

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Asbury Park Public Library

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 500 First Avenue not for publication

city or town Asbury Park City vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ County Monmouth zip code 07712

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I 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 nationally statewide locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

Deputy SHPO Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:) _____	_____	_____

Asbury Park Public Library
Name of Property

Monmouth NJ
County and State

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	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / Library
RECREATION AND CULTURE / Auditorium

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Brick
roof Asphalt
other _____

Narrative Description

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

Asbury Park Public Library
Name of Property

Monmouth NJ
County and State

8 Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- 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 continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on 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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY
COMMUNITY PLANNING

Period of Significance

c.1885 – c.1931

Significant Dates

c.1901

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ernest A. Arend (Architect)

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Name of repository: Asbury Park Public Library

Asbury Park Public Library

Name of Property

Monmouth NJ

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property _____

Latitude / Longitude Coordinates

(Note to Preparers: NJ HPO will complete this portion of the Registration Form for all Preparers, based on the coordinates derived from the Site Map or District Map that HPO produces.)

1. Lat. 40.220462 Long. -74.007564
2. Lat. 40.220388 Long. -74.007219
3. Lat. 40.221991 Long. -74.007361
4. Lat. 40.220065 Long. -74.007706

(NJ HPO will place additional coordinates, if needed, on a continuation sheet for Section 10.)

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet for Section 10.)

Boundary Justification Statement

(Explain, on the section sheet following the Verbal Boundary Description, how the chosen boundaries meet the requirements for boundary selection and are the most appropriate boundaries for the nominated property or district.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ann Parsekian and Dennis Bertland

organization Dennis Bertland Associates

date April 2020

street & number P.O. Box 315

telephone 609-397-3380

city or town Stockton

state NJ

zip code 08559

Additional Documentation

(Submit the additional items with the completed form that are outlined in the "Standard Order of Presentation" that NJ HPO provides. Each page must contain the name of the nominated property or district, and the State and the county in which the property or district is located. Consult with NJ HPO if you have questions.)

Property Owner

(Either provide the name and address of the property owner here or provide the information separately to NJ HPO. Check with NJ HPO for other requirements. All owners' names and addresses must be provided, including public and non-profit owners, but their presence on the form, itself, is not required).

name _____

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. The proper completion of this form and the related requirements 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.

Direct questions regarding the proper completion of this form or questions about related matters to the Registration Section, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Mail code 501-04B, PO Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625-0420.

DRAFT

United States Department of the Interior
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Monmouth County, NJSection number 7 Page 1**Narrative Description**

The c.1885 Asbury Park Public Library, which is owned and operated as a free municipal library by the city of Asbury Park, is located at 500 First Avenue, Asbury Park, New Jersey, in southeastern Monmouth County. Asbury Park is an urban residential town bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean; on the north by the small towns of Loch Arbor and Interlaken; on the south by Ocean Grove; and on the west by the townships of Ocean and Neptune.¹ The library stands at the southwest corner of the broad intersection of First and Grand Avenues, opposite Library Square, a one-block, pedestrian park (Photo #s 12-14). The library is a painted brick building whose original design was by an unidentified New York architect; it is one story over a full basement. The original library footprint, three bays wide by two bays deep, measures approximately fifty feet wide by seventy feet deep. The main entrance is slightly recessed, centered on the north façade within a projecting gable, and is distinguished by a projecting pediment supported by ionic columns (Photo #1). A secondary entrance via an open concrete bulkhead is on the east side at the basement level and it provides direct access to the lower level Junior Library (Photo #3). An entrance on the south side of the building is serviced by a wooden ramp. There are two utility entrances on the west side of the building. The Asbury Park Public Library is a mix of styles. It originally featured a Queen Anne design, still apparent on the long east side facing Grand Avenue (the original front). It has a Classical Revival treatment on the c.1931 façade that faces north onto First Avenue, designed by locally prominent architect Earnest A. Arend that faces north onto First Avenue (Photo #s 1 & 2). The library stands within the Asbury Park Library Square Historic District, a residential/civic district identified in the Monmouth County Historic Sites Inventory that is a mix of late 19th and early 20th century residential architecture, churches, and hotels in addition to the library.²

Setting

The library is set back twenty-five feet from tree-lined First and Grand Avenues on a neatly mown lawn with concrete sidewalks and bluestone curbing along the avenues (Photo #2). There is a mixture of evergreen foundation shrubbery, including cedar trees which have become overgrown. The narrow space along the south of the building is occupied by a handicapped accessible ramp while the space along the west side of the building is paved and enclosed by modern chain-link fencing.

Exterior

The building is constructed of brick with limestone detailing at a molded water table, first floor window sills, basement level window lintels and the four, square medallions below the eaves at the northeast corner. (Photo #s 2 & 3) Above a wide molded masonry cornice featuring dentils, the asphalt-shingled roof of the building forms a hip with large side and front gables and three tall, corbelled brick chimneys. Built-in gutters have modern drainpipes located at each corner.

The main entrance originally was located at the north end of the east elevation. It was relocated to its current location in 1901. The primary façade now faces north toward First Avenue (Photo #1).³ This elevation,

¹ Ocean Grove is an unincorporated community within Neptune Township.

² Monmouth County Park System, *Monmouth County Historic Sites Inventory*, No. 1303-D2.

³ According to an 1897 birds eye view, the building was originally constructed with its main entrance on the east elevation, facing Grand Avenue (Historic Map 3). A north entrance is not visible in the drawing. A photo postcard from 1909 depicts the building after

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remodeled c.1931, is nearly symmetrical at both the basement and first floor levels (the east bay projects slightly, a remnant from an original corner tower removed in 1931). A monumental stair with stone risers and treads and masonry side walls capped with limestone rises from the sidewalk to the main entrance. Modern round metal pipe railings run along the center of the stair supported at intermediate points by identical pipes set vertically. The main entrance is located at the top of the stairs and is centered within a pedimented, projecting front entrance portico. The pediment contains a rounded arch window of clear glass. Within the portico, a Palladian front entry is set within a masonry recess and is flanked on either side by lancet windows and Ionic pilasters supporting a molded entablature. The pair of single-light metal entrance doors are set in a metal frame. The doors are single lite. Above the pair of doors is a recessed rounded arch trimmed with limestone containing an unsigned stained-glass panel depicting what may be a stylized lamp of knowledge. Above the entry is a large carved stone plaque, with the words "Public Library." A pair of tall window openings is centered in the west bay and a single, slightly larger tall window opening is located on the east side of the east bay, within the original tower base. Each has double-hung, one-over-one windows and a fixed transom separated by metal mullions. Below each window opening is a plain brick recess. A protective metal grill has been mounted in front of each window.

The long east elevation along Grand Avenue has been designed as a secondary public façade of the library (Photo #2). The primary defining element is a projecting, pedimented gable with tall, half-engaged corbelled chimneys at both corners. At the basement level is an opening into a room designated as a Junior Library (Photo #3). Centered on the gable, the General Grant memorial window is a large round arched window with wood and metal mullions fitted with stained glass. It features stained glass portrait of General U.S. Grant in the stained glass (Photo #9). The window was made by Alfred Goodwin and Company in Philadelphia. Above this arch a pair of small rectangular window openings are fitted with clear, one-over-one, double-hung windows. The irregular fenestration north and south of the central gable is a mix of tall rectangular and round-arch windows.

The south and west sides are largely out of public view and have fewer architectural details, though the molded cornice and water table continue around the building. The west elevation fenestration largely mirrors that on the east elevation. A center gabled bay features a large round arch window fitted with stained glass known as the Longfellow Window, a work by Tiffany Studios and designed by Asbury Park artist Theodore R. Davis that depicts the burial at sea of the Viking god Balder as portrayed in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "Tegner's Drapa." (Photo #10). The window was installed in 1907. Openings on each side of this center gabled bay are fitted with utilitarian doors. The south elevation has a projecting double bay with pairs of rectangular window openings at the first and second story. A utilitarian door serviced by a long wooden handicapped-accessible ramp is located at the southeast corner.

Interior

The first floor contains the primary entrance and the main public space. The vestibule and entry hall at the north end of the first floor retain their c.1901 configuration designed by Ernest A. Arend, which helps define

a 1901 remodeling. Although the elimination of the east entrance was not mentioned in descriptions of the 1901 work, the 1909 image shows no east entrance (Historic Image 1).

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the original library space and provides clues as to how the library functioned (Room #s 1 & 2; Photo #s 4 & 5). The spaces contain a combination of c.1901 and c.1931 fabric (doors, windows, moldings, floors). The two spaces are separated by a pair of glass and metal doors framed by tall molded cornices carried by pairs of paneled ionic pilasters separated by leaded glass panels. A similarly detailed open doorway at the south end of the hall opens to what is now the main reading room – originally the auditorium (Room #5). On the east side of the hall a pair of wood and glass doors provides direct access to the adjacent reading room (Room #3; Photo #6). At the south end of the west side of the entry hall a single door enters into what was originally the bookroom (Room #4). A large window opening with two rows of fixed beveled glass sashes and wood muntins is also located on the east wall. Centered on the bottom row a small beveled glass opening originally provided communication between library staff and patrons. Both spaces retain early plaster walls and paneled wainscoting. Terazzo floors (likely dating to the c.1931 remodeling) are set off by a colorful Roman key border.

