

**85-87 NORTH MAIN STREET  
ST. ALBANS, VERMONT**

**HISTORIC DOCUMENTATION**

***I. INTRODUCTION***

**Location:** The building to be removed is located at 85-87 North Main Street in downtown St. Albans, which is located in Franklin County, Vermont.

**Date of Construction:** The front portion of the building was built c. 1905 replacing an earlier commercial building that stood on the lot prior to 1853. The rear addition was constructed in the 19-teens. The front façade was renovated in the late 1970s.

**Present Owner:** The City of St. Albans

**Present Use:** Vacant

**Historic Use:** Commercial on the first floor, residential on the second floor. Rear addition was an auto sales and service shop in the 1920s.

**Significance:** The building at 85-87 North Main Street is a noncontributing building, #23, in the St. Albans Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with alterations to the front façade c. 1978. This building continues the commercial use of the parcel that began in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This building housed automobile-related businesses in the 1920s. While the building does not contribute to the historic district due to its altered architectural design, its role in the commercial development of the City is significant.

**Location of Documentation Report:** St. Albans Historical Society

**Historian:** Suzanne C. Jamele  
August 2018

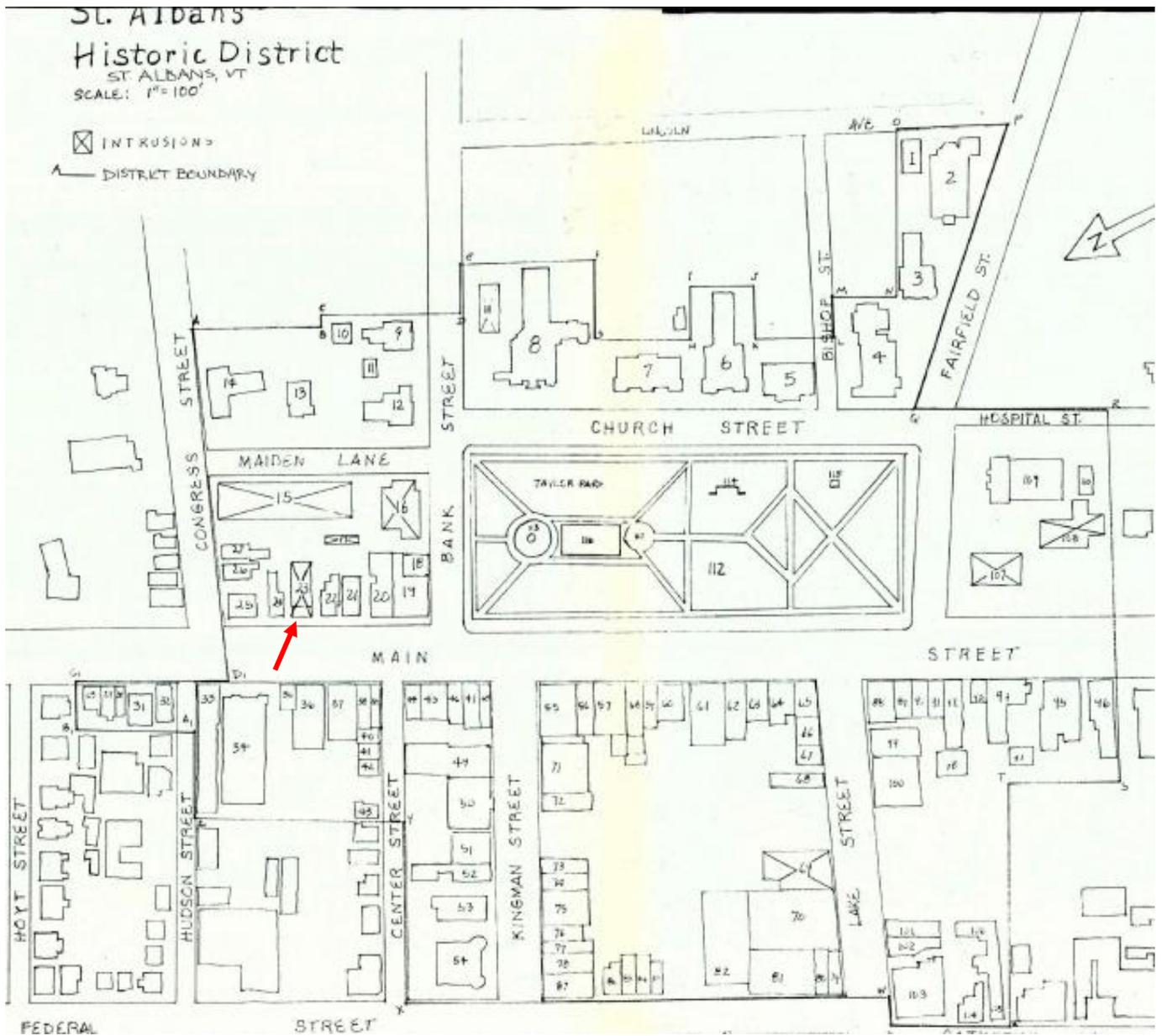
## ***II. PROJECT SUMMARY***

The City of St. Albans proposes to remove the vacant building at 85-87 North Main Street in St. Albans in order to construct a new multi-use building on several lots at the corner of North Main Street and Congress Street and on Maiden Lane. The building at 85-87 North Main Street is one of several altered historic buildings on the parcel that will be removed. The new building is expected to provide commercial and residential space that will stimulate the economy in the downtown historic district. Re-use of the existing buildings would not provide the necessary spaces to serve the program needs of the anticipated occupants of the new building; therefore, it was determined necessary to remove the existing buildings and build new.

The building at 85-87 North Main Street was built c. 1905 with an addition constructed in the 19-teens, and has played a role in the commercial history of the City for over 100 years. Due to late 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations, it is a noncontributing building, #23, in the St. Albans Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This documentation package meets the intent of St. Albans's zoning regulations, (e) i.1, related to the demolition of historic structures. The report meets accepted historic preservation documentation standards as established by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation's *Photographic Documentation Standards for Historic Buildings*. A copy of the report with printed photographs, and a CD containing the report and photographs saved as .jpg images, is on file at The St. Albans Historical Society.

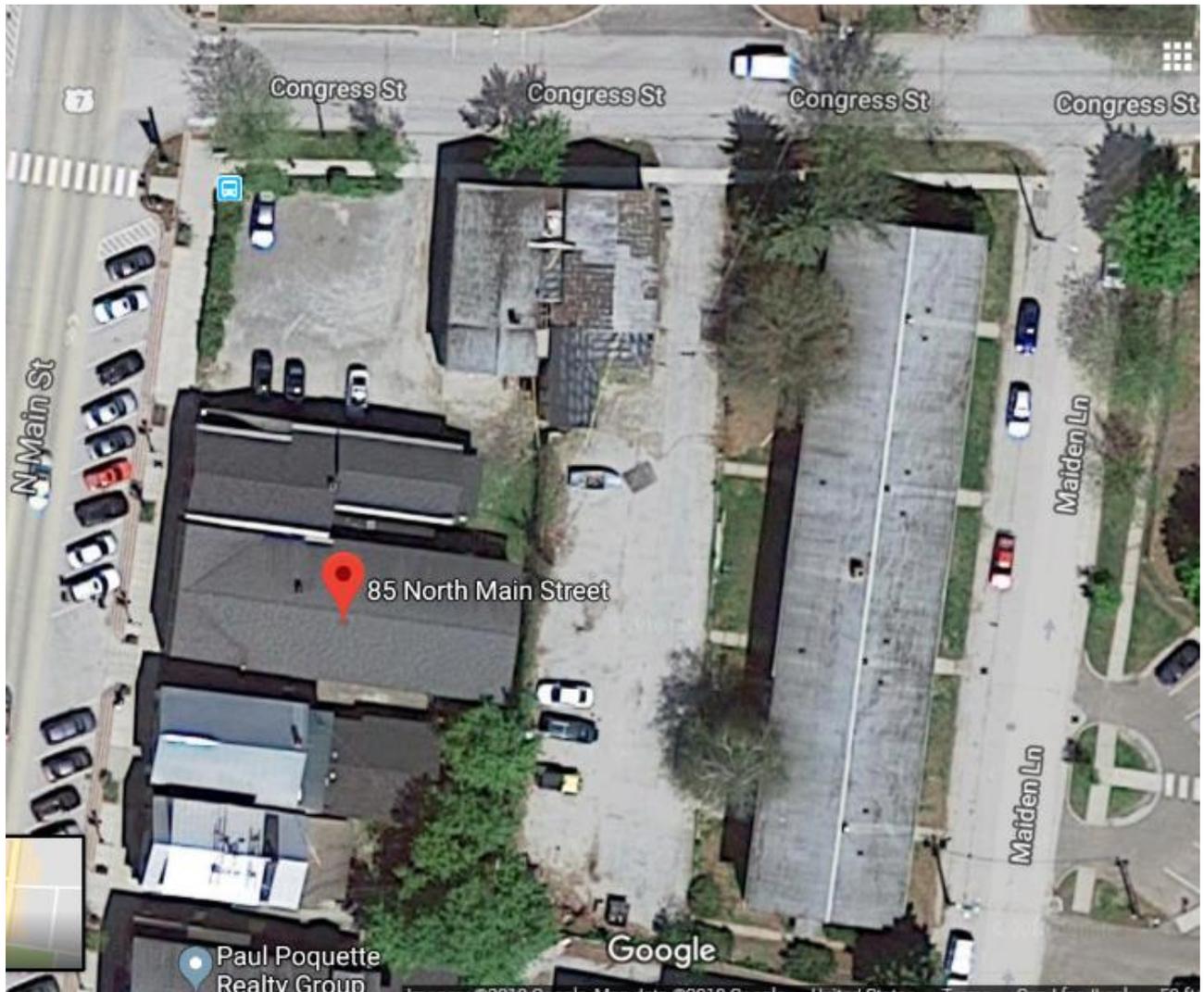
Suzanne Jamele, historic preservation consultant, conducted a site visit of the project area on March 27, 2018. All photographs were taken at that time. Research for this documentation was conducted at the St. Albans Free Library, the Vermont Historical Society's Leahy Library in Barre, the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation's Online Resource Center, and on-line images of the Landscape Change Program of the University of Vermont.



