



STAFF REPORT

DRCC #: 26-3641D

DATE: September 9, 2026

PROJECT NAME: 77 South Union Street -- Renovations

Latest Submission Received: September 1, 2026

Applicant:

Stockton Suites, LLC
77 South Union Street
Lambertville, NJ 08530
kellytown1@verizon.net

Engineer:

Joseph E. Keil, P.E.
Keil Engineering
66 Churchill Boulevard
Plumsted, NJ 08533

Project Location:

Road	Municipality	County	Block(s)	Lot(s)
77 South Union Street	Lambertville City	Hunterdon	1052	12

Jurisdictional Determination:

Zone A	Minor	Nongovernmental
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Subject to Review for:

Drainage	Visual	Traffic	Stream Corridors
	X		

Documents Received: Architectural Plan (1 sheet) dated July 6, 2026, prepared by Keil Engineering.

**THIS STAFF REPORT IS ISSUED AS A GUIDE TO APPLICANTS IN
COMPLYING WITH DRCC REGULATIONS. IT IS NOT AN APPROVAL. NO
CONSTRUCTION SHALL BEGIN UNTIL A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL
HAS BEEN ISSUED.**

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The application is complete and shall be presented to the Commission for their action with a staff recommendation of approval at the September 16, 2026, meeting based upon the following analysis:

Existing Conditions: The project area is a 9,148 square-foot (0.21 acre) lot located at the northwesterly corner of Mount Hope Street and South Union Street 22 feet east of the Delaware and Raritan Canal and within Commission Review Zone A. The project area is bounded by residential developments to the north, a hotel/restaurant to the east, a municipal park to the south, and South Canal Street followed by the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park to the west.



In the existing condition, the site consists of a 20th century commercial building, although the site has been developed by several industrial and commercial developments since the 1870s. The building appears in its current configuration on historic aerial imagery dating to 1974 and has been used over the ensuing years for several manufacturing, office and retail purposes including a restaurant, karate studio, law firm office, and a beauty salon.

In 2008 the Commission issued a certificate of approval for a project to replace three signs for a restaurant with three new signs, remove a ventilation system for the restaurant stove and grill and install a new hood placed in the center of the roof (DRCC #08-3641). In 2012 the project site received an exemption for maintenance work associated with the building air conditioner (DRCC #12-3641A). In 2024 the Commission issued a General Permit No. 1 for the in-kind replacement of a hanging sign on a bracket (DRCC #24-3641B). In 2026 the Commission issued a General Permit No. 1 for the in-kind replacement of the building roof, which consists of timber trusses spanned by timber purlins.

Proposed Project: The applicant proposes several exterior renovations to the existing building. Specifically, the applicant proposes to:

- Reframe an exterior wall that had sustained water damage;

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- Close off and reframe the one existing garage door (the center of three clustered together) located on the south elevation facing the municipal park;
- Frame in a new entry door in the location of the former garage door;
- Replace the existing exterior aluminum siding with cementitious board and batten siding;
- Replace the existing wood trim with PVC trim;
- Install air conditioner condenser and heat pump units to the roof of the building;
- Paint the remaining garage doors black, and paint the building in two different shades of gray with white trim throughout;
- Install a 36 inch-high natural stone veneer to the building at the ground level; and
- Install seven standing seam metal awnings, one over each of the entry doors on the south and east elevations.

The project would not result in the creation of any impervious surface coverage, or the disturbance of any land.

Stream Corridor: There are no streams or mapped watercourses on the site, the nearest being a tributary of the Delaware and Raritan Canal, which served as a raceway to former industrial properties, located approximately 215 feet to the south of the site. The project does not propose any intrusions into the stream corridor of this watercourse. Therefore, the project is not subject to stream corridor impact review pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:45-9.1(a).

Stormwater Runoff and Water Quality: The project does not propose an increase in impervious surface coverage. Therefore, the proposed project is not subject to stormwater runoff and water quality impact review pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:45-8.

Visual, Historic and Natural Quality Impact: N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.2(a) directs that the Commission shall review all projects in Zone A to determine if the project is in accord with the goals for the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park as defined in the park's Master Plan. The visual, historic, and natural quality impact review is intended to assure that development within Zone A is not harmful to the character of the environmental types identified in the Master Plan as comprising the park.

