

4 Dickinson Street (House)
North side of Dickinson Street
Binghamton
Broome County
New York

HABS No. NY-5504

HABS
NY,
4-BING,
14-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MIDATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

4 DICKINSON STREET (House)

HABS No. NY-5504

Location: 4 Dickinson St. (north side of street)
Binghamton, Broome County, N.Y. 13905
UTM QUADRANGLE: BIGHAMPTON WEST
UTM REFERENCE: 18 424240 4661640

Present Owner: Binghamton Urban Renewal Agency (BURA)
4th Floor, City Hall
Governmental Plaza
Binghamton, N. Y. 13901

Present Occupant: Vacant, to be demolished

Significance: 4 Dickinson Street is the largest and most ornate of the Dwightville Cottages that were built by Col. Walton Dwight in the early to late 1870's. This particular cottage was characterized by detailed vergeboards, a cross-tie ornament and unique lattis work on the porch which was common to many of the cottages. Unlike many of the other structures in this development this house is cross-shape in plan rather than rectangular and has a large bow window at the front of the house.

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HISTORY OF 4 DICKINSON STREET

4 Dickinson Street was among the largest and most elaborately decorated of the 45 Dwightville cottages. It was designed and built by Truman I. Lacey and displayed an imaginative array of details, that Lacey became well-known for. This building is physically unlike the other cottages in Dwightville because of its cross-shaped plan, but it was used much the same way as other buildings in the development.

After its construction in 1883, this house was rented for four years (data from Binghamton City Directories 1873-1888) in the same fashion as other dwellings in Dwight Place and then sold in 1877 at cost. The house was and continued to be occupied by single families on an owner-occupied basis until 1978 when it again became a rental property. In February of 1986 the building sustained severe damage from fire. The interior was completely destroyed, the roof collapsed and the exterior walls were badly burned but remained standing. The building was demolished in March of 1986, because the building remains and debris posed a safety hazard.

PART II - ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: This two story structure was the most highly ornamented and among the largest in size of the Dwightville cottages. It was an excellent Swiss-Gothic architecture that had emerged during the early 1870's.
2. Condition of Fabric: This structure was severely damaged by fire in February of this year (1986) and was demolished for safety purposes. The building materials and construction style appeared to be the same as the Dwightville cottage at 8 Dickinson Street (also documented for HABS). Before the fire, Code Enforcement staff (City of Binghamton) reported that the building was in fair to poor condition on the interior and fair condition on the exterior.

B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: The structure was unique in that it was the only remaining Dwightville house that had a cross-shaped plan. The building has a front porch width of nine (9) feet, six (6) inches, and actual building face width of twenty-nine (29) feet, zero (0) inches. The overall width of the building excluding the porch is thirty (30) feet, zero (0) inches. The overall depth of the building is forty-nine (49) feet, six (6) inches. The height of the structure from the level ground to the peak of the roof is approximately thirty-eight (38) feet.
2. Foundation: Combination of stone and concrete measuring one (1) foot, six (6) inches in thickness.
3. Walls: Wood-frame with light members, originally sided with clapboard but changed to brown shake shingles with yellow trim at an unknown date. All decorative shutters, vergeboards and the cross-tie ornament at the peak of the roof had remained intact up to the time of the fire.
4. Structural System: Wood-frame with light members, balloon construction.
5. Porch: Wood construction, attached roof supported by two square columns (also shingled) was in fair condition until time of fire.
6. Chimney: Brick, rectangular shaped and centrally located.

7. Openings: (see Drawings 1-4 for locations and widths)
All windows and doors were trimmed with 3-6 inch molding, decorative shutters and front windows were adorned with bracketed gables.
8. Roof: Was Gabled with four distinct peaks facing all compass directions.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: (See Drawings 1-4, estimated plans.)
2. Stairways: From discussion with fire department personnel, there appeared to be three stairways: basement, main entry and attic. (See drawings 1-4 for estimated locations & width - plans were reconstructed from inspection of building remains and photographs taken by the Binghamton Fire Department. Materials of construction were most likely hardwoods and pine.
3. Flooring: Basement was earthen floors and upper floors appeared to be hardwood.
4. Wall and Ceiling: All walls and ceilings were hard finish horse hair plaster that were either painted or wallpapered.
5. Openings (see Drawings 1-4 for estimated locations & width.)
 - (a) Doorways and Doors: The typical doorway was seven (7) feet, six (6) inches in height and was surrounded by 3-5 inch wood molding, no details were apparent from remains.
 - (b) Windows: Sash-type windows that typically measured six (6) feet, six (6) inches in height from top molding edge to bottom molding edge.
6. Decorative Features & Trim: The entire interior was severely burned and there was no evidence of details or decorative features.
7. Hardware: Hardware used on the doors and windows include common window latches and door hinges. The front door has a decorative brass doorknob, key holes and door plates which will be removed. Other doors in the house had (all removed) glass doorknobs and plain door plates.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

