



### 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	
46	8	buildings
2	0	sites
0	0	structures
8	0	objects
56	8	Total

#### Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

#### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

9

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: park  
COMMERCE: office building  
COMMERCE: department store  
COMMERCE: specialty store  
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling  
INDUSTRY: factory  
RELIGION: church  
SOCIAL: clubhouse

#### Current Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: park  
COMMERCE: office building  
COMMERCE: specialty store  
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling  
EDUCATION: school  
RELIGION: church  
VACANT/NOT IN USE

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Renaissance  
Italianate  
Art Moderne

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone, limestone, granite  
walls brick, limestone, brownstone, terra cotta  
roof metal, slate, composition  
other

#### Narrative Description

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

### 8. Description

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

#### Period of Significance

1870 - 1967

#### Significant Dates

1916

#### Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Ely, Wilson and John

Guilbert and Betelle

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Approx. 10 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

18  
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries are unchanged in this document, from the original nomination.

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nancy L. Zerbe, President

organization ARCH<sup>2</sup>, Inc.

date March, 2017

street & number 495 Main Street, Suite 28

telephone 732-906-8203

city or town Metuchen

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## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs:** Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

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

## Property Owner

name/title Various

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_

zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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<b>Military Park Commons Historic District (Additional Documentation)</b>
Name of Property
Essex County, New Jersey
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Due to the passage of time from the preparation of the original National Register nomination in 2004, the district’s end date for the period of significance has been re-evaluated and extended to 1967. Of the 62 buildings currently within the boundaries of the Military Park Commons Historic District, four of the more prominent buildings (IBM building at 566-570 Broad; Kislak Building at 579 Broad; YM-YWCA at 586-602 Broad; and the Military Park underground parking garage) were either built or significantly renovated in the 1950s and early 1960s, a time of major urban renewal for the City of Newark.

In 2004, the historic district contained a total of 70 buildings (8 individually listed in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places; 6 evaluated as Key Contributing but not listed in the Registers; 44 Contributing; and 12 Non-Contributing); 2 sites (1 evaluated as Key Contributing but not listed in the Registers, and 1 Contributing) and 8 objects (1 individually listed in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places; 3 evaluated as Key Contributing but not listed in the Registers; and 4 Contributing). Based on the new end date for the period of significance combined with a review of changes within the historic district, there are currently a total of 62 buildings (8 individually listed in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places; 5 evaluated as Key Contributing but not listed in the Registers; 41 Contributing; and 8 Non-Contributing); 2 sites (1 evaluated as Key Contributing but not listed in the Registers, and 1 Contributing) and 9 objects (1 individually listed in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places; 3 evaluated as Key Contributing but not listed in the Registers; and 5 Contributing, 1 of which dates to 1966 and has been added to the inventory in this update).

In terms of demolition, the main loss has been on the west side of Broad Street, where two new modern structures have been built, a one-story commercial structure and a large high-rise Prudential office complex. The area immediately surrounding the new structures, which includes Military Park and adjacent contributing structures along Broad Street and Park Place, has retained its architectural integrity; therefore, not affecting the historic district’s National Register eligibility.

The following additional documentation re-evaluates buildings that fall within the extended period of significance, i.e., between 1940 and 1967; lists the resources that have been demolished subsequent to the 2004 nomination; and lists any new construction within the historic district. In addition, buildings evaluated in 2004 as contributing to the historic district were re-evaluated; however, no buildings were altered to the extent that they are no longer considered contributing.

566-570 Broad Street  
Add:

Block 14 Lot 1

This building was constructed in 1960-61. In August 1961, it was announced that IBM was moving into this building as the major tenant. This building falls within the expanded period of significance; however, it appears that the exterior elevations have been covered with all new material. Therefore, it no longer reflects its 1960s appearance would continue to be considered non-contributing. (see photo AD-1).

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579 Broad Street Block 18 Lots 11-15

Add:

The building was constructed ca. 1920 and renovated with a new façade in 1960-61. In light of the expanded end date for the period of significance, this building is contributing. (see photo AD-2).

586-602 Broad Street Block 15 Lots 1-9

Add:

In light of the expanded end date for the period of significance, this building is contributing.

Add:

The groundbreaking ceremony for this building was held on July 16, 1952; the YMCA and YWCA merged as of January 1, 1954; and the building (at that time consisting of only 9 stories) was dedicated in November 1955. In 1959, the Y added three more stories to the building. In 1963, the Y announced the need for more space; however, this additional construction does not appear to have taken place. (see photo AD-3).

614-706 Broad Street Block 124 Lot 1  
Military Park

Add:

In light of the expanded end date for the period of significance, the parking garage and attached elevator kiosks are jointly considered a contributing building.

On August 3, 1959, the City broke ground for the Military Park parking garage. Following a few construction delays, the garage was finished and dedicated on August 1, 1961. The three-level garage with parking for 1,030 cars is located under 3.3 acres of Military Park's 5.9 acres.

At the southern end of the park is a bronze plaque that reads "Memorial Garden Newark's 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Established by Newark Garden Club 1966." The plaque is mounted on a stone base. This plaque, erected during the expanded period of significance, is considered a contributing object. (see photo AD-4).

Add:

40 East Park Street Block 126, Lots 52, 1-2

The text in the original nomination describes this building as non-contributing due to its alterations; however, the associated map indicates that it is a contributing resource. The building still reflects its basic form from the late nineteenth century; therefore, it is considered contributing.

