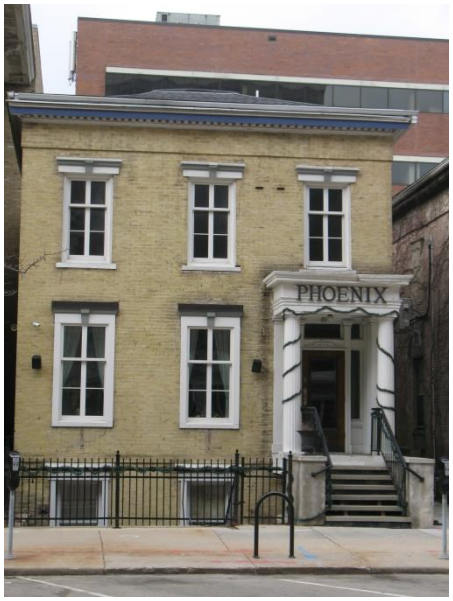

PERMANENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT FINAL AND REVISED

JEFFERSON STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

MAY, 2020

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FINAL AND REVISED

MAY 2020

I. Name

Historic: Jefferson Street

Current: Jefferson Street Historic District

II. Location

The district includes the properties on the west side of Jefferson Street between East Mason Street and East Wells Street excluding the property at 797 North Jefferson Street a.k.a. 419-433 East Wells Street

III. Classification

District

IV. Owner of Properties

751-765 North Jefferson Street
Sevens51 LLC
751 North Jefferson Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Tax Key Number 3920817000

767-769 North Jefferson Street
Carol Hartter
767 North Jefferson Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Tax Key Number 3920816000

771-773 North Jefferson Street

Fox Properties LLC	Registered Agent
P.O. Box 171003	Fabio Romersi
Milwaukee, WI 53217	110 W. Krause Pl.
Tax Key Number 3920815000	

775-781 North Jefferson Street

Gerda Fay Holdings LLC	Registered Agent
301 Main Street	Noel Williams CPA
Houston, TX 77002	1850 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Dr.
Tax Key Number 3920814000	Suite 201
	Milwaukee, WI 53212

783-785 North Jefferson Street

Zet Jeff LLC	Registered Agent
8870 North Port Washington Road	Howard M. Zetley
Bayside, WI 53217	88870 North Port Washington Road
	Milwaukee, WI 53217-1628

787-789 North Jefferson Street

Zet Jeff LLC	Registered Agent
8870 North Port Washington Road	Howard M. Zetley
Bayside, WI 53217	8870 North Port Washington Road

Nominator: Alderman Robert Bauman

NOTE: Jefferson Street is part of the East Side Commercial Historic District listed in the National Register on September 23, 1986.

V. Description

A. Boundaries

Beginning at the southeast corner of the property addressed as 751-765 North Jefferson Street; then north along the east property lines of all buildings fronting North Jefferson Street to the northeast corner of the property line of 787-789 North Jefferson Street; then west along the north property line of 787-789 North Jefferson Street to the rear property line; then south along the property line of 787-798 North Jefferson Street, 783-785 North Jefferson, 775-781 North Jefferson, 771-773 North Jefferson, and 767-769 North Jefferson Street to the southwest corner of the property at 767-769 North Jefferson; then east along the south property line of 767-769 North Jefferson to the northwest corner of the property line of 751-765 North Jefferson; then south along this west property line of 751-765 North Jefferson to a point where the property line jogs east; then east along this jog to the point where the property line turns south; then south along this property line to the southwest corner of the property line of 751-765 North Jefferson; then east along the south property line of 751-765 North Jefferson (parallel to Mason Street) to the point of beginning.

B. General Character

The Jefferson Street Historic District consists of six properties, five of which were originally constructed for residential purposes. The sixth was constructed for commercial purposes and remains so today. The buildings range in age from 1852 through 1926 and were built up close to the street. Lot lines are tight in contrast to the more spacious lots found in other neighborhoods. All are of solid masonry construction and are mostly two to three stories in height. Over time, the residential structures have been converted to commercial or office use, in some instances resulting in a remodeling of the core structure. The district boundaries have been established based on the consistent scale and quality of details in the buildings and its overall ability to convey the sense of a 19th and early 20th century streetscape.

Visually the district stands out from surrounding areas. The east side of the 700 block of Jefferson Street has been completely rebuilt since the 1960s and all historic properties, (the Layton Gallery of Art, Phoenix Club, Moose Club, Milwaukee Institute of Art, etc.) have been removed and replaced.

North of Wells Street are commercial buildings from the 19th and 20th centuries and Cathedral Square, once known as Courthouse Square where the first and second county courthouses once stood.

South of East Mason Street the character changes to the taller commercial buildings.

The other side of the block is Milwaukee Street which consists of commercial properties from the 1860s into the 20th century.

PROPERTY HISTORY

The block in which the Jefferson Street Historic District is located is Block 20 of the Plat of Milwaukee. It featured twelve lots each of which was sixty feet by 120 feet in dimension. An alley runs north/south through the block. The block is located four blocks east of the Milwaukee River and was early on found desirable for residential development as it was away from the commercial activity along Water Street. By 1851 tax rolls show that there were improvements on six parcels within this block. Lots one through six fronted Jefferson Street. Lots seven through twelve fronted Milwaukee Street. Lots five and six, closest to Mason Street, were divided into two parcels each. The highest assessed parcels were the east half of Lot six at $1200 and the west half of Lot six at $1800. Fire insurance maps indicate that commercial/mixed use buildings were located here.

By 1876 fire insurance maps show the west side of Jefferson Street built up with mostly residential structures. At the corner of Jefferson and today's East Wells Streets (old Number 471) was a substantial two story masonry residence. It was owned by John H. Van Dyke in 1851 and occupied by him until about 1862 then was owned and occupied by Herman Nunnemacher from 1870 through 1892. Next south were the two houses built by William Webber, then the double house of Matthew Keenan, followed by a three-unit two-and-one-half story masonry rowhouse, then three small frame structures and a masonry commercial building at the corner of Mason Street. (Rascher's Fire Insurance Atlas of the City of Milwaukee, Wis. Chicago: Western Fire Map Pub. Co. 1876, volume 1 page 21)

The residential structures were built of solid masonry and ranged in style from the simple Federal Style to the very elaborate Italianate. The frame buildings consisted of a two-story residence at # 447, a two story frame residence with one story front at # 443 and a one story structure at # 441 (all pre-1930 addresses).

Some changes were made to the block by the 1890s. The northernmost house at the corner of Jefferson and Wells was sold to E. H. Abbot who replaced the early house in 1894 with a one story building with five storefronts that fronted onto Wells Street. The rowhouse south of the Matthew Keenan doublehouse began a series of modifications that would leave only one unit recognizable today.

By the late 19th / early 20th century, after many of the original owner-occupants had passed away, some of the buildings evolved into rentals for multiple tenants both for residential and for commercial use as offices and shops. The small frame buildings and the masonry building at the corner of Jefferson and Mason Streets made way for the Watts Building. The proximity to Chapman's Department Store on East Wisconsin Avenue at North Milwaukee Street, known for catering to the "carriage trade" or well-to-do, led to this part of the east side becoming known for high end shops, art boutiques, music studios and the like. The Layton Art Gallery on the east side of Jefferson Street also made this area a center for arts activities as there was no public/municipally-sponsored art museum at that time. Many of the businesses along Jefferson Street as well as Milwaukee Street carried merchandise that could not be found elsewhere and there were also one-of-a-kind dining establishments. To quote from an article by Obie Yadgar in 1982 "Jefferson in parts comes nearest to being the Rolls-Royce of Milwaukee's commercial

streets. In a single brush stroke, it blends the old and the new in a graceful line of charm and elegance…Jefferson still caters to the carriage trade." (Milwaukee Journal 1982 December 13, page 1 "Jefferson: Rolls-Royce of Downtown streets.")

DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY OF INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS

GEEORGE WATTS & SON, INC
759 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
(1925) Martin Tullgren & Sons architect (Permit dated October 5, 1925)

The Watts Building is a two-story former retail shop and restaurant that is sheathed entirely in two-tone terra cotta and trimmed with sheet copper, polychromatic terra cotta, and leaded glass. Designed by Martin Tullgren & Sons, the Italian Renaissance / Mediterranean design is reflected in the elaborate cornice, rope window moldings, and trabeated window surrounds. The type of rough terra cotta used was described in the press as "never before been used here." The exterior is in nearly original condition. Kessler's Jewelers, occupying the corner retail space at Mason and Jefferson Streets, removed the stained glass from the transoms in his unit in recent years and installed reflective disks in the spaces.

George Watts & Son was the last of what was once a thriving crockery and glassware business in the Central Business District. George Watts was born in Uffcolmbe, England in 1847 and came to the United States at age 21. Traveling from Chicago to Milwaukee Watts saw a help wanted sign at the china establishment of Thomas Massey on today's South 2nd Street (Reed Street). He was hired and began what would become a life-long career. The business moved to the more prestigious 424 Milwaukee Street (old address) in 1885 about which time Watts became partner/acquired an interest in the store. The partnership lasted until 1890 when Massey was killed in an accident. Thereafter the business was known as Siddel-Watts China Company. Beginning in 1893 Watts purchased full interest in the business and carried on under his own name. Son Howard M. Watts (1890-1968) became partner in 1915 and the business became known as George Watts & Son. The firm was known for its high grade china and glassware. George Watts died in 1919 and was followed by his wife in 1923.

In 1925 under Howard Watts the business formed The Watts Building Company to construct a new two story building to house three stores, four offices and a tea shop. The permit dated October 5, 1925 indicated that the building was to cost $120,000 and that Martin Tullgren & Sons was the architect.

Newspaper articles indicated that the new building took the place of several venerable businesses. At the north end of the development site were three frame buildings that came down. A sliver of a building at address # 441 was known as the Jabez Smith candy store where one could buy in addition to candy, valentine day cards, slate pencils, magazines and newspapers. Mr. Smith had been on the premises for 30 years (that would put it at 1875) per an interview with him in 1906. It was said his store was a favorite gathering place for little girls and one society woman reminisced about delicious chocolate mice and the brightly colored pencils that were available at the shop. The Smith family originally thought to move the building but found it was not feasible. (Milwaukee Journal 1906 May 5 page 13; 1925 August 20 page 15; 1933 February 5 page 30)

The building at # 445 Jefferson started as a front gabled frame structure to which a one story projecting storefront was added. It was occupied by a furnace and tin shop occupied over time by Co-Operative Plumbing & Gas Fitting Company, J.H. McDonald and then Hollitz & Bogenberger. Hollitz had occupied the site for thirty years but when the property was sold for the Watts project Hollitz acquired a new location where he intended to build a three story building with A.G. Fischer. (Milwaukee Journal 1887 May 5 page 5; 1893 June 17 page 7; 1897 November 6 page 7; 1903 September 12 page 10; 1925 January 5 page 13)

The building at # 447 Jefferson was likewise a frame front gabled structure to which a one story projecting storefront was added in 1892. The building was occupied by Jefferson Market run by A. G. Fischer. It has earlier been occupied by H. Hambach's meat market. (Milwaukee County Historical Society photo collection Jefferson Street; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1894; Permit records 447 Jefferson Street within the permit for the George Watts Building at 751-765 North Jefferson Street)

At # 148-150 Mason Street was a solid masonry store with upper apartments, likely dating to the 1860s. At the time of its demolition Milwaukee residents referred to this as an "East side landmark" occupied by Home Brothers Grocery, a fixture in the neighborhood going back to at least 1880. Home Brothers along with the Fox grocery were identified as groceries that catered to the carriage trade. At one time the west bay of the storefront (# 148 Mason) was tenanted by Charles A. Higgins(1880s) and then M. Stewart & Co. (early 1880s) dealers in fish and seafood. Eventually Home Brothers occupied both storefronts. Before the Home Brothers occupied the building it was the grocery of J. Siddel in the mid-1870, Barker & Co. in the early 1870s, and Millerd Brothers in late 1860s. (Milwaukee City Directories; Milwaukee Journal 1925 August 20 page 15; October 7 page 17)

Construction on the new Watts Building was scheduled to start September 1925 and inspectors' notes show the foundation was being worked on by October 12, 1925. An article in the Milwaukee Journal indicated that Watts would open in the latter part of April, 1926. Inspectors determined the building was complete after inspection on May 6, 1926. In addition to Watts the original tenants included the Aitchison Shop (exclusive women's wear), MacArthur Studios (interior decorating), Astor Linen Shop (fine linens and lingerie) and The Tea Shop run by the Misses Cook. The article about the tenants added that there were two more spaces available on the second floor "catering to high-class trades." (Milwaukee Journal 1926 April 1 page 12)

The Watts Building was given a two page spread in American Builder magazine in their October 1926 issue. It was described as being an "Effective Blending of Italian Renaissance and Spanish Style" "predominantly Italian Renaissance, although there is a touch of modern Spanish architecture in the design" and is the "finest glass and china shop in the country" and "certainly one of the most attractive mercantile establishments in the city of Milwaukee." It "is designed especially to suit the delicate tastes of the artistic clientele to which it caters." Howard Watts, son of the late founder George, had toured the country studying other stores of this type and came up with a general plan that incorporated the best of what he'd seen as well as his own ideas. The article goes on to say that he "entrusted the design and construction" to Martin Tullgren & Sons who were widely known. ("The Beautiful Renaissance Style in Beautiful Retail Store. Martin & Tullgren [sic], Architects". American Builder, October, 1926, pages 156-157)

The Watts building was 120 by 60 feet in dimension and built of reinforced concrete. The Jefferson and Mason Street facades were elaborate but the rear (west) side was utilitarian and the north wall abutted the neighboring building. "The entire building is faced with a special finish terra-cotta of brownish hue. The terra-cotta used on the building is something new, and was developed especially for the work. A pleasing and decidedly different effect was obtained by scraping the terra-cotta with a heavy wire brush before it was glazed, with the result that it gives a richer and more distinctive tone to the appearance of the building." The terra cotta was produced by the American Terra Cotta & Ceramic Company of Terra Cotta (outside of Crystal Lake), Illinois. (Information provided by Sharon Darling to Carlen Hatala, cataloguing terra cotta projects from the American Terra Cotta & Ceramic Company, per e-mail correspondence August 17, 2005; American Builder)

Detail on the first story consist of arched openings of varying sizes framed with rope moldings and a series of medallions. The name "WATTS" was spelled out in bronze cast letters above the entrance to Watts' store. There were originally two bronze lanterns suspended from the medallions on the Jefferson elevation. (American Builder)

The second story features eighteen windows along Jefferson and nine along Mason Street. They are framed with terra cotta pilasters with stylized Doric capitals. Between the capitals are plaques with winged griffins and the entire roofline features a colorful series of cartouche and scrolls.

