 1941-1943, were all authorized under different federal funding mechanisms that promoted the construction of emergency housing related to the war effort.

Four projects were built under the National Defense Act (enacted June 1940 to authorize the United States Housing Authority to work with local housing authorities to make housing available for persons engaged in national defense activities): Park Holm Housing Project in Newport (1941), the Chad Brown and Roger Williams Housing Projects in Providence (both 1942), and the Morin Heights Housing Project in Woonsocket (1943). The Tonomy Hill Housing Project in Newport (1942) was built under the authority of the Lanham Act (enacted October 1940 to provide federally-built housing in the most congested defense industry centers).[4] All of

[4] Source: Appendix III, *Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949.*

these utilized a simple grid pattern site plan, rather than the unique radiating site plan used at Prospect Heights.

Public Housing Comes to Pawtucket, 1937 to 1942

The industrialization of Pawtucket, beginning in the 1790s, and the massive expansion of its textile plants in the decades following the Civil War brought waves of immigration to the city. From a population of fewer than 7,000 in 1870, by 1925 the city housed some 70,000 people, a ten-fold increase—overwhelmingly low-paid textile operatives, male and female, and their families. Much of this population growth was foreign-born, particularly Irish and French-Canadian immigrants. Despite an expanding textile economy and some speculative construction of multi-family tenements in the shadows of the booming mills, housing demand far outstripped supply. As local property taxes increased to offset the cost of expanded municipal services, construction costs were also increasing. As a result, the private real estate market found little financial incentive to create adequate, affordable housing for low-income renters. At the time, some 8,000 dwellings classified as "multi-family" tenements were available, with monthly rents typically ranging from $26 to $45. Still, Pawtucket struggled to house its burgeoning population, forcing many into housing of last resort—overcrowded, aging and substandard dwellings that lacked running water or even the most rudimentary sanitary facilities. Despite these shortcomings, these units still carried rents of up to $30 per month. Although comparable statistics specific to Pawtucket are unavailable, a housing survey for neighboring Providence noted that one out of five of the city's 68,000 dwellings had neither a bathtub nor shower; 2,055 had no private indoor toilet. Thirty-six dwellings had no running water at all and 42 had no heat.[5]

A recession in the years immediately following World War I brought instability to Pawtucket's cotton and woolen plants that had profited in the production of war-related textiles. This was compounded dramatically by an exodus of textile plants to southern states, beginning in the early 1920s and well-established by mid-decade, as mill owners and investors sought non-unionized labor, proximity to raw cotton, and turnkey mills (often designed by New England mill designers and outfitters). By the mid-30s at least four of Pawtucket's major textile companies had closed, and many more were operating well below capacity (this figure includes mills in Pawtucket and neighboring Central Falls).[6] Nonetheless, Pawtucket's total population continued to increase between 1920 (64,248) and 1930 (77,149), and declined only slightly by 1940 (75,797).

The advent of the Great Depression in 1929 only added to Pawtucket's misery. By 1936 a city that had once boasted that 80% of its workforce was employed in the textile trades now looked out on shuttered mills and the grim statistic of a 50% unemployment rate. A housing market unable to address the needs of low-income residents in the comparatively prosperous 1920s found itself in full crisis by the 1930s.

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[5] Sources: Susan M. Boucher, *The History of Pawtucket, 1635-1986* (1986) and Winston Phelps, "Writer States Case for Slum Clearance." *Providence Journal* (2 July 1939): Section 4, p. 2.
[6] See context statement on R.I. industrial history in: *Rhode Island: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites* (1977), p. 24.

The federal government had been involved in a number of low-income housing projects nationwide since shortly after the enactment of the NIRA in 1933, but none was built in Rhode Island until after the enactment of the Housing Act of 1937. In anticipation of passage of this law, the R.I. General Assembly had passed enabling legislation in 1935 (revised, 1938) to have a mechanism in place for the creation of municipal housing authorities. This legislation targeted:

> Unsanitary or unsafe conditions [arising] from overcrowding and concentration of population, the obsolete and poor conditions of the buildings, improper planning, excessive land coverage, lack of proper light, air and space, unsanitary design arrangement, lack of proper sanitary facilities, and the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes....[7]

In 1936, Thomas P. McCoy was elected Mayor of Pawtucket (see Figure 15). A consummate and sharp-elbowed politician, McCoy had already served in several local and state offices: in 1920 he was the only Democrat from Pawtucket elected to the overwhelmingly Republican Rhode Island General Assembly; he was appointed Pawtucket City Auditor in 1930 and State Auditor in 1935. By the time he became Pawtucket's Mayor, he had consolidated his political power, particularly among the substantial Irish-American working-class population of the city, and had made a name for himself for his frequent success in securing PWA funding for city projects, including Pawtucket City Hall (built 1933-5), Pawtucket West High School (built 1938-9) and a new sports stadium (built 1940-2, later named "McCoy Stadium" upon the death of the mayor in 1945).

One of McCoy's close associates was Vernon C. "Buddy" Norton,[8] a Democratic Party operative and Pawtucket native who began working as a staff writer for the Pawtucket *Evening Times* shortly after his graduation from Providence College in 1925. Norton's ties to McCoy and the Democratic political machine landed him an appointment, in 1938, as Rhode Island's representative to the National Emergency Council (NEC), which had been established in accordance with the NIRA and an Executive Order by President Roosevelt.[9] The NEC's role was to advise the federal government in crafting legislation and allocating resources to local communities to address what the Executive Order described as an "acute national economic emergency."

On April 29, 1938 Rhode Island Democratic governor Robert E. Quinn convened a meeting of mayors of four of the state's major cities, including Thomas McCoy, to discuss the availability of $10,000,000 set aside by the USHA for low-income housing through the recently enacted Housing Act. Seizing an opportunity to bring more federal dollars to Pawtucket, Mayor McCoy and Vernon Norton took advantage of a major provision of the state enabling legislation

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[7] General Laws of Rhode Island (1935, revised 1938), Chapter 344: *The Housing Authority, Its Powers and Duties, and the Issuance of Bonds by Such Authority* (pp. 717-723). See also, Norma L. Daoust, "Housing the Poor: The Early Years of Public Housing in Providence," *Rhode Island History* 51 (February 1993).

[8] Norton's loyalty to McCoy is evident in his self-published biography of the mayor, *A Common Man for the Common People: The Life of Thomas P. McCoy* (1946), written shortly after McCoy's death in 1945.

[9] Executive Order 6433-A, November 17, 1933.

concerning the means by which a local housing authority was to be created. Section 4 (*Notice, Hearing and Creation of Authority*) stated that "any 25 residents of a city may file a petition with the city clerk setting forth that there is a need for an authority to function in the city." On receipt of such a petition, a City Council hearing was to be convened to determine:

(1) Whether unsanitary or unsafe inhabited dwellings exist in the city, and/or
(2) Whether there is a lack of safe or sanitary dwelling accommodations in the city for all the inhabitants thereof.[10]

In Thomas McCoy's Pawtucket, there would have been little difficulty in finding 25 signatories in support of a favored—and potentially lucrative—program. On June 21, 1939 Vernon C. Norton, in his capacity as head of the NEC, appeared before the Pawtucket City Council and an audience of one hundred residents to present the Council with a petition signed by the requisite 25 residents for creation of a city housing authority. A provision of the Federal Housing Act of 1937 required that data be submitted to the local government substantiating unsafe and unsanitary conditions and the consequent need for what had come to be known as "slum clearance." The USHA also needed confirmation of the areas most blighted and the proposed size of the project based on housing and population figures. The task of compiling this data fell to McCoy lieutenant and Director of Public Works, Albert J. Lamarre[11], who presented it to the Council (to date, the document containing this required data has not been located in state or local repositories). Norton also made what the *Evening Times* called a "lengthy statement on the benefits to be derived from a housing authority." After Norton's presentation, the ever-present Mayor McCoy invited audience comment from anyone who might oppose the plan. There was no opposition, save for a request by Wilfred St. Louis of the Pawtucket Real Estate Exchange that one of its members be appointed to the authority. McCoy, having little interest in representation from private land interests historically opposed to any governmental intrusion into the real estate market, told St. Louis, "I can assure you that every consideration will be given your request." [12]

A provision of the Council resolution ensured that the Mayor had sole authority to appoint housing authority members. McCoy added, "...I will select sound, solid men, men concerned with the best interests of the city." [13] Soon after, McCoy appointed a five-member authority: William L. Connolly, chairman; Frank Crook, vice chairman; Joseph Charpentier; Edward J. Costello; and Edmond C. Laurelli, M.D. Connolly had been the head of the Rhode Island branch

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[10] General Laws of Rhode Island (1935, revised 1938), Chapter 344.

