



Schuster's Department Store 1220 West Vliet Street

PERMANENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION REPORT

CCF 240025

JUNE 2024

**SCHUSTER'S DEPARTMENT STORE
PERMANENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION REPORT
AND PRESERVATION GUIDELINES
JUNE 2024**

PROPERTY NAME

Historic: Schuster's Department Store
Common: Milwaukee County Social Services; Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center

LOCATION

Address: 1220 W. Vliet Street (1202-1216 Vliet Street., old)
Legal Description: ORIGINAL PLAT OF THE TOWN OF MILW WEST OF THE RIVER IN SECS (20 & 29)-7-22 BLOCK 110 LOTS 6-7-8 & VAC LANE ADJ SD SUBD & LOTS (1 THRU 6 & 39 THRU 50 & 83 THRU 88> & E 20' (LOTS 7-38-51 & 82> BLK 16 SUBD INTO LOTS OF JOEL KNEELANDS PARK & VAC (ST & ALLEYS ADJ)>
Classification: Site

NOMINATION DETAILS

Owner: MILWAUKEE COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS
901 N. 9th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53233
Nominator: Stephen F. Thiel
Aldersperson: Ald. Russell W. Stamper II, 15th District

BUILDING DATA

YEAR BUILT 1910, 1923 addition
ARCHITECTS Brust & Philipp
STYLE Beaux Arts

DESCRIPTION

The Schuster's Department Store is a three-story, rectangular commercial building located on the north side of W. Vliet Street between N. 12th Street and N. 13th Street in the King Park neighborhood. The building was constructed in 1910 to accommodate an expansion of the near-west presence of the Schuster's Department Store chain. Schuster's president, Albert T. Friedmann, commissioned the Milwaukee architectural firm of Brust and Philipp to design the building and tapped the firm again for an addition in 1923.

The building is located on an L-shaped parcel and is sited on the southern third of the block bound by W. Vliet Street, W. Cherry Street, N. 12th Street, and N. 13th Street. The building measures approximately 350' by 150' with the longer frontage along W. Vliet Street. It is constructed to the property lines along W. Vliet, N. 12th, and N. 13th, matching the setback of adjacent commercial properties. The northern portion of the property contains a large parking lot with a landscaped island in the center. The parking lot is enclosed by a metal picket fence with trees and other landscaping adjacent to the fence. The majority of the parking lot has been present since at least 1937. The parking lot was expanded north to Cherry Street by 1951 and has been the present size since that time.

The Schuster's Department Store is built in the two-part commercial building form and finished in the Beaux Arts architectural style. Finishes are consistent on the east, west, and south facades. The building is clad with a brown and tan variegated brick on the upper two levels and an aluminum storefront system set within limestone panels on the first level. Covered transom windows are located above the storefront system. Various transom openings have been infilled with modern decorative tile designs. The first floor window system is topped with a cast iron window hood with decorative circle medallions. The building entrances are the most decorative components of the first floor. The door surrounds are intricately decorated with an acanthus freeze and Greek key fascia. A central cartouche above the opening is flanked by two lion head medallions. The entrances on the east and west facades, as well as the two outer entrances on the south façade, have been partially infilled with brick. The center entrance on the south (main) façade contains a modern four-door entrance with a large metal and glass awning. A stone belt course separates the lower level from the upper two floors. The upper levels contain paired banks of fixed-commercial windows with modern glazing set within brick columns with simple capitals that terminate below the roofline. The 1910 section of the building contains small rectangular stone panels between the window bays on the first and second floors but this detail is absent on the addition. A stone belt course is found above the windows and capitals below the parapet. Larger stone panels are found below the parapet above each capital. The stone parapet overhangs slightly from the roofline and is unadorned, though historically roof cresting was present from construction until sometime after 1979.

The primary (south) façade spans the entire 1200 block of W. Vliet Street and features a symmetrical façade consisting of three openings and a storefront window system on the first floor and sixteen paired window bays on the upper levels. The original 1910 portion contains seven paired window bays, with the addition consisting of another

nine paired bays and two first-floor entrances extending west. The architectural finishes for this façade are described above.

The east and west facades are identical and contain a central entrance flanked by an aluminum storefront commercial window system on the first floor and seven banks of paired windows on the upper levels. The architectural finishes match that of the primary façade.

