

1101 CHESTNUT AVENUE (Commercial Building)  
Altoona  
Blair County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-6182

HABS  
PA  
7-ALTO  
165-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
Northeast Region  
Philadelphia Support Office  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, P.A. 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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LOCATION: Altoona, Blair County, Pennsylvania

UTM/USGS coordinates 16 720400 4488610

SIGNIFICANCE: It is one of the oldest remaining structures in the Altoona area in addition to possessing an unique stone facade.

DESCRIPTION: The three story stone structure faces a one-way street (Chestnut Avenue) that is located in the center of one of the oldest residential neighborhoods within the City of Altoona. The three bay structure is 24'-0" wide and 40'-0" high. A large pressed-metal cornice caps the building and is in good condition. Directly below this cornice are four oval windows. These windows are located at the attic elevation of the building. Two of these windows are directly above the large center bay while the other windows are centered directly above the long narrow windows on the first and third bays of the floor below. A dark colored sandstone horizontal band connects the top of each of these four oval windows. Directly below these windows, on the third floor, are three bays. The side bays are defined by 2'-6" wide, by 7'-0" long windows while the center bay has a wide, arched-top window. The header of each of these windows is capped with a dark colored sandstone. This banding does not connect the window bays as it does at the attic and first floor levels. The second floor also has three bays. Each bay is defined by a arched-top window. A dark colored band of sandstone connects each of the arches in the same manner as the oval attic windows above. Almost the entire second floor is encompassed by these three large windows. Stone pilasters 2'-0" wide anchor the ends of this portion of the elevation, while 1'-0" stone pilasters separate each window. Adjacent to each of these pilasters are metal columns with unadorned capitals and plinths. A total of six metal columns occur at this position of the building's elevation, one on each side of the window. Of similar design, but somewhat wider in section, are columns paired at the end conditions of the first floor elevation. These paired columns sit atop of a 4'-6" stone plinth. No other portion of the original first floor storefront elevation remains. All of the windows throughout the front elevation are covered with a corrugated Plexiglas material. It is impossible, therefore to determine the condition of the windows. The side and rear elevations are covered by existing buildings. On December 29, 1994, the City of Altoona "found the building to be dangerous" and required the structure to be demolished within 30 days. On February 28, 1995, a structural engineering firm prepared an "existing structural conditions" report for the Redevelopment Authority of Altoona. The report found the building to be structurally unsound. Because of the current condition of the building, it is unsafe to enter the building to document any of the interior spaces. The building is currently locked and therefore inaccessible.

HISTORY: The structure dates before 1887 and was built by Martha J. Wolfe, the widow of John P. Wolf, one of the more prominent business families in the Altoona region. Originally, the first floor was used as a grocery store while the top two floors were used as a residence for the Wolf family. The original brick veneer was removed and a new sandstone facade was constructed between 1894 and 1909 by her sons, who established the business name of The Wolf Brothers during that time. The building served as their store, where they sold cigars, bicycles and sporting goods to the general public. During the turn-of -the-

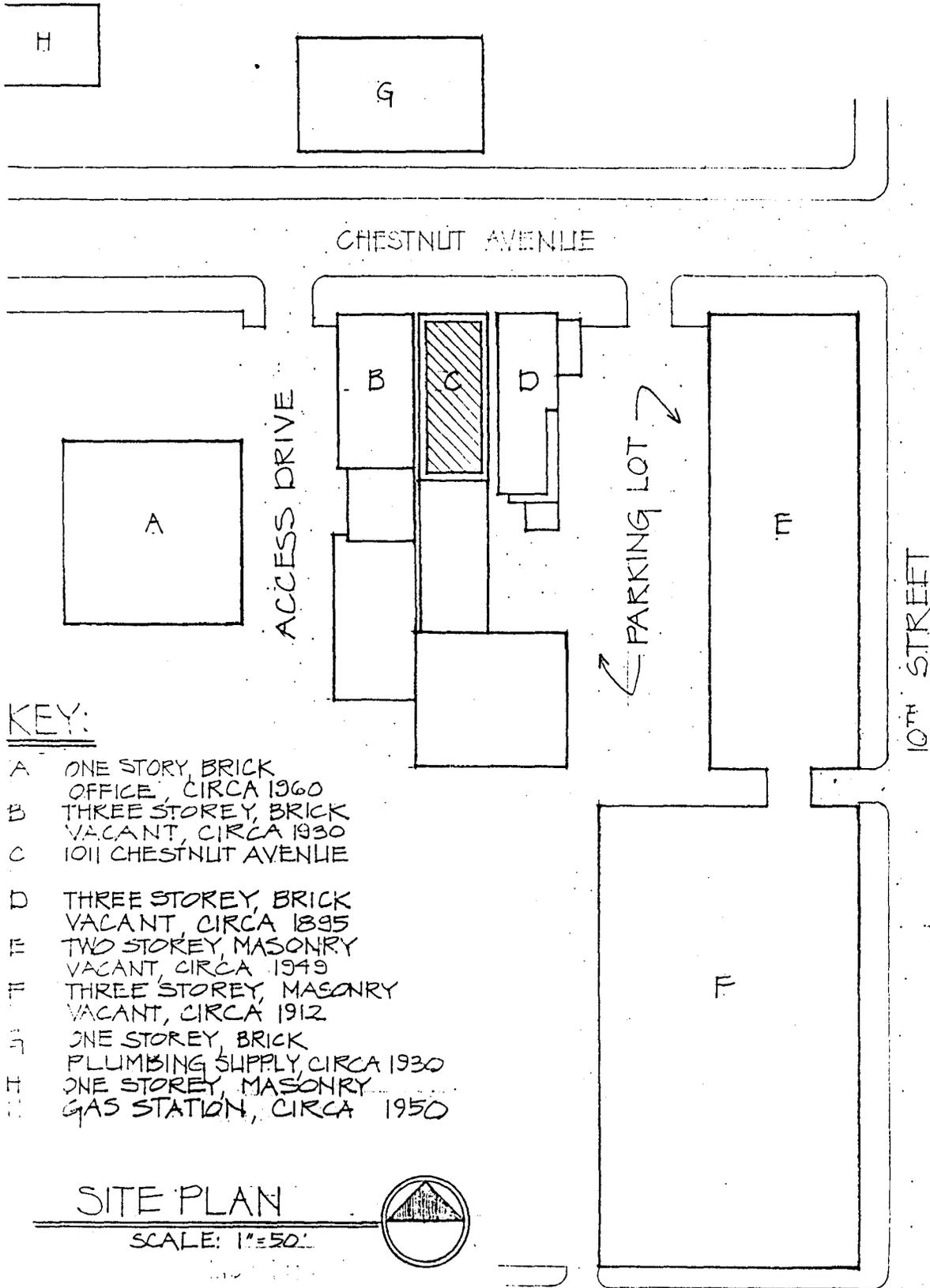
1101 CHESTNUT AVENUE (Commercial Building)