[11] Lamarre played an important role in the McCoy machine, as Matthew Smith observed in his 1973 historical study of McCoy:

> He created a hierarchical machine that would serve the people. To administer it he chose three able lieutenants--his brother Ambrose was his voice on the city council--Albert J. Lamarre, Franco-American, became his director of public works--and Harry C. Curvin, who succeeded him in the House, maintained his power in the General Assembly. In concert they ran Pawtucket. Source: Matthew J. Smith, "The Real McCoy in the Bloodless Revolution of 1935," *Rhode Island History* 32 (August 1973).

[12] "Council Votes Slum Clearance." *Evening Times* (22 June 1939): 1.

[13] Ibid.

of the American Federation of Labor since at least 1934. By 1941 he was director of the Rhode Island Department of Labor, eventually becoming Director of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Standards. Frank Crook established radio station WFCI in Pawtucket in 1921 and was owner of Frank Crook Auto Sales, Inc. in downtown Pawtucket at the time of his appointment. Edward J. Costello was a Pawtucket tobacco wholesaler. It appears that Joseph Charpentier was a cabinetmaker. Little is known of Edmund C. Laurelli other than the fact that he was a physician and resident of the city.

It would appear that the decision to establish a Pawtucket Housing Authority (PHA) was a *fait accompli* long before any Council vote: a week earlier on June 14, 1939 the city had acquired (at unknown cost) a 21-acre parcel of mostly vacant, former industrial property about 1.5 miles southwest of downtown Pawtucket, fronting on Prospect Street (see Figure 10).[14] The property, originally part of a larger parcel owned by a textile finishing operation (the Dunnell Print Works), contained five older dwellings arrayed near the intersection of Prospect Street and Beverage Hill Avenue.

Throughout the 1930s, a lively debate ensued among public housing advocates and housing theorists as to the proper relationship between construction of new housing and what had come to be called "slum clearance." Addressing that question, one of the provisions of the 1937 Housing Act required that construction of new dwellings must offset "an equivalent number of substandard dwellings." [15] There was widespread sentiment that new construction be carried out on the site of former slums—if not, the well-documented and costly ills of slum dwelling would proliferate. This proportional removal of slums proved difficult to realize. In the case of multiple ownership, the legal process of eminent domain could be expensive and time-consuming.

Even vocal advocates of proportionality like Catherine Bauer came to concede that in the interests of expediency, housing authorities often had little choice but to acquire vacant or minimally-developed land.[16] In *A Citizen's Guide to Public Housing* (1940), she addressed the question of slum clearance and the rebuilding of new communities in place vs. construction on vacant land. Commenting on the disadvantages of rebuilding in place, Bauer noted several complicating factors, among them high land costs, the difficulty of acquiring connected small parcels, creating a temporary shortage of dwellings during the period of design and construction, and, perhaps most importantly, an inability to realize the salubrious physical environment so desired by housing visionaries. In the end, the sunlight and air advocated by Depression-era "housers" trumped the legalities of slum clearance. Of the 52 "Direct-Built" housing projects of the PWA's Housing Division (1933-1937), 28 replaced slum dwellings and 24 were built on vacant land.[17]

The mitigating factors cited by Bauer apparently relieved the PHA of the necessity to link housing construction in Pawtucket with slum clearance. In fact, there is no evidence that city-

[14] Pawtucket Land Evidence Book 349:479 (June 14, 1939). (Book 355:342, July 9, 1940).
[15] Bauer, Catherine. *A Citizen's Guide to Public Housing* (1940), p. 63-4.
[16] Source: *Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949*, Appendix III.
[17] Source: *Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949*, Appendix III.

mandated slum clearance associated with the construction of Prospect Heights ever occurred. A year after the City purchased the 21-acre former Dunnell Print Works property, it sold the parcel to the PHA for $15,000 for construction of a low-rent public housing project.[18] The extensive buildout of Pawtucket due to explosive population growth between 1870 and 1940 limited the city's choices of land suitably large for a project of this size. The 1917 Richards Atlas map of Pawtucket shows only two undeveloped or under-utilized areas within the city that could accommodate a project the size contemplated for Prospect Heights. The Prospect Street site chosen was much closer to the city center and on a public transit line.

On February 6, 1940 the PHA became the first housing authority in the state to receive USHA approval for a publically-funded housing project. This approval came with a $962,000 check for what was planned initially to be a 25-building, 226-unit development. Although the precise circumstances are unclear, discussion with federal authorities over the ensuing five months yielded an additional $400,000 for the PHA, permitting an expanded plan of 35 buildings and 310 dwelling units.

In the spring of 1940, despite the fact that the PHA had not yet acquired title to the city-owned parcel, the agency sought design proposals for the new housing project. By June the Authority had chosen local architect John F. O'Malley (1885-ca. 1950) as the chief designer. Site work was set to begin on September 1 (see Figure 11).

John F. O'Malley had a longstanding relationship with Thomas P. McCoy. He had set up his office in Pawtucket by 1910, designing buildings throughout metropolitan Providence. Among his early projects were the Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet Casino (Cranston, 1915, NR-listed), St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church (Central Falls, 1916, NR-listed) and the Gately Building (Pawtucket, 1917, NR-listed). While McCoy was consolidating his power in Pawtucket city politics, O'Malley designed the Leroy Theater (Pawtucket, 1922, demolished) and the Elks Building (Pawtucket, 1926, NR-listed). During the Roosevelt administration, as Mayor McCoy demonstrated a prodigious ability to secure Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding for city projects, O'Malley was the beneficiary of no small amount of this federal largesse. In 1934-1935 he designed Pawtucket City Hall (NR-listed),[19] and three years later he completed Pawtucket West High School (renamed Shea High School, NR-listed), both executed in the Art Moderne/Deco style. The housing authority's choice of O'Malley as architect for Prospect Heights likely came as no surprise to observers of Pawtucket politics. A 1940 *Evening Times* article noted that Henry Gerber would also serve as architect on this project. In the same year Gerber was listed in city directory as a draftsman working for O'Malley. [20]

By May 1941 the site was graded and prepared for the concrete-slab row house foundations (see Figure 12). By late in the month the concrete-block superstructure and brick facing was in place

[18] Sources: Pawtucket Land Evidence Book 355:492 (9 July 1940) and *Joint Resolution of the City Council* (3 July 1940), City Council file #578 (Box 1), on file, Pawtucket City Clerk's office.
[19] Designed with architect William G. Richards.
[20] Source: clipping file, Pawtucket Research Library, Pawtucket Public Library.

for many of the 35 two-story apartment buildings (see Figure 13). Although tenancy had been optimistically projected for November 1941, construction moved at a slower pace and an opening date was moved forward to the following spring. Adhering throughout to the minimalist "functional modernism" as standardized in public housing of the Depression years, through the summer months of 1941 and the winter of 1942, Prospect Heights emerged as an orderly arrangement of flat-roofed apartment buildings aligned in a fan-shaped superblock—a vision decidedly different from the 90-degree grid pattern and 1-2 family detached houses of the neighboring streets (see Figure 14).

In a September 23, 1941 interview with PHA Chairman William Connolly, the *Evening Times* noted the opening of a rental office in the basement of City Hall for the filing of applications for units at Prospect Heights.[21] The application and interview process was conceived to provide a rating based on the level of need and present living conditions of the applicant. Beyond general eligibility, this rating would determine the appropriate unit size (from 3½ to 6½ rooms). Rents were adjusted according to income; e.g., monthly rent for a 3½-room unit would range from $18 to $23 based on an annual family income of from $1,200 to $1,300. Similarly, a family requiring a 6½-room unit might pay from $19.50 to $27monthly (converted to 2015 dollars, this range would be from $285 to $395/month, a figure roughly equivalent to today's Prospect Heights rents) based on an annual income of from $900 to $1,500. Norton, citing a USHA requirement, stated that income could not exceed five times the rent. An annual income of $1500 was the upper limit.[22] Connolly listed the seven broad criteria that would determine eligibility:

1. [A family must] have a net annual income at the time of admission within the income limit established for the size of the apartment.
2. Conform in size to the occupancy limit of each type of dwelling.
3. Be a coherent family group. (Two families doubling up is out.)
4. Have lived in substandard or little desired home at time of application, so that health, safety or morals are jeopardized. Residents of substandard housing in slum clearance site acquired by the housing authority for a new project would have preference. (Five dwelling units were razed from the Prospect Heights site, so that families vacating them when the housing authority acquired the land will have preference, so long as they meet other requirements.)
5. Be citizens of the United States.
6. Have been determined to have ability to pay rent. (This would include old-age pension recipients.)
7. Be reasonable rent risks.[23]

[21] "$18-$27 Rent Schedule for Apartments at Project Which Opens in November." *Evening Times* (9 September 1941) Clipping file, Pawtucket Research Library, Pawtucket Public Library.
[22] Sources: *Evening Times* (23 September 1941) and *Providence Journal* 2 July 1939.
[23] "$18-$27 Rent Schedule for Apartments at Project Which Opens in November." *Evening Times* (9 September 1941), Clipping file labeled "Housing," Pawtucket Research Library, Pawtucket Public Library. Other than where bracketed, wording of these criteria (including phrases in parentheses) is exactly as it appeared in the original article.