The north façade is much more utilitarian and unadorned. The façade is covered with large rectangular exterior insulated finishing system (EIFS) panels. There are minimal openings on the façade, with the majority of openings consisting of various HVAC related openings. A large awning hangs over a loading dock on the northwest corner of the first floor. There are five double-hung sash windows in the penthouse level and three double-hung windows on the third level on the far eastern corner of the building. Various cellular antennae are visible above the roofline from the north façade.

There have been no substantial exterior additions to the building following the addition of 1923. The alterations to the building consist of modifications to the windows, covering window openings and addition of exterior insulated finishing system (EIFS) to the north façade, infilling the majority of the entrances, and removal of the decorative cornice. These do not diminish the overall quality and integrity of the building, which retains its overall form, ornamentation, and historic openings.

HISTORY

The Schuster Department Store building being considered for local designation is located at 1220 W. Vliet Street. The store served as a staple of Milwaukee's near northwest side during the first half of the twentieth century. The department store was named after Edward Schuster, a German-Jewish immigrant. Schuster immigrated to the United States in 1883 from Driburg, Westphalia, Germany. Before settling in the United States, he travelled to Australia, but ultimately decided on Milwaukee, because of its large German population at the time. In 1883, at the age of fifty-two, he purchased half ownership of Jacob Poss's dry goods store, located at Twelfth and Walnut, which was subsequently renamed Poss & Schuster. Dry good stores were known to sell textile and ready-made clothes, but soon Schuster's stores would grow to sell much more. Ed would eventually open his own store at 2107 N. Third Street in 1884, partnering with young Albert Friedmann. Friedmann was born and educated in Vienna, Austria. He would marry Ed's daughter in 1889 and they would have two sons. Both sons would have ownership of Schuster's, maintaining the business in the family for generations. The store was expanded in 1888 and again in 1889. A few years later in 1893, the store suffered through a fire and a new one was built at the same location on Third and Brown. The next year Schuster opened a second store at Twelfth and Walnut. Schuster's developed their department stores in neighborhood locations serving the local mostly German/Jewish neighborhoods, preferring neighborhood locations. They never developed a downtown store and thus compete directly with Gimbel's, Chapman's, and Boston Store.

The early 1900's are considered as the boom years for the Schuster department stores. The business became incorporated on May 25, 1901. Edward Schuster passed away in 1904 and leadership was transferred to his partner, Albert Friedmann, who became president and general manager. It's recorded that Mr. Friedmann thought it was important to maintain good employer-employee relationships with Schuster's being one of the first companies in the nation to have a training program, employee magazine, and illness benefit plan. Because the company continued to grow, a new location felt necessary to meet customer's demand. The new three-floor, fire-proof building would be established in 1910 on Vliet between 12th and 13th streets. The architectural firm Brust and Philipp was hired to work on the new building on Vliet.

Schuster's merchandising approach was not known as the most elegant, however what Schuster's lacked in elegance it made up for in the amount of merchandise it offered. A manuscript from 1925 recorded how the Vliet and Twelfth street store display window showcased all of its merchandise from hosiery, ribbons, embroidery, corsets and notions, and many more. The Schuster's Christmas parade was a defining feature of Vliet Street for thirty-four years beginning in 1927 with the last one occurring in 1961. Santa and his reindeer would set up shop after the parade at the Vliet and Twelfth street store. The Christmas parade created one of Schuster's most popular promotion tools, known as Billie the Brownie, Santa's fictional helper, who broadcasted on WTMJ beginning in 1931.

The Great Depression brought an end to Schuster's expansion that it experienced throughout the first thirty years of the 20th century. During 1933, Alfred Friedmann would pass away and ownership was given to his son Max Friedmann. After World War Two, Schuster's began to experience the type of success it had prior to the Great Depression. Schuster's Department Stores grew to offer more than clothes with a deli kitchen being located at the Vliet and Twelfth street store. Max Friedmann died unexpectedly in 1954, and ownership transferred to his son, Ralph. The last Billie the Brownie show would air on December 24, 1955. By the 1960's, Schuster was bought by Gimbel Brothers, merging the two companies into Gimbels-Schuster's.