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Add:  
655 Broad Street Block 51, Lots 42, 49, 50, 53, 56, 59, 62, & 64  
Early twenty-first century commercial office complex consisting of a low two-story section connected to a multi-story high-rise.

Add:  
691 Broad Street Block 52, Lots 32, 34, 38, & 39  
2-story 4 bay early twenty-first century commercial building.

**The following buildings were demolished and should be removed from the “Military Park Commons Historic District Inventory”:**

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 665-671 Broad Street | Block 51, Lot 59*      |
| 673-675 Broad Street | Block 51, Lot 62       |
| 677 Broad Street     | Block 51, Lot 64       |
| 679-681 Broad Street | Block 52, Lot 32       |
| 683-687 Broad Street | Block 52, Lot 34       |
| 689-691 Broad Street | Block 52, Lot 38       |
| 693-695 Broad Street | Block 52, Lot 39       |
| 16 Fulton Street     | Block 14, Lots 50 & 51 |
| 7 Kitchell Street    | Block 125, Lot 84      |
| 34-36 Park Place     | Block 125, Lot 26      |
| 40 Rector Street     | Block 17, Lot 26       |
| 24-26 Central Avenue | Block 18, Lot 1        |

\*Note: 665-671 was incorrectly listed in the original National Register nomination as consisting of Block 51, Lots 59 and 1; however, Lot 1 is outside of the historic district and has therefore been removed from this listing.

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Military Park Commons Historic District  
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Name of Property

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The purpose of this amendment is to extend the end date of the period of significance for the Military Park Commons Historic District from 1940 to 1967. The justification for this extension is two-fold. First, looking at the original nomination for the historic district, the historic themes cited as significant under Criterion A extend to the 50-year cut-off of 1967, which is the year of the Newark riots that had such a great impact on the city. These themes include Newark's great urbanization, especially as it pertains to the area as a premiere shopping district; the park and the district as a social gathering spot; and the use of the park to reflect the City's patriotic pride and memories. The continuation of each of these themes through 1967 is discussed below. In addition, the extension incorporates an important time related to Newark's "great urbanization," i.e., the mid-twentieth century reform efforts. The reformers in Newark in the 1950s, reacting to the "urban crisis" affecting cities, "sought a modernized government, one that would be more responsive to the urban challenges of the moment and to the city's changing population."<sup>1</sup> The reform movement resulted in Newark's 1954 change in its form of government, the election of reformer Leo P. Carlin as mayor, and the initiation of his "New Newark" urban renewal initiatives. Although many of his goals to improve Newark's problems were not realized—especially after the 1967 riots—the reforms did result in a new form of city government, several major companies committing to stay in the city, and an extensive amount of new building infrastructure including seven extant structures within the Military Park Commons Historic District. The Military Park garage, New Jersey's first underground garage, spurred \$15,000,000 of construction in its immediate vicinity.<sup>2</sup>

**NEWARK'S PREMIERE SHOPPING DISTRICT**

Newark continued to serve as an important shopping district up through the time of the 1967 riots. In February 1965, the Associated Dry Goods Corporation, which owned Hahne's Newark, reported that their downtown stores were doing well in terms of sales, indicating that "All of the chain's midtown units went ahead of the preceding year's results," attributing the increase to "downtown revivals."<sup>3</sup> On July 16, 1967, after several days of rioting in the City of Newark, *The New York Times* wrote that "Days and nights of rioting...are sapping [Newark's] economic lifeblood. Near-empty downtown streets, shuttered stores, closed theaters, and restaurants, almost-vacant parking lots, a scattering of riders on buses on what normally is a busy shopping day..." The article proceeds to discuss the effect on "the major department stores" including on Military Park.<sup>4</sup> It is clear from this article that the Military Park area had at that time lost neither its role as a major shopping district nor its major department stores. In 1976, nine years after the riots, three downtown Newark stores, Two Guys, Bamberger's, and Hahne's, were reported in *The New York Times* as fighting "blue laws" to require them to be closed on Sundays.<sup>5</sup> Two specialty stores mentioned in the National Register nomination, the Griffith Piano Company and the Lauter Piano Company, also survived into the mid-twentieth century as they are both listed at their Broad Street addresses in the 1957-1958 *Newark Directory*.<sup>6</sup> Parker and Lena Griffith,



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owners of the piano company, both passed away in 1960; the “piano business lasted another dozen or so years.”<sup>7</sup>

**MEETING PLACE**

In terms of the historic district’s role as an important gathering place, the park, the YM-YWCA (built in the mid-1950s), and the Robert Treat Hotel (enlarged in the early 1960s) served as important gathering places for the city well past 1940.

Local newspapers indicate that throughout the mid-twentieth century, Military Park continued to serve as a community meeting spot, including during World War II. In July 1942, Newark participated in a statewide air raid drill, with the officials conducting the alarm standing in the southern end of Military Park.<sup>8</sup> On several occasions, the park was a gathering spot for efforts to sell war bonds. In September 1942, well-known movie star Hedy Lamarr appeared at the Robert Treat Hotel to promote the sale of war bonds. A crowd estimated to be between 15,000 to 20,000 gathered in Military Park to see her as she rode along Broad Street in a jeep.<sup>9</sup> In April 1943, a one-man Japanese submarine captured at Pearl Harbor was exhibited in Military Park as part of a campaign to sell war bonds by offering bond purchasers a special preview of the submarine.<sup>10</sup>