Connolly added that, should the number of eligible applicants and families exceed the availability of dwelling units, preference would be given to:

1. Those who are living under housing conditions detrimental to health, safety or morals; or to those whose annual net income in relation to the number in the family is least.
2. Those who occupied dwellings on the old site.[24]
3. Those who have minor dependent members.[25]

Unlike the Roger Williams Housing Project in Providence, there does not appear to have been an official policy on racial segregation at Prospect Heights. This may be due to the fact that African-Americans made up only .4% of the population of Pawtucket in 1940. In 1942, with a total of 242 families listed, roughly 25% bore Irish names, 25% bore French-Canadian names, and 35% bore English or Scottish names. Portuguese, Italian, Jewish, Polish and other names accounted for 15%.

Late Depression belt-tightening at the USHA required that per-unit costs be reduced significantly from the relatively luxurious average unit cost of $6,000. These unit cost figures did not factor in land acquisition. The final assessment of per-unit costs for Prospect Heights was $3,083—well below the federal guidelines of $4,000/unit. Perhaps minimal by today's standards, the complement of rooms, the modern conveniences, the construction materials and the clean interior finishes that they provided, and the orderly arrangement of row houses and recreation space was, nonetheless, a vision to prospective tenants.

On March 7, 1942 the PHA opened a model unit for public inspection (see Figure 4). As noted in an *Evening Times* article published the day before, rent would include "private bath, hot and cold water, gas stoves, steam heat, electric refrigerators, electric lights, playgrounds and kitchen cabinets. Gas, water and electricity will be provided 24 hours a day."[26] To prospective tenants wanting to escape miserable housing conditions, it may well have seemed that a bright, well-ventilated neighborhood of the future had descended upon Pawtucket.

While finishing touches were being applied to most of the buildings, two weeks later on March 23 the first tenants moved in to four of the completed row houses. A *Times* writer interviewed a decidedly enthusiastic Charles Connors, formerly of Brewster St., who was in the process of moving his wife and young daughter into Unit 40, a 4½-room apartment. Connors, an operative at a riverfront textile finishing plant, had been given a day off. "We're lucky to get one of these apartments," he said, "they have all the modern conveniences, plenty of closet space and what's most important, plenty of fresh air." An interview with the Teixeira family, two doors down in

[24] There is no evidence that displaced occupants of the site applied for tenancy at Prospect Heights. A comparison of a 1942 Prospect Heights tenant list with 1938 Pawtucket City Directory listings for eight residents in the vicinity of Prospect Street and Beverage Hill Avenue showed no name correlation.
[25] "$18-$27 Rent Schedule." *Evening Times* (9 September 1941).
[26] "Housing authority invites Prospect Heights inspection." *Evening Times* (6 March 1942): 3.

Unit 38, showed the same enthusiasm. Joseph Teixeira, who worked as a cook, pointed out his gas stove, refrigerator and steam heat. At $24/month, "We couldn't have found a better place."[27]

"The Projects" – Prospect Heights, 1943 to 1965

When Prospect Heights welcomed its first residents in 1942, the term "housing project" had no negative connotations in the public mind (except perhaps for those who objected to taxpayer-funded housing). The buildings were new, the tenants were happy to be there, and the problem of how to provide adequate housing for the working poor—on a temporary basis until they could become more financially secure—seemed to be on its way to being resolved. However, the vision and the enthusiasm embodied in projects like Prospect Heights did not endure.

In its first year of operation, Prospect Heights experienced mechanical difficulties in the central heating plant that were to prove systemic. The boiler, located in the rear of the Administration Building, was unable to deliver steam reliably to the 35 row houses through the network of underground pipes. This was compounded by difficulty in obtaining an adequate supply of heating oil. Tenants endured system outages and often relied on their kitchen stoves to maintain heat.[28]

Another issue was the lack of any formal maintenance program for the grounds at Prospect Heights; likewise, leases contained no provisions requiring tenants to keep the exterior of their units orderly. This inexplicable omission, especially given the location of a large commercial incinerator and dump directly across Prospect Street, began to alter not only the physical appearance, but also the public perception, of the housing project. As early as September 1943, the *Providence Journal* noted portentous signs in an article ominously titled, "Housing Project Becomes Slummy." A captioned photograph on page one left little to the imagination:

> [This] Eighteen month old, $1,500,000 project, sports front yards that already look like any slum yards. Refuse and garbage barrels are in front of the houses; there are no sidewalks or lawns; stringy weeds grow where there should be green grass. For neither tenant nor city employees bother to plant, mow, water or even clean-up the grounds… A ten-acre dump, permitted by the city, is operated just across the street and it does its bit toward cluttering up the landscape with blowing papers and other litter.[29]

In comparison, the article pointed out that the Chad Brown Housing Project in Providence (also built in 1942) had made provisions for regular trash pickup and incineration. The irony was surely not lost on those who a few years earlier had advocated for the sunlight and ventilation of the modern housing project.

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[27] "First tenants take suites at housing authority site." *Evening Times* (23 March 1942): 3. The Connors family left Prospect Heights in 1954 when Charles Connors' income exceeded the upper limit. The Teixeira family left in 1948 because of "dissatisfaction with the project." Source: Space Inventory cards, on file, Prospect Heights Administration Building.
[28] "Housing Project Tenants Shiver." *Providence Journal* (24 November 1942): 1.
[29] "Housing Project Becomes Slummy." *Providence Journal* (17 September 1943): 1.

A survey of ten Prospect Heights tenants, listed in the 1942 city directory and chosen at random, showed a 60% retention rate a decade later. While this may indicate that tenants were satisfied with their new lives at Prospect Heights, it could also point to a systemic failure that became evident nationally in public housing in the coming decades, and contributed to an increasingly negative image of both "the projects" and the people who lived in them.

The original vision for low-income public housing was programmatic. Income requirements, such as those originally applied at Prospect Heights, ensured that adequate, sanitary and affordable housing would be made available to the working, "barely" poor. An early and optimistic assessment of low-rent public housing saw these projects as a temporary solution to widespread poverty in the Great Depression and wartime housing shortages in the 1940s: it would provide a leg-up, a respite allowing an individual time to re-enter the job market and return to private housing. While this was often the case in the early decades, by the 1960s it was becoming apparent that a permanent underclass was locked in with no alternative to public housing.

So it was with Prospect Heights. By the mid-1960s, the original income requirements had been relaxed substantially, with 1/3 of residents on public assistance. "Barely poor" residents were joined by the chronically poor and a temporary status had, in many cases, become a permanent condition.[30] This underclass had no choice but to remain in public housing and endure the deteriorating physical conditions wrought by chronic lack of maintenance and inadequate investment in physical plant improvements. To many, the term "housing project" became associated with the slum conditions it had been conceived to alleviate.

A series of *Evening Times* articles in the late 1960s offered vivid depictions of crime and family dysfunction. A *Providence Journal* article quoted residents who described Prospect Heights as overcrowded and "not fit to live in."[31] A February 1968 article declared the project "beyond rehabilitation" and called for its demolition. Figuring prominently in the public discussion of what to do with Prospect Heights at that time was State Senator Norman Jacques, who advocated for demolition of the project and replacement with duplexes scattered throughout the city.[32] Among the cited ills were prostitution, drug dealing, youth gangs, boarded-up units and abandoned cars. Although the bid to demolish the project was unsuccessful, a concerted effort to reverse the decline of Prospect Heights would have to wait another twenty years.

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[30] Source: "Pawtucket Housing Site Called Jungle," *Providence Journal* (25 September 1966): N1 and "How Section 8 became a 'racial slur.'" *Washington Post* (6 June 2015).
[31] "Pawtucket Housing Site Called Jungle," *Providence Journal* (25 September 1966): N1.
[32] While Pawtucket Housing Authority built a small number of detached houses in city neighborhoods, it no longer maintains this program.

Recent History

After the end of the period of significance for Prospect Heights, the racial makeup of Prospect Heights changed in a reflection of changes in the City, at large. Over the following three decades, Irish and French-Canadian tenancy declined significantly, but remained substantial in the city at large. Between the years of 1966 and 1972, African-American tenancy more than doubled, from 23 families to 58, but still represented only about 20% of the project's population. By the mid-70s, Latinos were beginning to settle in Pawtucket, and within a decade, new tenants at Prospect Heights were mostly Latinos, who remain the dominant population group. Census figures for Pawtucket from 2015 report a total population of 71,148. Whites account for 67% of the population (47,289); Latinos 20% (14,042); and African-Americans 13% (9,534).