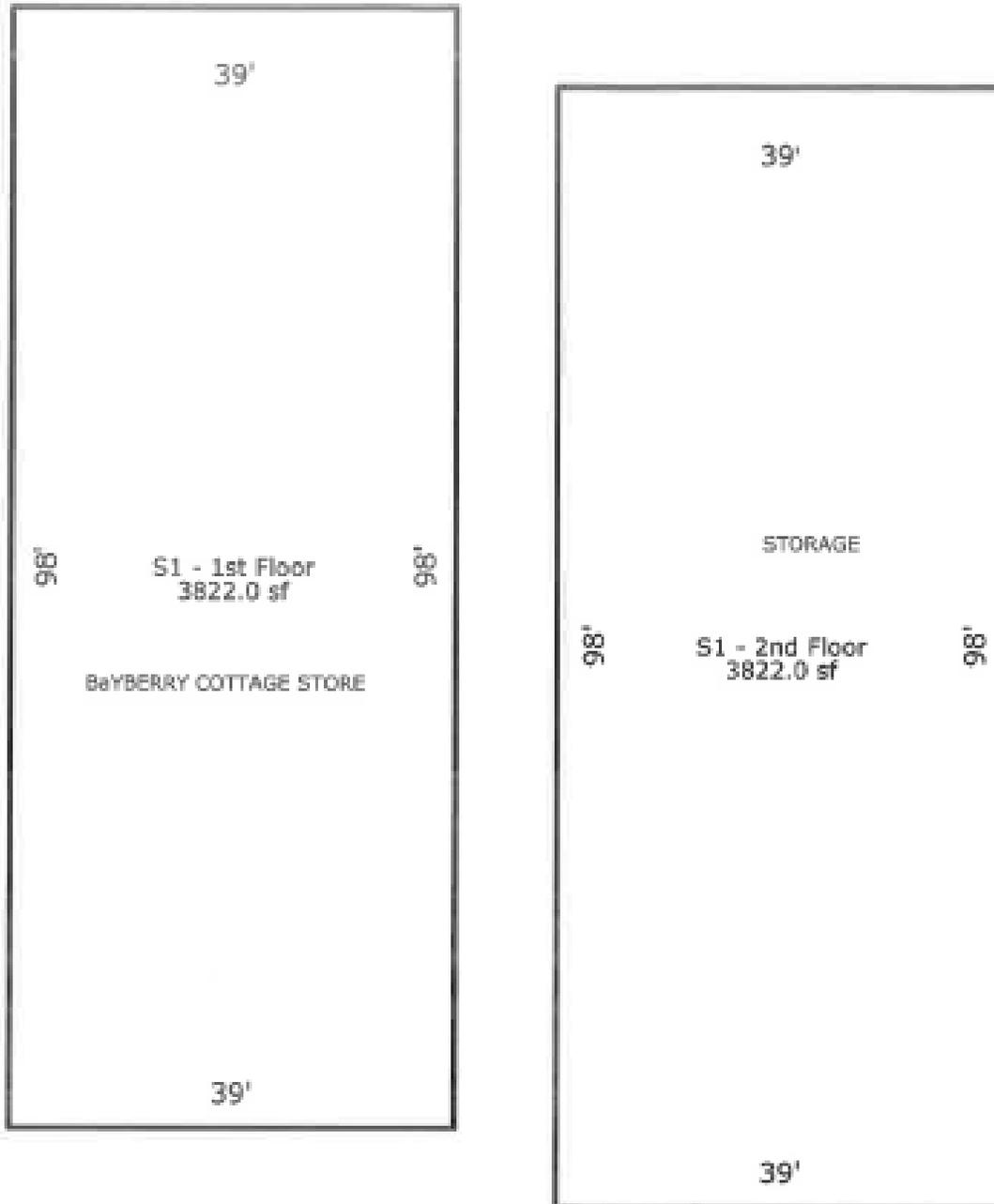
Location Map

### III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The building at 85-87 North Main Street is located on a small urban lot on the east side of North Main Street, near its intersection with Congress Street, and is within the core of the City's downtown. This portion of the city was developed in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and this block of North Main Street survived a devastating fire in 1895 that destroyed many of the downtown buildings. The building is situated one block to the north of Taylor Park, a large open space that is the focal point of the city's downtown. The city sidewalk runs next to the front of the building and the structure largely fills its entire lot. Buildings to the north and south stand immediately adjacent to the structure. Behind the building, to the east, is a parking lot for a large apartment building located at 10 Maiden Lane.



This c. 1905 mixed-use, two-story building has a rectangular main block with a very shallow shed roof and a long gable roofed rear addition, spanning the entire width of the rear elevation, that was constructed in the 19-teens. A long, narrower, single story addition stood at the back of the building until the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



## Exterior

The building was substantially renovated c. 1978 and finishes date from that period on both the exterior and interior. The front façade is brick veneer and the rear addition has T1-11 siding. The front portion of the building has a stone foundation and an asphalt shingle roof. The rear addition rests on concrete and has an asphalt shingle roof.

The front (west) elevation facing North Main Street has a recessed plate glass door offset to the north entering into the storefront area. The door has a surround of fluted pilasters and a narrow molded scalloped cornice. A plate glass door with a row of header bricks above it, enters into the building at the southern end of the front elevation accessing stairs to the second floor. Flanking the central door are angled brick walls and very large 24 pane fixed glass display windows with brick sills. A band of vertically set bricks runs almost the full width of the building above the first floor windows and doors. Above this, a broad wood signboard spans the front of the building separating the first floor from the second. On the second floor are two pairs of modern eight-over-eight windows (8/8) that are slightly recessed and have flat wood trim and modern shutters. A simple wood belt course runs above the windows. There is a two-part cornice band at the eave.

The south side of the main block is covered with T1-11 siding and has no windows and a single door on the first floor that is covered with plywood. The door has a molded scalloped cornice similar to that on the front elevation. A narrow pent hood shelters the door. The north side of the main block has corrugated vertical metal siding.

The rear addition has T1-11 siding and flat wood corner boards, window trim and a boxed cornice with broad eaves. The south side of the rear addition has five bays on the first floor alternating doors and 1/1 windows. There are three sliding windows on the second floor which are typical of second floor windows throughout the addition. Doors have been covered with plywood and have small pent hoods. The back (east) side has no windows on the first floor and two sliding windows on the second floor. The north side is obscured by the adjacent building at 89 North Main Street..

## Interior

The first floor of the main block contains a single open commercial space with modern finishes. The floor is carpeted, walls are sheetrock or paneling with clamshell trim, the ceiling has fiberboard tiles on a metal grid. Square posts with mirrors are scattered throughout. The first floor of the addition has a mix of living spaces and storage areas all with modern materials. In living units, floors are carpeted or sheet vinyl, walls are sheetrock or sheet paneling with clamshell or flat stock trim and ceilings are sheetrock or fiberboard tile on a metal grid. Storage portions of the rear addition have painted pine board flooring, vertical panel wood doors that open into storage rooms with roughly constructed plywood walls and ceilings. Exposed framing in the rear addition of the building is all dimensional lumber which is consistent with its construction in the 19-teens.

The second floors of both the main block and addition contain living units with modern finishes. Floors are carpeted or sheet vinyl, walls are sheetrock or paneling with clamshell or flat stock trim, ceilings are sheetrock or fiberboard tile on a metal grid and doors are flush wood.