The main reading room is a double-height, vaulted space (Photo #s 7 & 8). Later mezzanine levels at the north and south ends of the room contain workspaces and book stacks (Rooms #6 & 7). A smaller reading/meeting room (Room #3; Photo #6) is located in the northeast corner. The reading rooms have been remodeled over the years and now feature painted white walls and ceilings and carpeted floors. Early wood moldings, paneled wainscoting, and windows remain in most places. A brick fireplace with a carved wood mantel and surround and a 1901 plaque survives in the small reading room (Photo #6). The early arched ceiling survives in the main reading room (Photo #8). The two large stained-glass windows are in good condition.

The main public space at the basement level – the Junior Library, Photo #11 – is located at the north end of the building with various secondary support spaces (staff areas and unfinished storage and utility spaces) located in the remaining space. The children's library and staff areas are finished with dropped ceilings and carpeting, metal book stacks, and functional furniture.

The attic space, which is unfinished, is used for storage. Exposed framing is composed of heavy dimensional lumber.

Integrity

The Asbury Park Public Library is in very good condition. The removal in c.1931 of the deteriorated square tower at the northeast corner was a major alteration; importantly, the architect-designed project effectively retained the feeling of a small public library of the era. Other changes have not negatively impacted the building's integrity. A children's library has been inserted in the basement; open second floors have been added at the north and south ends of the main floor to accommodate book stacks; and modern lighting and floor coverings have been installed. The library retains its original location along Grand Avenue, still a wide north-south street, as well as its location opposite the original prominent Library Square public park. Overall, the Asbury Park Public Library retains an excellent degree of integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, design, and association.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary Paragraph

The Asbury Park Public Library is significant as one of New Jersey's earliest purpose-built public library buildings and is a key component of a civic/residential district along Grand Avenue, part of James A. Bradley's original plan for Asbury Park, which he founded in 1871.¹ Bradley's wife, Helen M. Bradley, served as founding president of the Asbury Park and Ocean Grove Library Association, organized in 1878 for the cultivation of literary and social tastes; in 1880 Bradley donated land for the library and personally selected a now-forgotten New York architect for the project.² Construction of the building's shell took place over a period of years, beginning with foundations that were laid in 1881. By 1885 the shell of the building was completed to a point that the first meeting could be held there, which marks the beginning of the period of significance. The building's interior was completed c.1901. Alterations undertaken c.1931 mark the end of its period of significance. The Asbury Park Public Library, which predated the Carnegie Library Movement, was constructed as an example of Queen Anne architecture that was popular in America at the time. The original interior plan of the building had an idiosyncratic design, with small spaces to accommodate library use, as well as a large open auditorium for lyceum-like programs. The auditorium was adapted for library use in 1915.³ The original Queen Anne corner tower was removed around 1931 as part of alterations designed by Ernest A. Arend (1876-1950), a locally prominent architect who had designed the building's interior in 1901; Also around 1931 the red brick was painted white, creating a more symmetrical appearance in line with the dignified Classical Revival style that had become popular by then for public buildings. The Asbury Park Public Library qualifies for local significance under Criterion A, in the areas of Social History and Community Planning.

Narrative History

In 1870, James A. Bradley, a wealthy brush manufacturer from New York City who was a convert to Methodism, visited the site of the new Methodist camp meeting at Ocean Grove, an undeveloped beachfront parcel along the New Jersey coast about eight miles south of Long Branch, at the time one of the country's most well-known resorts that had a bit of a boisterous reputation. In 1871, Bradley bought three large tracts of barren land north of the camp meeting property where Asbury Park was developed on a tract of 387 acres.⁴ Bradley envisioned Asbury Park – named after pioneering Methodist minister and bishop Francis Asbury – as a buffer between what he viewed as the paradise of Ocean Grove (sacred) and the corruption of Long Branch (profane). As a businessman, he also saw the development potential of a resort “designed to be attractive to and demonstrative of the values of middle-class white Protestant America but without the theological intensity of Ocean Grove.... [Bradley] had a somewhat progressive, if paternalistic, sense of modernity, and his plan for Asbury Park proposed an urban landscape of wide streets and large lots.”⁵

¹ Franklin Ellis, *History of Monmouth County, New Jersey*, Philadelphia: R.T.Peck & Co., 1885, p. 864.

² *Asbury Park Journal*, November 30, 1878.

³ *New Jersey Library Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 4, Trenton, NJ, p. 6.

⁴ Luther Elting to James A. Bradley, January 24, 1871. The three tracts totaled 658 acres.

⁵ Joseph Bilby and Harry Ziegler, *Asbury Park: A Brief History*, Charleston: The History Press, 2009, p. 17.

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Asbury Park's first hotel opened in 1873. Within only a couple of years after its founding, Asbury Park could boast a small library at Park Hall – the first public building in town, which also housed stores, the post office, and a meeting hall. An 1878 description of the town noted there was a permanent population of 895, two church edifices, a free reading-room, open year-round, and two public halls, including Educational Hall, a building that had been relocated from the grounds of the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial and could seat 1,500.⁶ 1878 was also the year that the Asbury Park and Ocean Grove Library association was organized, with Helen M. Bradley, wife of the founder, serving as president. Organized under a state law allowing the formation of associations to promote learning, a contemporary newspaper reported:

[T]he initiatory steps were taken towards forming a society for the cultivation of literary and social tastes in the joint communities of Ocean Grove and Asbury Park. Many ladies and gentlemen of both places are realizing the fact, that in a community so unsettled and immature as ours, the formation and right conduct of a society of the kind indicated has really become a social necessity. A literary association of men and women actuated by a kindly spirit and by an honorable ambition to cultivate the mental resources of their neighborhood, can scarcely fail of becoming an elevating power in the homes and lives reached by its influence.⁷

Another article noted that the association, which “promises to be a literary society of merit,” proposed to provide a public entertainment once a month, and “all persons interested in a higher intellectual development” should apply for membership.⁸ The association also had as a goal to create a collection of books. Meetings were held in various local halls. In January 1880, the library association purchased a desk and opened its library to members.⁹ The building committee of the library association worked on plans for a building and the public meeting of March 29, 1880 featured “stereoscopic views of [a] new library building” in addition to vocal music and competitive reading.¹⁰

Funds for the building were being raised by members, and they raised over \$2,000 by April 1880. James Bradley agreed to donate land for the library building, and he worked with a New York City architect – whose identity has been lost – to design a Queen Anne style building that would house an auditorium and museum in addition to a library. *The New York Times* reported foundations for the new building were laid by mid-1881, and that the balance of the building cost “has been subscribed by Mr. Bradley and his friends.”¹¹ The one-story building, constructed by P.P. and Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, cost a reported \$16,000.¹² On June 30, 1884, Bradley and his wife conveyed “parts of lots designated Numbers 667, 668, and 669” to the Trustees of the Library Association of Asbury Park and Ocean Grove.¹³ The Library Association held its first meeting in the

⁶ Rose, p. 81.

⁷ *Asbury Park Journal*, December 7, 1878.

⁸ *Ibid*, December 14, 1878.

⁹ *Ibid*, January 31, 1880. The location of the library was not noted.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, March 27, 1880. The images have not been located.

¹¹ “Religion at the Sea-Side,” *New York Times*, July 25, 1881.

¹² *American Architect*, May 13, 1882. According to a bird's eye view from 1897, the original main entrance of the building was evidently located adjacent to the tower at the northeast corner of the building, and faced Grand Avenue. [*Asbury Park and Ocean Grove New Jersey*. New Jersey: Landis and Hughers, 1897.

¹³ Monmouth County Deeds, 679/420

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new building on March 1, 1885.¹⁴ The earliest known image of the library is from an 1897 bird's eye view of Asbury Park and depicts the Grand Avenue façade, which originally featured three gables, a corner tower, and the main entrance (Historic Map 3).

Although the library's interior remained unfinished for a number of years, "the structure was strong and substantial and it afforded facilities for conducting the weekly meetings and for distributing the books."¹⁵ The library trustees relied on donations, including in March 1886 the gift of a large stained glass window given in memory of General Ulysses S. Grant who had died the previous July. Grant's last public appearance had been at a service in nearby Ocean Grove that was attended by thousands. The window, a portrait of the General that was prominently placed facing Grand Avenue, was made by Alfred Godwin and Company in Philadelphia and presented by George Childs, a Philadelphia newspaper publisher and real estate developer.

The library in Asbury Park remained a private, subscription library until 1897. That year, New Jersey passed laws relating to the purchase of land by cities and towns and the erection of buildings for library purposes.¹⁶ As reported in the *Library Journal*, on November 30, 1897, at a special meeting in Asbury Park, a vote to establish a free public library carried by two votes: "[T]he first ward, which is the business section of city, cast 21 votes against it, while the second ward, which is the residence portion, gave 23 votes for it. An energetic library canvass was made by the women of the city."¹⁷ New library trustees appointed in April 1898 immediately turned their attention to the task of acquiring and finishing the existing library building, which was still owned by the original library association and was facing financial difficulty.¹⁸ A committee of the board looked into financing the acquisition. At the same time, even as programming continued in the unfinished space – the library was open to the public each Friday "with a competent attendant in charge" – plans moved forward to finish the building.¹⁹ The architectural firm of Brouse & Arend was commissioned to prepare plans to "remodel" the library at a cost of \$6,000.²⁰ Samuel A. Brouse and Ernest A. Arend established their firm in Trenton and by 1899 had opened an office in Asbury Park. Arend (1876-1950), a young architect at the very start of what would become a long career in Monmouth County, was responsible for the library project.²¹ In December 1899, an article in the *Asbury Park Daily Press* noted that contracts for part of the work had already been let: "The improvements will give the public a handsome library room, reading room, auditorium with stage, dressing room, and all equipment, banquet hall, kitchens, cloak room, etc. It is expected to expend about \$8,000 on work at present."²² The formal dedication of the finished library, "splendid monument to the zeal and enthusiasm of Asbury Park's fair ladies," was held on January 15, 1901:

¹⁴ Bilby and Ziegler, p. 48.