Watts occupied the largest space in the building with a 76 foot frontage. The first floor also had a women's apparel shop and a studio while the second floor had a tea room, a linen shop and a "high class jewelry concern." Unlike typical storefronts used for display, these storefronts allowed views to the interior where displays were set up by each of the tenants.

The interior of the Watts shop featured textured plaster with a color scheme a cross between a pink and a buff shade. The main room had a 60 foot by 16 foot mezzanine that was accessed by a bronze and marble staircase in front of which was set an elaborate marble fountain. The mezzanine housed the general offices, Mr. Watts' private office and a completely furnished dining room to display china and glass as it would appear at home. Two other display rooms were located below the mezzanine. The American Builder article goes on to say that over 12,000 feet of walnut was used in fitting out the interior. The floor had cork tile while the rest of the building had terrazzo flooring. Lower-priced dinnerware was displayed in the basement which also housed stock and shipping and receiving rooms.

Over the decades since the building was completed there have been changes in tenants but by and large there was stability, anchored by George Watts & Son. Kohler Company had its Milwaukee showroom in the building from the 1930s until around 1954. In 1927 Henerlau's, a jeweler, advertised he was moving into the Watts Building. In the 1930's one tenant was Millie-Ann Koerner who ran a gift shop, "The Shop of Different Things." Sternkopf's was another long term tenant who occupied space for eighteen years in the building, beginning in 1957 and moving in 1974. The tea room had been a fixture from the beginning. Zita Bridal Salon was a tenant beginning in 2011. Kessler Diamonds is the current tenant in the building. Citing that the transoms in their space blocked views of the diamond displays, Kessler removed the original leaded glass transoms, some of which were replaced with reflective discs.

There is much more to the Watts history than can be documented in this report. The ginkgo was adopted by the business as its logo around 1957 when George Watts (grandson of the founder) petitioned the Common Council to plant ginkgo trees along the property that year. George Watts died in 2005 with the business continued by his widow Martie and grandson Sam. The business decided to close its doors on December 31, 2016 and concentrate on internet sales. The ginkgo sign was donated to the Milwaukee County Historical Society. Continuum Architects and Planners purchased the building in March 2020 for $1.5 million.

ARCHITECT MARTIN TULLGREN & SONS

The architect for the Watts Building is Martin Tullgren and Sons. Martin Tullgren (May 7, 1858-February 23, 1922) was a Swedish immigrant who established an architectural practice in Chicago in 1881. He interrupted his career to prospect for gold and superintend mines in the west for a number of years. Tullgren resumed his architectural career in Chicago at the turn of the twentieth century, taking Archibald Hood into partnership with him. By 1902 the firm had established a branch office in Milwaukee and Tullgren settled here permanently in 1905. Tullgren and Hood designed numerous apartment buildings throughout the city and maintained ownership interest in a number of their buildings. (John G. Gregory, History of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Chicago and Milwaukee: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1931, Vol. IV pages 520-523)

Tullgren dissolved ties with Hood in 1901 and took his sons, Herbert Wallace and S. Minard, into partnership with him under the name Martin Tullgren & Sons. The firm specialized in large commercial projects, especially hotels and apartment houses. They also designed movie theaters as the Downer Theater in 1915. After Martin's death in 1922, the firm was continued under the old name by Herbert and Minard. Biographies seem to indicate that Herbert was the chief designer of the firm after his father's death while Minard handled construction. After Minard's unexpected death in 1928 Herbert retained the old name of the firm in the directories until 1936 when it became Herbert Tullgren, Architect. Architectural drawings, however, indicate that he used his own name on his drawings after 1928. (Gregory, pages

520-523; "H.W. Tullgren, Architect, Dies" Milwaukee Journal, February 23, 1944, Sports, Business News, Classified Ads Section, page 1)

Tullgren was a facile designer and produced buildings in a number of historical revival styles during the late teens and 1920s. After 1928, however, his work was almost exclusively in the Art Deco and Moderne styles and included such work as the First Wisconsin Bank Garage (1929) at 740 North Water Street, the Armory Courts Building (1930-1931) at 4001-4015 North Oakland Avenue, the Hathaway Tower (1930) at 1830 East Kane Place, the Sherman Theater (1935) at 4632 West Burleigh Street, the remodeling of the Wisconsin Consistory for the Scottish Rite Masons (1936-1937) at 790 North Van Buren Street, the Badger Mutual Fire Insurance Company Building (1937) at 1635 West National Avenue, and the 1260 Apartments (1938-1939) at 1260 North Prospect Avenue, the Viking Apartments (1934) at 1705-1717 East Kane Place and the Milwaukee Western Fuel Company Building at 2150 North Prospect Avenue (1934).

Herbert Tullgren would have been the designer of the Watts Building. Herbert Tullgren (1889 – February 22, 1944) was born in Chicago and educated in the public schools there before attending Staunton Military Academy in Virginia from which he graduated in 1908. Having served as a draftsman for his father Martin from 1905 through 1908, he became partner in 1909. Until his death in 1944 he continued to design hotels for the Schroeder hotel chain, at least fifty apartment buildings, and the grade and high schools in Whitefish Bay and Plymouth, Wisconsin and even participated with associated architects in the design of the city's Parklawn Housing Project. During his career as an architect Herbert left a statewide legacy of well-designed and iconic buildings a number of which have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places or locally designated in their own communities. ("H. W. Tullgren Architect, Dies", Milwaukee Journal, February 23, 1944, Sports, Business News, Classified Ads Section, page 1)

It is not known how Tullgren received the commission for the Watts Building. It is one of a small number of buildings constructed between 1924 and 1928 that Tullgren designed in what we call today the Mediterranean Revival style, a combination of Italian Renaissance and Spanish design. There are similarities among them including their small scale, arched windows for the storefronts, liberal use of colorful terra cotta ornament and overall terra cotta cladding on two elevations of the buildings. In addition to the Watts Building Tullgren designed the Tullgren Building at 5919-5927 West North Avenue (1924), the Bertelson Building at 2101-2111 North Prospect Avenue (1927) and the Drott Tractor Company Building (1928) at 3841 West Wisconsin Avenue. The latter was not in the same category of retail as the others but it too has two elevations clad in terra cotta blocks with restrained terra cotta trim and its show windows were rectangular rather than arched.

Alterations to the Watts Building have included remodeling of first floor showrooms in 1929 that resulted in installation of new terrazzo flooring and partitions; a stairway was enclosed and second floor partitions were changed in 1956; stairways were removed in 1957 along with the enclosure of the elevator and dumbwaiter shafts; the front entrance [Jefferson Street?] was relocated and two front entrances were eliminated [Mason Street?] in 1974. Along with the removal of the original letters spelling out "Watts" along Jefferson Street at some undisclosed time, the removal of the original bronze lanterns on the Jefferson Street elevation at some undisclosed time, and the change in entrances have been the only alterations to the exterior but were kept within the original arches of the first floor. In recent years vinyl windows replaced the originals on the second story and some of the transoms had their leaded glass removed by Kessler's Diamonds.

J. HOME BUILDING
767-769 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
1852, 1916-1917, 1966
Architect 1852 unknown; 1916 Leenhouts and Guthrie (Permit Record December 12, 1916); 1966 George G. Schneider (Milwaukee Journal January 9, 1966, page 137)

The current facade of the building dates to a remodel in 1966 to convert it into the Georgian style. The first story is clad in Bedford stone laid with penciled rustication and features two entrances and two storefront windows. The entrance to the commercial space is flanked by the storefront windows and the entry to the upper apartments is located at the north end of the façade. The commercial entrance is flanked by slender scroll-topped pilasters and crowned with a fan shell. The entry door features nine lites over two panels and has a glazed transom. The storefront windows are rectangular plates of glass with no transoms or bulkheads. They have modern awnings over them. The entry door to the residential units is six paneled with no lites and had a glazed transom. The two upper stories are stucco, a material that was applied over the original brick of the 1916-1917 façade. The fenestration pattern of these upper story windows is similar to the 1916 façade but the current single windows above the entrances were once paired windows with wide mullions between them. The windows are multi-paned and have shutters to "conform to the East Town concept." The current single windows are set into the wall slightly and are topped with segmental arches. Above the third story is a beltcourse/cornice above which is a plain parapet wall. ("East Side Store Front to Get Georgian Look", Milwaukee Journal 1966 January 9 page 137)

This building has a rather remarkable story. It started out as two units of a three-unit rowhouse that was built in 1852; the third unit is located right next door to the north. Fire insurance maps show the rowhouse in place through 1894-1909 and permit records show major changes were made to the front of the building in 1916-1917 by J. Home, one of the brothers who owned the Home Brothers Grocery at the corner of Mason and Jefferson that was later replaced by the Watts Building. The permit dated December 12, 1916 does not refer to the work as a demolition and new construction but rather an addition to an existing structure costing $7,000. The work included creating a new front wall closer to the sidewalk, setting new roof joists, setting floor slabs, laying a concrete floor on the first story. The resulting building had what appears in existing black and white photos to be brown brick. The first story had a large double storefront window with transoms and a bulkhead. The entrance to the commercial space was at the far south or left side of the building and was recessed. The entry to the upper apartments was at the far north corner or right side of the façade and had a transom. On each of the upper two floors the fenestration patter consisted of a grouping of three double hung windows, then a pair of double hungs, then a grouping of three followed again by a pair of double hungs.

The most notable occupant of the building was the Niedecken-Walbridge Company and the business moved in right after J. Home remodeled the building into a commercial style front.

Niedecken-Walbridge was established by George Mann Niedecken and his brother-in-law John S. Walbridge in 1907. Niedecken (1878-1945) was talented in many fields including muralist, painter and teacher in addition to interior architecture as he called the profession. He took classes at the Wisconsin Art Institute and the Art Institute of Chicago where he exhibited among the architects later to be known as the Prairie School. In 1899 Niedecken went to further his studies in Europe and returned in 1902 to teach at the Wisconsin School of Arts. In 1907 he established his partnership with Walbridge and then exhibited again in Chicago, making the connections that would lead to collaboration on twelve of Frank Lloyd Wright's commissions. Niedecken designed and provided murals, rugs and furniture designs for these commissions. During Wright's absence Niedecken worked with other Prairie architects and his last collaboration with Wright was on the Bogk House in Milwaukee 1918. (Web Information www.prairiestyles.com/neidecken.html)

City directories show that Niedecken-Walbridge was located at 436 Milwaukee Street (old number) just south of Mason Street on the east side of Milwaukee Street. It is said he was in the same building as the F. H. Bresler Company, a company that dealt in paintings and picture frames. City directories show Bresler at 423 Milwaukee Street (old number) down the block and across the street from Niedecken, closer to Wisconsin Avenue. Perhaps the shared building was the three story masonry structure behind today's 767-769 North Jefferson Street (old number 449-451Jefferson, two of the three units of the 1852 Tiffany Rowhouse). It was built in 1906 by the Home Brothers who had a grocery at the corner of Jefferson and Mason before the Watts Building was constructed. The Home brothers built this for use as a warehouse or factory building. ("Will Erect Building", Milwaukee Journal 1906 February 14, page 1) The 1894-1909 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows F. H. Bresler Co. occupying this space and manufacturing

furniture and picture frames. The basement and first floor had woodworking machinery, the second floor was where cabinet work was done and picture frames were made on the third floor. A steam dry kiln was located at the northeast corner of the basement. It would make sense that the Milwaukee Street store would be for their finished goods while this utilitarian building would be their factory. Niedecken and Bresler broke off their association in February 1910 and Niedecken established his own furniture manufactory under the supervision of Dutch woodworker Herman Tenbroeke. The 1910-1926 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows that the Niedecken-Walbridge Company now occupied the rear structure. Planing and sawing took place in the basement, machine work took place on the first, bench work on the second and cabinet and moldings were produced on the third.