(a) Heating: The original heating system was a coal burning furnace that distributed warm air throughout the house by way of air ducts on all levels of the structure except the attic. This system was later replaced by a gas burning furnace.

(b) Lighting: Designed with gas lighting on all floors and was later replaced with electricity.

(c) Plumbing: Had complete plumbing service from time of construction to present use, included: hot and cold running water, sewer and waste water hookups. Original pipes were galvanized steel pipe and later replaced by copper.

PART III - SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings: None available.

B. Early Views:

1. Birds Eye View of Binghamton 1882 - provided building locations and early street configurations.

C. Interviews: None.

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and Unpublished Sources:

- a. Broome County Historical Society. Dwightville Historic File. Located at: Roberson Center for the Arts, Binghamton, N.Y.
- b. Foote, Keith G. Sanford O. Lacey. SUNY Binghamton, Department of Art History. 1980.
- c. Office of Developmental and Community Services. Dwightville Historic File. Located in: City of Binghamton Planning Division, 4th Floor, City Hall, Binghamton, New York 13901

2. Secondary and Published Sources:

- a. Binghamton Daily Times. "Dwight Place". Binghamton Daily Times, March 9, 1974.
- b. Blumenson, John J.G. Identifying American Architecture. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History. 1973.

E. Site Inspection: This structure was visited by staff members and complete notes and measurements were taken at this time. February 3-5, 1986.

PART IV - PROJECT INFORMATION

This structure lies within the eastern end of the Clinton Street Redevelopment Project area and this 4.4 acre portion of the parcel will be used for a commercial plaza project. The following is a physical description of this project:

Project Name: Dwight Block Supermarket Project

Development Group: Nat C. Rose, Incorporated
Walter Rose, Developer

Project Location: Parcel at the eastern end of the Clinton Street Redevelopment Project Area, located near the northwestern intersection of Front Street and Clinton Streets. (see map on following page)