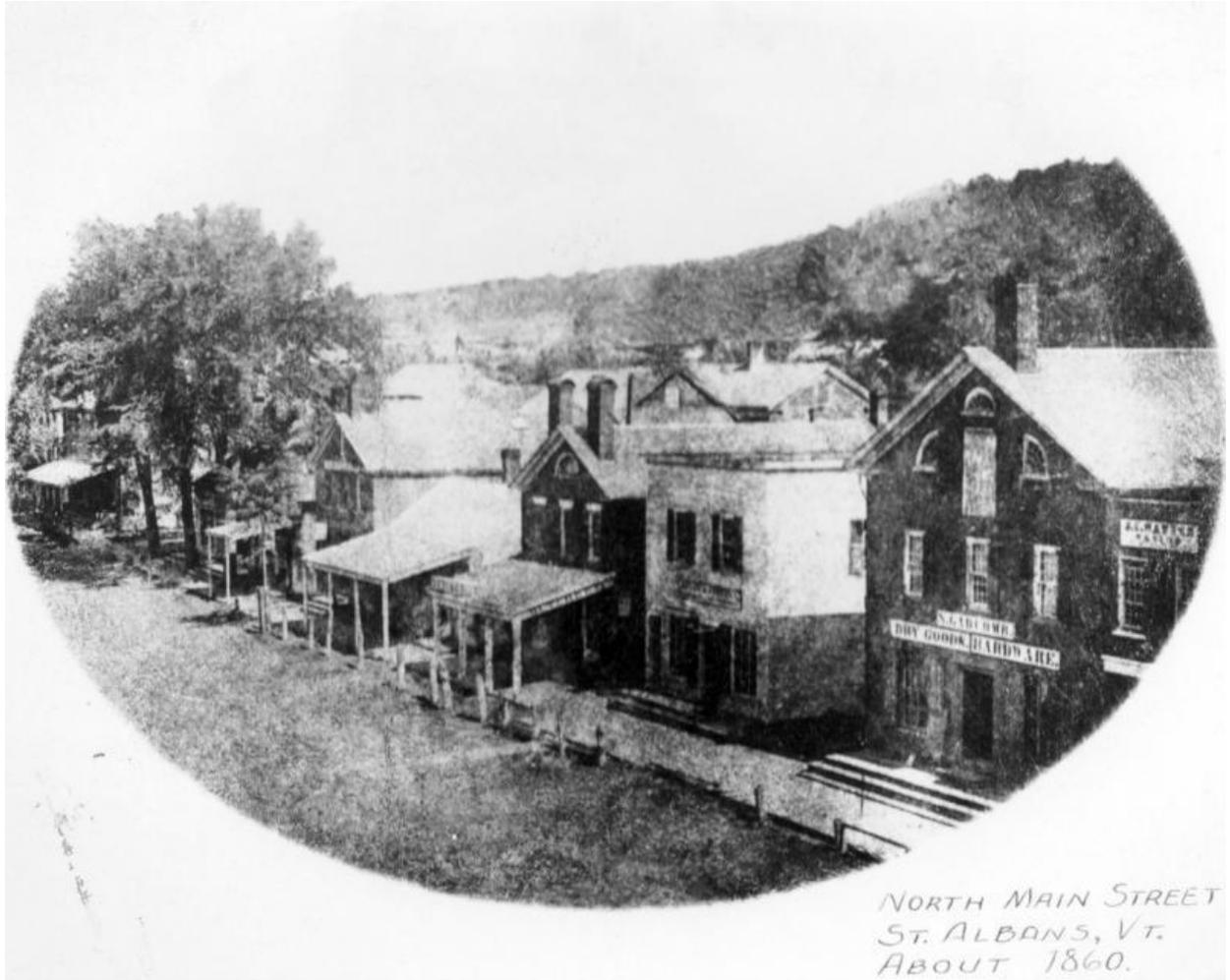
#### *IV. SIGNIFICANCE*

The building at 85-87 North Main Street is a noncontributing building, #23, in the St. Albans Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building dates from c. 1905 and was built on the site of an earlier wood frame commercial building. It was significantly altered c. 1978 and retains no visible historic material on the outside or inside. The main block's form, scale and placement on the street are consistent with other commercial blocks nearby dating from the early period of downtown development. While the building lacks historic fabric, its history helps fill out the understanding of commercial development along North Main Street.

In addition to the building's commercial history, this block of North Main Street was the scene of action during the Confederate Raid on St. Albans that took place during the Civil War on October 19, 1864. Following the bank raids, Elinus Morrison, a contractor supervising construction of the Welden House Hotel on nearby Bank Street, was shot by the Confederate Raid's leader Lieutenant Bennett Young. Morrison and his crew had run to Main Street to see if they could help apprehend the raiders. Morrison was shot outside of Miss Beattie's Millinery Store, that stood several buildings north of 85-87 on the same block of Main Street. This building is no longer standing. Badly wounded, Morrison was carried to Dutcher's Drug Store which was in the building immediately to the south of 85-87. He was given first aid at Dutcher's and then taken to his room at the American Hotel on the corner of Main and Lake Streets where he died two days later.

#### History of First Building on the Lot

The first building on the lot appears on the 1853 Presdee and Edwards map of St. Albans as well as the 1857 Walling map and the 1871 Beers map. On all three maps the building owner is not named and the building appears as a large main block adjacent to the street with a long ell attached to the northern portion of the rear elevation. By 1871 the building's street number was 103-105. A photo of this block of North Main Street taken c. 1860 shows the building tucked between its neighboring larger gable front brick buildings. The building is a 1 ½ story, eaves front, wood frame Cape Cod type building with a shed roof extending over the sidewalk to shelter the wooden walkway. A second photo taken c. 1880, shows this building as a flat roofed wood frame structure with two entries or storefronts on the first floor and two second floor windows. It is possible the gable roof of the original building was removed and a second story with flat roof added. While the rear ell does not appear in the photos of the streetscape, historic maps indicate the building always had a long rear ell.



NORTH MAIN STREET  
ST. ALBANS, VT.  
ABOUT 1860.

Looking northeast on North Main Street c. 1860. The original building at 85-87 is the fourth building from the right. Dutchers Drug Store is to its right and G. A. Jaques grocery store is to its left. This photograph shows these early buildings with their Federal style design including 12 over 12 windows and fanlight windows. *Courtesy: University of Vermont Landscape Change Program.*



North Main Street c. 1880. The building at 85-87 is the flat roofed building on the left side of the photograph. It and a nearby building both have had their roofs raised and the roofline altered. Other buildings have been updated with Italianate trim and windows replacing Federal style windows. *Courtesy: Images of America- St. Albans, page 123.*

The *Pocket Directory of the Village of St. Albans, 1877 and 1878* indicates the Jacques Brothers had a boot and shoe shop in the building. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps provide further information regarding commercial uses of the building and periods of renovation. From 1884-1901 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps indicate the building's commercial first floor was divided into two storefronts. The first Sanborn map dates from 1884 and at that time the two-story main block housed a boot and shoe shop and a handprinting shop. Off the back of the building was a long two-part rear addition on the northern portion of the rear elevation. The part closest to the main block was one story and was used as storage. Attached to it was a 1 ½ story portion that was a dwelling. Small single-story additions projected south- one from each section of the rear addition. In 1889, 1895/96 and 1901 the building's uses remained the same except the handprinting shop was gone and a harness shop had opened. The May 1906 Sanborn map shows a vacant lot at 105.

#### History of Existing Building

The 1912 Sanborn map shows a new two-story building with two storefronts and no rear addition on the lot. It housed a tailor and a barber, Fred Poquette. Also, by 1912 the street numbers had changed and this building was now 85-87.

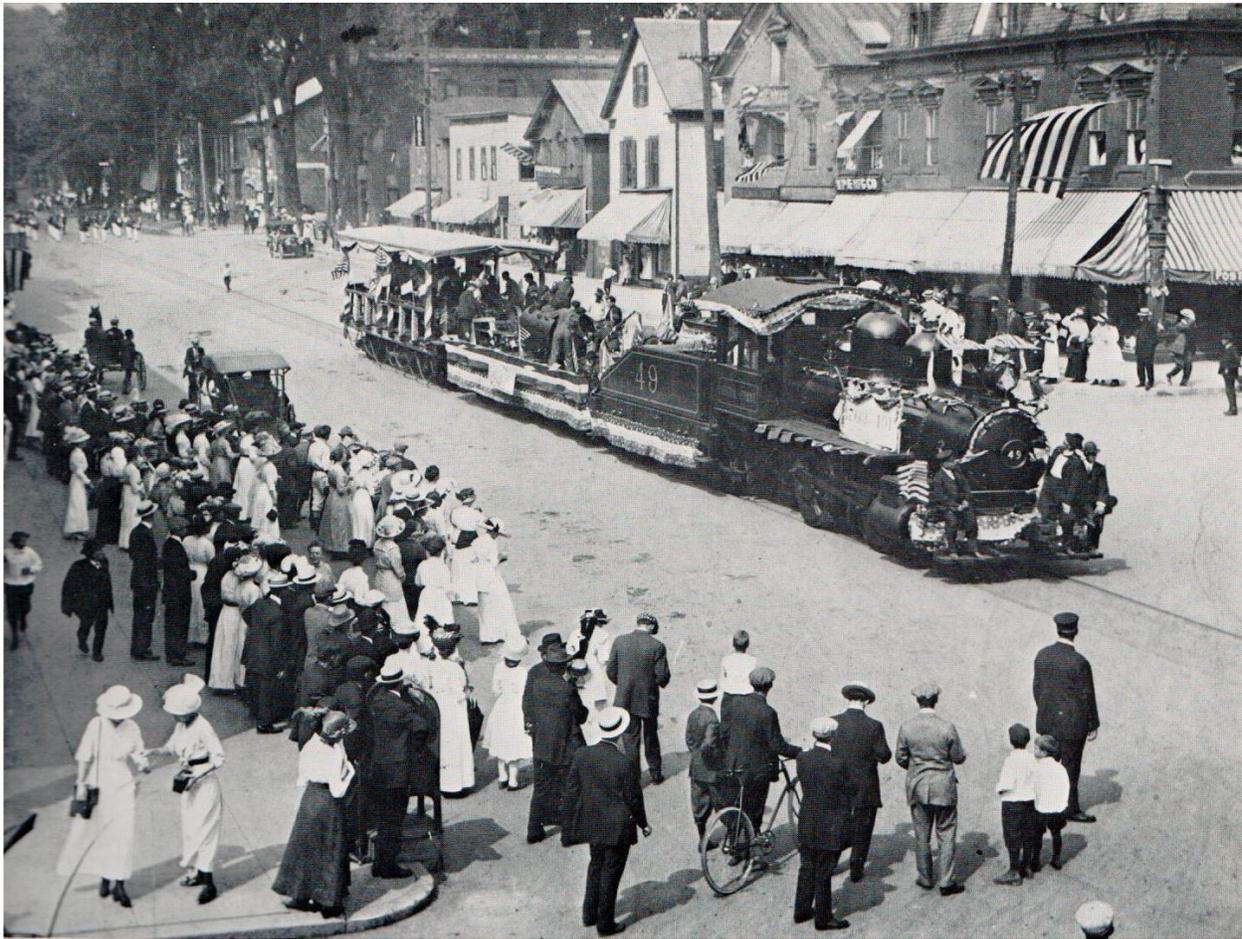


Photo taken in 1914 during a big celebration to celebrate 100 years of peace between the United States and Canada. The train is proceeding on streetcar tracks. 85 North Main is the flat roofed building in the center of the image. *Courtesy of The Central Vermont Railway, Volume 3, 1911-1917, page 55.*

The 1920 map shows a tailor and an auto supply shop in the main block. A large, two-story, iron clad addition that served as an automobile garage with a capacity for 20 cars and had an earthen floor and no heat had been constructed off the back of the building. The second floor of the addition housed a furniture repair business. In 1926 the Sanborn map indicates the building had an auto sales showroom on the north side of the main block, H. C. Manzer's Northern Chevrolet Co. and a vulcanizing shop on the south side, Wright's Tire Shop. Adds from the 1928 *Houghton's City Directory of St. Albans, Vermont* are below. The rear addition was used for auto storage.

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The *Standard Directory of St. Albans City* published in 1936 indicates the south side shop was occupied by Victory Auto Stores which was owned by Charles McLea. The commercial space on the north side was The Dinette owned by Mrs. Bertha Bingham. In 1946 there were two shops in the main block and the rear addition was used for storage.