Newspaper articles from 1940 to the early 1960s document the wide range of local, regional, and state organizations that met at the Robert Treat Hotel, very often with a prominent state or federal official as a keynote speaker. The organizations ranged from business groups, e.g. Bond Club of New Jersey, Northern New Jersey Businessmen, unions and employers (sometimes meeting at the Robert Treat to mediate), Atlantic States Shippers Advisory Board, Federal Bar Association of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, New Jersey Self-Insurers Association, NJ Retail Butchers Association, the NJ Slaughterers Association, the NJ Retail Live Poultry Association, Self-Insurers Association, Northern NJ Chapter of the American Society of Tool, and Sales Executives Club of New Jersey; civic and non-profit organizations, e.g., Kiwanis Club, Newark Boston Terrier Club, Notre Dame alumni, New Jersey Symphony (for their Annual Ball), and West Hudson Hospital, Kearny (for their Annual Ball); and numerous political functions, e.g., June 1940 meeting of Republican convention delegates with Presidential candidate Thomas Dewey, October 1961 press conference and private reception with former President Eisenhower campaigning for Republican Governor candidate James P. Mitchell; and religious meetings, e.g., June 1940 Catholic War Veterans Annual Convention, and July 1940 consecration of the new Bishop of Newark. Prominent individuals who either stayed at or attended events at the hotel during the 1940s to 1960s include: U. S. Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy; U. S. Presidential nominee Thomas E. Dewey; New Jersey Governors Charles Edison and Richard J. Hughes; Assistant Secretary for Air Robert H.

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Hinckley; General Counsel of the U.S. Treasury Department Randolph E. Paul; Westinghouse Company Board Chairman A.W.R. Robertson; and Paramount Pictures, Inc. Executive Committee Chair Stanton Griffis.<sup>11</sup>

The YM-YWCA also served as a social gathering spot. At the groundbreaking ceremony in 1952 (prior to the merger with the YWCA), it was announced that the facility would have space for 300 men.<sup>12</sup> In addition to the residential component, the Y provided a wide range of programs, described in 1956 as a “hub of an activities program that ranges from water ballet to opera appreciation, from judo to shorthand.”<sup>13</sup> The Y also served as a gathering spot for students who commuted to either Rutgers-Newark or the Newark College of Engineering and needed a place to study.<sup>14</sup>

### MEMORIALS

The tradition of placing monuments to showcase the City’s patriotic pride and memories extends to 1966 with the 1965 placement of the Jacques Lipschitz bust of John F. Kennedy and the Newark Garden Club’s 1966 development of the Memorial Garden, both located at the southern end of Military Park. In conjunction with the new Memorial Garden, which contains a bronze plaque in honor of Newark’s 1966 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary, PSE&G gifted to the City a lighting system to illuminate both the garden and the nearby Kennedy bust. The system was described in the local newspaper at the time as consisting of “Sixteen ground-based units laid out in the form of a bell illuminate the Memorial Garden. The dome-shaped fixtures are of a new design and are the first installed anywhere in the country. A photo-electric cell automatically activates all the lights at dusk while a timer extinguishes them at midnight.”<sup>15</sup>

### MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY REFORMS

Starting in 1917, Newark operated under a five-member commission form of government, in which the five commissioners determined which of them would serve as mayor and then divided up between them oversight of the city’s various departments. As described in the *Newark Evening News*,

Under commission government, every commissioner rules his department virtually without interference from his colleagues. The mayor is merely a presiding officer, and because his general powers are largely ceremonial the city has no real leader. No one can be held directly responsible for errors or extravagance, so no commissioner has any incentive to be economical or industrious.<sup>16</sup>

This system was described as having “produced a city hall bogged down in patronage and corruption.”<sup>17</sup> In 1953, a group of reformers, led by labor, business, and professional

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organizations and calling themselves the Newark Citizens Committee on Municipal Government, advocated for a change in the city's form of governing.<sup>18</sup>

The Committee was able to gather enough signatures to place a question on the May 12, 1953 ballot as to whether or not to study a new form of government. By a vote of 62,687 for and 8,168 against the study, the proposal overwhelmingly passed. In twelve weeks, a five-member study commission recommended that Newark adopt a new form of government with a strong mayor and nine council persons.<sup>19</sup> In November 1953, the citizens of Newark voted to adopt the new form of government, which the city still has today, with nine council members (four elected at-large and one from each of the five wards) and a mayor elected directly by the people of Newark.<sup>20</sup>

City Commissioner and Labor Leader Leo P. Carlin won the mayoral election on May 11, 1954 and took office on July 1 with a strong mandate to improve city operations, strengthen the business community's confidence in the city, and improve the city's business, residential, and industrial infrastructure. In the mid-twentieth century, cities were struggling with "urban crisis," described by Mark Krasovic as "variously configured as uncontrolled metropolitan expansion, human migrations, the financial and demographic depletion of inner cities, and the political and physical conflicts engendered in particular places by those broad social phenomena."<sup>21</sup>

Mayor Carlin's early efforts to better manage city government increased faith in the city's administration. As Robert Curvin explained, "The new mayor-council government gave assurances to some members of the business community that better government would protect the city's economic future."<sup>22</sup> In December 1954, when Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company announced their decision to stay in Newark, they explained that their decision was based on the fact that the change in Newark's government "fosters the kind of good economic climate attractive to business interests. The directors are impressed with the sound and constructive approach of the present administration toward many of the problems of our city government, as well as those which are plaguing business in other large cities."<sup>23</sup>