In 1987 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) granted PHA a multi-million dollar grant for the rehabilitation and rethinking of Prospect Heights. The *Providence Journal* described the bleak setting at the time the new plans were unveiled:

> Now the roads through the project are strewn with rusted autos and trash. Graffiti and plywood boards mark the worn three-story [sic] brick buildings. And, at all hours, ominous-looking men congregate in abandoned apartments and on the curbs, shouting, fighting and selling their "junk"—drugs.[33]

The intent of the three-year rehabilitation program was to promote a greater sense of community and ownership among the residents through creation of a "village" setting, including pitched roofs, porticos, and the option for residents to erect low fences to define individual yards. In order to limit access and discourage illegal activity, the two roads through the project were made internal roads, with no passage through to Notre Dame Avenue. To supplement this, a security station was built at the Prospect Street entrance. The central heating system was replaced with sixteen local boiler/electrical houses arranged throughout the site. After a cave-in in the winter of 1987, flat roofs were replaced with the hip-on-gable roofs seen today.[34] Original windows and doors were replaced with more energy efficient types. Hip-roofed (or shed-roofed where a window is located above a door) hoods were installed over front doorways. Over a hundred unit interiors were completely rehabilitated.

Despite these alterations, Prospect Heights continues to maintain a relatively high level of integrity. The site plan is largely intact, no buildings have been demolished, and the buildings retain their overall form, fenestration patterns, and building materials. In addition, Prospect Heights can claim a higher level of integrity than any of Rhode Island's other early 1940s-era housing projects. Park Holm in Newport is currently (in 2015) undergoing a complete transformation involving demolition, extensive modernization and new construction. Morin Heights in Woonsocket has undergone several major rehabilitation and remodeling campaigns. Chad Brown in Providence, while maintaining its original complement of 1942-era buildings, had a substantial expansion in 1951 with the addition of the Admiral Terrace project to its

[33] "Tenants see how project will look after $7 million." *Providence Journal* (30 August 1988).
[34] The architect for this rehabilitation project was Edward Rowse, Providence, Rhode Island.

immediate south. Chad Brown also underwent a major remodeling in 1986-1989 in which new roofs were installed (similar to the remodeling at Prospect Heights). Roger Williams Housing in South Providence was substantially demolished by 1991. Tonomy Hill in Newport was demolished in 2006.

Meanwhile, much stability has returned to Prospect Heights. Seventy-five years after groundbreaking, this facility—still operated by the Pawtucket Housing Authority—has provided affordable shelter to thousands of the city's poorest citizens. As the PHA recognized its diamond anniversary in 2014, the Agency and current tenants collected information about the history of Prospect Heights, revealing its significant place in Pawtucket's social history. This housing project is a well-preserved local example of national housing initiatives of the New Deal. Current plans call for historic rehabilitation at Prospect Heights, which will extend its service to the Pawtucket community while preserving its newly-recognized historic character.

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Unpublished material:

Space Inventory cards on file at Prospect Heights Administration Building noting tenant name, dwelling unit number, dates of tenancy and reason for leaving (1942-present).

City Council Records, File 278, Box 1. On file, City Clerk's Office, Pawtucket City Hall.

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:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
__X__ Other
Name of repository: _Pawtucket Housing Authority, 214 Roosevelt Avenue, Pawtucket, RI 02904_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): ___N/A_____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ___21 acres_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 41.862709 Longitude: -71.370340
2. Latitude: 41.863488 Longitude: -71.367518
3. Latitude: 41.864376 Longitude: -71.367575
4. Latitude: 41.865419 Longitude: -71.366441
5. Latitude: 41.860834 Longitude: -71.366247
6. Latitude: 41.860794 Longitude: -71.368299

Or

UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

5. Zone Easting: Northing:

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

The boundaries of the Prospect Heights Housing Project Historic District are contiguous with those of Pawtucket, R.I. assessors Map 38, Lot 391.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These are the boundaries of the original parcel of land purchased by the Pawtucket Housing Authority in 1940 for the construction of Prospect Heights.

---

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Edward Connors and Kathryn Cavanaugh
organization: Edward Connors and Associates
street & number: 39 Dyer Avenue
city or town: Riverside state: RI zip code: 02915
e-mail: nconnors@cox.net
telephone: 401 595-0699
date: June 2015

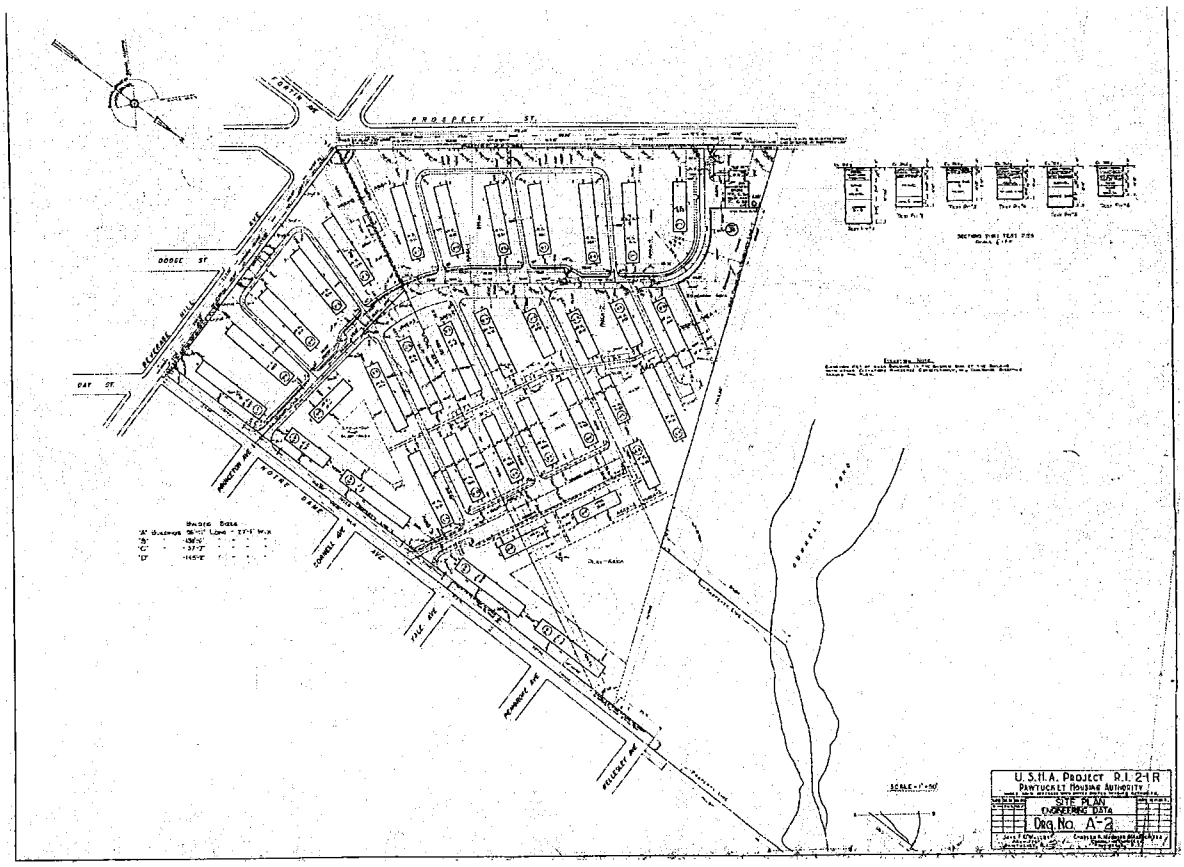


Figure 1
Site Plan, Drawing A-2 (1940)
John F. O'Malley, architect

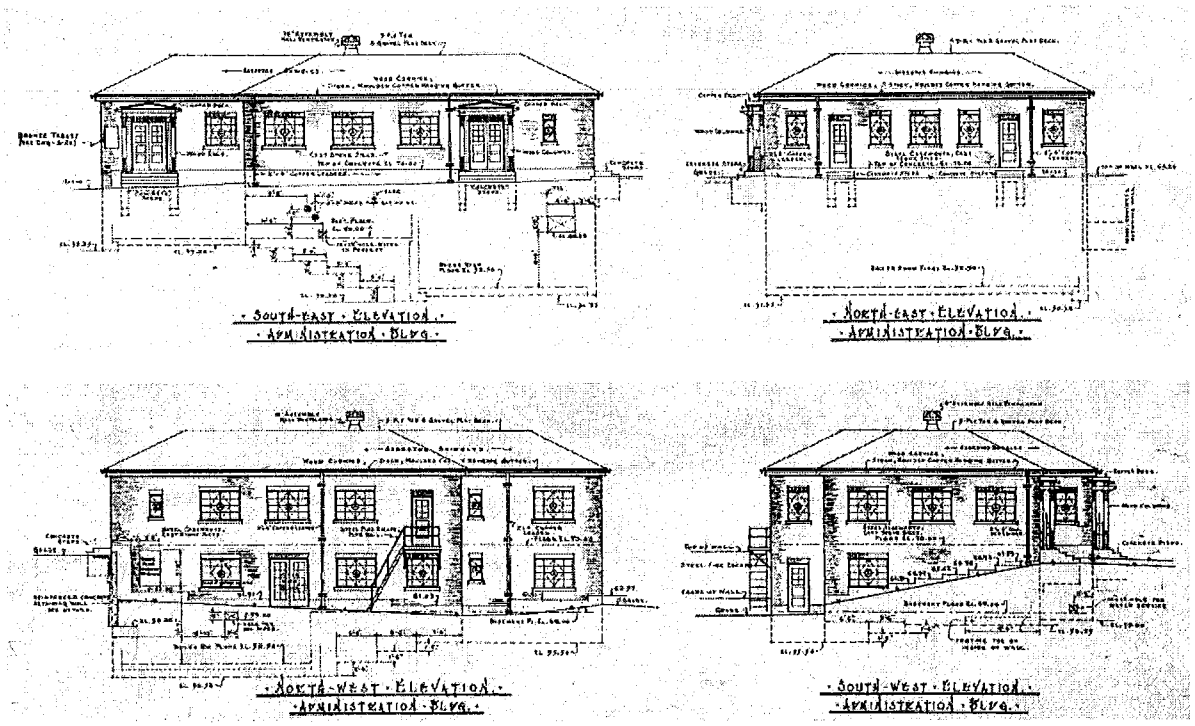


Figure 2
Detail of Administration Building from drawing A-10 (1940)
John F. O'Malley, architect