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century, this section of Altoona was a thriving residential and neighborhood commercial area. In 1901, the building was valued at \$4,500.00. In 1940, the Wolfe Brothers built an automobile showroom located at the corner of Chestnut Avenue and 10th Street. This building is illustrated as building "E" on the enclosed Site Plan.

SOURCE: Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania  
HABS Survey, 1990

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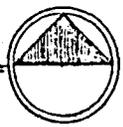


KEY:

- A ONE STOREY BRICK OFFICE, CIRCA 1960
- B THREE STOREY, BRICK VACANT, CIRCA 1930
- C 1011 CHESTNUT AVENUE
- D THREE STOREY, BRICK VACANT, CIRCA 1895
- E TWO STOREY, MASONRY VACANT, CIRCA 1949
- F THREE STOREY, MASONRY VACANT, CIRCA 1912
- G ONE STOREY, BRICK PLUMBING SUPPLY, CIRCA 1930
- H ONE STOREY, MASONRY GAS STATION, CIRCA 1950

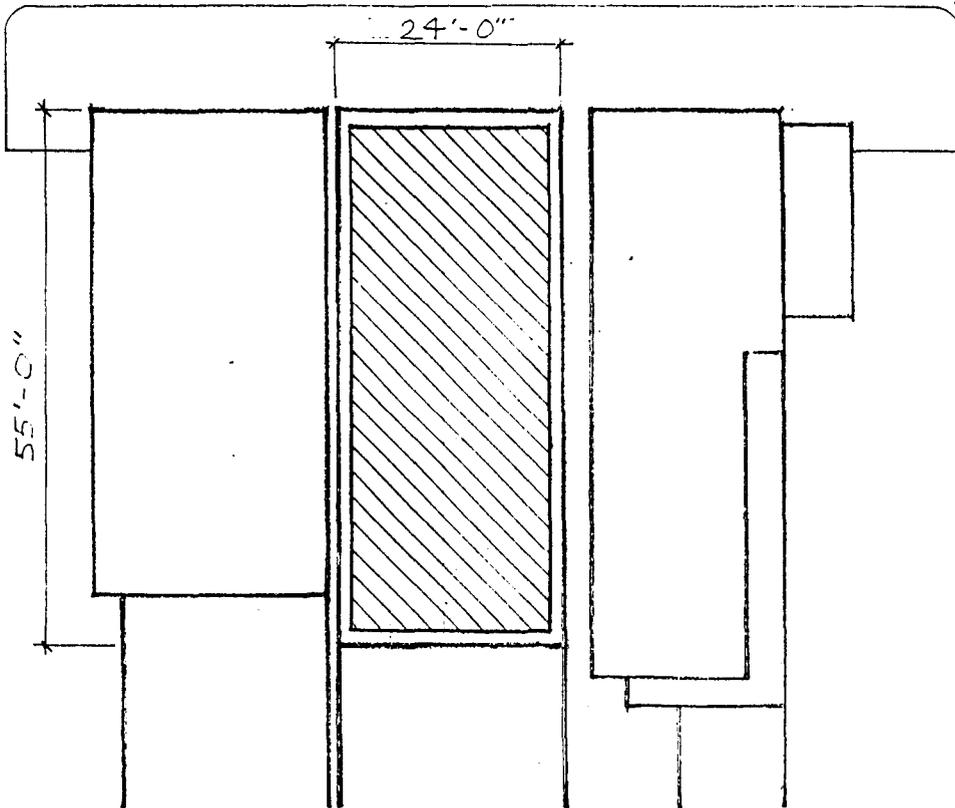
SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1"=50'



NORTH

CHESTNUT AVENUE



SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 20'



NORTH