## **V. REFERENCES**

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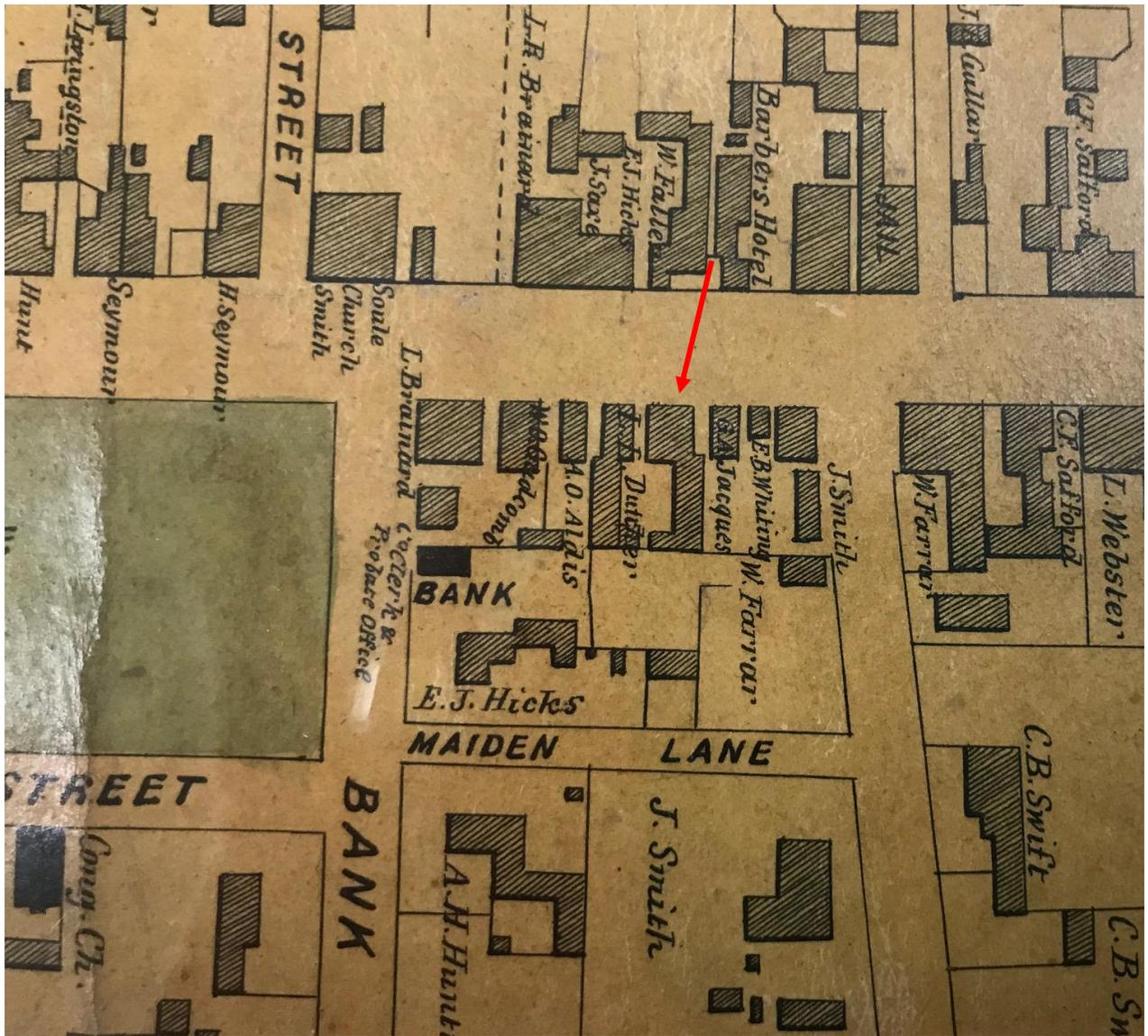
*Walton's Vermont Register & Farmer's Almanac.* S. M. Walton: Montpelier, Vermont, 1862 and 1867.

## ***VI. INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS ON CD***

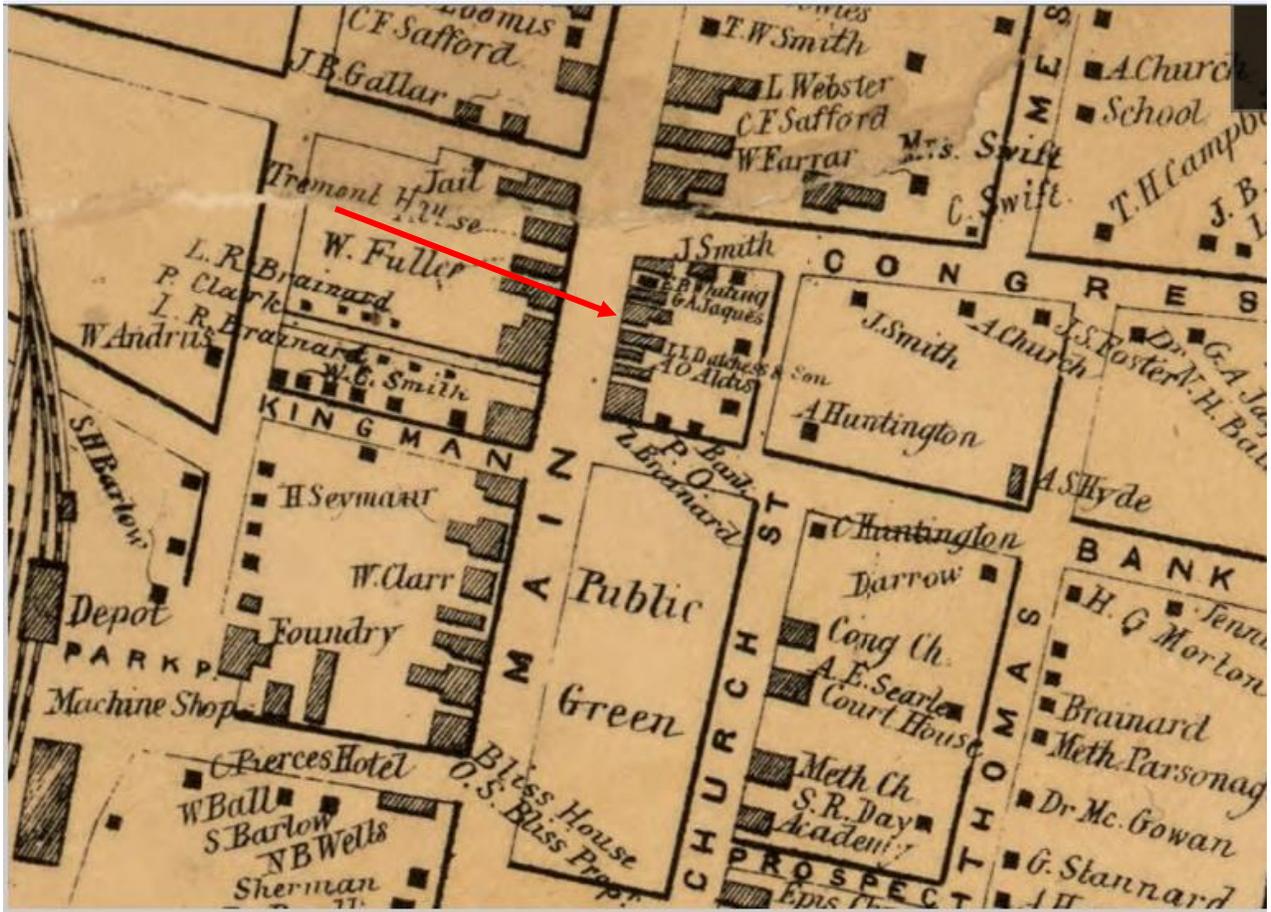
85-87 North Main Street  
St. Albans, Franklin County, Vermont

Photographs # were taken by Suzanne Jamele, March 27, 2018 except for photographs # 2,4 and 8 taken August 12, 2018.