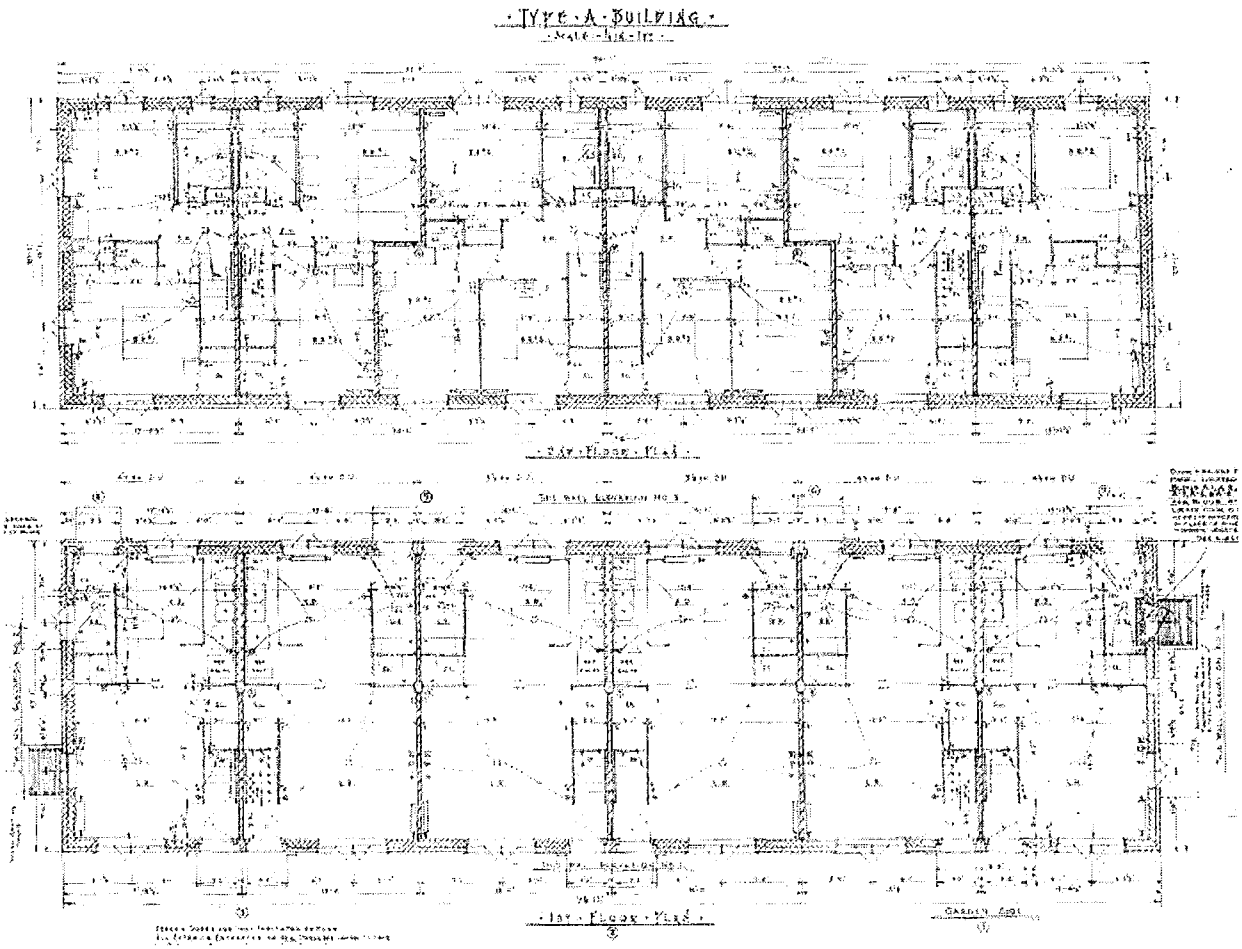


Figure 3
Typical floorplan
Detail from drawing A-6
John F. O'Malley, architect

Figure 4
Original kitchen layout showing electric refrigerator, cupboards, double sink and linoleum floor (March 1942)

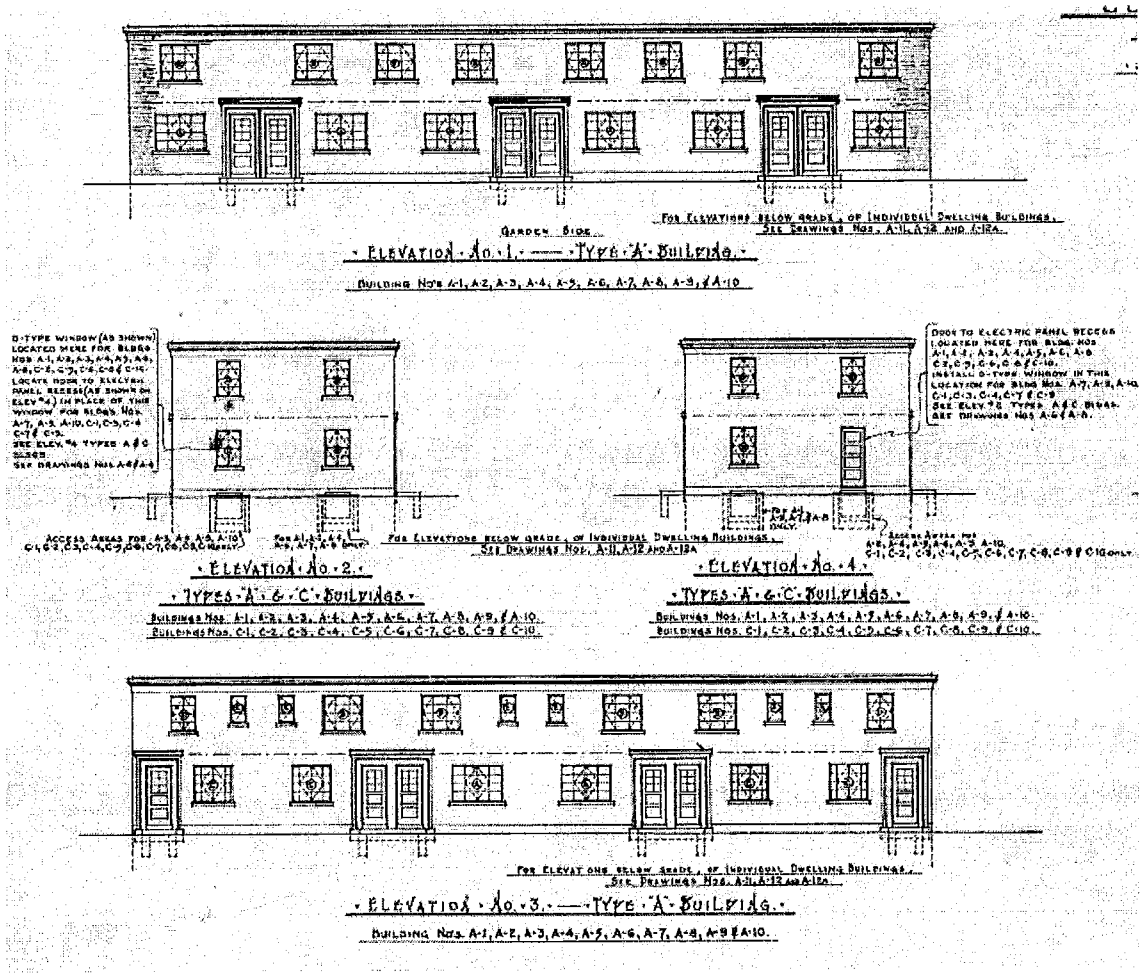


Figure 5
Type A row house
Detail from drawing A-10 (1940)
John F. O'Malley, architect