It seems highly probable that J. Home of the Home Brothers remodeled the front townhouses in 1916 into a commercial building to accommodate Niedecken-Walbridge. They were the occupants in the building for decades thereafter. Niedecken-Walbridge bought the property from the Home family estate in 1940 after the last of eight Home family brothers and sisters, all of whom were unmarried, died. The last member of the family was Annie E. Home and she died in 1936 at the age of 90, having lived in one of the upstairs apartments. Her will was contested leading to the delay in resolving the beneficiaries. ("Miss Anna E. Home", Milwaukee Journal 1936 May 4 page 30; "Property Changes Hands as Old Family Line Ends", Milwaukee Journal 1940 October 6 page 52)

In 1938 Niedecken-Walbridge added Robert Jacobson to their company with the name changed to Niedecken-Walbridge & Jacobson. Niedecken died on November 3, 1945. In an announcement in the October 29, 1950 Milwaukee Journal, Jacobson stated that the company name would be changed to Jacobson Interiors Inc. as of November 1, 1950. The announcement went on to say "The high principles of good taste in decoration, better living through the understanding and appreciation of art, and integrity in business dealings, as practiced by the late George M. Niedecken, who founded the company forty-three years ago will be maintained by an organization which has worked with him for many years."

Under Jacobson's ownership the apartments on the upper two floors were modified in 1951. He commissioned the front alteration to the Georgian style at a cost of $10,500 in 1965-1966 per permit dated October 20, 1965. Inspectors signed off on the project on July 19, 1966. By 1966 Jacobson's business was known as Jacobson & Flickinger Interiors, Inc.

Steady occupancy has been the hallmark of this building since the Jacobson firm left the premises. The House of Antiquities Ltd applied for occupancy on October 7, 1975 under new owner Jordan Miller. Scandinavian Design then took occupancy per permit dated October 6, 1977. The Scandinavian Fine Furniture Inc., Carol Ann Hartter, president, took occupancy per permit dated March 19, 1988 while Jordan Miller was still owner. Carol Ann Hartter has been the building's owner since 1992 and still runs the Scandinavian shop out of the premises.

As referenced in the above history, this property also has a three story solid masonry building at the back of the premises, visible along the alley. It was built by the Home Brothers in 1906 to be used as either a warehouse or factory. The building is constructed of common cream city brick, has a flat roof, and has numerous tall windows set into segmental arched openings. Widow openings contain six-over-six sash. The alley elevation features two arched pedestrian doors at grade, numerous tall windows and large rectangular openings on each floor where supplies and finished goods could be loaded in and out of the building. Above the third story opening is a hoist with wheel and pulley once used to load goods. The large openings are closed off as our some of the windows but the openings remain intact. This warehouse building is attached to the building fronting Jefferson Street by a small connector. While once used to manufacture picture frames and furniture, it was later used as a warehouse.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS TIFFANY ROWHOUSE
771-773 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
(1852) Architect unknown

This sliver of a building was once part of a three-unit rowhouse. The other two to the south were remodeled for commercial purposes in 1916-1917.

The three story with raised basement building is the oldest in the historic district having been built in 1852 and was designed in the Federal Style and constructed of solid masonry. It is set back from the city sidewalk allowing for windows to be placed in the raised basement. The rooftop features a front dormer and the roof behind it may be flat or slightly pitched. The south elevation is not visible as the building buts up against the Watts Building. The north elevation is several feet away from the adjacent Keenan House but its visibility is blocked by a recent era masonry wall. The rear cannot be seen from the alley due to the presence of another structure that is located behind the rowhouse. This structure is a two story brick veneered building with metal clad bay facing the alley. It appears to be connected to the front building when looking at aerial views. It first shows up in the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1894-1909 and its profile resembles a small dwelling. Permit records do not reflect any building being moved to the site, but as is the case with most of the Jefferson Street buildings, many permit records appear to have been lost or discarded at the time of microfiching in the 1970s.

As in many Federal style buildings built in Milwaukee during this period (seen in historic photographs), the façade is flat and simple in character with only the openings for doors and windows giving rhythm to the façade. The entry is raised above the sidewalk and is located at the far north or right side of the façade. Above a recent era replacement door with oval glass widow is a single lite transom. A small wood stoop has railings with side mounted balusters and steps that lead to the sidewalk. The basement level is approached with its own wooden stair. There were three rectangular window openings per floor, stacked above one another. At the basement story these have been replaced with larger openings to create a storefront with entrance. At the first story two windows were removed to create a large single paned plate glass window. The upper stories each feature three rectangular windows with one-over-one sash. Windows have prominent sills and lintels. It is unknown if these are metal or stone. The dormer at the rooftop once had a three paned window. The current dormer appears to have been enlarged and now has four rectangular windows with one-over-one sash. Where the dormer meets the front wall of the building there had been a panel with cut shingles. This area is now clad with metal panels separated by vertical metal strips. The cornice has been replaced by big box gutters. The headblock/bracket still survives at the north end of the gutter.

Although the building today has one additional story and the addition substituted the gabled roof with a flat or slightly sloped one and some window openings have been enlarged, the building can still be read as part of a rowhouse in the Federal style. While rowhouses were not as common here as in cities back east or Chicago, there were a number in this part of the city, all of which have been demolished for new development.

H. Russell Zimmerman has documented this building in an article dated April 4, 1982, “Part of old Tiffany house peeks out at Milwaukee” as part of The Past in Our Present series for the Milwaukee Journal.

George Augustus Tiffany was the builder of this, originally, three unit rowhouse and had come to Milwaukee in 1839 from Rochester, New York. Tiffany had been preceded by his son George O. who had arrived in 1835 and worked as the confidential clerk for Solomon Juneau and then embarked on other endeavors to eventually end up a farmer in Greenfield and became known for breeding and racing horses. Tiffany Sr. also had two daughters, Cornelia Morrison and Elsie Maria.

Cornelia married Levi Blossom who made his mark on Milwaukee by helping organize the Milwaukee & Janesville Plank Road Company, serving as clerk of the Rock River Canal Commission, being involved in the first Chicago-Milwaukee railroad and building the Eagle Brewery. They ended up in San Francisco where Levi had become a wealthy attorney.

Elsie Maria married Frederick Wardner who invested and speculated in real estate. Wardner built a house at the north end of the block, old # 471, in 1843 but never lived there. It was said to have been modified later. By the 1851 tax rolls a Mr. John H. Van Dyke was owner of the property and apparently lived there.

Son-in-law Wardner subsequently acquired an interest in our subject property and sold it to his father-in-law George Augustus Tiffany. After several years of ownership, George A. decided to build an investment property on his land in 1852 per tax rolls. Per historic photographs and the 1876, 1888 and 1894-1909 fire insurance maps, the rowhouse was two and one half stories in height and built of solid masonry. (Rascher Fire Insurance Maps 1876-1888; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1894)

George A. did not live on the premises. Census records from 1850 and 1860 show he was living with his son George O. and George O's family on a farm in the Town of Greenfield. When the patriarch of the family George A. died in 1863 at the age of 78 his son George O. had already moved to Los Angeles per census records and daughter Cornelia was likewise living out of Milwaukee. Father George A.'s will left the rowhouse to daughter Elsie Marie Wardner.

Elsie and her husband Frederick did eventually live in the rowhouse in the southernmost unit beginning in 1870. Frederick died there in March, 1886 at the age of 71. In 1889 Elsie moved back to a house they had owned at 520 Jackson Street (old number). Elsie's brother George O. later died while visiting his sister on Jackson Street in July 1892 at the age of 78.

In 1898 Elsie Wardner sold the northernmost unit to her friend Charlotte (Lottie) Vilas. She then sold the southernmost two units to John M. Home of the Home Brothers Grocery. Home would later remodel his two units and lease to Niedecken-Walbridge.

Lottie Vilas' section underwent alterations after she obtained the north unit. In 1899 she added four feet to create a full third floor. Newspapers indicate the cost of the alteration was $2,000. (Milwaukee Journal 1899 March 18 page 4) There was also a rear two story addition constructed. In 1904 the roof was raised to create a fourth floor in the attic area. By the 1894-1909 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, the rear addition had grown from two to three stories. Another structure appeared in the rear almost in the shape of a small dwelling. The map shows it as a two story, brick veneered flat with a bay at the front and a metal clad bay at the rear, facing the alley. It is not known at this time if an existing dwelling was moved to the site. (Russell Zimmermann, "Part of old Tiffany house peeks out at Milwaukee", Milwaukee Journal, The Past In Our Present series, 1982 April 4 pages 87,90)

The rowhouse appears to have been divided up into multiple units, perhaps before, but definitely after Charlotte Vilas got the property. Some tenants ran businesses out of their units. In 1894 and 1902 there were ads for products that listed the contact person at this address. In 1921 there was an ad for a furnished apartment consisting of three rooms and bath and kitchenette for $65 per month. (Milwaukee Journal 1894 November 6, page 7; 1902 April 2 page 10; 1921 June 5 page 68) The 1922 and 1923 and 1924 City Directories show five occupants in the building. In 1929 an ad shows up for Puss in the Corner gift shop so it appears the basement level was used commercially at this time. (Milwaukee Journal 1929 December 8 page 62). By the 1937 City Directory there is a gift shop run by Emilia Pleiss while William H. Williams is renting out furnished rooms. In 1961 occupants included Dorothy White Taylor's Shutter Shop antiques, Victor J. Williams interior design, and five apartments.

Benjamin Blinstrub purchased the property and added the large first story window. In 1982 the owner was Walter Blinstrub. Blinstrub sold the property to the current owner Fox Properties LLC on January 14, 1991.

MATTHEW KEENAN HOUSE
775-781 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
(1860) Edward Townsend Mix architect (Milwaukee Sentinel 1860 May 8)

The Matthew Keenan House is an Italianate Style doublehouse that served as Keenan's residence from 1860 until his death in 1898. The building is set back from the sidewalk at the front creating a window well that illuminates the raised basement windows. There are side setbacks from the adjacent buildings

for about a third of the building but then a recent era rear addition extends the sidewalls to the side lot lines. There is no front landscaping but rather access to the raised basement from the sidewalk. A low wrought iron fence surrounds the front window well and from permit records relating to getting a special privilege to keep the historic railing, it is original. It matches the railing shown in historic photographs.

The solid masonry building is three stories high on a raised basement. The hip roof is clad with what appears to be a standing seam metal roof. Two prominent cream brick, paneled chimneys are located on each of the north and the south roof slopes. The façade is symmetrical in design and features a projecting pavilion at the center. The center pavilion contains the entrance. There are two sided-by-side entry doors that originally led to each of the two units. These doors have arched panels over rectangular panels framed with bolection moldings. A very prominent one story porch with broad eaves extends out from the entrance and features a curved cornice supported by pairs of elaborate carved brackets. Pairs of fluted Corinthian columns set on paneled plinths support the porch. The porch balustrade has thick shaped balusters and the handrails curve down to the sidewalk on either side over the window well, a feature not seen in any other extant house in the city. Access to the basement level businesses is below the porch.

Fenestration is regular across the façade. On the first story four four-over-one windows are set into segmental arched openings; two on either side of the entrance. The second story windows feature two-over-four sash and are stacked above the first story windows. A pair of identical windows is located above the porch on the second story. Attic windows are set into arched openings, one above each window of the second story and a pair above the second story in the center pavilion. Elaborate carved brackets support the broad cornice at the roofline. The cornice features a curved profile above the center pavilion. The frieze board has panels framed with bolection moldings. There are two original arched window openings at the north end of the basement level and a large modern window opening at the south end of the basement. Stone trim is used for the corner quoins and trim around the windows.

The north elevation continues the cornice detail and one round and one arched window is visible.

The south elevation has some of the same detail but no windows are visible. A wall has been constructed between the Kennan House and the Tiffany Rowhouse to the south that obscures visibility of the south elevation.