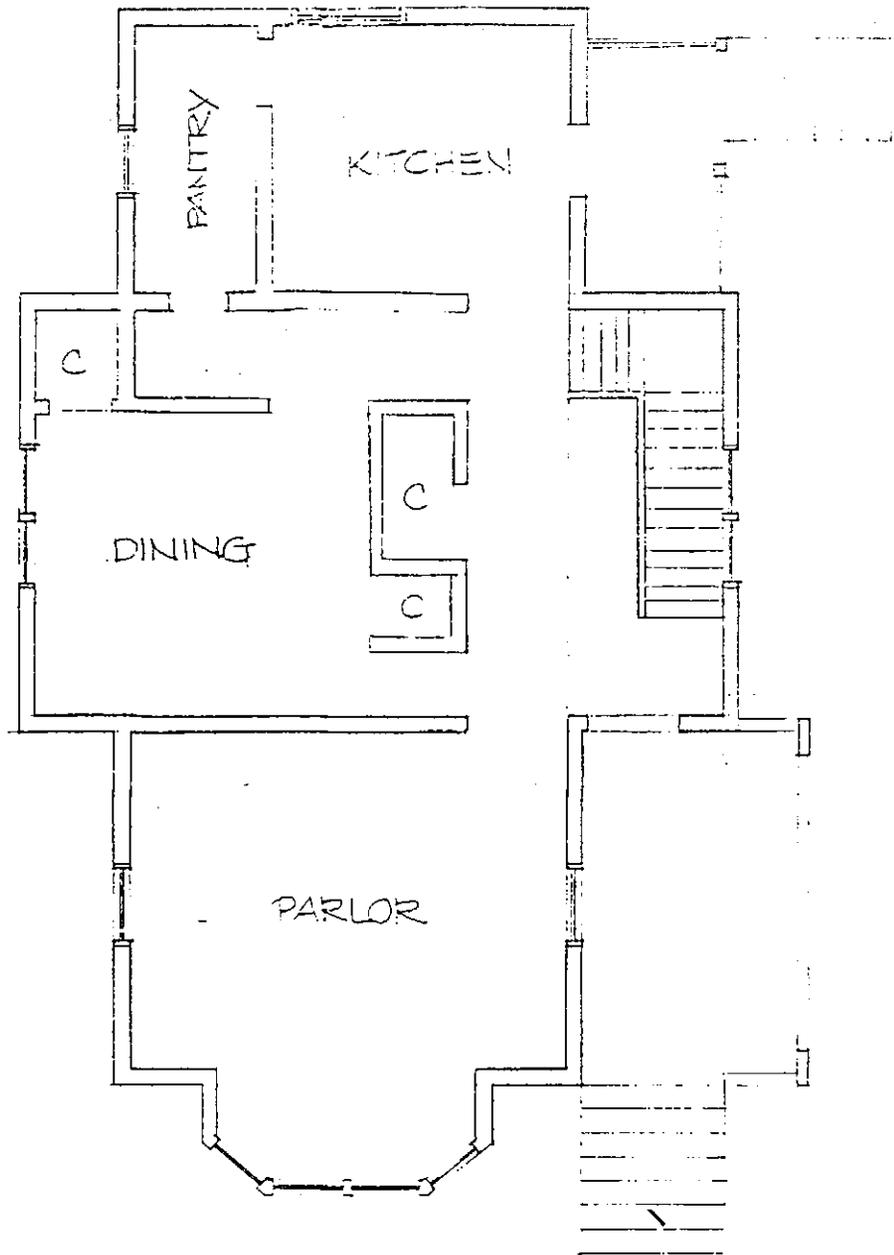
Business Type: Commercial Plaza to include:
Supermarket 35,000 sq. ft.
Drugstore 15,000 sq. ft.
Total 50,000 sq. ft.

Parking Spaces: 300 total spaces.

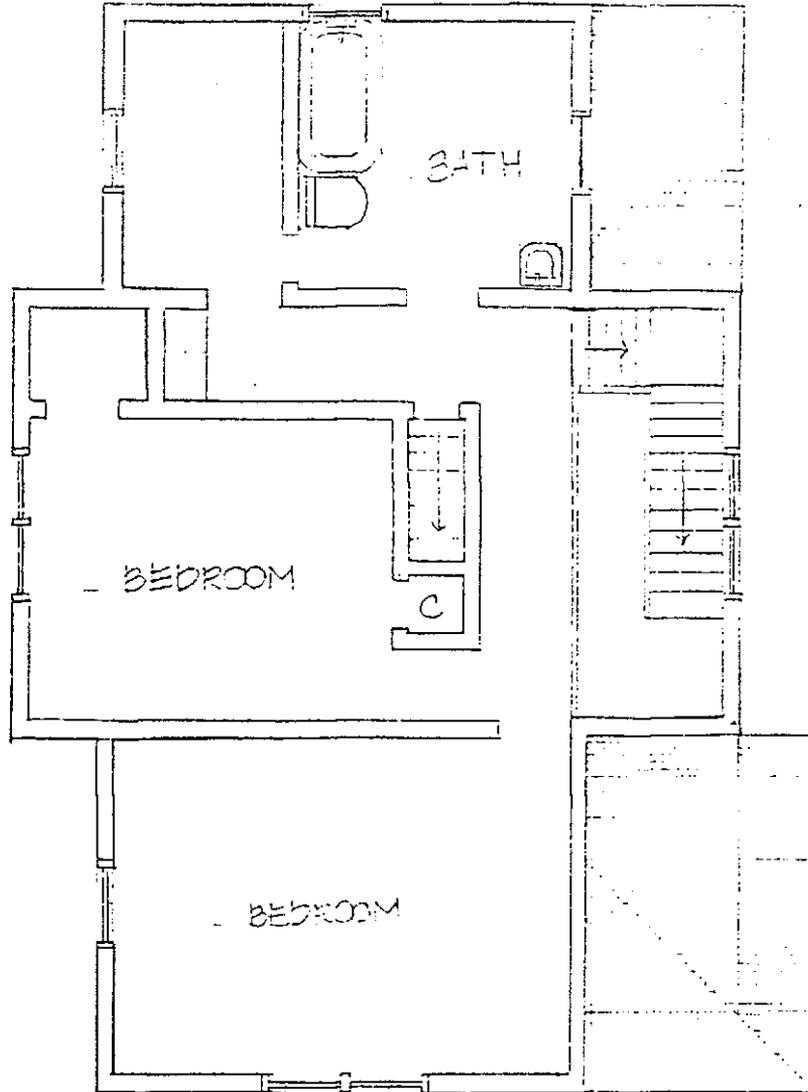
City Agency Involved: Urban Renewal Agency (BURA)

Federal Involvement: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Federal Funds needed to acquire site and for residential and commercial relocation.