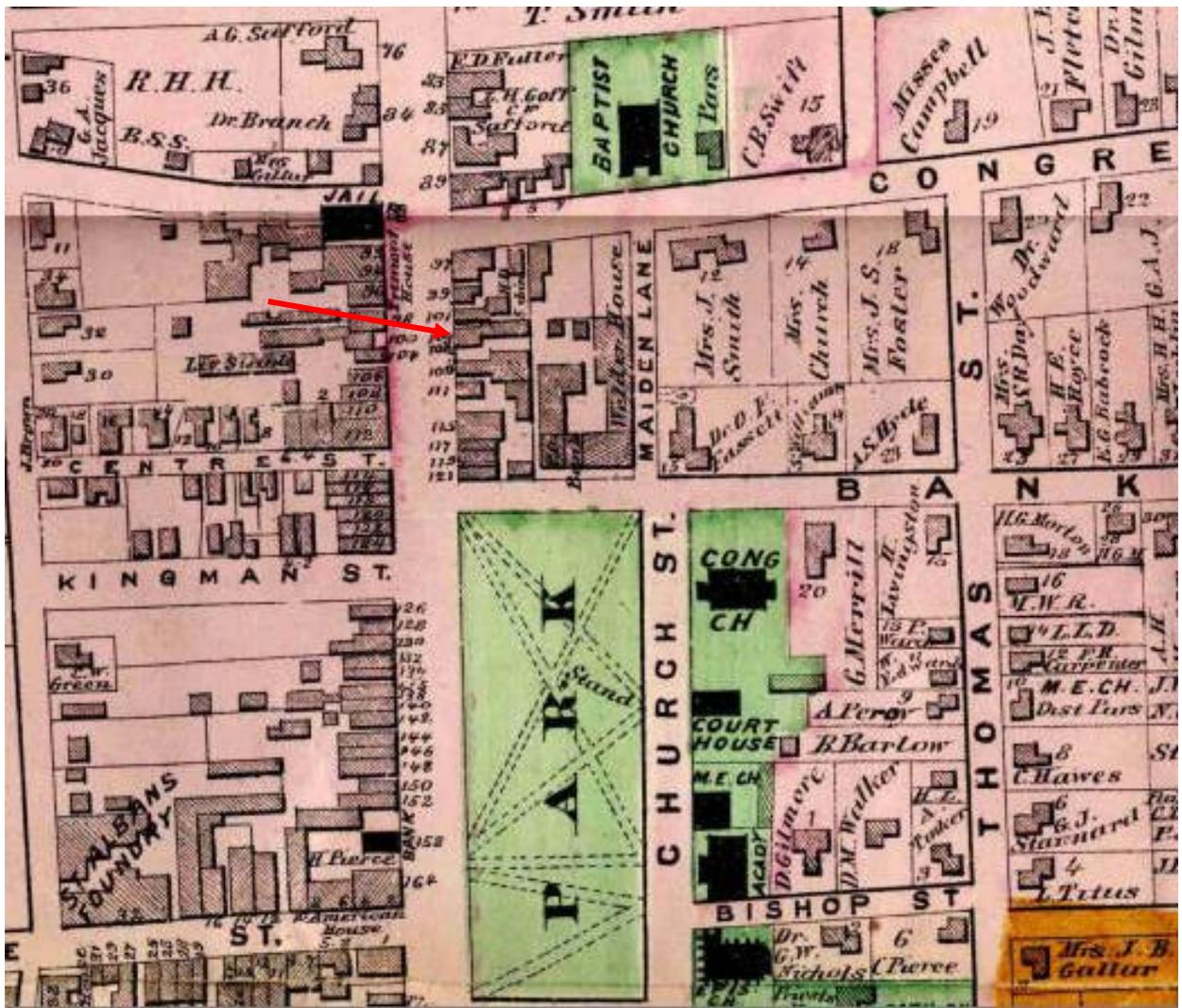
- 1.** View east across North Main Street. #85-87 second from right.
- 2.** View south on North Main Street. #85-87 second from left.
- 3.** View east across North Main Street. 85-87 on right.
- 4.** View east at front of building.
- 5.** View east at center front door to commercial space.
- 6.** View northeast at front (west) and south sides.
- 7.** View northeast at boarded up door on south side of main block with molded scalloped cornice.
- 8.** View northeast at south side of main block and rear addition.
- 9.** View west at addition's south and rear (east) sides.
- 10.** View east at north side of building on right. Wall of 89-91 on left.
- 11.** View east in first floor storefront.
- 12.** View west in first floor storefront.
- 13.** View east in first floor storage areas in rear addition.
- 14.** View south in unfinished first floor storage areas in rear addition.
- 15.** View west on second floor at west side front windows.
- 16.** View north in second floor living unit.
- 17.** View east in second floor hallway in rear addition.