A fire gutted the building in 1984 and the owners rebuilt the interior but changed the scale of the original rooms. They also built a new four story addition to the rear that extended the building out to the lot line on both north and south sides of the building as well as west or alley side. This addition is contemporary in appearance but used cream colored brick and corner quoins as a homage to the historic property. The exterior was retained with original details. It appears that the windows and hand railings were recreated but match historic photos. H. Russell Zimmermann chronicles the building's history and fire in his chapter on the Keenan Doublehouse in Magnificent Milwaukee: Architectural Treasures 1850-1920, published by the Milwaukee Public Museum in 1987. (Pages 28-33)

Matthew Keenan was born in New York in 1825 and moved to Milwaukee with his family in 1837. He supported his family after his parents died and worked his way up from clerk to partner at William Brown's General Store. Beginning in 1852 he served in a number of elected/appointed positions for a number of years including: Clerk of Circuit Court, Tax Commissioner, Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce, Secretary of the Board of Water Commissioners, and member of the state legislature from the Seventh Ward, alderman, regent of the University of Wisconsin, trustee of the city public library. In 1875 he became a trustee of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company a position her served for ten years before becoming vice-president. In July 1894 he resigned from Northwestern Mutual citing health reasons. ([Frank A. Flower], History of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Chicago: The Western Historical Company, 1881; Milwaukee Journal 1898 August 20 page; Randal S. Chasco. "Self Guided Tour of Historic Calvary Cemetery Blue Mound Road & Hawley Road, Milwaukee in Wisconsin", no date, Calvary Cemetery website http://www.cemeteries.org/Our-Cemeteries/Calvary-Cemetery-Mausoleum.htm)

Keenan was active in the Old Settler's Club, the Temperance Society, and had a part in establishing the soldier's home. He owned much property throughout the city. His wife Antoinette Hayden Keenan was active in the Women's Democratic Club. They had no children. Matthew Keenan died at home of apoplexy on August 19, 1898 at the age of 73. He left an estate valued at $276,513.24 of which $251,000 was the value of real estate in the First, Seventh and Third wards. (Milwaukee Journal 1899 January 11 page 5)

Keenan's widow Antoinette continued to live on the premises through 1906. In 1901 she donated the public library $10,000 to establish a memorial for her husband and the library was to set aside a room to store books purchased with the money. She gave an additional amount of $5,000 in 1903. She then moved to one of Keenan properties at 204 Juneau (old number), a masonry doublehouse, in 1907 and died July 10, 1915 at the age of 90. Antoinette's will was contested on the grounds she was of unsound at the time the will was made. That was resolved in 1918 but there were other hurdles. An amount was earmarked for the establishment of some form of health care facility to treat those who could not afford to pay. After resolution of the will in 1927, the money eventually went to the construction of the Keenan Health Center at 3200 North 26th Street (now the Keenan Sexual Health Clinic-City of Milwaukee). ("Mrs. Antoinette A. Keenan Gives the City Institution $10,000" Milwaukee Journal 1901 April 2 page 4; "Given by Mrs. Matthew Keenan in Honor of Milwaukee Pioneer", Milwaukee Journal 1903 September 22 page 4; "Not City's Cash" Milwaukee Journal 1907 May 24 page 11; "$48,194 Taxes Paid on the Keenan Estate", Milwaukee Journal 1926 December 21 page 33; "Estate of $369,000 Given to Trustees", Milwaukee Journal 1927 February 13, page 12)

The Keenan's lived the south half of the doublehouse. The tenants in the north unit (addressed at 457 Jefferson) during Keenan's lifetime are not known at present. At the time of construction the Milwaukee Sentinel article of May 8, 1860 indicated that the other part of the doublehouse was already leased at $900 per year rent. It is known that John E. Eldred lived in the north unit per the 1870-1871 city directory but he does not appear there in earlier or later directories. An auction ad dated April 30, 1892 indicated that the furniture, carpets, draperies, crockery etc. of the former occupant Mrs. [Susan E.] Phelps would be sold on Monday May 2nd. City directories show her in the north unit, # 457, only in 1891. (Milwaukee Journal 1892 April 30, page 3) There were a few notices in the paper advertising rooms for rent , suitable for a "man and wife" or several gentlemen. (Milwaukee Journal 1895 May 21, page 7, July 22, page 7 and 1896 March 9 page 7) In 1895 the paper announced that Edward T. Balcom, an attorney, and his wife had returned from their wedding trip and would entertain at their home 457 Jefferson Street. They subsequently moved. (Milwaukee Journal 1895 August 2 page 2; Milwaukee City Directory)

In 1905 we know that a business moved into the building, perhaps for the first time. S. Buchbinder & Co., ladies tailors, advertised that they moved from Mason Street to 457 Jefferson. What part of the north half of the building is not clear. (Milwaukee Journal 1905 May 6 page 10) The County Board voted to temporarily lease 457 Jefferson as a detention home in 1908. (Milwaukee Journal 1908 February 26 page 3)

Whether or not the south side of the building was vacant while Mrs. Keenan was living on Juneau Avenue is not known. Her death in 1915 and the contesting of her will may have impacted occupancy.

Starting in the 1920s we see a number of different occupants in the building many tied to the arts and music and there were exclusive clothing shops, antique shops, galleries and fine dining establishments that would move in.

The 1920s were an especially fruitful time for the arts in the building. The north unit of the building housed the Walrus Club from 1919 through about 1925 when the club moved to the Pioneer Building. The unusual name came from "Alice in Wonderland" and the Walrus's advice "to talk of many things". One history indicates that the group started out as Milwaukee's Beaux Arts society whose members were musicians, artists, writers and others interested in the arts. A small group of writers and newspaper women formed the Scribblers and in 1919 invited 48 people to an organizational meeting at the Playhouse on Jefferson Street. The club was incorporated as the Walrus Club in 1921 to promote understanding and good fellowship among those interested in writing, music and art. Among the many

members were artists Elsa Ulbricht and Gustave Moeller, physician Clarence Baer and architects George Spinti and Willis Leenhouts. The press referred to the club as "Bohemian" and their activities were different from many of the clubs that affiliated around occupations, ethnicity or college attendance. Walrus Club members sometimes coordinated with the Wisconsin Players who were also in the Keenan House. The group hosted lectures, visiting performers, put on skits, held exhibitions, showed films at their clubhouse (referred to as "the cove") and sponsored famous fancy dress balls at venues that had larger space. Their fancy costume balls were much anticipated for their unique themes, decorations and costumes. ("A Time to Celebrate", Milwaukee Journal 1969 November 27 page 87 and 96; Numerous other articles about the club appear throughout the club's history in the Milwaukee Journal)

Other arts tenants included the Meyer School of Music, the vocal studio of Lydia Rew Dunn, the Jack Boyle School of Acting, the Wisconsin Players Playhouse, and Miss Lillian Way. City directories show a host of music teachers in the building in the mid-1920s. Artist Bernhard C. Damien had his studio in the building for decades.

By the late 1920s retail shops included Lillian Baker Children's Apparel, Antique Treasures, Myrtie Robertson dresses, Sarah Coyle hat shop, and John E. Lock children's shoes. Some of these tenants were anchors in the building for decades. Interestingly, a number of ads for these businesses played up the fact that were in an old mansion.

In more recent history the Sarah Coyle shop filed for bankruptcy in 1961 after forty years in the building. Her space was remodeled for the Robert Schuenke Gallery which opened in October 1961 and was featured in the Milwaukee Journal with photos of the interior. The gallery was replaced by The Loom of Denmark in 1964, followed by Talisman House. Travel Ideas was the next occupant but closed abruptly in January 1973 costing many customers to lose money paid for travel packages. Madame Kuony followed in 1978 and opened a branch of her Fond du Lac Postilion here. She taught cooking classes and had a gift shop and later opened a restaurant in 1980. The architectural firm of Jordan Miller and George D. Waltz was also located in the building by the 1960s.

After fire gutted the building in February of 1984, the building was rebuilt as offices on the interior and a substantial addition was constructed at the rear. The front exterior of the building was restored and it is thought that the front curved balustrade was restored at that time. The building today mostly houses offices with several dining/drinking and retail establishments on the premises.

Dino's Taverna had been in the building's basement for many years in recent decades. It closed at the time that J. Jeffers and Co. purchased the building at the end of April, 2018. The current owner, Gerda Fay Holdings LLC, has had ownership since December 2019. The current occupant of one portion of the basement is The Sofie, a cocktail lounge, which opened in late 2019. Another tenant is Althea Fine Lingerie. On an upper floor is Sarah Boardman-Miller Interior Design and Trade Showroom.

ARCHITECT EDWARD TOWNSEND MIX

The architect of the Keenan House is Edward Townsend Mix. Mix was born in New Haven, Connecticut on May 13, 1831 and after a boyhood in Andover, Henry County, Illinois, moved with his family to New York in 1845. On a visit to New Haven in 1848 he made the acquaintance of Major Stone (Sidney Mason Stone), then considered one of the leading architects of New England. Mix stayed with Stone for seven years and worked his way up to an assistant. After declining a partnership with Stone, Mix went to Chicago in the fall of 1855. He worked as a foreman for William W. Boyington then became partner in the spring of 1856. It is thought that Boyington had also studied under Major Stone.

Mix arrived in Milwaukee in the summer of 1856 to supervise several of the firm's commissions, including the Seventh Ward School and the Newhall Hotel, and afterwards decided to stay. He is said to have been the first trained architect in the city, not coming out of the ranks of builder/contractors as had been the common practice in the past. He brought a level of sophistication to his design work and soon had numerous commissions for schools, commercial buildings, residences and churches. One of his major patrons was Alexander Mitchell for whom he designed the Mitchell Building, the Chamber of Commerce

Building, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Depot (razed) and the Mitchell residence remodeling (today's Wisconsin Club) as well as other commercial and investment buildings for Mitchell, said to have been the richest man in Wisconsin at one time.

Mix's practice took Walter A. Holbrook as partner in 1881 as the value of his commissions began topping the million dollar mark. The firm name was changed to E. T. Mix & Company. During the 1880s few public projects were being constructed but Mix received all the large commissions including the Exposition Building (razed), Colby-Abbot Building, the Normal School (today's Rescue Mission) , T. A. Chapman's Store (razed), the Y.M.C.A. (razed) and the supervision of the Layton Gallery (designed by British architect George Audsley, razed) once located across the street from the proposed Jefferson Street Historic District. The plum commission in this decade was the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railway Depot (razed). Mix was said to have the firm that handled all the big projects in Milwaukee. Mix's office had a number of talented designers most of whom if not all embarked on careers of their own later. In 1888 Mix had several large commissions in Minneapolis and he personally moved there to superintend construction as he typically did. The thirteen story Northwestern Guaranty Building (Metropolitan Building) in Minneapolis was his first skyscraper and a commission worth a million dollars. He also designed the Metropolitan Building in Minneapolis in 1888 at twelve stories with a twelve story atrium. Both have been razed. His business E.T. Mix & Company remained open and busy in Milwaukee. Some accounts indicate that Mix moved to Minneapolis for his health but due to a climate similar to Milwaukee's it seems questionable. He died of consumption on September 23, 1890.

Mix was known for his professionalism and had memberships with a variety of organizations including the American Institute of Architects (he was a fellow), the New York State Institute of Architects, was president of the Wisconsin Architectural League and a founding member of the Western Association of Architects. He was also appointed as state architect by Governor Fairchild in 1864 and had charge of the state capitol building and other state works. He resigned in 1867 to allow the former state architect Col. Shipman to resume his job upon return from serving during the Civil War. Mix was also a member of the State Historical Society. A number of his projects were published in national periodicals including Inland Architect and Sanitary Engineer. He had an extensive library of architectural books which were donated to what we call today Milwaukee Central Library.

Mix's commission for Matthew Keenan was a major residential one in his early career and showed his mastery of the Italianate style. It received press coverage and even the house's elaborate interior was commented upon at the time. Mix would go on to design in the Victorian Gothic (Soldiers Home, Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Jason Downer House), the Second Empire (Mitchell Building) the Queen Anne (Exposition Building) and the Romanesque Revival (St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Grand Avenue Congregational Church now Irish Cultural Heritage Center) and these are just a few examples. In published biographies after his death and newspaper articles of the time, much was made of the fact that Mix significantly impacted the visual landscape of the city. ([Flower], History, p 1499-1500; Withey and Withey page 423-424; Howard Louis Conard, ed. History of Milwaukee County from its First Settlement to the Year 1895, Chicago: American Biographical Publishing Co., Volume II, pages 445 through 448; Mary Ellen Pagel, "Edward Townsend Mix", Historical Messenger of the Milwaukee County Historical Society, December 1965, Vol. 21 No. 4; Carlen Hatala, Edward Townsend Mix and Alexander Mitchell. Four Commissions, unpublished Master's paper, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1982; Chris Szczesny-Adams, Galleria, Wisconsin People & Ideas, Spring 2008, pages 34-40)

WILLIAM ALFRED WEBBER HOUSE
783-785 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
(1858) Architect unknown

This former residence is one of the last Greek Revival residential buildings remaining in the city. The two story solid masonry house is rectangular in shape with a hipped-roof-with-deck. The building is set back from the sidewalk to allow light to the raised basement level. An aluminum picket railing is located around the light well. A corbelled beltcourse separates the basement level from the main body of the house.

Above the second story windows the windowless attic level extends out slightly beyond the main walls of the building. Of particular note is the band of foliated ornament right below the shallow eave. There is also a band of geometric ornament at the edge of the eave. This shows the use of simple form with targeted areas of rich detail that is characteristic of the Greek Revival. This detail is now missing along the north portion of the roof. It could not be determined if it is still extant on the south portion of the roof.