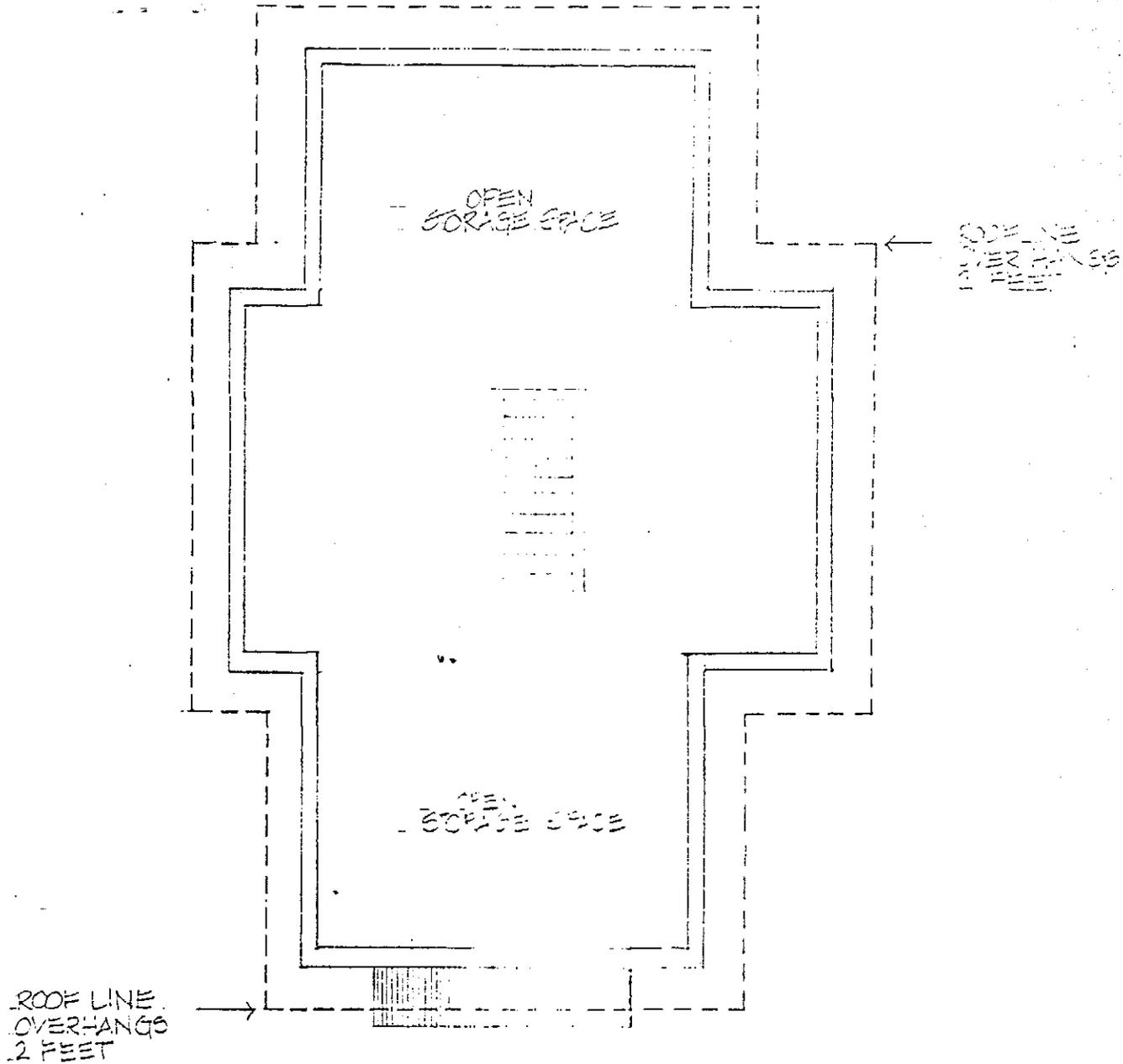
Prepared by: Laurie A. Kimball
Title: Planner
Affiliation: City of Binghamton
Development & Community Services
Planning Division
Date: June 25, 1986