The Vliet and Twelfth store closed its doors in 1961. Urban renewal had begun to destroy the Walnut Street African-American business corridor and surrounding residential neighborhood. The neighborhood surrounding the department store had transitioned from a mostly German/ Jewish neighborhood in the beginning of the twentieth century to a mostly African-American neighborhood at the time of its closure. The automobile and growing suburbs are commonly blamed for the closing of the Vliet and Twelfth location. The closure was likely more directly linked to urban renewal. The nearby Hillside Housing project was well underway, having bulldozed much of the surrounding businesses and residences. Freeway construction had begun in 1959 at the Ozaukee County line with its future path directly adjacent to the Schuster's building already known. The clearing of the blocks from 10th to 12th would be completed between 1963 and 1967.

ARCHITECTS

The Brust and Philipp firm associated with Peter Brust and Richard Phillip was well-known in Milwaukee as a quality design firm in the early 20th century. Richard Phillip was born in Mayville, Wisconsin during 1874 and was a child of German immigrants. His father was from Berlin and his mother from the Oder River region south of Berlin. Phillip

and his family moved to Milwaukee in 1889 when he was fifteen and became an apprentice at the architectural firm Ferry & Clas after graduating from East Side High School. He was promoted to chief designer in 1902. Philipp was known for his original designs in the Tudor style. While working at Ferry & Clas, Richard met Peter Brust and the two would start their own firm in the early 1900's.

Peter Brust was born on November 4, 1869 in the Town of Lake, Wisconsin, which is now a neighborhood located on the south side of Milwaukee. By the age of 14, Peter stopped attending school and began working as a carpenter for his father to pay for an apprenticeship with a local architectural firm. He worked for Edward V. Koch & Company before working for Ferry & Clas. He started at Ferry & Clas in 1890 and spent a little over ten years there, becoming head draftsman. Brust and Philipp worked together on several projects while working at Ferry & Clas, such as the St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Cathedral (1892 renovation) and Milwaukee Public Library and Museum (1895-1899). Peter left Ferry & Clas and started his own firm Crane & Brust in 1901, but the new firm only lasted a year. During 1902-1905, Peter worked for Hermann Esser and H.C. Koch. After a visit to Europe, Richard and Peter formed their own firm Brust and Philipp in 1906. The firm would be a part of many commercial and residential projects known for their work in period revival styles from Neoclassical to Tudor. A few of their prominent works in Milwaukee are the St. Joseph's Convent Chapel, William E. Luick house, and three surviving Schuster Department Stores. One of their most famous works was their master plan for the Kohler Company Town. They designed the houses, 300-foot-long lodge building, the factory, school, church, and administrative buildings for the town. Their partnership would come to an end in 1926, though they continued independent practices after the firm dissolved. Peter founded the firm Brust & Brust with his sons named John and Paul continued his work until his death in 1946. The firm was transferred to his sons after his death. Richard continued his work independently until his death in 1959.

The Brust & Phillip firm was rehired for the addition done to the original Schuster Department store building on Vliet in 1923. The addition ran west on Vliet and north to Thirteenth. The facility would consist of a total of 235,558 square feet after the addition completed by the same firm that worked on the original structure. Fourteen years later the building was modernized. There were three important changes involved with the modernization remodeling. The first and most costly one was the circular staircase from the first floor to the basement. The second was the installation of an auxiliary staircase at the front of the first floor. The third was a soda grill, or dining area, with a lunch counter at the base of the circular staircase. Other minor projects of the remodel were murals on the walls of the dining area and a ventilating system to eliminate food odors. The Vliet location between twelfth and thirteenth streets would serve as the staple department store for the east end of the Vliet business corridor.

RECENT HISTORY

The Milwaukee County Department of Welfare bought the building in 1963. There, the County provided a variety of social services, including "Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled, Aid to Dependent Children, General Assistance, Veteran's Aid, and Foster Home and Institutional Care for Children."¹

¹ "Health and Welfare Functions," *Milwaukee Journal*, October 29, 1967.

Since 2003 the building has been known as the Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center. Marcia P. Young was born in Kansas City, Missouri, and earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Marcia married Isaac Coggs, one of the first African-Americans elected to the Wisconsin state legislature, in 1952. She worked for the Milwaukee County Children's Home for thirteen years before being elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly. Marcia first ran for office in 1960, but she would not win a seat on the state assembly until 1976. She was the first African-American woman elected to the state assembly, and the first African-American appointed to a seat on the state legislature's Joint Finance Committee in 1987. She served on the Health and Human Services Committee during her whole time in office. Marcia remained dedicated to social causes throughout her tenure in office proposing legislation to better schools, housing, and healthcare. She not only advocated for civil rights in Milwaukee, but on an international scale as well. She protested against apartheid in South Africa, introducing bills calling for the disinvestment of Wisconsin state funds associated with South Africa's apartheid regime. While in Washington D.C., she was arrested for protesting in front of the South African Embassy. She left office in 1992, but continued to fight for social causes. She was known as someone devoted to her faith, family, and community. Marcia passed away in 2003, and the old Schuster's Department store on W. Vliet Street, which housed Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services, was named after her in her honor. It's currently being considered as a new home for many area non-profit organizations.