The project is located in an "Urban" canal environment as described in the Master Plan. The Urban canal environment name is characterized at N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.2(a) by the enclosure of the canal by dense development. The Master Plan states at Page 14 that goals for this section of the canal in the City of Lambertville are the completion of the multi-use trail and the placement of trees and shrubbery for definition and privacy. Therefore, nothing with respect to the proposed renovations is incompatible with the Master Plan.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.3(a) and (b), respectively, which discourage projects within certain portions of Review Zone A and authorize the Commission to require specific compensatory measures that mitigate the project's potential for harmful impact on the park as a condition of approval, are inapplicable to the proposed project, which is located in an Urban canal environment.

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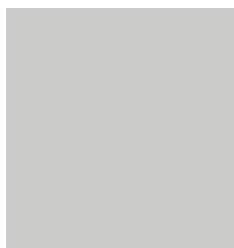
N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(a) directs that the projects in Review Zone A shall be set back from the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park sufficiently far so that the winter visual and natural quality of the park are not adversely affected. In Urban canal environments, there are no minimum setbacks except as may be prescribed by municipal ordinances. Therefore, the project is in compliance with this requirement.

N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(b) directs that projects in Review Zone A shall maintain a reasonable height and scale relationship to nearby structures or vegetation. In the Urban canal environment, the height of structures may vary according to the height of existing structures that have a visual relationship to the proposed structure. The proposed new HVAC units would be placed on the roof of the existing building, raising its overall height by approximately 47 inches in the case of the air conditioner condenser, and by approximately 25 inches in the case of the proposed heat pump. With these additions, the building height remains considerably lower than surrounding structures, most notably the “Raritan Pointe” multiunit residential development located at Block 1053. Therefore, the project is in compliance with this requirement.

N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(c) directs that for projects in Review Zone A, the exterior appearances of a project shall be in keeping with the character of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park’s individual environments. Specifically, proposed building colors shall harmonize with the man-made or natural surroundings of the project and shall be typical of colors found in the park environment. Proposed building materials and textures shall harmonize with the surrounding man-made and natural materials.

With regard to materials, the applicant proposes to replace the existing exterior vinyl clapboard-style siding with J. Hardie® cementitious siding in a board and batten design. The applicant also proposes to replace the existing trim with Azek® PVC trim. The applicant proposes to install seven domi® outdoor living standing seam metal canopy awnings above the six existing and one proposed entry door thresholds in a pent roof design. Five of the proposed air conditioner condenser/heat pump units would be located along the north elevation roof line, while four would be located on the flat roof of the portion of the building used most recently as a restaurant at the east elevation. Finally, the applicant proposes to install a 36 inch-high Panga Natural Stone Inc. stone veneer along the foundation of the south and east elevations of the building in a random ashlar pattern.

With respect to colors, the cementitious siding would be painted in two shades of gray. The south and east facing sides of the building would be painted Sherwin-Williams SW 6407 “Passive Grey”; while the north and west facing sides of the would be painted in Benjamin Moore “Delray Gray 1614.”



(Passive Grey)



(Delray Gray)

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The standing seam metal awnings would be powder coated in black, and the existing garage doors would be painted black. The PVC trim would be white in color.

Commission staff determines that the proposed materials and colors are typical of numerous signs approved by the Commission in the City of Lambertville, and that the project is in compliance with this requirement.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d)1, which direct that for projects in Review Zone A, electric, telephone, cable television, and other such lines and equipment shall be underground or otherwise not visible from the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, are inapplicable to the proposed project, which does not propose to add any such lines or equipment.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d)2, which direct that exposed storage areas, out-buildings, exposed machinery service areas, parking lots, loading areas, utility buildings, and similar ancillary areas and structures shall either be completely concealed from view from the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park or designed to minimize their visual impact on the park, are inapplicable to the project, which does not propose any new ancillary areas or structures.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d)3 and 4, respectively, which regulate the location and dimensions of commercial signs or outdoor advertising structures, are inapplicable to the proposed project, which does not propose any new signs or outdoor advertising structures onsite beyond those which have already obtained Commission approvals.