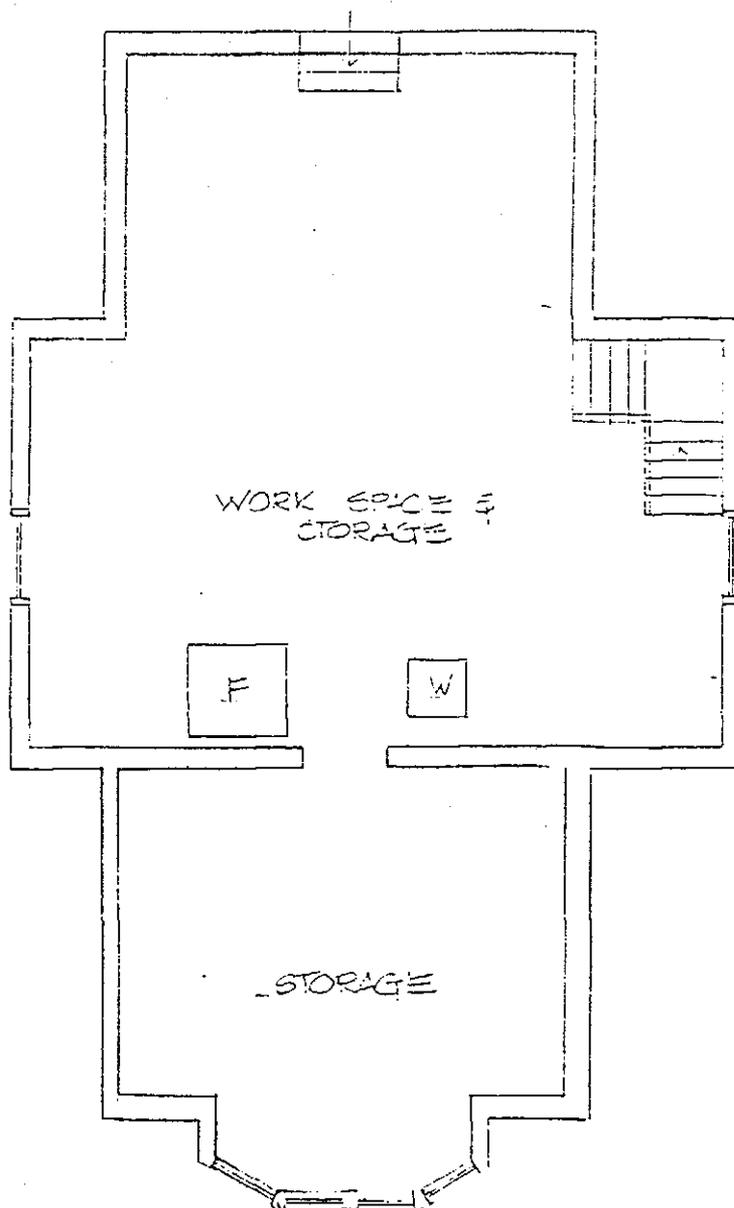
First Floor Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'00"
4 Dickinson Street
Drawn by Laurie Kimball
Date: 6/26/86