MAJOR SOURCES

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RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Schuster's Department Store be given permanent historic designation as a City of Milwaukee Historic Site as a result of its fulfillment of criteria f-5, f-6, and f-9 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 320-21(3) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

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

RATIONALE: The Schuster's Department Store is an excellent example of a department store constructed in a simplified Beaux Arts architectural style. Major characteristics of the style include a grand, imposing size and scale, symmetrical façade, flat or low pitched roof, highly decorated wall surfaces with floral patterns, window surrounds, decorative panels, and cartouches, columns or pilasters, and quoins. The Beaux Arts style was popular in the United States from 1895-1930. The style was influenced by the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, which sparked a renewed interest in Classical form. The style was often found on courthouses, banks, churches, schools and mansions.

Architects Brust & Philipp incorporated many of the characteristics of the Beaux Arts style into the Schuster's store, without being overly ostentatious. The elaborately decorated entrances are the central focus of the building's decoration. The door surrounds display acanthus molding with Greek key fascia. A cartouche

in the door surround is flanked by two carved lion head medallions. The decoration on the upper levels is more paired down but still clearly reads as a Beaux Arts building. The use of belt courses and brick columns with simple capitals on the upper levels

The Schuster's Department Store exhibits a great deal of architectural integrity. Over time, modifications were undertaken to accommodate the change of uses but they do not detract from the overall integrity of the building. The window openings on the first floor have been altered numerous times and many of the entrances partially infilled. The decorative parapet was removed at some point in the 1980s and the north façade, always the least significant façade, had window openings covered and the entire façade covered with exterior insulated finishing system (EIFS). However, the majority of the decorative elements remain on the building and the building reads as it would during the years it operated as a department store. The openings on the upper levels have been restored to their original size and retain their traditional muntin configuration, though with a modern plate-glass glazing. It remains as a great example of a Beaux Arts department store designed by one of Wisconsin's top architectural firms.

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

RATIONALE: The Schuster's Department Store was designed the architectural firm of Brust & Philipp. The firm was "one of the most important architectural firms practicing in Wisconsin in the first quarter of the twentieth century" and the largest firm operating in Wisconsin by the 1920s.² Peter Brust & Richard Philipp men began their architectural careers as draftsmen for the lauded late-19th century firm of Ferry and Clas, working together on notable projects such as the Milwaukee Public Library and Museum (1895-1899). The men entered into business in 1906 and the firm operated until 1927. During that time, the firm designed hundreds of residential, commercial, religious, public, theater, and medical buildings and employed thirty men at their peak.³ The firm primarily worked in revival styles ranging from Neoclassical/Beaux Arts to Tudor. Among the notable examples of the firm's work are Milwaukee South Branch Library (1908), St. Joseph Convent Chapel (1914), Albert and Hedwig Gallun House (1914), Mitchell Street Schuster's Department Store (1914), and William Luick House (1925). The firm was also commissioned by Walter J. Kohler to design the Kohler Company Factory Complex and for planning the company settlement of Village of Kohler, Wisconsin.

² National Register of Historic Places, Kohler Company Factory Complex, City of Kohler, Sheboygan, Wisconsin. National Register # 01000318.

³ Ibid.

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

RATIONALE: For decades, Schuster's supplied Milwaukeeans with a variety of household goods and clothing. The chain focused its locations in neighborhoods, rather than with a single downtown location. The Schuster's Department Store at 1220 W. Vliet Street is located in the center of what was a historically significant and successful business district on W. Vliet Street. The store was served by a Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company streetcar line that turned from Winnebago Street onto Vliet Street, popularizing the phrase "Let's go by Schuster's where the streetcar bends the corner round." While the store closed in 1961, the building has continued to serve generations of Milwaukeeans following purchase of the building in 1963 by the Milwaukee County Department of Welfare. The Public Welfare Department provided a wide variety of social services from the building, including "Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled, Aid to Dependent Children, General Assistance, Veteran's Aid, and Foster Home and Institutional Care for Children."⁴ The building was renamed the Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center in 2003, to honor the Civil Rights leader and legislator.

