

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only
received AUG 5 1985
date entered SEP 5 1985

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic _____

and/or common Osterling, Frederick J., Office and Studio

2. Location

street & number 228 Isabella Street _____ not for publication

city, town Pittsburgh _____ vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code 042 county Allegheny code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Foley Resources Inc.

street & number 888 17th Street, Suite 205

city, town Washington _____ vicinity of state District of Columbia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Allegheny County Office Building

street & number Ross Street

city, town Pittsburgh state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Allegheny County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979-1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved

date

N/A

N/

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Osterling Studio and Office is a diminutive row-type structure whose primary physical distinction is its openwork facade. Terra cotta Gothic tracery transforms a utilitarian commercial structure into an architectural gem.

The Osterling Studio and Office is located approximately one block north of the Allegheny River on Pittsburgh's North Side. Historically, this is an area of intermingled commercial and residential uses. But much of the land has been cleared in recent years in anticipation of a redevelopment project, and 228 Isabella Street now stands nearly isolated. As a row-type structure, the building was originally abutted by other buildings on both sides. The east and west elevations are, therefore, essentially blank scarred brick walls.

The facade, however, is dominated by a richly ornamented window wall which allows light to penetrate the interior.

At the base of the facade is a raised basement faced with smooth stone blocks which project to form a watertable. The basement is pierced by two deeply set squarish windows with metal grilles. The entry, with replacement double doors, is located at the eastern side of the facade, one step above ground level. The principal feature of the facade is a large vertical rectangular recess, which reads as a single story, but fronts two interior levels. Terra cotta mullions vertically divide this recess into three primary sections and six subsections. The entry partially extends into one of these sections, but the recess is primarily filled by leaded small-pane windows. Above the entry, and at the top of the recess, terra cotta Gothic tracery forms pointed arches, trefoils, and quatrefoils, with numerous crockets. Brick, currently painted grey, comprises the remainder of the facade and provides a frame for the recess. There is a nailhead band above the recess, and a crenelated parapet with stone coping tops the facade.

Although partially obscured by stepped parapets, the full height of the building extends for about one-third of its depth. At this point there is an approximately five foot drop-off marked by a rear-facing ribbon of windows. There is a drop-off of similar size at a point approximately three-quarters of the building's depth, and the final one-quarter of the structure consists of a garage.

The current basic form of the Osterling Studio and Office dates from a 1917 rebuilding of an earlier structure. The building's mid-section may have been part of the original building.

A 1934 account of the building interior describes a basement apartment with a living room, a kitchen/bar/dining room, and a bedroom; a ground floor workshop illuminated by the tall front windows and a small inner court into which extended a small castle-like turret; and an upper level parlor and office which overlooked the front of the workshop through a row of large windows.¹ The present owner has not permitted an examination of the interior, so it is not known how much of the original plan remains intact. A second-floor level that abuts the front window wall appears to be an alteration. It is apparent that the forward part of the building is used as office space, and that the central part is a large drafting room.

1. "Architect's Friend Seeks Furniture of 'Love Nest,'" Pittsburgh Press, August 8, 1934, p. 2.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1917 **Builder/Architect** /Frederick J. Osterling

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Osterling Studio and Office is significant as a rare example of an architect's studio and office building of the early twentieth century. It served Frederick J. Osterling, an important turn-of-the-century Pittsburgh architect. The facade design directly reflects that of Osterling's greatest work, the Union Arcade, and represents an unusual adaptation of Gothic elements for a small commercial structure.

The site of 228 Isabella Street was occupied by a building at least by the 1870s. Philip Osterling owned the building and many of the surrounding lots by the 1890s for operations of the Osterling & Co. lumberyard. In 1917, architect Frederick J. Osterling (1865-1934), son of Philip, rebuilt the structure. At minimum, this work involved the design of a new facade and new interior arrangements.

Frederick J. Osterling was Pittsburgh's most versatile and accomplished turn-of-the-century architect. He designed office buildings, banks, residences, churches, industrial buildings, and courthouses, and entered the design competition for the state capital in Harrisburg. His work personifies its age of architectural eclecticism. Perhaps his best designs are Richardsonian Romanesque; but he also utilized a wide variety of Beaux Arts and Neo-Classical modes, as well as a few more exotic styles.