Historic photos show that the house had two chimneys on each of the north and south roof slopes. There was also a "widow's walk" at the apex of the roof and a balustrade around the edge of the roof. These latter features were gone by the early part of the 20th century. Only one chimney survived into the 1980s , on the south roof slope, altered, but has since been removed.

The front entrance is located at the north or right side of the façade and is sheltered by a flat roofed porch supported by fluted Doric columns that support an entablature. The entrance features a full light wood door with slender pilasters separating the door from the sidelights. Above the door is a transom. Decorative scrollwork appears in the panel between the door and transom. Concrete wing walls frame the open front stairs that consist of concrete treads. There are modern metal handrails along the stairs.

Fenestration consists of two tall windows to the left of the entrance at the first story and three windows on the second story stacked above those below. Windows feature two-over-four sash which was customary before 1870. The upper windows are set into their masonry openings and feature stone sills and modest cornices above each with a keystone. The two lower windows are modern replacements for the originals and are framed with wood rather than set into the masonry. Sometime in the early twentieth century the original windows were replaced with bow front windows, probably to accommodate a commercial tenant. This condition remained until recent decades. There are two rectangular window openings at the basement positioned below those above and each features a simple lintel and sill. An entrance to this lower level is below the porch.

The south elevation is partially visible and a full view is blocked by the addition of the Keenan House.

The north elevation has one rectangular window on the second story and two on the first, set back toward the rear of the building. Mechanicals are also located here.

The rear elevation has a one story wing that is likely original and appears in the 1876 Rascher Fire Insurance Map. By the 1888 the Rascher Fire Insurance Map shows that the south half of the one story wing had received a second story. That condition remains today. The upper story has one rectangular window with six-over-six sash. A rear windowless entrance is located at the north end of the first story and has a wood stoop and a railing with surface applied balusters. Very large sheet metal ductwork snakes across the rear to discharge above the roofline. Other mechanicals are located at the rear and a satellite dish has been installed on the roof.

Fire insurance maps show from 1876 through the 1910s there had been a two-story masonry barn behind the house. By the 1920s this was gone. Permit records do not make any reference to the barn..

Historic photos show there had been a one-story connector, possibly fence, in the space between the two Webber buildings. It was topped with scrolled ornament. It is no longer extant.

William A. Webber built this house as well as the house next door in 1858. William A. Webber was born in Batavia, New York on June 26, 1818, the son of Israel and Abigail Webber. Webber had relocated to Milwaukee by the late 1830's and purchased Lot 2 of Block 20 (site of today's 783-785 and 787-789 N. Jefferson) on December 13, 1839 from Stephen Mack for $300. Mack, an Illinois resident , had purchased the property along with other lots from Solomon Juneau in 1835. (Deeds)

City directories show Webber living on the west side of Jefferson Street between Mason and Wells streets in the early 1850s so he must have erected a modest house on the lot at that time. A jump in the value of improvements in 1858 indicate that the two houses were built that year.

The Webbers used these as income property at first but lived at 787-789 North Jefferson in 1869 and 1870 then moved to 785 North Jefferson from 1872 through 1884. Webber is credited as being Milwaukee's first manufacturer of billiard tables and has an ad in the 1857-1858 city directory. He also ran a billiard hall. Living with William Webber were his wife Mary H. (Ames), likewise born in Batavia, New York in 1816, his sons Albert, Frank, Frederick, Wilkie, Harry, and Augustus, and daughter Hattie. (Census records 1860 and 1870 Ancestry.com; Milwaukee City Directory) Webber's other daughter Marietta died in infancy in 1849.

Webber died of stomach cancer on November 15, 1884 at the age of sixty-six and was buried in Forest Home Cemetery. His son William Frank died of an inflammation of the bladder on August 25, 1888 while in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Widow Mary Harriet Webber lived at 785 North Jefferson Street until her death at age seventy three on January 15, 1890 of pneumonia. Interestingly, her physician, Sarah H. Munro(e), was her tenant next door at 787-789 North Jefferson Street and one of the few women practicing medicine here at the time.

After Mary H. Webber's death James M. Pereles attempted to sell the entire property in 1892 but he was an administrator and not executor of Mrs. Webber's will. Pereles claimed he had advertised for bids from the prior March in order to "realize money to pay the legacies" and that Mr. Abbot as agent of Mr. Weil had the best bid and the auction realized $30,000 and was considered a "good price". Abbot's attorney challenged Pereles standing to sell the property. Family members challenged the sale.

Mary H. Webber's probate records read like a soap opera. It came out in testimony in January 14 and 15, 1907 that Pereles had attempted a number of times to sell the property but that Anna Webber widow of Webber son Harry H. continually interfered with the process. She was referred to as a "bug-bear". In 1902 Pereles tried again. The ad read "Administrator's Sale Real Estate" of Lot 2 Block 20 described as having "60-foot frontage on Jefferson street by 120 feet to an alley with two two-story brick dwelling houses thereon, numbered 461 and 465 [pre-1930 addresses] Jefferson street." The ad also included "J. M. Pereles Administrator Estate of Mary H. Webber". (Milwaukee Journal October 25, 1892 page 3; 1902 May 15 page 2)

The property was sold on July 23, 1902 for $19, 400, substantially less than had the sale gone through in 1892. The buyer was J. W. Dorsey, husband of Harriet A. Webber, Mary H. Webber's granddaughter. Itemized lists of expenses and income give us a glimpse into the care and repair and rental of properties in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Physician Sarah H. Monroe gave testimony about the condition of the adjacent Webber property, # 465, and how she paid sometimes $40 dollars rent for the house and other times $50. She lived there two different times, with a break of two years while she was renting at the "Keinen house". (Ancestry.com, Probate records relating to the estate of Mary H. Webber)

It appears that the Webber House was rented out, and perhaps the rear barns as well, as inventoried in the probate records. A cursory check of names of individuals paying rent against listing in the city directories was not fruitful with the exception of Dr. Sarah H. Monroe whose testimony seems to indicate she rented the entire house.

There were ads for rooms for rent through the early years of the 20th century. This later changed as organizations and businesses began moving in. A permit dated March 29, 1923 indicated that the building was being used for office purposes and was undergoing $1,000 worth of alterations to the partitions and that a toilet room was being added. By 1952 inspectors reported five rooms and a store in the basement, four rooms as offices on the first floor along with two toilet rooms, and five rooms as offices on the second floor.

Some of the occupants included: the Democratic state central committee campaign headquarters which offered the upstairs rooms as shelter to those who lost their homes in the Third Ward Fire (Milwaukee Journal 1892 July 3 page 3; October 29, page 2; 1894 August 8, page 1); the Milwaukee branch of the Indianapolis Medical & Surgical Institute that supplied medical appliances and apparatus (Milwaukee Journal 1895 April 18 page 3); Professor Bryant, a medium; sales of talking machines and records;

Tessie Lue Studio Shop (antiques); Lillian Baker children's apparel; Federated Church Women of Milwaukee County; Milwaukee County League of Women Voters; Nellie Flynn Hat Shoppe; Emilia Pleiss shop, Florentine shop, the Jefferson Painters gallery, and Rose Cottage Inc. In addition there were offices for Globe Express, Winnebago Realty, Wisconsin Realty, Flambeau Power Co., and Flambeau Paper Co. Each individual room must have been leased out.

Other tenants over the years included E. W. Stevens tailors, MacArthur Interiors, Victor J. Williams interior design, Walter Sheffer portrait photographer, Avery and Betty Sherry Foundation offices, Snow Goose boutique, Mueller & Breuss Associates, Henry G. Zummach interior décor, Sunken Treasures, Little Shop of Décor, Cara Carolina, Fritz-Klaus attorneys, Executive Gallery, Executive Edge, Absolute Business, and Brio Trattoria, a jazz and blues club. Recent tenants have operated taverns. This list was gleaned from city directories and references in the Milwaukee Journal to get a sense of how the building was used after the Webber family no longer lived on the premises and how occupancies changed over time yet allowed the building to retain much of its original exterior in a form recognized today.

Renovations took place to the building in 2016 when the front porch columns were replaced and the wing walls were rebuilt, and the bow-front windows were removed and replaced with facsimiles of the originals. The owners of Bad Genie next door, Ryan Bonen and Bob King, took over the Webber house as their second business calling it Phoenix Cocktail Club. (Melanie Lawder, "Bad Genie owners to open newly renovated cocktail lounge next door", https://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/blog/table_talk/2016/04/bad-genie-owners-to-open-newly-renovated-cocktail.html)

WILIAM ALFRED WEBBER-OWNED HOUSE
787-789 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
(1858) Architect unknown

This house was once a twin to 783-785 North Jefferson next door. It was built to match the other property and still features the cubic massing and hip roof but the tall chimney on the north roof slope, still extant in the 1984 Central Business District survey photo, has been removed. Up until recently, the upper story windows were intact and featured three rectangular openings with one over one sash and prominent lintels. Of note is the same foliated ornament under the eaves as the Webber house next door. It survives along the south elevation but it is not known if it is extant at the front or north elevation. The original front entrance was located at the south end of the façade and matched the Webber house next door per historic photos. Like the Webber House, it too had a widow's walk and balustrade around the roof, features that were gone by the early twentieth century.

The south elevation has two rectangular window openings with stone lintels and sills but is otherwise unornamented.

The north elevation is obscured by the building next door north, currently Taylor's.

At the rear is a two story solid masonry wing that appears to be original as it shows up on the Rascher 1876 Fire Insurance Map.

The rear elevation has a rectangular window opening on the first story (probably original but now boarded over), and entrance to the first floor with another opening at the north end of the first floor that appears to be blocked down. On the second story an original window opening stacked above the first story window has been altered with an arched opening and casement windows. At the center is an entrance to the second story and at the far side of the entrance another opening. At the north end of this rear façade are the traces of an original window opening that has been bricked up. Connecting the first and second story entrances are stairs, a landing and a handrail with surface mounted balusters. An air conditioning condenser is located at this rear elevation.

Fire insurance maps from 1876 through the 1910s show that there had been a two story masonry barn at the rear. It was demolished at an unknown time. Permit records do not refer to the barn at all. In 1920 a 14-foot by 10-foot steel portable garage was built at the rear at a cost of $99. It has also been removed. (Permit Records dated October 27, 1920; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1910-1926 Volume 1 part 1 page 24)

The first change to the front façade occurred in 1907 when a one-story brick veneered storefront was added to the building at a cost of $1,000 by then owner Mrs. Dorsey who with her husband had acquired the two houses in 1902. (Permit records dated March 9, 1907) The front may have been altered due to the changes occurring in the general neighborhood and even right next door at the corner of East Wells. The original house at that corner that dated to at least the early 1850s had been razed and a row of one story commercial storefronts had been constructed along East Wells Street in 1894. The portion at the corner of East Wells and Jefferson Street housed a pharmacy. This is where Taylor's now stand, not included as part of this historic district. The owners of the Webber Houses may have decided to look to commercial tenants, at least on the ground floor. The Dorsey's did not live on the premises.

The storefront at 787-789 North Jefferson featured a recessed center entrance flanked by two large glass store windows with transoms. To the left of the storefront was the entrance to the upper floor. The porch that matched the Webber house was removed and the entry was brought down to grade. It had, and still has, a transom.

H. B. Friedman Ladies Tailor might have been the first tenant in the storefront. He ran an ad indicating his move from 207 Wisconsin to this address on May 1, 1907 page 4 of the Milwaukee Journal. A couple years later on March 29, 1909 Friedman advertised that his business was moving to 587 Jackson Street (old address) (Milwaukee Journal 1909 March 29 page 4)

A store for rent was listed at this address on February 23, 1909 and the ad indicated that it was suitable for a merchant or tailor's shop, bakery or restaurant and that a long lease would be given to a responsible party. (Milwaukee Journal 1909 February 23 page 12)

The storefront remains much as it had and has a center recessed entrance flanked by two large storefront windows with bulkheads. There are no longer transoms. The entrance to the upper floors is located to the left or south where the original entrance had been. The two-lite over two panel modern door is framed with two pilasters and has a transom.

The second change to the front façade took place while Club Havana occupied the building and during the wave of converting small old downtown buildings into nightclubs beginning in the late 1990s. The owners removed the original rectangular windows on the second story and altered the openings into large arched windows, apparently in an attempt to make the building appear more Latin. The arches serve as access to what is now an enclosed porch and interior fabric has been removed. Today there is a shed-like fixed awning that extends from the roof to create a sheltered deck above the storefront below. A modern metal railing encloses the rooftop of the storefront.

The Webber-owned building follows the same pattern as the Webber house with residential use gradually being supplanted by retail and now entertainment venues.