In early 1955, Mayor Carlin formed an 18-member Newark Committee on Economic Development consisting of industrial, financial, and labor leaders, and chaired by Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company President H. Bruce Palmer.<sup>24</sup> By late 1955, Prudential Insurance Company had joined Mutual Benefit Life and committed to stay in Newark, announcing plans for a twenty-four-story main office building with two seven-story wings. As historian John Cunningham stated, "Revitalization could be seen everywhere... Three years after the new government took office, nearly \$250 million in new public and private money had been committed to rebuild downtown Newark."<sup>25</sup> According to the *Newark Reports To Its Citizens*,

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for 1956, \$30 million of that figure was due to the commitment of the two major insurance companies, Mutual Life and Prudential.<sup>26</sup> By 1961, the investment had grown to approximately \$800 million.<sup>27</sup>

Mayor Carlin dubbed his initiatives the “New Newark” initiative; many press announcements of new construction during the late 1950s and early 1960s alluded to this terminology. In June 1955, for example, the Newark Chamber of Commerce held their annual meeting at the Robert Treat Hotel, where—as described in the press—“Optimism was the keynote as 400 members of the Newark Chamber of Commerce and guests listened to a panel discussion on ‘The New Newark.’”<sup>28</sup>

Newark’s aggressive efforts during Mayor Carlin’s administration are reflected in various planning documents and statistics. First, records indicate that by the late 1950s, Newark had built more public housing units per capita than any other city in the United States.<sup>29</sup> The City’s Bureau of Inspection’s “Annual Building Inspectors Reports” indicate a high level of permits issued in the early 1960s. For the five-year period of 1960-1964, the total number of permits issued averaged approximately 1110 per year. For the subsequent five-year period of 1965-1969, the average dropped to approximately 650 per year.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the Central Planning Board, which was responsible for reviewing development applications in the central business district, reported in their annual reports for 1961 and 1962 that due to the volume of projects, the Board met an average of three times per month rather than their usual once a month.<sup>31</sup>

The following list of projects developed in Newark during the late 1950s and early 1960s was compiled from numerous public reports and press announcements; unless otherwise cited, the projects were included in the Municipal Council of Newark’s *1954-1961 Report to the People*. The properties marked in **bold** are within the boundaries of the Military Park Historic District and are discussed individually (if extant):

- Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company’s new 20-story office structure at 520 Broad Street
- **Philip J. Bowers Company’s renovation and modernization of their two buildings at 595-603 Broad Street; renovations announced in February 1955<sup>32</sup>**
- Prudential’s new headquarters at 745 Broad Street
- **1959 groundbreaking for the 1003-car underground parking deck at Military Park<sup>33</sup> (ribbon cutting in August 1961<sup>34</sup>)**
- 1959 announcement of two other possible projects that were “set in motion” by the parking garage:
  - **\$6 million addition and renovation of the Robert Treat Hotel**

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

- **construction of a \$2.5 million 12-story office building opposite Military Park at 657-59 Broad Street (demolished)<sup>35</sup>**
- **J. I. Kislak, Inc.'s renovation of their 5-story building at 579 Broad Street<sup>36</sup>**
- New Jersey Hospital Plan 6-story office building at 500 Broad Street
- **L.B.M. 14-story building at 570 Broad Street**
- **YM-YWCA Building (dedicated in 1955<sup>37</sup>; added to in 1959<sup>38</sup>)**
- 550-car parking garage at the corner of Plane and Academy Streets
- Broad Street National Bank at 905 Broad Street
- Rutgers University's Law Center in Washington Park<sup>39</sup>
- Newark College of Engineering's \$3½ million building expansion program to add 50% to classroom space for incoming freshmen<sup>40</sup>
- Colonnade Park three 22-story buildings
- Stella Wright homes on Spruce Street in the Old Third Ward
- Weequahic Park Tower 21-story apartment building on Elizabeth and Meeker Avenues
- Mt. Prospect Towers 14-story apartment building at 380 Mt. Prospect Avenue
- Abington Towers 14-story apartment building at 402 Mt. Prospect Avenue
- Engelhard Industries at 497 Delancey Street
- Stephen Crane Village homes for the elderly
- \$100 million program to build or modernize schools
- Remodeling of Westinghouse meter division plant
- Public Service Electric and Gas Company switching station at Plane and Williams Streets
- New Jersey Bell Telephone long lines relay tower at Plane and Williams Streets
- Mann Kraft Plant on Route 1
- Dixon Chemical Company sulphate plant, 340 Doremus Avenue
- Port Newark Cargo distribution center

*Construction Activity within the Military Park Historic District*

The flurry of construction activity in Newark in the late 1950s and early 1960s included at least eight structures within the Military Park Historic District; the history of the seven extant structures is discussed below.

One of the most important developments in the historic district was the underground parking garage, a project that was considered, studied, and talked about for many years. According to newspaper descriptions, the garage "set in motion" other projects, including the \$6 million 14-story addition to the Robert Treat Hotel and the \$2.5 million 12-story office building at 657-59

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Broad Street (no longer extant).<sup>41</sup> It is interesting to see how many projects were underway around the same time as the garage opened in 1961: In May, the Kislak Company moved their 300 employees into their newly renovated building at 579 Broad Street; in June, the Robert Treat Hotel announced their plans for the 14-story addition; on August 1, the garage was dedicated; and in mid-August, it was announced that IBM was moving to 570 Broad Street.