N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d)5 directs that wherever possible, natural terrains, soils, stones, and vegetation should be preserved, and that new vegetation, stones, and soils should be native to the environment in which they are placed. The applicant proposes no new landscaping or the removal of any existing landscaping. This requirement is, therefore, inapplicable to the proposed project.

N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d)6 directs that projects located in any officially designated Federal, State or local historic district or site shall be assessed for their impact upon that district or site. Recommendations to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts of a project on a listed property shall be made in consultation with the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and based upon the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

The project site is located in the Delaware and Raritan Canal Historic District, which encompasses the canal bed and all structures within 300 feet of the centerline of the canal. As noted above, the project site is located approximately 357 feet east of the canal. The project is also located within the boundaries of the Lambertville Historic District, which generally encompasses the area from the Delaware River to N.J. State Highway Route No. 29 and N.J. State Highway Route No. 179 (Bridge Street); and from north of Cherry Lane to south of Weeden Street. The district was added to the National and State Registers of Historic Places in 1983.

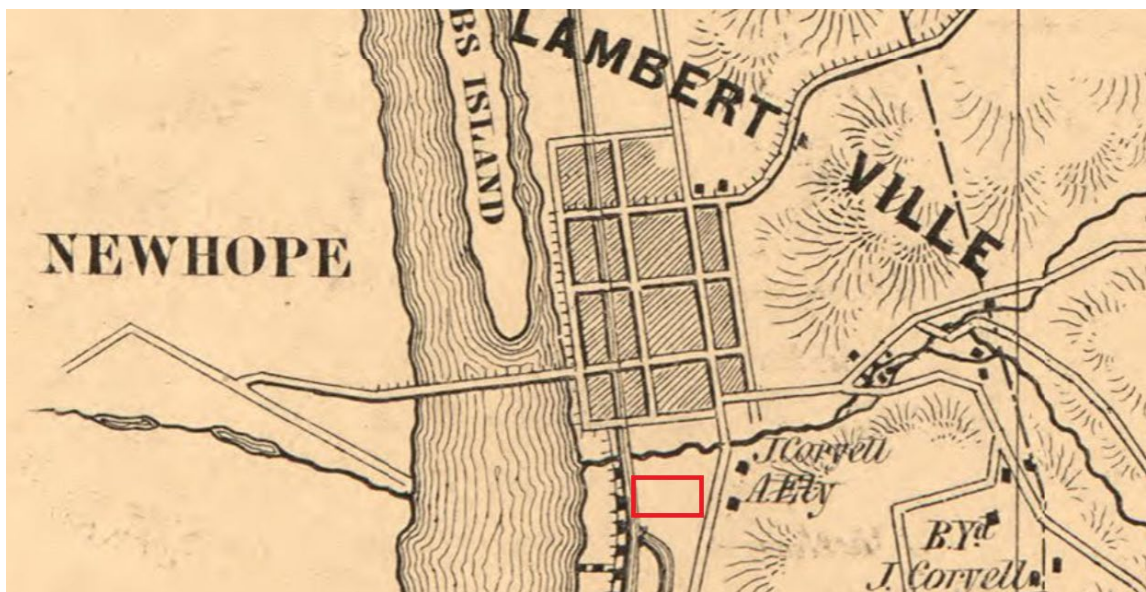
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With respect to impacts to the two historic districts noted above, Commission staff observes that the existing building that is proposed to be renovated post-dates the period of historic significance of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Historic District (1830-1933) and the Lambertville Historic District (1700-1933) by three decades, according to historic aerial imagery. The 1982 Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park Historic Structures Survey notes that the existing building does not possess any architectural significance.

Historical Background: Through the middle decades of the 19th century, the Lambertville City street grid ended north of Swan Creek. The land south of that point, including the land occupied by the existing building, was owned by the descendants of Emanuel Coryell, who had acquired generally everything south of present-day Delevan Street in 1732. His 1,016-acre estate was broken up after his death in 1742, and by the 19th century, the land in this area of the city was being subdivided and sold by the Coryell descendants.