⁴ "Health and Welfare Functions," *Milwaukee Journal*, October 29, 1967.

PRESERVATION GUIDELINES FOR THE SCHUSTER'S DEPARTMENT STORE

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this historic designation. However, the Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon design submissions. Building maintenance and restoration must follow accepted preservation practices as outlined below. The intent of the guidelines are to preserve the buildings as closely as possible to their original form and details. Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or restoration and/or replacement of documented original elements.

Any exterior alteration, exclusive of painting of non-masonry surfaces, will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Any existing exterior features can remain for their lifespan. The historic designation does not mean that owners are required to restore their buildings to original condition, but that changes are subject to review so that they are compatible with the historic character of the building.

These guidelines are based upon those contained in MCO 320-21-11 & 12 of the historic preservation ordinance. These guidelines serve as a guide for making changes that will be sensitive to the architectural integrity of the structure and appropriate to the overall character of the building.

I. Roofs

- A. Retain the roof shape. No changes can be made to the roof shape which would alter the building height, the roofline or its pitch as seen from ground level.
- B. Historic Preservation acknowledges that there are pre-existing mechanicals and vents on the rooftop associated with the building. Virtually all of them are not visible from the street. Continue to 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, antennas, and so on require review with historic presentation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness. Historic Preservation acknowledges that there are pre-existing cellular communications equipment present on the rooftop and attached to the facades of the building. New and replacement antennae can only be located on the rooftops and must not be visible from the W. Vliet Street right of way. New or replacement equipment should be sited, painted, or screened to minimize visibility from all other facades. Equipment swaps and upgrades will not be permitted where presently existing. Rooftop mounting solutions that do not mount to the façade will be required. 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.

- 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 building must be able to be “read” as a department store. The construction of other rooftop features, such as but not exclusive to dormers, cupolas, and so on will be based on the building’s ability to support such structures and its effect on the flat roof and parapet walls and requires review by the Historic Preservation Commission and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

II. Masonry, Stone, & Terra Cotta

- A. 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. 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. 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 surfaces is prohibited by both these guidelines and state law. 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.

III. Wood/Metal

- A. Retain any original wood material, if it exists, whenever possible. Do not remove architectural features that are essential to maintaining the building's character and appearance.
- B. Retain or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the original as closely as possible. Covering wood or metal with aluminum or vinyl or other substitute material is not permitted. Spot replacement or spot repair of current material is allowed. Under no circumstances will siding products with artificial wood grain be considered.

IV. Windows and Doors

- A. Retain existing window and door openings. Retain original doors and windows within those openings. The infilled entrances may be opened at a later date to bring the entries back to their historic appearances.
- B. Retain original windows within those openings if any are extant. Restoration to the original condition is encouraged. 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. Do not fill in or cover openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or concrete block.
- C. 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.
- D. 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. Do not fill in or cover openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or concrete block.
- E. Any original windows on the building must be retained and repaired if possible. Vinyl, vinyl clad, or fiberglass prime or other non-wood window units are not permitted. Storm windows and storm doors are encouraged for the preservation of the prime windows and doors. Any changes to doors and windows, including installation of new doors and windows, require consultation with Historic Preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- F. 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.

V. Trim and Ornamentation

Trim is to be retained. Changes to or cleaning of these elements will require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

VI. Additions

- A. Additions cannot be added to the West Vliet Street side of the building. Additions will only be considered on the north, as all other facades have significant architectural prominence.
- B. Additions must be smaller than the original building and not obscure the historic building. Additions will be reviewed in context of their size, scale and form. They should either complement the historic building or have a neutral effect on it.
- C. Additions are additionally subject to the new construction guidelines found below

VII. Outbuildings

There are currently no outbuildings on the property. The construction of accessory structures will be reviewed for appropriate scale, design, materials and form.

VIII. Signs/Exterior Lighting

Should there be an application for signage, plastic internally illuminated box signs with a completely acrylic face are not permitted. Approval will be based on the sign's compatibility with the architectural character of the historic building.

IX. Guidelines for Streetscapes

The streetscape of the Schuster's Department Store consists of minimal landscaping. The commercial building is built to the property lines on three sides, with a minimally landscaped parking lot located behind the building.