We know that Dr. Sarah Monroe occupied the entire premises at two different periods of time per her testimony in the court hearing to clear up contested matters relating to the estate of Mary H. Webber. She had moved out and taken rooms at the Keenan House down the street to allow for the house to be repapered, calcimined and otherwise repaired for her use. Ads in the Milwaukee Journal described rooms for rent in the 1890s and the itemization of income from the properties, part of the probate records, lists a number of individuals from whom J. M. Pereles collected rent as administrator of the estate. Some of these may have been for the rear stables that are no longer extant. There was mention of evicting one tenant (Childs) but details are unknown.

Some tenants appear to have hopped from one Webber building to another as did the Democratic Party in Wisconsin.

A somewhat lengthy article about the Democratic Party in Wisconsin using 465 Jefferson (today's 787-789 North Jefferson) as its headquarters appeared in the Milwaukee Journal on August 13, 1892 page 8. Accompanying this article is a sketch of the house with the American flag flying atop the building and the widow's walk still extant. A sign at the top of the porch identified the place as the headquarters of the State Democratic Party. The house was referred to as the old Webber "mansion" and was acknowledged as one of the landmarks of pioneer times. It was praised as being "more in its inception and completion than is the grandest house in the city by comparison today. It was builded[sic] in an age prior to this, and before class legislation, the bane of democracy, made millionaires at the expense of pauperism...It is a solid, substantial old mansion, the glory of which still remains with it in solid woodwork, large airy room[s] and a lack of the insubstantial ornamentation that characterizes the architecture of the present". It went on to describe old Billy Webber as a "genial, whole-souled gentleman of the old school " whose billiard table company long preceded those of Collander or the Brunswicks. The first floor to the right of the entrance held a reception room, behind which and a little to the south was the reading room furnished with newspapers from across the country as well as campaign literature. Another room was used as an office for assistant secretary C. J. Noel. There were several large closets, and an old kitchen and pantry stripped of its cooking items. Two adjoining rooms upstairs were used as offices and there were five other rooms as well used by clerks and stenographers and for special departments of campaign work. Rental for the 12-room premises was $150 for the duration of the campaign, with similar quarters running $600 in the business part of the city. The party's New York committee was paying $1,800 per month for their quarters. The reason for the low rent was attributed to the purchase of the site by Mr. Abbot who intended to raze the two Webber buildings, as well as the old Van Dyke/Nunnemacher house at the corner and erect a 10-story flat on the site. It was mentioned that there was a problem with the title to the property but the Democratic Party felt comfortable they had at least three months on the premises. As mentioned in the Webber House next door, Abbot did not get the property and it was eventually sold to the Dorsey's who instead kept the building and leased it out. A couple years later the Democratic Party in Wisconsin was listed next door at # 461.

The list of occupants at # 465 over time includes:

M. Millar electrical facial and scalp treatments (1907), H. B. Friedman ladies tailor and Friedman School of Dressmaking (1907-1909), Madeline M. Ingersoll manicurist second floor (1909), Highway Tire Protector (1921), T. E. Pritchard insurance (1923), Tessie Lou Studio Shop (1925-1930), Mr. & Mrs. E. P. Sherry, Mrs. Laura Sherry director of the WPA Theater lived on premises (1935), Wisconsin Institute of Mortuary Science (1938), Andrews women's dresses (1938), Fox Florist James F. Fox (1939-1955) Fox lived above the store, Jackfield Store (1966), Shaxted Linen Shop (1973), Percy's (1980), Jackie B Gallery (1985), Eden (1999), and Club Havana (1999-2006).

Occupancies for Club Havana are dated June 30, 1999, and the business featured live music and the retail sale of cigars, and related smoking accessories, as well serving as a tavern. The club made alterations to the premises and then got occupancy for the basement as well as second floor after its remodeling in 2001. (Permit records dated June 30, 1999, July 8, 1999, December 1, 1999, December 12, 1999, April 17, 2001, July 18, 2001, December 28, 2001)

Bad Genie has occupied the premises since 2006.

VI. Significance

Date Built:1852 through 1926

The Jefferson Street Historic District contains an architecturally and historically significant collection of residential and commercial buildings constructed between 1852 and 1926. It is the city's oldest surviving streetscape of first settlement period residences in the city. Within the

district are outstanding examples of Greek Revival, Italianate, Federal, and period revival. They show how the styles evolved from the simple to the elaborate over the course of time. The works of locally important architects are represented such as Edward Townsend Mix and Herbert Tullgren. Historically the district represents significant contributions to the development of Milwaukee in pioneer residential settlement as well as transitioning into what was known as a fashionable arts and women's oriented retail district. That owners still consider this an important street is shown by the fact that the fire-devastated Keenan house was rebuilt rather than razed. That the buildings have seen changes over time does not diminish their importance. They are still recognizable for the style in which they were designed or remodeled and speak to the fact that owners chose to modify instead of demolish them.

VII. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Jefferson Street Historic District be designated as an historic district of its fulfillment of criteria e-1, e-3, e-5, e-6 and e-9 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 320-21(3) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

Staff recommendation is based on the previous recognition accorded the district as part of the East Side Commercial National Register Historic District and the areas of significance enumerated above.

e-1 Its exemplification of the development of the cultural, economic, social or historic heritage of the City of Milwaukee, State of Wisconsin or of the United States.

RATIONALE: The Jefferson Street Historic District is an intact time capsule into the earliest period of development in Milwaukee. It shows patterns of residential development that included individual houses, doublehouses and rowhouses all on one block, built in close proximity to one another. Owners and occupants were of mixed economic background although it appears that they were professionals and business owners. That the structure of the block remained relatively intact is remarkable given the increased commercialization of the area. It was able to reinvent itself over time without losing its architectural character. The newest building, George Watts & Son, does not take away from the character of the street but was designed to fit into the scale of the overall setting. Its emphasis on exclusivity and "high class" tenants fit in with what was happening to the Home Building and the Keenan House. The Layton Gallery across the street as well as the clubhouses and the Milwaukee Art Institute drew musicians, actors and artists to the street and gave the area a Bohemian vibe. This lent a cache to the street still referred to as chic into the 1980s.

e-3 Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city.

RATIONALE: A number of individuals who lived and worked on Jefferson Street can be associated with the development of the city of Milwaukee. William Webber (1818-1884) was credited as the first Milwaukee manufacturer of billiard tables and he also ran a billiard hall. His firm manufactured not only billiard and bagatelle tables but cloths, balls, cues, leathers and so on. He supplied an early form of recreation, a type of sport still popular toady. Matthew Keenan (1825-1898) served in a number of elected offices between 1852 and 1874 including alderman, assemblyman and tax commissioner. He last worked at Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance and worked his way up to vice-president. He remained a high profile individual throughout his life. It is telling that the doublehouse he lived in is still referred to as the Matthew Keenan House after 160 years. The firm of Niedecken-Walbridge was a premier interior architecture firm that produced its own furniture and worked with Frank Lloyd Wright on significant commissions in the firm's early years. George Watts started an exclusive china and glassware shop that continued for over 140 years and became synonymous with quality. The commercial building he commissioned was

tenanted by “high-class” retailers and dining at the famous tea room was always considered a special occasion.

e-5 Its embodiment of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

RATIONALE; The Jefferson Street Historic District contains examples of various architectural styles popular from 1852 through the 1920s. The William A. Webber House is a fine example of the Greek Revival style as built in the city in the decades before the Civil War. The Greek Revival was popular among the “Yankee” settlers who brought the style with them from back east. It represented a major step up from the wooden vernacular structures being erected in the city in its formative years. The cubic form of the house features a hip roof and details are confined to windows and entrances. Here the windows feature two-over-four sash in rectangular openings. The entrance has sidelights and a transom and is sheltered by a small porch with fluted columns. Historic photos show the Greek Revival could be found in the early residential streets of Juneautown and redevelopment has erased all but this example. The twin of the Webber House shared the same features but had a storefront added in 1907 and in recent years the windows altered.

The Matthew Keenan Doublehouse is a highly detailed Italianate style residence with scrolled brackets at the eaves and arched windows with hoods and a prominent front porch with elaborate brackets and curved balustrades leading to the street. In the manner of most pre-1870s houses the basement is raised to allow for utilitarian living functions such as kitchens. This is arguably the most embellished pre-Civil War Italianate in the city.

The Watts Building has often been referred to as a jewel box due to its profusion of terra cotta detail on a building of modest size. It is an excellent high style example of Mediterranean Revival, blending elements from the Italian renaissance and Spanish architecture. Its textured terra cotta was created especially for this building and contributes to Watts’ rich visual character. Architectural elements are highlighted with polychrome terra cotta and care was taken over the years to keep any alterations to a minimum and barely discernable.

The surviving portion of the Tiffany Rowhouse still is recognizable as an example of the Federal style. Once a three-unit structure, the rowhouse has the simple façade, raised basement and flat dormer at the front, features that were common to the period that can be seen in historic photos. Again, when alterations were being done in the late 19th century, the owner kept to the basic form of the building and did not re-invent it into a Queen Anne or Colonial Revival fashion.

e- 6 Its identification as the work of an artist, architect, craftsperson or master builder whose individual works have influenced the development of the city.

RATIONALE: Edward Townsend Mix designed the Matthew Keenan House about five years after he settled in Milwaukee. He was known for his high style work and designed in all the popular styles of the 19th century including Italianate, Second Empire, Romanesque, and Gothic. His architectural firm was awarded the largest projects in the city during the 19th century. Some of these include the Mitchell Building, the Chamber of Commerce Building, the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Depot (razed), the Exposition Building, and the original portion of the Soldiers Home. Among his residential projects still standing are the Button House (now David Barnett Gallery), the Robert Patrick Fitzgerald House, and the Jason Downer House. Mix gave the city its distinctive visual profile and the Keenan house ranks among his best.

Herbert Tullgren, like Mix before him, was a prominent Milwaukee architect, but in the first third of the twentieth century. He introduced an entirely new form of apartment building to the city, designed numerous hotels and commercial buildings and did much to introduce the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles to the city. His body of four projects utilizing terra cotta for cladding and ornamentation between 1924 and 1928 are still eye-catching today.

e-9 Its unique location as a singular physical characteristic which represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the city.

There is no doubt that Jefferson Street has its own sense of place and is visually distinctive form surrounding blocks. The scale of the buildings, their relationship to the street, their variety of styles and their good integrity all make Jefferson Street unique.

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Preservation Guidelines

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding the permanent historic designation of the Jefferson Street Historic District. The intent of the commission is to preserve the historic, existing exterior features of the buildings and guide any changes and restorations that might be done on the exterior.

Building maintenance and restoration must follow accepted preservation practices as outlined below. Any exterior changes such as masonry repair, re-roofing, and so on but exclusive of routine painting of previously painted surfaces and trim, will require a certificate of appropriateness. Most certificates are issued on a staff-approved basis and only major new construction or alteration requests typically will go before the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions.

1. Roofs

   a. Retain the original roof shape. No changes may be made to the roof shape that would alter the building height, roofline, pitch or gable orientation.

   b. Locate mechanical systems and vents on portions of the roof not visible at all from the public right of way and paint them out to minimize impact. Re-roofing requires consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness to ensure appropriate materials and installation and proper construction of flashing, gutters, downspouts and valleys.

   c. Electronic devices such as, but not limited to, satellite dishes require review with historic presentation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness. The request for the installation of solar devices will be reviewed on a case by case basis based on provisions of 66.0401, Wis. Stats. Skylights may be added to roof surfaces if they are not visible from the public right of way and do not harm the historic fabric of the building. Skylights require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

   d. No large rooftop construction or addition is allowed, such as a full story, as this would have a negative impact on the historic character and proportions of the building. The construction of other rooftop features, such as but not exclusive to dormers, cupolas, and so on, requires review by the Historic Preservation Commission and a Certificate of Appropriateness. When re-roofing, ridge vents are preferable where possible and any pan vents should be located on roof slopes not visible to the street. Re-roofing requires a Certificate of Appropriateness to make sure the material, flashing, drainage and gutter systems are appropriate. Any historic chimneys must be retained.

   e. Retain the original roofing materials where ever possible. Given the age of the buildings in the district, it is unlikely that any original roofing materials are extant. Avoid using new roofing materials that are inappropriate to the style and period of the building and district and that differ to such an extent from the old in size, shape, color and texture so that the appearance of the building is altered.

2. Materials

Masonry

a. Unpainted brick, stone or terra cotta must not be painted or covered. The masonry is currently painted on some of the buildings. This can remain unless the paint can be shown to be damaging the building and the owner wants to remove the paint. Painting masonry is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date. Covering masonry with other materials (wood, sheet metal, vinyl siding, etc.) is not allowed.

b. Re-point defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, hardness, texture, joint finish and joint width. See the masonry chapters in the books, As Good As New or Good For Business for explanations on why the use of a proper mortar mix is crucial to making lasting repairs that will not contribute to new deterioration of the masonry. Using much harder, contemporary Portland cement mortar will not make a lasting repair and can damage the historic brick and stone. Replaced mortar joints should be tooled to match the style of the original. Do not use mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or were not used when the building was constructed. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before starting any re-pointing.

c. In the future should masonry cleaning be necessary (to remove paint, environmental pollutants, graffiti etc.) it should be done only with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting or high pressure water blasting or the use of other abrasive materials (baking soda, nut shells, dry ice, etc.) on limestone or brick or terra cotta surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. The use of accepted chemical products to clean masonry is allowed and a test panel is required before general commencement of the work. Work should be done by experienced individuals as the chemical cleaning process can have a negative impact on the masonry. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before any cleaning would begin.

d. Repair or replace deteriorated masonry with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. The use of EIFS (exterior insulation and finish systems) which is synthetic stucco is not permitted. The application of plywood, metal, vinyl or other substitute products is not permitted. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before attempting work on the masonry.

e. Unpainted terra cotta should not be painted or covered. Make no change to the original glazed surface. This is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date. Clean terra cotta only when necessary to halt deterioration and with the gentlest method available. Sandblasting terra cotta is prohibited. This method of cleaning destroys the material.