*YM-YWCA*

The YM-YWCA building, the first major building constructed in the Military Park Historic District during the 1950s and 1960s, was planned prior to the change in city government and Mayor Carlin's administration. In May 1952, the Newark YMCA announced that they were starting a campaign to raise \$1,600,000 for a new building at Broad and Rector Streets to replace their 50-year-old building on Halsey Street.<sup>42</sup> Only two months later, despite the fact that the YMCA had only raised two-thirds of the money needed for the new building, they proceeded to initiate the project with a groundbreaking ceremony on July 16, 1952. The decision to start construction was described as "a declaration of faith in Newark... 'Y' officials and campaign leaders are evincing their faith in Newark."<sup>43</sup> In conjunction with the July 1952 groundbreaking, the site was described as "one of the city's prominent corners" in an area becoming an institutional and cultural center.<sup>44</sup>

Struggles associated with fundraising led to a 1953 decision for the Newark YMCA and YWCA to merge.<sup>45</sup> This merger, effective January 1, 1954,<sup>46</sup> resulted in the first joint YM-YWCA in the United States.<sup>47</sup>

When the new building was dedicated in November 1955, *Newark Evening News* Editor Lloyd M. Felmlly stated that "The Newark YM-YWCA was the 'bellwether of the movement for a New Newark.'" He complimented the Y officials for the courage to start this project, stating that "Since that time, the change in the city's form of government and the decision of large business companies to put up new offices here have given added impetus to a redevelopment of the downtown area."<sup>48</sup>

In 1959, only four years after the building originally opened, the Y announced plans to add three more stories to the building. As part of the announcement, "Carrol M. Shanks, chairman of the Y's Committee of Friends, stated that the 1955 building was 'the first visible step toward the 'New Newark' in which we are all interested.'"<sup>49</sup> These additional stories were added and in 1963, after only another four years, the Y announced the need for more space. This additional construction does not appear to have taken place, yet the ongoing need for more space is a tribute to how much the Y's services were in demand.<sup>50</sup>

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*Military Park Underground Parking Garage*

The *Newark Evening News* morgue files reflect that the concept of placing parking beneath Military Park was discussed and debated in Newark for many years, with several 1929 articles discussing the idea.<sup>51</sup> By the mid-1940s, the Central Planning Board was supporting the garage, but the Newark Chamber of Commerce was opposed.<sup>52</sup> In 1947, the City's Central Planning Board issued *The Master Plan for the Physical Development of the City of Newark, N.J.*, which emphasized the need for additional parking and included analyses of parking facilities in the central business districts of ten large American cities and estimated projected parking needs in downtown Newark through 1970. The proposed parking garage under Military Park is discussed in the plan and shown in a rendering.<sup>53</sup>

According to Mark Krasovic, the push to develop the parking garage was certainly tied to notions of urban crisis and a concern with drawing people who had migrated out of the city back into Newark for work, shopping, and entertainment.<sup>54</sup> This theory is supported by some of the local press for the garage, including a 1946 article stating "Necessity presses for action. Insufficient parking space is injuring downtown business, which supplies so large a part of the city's tax revenues. We cannot continue to encourage the trend toward decentralization or to make it more convenient for suburban residents to shop in New York."<sup>55</sup>

From the mid-1940s to the mid-1950s, the City continued to review and discuss the idea, including looking at the example from other cities. In 1945, it was reported that the city was studying San Francisco's experience with underground parking at Union Square Park. At that time, it was reported that "San Francisco's underground garage was not the first of its type to be constructed. Others are located in Santiago, Chile; Buenos Aires and Salt Lake City, Utah. The Salt Lake City garage is the largest of these, holding about 200 cars."<sup>56</sup>

In 1958, the *Newark Evening News* reported that they had "gathered reports from correspondents in Pittsburgh, Chicago, Kansas City, San Francisco and Los Angeles...In all the cities, the garages have been successful. Not only have they helped substantially to relieve deficiencies in parking space, but they have materially enhanced the value of adjacent properties."<sup>57</sup> Over approximately a week, the newspaper printed articles on the following garages built under urban parks or squares: Mellon Square Park in Pittsburgh, Union Square Park and Civic Center park in San Francisco, Auditorium Plaza park in Kansas City, Pershing Square Garage in Los Angeles, and Grant Park garage in Chicago, described as "the biggest in the world."

In 1959, the City retained consultants to prepare a feasibility report for the new garage. This report analyzed the capital costs and potential income and expenses associated with the garage, as well as the city's need for additional parking to accommodate businesses and shoppers.<sup>58</sup>

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On August 3, 1959, the City broke ground for the Military Park parking garage.<sup>59</sup> Following a few construction delays, the garage was finished and dedicated on August 1, 1961, when Mayor Carlin hailed the garage as “another link in the chain of building the ‘New Newark.’ ” The three-level garage with parking for 1,030 cars was located under 3.3 acres of Military Park’s 5.9 acres.<sup>60</sup>

*Robert Treat Hotel*

In June 1961, the management of the Robert Treat Hotel announced that they were adding a 14-story \$6,000,000 brick and steel addition, including 180 rooms, a 1250-person banquet room, and eight private dining rooms.<sup>61</sup>