¹⁵ *Asbury Park Daily Press*, January 16, 1903.

¹⁶ *Public Libraries in New Jersey: Report on the Committee on State Library Commission and Other Papers*, [Trenton], NJ: NJ Library Association, 1900, p. 32.

¹⁷ *The Library Journal*, December 1897, p. 759.

¹⁸ Monmouth County Deeds, January 2, 1899, Book 622, p. 239.

¹⁹ *Asbury Park Daily Press*, January 28, 1899.

²⁰ *Ibid*, April 5, May 2, May 4, and June 4, 1899; *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, Vol. 62, C.W. Sweet & Co., 1898, p. 580.

²¹ *Ibid*, January 28, 1901.

²² *Ibid*, December 2, 1901.

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Now... the former uncompleted barnlike structure is a well appointed library.... The first floor, formerly one, big bare room, has been divided into a book room, reception or ladies' room and a concert or assembly room capable of seating 400. The old walls and ceiling, unsightly and rough, have been plastered and the old stage considerably enlarged. The new flooring of maple has been laid with a view of using it for dancing purposes. The book room is west of the new entrance and on the east is the ladies' or reception room. Both apartments are 20x30 feet and are separated by a corridor about eight or ten feet wide leading to the concert room. One of the things contemplated for the future is a banquet hall in the basement.²³

Among the improvements was the relocation and redesign of the main entrance to its present First Avenue placement; however, this part of the work, funded by Henry Steinbach – founder of a department store in Asbury Park and editor of *The Shore Press* – was not constructed by the time of the formal dedication (Historic Image 1).²⁴ Financial assistance for the project was also received from local women's groups including the Ladies' Literary Society, the Woman's Club, the Ariel Cyclers, and the Saturday Club (which later became the Asbury Park Women's Club).²⁵ Fundraising continued for central heating and chairs for the auditorium.²⁶

In May 1901, the Asbury Park council called a special election to approve bonding of \$18,000 to acquire the library building and land, which was valued at \$30,000 and offered at a discount to the city. The bonding question passed and the deed was finally conveyed to the city on December 2, 1901.²⁷

A plan in 1907 to install a series of memorial windows raised concern about placing colored glass in the reading room; instead, a single large memorial window dedicated to American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, designed by Asbury Park artist Theodore R. Davis (1841-1894) and made by the Tiffany company, was installed in the auditorium opposite the Grant window.²⁸ Davis was trained at the Rittenhouse Academy in Washington, D.C. He did numerous illustrations for Frank Leslie's magazine, and was a war artist and correspondent for *Harper's Weekly* during the Civil War. He moved to Asbury Park around 1880.²⁹ The ladies of Asbury Park's Present Day Club raised \$600 to cover the cost.

Use of the library grew steadily during the first decades of the 20th century. In 1908, the annual report of the New Jersey Public Library Commission noted that circulation at the Asbury Park Library, which was open eleven hours each day, doubled from the prior year. In 1909, the library association pointed out that the "cramped condition of the book rooms is a matter of grave concern," at the same time new book stacks were authorized.³⁰ Then, in early 1914, the possibility of using a site in Library Square for a new Carnegie library was reported in the press.³¹ Although the library trustees seemed to favor the proposal, Library Square had been

²³ *Asbury Park Daily Press*, January 15 and 16, 1901.

²⁴ *Ibid*, January 15, 1901.

²⁵ Pike, p. 178.

²⁶ *Asbury Park Daily Press*, January 16, 1901.

²⁷ *Ibid*, May 14, 1901; Monmouth County Deeds, Book 679, p. 420.

²⁸ *Ibid*, June 3, 1907. Davis' design, which may have been inspired by Longfellow's 1849 poem, "Tegner's Drapa," portrays "the designer's interpretation of the sea burial of the Viking deity Balder the Beautiful." [Bilby and Ziegler, p. 53] Tiffany Studios, *List of Tiffany Windows*, New York: Tiffany Studios, 1910, p. 80.

²⁹ "Death of Theodore Davis," *Asbury Park Press*, November 10, 1894, p. 1.

³⁰ *Annual Report by Public Library Commission*, p. 21; *Asbury Park Press*, December 15, 1909, p. 1.

³¹ *Asbury Park Press*, January 23, 2014.

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donated by James Bradley and he opposed the plan.³² Instead, in 1915 city commissioners decided to devote the entire library building to library use, eliminating the auditorium: "With the auditorium taken over for actual library purposes there will be ample room for the development of the institution along lines that will permit it to give adequate service to a constantly increasing patronage. The space now in use for book shelves, open to the public, is certainly too small."³³ The interior adaptation was completed by June 1915:

From a small and inconspicuous beginning the Asbury Park library has developed into one of the finest and most effectively managed public institutions of the city....[B]eautiful new section shelves [have been] placed in the reconstructed assembly hall. Here the librarian overlooks the visitors from a desk near the center of the book room... [L]ater interior improvements that have doubled the book capacity, added new reading rooms and a children's department, a workroom and a light airy space for the book shelves that remind one of the show libraries of New York....The Asbury Park library is now the equivalent of the best institutions of the kind in the state and it should be supported and maintained by the public patronage because it represents so completely the progress and ambition of this resort.³⁴

Concerned about the crowded conditions and impressed by the work being undertaken by the city, the Library Bureau of the New Jersey Library Commission planned and equipped the new layout.³⁵

New services and programs were introduced over the next several years and regularly reported in the *New Jersey Library Bulletin*, from a new newspaper room suitable for a major resort – supplied with daily newspapers and "with each state being represented by at least one paper" – to special programs during World War I, and regular cooperation with local teachers.³⁶ By early 1927, after a year when book circulation was more than 82,000, it became evident that library improvements were necessary. Alterations to create more workrooms, fireproof newspaper storage, and additional book stacks were desired.³⁷ A Sanborn insurance map from 1930 which depicts the floor plan at that time (Historic Map 4) shows a central entry hall at the north end of the building flanked by two smaller room; the tower is shown as a two-story portion of the northeast room; the remainder of the floor plan is open auditorium and stage. Perhaps most urgent was dealing with the Queen Anne tower at the northeast corner of the building, which had become weakened. The work took several more years to plan, with Ernest A. Arend once again engaged as project architect. In 1931 the tower and one chimney were removed and the original roofline altered in accordance with Arend's design to create a more symmetrical north-facing front façade. Although the plans for the tower removal and roof alterations have not survived, another set of plans by Arend, dated September 1931, shows the tower having been removed and details for additional exterior and interior alterations that were never constructed.³⁸

³² "Bradley Holds Key to Carnegie Library," *Asbury Park Press*, January 23, 1914.

³³ *Asbury Park Press*, March 3, 1915.

³⁴ *Ibid*, June 12, 1915.

³⁵ *New Jersey Library Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 4, July 1915.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 1916, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 10; 1917, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 9; 1918, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 10, & 1921, Vols. 9 & 10, Nos. 4 & 1.

³⁷ "Total of 82,310 Books Circulated In City Library During Past Year," *Asbury Park Press*, January 13, 1927, p. 12.

³⁸ Ernest A. Arend, "Asbury Park Library," Five Sheets, September 1931. The 1930 Sanborn shows a stage at the south end of the main room. Arend's First Floor Plan indicates a restroom, a storeroom and a workroom at the south end; it is unknown when the stage was removed.

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The 1931 tower removal and roof alterations were the last major changes to the library. Over the following decades, the library's layout changed to accommodate modernizing efforts, such as upgraded furnishings; a new secondary entrance on the Grand Avenue; and a new mezzanine along the south end of the main library room.

Criterion A (Community Planning): James A. Bradley's Plan for Asbury Park

In 1870, James A. Bradley (Supplemental Image 1) visited the newly organized Methodist camp meeting at Ocean Grove on the New Jersey coast. Not only did he purchase two lots at Ocean Grove, he also purchased a large parcel of undeveloped land north of Ocean Grove in January 1871, ostensibly to provide a buffer between the conservative Methodist camp ground and Long Branch, a lively seaside resort six miles further north, where there was convenient transportation to New York City. Bradley foresaw demand for development along the shore.³⁹ As the property owner, Bradley determined land-use patterns for the town, which he called Asbury Park in honor of Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury. He platted the land, laying out lots measuring fifty by one hundred and fifty feet that fronted on avenues ranging from seventy-five to one hundred feet in width, and several full-block public parks; by the time the first survey was filed in 1878, numerous buildings existed south of First Avenue (Historic Map 1).⁴⁰ Lots located south of Asbury Avenue – which included the earliest commercial and residential construction – were smaller than lots north of Asbury Avenue. Measures were adopted to support his vision for the high moral tone of the community as well as a reputation as a health resort. It did not have the drinking and gambling that Long Branch had a reputation for, but neither was it a camp meeting like Ocean Grove. Nor was Asbury Park designed to appeal to members of the wealthy class who were building country places in Newport or Bar Harbor: Bradley's new resort "was aimed at a growing population of post-Civil War American middle-class families, courted by Bradley to take a journey by train to enjoy a whole-some week by the sea as the New York and Long Branch Railroad worked its way south along the coast."⁴¹ Asbury Park was a temperance town and special laws restricted activities on Sundays, including access to the beach.⁴² Bradley was also intent on maintaining high health standards in the town and avoiding overdevelopment, as reflected in lot sizes, placement of public parks, and street widths, which were the widest of any New Jersey resort.⁴³

The precise inspiration for Bradley's plan is unknown, although he is known to have travelled to Paris, which underwent major redevelopment in the decades after Napoleon III came to power in 1851. Bradley, a New York industrialist, was undoubtedly familiar with Central Park's designer, Frederick Law Olmsted, who argued that

...parks (and by later extension, all aesthetic improvements) raised surrounding land values, contributing to private enterprise and returning their costs through increased municipal real estate taxation. More fun-

³⁹ Ellis, p.865. Bradley also purchased two additional large tracts in 1871. The three tracts totaled 658 acres.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Joseph G. Bilby & Harry Ziegler, *Asbury Park Reborn: Lost to Time and Restored to Glory*, Charleston: The History Press, 2012, p. 15.