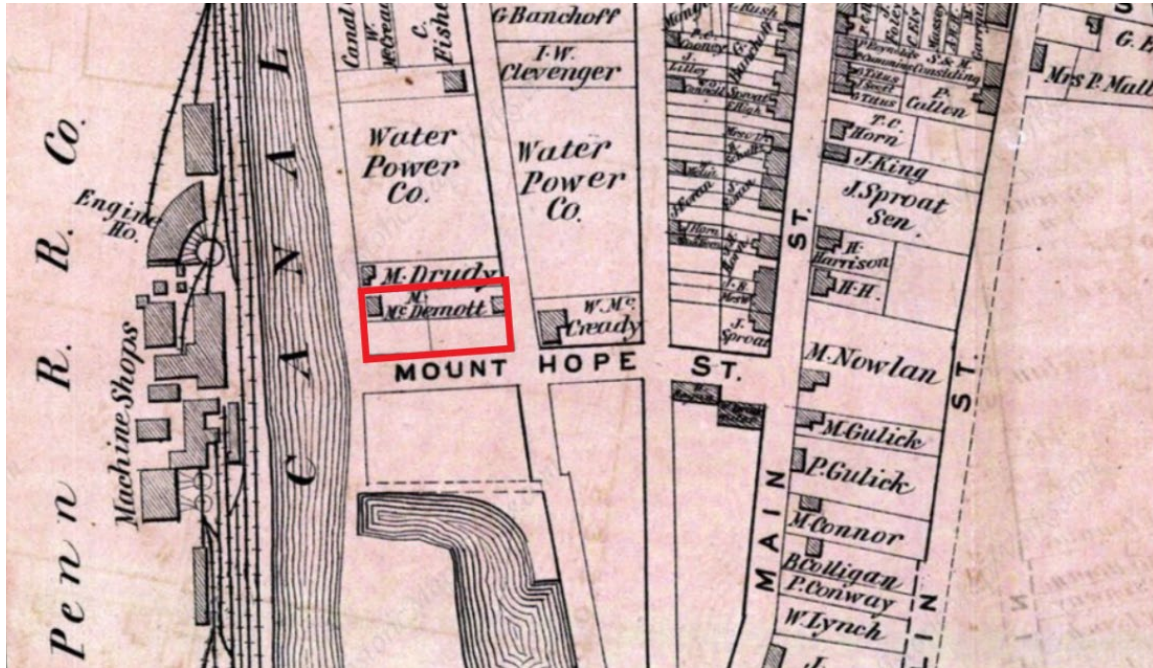
(1851 map of Lambertville and Hunterdon County. Lloyd Van Derveer & S.C. Cornell)

By the 1870s, the Lambertville Water and Power Company acquired a significant portion of the southern end of the city. The lands not otherwise owned by the company were divided into lots and developed, along with the street grid. One such development was the residence and coal yard businesses of A.H. Heath, which was preceded and then succeeded by a coal yard owned by Dermott and Brothers. It also appears that the yard was owned by Charles Matthews in between the ownerships of Heath and McDermott.