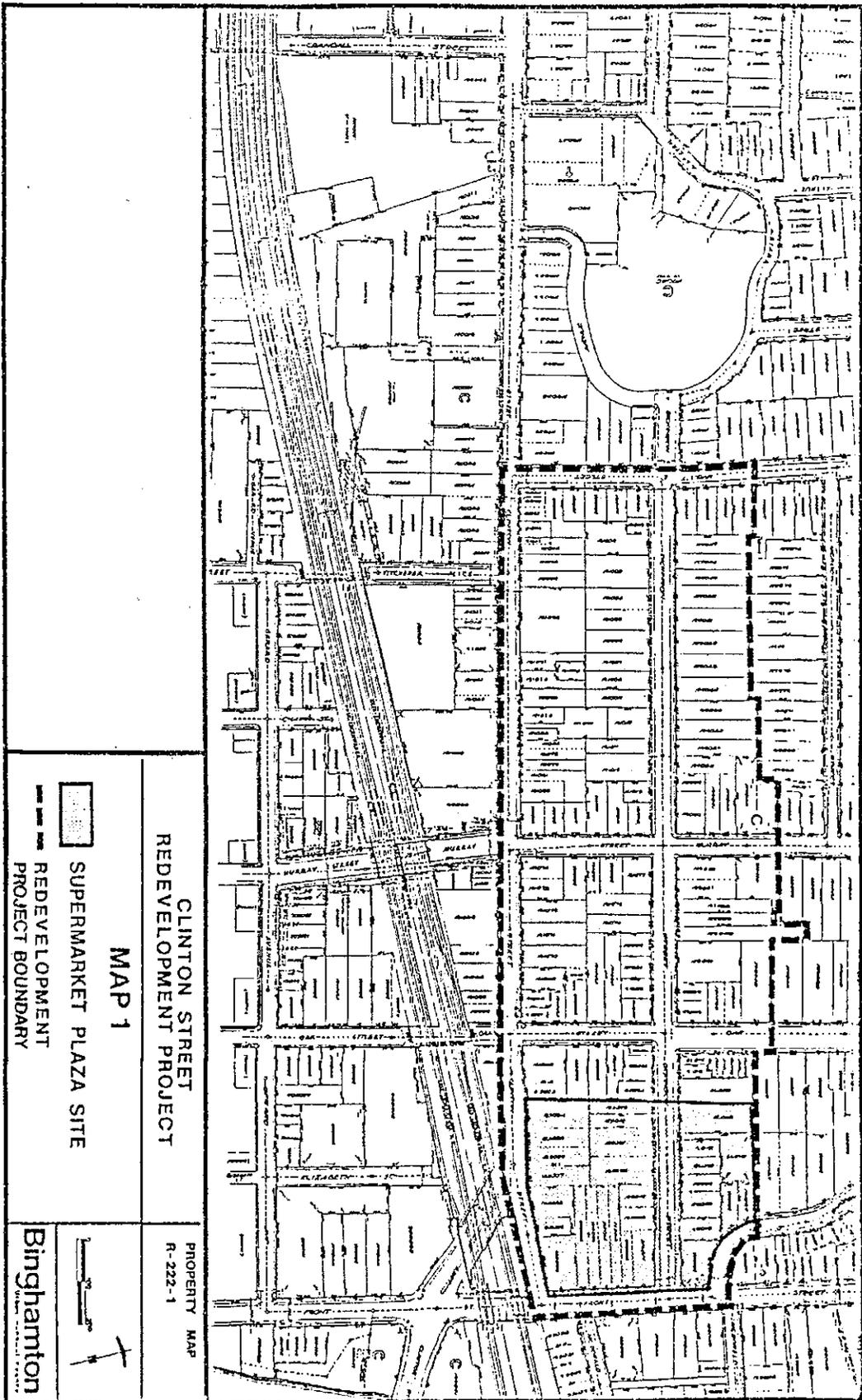
Second Floor Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'00"
4 Dickinson Street
Drawn by Laurie Kimball
Date: 6/26/86



Attic Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"
4 Dickinson Street
Drawn by Laurie A. Hall
Date: 6/26/86



Basement Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'00"
4 Dickinson Street
Drawn by Laurie Kimball
Date: 6/26/86



CLINTON STREET
REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

MAP 1

 SUPERMARKET PLAZA SITE
 REDEVELOPMENT
PROJECT BOUNDARY

PROPERTY MAP
R-222-1



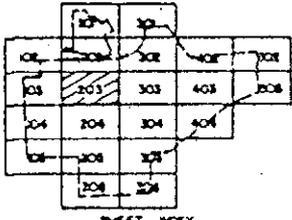
Binghamton

4 DICKINSON ST. (HOUSE)
 HABS No. NY-5504 (Page 12) AGE

- INDIVIDUAL TREE
- AREA
- RETAINING WALL
- BUILDING
- RAILROAD
- POLE
- PARKING AREA
- POOL

COORDINATE GRID BASED ON NEW YORK STATE
 PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM, CENTRAL ZONE
 MAPPING IS BASED ON THE TRANSVERSE
 MERCATOR PROJECTION.

Location Plan 4 Dickinson St.



City of BINGHAMTON
 BROOME COUNTY NEW YORK
 PLANIMETRIC MAP