1853 Presdee & Edwards map of St. Albans

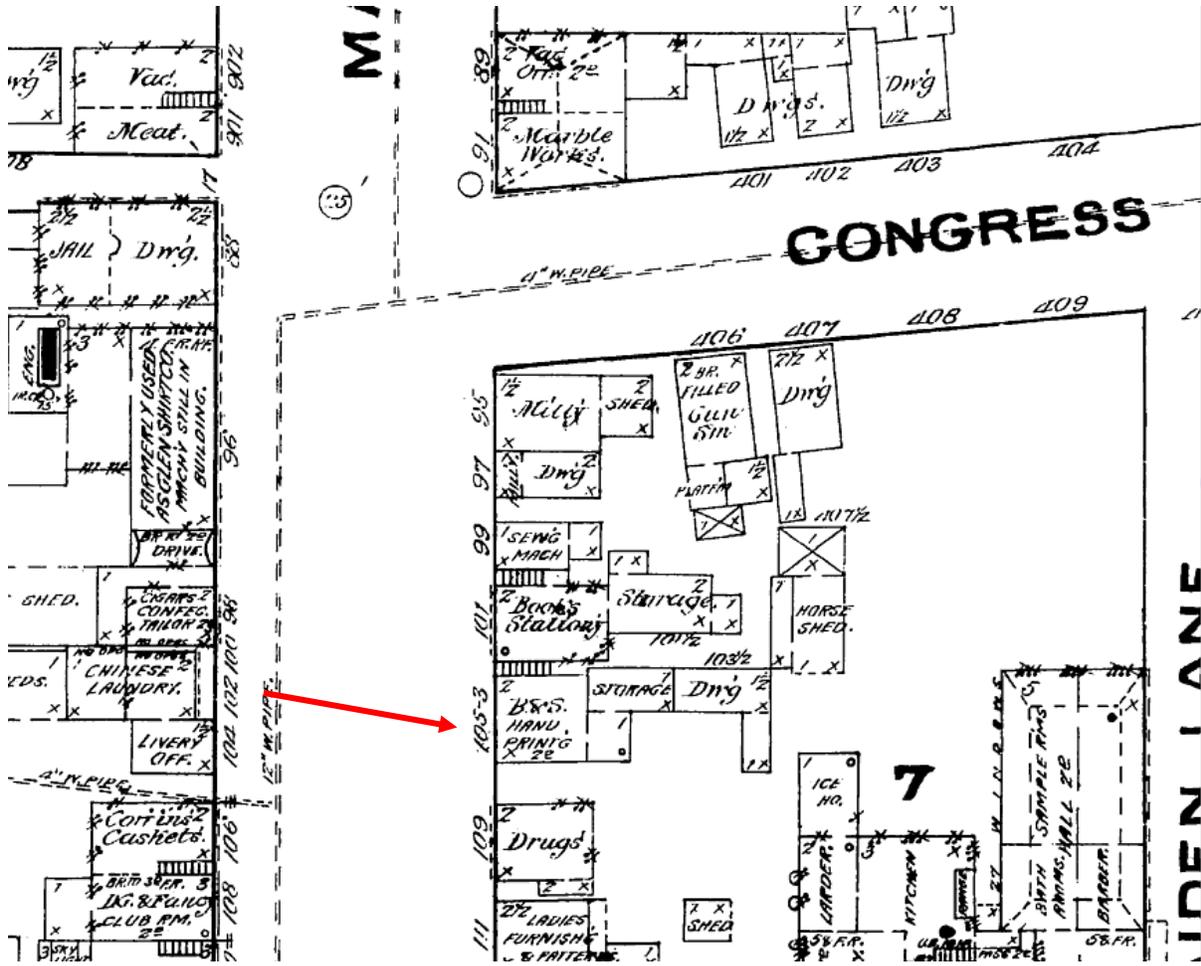


1857- H. F. Walling map of St. Albans

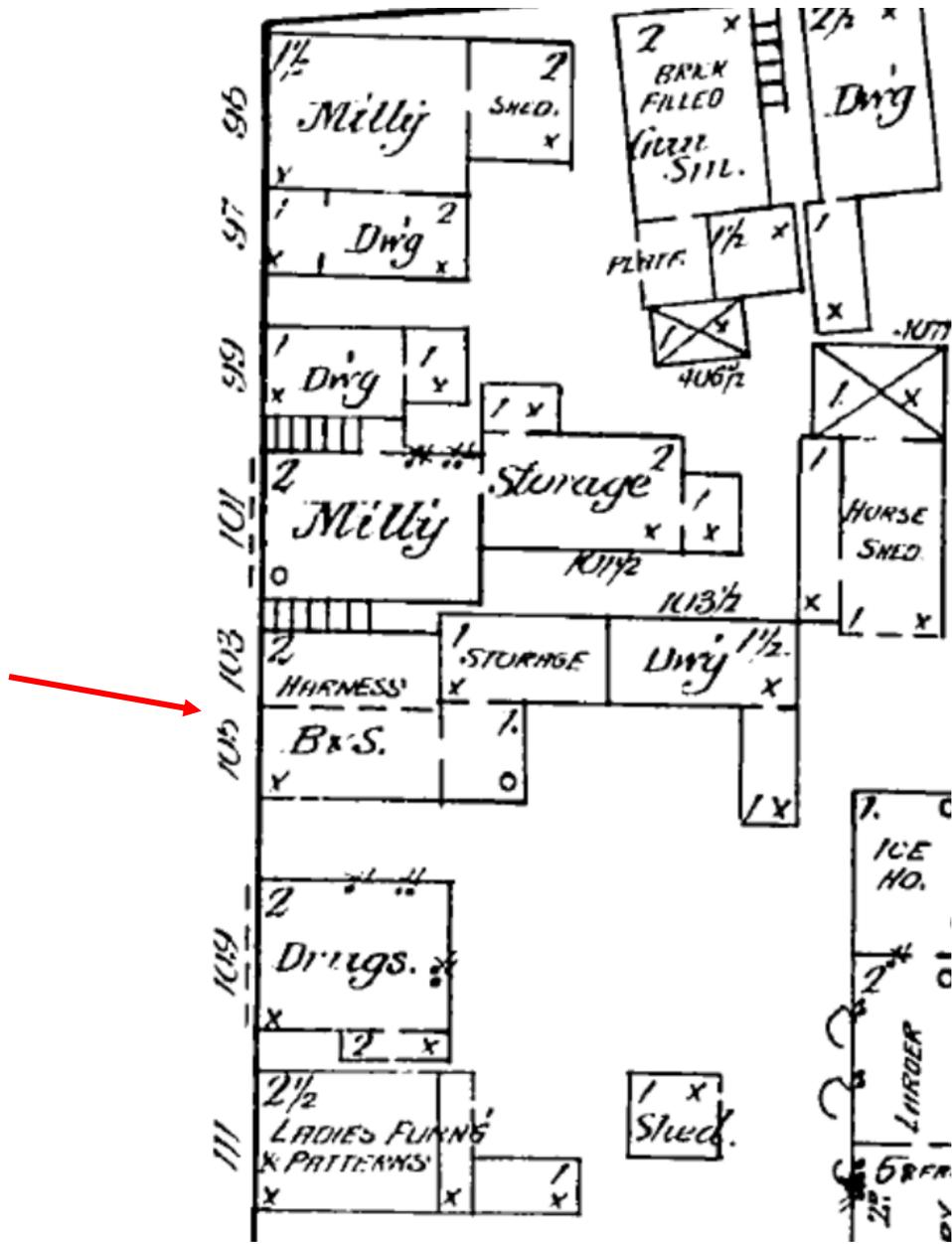


1871 Beers Atlas of St. Albans

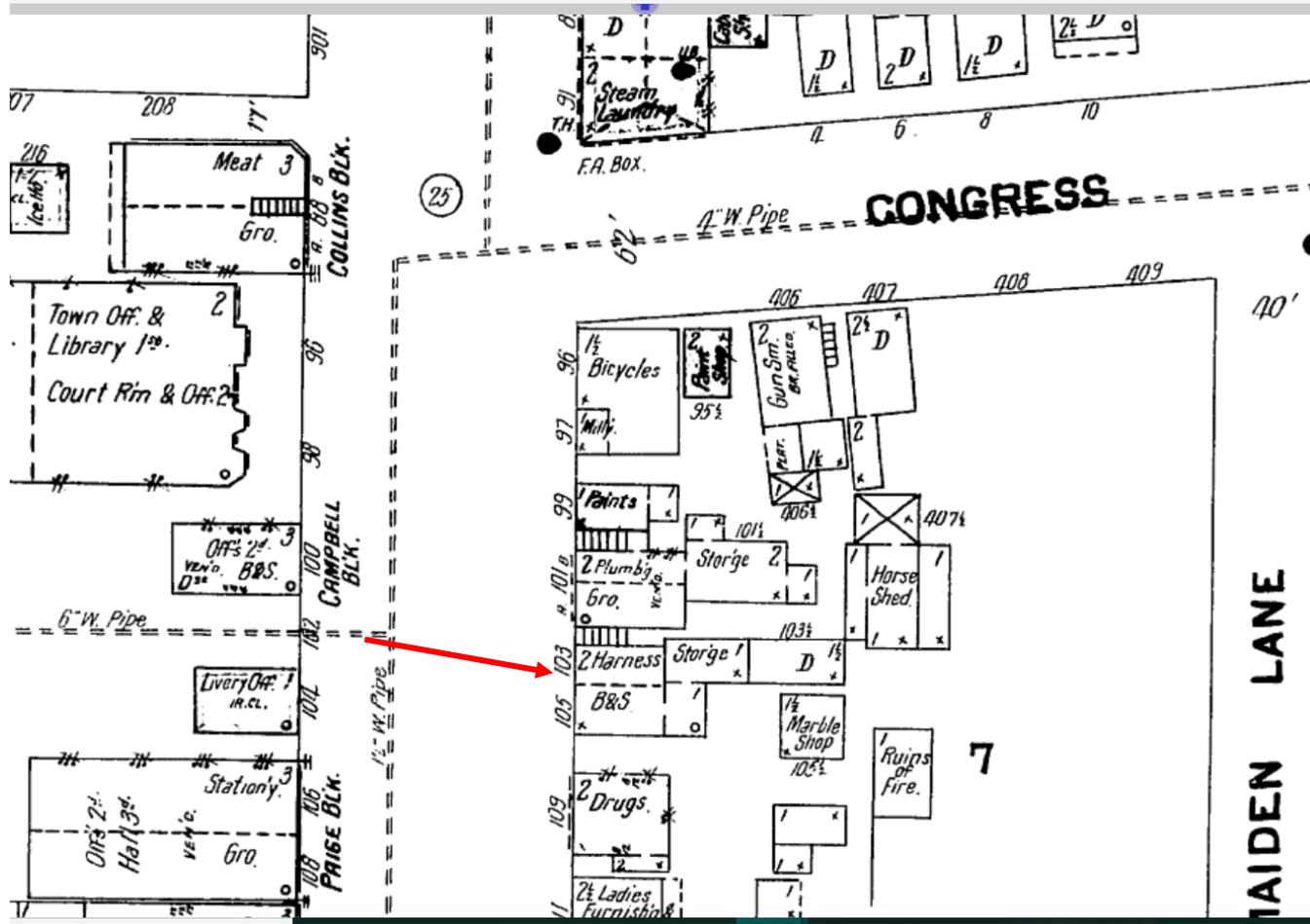




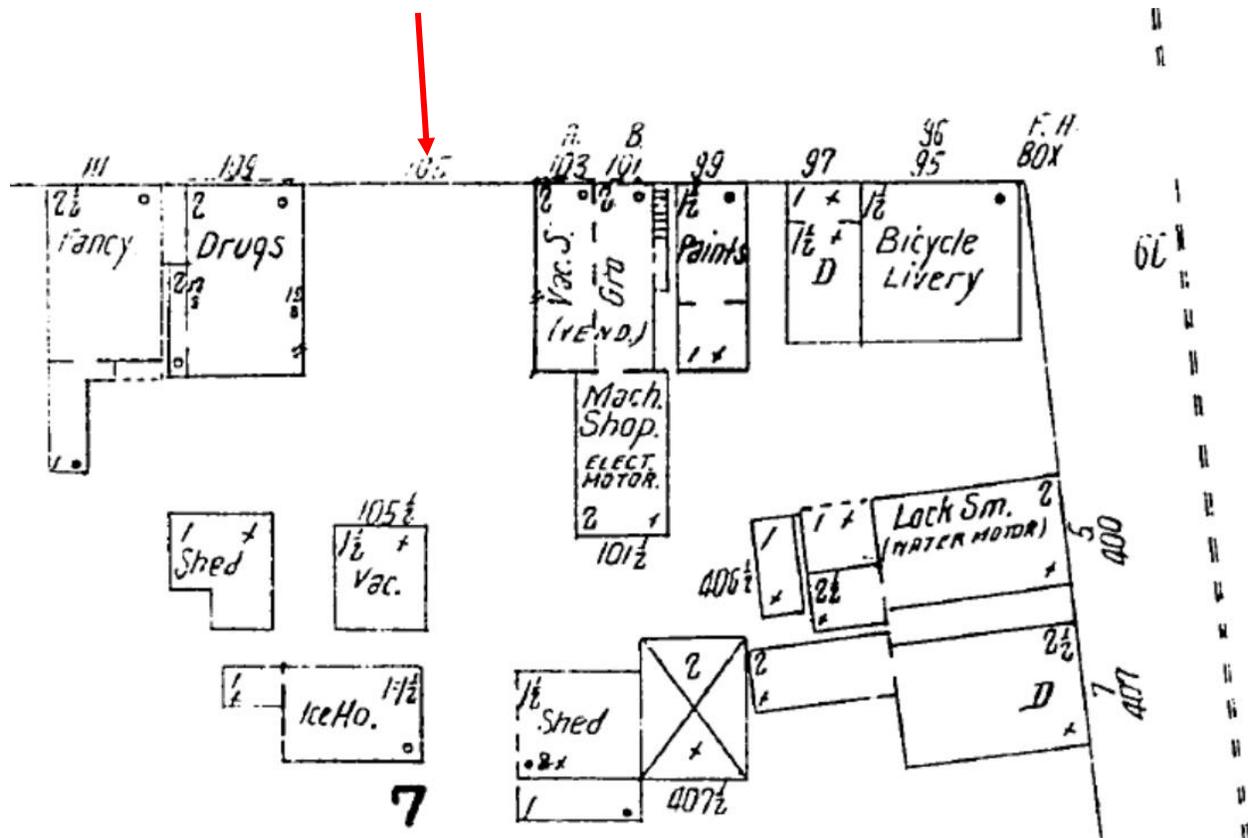
1884 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



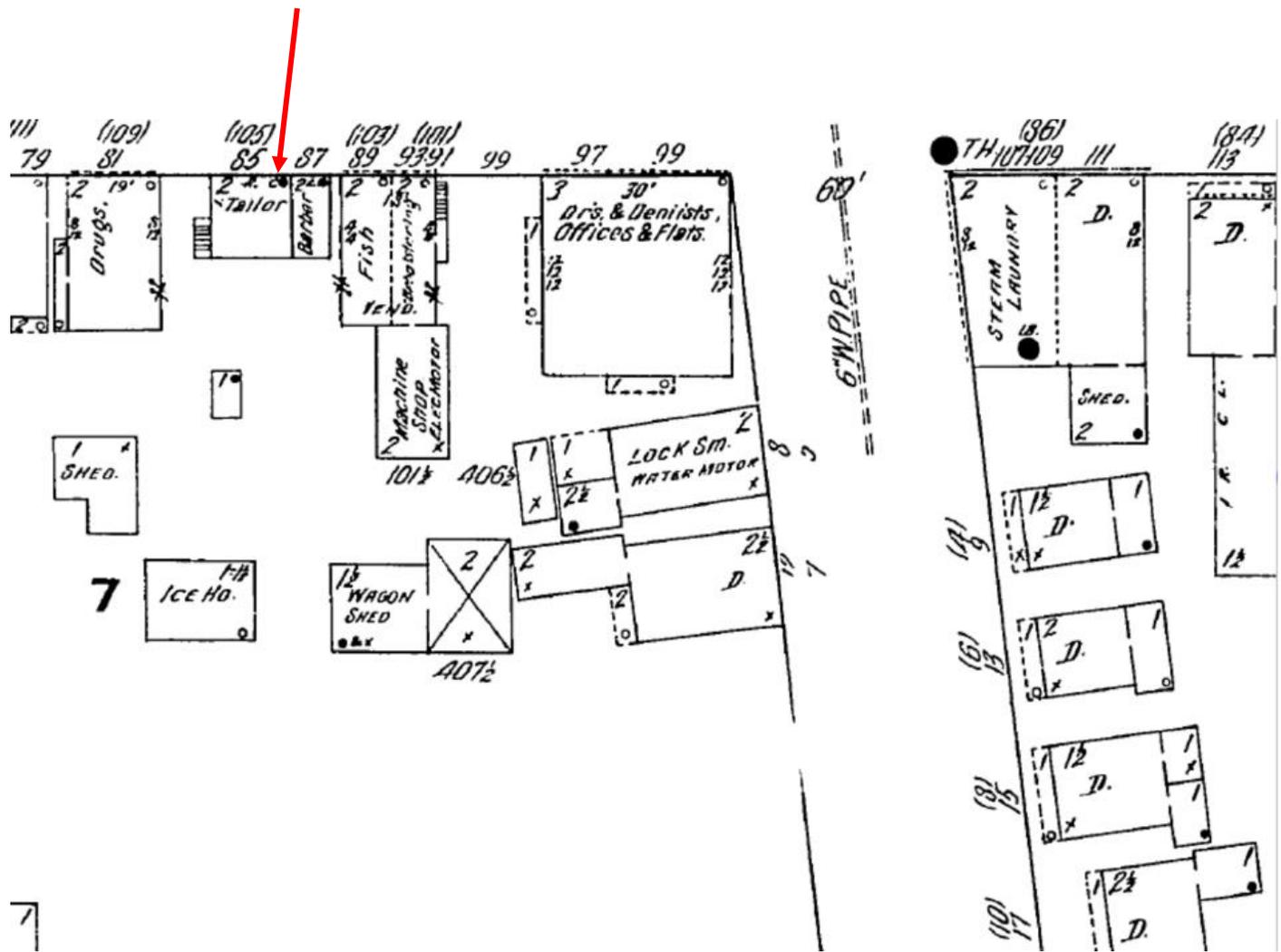
1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. The 1895 and 1896 maps are similar except the millinery shop is gone.