⁴² Glenn Uminowicz, "Sport in a Middle-Class Utopia: Asbury Park, New Jersey, 1871-1895," *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 11, No. 1, (Spring 1984), p. 57.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 59.

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damental to him, however, were the restorative, recreative influences of natural landscape on city-bound people.⁴⁴

Bradley's plan for Asbury Park was a street grid bounded on three sides by active recreation areas – on the east by the Atlantic, and on the north and south by small lakes. The street grid was organized along two main streets running north and south, Grand Avenue and Ocean Avenue:

Grand Avenue was Bradley's show street, the finest residential and institutional thoroughfare in the city. It ran parallel to the ocean through the center of the city four blocks up from the beach. Several church edifices, one of the first of the large hotels, and the Asbury Park and Ocean Grove Library were all constructed along its length. In 1877, Bradley installed the first of Asbury's public auditoriums in a park along Grand Avenue.⁴⁵

Grand Avenue cut through the center of the town, and is "distinguished from surrounding streets by its institutional architecture. Its churches, the library, and Educational Hall symbolized Asbury's claim to being a respectable community based on Christian principles and committed to intellectual and moral uplift."⁴⁶ In contrast, running along the beach, Ocean Avenue represented and facilitated the town's primary summertime function as a recreational resort. Bradley achieved his vision for Grand Avenue in large part by donating parcels of land to the institutions he wanted to see there: churches; a public library; and Educational Hall, a 1,500-seat auditorium. To emphasize the uplifting theme, he later named the one-square-block public park across from the library – the only public park designated on the first survey of the city – "Library Square" (Historic Maps 1 & 2).⁴⁷ Grand Avenue, which is part of the Library Square historic district, still exhibits the institutional architecture envisioned by Bradley, particularly in the area of Library Square where there are several churches as well as the library.⁴⁸

Bradley was successful in his goal to build a clean, well-planned resort for the urban middle class, as an experiment in urban planning. It is notable that not only did Bradley conceive of the plan for his new city, he also chose a parcel on the prestigious Grand Avenue to donate for the purpose of a public library, and then selected the architect for the new building. The library was constructed of masonry, an expensive material that serves to convey Bradley's sense of the building's importance. The library location was across from the single planned public space in the city, which he called Library Square, and which served to emphasize the significance and prestige he planned for the institution.

⁴⁴ William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, p. 10.

⁴⁵ Uminowicz, p. 59.

⁴⁶ Uminowicz, p. 61.

⁴⁷ Education Hall was originally built on the grounds of the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and then was rebuilt on Grand Avenue. It was moved from Grand Avenue in 1906 and converted into a repair garage. Helen-Chantal Pike, *Images of America: Asbury Park*, Dover, NJ: Arcadia Publishing, 1997, p. 8. A map of Asbury Park surveyed in 1877 shows an unnamed "Public Park". [Historic Map 1] The Library Square designation first appears on the 1889 Wolverton Atlas (Historic Map 2).

⁴⁸ Alex MacDonald, *Monmouth County Historic Sites Inventory*, [Freehold, NJ]: Monmouth County Park System, 2000, Historic Sites Inventory No. 1303-D2.

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However, Bradley was not interested in making Asbury Park a popular resort open to all, especially not to minorities, foreigners, and members of the working white class.⁴⁹ Outside Asbury Park's city limits on the west side of the railroad tracks were two competing real estate ventures – West Park and West Side – which were developed independently from Bradley's Asbury Park. These became the working-class districts where blacks, ethnic minorities, and “several varieties of the genus tramp” lived. Although Bradley owned property in West Park, he did not extend his urban plan design there, effectively delineating Asbury Park as a community for the middle class, separated from their social inferiors.⁵⁰ Bradley did not let African Americans on the east side of Main Street unless they were employees of a family or business there. Eventually, racial tensions mounted, culminating in rioting during 1970, and Asbury Park's status as a resort declined over the next several decades.⁵¹

Criterion A (Social History): The Role of the Asbury Park Public Library in New Jersey's Public Library Movement

From at least the early 19th century, the purpose of free public libraries was for the “dissemination of knowledge and virtue,” according to education and human rights advocate Jesse Torrey Jr. of New Lebanon, New York, writing in 1817.⁵² In 1852, Boston became the first major city in the United States to create a tax-supported library. Edwin Beckerman's 1997 work, *A History of New Jersey Libraries: 1750-1996*, provides context for Asbury Park's library: “In Boston, as in New Jersey and other states, the growing trend toward a more democratic, classless society, coupled with a belief in public education as a foundation of a free society, provided the open atmosphere in which public libraries began to develop in the 19th century.”⁵³ After the Civil War, belief in the power of self-improvement through education became widespread, and this hunger for learning was frequently met by reading books. By the 1870s, most large cities had a public library built and supported by private donations. In 1876, there were 188 public libraries in America, and more than 600 were in existence in 1886, the year Andrew Carnegie donated the first of more than 1,600 free public library buildings, as part of his vision for “the improvement of mankind.”⁵⁴ A conference of librarians held in Philadelphia during America's Centennial in 1876 was an important event in the modern library movement, resulting in the organization of a national association – the American Library Association – and the establishment of *Library Journal*, the official organ of the Association.⁵⁵ At the end of the 19th century, the modern library movement saw itself as progressive in spirit, and as an important influence in the community, along with family, vocation, government, churches, the press, and schools:

⁴⁹ Uminowicz, p. 63.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 64.

⁵¹ Helen-Chantal Pike, *Asbury Park's Glory Days: The Story of an American Resort*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005, pp. xi & 3.

⁵² Stuart A. P. Murray, *The Library: An Illustrated History*, Chicago: Skyhorse Publications, 2009, p. 174.

⁵³ Roger McConough, “Public Libraries,” in Edwin Beckerman, *A History of New Jersey Libraries, 1750-1996*, Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 1997, p. 7.

⁵⁴ Murray, p. 182. Carnegie's donations were limited to construction of the library buildings; to be eligible to receive the donation, the local government had promise to support the library with public funds. Between 1900 and 1917, thirty-six Carnegie libraries were constructed in New Jersey, including the Free Public Library at Long Branch, Asbury Park's resort city competition.

⁵⁵ Joseph Leroy Harrison, “The Public Library Movement in the United States,” *New England Magazine*, New Series Vol. 10, March 1894 – August 1894, p.719.

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It furnishes a foundation for an intelligent reading of paper and magazine. It is the complement and supplement of the school...furnishing the means for continuing that education.... The modern library of today is centrally located, well housed, ventilated, heated and lighted, well arranged, catalogued and manned.... The library has begun to study thoroughly and systematically the community, and to shape its course to meet the best needs of the material, intellectual, and moral advancement of its people... [It] will attract not one class but all classes, and will be a powerful disinfectant in preventing the spread of crime.⁵⁶

In New Jersey, eighty-one new libraries, including the library in Asbury Park, were established between 1850 and 1883. Beginning in 1879, a series of Acts passed by the New Jersey State Legislature provided for the establishment and maintenance of free public libraries in cities, towns and townships. The Acts provided the right to establish such libraries by means of a popular vote that authorized the mayor to appoint five trustees and the city council to annually appropriate a small portion of taxes to fund the library.⁵⁷ Subsequent Acts passed in 1897 enabled cities and towns to acquire land and erect library buildings. By 1900, an additional fifty-seven new libraries were established in the state, including twenty-two covered by the new legislation. The state library association was organized in 1891.⁵⁸

Focusing on non-academic libraries, there were purpose-built library buildings in New Jersey prior to the erection of the Asbury Park library building. Several buildings were architecturally distinguished, for example, the 1864 Burlington Library Company, the 1869 Rahway Library. The Burlington Library Company, which is the seventh oldest in the nation, was the first library to extend borrowing privileges to nonmembers (Encyclopedia of NU, p. 469). The Rahway Library, which was organized as a private subscription, was open to the public. It became a free public library under state law in 1918 although it was privately funded until 1931. [A. Van Doren Honeyman, *History of Union County, New York*: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1923, Vol. II, p. 108] The 1873 Chancellor Green Library has always been a private, academic library. The Salem Library, the second oldest operating library in the state, established in 1804, is housed in an 1885 purpose-built building. Several urban libraries were established immediately following the NJ General Library Act of 1884: Paterson, Newark, and Hoboken. Hoboken's library was constructed in 1896; Newark's Free Public Library was constructed in 1901; Paterson's first purpose building was constructed in 1905. Trenton's library, originally organized in 1750, went through several private iterations before a referendum was passed in 1900 to create the Free Public Library of Trenton; its building was constructed in 1902.