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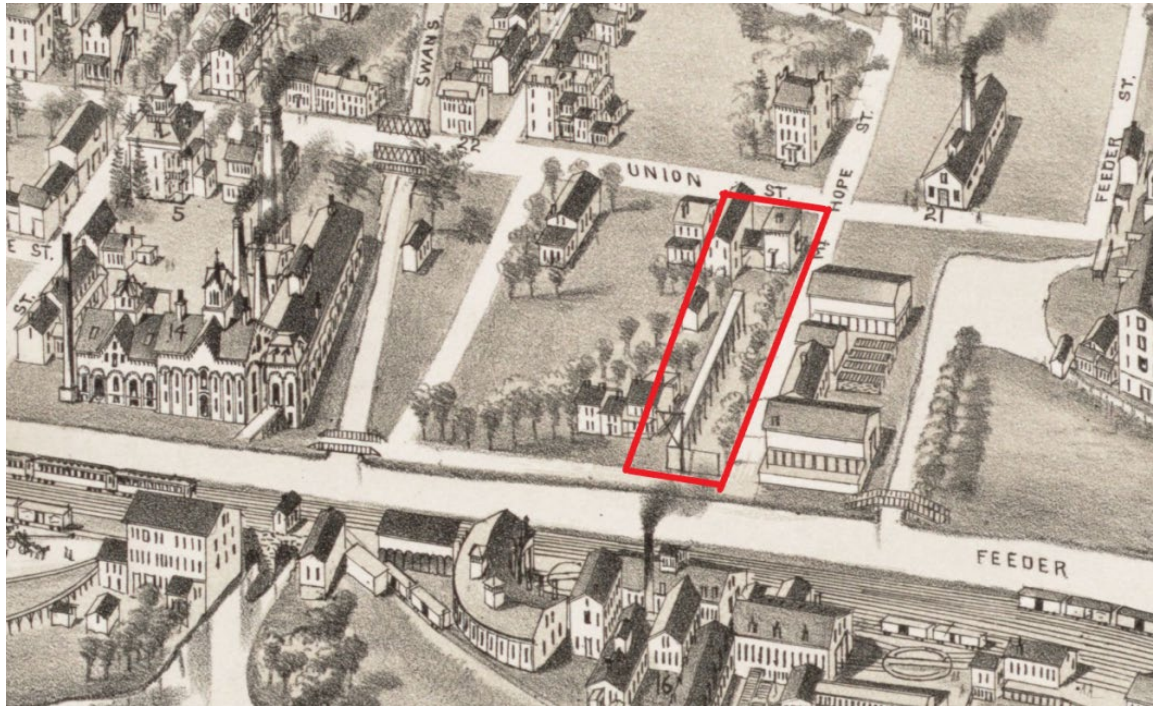
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(1873 map of Lambertville south of Bridge St. Beers, Comstock & Cline)

The 1883 bird's-eye map of Lambertville shows the residence and associated coal yard relative to the surrounding area.



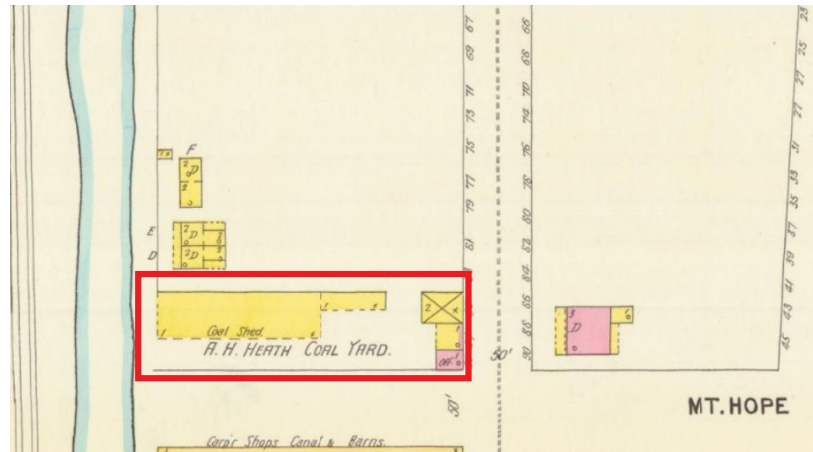
(1883 illustrated map of Lambertville. O.H. Bailey & Co.)

A review of Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps from this period is also useful. The 1885 and 1890 maps do not cover the area at all, probably due to it being sparsely developed. The 1897 map clearly depicts the A.H. Heath Coal Yard, along with a small brick office building and some nearby residential development.