New plant materials, paving, or fencing shall be compatible with the historic architectural character of the building. Should a new fence be considered in the future, examples of appropriate fencing can be found in *As Good As New* and *Living with History*. Avoid introducing landscape features or fencing that are inappropriate to the character of the site.

X. Guidelines for New Construction on the Site

See also Additions above. It is important that any proposed new accessory structures be designed to be as sympathetic as possible with the character of the building. It is unlikely that there will be new large scale construction on the site. The following guidelines are consistent with all sites that receive local historic designation.

- A. Site work. New construction must respect the historic site and location of the building. The primary building on the site must maintain the appearance of a freestanding structure as it was built.
- B. Scale. For new construction, overall building height and bulk, the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof, and individual building components, such as overhangs and fenestration that are in close proximity to the historic building must be compatible to and sympathetic with the design of the original historic building. New construction is to be smaller in size and shorter in height than the historic building. New construction will not extend over the top of the current complex
- C. Form. The massing of new construction must be compatible with the goal of maintaining the integrity of the historic building as a freestanding structure. Arrangement of windows, doors, roof shape, and foundation openings must be compatible with the historic property.
- D. Materials. The building materials which are visible from the public right-of-way and in close proximity to the original building should be compatible with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of original cladding materials used on the historic building. Faux wood grained panels, wood panels, cementitious panels, panels constructed of pressed wood, metal panels or corrugated metal, or panels made of other materials would be inappropriate for new construction.

XI. Guidelines for Demolition

It is not anticipated that the Schuster's Department Store would be demolished, either in whole or in part. 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. All of the following guidelines, along with those required in subsection 11(h) of the ordinance, shall be taken into consideration by the Commission when reviewing demolition requests.

- A. 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 and is beyond hope of repair. This would generally be in case of a major fire or a natural catastrophe.
- B. Importance. Consideration will be given to whether 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.
- C. Location. Consideration will be given to whether the building or portion of it contributes to the neighborhood and the general street appearance and has a positive effect on other buildings in the area.
- D. Potential for Restoration. Consideration will be given to whether the building is beyond economically feasible repair.

- E. Additions. Consideration will be given to whether 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.

Historic Photo Appendix



Figure 1. 1910 Sanborn Map showing the location and size of the Schuster’s Department Store, pre-1923 addition. From Digital Sanborn Maps of Milwaukee, 1894 and 1910. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Limited, 1894. American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries. <https://uwm.edu/lib-collections/sanborn/>



"Schuster's" and the Electric Company

"Schuster's," Milwaukee's newest big store opens tomorrow, its management alert for every practical improvement which would add to the convenience, comfort and ultimately to the economical advantage of their patrons have included The Electric Company's service in their equipment.

The Schuster Co. Know the Waste and Worries of an Independent Plant

In their store at Third St. and Garfield Ave., they have operated their own light and power plant, and adoption of Central Station service for this new store is in line with their progress and with what enterprising merchants in other cities are doing every day.

Central Station service is modern, convenient and economical. Let our engineers make a free test of your plant. Valuable information may result.

Central Office
Public Service Building
Tel. Grand 127

North Office
1035 Third Street
Tel. North 304

South Office
429 Mitchell Street
Tel. South 313

The Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company
"THE ELECTRIC COMPANY"



Figure 2. March 5, 1911, *Milwaukee Sentinel*. Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company advertisement announcing the opening of the Vliet Street Schuster's.



Milwaukee Public Library

Figure 4. Schuster's Department Store, looking northeast. Addition possibly under construction (c. 1923). Note, decorative cornice not completed on addition portion of the parapet. <https://content.mpl.org/digital/collection/HstoricPho>



Milwaukee Public Library

Figure 5. Schuster's Department Store and streetcar, looking northwest.
<https://content.mpl.org/digital/collection/HistoricPho>



Figure 6. Schuster's Department, looking east, 1926.
<https://content.mpl.org/digital/collection/HstoricPho>



Milwaukee Public Library

Figure 7. Schuster's Department, looking northeast.
<https://content.mpl.org/digital/collection/HstoricPho>



Figure 8. Schuster's Department, circa 1940s.
<https://content.mpl.org/digital/collection/HistoricPho>



Figure 9. Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory, Record #78966. Photo taken 1979. Looking northwest



Figure 10. Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory, Record #78966. Photo taken 1993. Storefront windows on first floor and windows on upper levels had been infilled. By 1993, decorative parapet had been removed.