In Asbury Park, James Bradley's wife, Helen M. Bradley, and other local women, as noted above, organized the Asbury Park and Ocean Grove Library Association in 1878 for the stated purpose of the cultivation of literary and social tastes in the joint communities.⁵⁹ Mrs. Bradley served as the first president. An article about the new society in the local newspaper, the *Asbury Park Journal*, reported on the "social necessity" for such a

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 721-722

⁵⁷ Library Acts were passed by the New Jersey Legislature March 14, 1879, April 1, 1884, April 2, 1890, March 17, 1893, and March 5, 16, April 9, and 13 1897. [*Public Libraries in New Jersey: Report of the Committee on State Library Commission and Other Papers*, New Jersey Library Association, 1900, p. 30.]

⁵⁸ McConough, p. 8.

⁵⁹ *Asbury Park Journal*, Nov. 30, 1878. The Library Association was also referred to as "the Society" and "a literary society," although there also seems to have been a contemporary organization called "The Ladies' Literary Society of Ocean Grove and Asbury Park." [*Asbury Park Journal*, December 7, 14, and 21, 1877; January 10, 24, and 31, 1878]

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society “in a community so unsettled and immature.”⁶⁰ In line with Bradley’s goal of a high moral tone for Asbury Park, the mission of the Association was to be “an elevating power in the homes and lives reached by its influence.”⁶¹

Most of New Jersey’s public libraries during this period had no dedicated building and relied on members’ donations of books, which typically produced a non-descript collection. The Asbury Park association was no different.⁶² It held weekly members’ meetings in a room provided by James Bradley, first at Park Hall, the original public hall, which combined post office, commercial and municipal offices, and then at School Hall.⁶³ It offered monthly public meetings along the lines of a lyceum, with programs consisting of musical selections, readings, and discussions of questions on “varied and interesting topics” – such as “resolved, that extreme bashfulness is inconsistent with true manliness” – that were held first at School Hall and then at the much larger Educational Hall.⁶⁴ There was also a “free reading-room, open year around,” which presumably was also where the donated books were stored; however its location prior to the construction of the library building is unknown, although Education Hall would seem to have been the likely place.⁶⁵

The unidentified New York architect selected by Bradley designed a substantial brick building, which served to underscore the idea of permanence and stability (Historic Image #1). Just as important, brick was a more fire-resistant building material. He planned the interior to include a museum and large auditorium as well as a library.⁶⁶ The library association spent several years raising funds before construction commenced in 1881.⁶⁷ The building was first used in 1885, though as a result of slow fundraising the interior remained unfinished until 1901.⁶⁸ It is noteworthy that just months after New Jersey’s 1897 legislation to enable municipal ownership of land and building for library purposes, Asbury Park’s voters approved a local public library.

The library’s circulation department and reading room occupied rooms on either side of the main entrance hall at the north end of the building. The remainder of space on the main floor was an auditorium with a low stage that was used for public programs until 1915, when the library took over the space – by 1908, the library contained 5,000 volumes and daily circulation averaged 106 books. The circulation, reference and juvenile departments were moved into the auditorium space in accordance with plans prepared by the New Jersey Library Bureau, which also provided the equipment for the new space.⁶⁹ The auditorium was well suited to conversion for modern public library purposes – the large space facilitated a modern flexible, open stack approach,

⁶⁰ *Asbury Park Journal*, Nov. 30, 1878.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² At one early meeting, there were donations of *Letters to Young Men*, *The Cause and Cure of Infidelity*, *History of the Destruction of Jerusalem*, and *The True American*, as well as *Don Quixote*. [*Ibid.*, January 3, 1880]

⁶³ *Ibid.*, December 7, 1878.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, February 7 and March 27, 1880.

⁶⁵ Theodore F. Rose, *Historical and Biographical Atlas of the New Jersey Coast*, Philadelphia: Woolman & Rose, 1878, p. 34.

⁶⁶ “Asbury Park Public Library: Some Notes on the History of the Building,” Undated anonymous typescript at Asbury Park Public Library.

⁶⁷ “Religion at the Sea-Side,” *New York Times*, July 25, 1881.

⁶⁸ “Religion at the Sea-Side,” *New York Times*, July 25, 1881; “Only Yesterday,” “Dedication of Public Library,” *Asbury Park Daily Press*, January 3, 1901.

⁶⁹ *New Jersey Library Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 4, Trenton, NJ, July 1915.

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which John Cotton Dana, the prominent and innovative Newark, New Jersey librarian, espoused in his important 1899 work, *A Library Primer*.⁷⁰ The enlarged and modernized library apparently met with satisfaction within the librarian community and it was used by the New Jersey State Library Commission for its summer Library School in elementary library science in 1915, 1916, and 1917. The American Library Association held its annual conference in Asbury Park in 1916 as well.⁷¹

Criterion A (Social History): The Role of Women in the Foundation of a Public Library in Asbury Park

The women of Asbury Park were the prime movers in the founding of the first library association; in the construction of the library building; and then two decades later in winning a vote to establish the library as a free public library supported by the town.⁷² Helen M. Bradley, Mrs. Henry Mitchell, Emma J. Johnson and Mrs. L.B. Annibaldi were the pioneers of the library movement in Asbury Park.⁷³ The Asbury Park Library Association was founded in 1878, with Helen Bradley as president:

[I]n a community so unsettled and immature as ours, the formation and right conduct of a society of the kind indicated has really become a social necessary. A literary association of men and women actuated by a kindly spirit and by an honorable ambition to cultivate the mental resources of their neighborhood can scarcely fail of becoming an elevating power in the homes and lives reached by its influence. Those, therefore, who must be held responsible for the social and intellectual of a community yet in its forming state.⁷⁴

Its principal purpose was to secure a collection of books for public use, but regular public lyceum-like meetings became a central part of the association, as recalled later: "Doubtless many...recall with pleasure the entertaining and instructive papers and discussions presented from week to week, ... when almost all of the adult inhabitants of this locality, old and young, participated in educational and social diversions under the guidance and protection of the prosperous and popular Library association."⁷⁵

Other women's groups integral with the establishment and support during the first decades of the library included the Ladies' Literary Society of Ocean Grove and Asbury Park; the Women's Club; the Ariel reading club (which began as a women's cycling club before becoming a social club); and the Saturday Club.⁷⁶ The Ariel club raised an impressive \$5,000 for the library. In November 1897, Asbury Park women, although they

⁷⁰ John Cotton Dana, *A Library Primer*, Chicago: Library Bureau, 1913, p. 25. Dana's open stack approach was also promoted by Andrew Carnegie for library buildings he donated.

⁷¹ *New Jersey Library Bulletin*, April 1915, p. 12; January 1916, p. 2; April 1917, p. 1;

⁷² The New Jersey free public library act of 1884 provided for establishment and maintenance of free public libraries in cities, attained by popular vote. An amendment in 1890 provided the same for towns and townships. Amendments passed in 1896 and 1897 related to purchase of land and erection of buildings for library purposes. [*Public libraries in New Jersey: Report of the Committee on State Library Commission*, [Trenton], NJ: NJ Library Association, 1900, p. 32.

⁷³ "Asbury Park's Public Library," *Asbury Park Daily Press*, January 16, 1901.

⁷⁴ "Historical Sketch: Early Days of the Public Library Recalled by Dr. Mitchell," *Asbury Park Daily Press*, January 16, 1901.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

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could not themselves vote, canvassed to win passage of a measure to create a free public library by an all-male vote of twenty-three votes in favor to twenty-one votes opposed.⁷⁷ State law required the mayor to appoint library trustees for the newly organized library, and in 1898, Mayor Ten Hoek appointed all men to the board.⁷⁸ The new library board voted to purchase the existing unfinished building owned by the Asbury Park Library Association. A report of the Committee on the New Jersey State Library Commission from 1900 seemingly describes the motivations and efforts by Asbury Park women to establish a public library:

It hardly seems necessary at this late day to plead the cause of what has become so universally recognized as a necessity, as the public library, were it not that there is still a disposition on the part of many communities to regard it in the light of a luxury....It usually devolves upon a few energetic individuals to arouse public sentiment to the belief that the library is not a pastime for the idle, but one of the strongest and most vital elements in the refining and educational forces in any community. Books are a most important factor in the development of character, and they have the same elevating an inspiring influence upon society as upon the individual.⁷⁹

A report in 1908 noted that the Asbury Park library “has been maintained by the efforts of the ladies,” but men would continue to remain in control of the board of trustees.⁸⁰

Ernest A. Arend, AIA (1876 – 1950)

Ernest Augustus Arend was born about 1876 in Trenton, New Jersey, to Frank E. Arend, a German immigrant who was a jeweler in Trenton, and his New Jersey-born wife Mary. He initially practiced there as a partner with another Trentonian, Samuel Brouse, in the firm of Brouse & Arend. He moved to the Asbury Park area around 1900 and started a solo practice there.⁸¹

Brouse & Arend had several projects in Asbury Park as early as 1897 and the firm was already a prominent architectural firm in Asbury Park by 1899, when a lengthy first-page article about its projects appeared in the local newspaper: “More New Buildings. Better Class Structures Are Being Erected. Free Library Will Be Fine.” The article enumerated a number of the firm’s local projects, including additions and a new stable and landscaping for Senator Frederick Biggs in Asbury Park. According to the article, the planned library improvements “will give the public a handsome library room, reading room, auditorium with stage, dressing rooms and all equipment, banquet hall, kitchens, cloak rooms, etc.”⁸² Brouse & Arend’s design for finishing the interior of the library was handled by Arend and was a prominent project for the twenty-two-year-old architect.⁸³

⁷⁷ *The Library Journal*, December 1897, p. 759.

⁷⁸ *Asbury Park Daily Press*, May 4, 1898.

⁷⁹ *Report of the Committee on State Library Commission And Other Papers*, [Trenton]: New Jersey Library Association, 1900, p. 25.