   Repair or replace deteriorated terra cotta with new terra cotta cast to match. It may be possible to use pre-cast tinted concrete or cast fiberglass as replacement material as long as it is finished with a coating to resemble the original appearance. Avoid using new material which is inappropriate or does not resemble the original.

Wood/Metal

a. Retain original material, whenever possible. Do not remove architectural features that are essential to maintaining the building's character and appearance such as but not limited to bargeboards, finials, corbels, brackets, cornices.

b. Retain or replace if absolutely necessary deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Covering wood with aluminum or vinyl or other substitute material is not permitted. Spot replacement or spot repair of any deteriorated elements is encouraged rather than complete removal and replication. Pediments above doors and windows, window architraves, and cornices are essential parts of a building's character and need to be retained. Covering architectural features with new materials that are inappropriate or were unavailable at the time of construction should not be used and this includes but is not limited to artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, vinyl or aluminum siding, metal panels.

3. Windows and Doors

a. Retain existing original and historic period window and door openings. Retain original doors and windows within those openings if any are extant. Do not make changes in existing fenestration by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Do not change the size or configuration of original window panes or sash. The only location where additional windows might possibly be added is at the rear of the buildings. Any approval will depend on the proposal submitted.

Some entry doors may be original. The rear doors cannot be seen from the street. Should doors need to be replaced, there are examples being made today that would be appropriate for the building. Consultation with Historic Preservation staff is required for replacements. It is possible to have original doors restored in function and finish. Historic Preservation staff will assist the owner in selecting an appropriate contractor.

b. In the event any windows need to be replaced, consultation with Historic Preservation staff is required to determine appropriate replacements. New glass must match the size of the historic glass in overall size and number and configuration of panes. Do not use modern style window units such as horizontal sliding sash or casements in place of double hung sash . Do not fill in or cover openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or concrete block. Basement windows may not be replaced with glass block unless they are not visible form the street.

Any original windows on the building must be retained and repaired if at all possible. Vinyl, vinyl clad, metal, and metal-clad or fiberglass prime window units or windows made of new forms of substitute materials are not permitted. Tinted low-e glass is not permitted. Storm windows and storm doors are encouraged for the preservation of the prime windows and doors. The Commission has approved wood storms. Any changes to doors and windows, including installation of new

doors and windows, require consultation with Historic Preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

c. Steel bar security doors and window guards are discouraged. If permitted, the doors or grates must be of the simplest design and installed so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for this type of installation.

4. Porches, Trim and Ornamentation

a. Retain porches and steps visible from the public right-of-way that are historically and architecturally appropriate to the building. Avoid altering porches and steps by enclosing open porches or replacing wooden steps with cast concrete steps or by removing original architecturally appropriate material to the building such as handrails, balusters, columns or brackets.

b. There shall be no changes to the existing trim or ornamentation except as necessary to restore the building to its original condition. Retain trim and decorative ornamentation such as but not limited to terra cotta, pressed metal elements such as cornices, pediments, and oriels, copper downspouts and guttering, brackets, copings, cornices, cresting, finials, railings, balconies, oriels, pilasters, columns, chimneys, decorative panels, and carved and cast stonework. Avoid the removal of trim and decorative ornamentation, both wood and masonry, that is essential to retaining the historic character and appearance of the buildings.

c. Repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible and that matches the original feature in scale, color, and design. Avoid using replacement materials that do not accurately reproduce the appearance of the original material. Repairs to original materials are encouraged rather than removal and replication. Consult with Historic Preservation staff before embarking on repairs as many require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

5. Additions

No additions would be allowed on the front facades of the buildings. Lot conditions would preclude additions to side elevations. Rear additions may be possible depending on the design and require the approval of the Historic Preservation Commission. Ideally an addition should either complement or have a neutral effect upon the historic character of the building. Approval will be based on the addition's design compatibility with the building in terms of building height, roof configuration, window proportion and placement, scale, color, design, and materials. Additions must be smaller than the original building and not obscure the historic building.

6.. Signs/ Exterior Lighting

The installation of any exterior sign or light fixture on the buildings shall require the approval of the Historic Preservation Commission. Approval will be based on the compatibility of the proposed sign or light with the historic and architectural character of the building. Consultation with Historic Preservation staff is required

to assist in the selection of exterior fixtures. Plastic internally illuminated box signs with a completely acrylic face are not permitted.

7. Guidelines for Streetscapes

The streetscape on Jefferson Street is visually cohesive because of the intact building stock and the retention of period setbacks, relationship to the street, period appropriate street lighting street and minimal landscaping features.

1. Maintain the height, scale, mass and materials established by the buildings in the district and the traditional setback and density of the block faces. Avoid introducing elements that are incompatible in terms of siting, materials, height or scale.

2. Use traditional landscaping, fencing, signage and street lighting that is compatible with the character and period of the district. Avoid introducing landscape features, fencing, street lighting or signage that are inappropriate to the character of the district.

8. Guidelines for New Construction

Given the development pattern of Jefferson Street there would be no room for new construction aside from possible rear additions. Nonetheless, the following guidelines are consistent with all historic districts and properties. It is important that potential additional new construction be designed so as to harmonize with the character of the district.

1. Siting

New construction must reflect the traditional siting of buildings on Jefferson Street. This includes setback, spacing between buildings, the orientation of openings to the street and neighboring structures, and the relationship between the main building and any accessory buildings such as new construction resulting from fire or natural disaster.

2. Scale

Overall building height and bulk; the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof; and, individual building components such as bays, overhangs and fenestration must be compatible with the surrounding structures.

3. Form

The massing of new construction must be compatible with the surrounding buildings. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and recede from the main block must express the same continuity established by the historic structures.

4. Materials

The building materials that are visible from the public right-of-way should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials traditionally used on Jefferson Street. The physical composition of the

materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.

9. Guidelines for Demolition

Although demolition is not encouraged and is generally not permissible, there may be instances when demolition may be acceptable, if approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission shall take the following guidelines, with those found in subsection 9(h) of the ordinance, into consideration when reviewing demolition requests.

1. Condition

Demolition requests may be granted when it can be clearly demonstrated that the condition of a building or a portion thereof is such that it constitutes an immediate threat to health and safety.

2. Importance

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is of historical or architectural significance or displays a quality of material and craftsmanship that does not exist in other structures in the area.

3. Location

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building contributes to the neighborhood and the general street appearance and has a positive effect on other buildings in the area.

4. Potential for Restoration

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is beyond economically feasible repair.

5. Additions

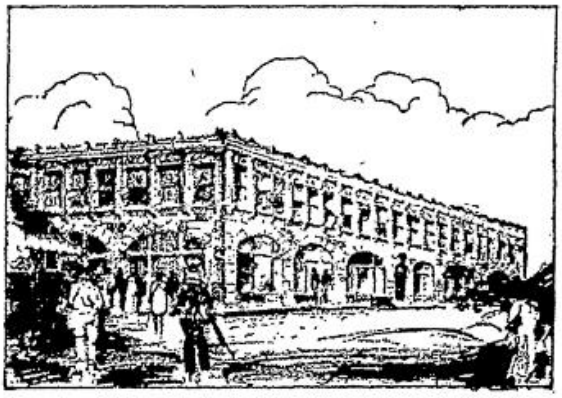
Consideration will be given to whether or not the proposed demolition is a later addition that is not in keeping with the original design of the structure or does not contribute to its character.

6. Replacement

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is to be replaced by a compatible building of similar age, architectural style and scale or by a new building that would fulfill the same aesthetic function in the area as did the old structure (see New Construction Guidelines).

Jefferson Street Historic District

GEORGE WATTS BUILDING
759 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
OLD NUMBER 439, 441, 443, 445, 447 JEFFERSON STREET



WATTS BUILDING, MASON AND JEFFERSON STREETS

AN INNOVATION

A NEW IDEA FOR MILWAUKEE, AN EXCLUSIVE SHOPPING CENTER, WILL BE COMPLETED WHEN THE NEW WATTS BUILDING IS OPENED THE LATTER PART OF APRIL. IN ADDITION TO OUR OWN CHINA AND GLASSWARE STORE, WHICH WILL BE ONE OF AMERICA'S FINEST, THE FOLLOWING TENANTS, ALL LEADERS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE LINES, WILL OCCUPY SPACE.

THE AITCHISON SHOP
EXCLUSIVE WOMEN'S WEAR

MACARTHUR STUDIOS
INTERIOR DECORATORS

ASTOR LINEN SHOP
FINE LINENS AND LINGERIE

THE TEA SHOP
THE MISSES COOK, PROPS.

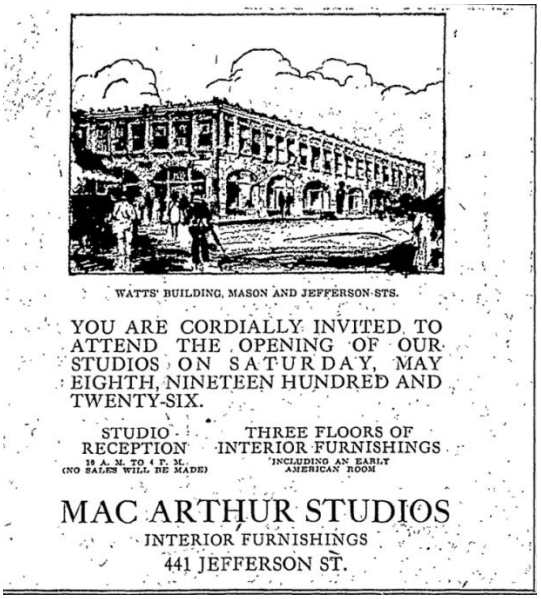
(TWO SECOND FLOOR STORES AVAILABLE FOR SHOPS CATERING TO HIGH-CLASS TRADE.)

WATTS
424 MILWAUKEE ST.

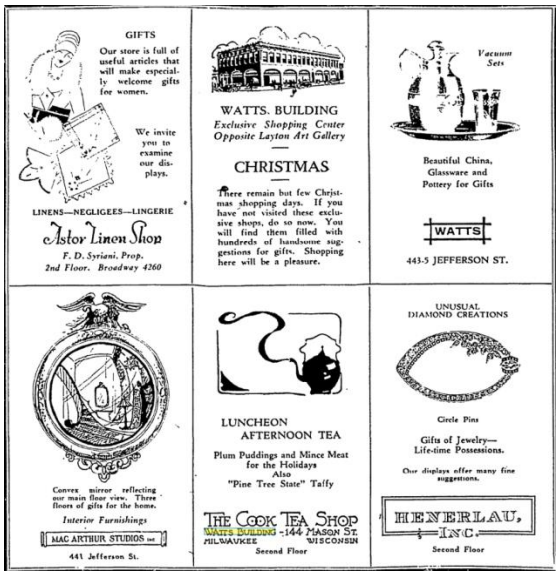
OUR SALE CONTINUES

STOCKS ARE ARRIVING FOR OUR NEW STORE. TO MAKE ROOM, MANY DINNERWARE PATTERNS WILL BE DISCONTINUED, AND MANY LINES OF GLASSWARE WILL BE SOLD OUT. AFTER APRIL 1ST, DRASTIC REDUCTIONS WILL BE MADE TO CLOSE OUT EVERYTHING WE MUST LEAVE BEHIND WHEN MOVING.