Most of his more important commissions came earlier--Magee Building (1892), Washington County Courthouse (1900), Arrott Building (1902), Colonial Trust Company (1902), but Osterling's most-acclaimed work was erected in 1915-17. The Union Arcade (later known as the Union Trust Building, and now as Two Mellon Bank Center) was a massive retail arcade and office building speculation of industrialist Henry C. Frick. It is one of Pittsburgh's most important historic buildings, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Evidence suggests that one Pierre Liesch, a designer briefly employed by Osterling, provided the basic form for the building which somewhat resembles a medieval Flemish town hall. But Osterling is credited with the building's specifics, including its elaborate Gothic detailing. Perhaps the building was also inspired by the then recently completed Woolworth Building in New York (1913). But Gothic motifs similar to those employed for the Union Arcade appear in Osterling's work as early as the Daub Building, illustrated in a published Osterling portfolio of 1904.

It was the Union Arcade project which spurred Osterling to build his own studio and office building. However, the exact reason for the construction of the building in the year of the Arcade's completion is unclear. It has been suggested that the building was erected as a "test" project for experimentation with the terra cotta Gothic motifs which topped off the Union Arcade. Alternately, the building seems to be a plausible product of the Arcade's anticipated success and an attendant financial and popular payoff for Osterling. If so, the anticipation was to a degree disappointed because no large Osterling commissions have yet been documented after construction of the studio and office.

(continued on attached sheet)

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Architect's Friend Seeks Furniture of 'Love Nest,'" Pittsburgh Press,
August 8, 1934, p. 2.

(continued on attached sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .05

Quadrangle name Pittsburgh West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	17	5	8	4	6	5	0	4	4	7	7	7	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property consists of Allegheny County block and lot 8H-264 and is 21.3 feet by 100 feet in size.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martin Aurand; Director, Preservation Research

Pittsburgh History &

organization Landmarks Foundation

date January 31, 1985

450 The Landmarks Building

street & number One Station Square

telephone 412/471-5808

city or town Pittsburgh

state Pennsylvania

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/11/85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Allores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 9/5/85

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Significance

Item number 8

Page 1

Whatever the reason for the design, the nature of the design clearly echoes that of the Flemish Gothic Arcade, and no prospective client entering Osterling's studio and office could fail to be reminded of the architect's major achievement.

In addition, the building is itself a striking design. A 1922 account enthuses: "(Osterling's) own office building, which he constructed in 1917, containing his offices, drafting rooms, etc., and occupied entirely by himself and his assistants, is a wonderful example of modern compactness, and a structure of rare beauty and symmetry."²

The principal significance of the building lies in its facade. Here the Gothic motifs, by-products of Eclecticism, are displayed in a composition whose openness owes much to the more progressive architectural currents of the day. The result then, is a building uniquely representative of its period.

Ironically, the building received broad public attention only as the scene of social scandal when millionaire Osterling's 1934 Will was contested by a woman who claimed to be Osterling's wife. She lost her case, but only after extensive newspaper publicity exposed the alleged "love nest" apartment in the basement of the studio and office.

The Osterling Studio and Office stands as a rare but significant link between an architect and his public work.

1. Works of F. J. Osterling, Architect (Pittsburgh: Murdock-Kew Press, 1904), plate 22.
2. History of Pittsburgh and Environs, Volume VIII (New York and Chicago: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1922), p. 61.

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Continuation sheet Bibliographical References Item number 9

Page 1

History of Pittsburgh and Environs. Volume VIII: Encyclopedia of Biography. New York and Chicago: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1922. pp. 60-61.

Van Trump, James D. Legend in Modern Gothic: The Union Trust Building, Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1966.

Works of F. J. Osterling, Architect. Compiled by J. Franklin Nelson. Pittsburgh: Murdock-Kew Press, 1904.

Rec #
85001964

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Osterling, Frederick J., Office and Studio
Allegheny County
PENNSYLVANIA

AUG 5 1985

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-4-82
Date Due: 9/5/85 9/19/85
Action: ACCEPT 9-5-85
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection



Figgins
FREE PARKING
←

Coley
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

GEO. L. WILSON

VEIN'S MUSIC INSTRU

PRIVATE
PROPERTY
NO THRU TRAFFIC

PARKING

OSTERLING STUDIO AND OFFICE
Allegheny County
PD: 1985 PC: M. Aurand
NL: PHLF
PV: Context; view toward NW



GEO. WILSON
Specialty Products
LUMBER COMPANY

Small plaque or sign on the wall to the right of the door.