*Kislak*

Contemporary newspaper articles at the time the Kislaks bought and spent approximately \$400,000 renovating the 1920s building at 579 Broad Street indicate that the renewal efforts in Newark were clearly a major factor that drew the Kislak company to Newark. Kislak President Julius I. Kislak stated in January 1960, when they purchased the building, that “the growth of the concern’s business in the Essex County area, plus the improved outlook for Newark, dictated the development of our plans,” and that “the new look in Newark was what prompted [the company] to come here after 33 years in Jersey City.”<sup>62</sup> When renovations began that summer, Kislak Senior Vice-President Joseph G. Segal stated that “The business and government climate in the New Newark is most receptive to new neighbors. I want to commend both Mayor Carlin and the Newark Economic Development Committee for helping to create the atmosphere.”<sup>63</sup>

*Philip J. Bowers Company*

In February 1955, the Philip J. Bowers Company announced that they were planning to renovate and modernize their building at 595-603 Broad Street.<sup>64</sup>

*IBM*

In August 1961, it was announced that IBM would move its Newark office from 965 Broad Street to 570 Broad Street (at the northern end of the Military Park Commons Historic District). IBM would occupy six stories and therefore be the major tenant of the new 14-story building. The manager of IBM’s Newark unit said that “the choice of the building was largely influenced by its nearness to the new Military Park underground garage, its location ‘in the heart of the highly promising New Newark area,’ and the attractions of an ultra-modern air-conditioned structure.”<sup>65</sup>

IBM, which was described at that time as “mainly serving North Jersey banking and insurance enterprises,”<sup>66</sup> moved in close proximity to the Prudential Insurance Company, who only a year



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earlier had been described as having an electronic data processing center that was “the largest commercial installation of its kind anywhere.”<sup>67</sup>

*Urban Decline*

In August 1960, *The New York Times* reported that “Within the last few years, Newark has come into its own, chiefly through a massive redevelopment program. Public attention has been chiefly drawn to the commercial aspects of Newark’s downtown development.”<sup>68</sup> This optimism, which had been fostered in the late 1950s and early 1960s, did not last. As historian John Cunningham stated:

A thriving seaport, a booming airport, a brisk financial leadership, diversified industry, a bold new concept in urban higher education, housing planned for all economic levels, a modernized government; all of these were actualities as Newark prepared in 1966 to observe its 300th anniversary.

Nevertheless, uneasiness underlay the optimism. Newark was failing to recognize the major challenge facing all northern cities—the influx of rural Southern blacks into heavily populated areas of the North.<sup>69</sup>

With the riots of 1967, Newark’s prospects for successful revitalization significantly changed. However, several aspects of the 1950s-1960s reform movement remained, including a new form of city government, businesses including two large insurance companies committed to the city, and an extensive amount of new building infrastructure including seven extant structures within the Military Park Commons Historic District.

**SUMMARY**

The historic district’s areas of significance under Criterion A for association of broad patterns of our history do not end at 1940. Up through 1967, the Military Park Commons Historic District was significant as a premiere shopping district, social gathering area, and site for memorials. In addition, despite growing racial tensions and city leaders’ concerns with “urban crisis,” the city’s reforms effected a new form of government that still exists, a commitment from several major business leaders that continued to benefit the city, and a substantial amount of construction, including seven extant structures within the Military Park Commons Historic District, some of which were important for their effects on the surrounding area. The year 1967 is the appropriate year for the historic district’s end date for the period of significance, both as the 50-year cut-off and as the year of Newark’s devastating riots that had a major impact on Newark and its image.

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<sup>2</sup> "Garage is Opened at Newark Park," *The New York Times*, 1 August 1961, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Isadore Barmash, "Retail Chain Detects Downtown Revival," *The New York Times*, February 18, 1965, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Gansberg, "Major Stores Closed in Newark as Few Decide to Go Downtown," *The New York Times*, 16 July 1967.

<sup>5</sup> Walter H. Waggoner, "3 Newark Stores are Challenging Ban on Sunday Sale of Some Items," *The New York Times*, December 2, 1976, p. 91.

<sup>6</sup> *Newark Directory 1957-1958* (Newark: The Price & Lee Company, 1958).

<sup>7</sup> JoAnne Sills, "Newark's forgotten music center," 22 November 2008, [http://blog.nj.com/ledgerupdates\\_impact/print.html?entry=/2008/11/\\_griffith6\\_lena.html](http://blog.nj.com/ledgerupdates_impact/print.html?entry=/2008/11/_griffith6_lena.html).

<sup>8</sup> "Daytime Raid Test Surprises Jersey," *The New York Times*, 10 July 1942, 34.

<sup>9</sup> "Hedy Lamarr a Hit in Newark," *The New York Times*, 5 September 1942, 13.

<sup>10</sup> "To Exhibit Submarine: Newark to Show Captured Japanese Craft in War Bond Drive," *The New York Times*, 25 April 1943, 22.