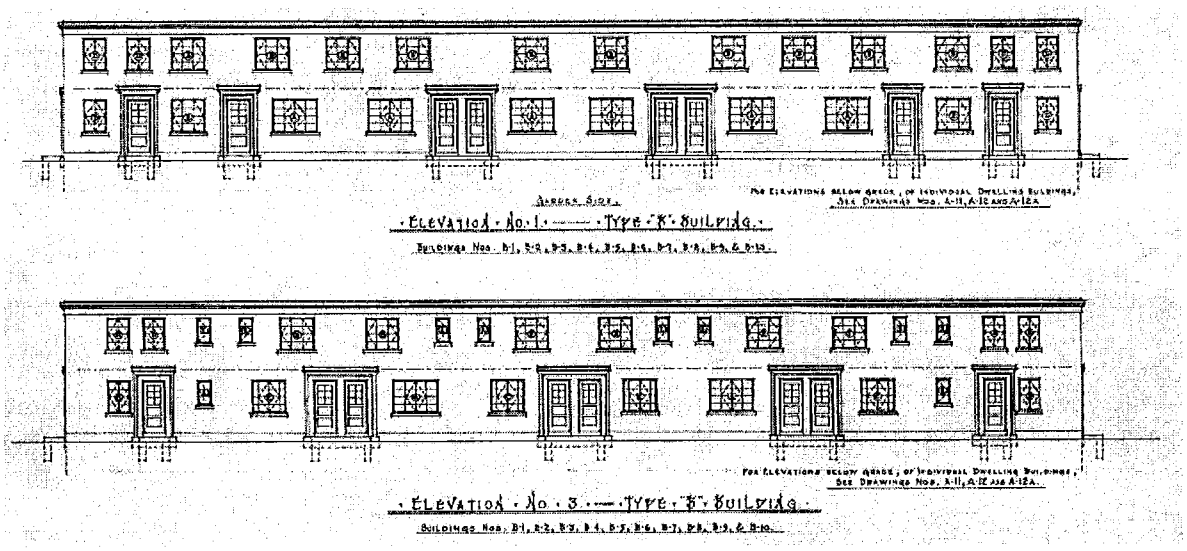


Figure 6
Type B row house
Detail from drawing A-10 (1940)
John F. O'Malley, architect

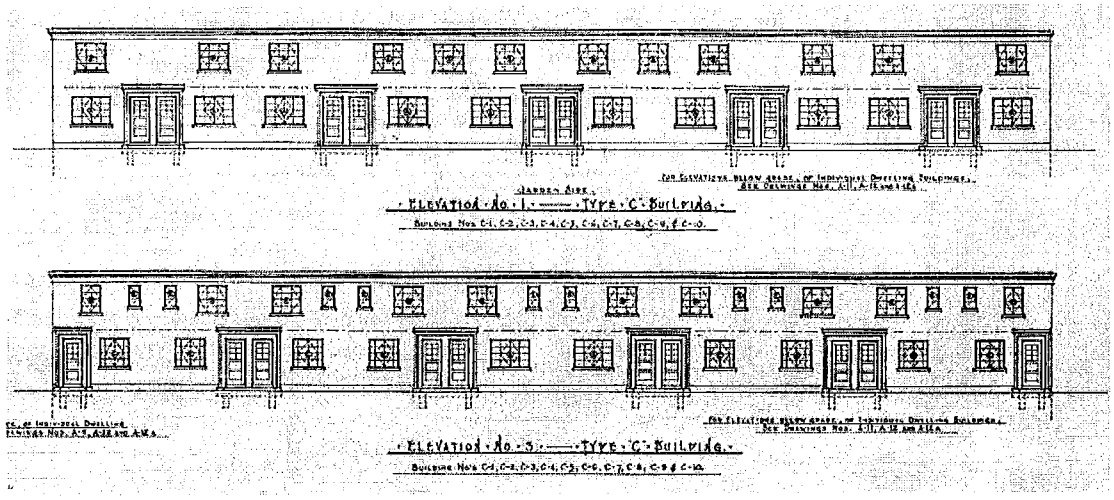


Figure 7
Type C row house
Detail from drawing A-10 (1940)
John F. O'Malley, architect

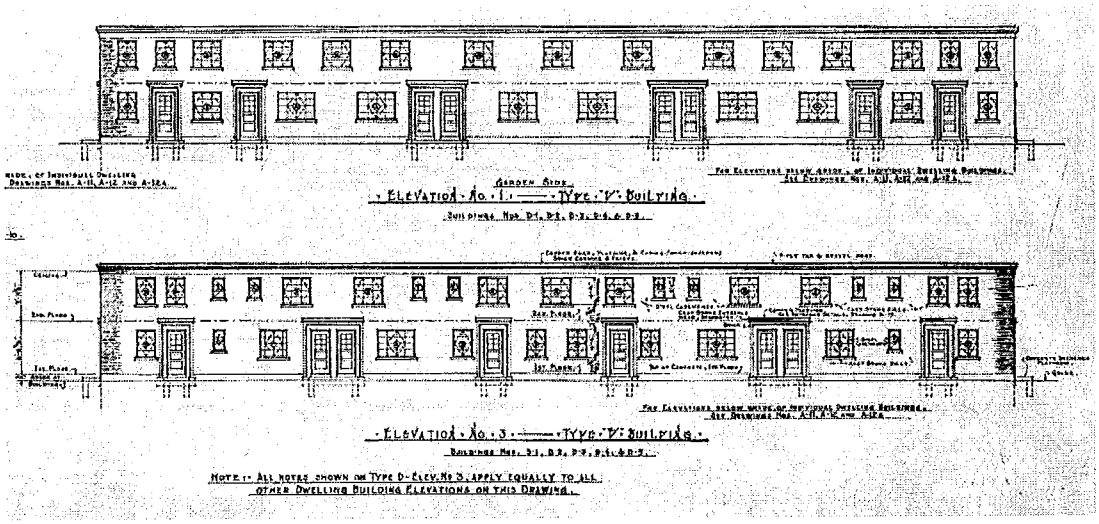


Figure 8
Type D row house
Detail from drawing A-10 (1940)
John F. O'Malley, architect

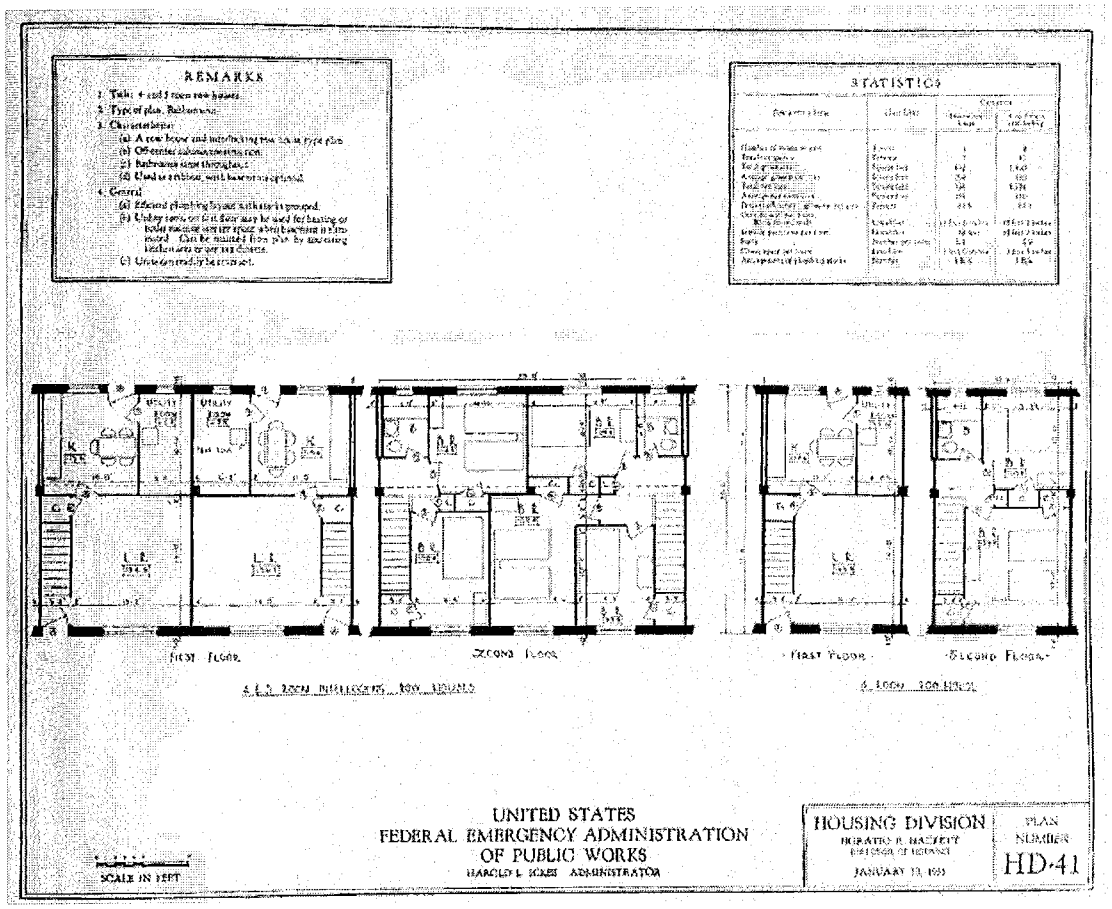


Figure 9
Four and Five-Room Row House samples
Plan HD-41, PWA Housing Division (1935)