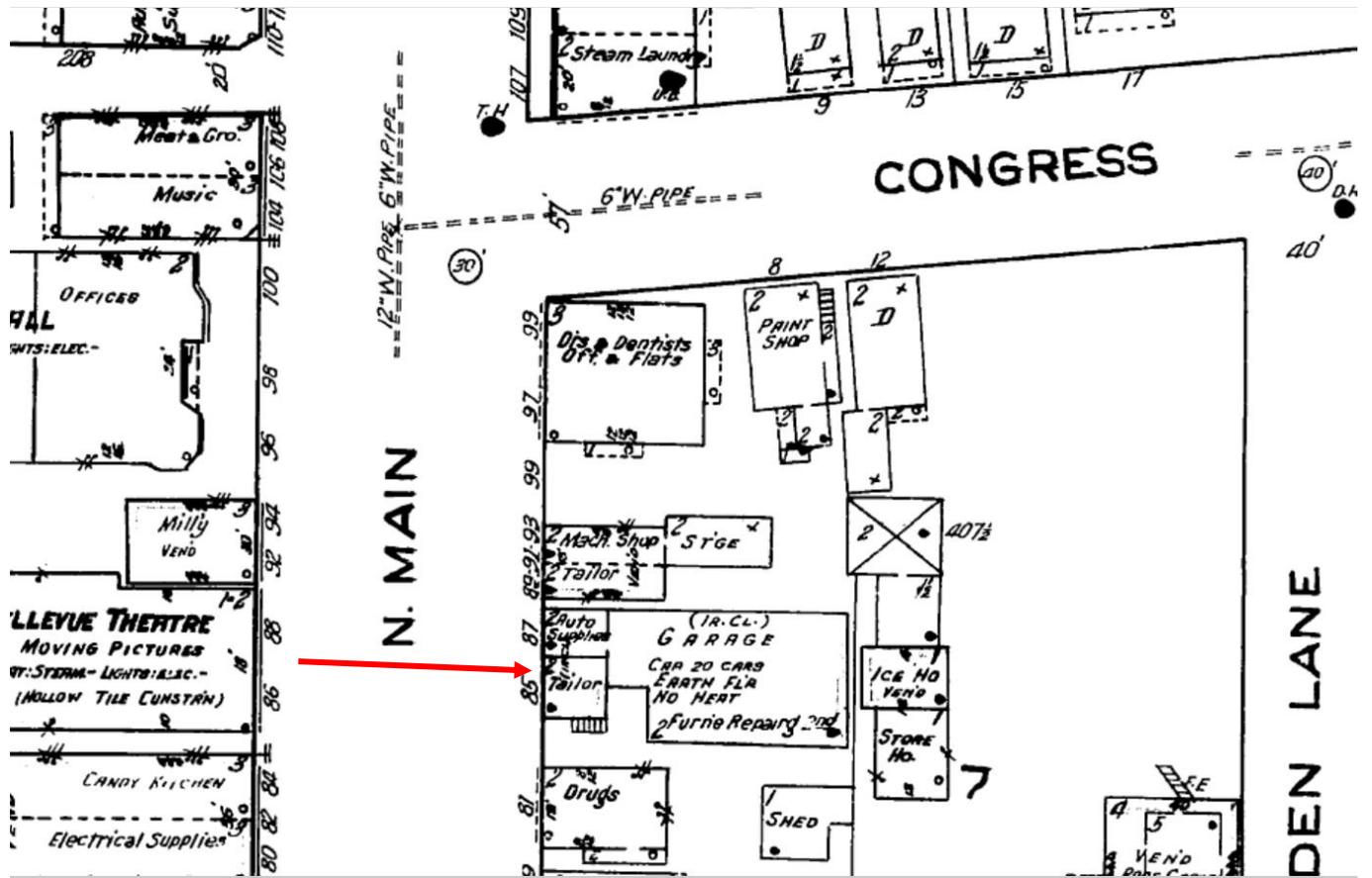
1901 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



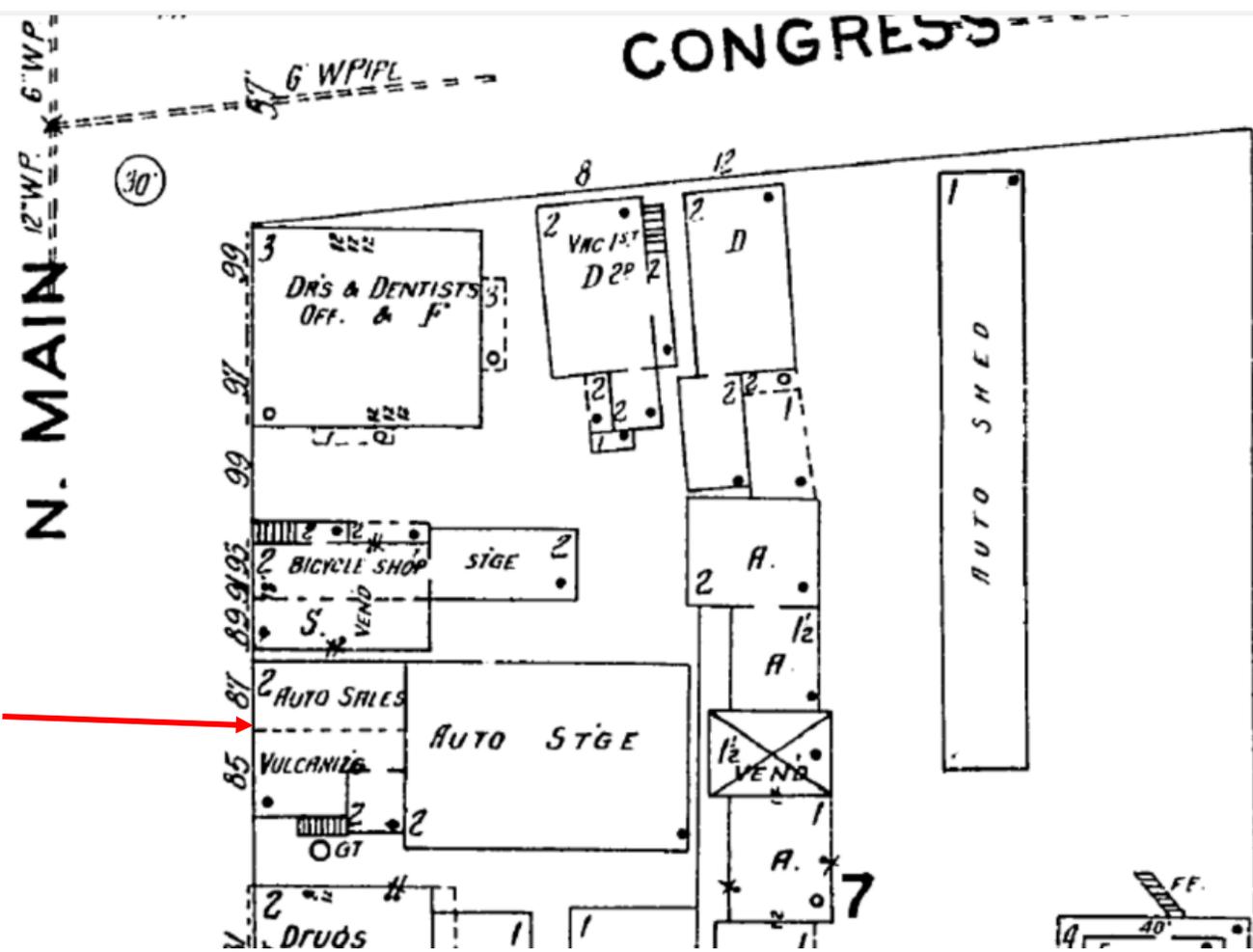
May 1906 Sanborn Map. There is no building at #105.