<sup>11</sup> "92 Groups Observe Notre Dame Night," *The New York Times*, 16 April 1940, 20; "1,300 Truck Drivers Strike in Newark," *The New York Times*, 2 October 1940, 25; "Aluminum Policy Scored," *The New York Times*, 21 October 1943, 36; "Benefit for Jersey Hospital," *The New York Times*, 11 November 1962, 111; "Bishop of Newark is Consecrated," *The New York Times*, 26 July 1940, 15; "Bond Club to Hear Film Official," *The New York Times*, 14 February 1940, 41; "Catholic Veterans Urge Defense Move," *The New York Times*, 22 June 1940, 9; "Dewey Pressing Fight In Jersey," *The New York Times*, 14 June 1940, 18; Eckenberg, "Armistice Appeal Is For Firm Peace," *The New York Times*, 12 November 1946, 12; "Essex Stamp Show Opens Today," *The New York Times*, 13 October 1944; "Eisenhower to Stump For Mitchell Tuesday," *The New York Times*, 15 October 1961; "Fifth Ave. Parade To Mark Holiday," *The New York Times*, 12 October 1943, 23; Henry R. Ilsley, "Chesapeake Field Card Is Set For Week-End Meet at Babylon," *The New York Times*, 3 November 1940, 98; "Hinckley Urges Air Training in High Schools; Stresses Lack of Planes in Pacific Battles," *The New York Times*, 25 March 1942, 23; "'Holiday' On Meat Voted For Jersey," *The New York Times*, 8 January 1945, 19; "Huge Income Tax Held Needed in '44," *The New York Times*, 1 July 1943, 30; "Jersey Merchant Is Honored," *The New York Times*, 23 April 1963, 57; "Oppose Aid To Allies," *The New York Times*, 23 June 1940, 22; "Pickets Aid Edison: Break Up Newark Line So Jersey Governor May Pass," *The New York Times*, 24 October 1941, 13; "Railways Prepared for Heavier Traffic," *The New York Times*, 9 January 1942, 35; "Ruth St. Denis to Be Honored At Newark Benefit April 25," *The New York Times*, 5 April 1964, 98; "Tax Change Asked By Tool Builders," *The New York Times*, 13 February 1946, 38; "To Sell Newark Factory," *The New York Times*, 23 November 1941, RE3; "'Worst Over,' Westinghouse Chairman Says, Predicting Business Rise to the End of Year," *The New York Times*, 29 March 1940, 33.

<sup>12</sup> "Opening is Set in Two Years," *Newark Evening News*, 10 July 1952.

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<sup>14</sup> "Frosh Learn the Ropes in Latest Service of YM-YWCA's Student Y," *Newark Evening News*, 4 October 1964.

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<sup>16</sup> "It's Time Here, Too," *Newark Evening News*, 18 January 1953.

<sup>17</sup> Mark Krasovic, 5.

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<sup>19</sup> Cunningham, 306.

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- <sup>21</sup> Krasovic, 5.
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- <sup>23</sup> "A Vote of Confidence," *Newark Evening News*, 15 December 1954.
- <sup>24</sup> "Advisers for Newark," *Newark Evening News*, 18 February 1955.
- <sup>25</sup> Cunningham, *Newark*, 308-9.
- <sup>26</sup> City of Newark, *Newark Reports To Its Citizens, for 1956*.
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- <sup>28</sup> "Optimism Marks Discussion As Chamber Hails 'New Newark'," *Newark Evening News*, 10 June 1955.
- <sup>29</sup> Brad R. Tuttle, *How Newark Became Newark: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of an American City* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 128.
- <sup>30</sup> Research and Governmental Affairs Department of the Greater Newark Chamber of Commerce, *Facts on Newark, A City Moving Forward*, 9 October 1970, VI-1.
- <sup>31</sup> Central Planning Board, *(1961 and 1962) Annual Report, Newark, New Jersey*.
- <sup>32</sup> "Renovation Started on Newark Building," *The New York Times*, 13 February 1955, 304.
- <sup>33</sup> "City Starts Garage Under Military Park," *Newark Evening News*, 4 August 1959.
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- <sup>35</sup> Andre Briod, "Stirs Speculation On Other Projects," *Newark Evening News*, 5 August 1959.
- <sup>36</sup> "Newark's 'New Look' Spurred Kislak Move," *Newark Evening News*, 20 January 1960.
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- <sup>38</sup> "Seek \$1,250,000 for Y Expansion," *Newark Evening News*, 3 February 1959.
- <sup>39</sup> City of Newark, *Newark Reports To Its Citizens, for 1956*.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup> Andre Briod, "Stirs Speculation On Other Projects," *Newark Evening News*, 5 August 1959.
- <sup>42</sup> "The YWCA Campaign," *Newark Evening News*, 19 May 1952.
- <sup>43</sup> "Act of Faith," *Newark Evening News*, 17 July 1952.
- <sup>44</sup> John W. Kempson, "Afield in Realty," *Newark Evening News*, 13 July 1952.
- <sup>45</sup> "Merging the Ys," *Newark Evening News*, 19 July 1953.
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- <sup>51</sup> "Let's Not Gum Up The Traffic Works," *Newark Evening News*, 3 January 1929; "Parking Under the Park Not a Tolerable Idea," *Newark Evening News*, 28 August 1929.
- <sup>52</sup> "Military Park Garage," *Newark Evening News*, 4 December 1946.
- <sup>53</sup> Central Planning Board, *The Master Plan for the Physical Development of the City of Newark, N.J.* (Newark, New Jersey 1947).
- <sup>54</sup> Interview of Marc Krasovic, July 14, 2016.
- <sup>55</sup> "Get on With It," *Newark Evening News*, 19 December 1946.
- <sup>56</sup> "Newark Studies Frisco Parking," *Newark Evening News*, 23 September 1945.
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<sup>58</sup> Ramp Buildings Corporation, *Feasibility Report on Military Park Underground Garage Project* (Newark, New Jersey, 1958).

<sup>59</sup> "City Starts Garage Under Military Park."

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<sup>61</sup> "14-Story West Wing Planned By Robert Treat Hotel," *The New York Times*, 16 June 1961, 53.

<sup>62</sup> "Kislak Buys Newark Site," *Newark Evening News*, 11 January 1960.

<sup>63</sup> "Kislak Building Work Under Way," *Newark Evening News*, 19 August 1960.