⁸⁰ *Annual Report by the Public Library Commission*, p. 21.

⁸¹ Randall Gabrielan, *Birth of the Jersey Shore: The Personalities & Politics that Built America’s Resort*, pp. 11-12.

⁸² “Brouse & Arend (1890-1905) – Project List,” *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings; Asbury Park Press*, December 2, 1899, p. 1. Other local projects mentioned in the *Press* article included a new golf club house and two cottages in Deal; a cottage and a hotel in Ocean Grove, two cottages in Belmar; and three cottages in Spring Lake.

⁸³ Exactly who hired Arend and when is not known, but presumably the new library board was involved.

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Arend's later solo commissions included numerous municipal and school buildings as well as many sizable residences. His many public and private commissions included a number of prominent Asbury Park civic buildings, including the Asbury Park Convention Hall and the Asbury Park High School (Supplemental Image 2), both of which survive.⁸⁴ He served as consulting architect for the City of Asbury Park.⁸⁵ He also designed the North Asbury Park Engine and Hose Company, the Bangs Avenue School, and Neptune High School.⁸⁶ His local commercial projects included the Georgian Revival Asbury Park Press building and the Art Moderne Levin's Department Store building, both within the Asbury Park Commercial Historic District.⁸⁷ Arend also designed the 1903 Crystal Maze addition to the Palace Amusements complex.⁸⁸ In addition, he designed many large residences in Monmouth County.

Arend's long resume of prominent local projects and his previous involvement in 1901 with finishing the library building interior made him a fitting candidate for the repairs and renovations of the library in 1931, when the original tower was removed and the roofline reworked. The front (north) elevation of the library was transformed into a more symmetrical, updated design in line with popular revival styles, such as were used for numerous Carnegie libraries of the period that had become an easily recognizable form for small public libraries. Arend's subsequent plans from September 1931 for additional work to reorient the library to create a new main entrance on Grand Avenue and reorganize interior space were never built.⁸⁹ The same year Arend prepared the library alteration plans he also designed the elegant Tudor Revival borough hall in nearby wealthy Deal, New Jersey – further evidence of his competence in a variety of fashionable revival styles.

⁸⁴ "Ernest A. Arend," *New York Times*, August 29, 1950.

⁸⁵ "Arend Dies; Architect Made Plans for Many Buildings Here," *Asbury Park Press*, August 28, 1950.

⁸⁶ Gabrielan, pp. 11-12.

⁸⁷ George E. Thomas, *Asbury Park Commercial Historic District National Register Nomination Form (Draft)*, 2013.

⁸⁸ Werner Baumgartner, *Palace Amusements National Register Nomination*, Asbury Park: Asbury Park Historical Society, 2000.

⁸⁹ Ernest A. Arend, "Library Building, Asbury Park, N.J." Five sheets.

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NARRATIVE BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property includes a lot in Asbury Park: tax block 3304, lot 4, which encompass the library building. The boundary of the nominated property follows the boundaries depicted on the March 15, 2012 tax map that accompanies this nomination. The boundary of the nominated property begins at the northeast corner of block 3304, lot 4 at the southwest corner of the intersection of First and Grand Avenues, and proceeds west following the north boundary of lot 4, south along the west boundary of lot 5, then east along the south boundary of lot 4, then north along the east boundary of lot 4 to the northeast corner of that lot to the place of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the nominated property encompasses the lot that constitutes the property associated with the Asbury Park Public Library.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION

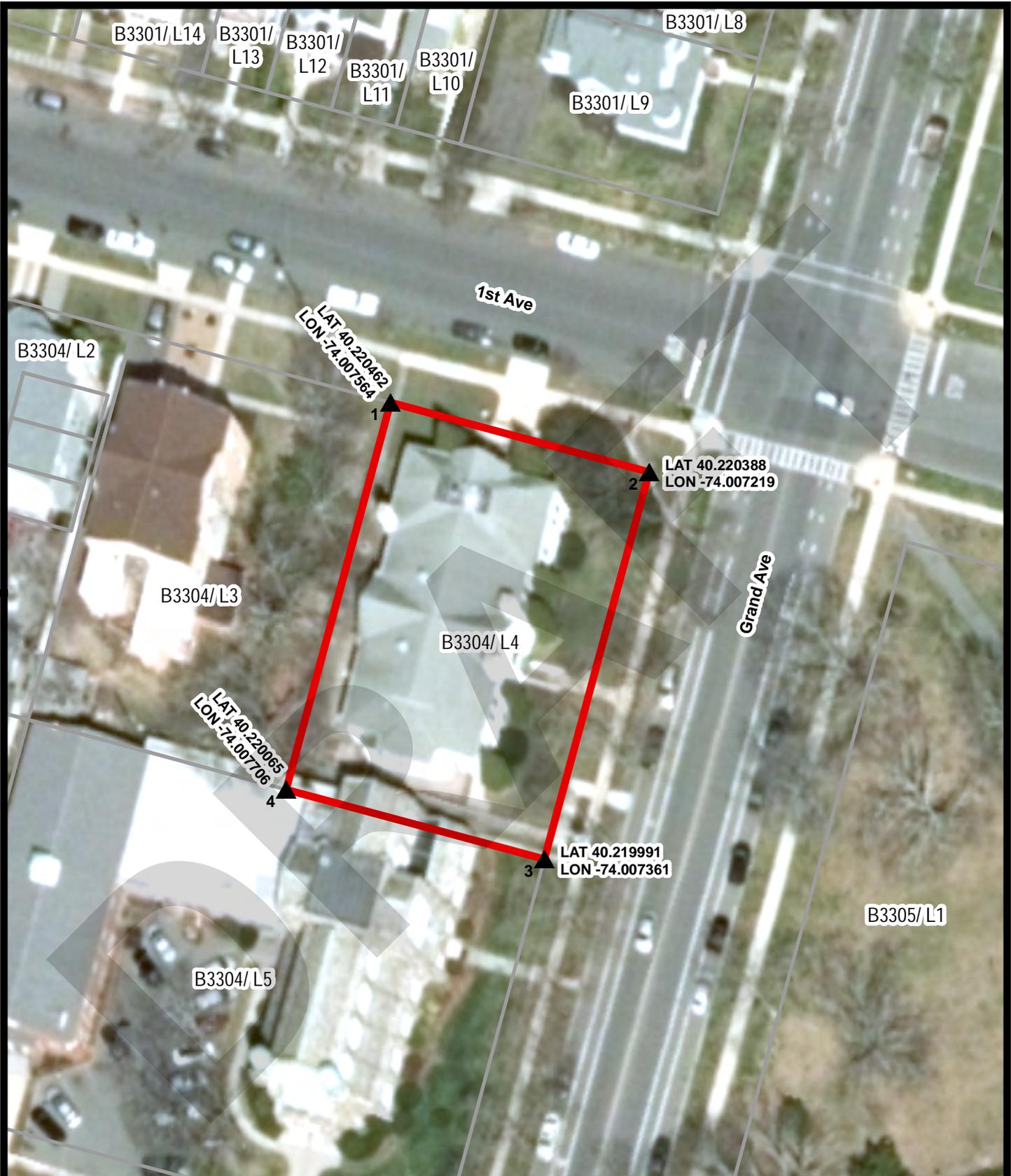
The following information is the same for all photographs submitted with the nomination:

Name: Asbury Park Public Library
Location: Asbury Park, Monmouth County, NJ
Photographer: Ann Parsekian, Dennis Bertland Associates
Date: Fall 2017
Negative and Electronic file Repository: Dennis Bertland Associates, Stockton, NJ

Photo

View

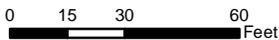
1. North elevation, view to south
2. East elevation, view to west
3. East elevation, view to west
4. Entrance Hall, view to north
5. Entrance Hall, view to south
6. Northeast Room, view to north
7. Main Room, view to northwest
8. Main Room, view to southeast
9. Grant Window, view to east
10. Longfellow Window, view to west,
11. Children's Room, basement level *Basement Plan Not Shown
12. View from Library Square, view to west
13. Intersection of Grand and First Avenues, view to southwest
14. View along west side of Grand Avenue, view to southwest



Asbury Park Public Library
500 First Avenue

National and New Jersey Registers Nomination
 Asbury Park,
 Monmouth County, New Jersey

Boundary and Tax Map



Datum: NAD 1983 State Plane New Jersey

Legend

-  Property boundary
-  Coordinates
-  Tax Parcels

0.34 Acres



*NJDEP,
 Historic Preservation Office
 December 2019*

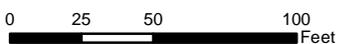
Prepared by Justyna Csolak



Asbury Park Public Library
500 First Avenue

National and New Jersey Registers Nomination
 Asbury Park,
 Monmouth County, New Jersey