Figure 10
Aerial view of Prospect Heights site before construction (view northerly)
showing five dwellings later demolished and Dunnell Print Works and Pond to north of site.
Fairchild Aerial Surveys, Inc. (1940)

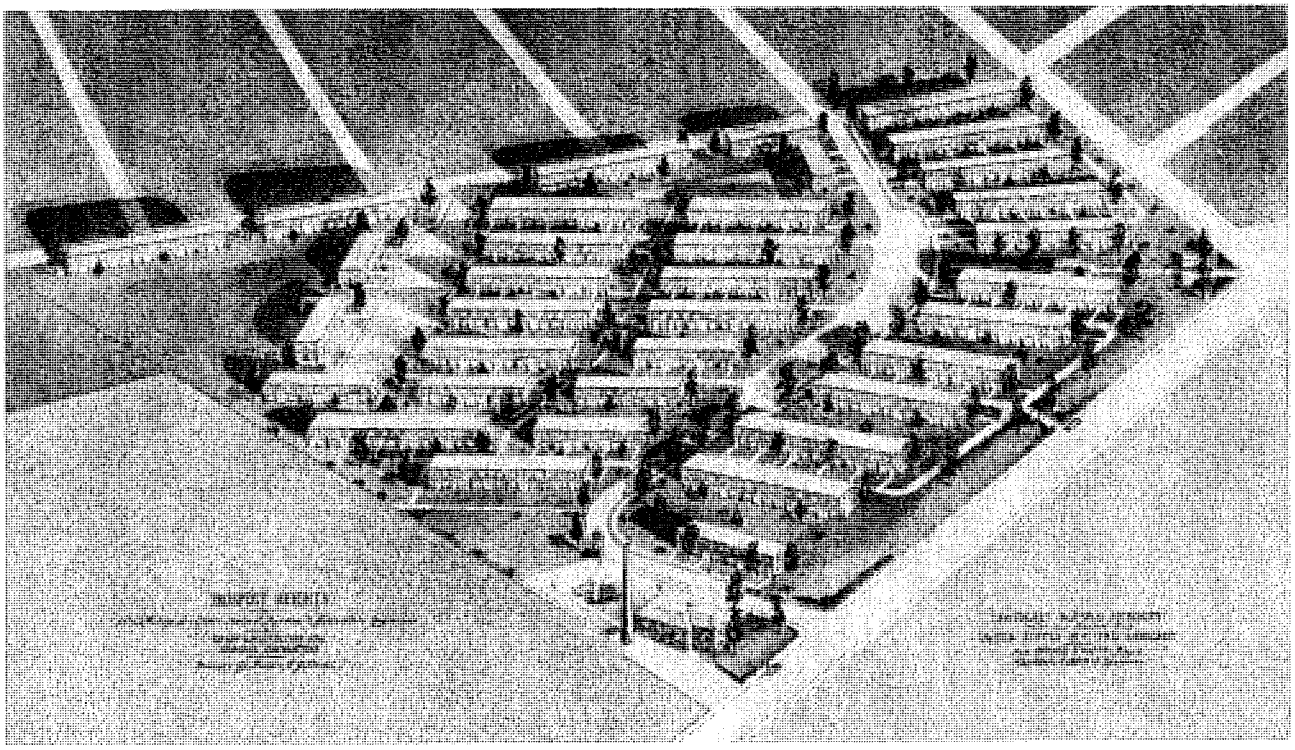


Figure 11
Architect's rendering of Prospect Heights (1940)
John F. O'Malley, architect
Kasmir B. Jablecki, artist

Figure 12
Row house concrete foundations ready for brickwork (May 1941)

Figure 13
Row house wall construction (1941)

Figure 14
Row houses near completion (1941)

Figure 15
Undated (ca. 1942) press photo of Mayor Thomas P. McCoy (center) and city officials at unidentified Prospect Heights event

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Prospect Heights Housing Project

City or Vicinity: Pawtucket

County: Providence State: Rhode Island

Photographer: Edward Connors

Date Photographed: 15 June 2015

1 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ ProspectHeightsHousingProject _0001: Streetscape from the north side of the Security Building, facing southeast. Building 22 is the first housing building on the left.

2 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0002: Context view of Building 15 (center), with Buildings 14 and 13 (left) and Building 10 (right). View facing south.

3 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0003: Security building along main entrance drive from Prospect Street. View facing east.

4 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0004: Administration Building. View facing west.

5 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0005: Building 2, a Type A building. View facing west showing façade (southeast elevation) and northeast end elevation.

6 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0006: Building 22, a Type A building. View facing south showing rear (northwest) elevation and northeast end elevation.

7 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0007: Building 22, a Type A building, rear elevation entrance. View facing southeast.

8 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0008: Building 23, a Type B building. View facing northeast showing façade (northwest elevation) and southwest end elevation.

9 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0009: Building 23, a Type B building. Façade (northwest elevation) paired entrance. View facing southeast.

10 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0010: Building 24, a Type C building. View facing north showing façade (southeast elevation) and part of southwest end elevation.

11 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0011: Building 24, a Type C building. View facing northeast showing rear (northwest) elevation and southwest end elevation.

12 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0012: Building 10, a Type D building. View facing southwest showing façade (east elevation) and north end elevation.

13 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0013: Rear yards of Buildings 10 (left) and 9 (right), with Utility Building at far end. View facing south.

14 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0014: Utility Building at south end of rear yards of Buildings 10 and 9. View facing southwest.

15 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0015: Administration Building, interior view of meeting room. View facing south.

16 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0016: Typical interior stair to second floor in housing unit.

17 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0017: Typical interior view of living room area in housing unit.

18 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0018: Typical interior view of kitchen in housing unit.

19 of 19. RI_ProvidenceCounty_ProspectHeightsHousingProject_0019: Typical interior view of bathroom in housing unit.

Photo Location Map (1 of 2)