Ad Milwaukee Journal April 1, 1926



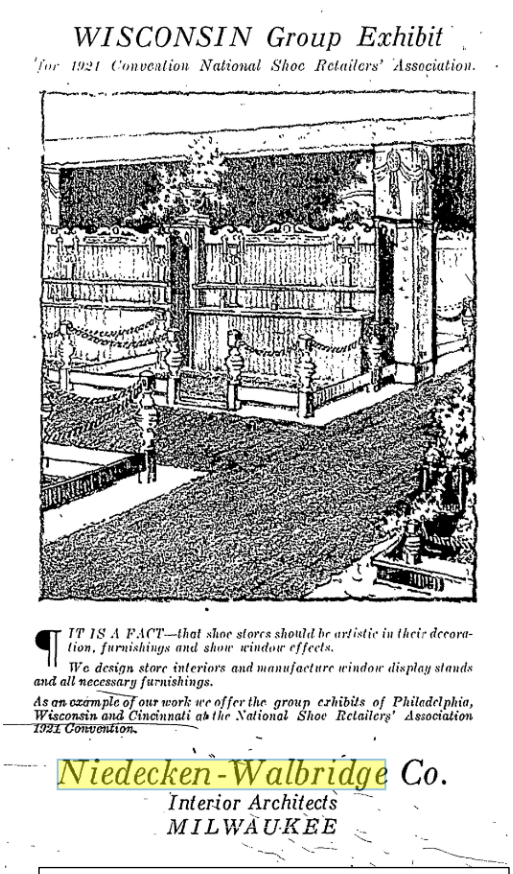
Ad Milwaukee Journal May 7, 1926



Ad Milwaukee Journal December 12, 1926

J. HOME BUILDING
767-769 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
OLD NUMBER 449-451 JEFFERSON

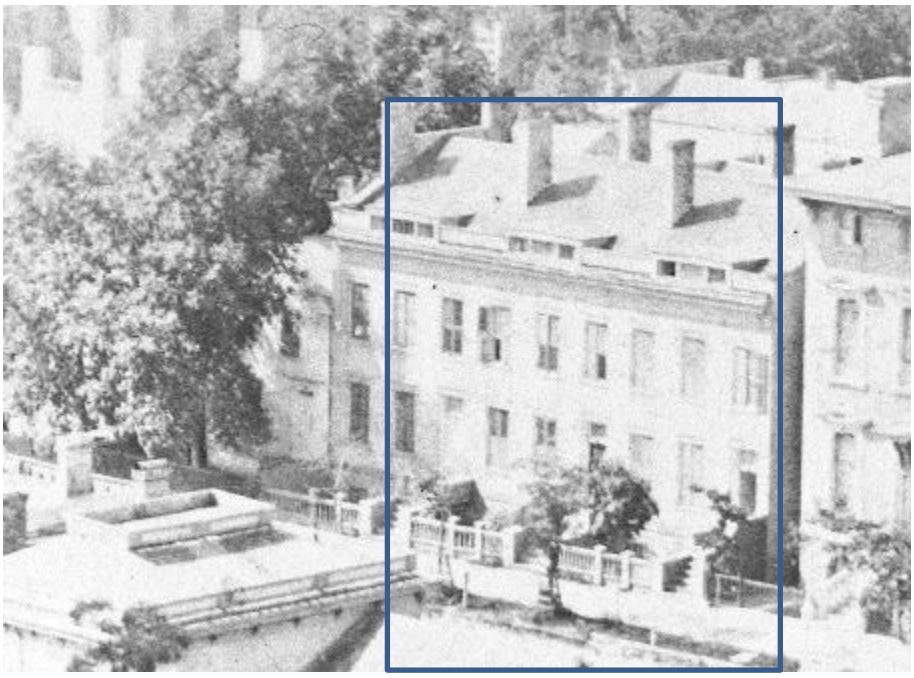
Milwaukee Journal October 6, 1940



Ad Milwaukee Journal January 10, 1921

Ad Milwaukee Journal January 13, 1921

GEORGE AUGUSTUS TIFFANY ROWHOUSE
771-773 NORTH JEFFERSON STREET
OLD NUMBER 453 JEFFERSON



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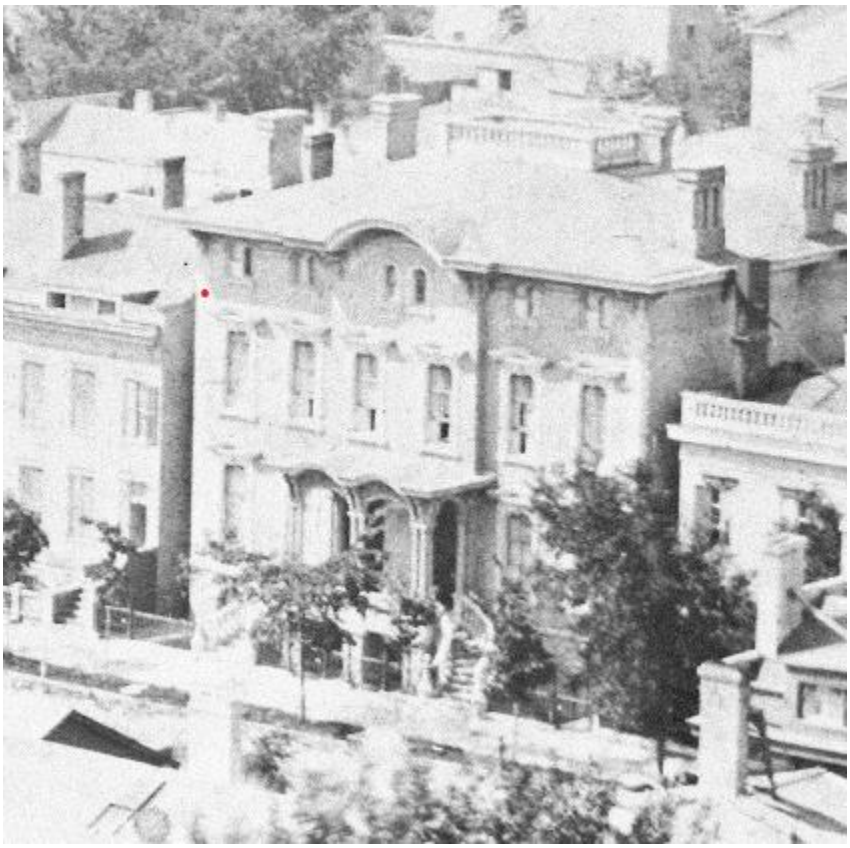
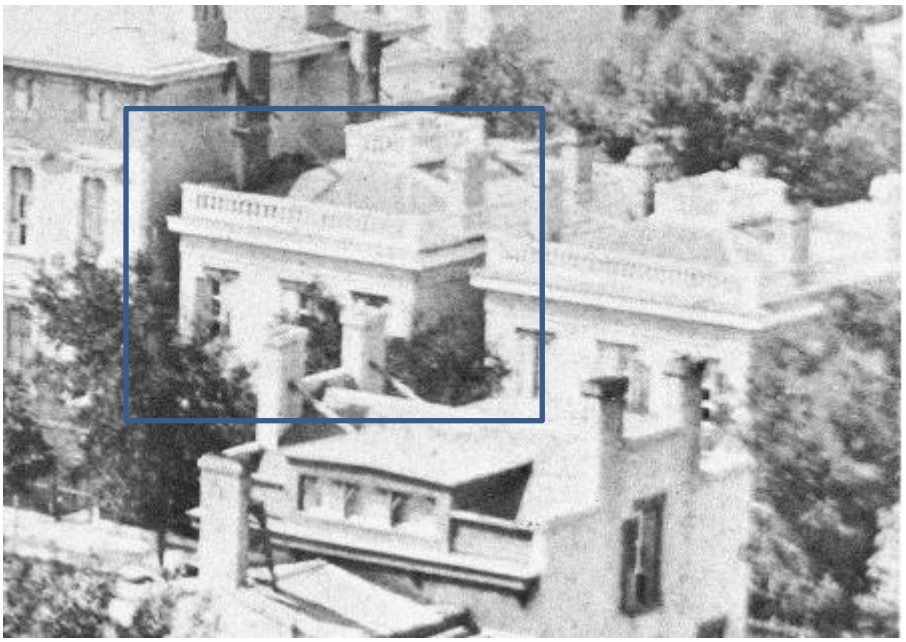
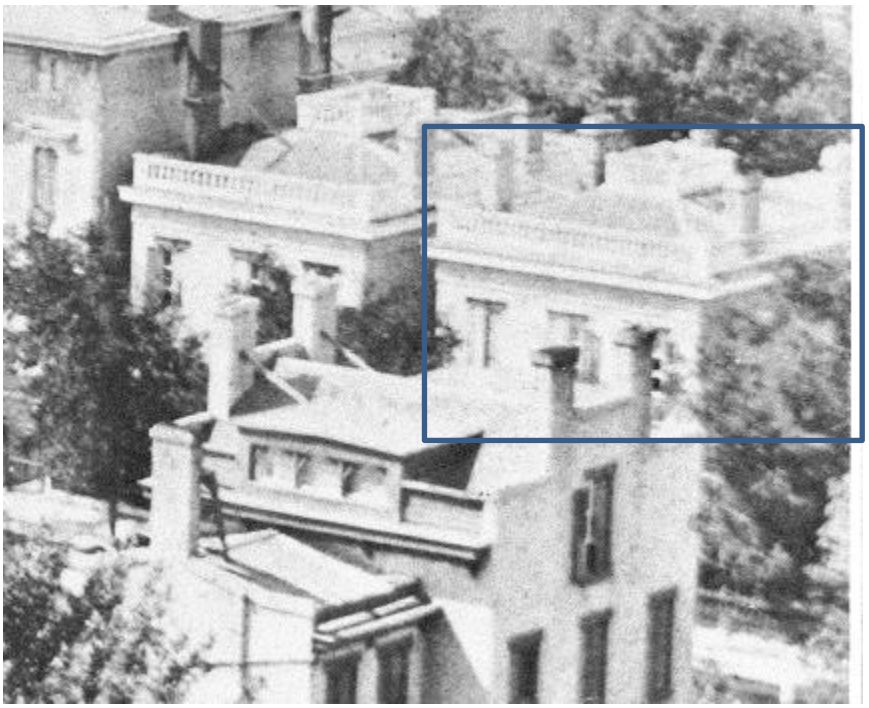
MATTHEW KEENAN DOUBLEHOUSE
775-781 NORTH JEFFERSON
OLD NUMBER 455, 457, 459 JEFFERSON

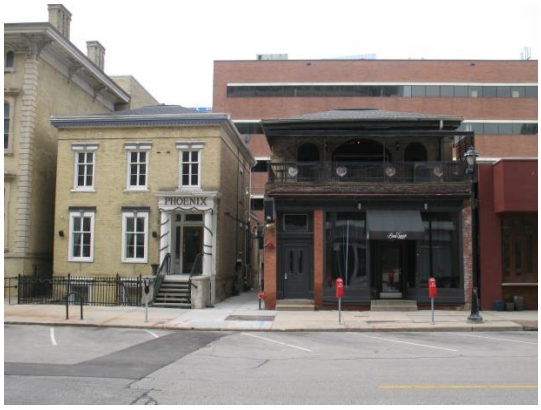


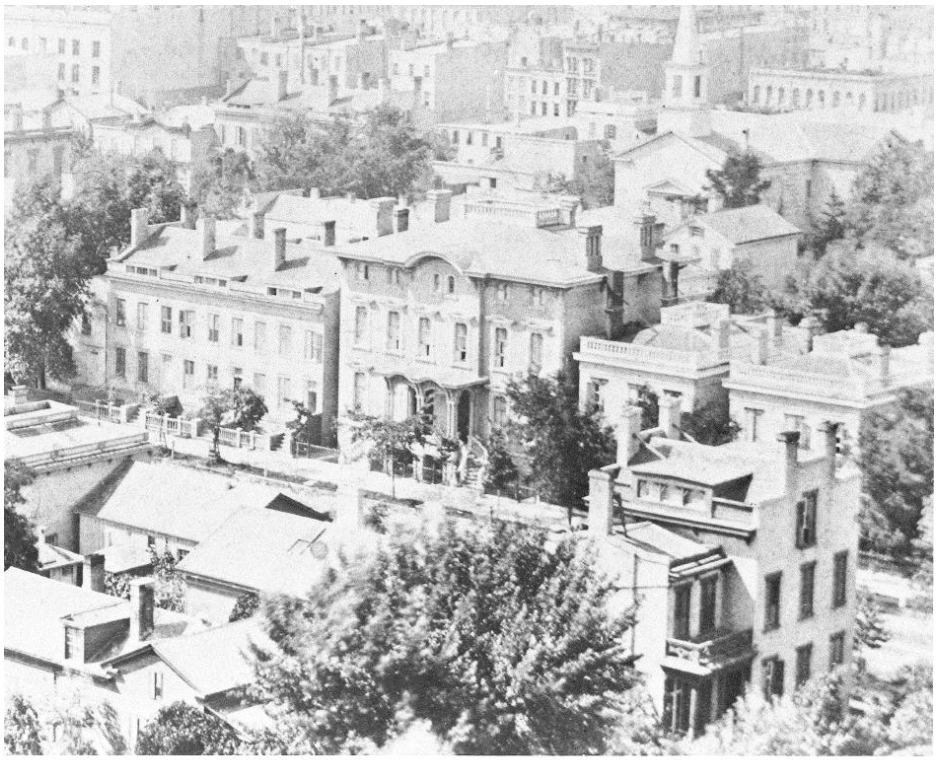
WILLIAM A. WEBBER HOUSE
783-785 NORTH JEFFERSON
OLD NUMBER 461 JEFFERSON



WILLIAM WEBBER-OWNED HOUSE
787-789 NORTH JEFFERSON
OLD NUMBER 465 JEFFERSON







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