<sup>64</sup> "Renovation Started on Newark Building."

<sup>65</sup> "IBM [Moving?] to New Building," *Newark Evening News*, 13 August 1961.

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<sup>67</sup> Alexander Milch, "Prudential Largest User of IBM Brains," *Newark Evening News*, 25 September 1960.

<sup>68</sup> "City is Rebuilding on Massive Scale," *The New York Times*, 21 August 1960, R1.

<sup>69</sup> Cunningham, 311-312.

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**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

Property Name: Military Park Commons Historic District

Property Location: Newark, Essex County, New Jersey

Source: ARCH<sup>2</sup>, Inc.  
495 Main Street, Suite 28  
Metuchen, New Jersey 08840

Photographer: Nancy L. Zerbe

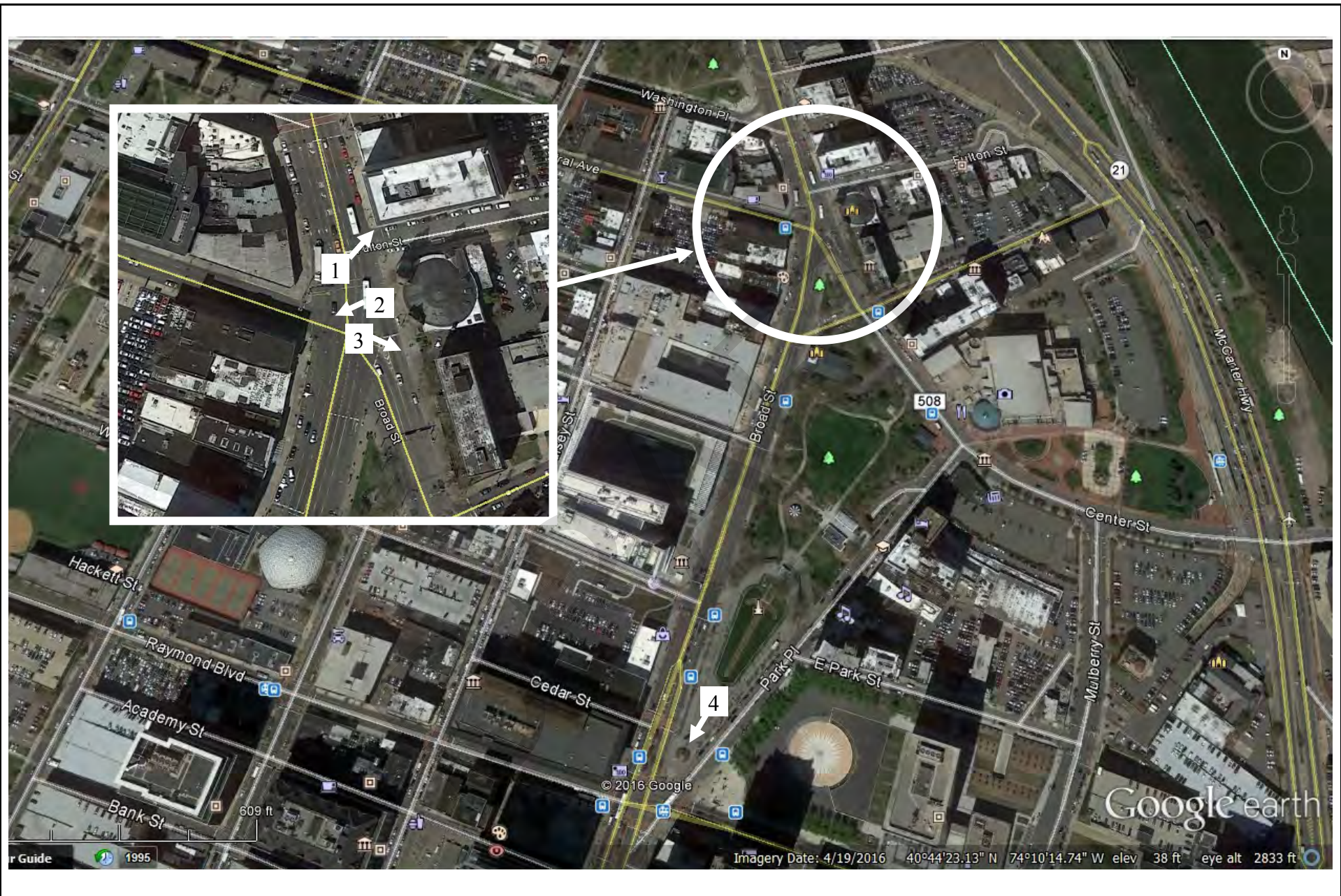
Date: July 8, 2016

Photo No. AD-1: View looking northeast at the front façade and the east side elevation of the Chase building located at 566-570 Broad Street.

Photo No. AD-2: View looking southwest at the front façade and the north side elevation of the Kislak building located at 579 Broad Street.

Photo No. AD-3: View looking southeast at the YM-YWCA building located at 586-602 Broad Street.

Photo No. AD-4: View looking southwest at the plaque located at the southern end of Military Park.





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Photo No. AD-1: View looking northeast at the front façade and the east side elevation of the Chase building located at 566-570 Broad Street.

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Photo No. AD-2: View looking southwest at the front façade and the north side elevation of the Kislak building located at 579 Broad Street.

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Photo No. AD-3: View looking southeast at the YM-YWCA building located at 586-602 Broad Street.

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Photo No. AD-4: View looking southwest at the plaque located at the southern end of Military Park.