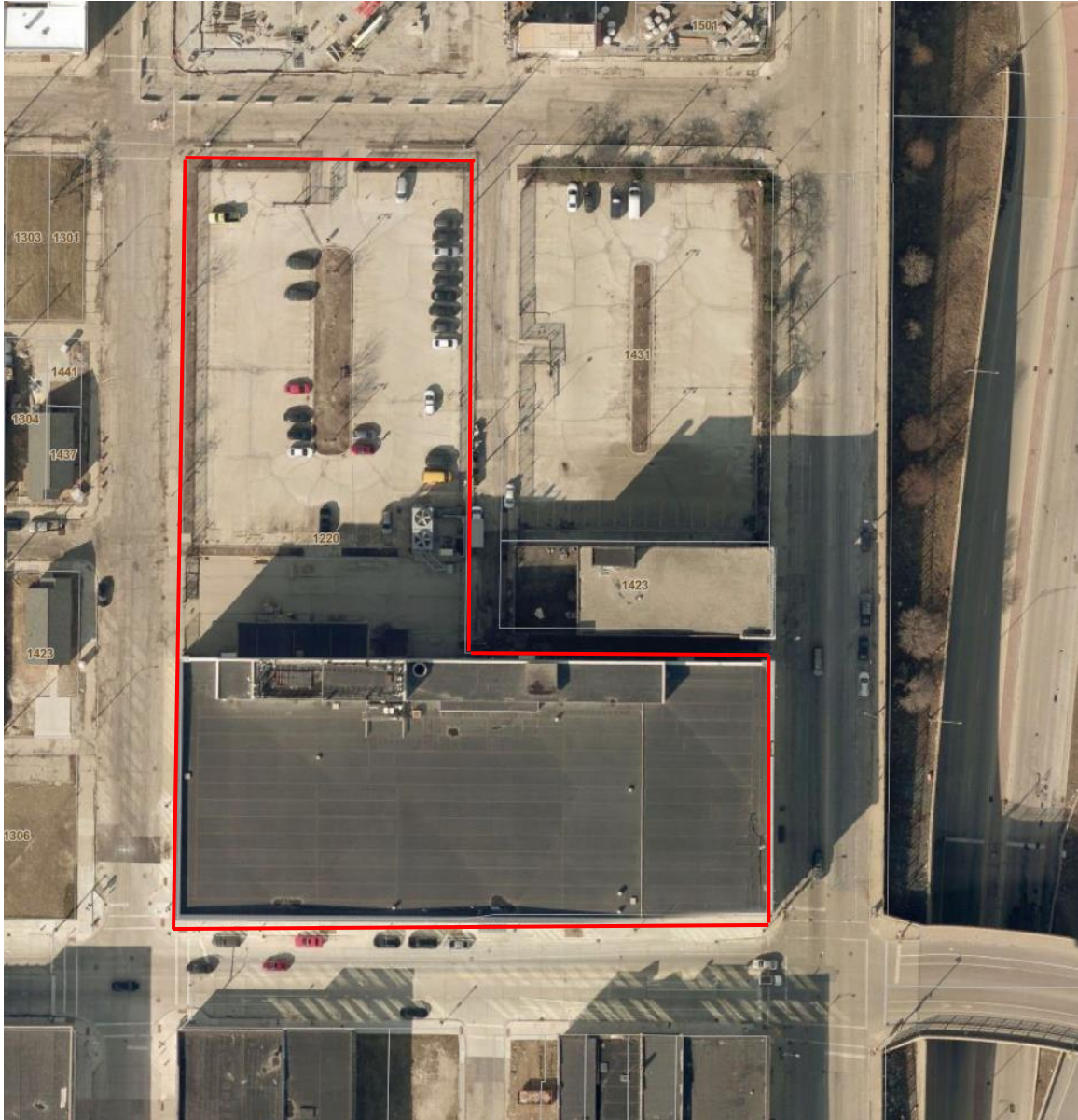


Figure 11. 2024 Aerial Photograph with property lines marked

Contemporary Photographs



View looking northwest from W. Vliet Street.



East façade, view looking west from N. 12th Street.



View looking west from W. Vliet Street.



Architectural detailing on an entrance



Close up of entrance detailing



Looking northeast from W. Vliet Street.



West façade, facing east



North façade, facing southeast