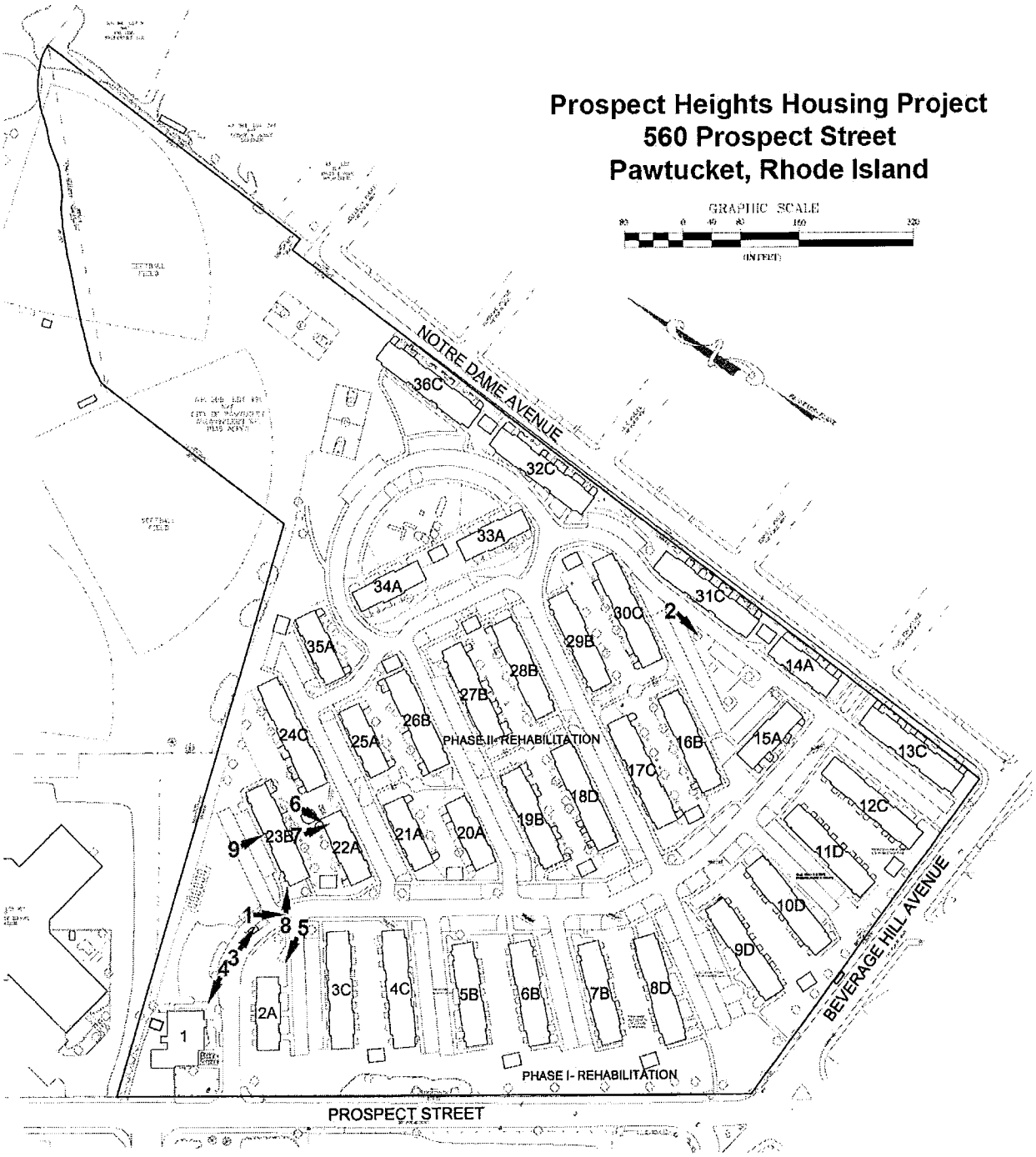
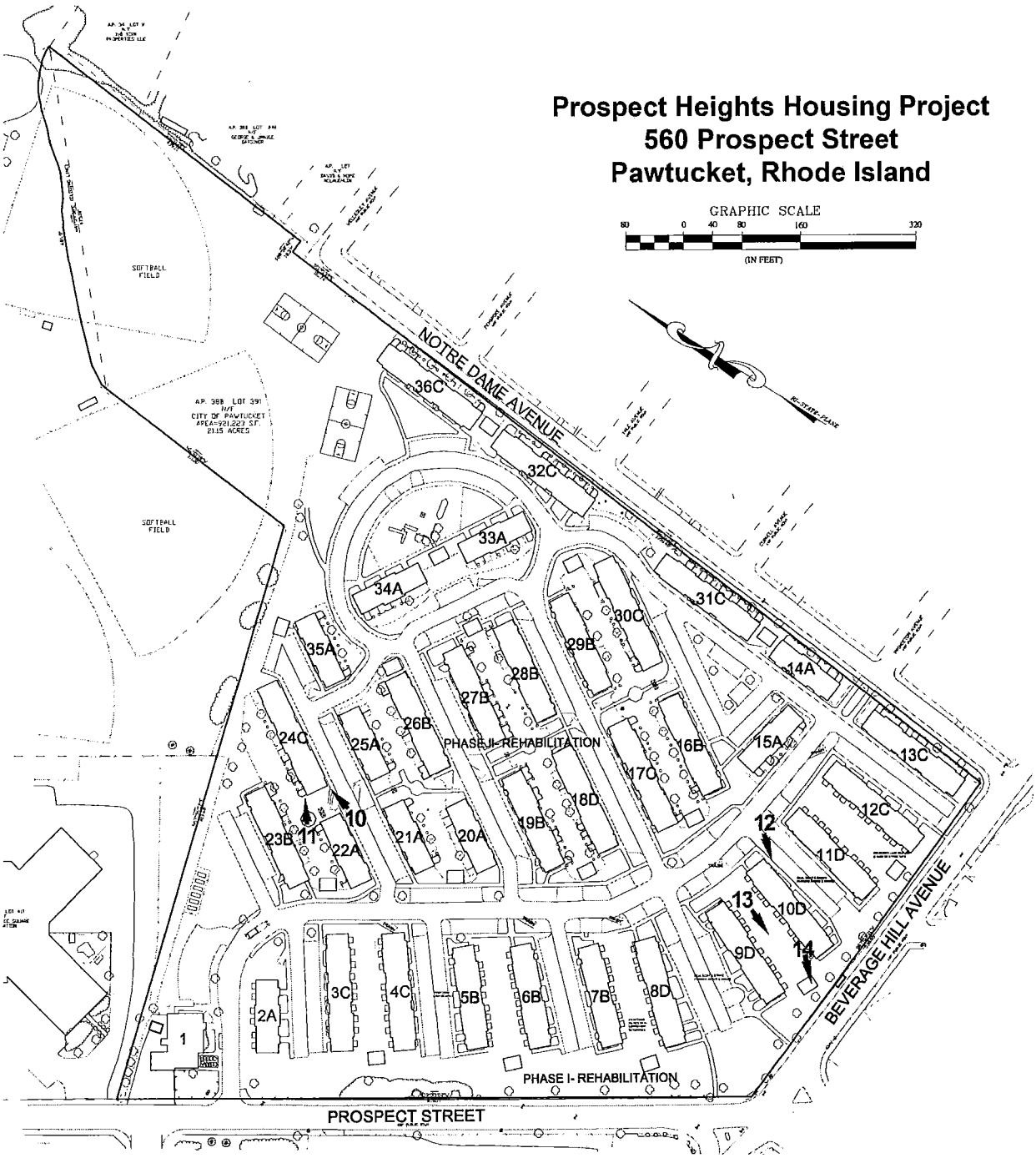


Photo Location Map (2 of 2)



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 100 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.

Google earth

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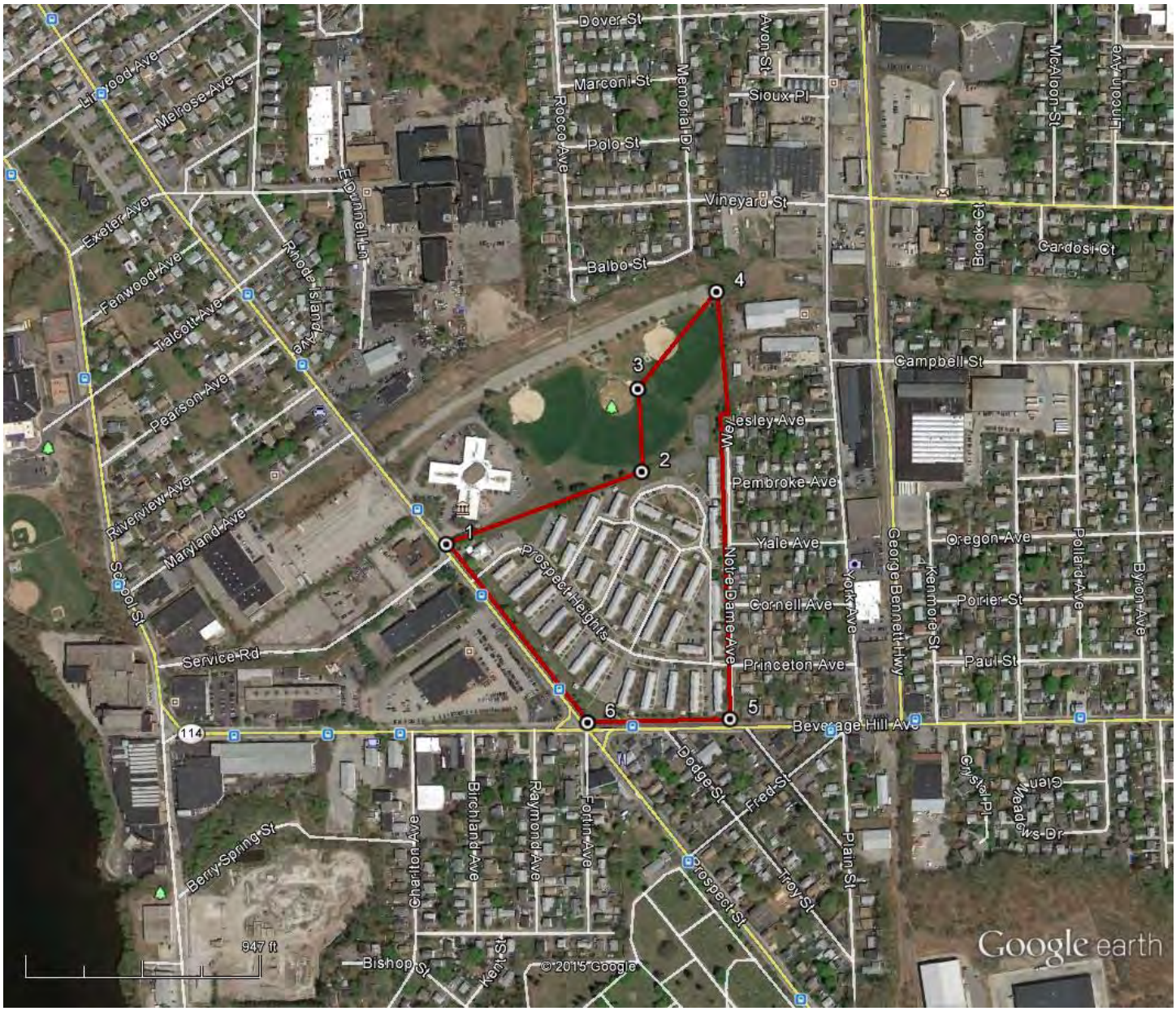
meters 400



Google earth

feet 2000

meters 700

SPEED
BUMP