Boundary and Tax Map



Datum: NAD 1983 State Plane New Jersey

Legend

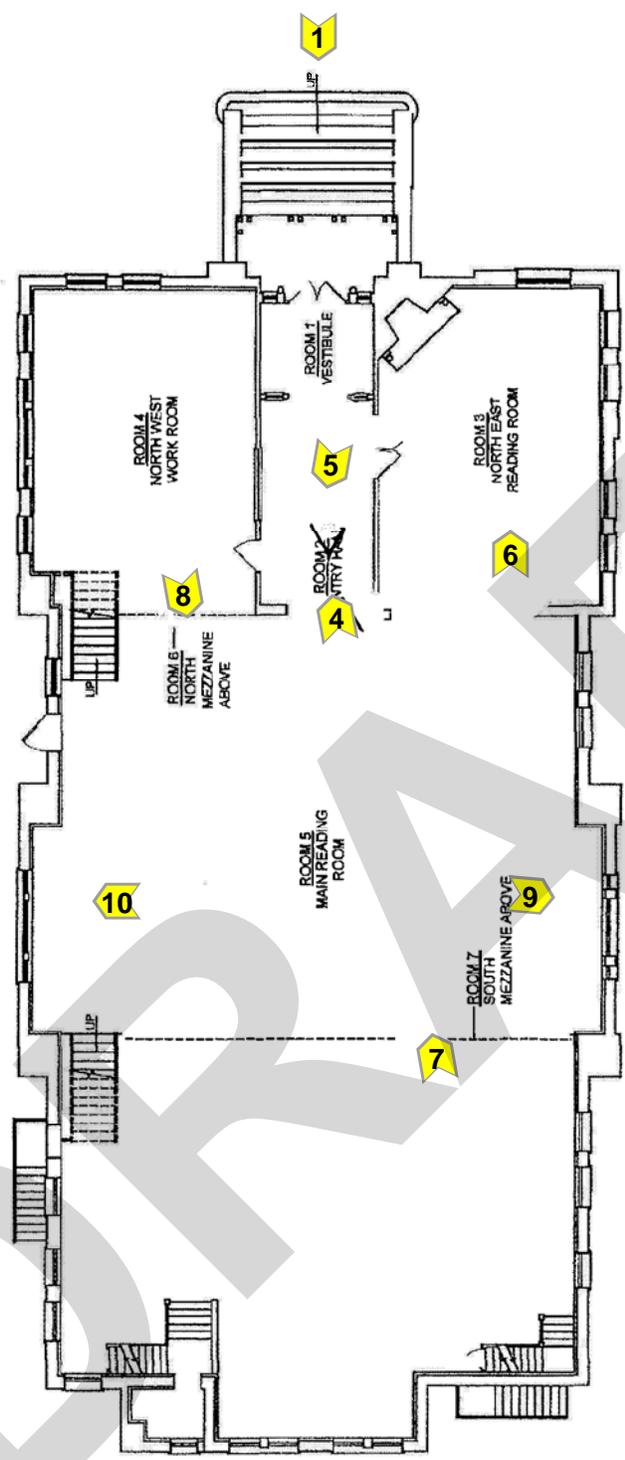
-  Property boundary
-  Photo location
-  Tax Parcels

0.34 Acres



*NJDEP,
 Historic Preservation Office
 December 2019*

Prepared by Justyna Csolak

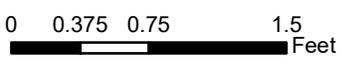


ASBURY PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY - FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

DRAWING PREPARED BY
MICHAEL CALAFATI ARCHITECT, LLC. SEPTEMBER 2018

11 Children's Room, basement level
*Basement Plan Not Shown

Asbury Park Public Library
500 First Avenue
National and New Jersey Registers Nomination
Asbury Park,
Monmouth County, New Jersey

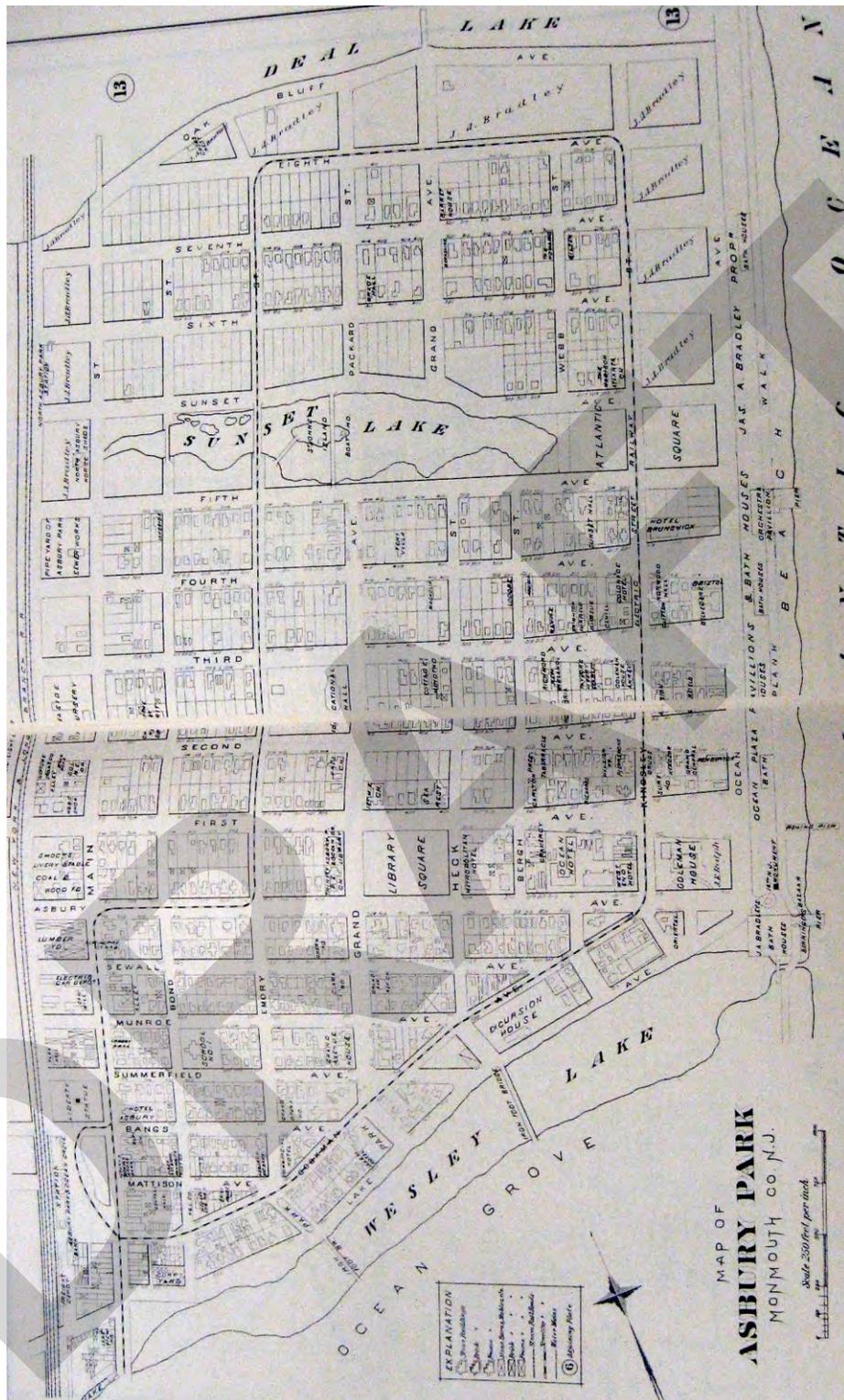


Legend
1 Photo location

First Floor Plan

Datum: NAD 1983 State Plane New Jersey

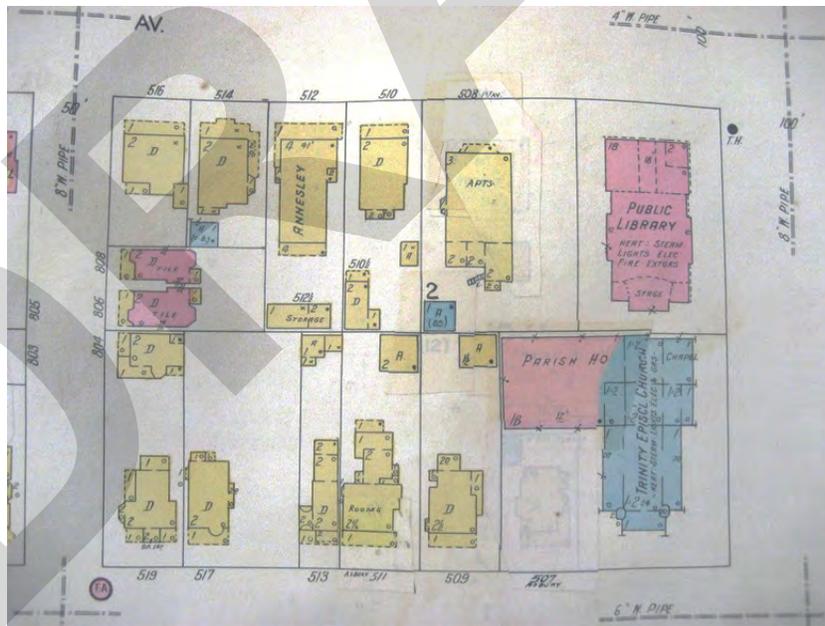

NJDEP,
Historic Preservation Office
December 2019
Prepared by Justyna Csolak



Historic Map 1: detail from *Wolverton's Atlas of Monmouth County, New York*: Chester Wolverton, 1889.



Historic Map 2: Detail from Asbury Park 1897 Birds Eye View, showing the library at left center.