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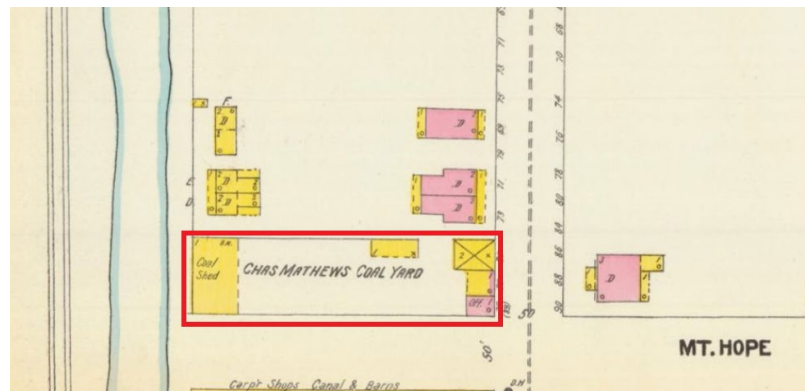
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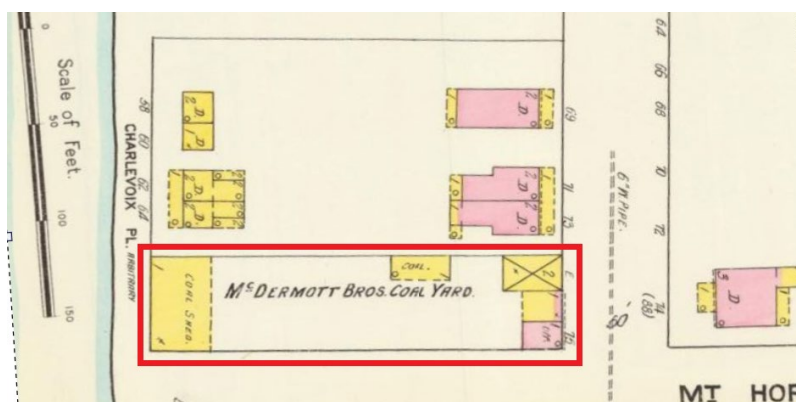
(1897)

By 1902, the ownership of the coal yard appears to have been taken over by Mr. Matthews, and the size of the coal shed greatly reduced.



(1912)

By 1912, the ownership appears to have reverted to the McDermotts, whose company appears in several editions of the Lambertville Beacon as a supplier of coal to the city's firehouses. However, by 1923, the site appears to no longer be a going concern, with the coal shed being described in the survey as vacant and dilapidated, and the office being unused.

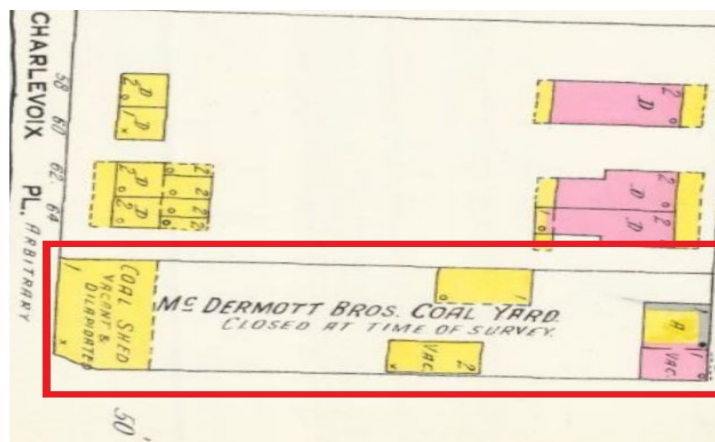


(1912)

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(1923)

At this point, the purpose of the project site changed from coal yard to an ice-making plant around 1945. Whether the present building was constructed at this time is unclear from aerial imagery. This ice plant business continued to operate until the early 1960s when it was supplanted by H.L. Birum Corporation, a manufacturer of office partition and cubicle walls, which remained in business until at least 1978, according to the brochure image below.



Commission staff notes that with respect to the Delaware and Raritan Canal Historic District, the existing building was either constructed circa 1945 as an ice plant, and heavily modified over the ensuing decades to accommodate changing uses, or was constructed in the early 1960s for the H.L. Birum Corporation. Either way, neither of these uses has any historic relationship to the Delaware and Raritan Canal and would post-date the period of

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historic significance of the canal. With respect to the Lambertville Historic District, the building would succeed the period of historic significance of that district as well. Commission staff also notes that the Lambertville Historic Preservation Commission declined to review the project.

Given the foregoing, Commission staff determines that the project does not impact any officially designated Federal, State or local historic district or Register-listed property, and that the project is in compliance with this requirement.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Hutchison", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Hutchison
Executive Director

- c. Hunterdon County Planning Board
City of Lambertville Planning Board

Please refer to the Commission project number (DRCC #) when making a submission, a resubmission, or transmitting project correspondence or documents.