OSTERLING STUDIO AND OFFICE
Allegheny County
PD: 1985 PC: M. Aurand
NL: PHLF
PV: South facade



OSTERLING STUDIO AND OFFICE
Allegheny County
PD: 1985 PC: M. Aurand
NL: PHLF
PV: South facade and West side



STRUMENTS

Foley
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

NO
PARKING
ANY
TIME

NO PARKING
ANY TIME

OSTERLING STUDIO AND OFFICE

Allegheny County

PD: 1985 PC: M. Aurand

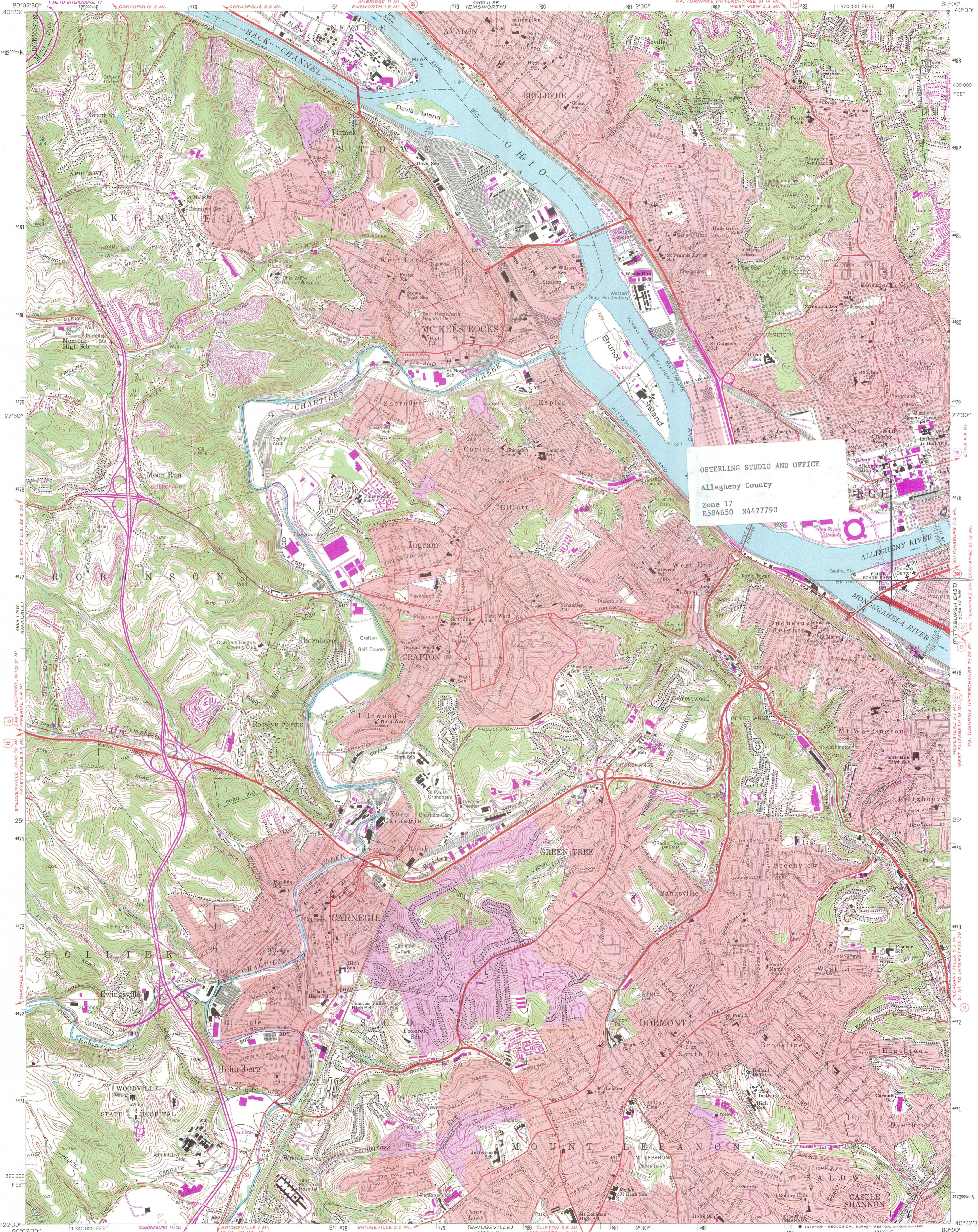
NL: PHLF

PV: South facade and East side

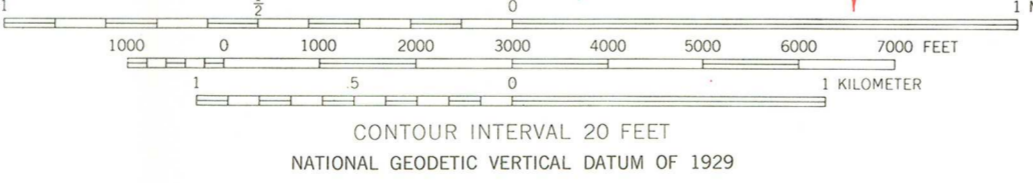
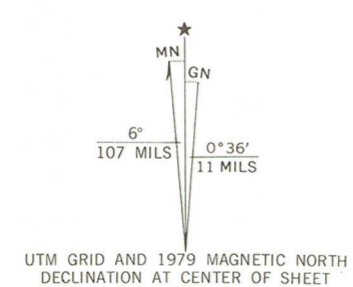


THE
WALTON TRADING
COMPANY
228

OSTERLING STUDIO AND OFFICE
Allegheny County
PD: 1985 PC: M. Aurand
NL: PHLF
PV: Doorway detail

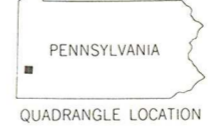


Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USCG&S, USCE, and the City of Pittsburgh
Topography by planetable surveys 1925-1941, and 1948
Revised 1960
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American Datum
10,000-foot grid based on Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 17, shown in blue
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 4 meters south and
18 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route



PITTSBURGH WEST, PA.
N4022.5—W8000/7.5
1960
PHOTOREVISED 1979
DMA 4964 1 NE—SERIES V831

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of
Pennsylvania agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Department of City Planning

Public Safety Building, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219 Telephone: [412] 255-2200

PLANNING COMMISSION
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Robert H. Lurcott, Planning Director

9 July 1985

Ms. Donna Williams, Acting Director
Bureau for Historic Preservation
Box 1026
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: National Register Nomination
for Osterling Studio

Dear Ms. Williams:

At its 14 June 1985 meeting, the City of Pittsburgh Historic Review Commission (HRC) reviewed the nomination for the Osterling Studio. The HRC recommended in favor of designation, however, there was considerable discussion. The building is located in the North Shore Redevelopment area and has been scheduled for demolition for some years now, to make way for housing.

The Planning Department will be investigating the alternatives to demolition, such as the relocation of the structure or preservation of the facade.

We appreciate your keeping us informed of nominations from Pittsburgh.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Lurcott
Secretary
Historic Review Commission

RHL/bb

RECEIVED

JUL 15 1985

HISTORIC PRESERVATION



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
 PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
 BUREAU FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 BOX 1026
 HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17108-1026

JULY 17, 1985

National Register of Historic Places
 US Dept. of Interior
 Carol Shull, Chief of Registration
 P.O. Box 37127
 Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Re: NR Nomination Forms

Dear Ms. Shull:

The following National Register nomination forms are being submitted/resubmitted for your review and response:

- ① JACKSON MANSION + CARRIAGE HOUSE (COLUMBIA CO.)
- ② OSTERLING, FREDERICK J., OFFICE AND STUDIO (ALLEGHENY CO.)
- ③ SAUER BUILDINGS HISTORIC DISTRICT (ALLEGHENY CO.)
- ④ H.K. DEISHER KNITTING MILL (BERKS CO.)

The proposed action is:

- listing in the National Register
- determination of eligibility (owner objection)

If you have any questions regarding the nominations please call us at (717) 783-8947.

- ↓
- ⑤ CARNEGIE FREE LIBRARY, BEAVER FALLS (BEAVER CO.)

Sincerely,

Greg Ramsey
 Greg Ramsey, Chief
 Division of Preservation Services

GR:sk