1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



1920 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

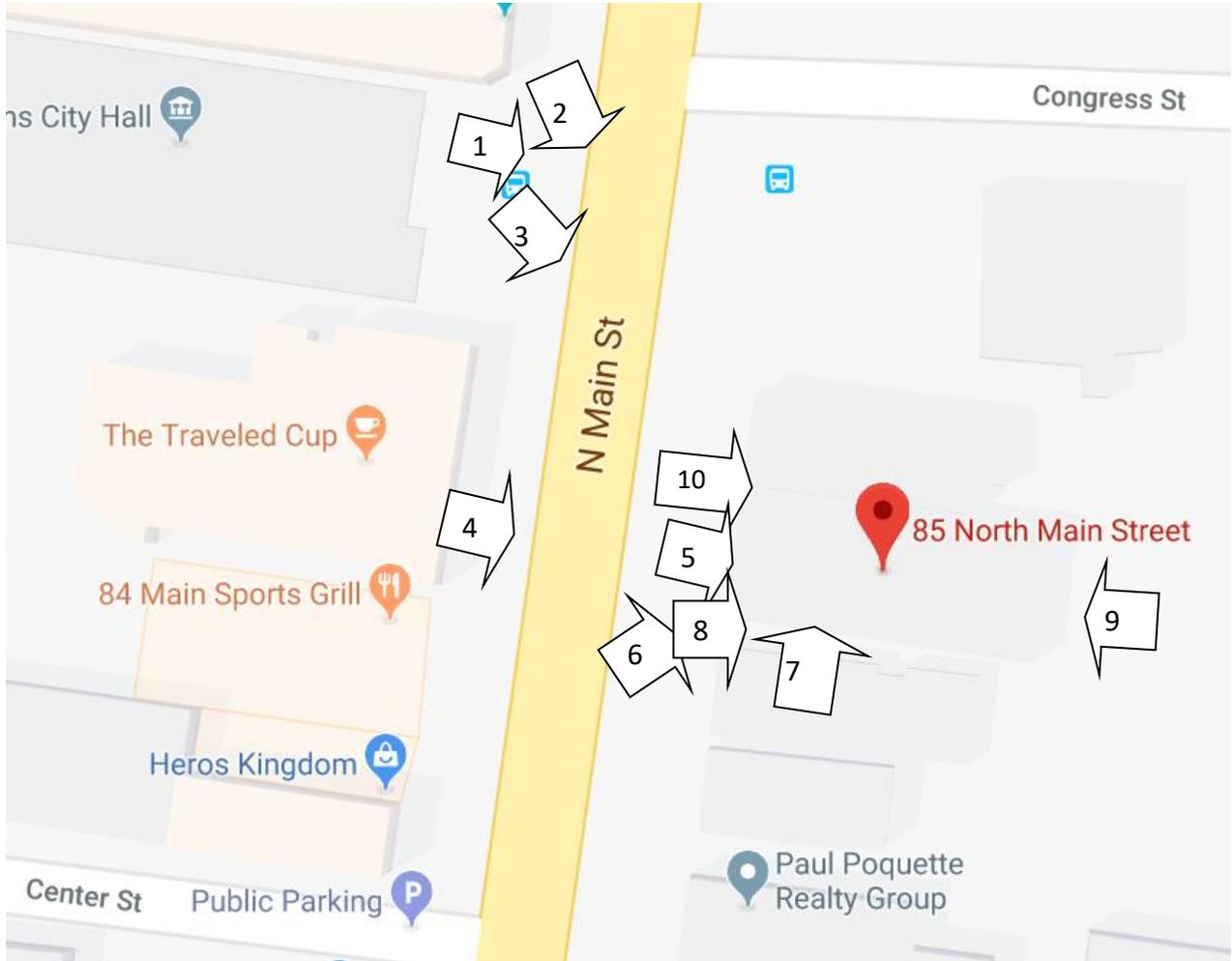


1926 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



# Photograph Location Map

Exterior





1. View east across North Main Street. #85-87 second from right.



2. View south on North Main Street. #85-87 second from left.



3. View east across North Main Street. 85-87 on right.



4. View east at front of building.



5. View east at center front door to commercial space.



6. View northeast at front (west) and south sides.



7. View northeast at boarded up door on south side of main block with molded scalloped cornice.



8. View northeast at south side of main block and rear addition.



9. View west at addition's south and rear (east) sides.



10. View east at north side of building on right. Wall of 89-91 on left.



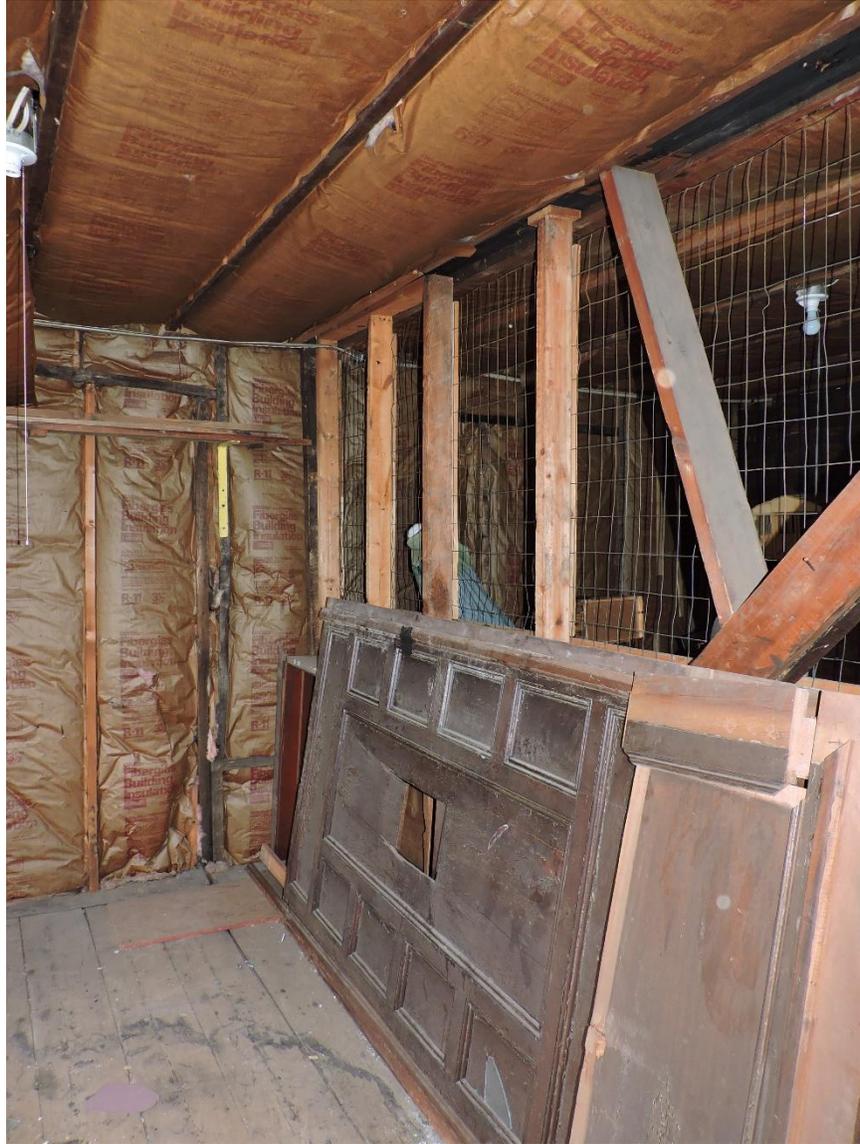
11. View east in first floor storefront.



12. View west in first floor storefront.



13. View east in first floor storage areas in rear addition.



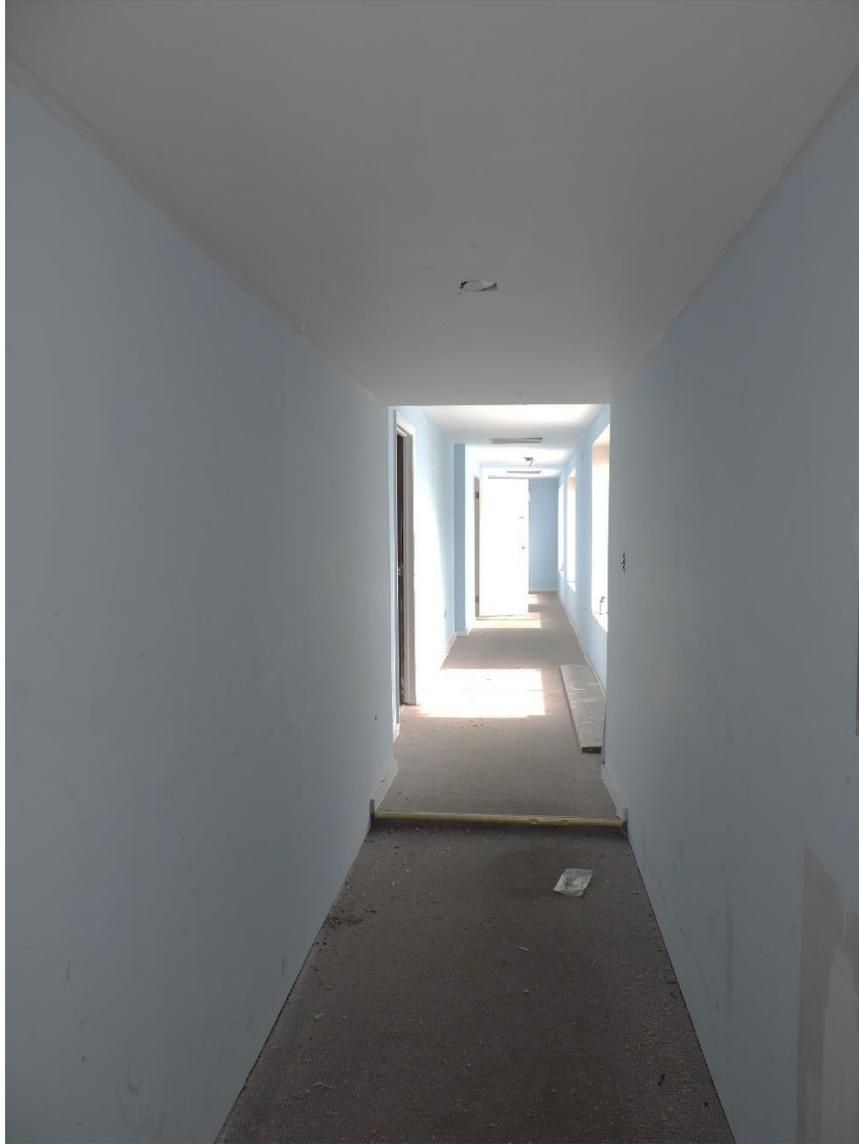
14. View south in unfinished first floor storage areas in rear addition.



15. View west on second floor at west side front windows.



16. View north in second floor living unit.



17. View east in second floor hallway in rear addition.