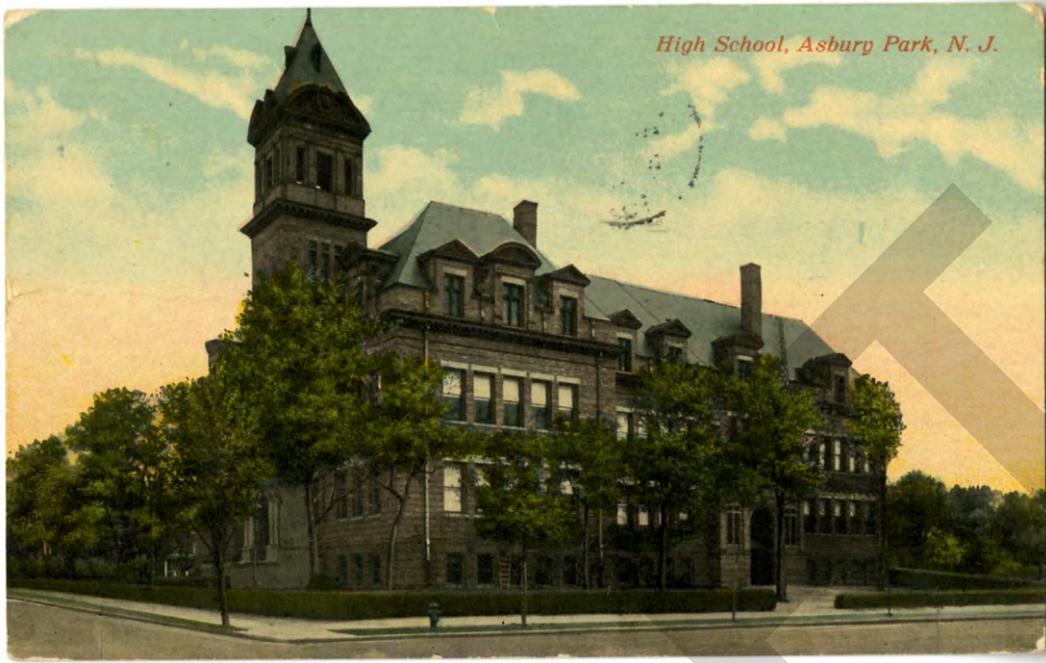
Historic Map 3: Detail from Sanborn 1930



Historic Image 1: Postcard, ca. 1909.



Supplemental Image 1: Undated image of James A. Bradley



Supplemental Image 2: Undated postcard of Asbury Park High School, designed by Ernest A. Arend.

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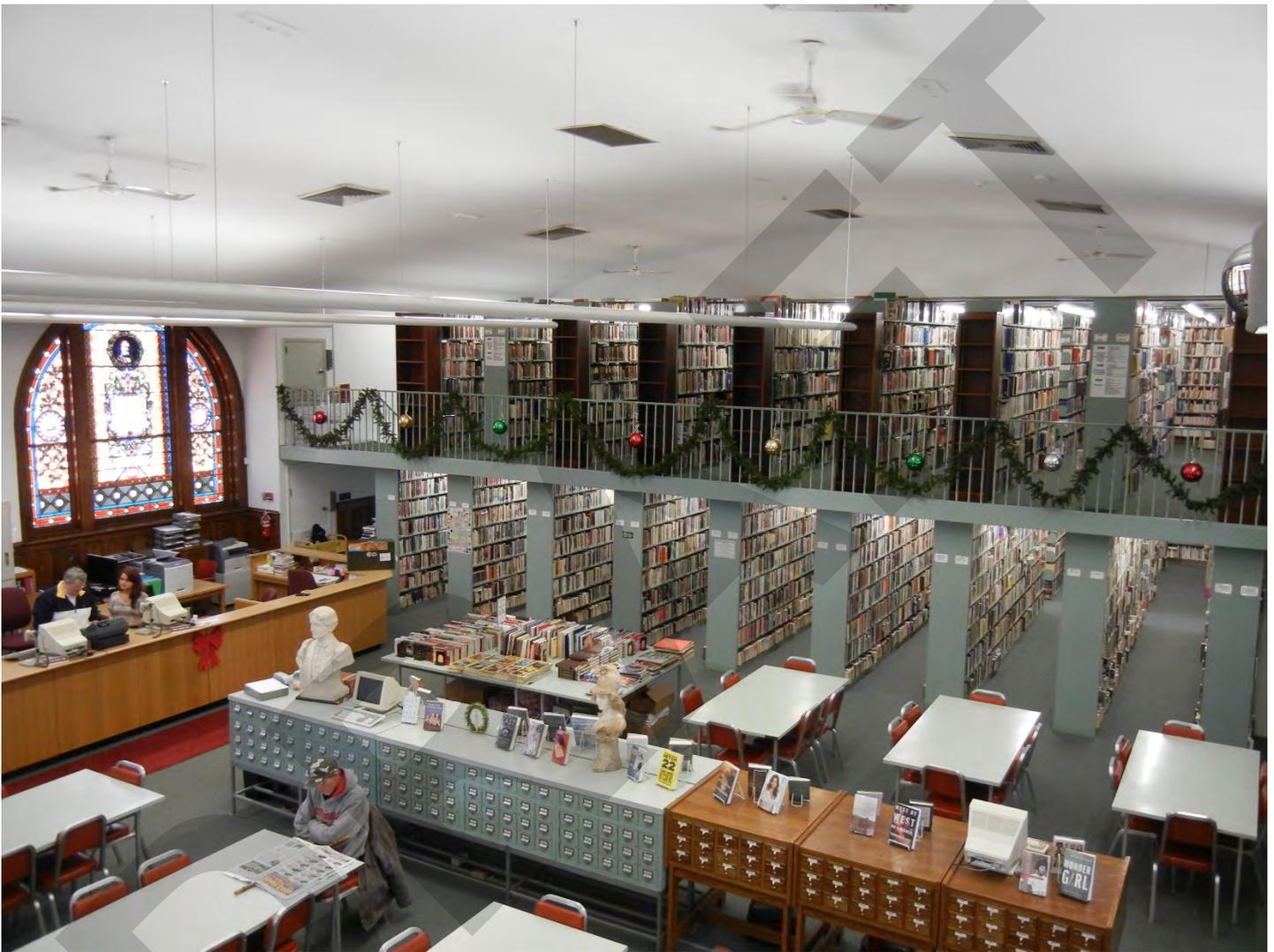


Photo 8

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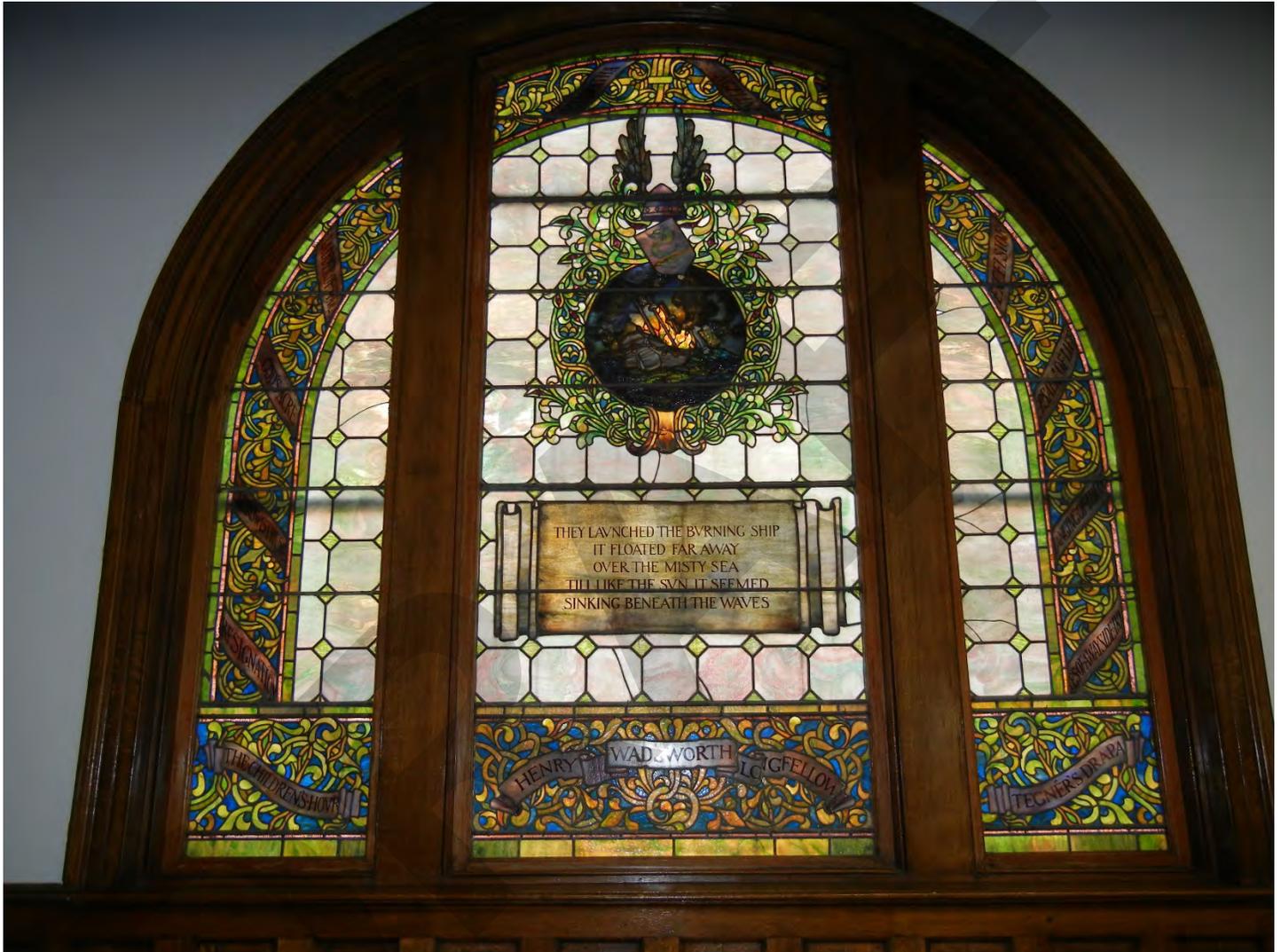


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