

PART 2: PHYSICAL SITE EVALUATION

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Physical Site Evaluation

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Executive Summary

Salem, New Jersey has a population of 5,285 and is the county seat of Salem County, the least populated of the 21 counties in New Jersey. This compact, historic city built on a coastal plain has a long history of shipping and industrial glass manufacturing. The decline of these industries led to rising unemployment and a steady decrease in population over several decades, and the city's retail sector has struggled to remain viable. In 2017, the city's only grocery store closed, leaving residents with inadequate options for fresh, nutritious food. Salem is the second-most distressed community in New Jersey, and its many challenges – including food access and food security – are complicated by the city's small size and location in a rural county.



Source: City of Salem [website](#)

The City of Salem and its project partners received a Food Security Planning Grant funded by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) to carry out a market analysis, physical site evaluation, and development plan that will enable the city to potentially transform underutilized, city-owned land in an effort to improve food access and promote local economic development. The target site identified for this study comprises the lots at 21 and 25 New Market Street and a vacant, surface parking lot across the street. *Part 2: Physical Site Evaluation* follows *Part 1: Market Analysis* and considers the physical aspects of the site, its location and accessibility, sustainability and environmental impact factors, legal and regulatory considerations, and a brief transportation analysis.

The target site's location in the center of Salem and existing parking lot are clearly advantages, and redevelopment of this vacant property would undoubtedly benefit the city's downtown. This report discusses target site challenges and constraints that must be addressed if the development of a grocery store, supermarket, farmers market, co-op, or other food retailer is determined to be desirable. The existing two-story building at 25 New Market Street is significantly smaller than the average US supermarket, but it is of adequate size for a small or medium-sized grocery store. Given the building's state of repair, however, the renovations necessary to transform the building into a store would be significant and expensive. This does not include environmental assessment and remediation of potential environmental contamination that would need to be completed before renovations begin. Accessibility presents another challenge – not only for truck delivery but also for customers who rely on public transportation. This report also outlines zoning-mandated requirements for commercial uses.

The constraints of the site help to inform site planning and retail design and are important considerations in formulating realistic plans for improving food access. Research on food deserts indicates there is no magic formula; however, the evidence suggests that a solution must have community buy-in and support to be successful. Many communities have designed a variety of creative and successful solutions that are customized and tailored to support and address their communities' specific needs and desires. Salem has selected a target site and wants to capitalize on the opportunities afforded by the site, while making allowances for site constraints and challenges.

Introduction

The purpose of the NJEDA Food Security Planning grant is to carry out a market analysis, physical site evaluation, and development plan with recommendations that will allow the City of Salem to transform this vacant property, with the intent of improving food access and supporting economic development. The target site that is the focus of this study is located at 25 New Market Street.

There are four components to this project:

- Market analysis
- Physical site evaluation
- Community engagement
- Site development plan and recommendations

Figure 1: 21 and 25 New Market St.



Photo: BRS site visit 29 April 2025

The objective of this second component – the Physical Site Evaluation – is to analyze whether the target site is an appropriate location for a supermarket, grocery store, farmers market, food co-op, or other retailer. This physical evaluation focuses on identifying the challenges, constraints, and impediments to development of the target site and providing recommendations for addressing those deficiencies. Specifically, this report will consider a physical evaluation of the site, including its location, proximity, and accessibility to target customers; a risk analysis that addresses seasonal issues; sustainability and environmental concerns that focus on flooding and the potential need for environmental investigation and/or remediation; zoning and permitting issues; and a brief transportation analysis that examines access routes, constraints, and potential improvements.

Terminology

Because this report references technical jargon utilized by the food retail industry, this section provides industry-standard definitions for the terminology used throughout the report.

The **food retail industry** includes all types of grocery stores, supermarkets, and other retailers that sell food for consumption (and often preparation) at home.¹ This study focuses on retailers that provide a general line of food such as fresh fruits and vegetables, and fresh and prepared meats, fish and poultry, and canned and frozen foods.

The Food Industry Association defines a **grocery store** as “a retail store that sells a variety of food products, including some perishable items and general merchandise.”² Stores meet the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) definition of a grocery store if they report at least \$2 million in annual sales and contain all the major food departments found in a traditional supermarket, including produce, fresh

¹ It also includes all types of restaurants, which are not considered in this study because they generally sell prepared foods for consumption outside the home.

² <https://www.fmi.org/our-research/food-industry-glossary>

meat and poultry, dairy, dry and packaged foods, and frozen foods. No specific square footage is noted in this definition.³

The USDA defines a **supermarket** as having an average size of 45,000 square feet (SF) and annual total sales of at least \$14 million.³ This is generally understood to be a conventional food store but not a warehouse club or wholesale club.

A **club store** (or wholesale club store) is “a large retail store (100,000 SF or more) that sells only to members who pay an annual membership fee” in return for discounted pricing. Stores like BJ’s, Costco, and Sam’s Club fit into this category.

A **convenience store** is a “small, easy-access food store with a limited assortment. Many convenience stores also sell fast food and gasoline.”⁴

A **greengrocer** is a retailer that only sells fruits and vegetables.

While we often use these terms interchangeably to refer to the location where we purchase groceries, it is important to understand that the terms have specific meanings attached to them. A convenience store and a grocery store are not the same, which may help explain why the price points differ – sometimes substantially. Some stores are also differentiated by their size, footprint, and the types of products they sell. These nuances are important, especially in the context of a market analysis and physical evaluation of a specific property, where the intention is to study how best to address food access challenges and consider creative and custom-tailored solutions that have the potential to have a positive impact despite existing constraints.

A **farmers market** is “a public and recurring assembly of farmers or their representatives selling the food that they produced directly to consumers.”⁵ Many markets have a broad range of offerings that include not only farm-grown fruits and vegetables but also meats, cheeses, baked goods, and homemade products. The key differences between a food retailer such as a grocery store or supermarket and a farmers market are that the producers in a farmers market are the sellers and set their own margins, they generally transport their own products to the market of their choice, and they rent a stall or area within the communal market to sell products of their choosing.

A **cooperative (co-op)** is a business “owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services and whose benefits are derived and distributed equitably on the basis of use.”⁶ It may be consumer-owned, worker-owned, or producer-owned, but the goal is for benefits to accrue to members rather than to outside investors. Generally, co-ops have a board and hire professional management, and co-op members have a say either directly or indirectly (through an elected board) in a variety of decisions about how the store will be run – products carried, membership fees and structure, design and marketing, etc.

³ <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/documentation/>

⁴ <https://www.fmi.org/our-research/food-industry-glossary>

⁵ <https://farmersmarketcoalition.org/education/qanda/>

⁶ USDA definition from “Co-ops 101: An Introduction to Cooperatives.” USDA Cooperative Information Report 55. April 1997, revised November 2012. <https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/cir55.pdf>

Online or digital grocery shopping refers to the numerous digital platforms consumers use to purchase groceries online, whether for delivery or for pickup.⁷

Site Assessment

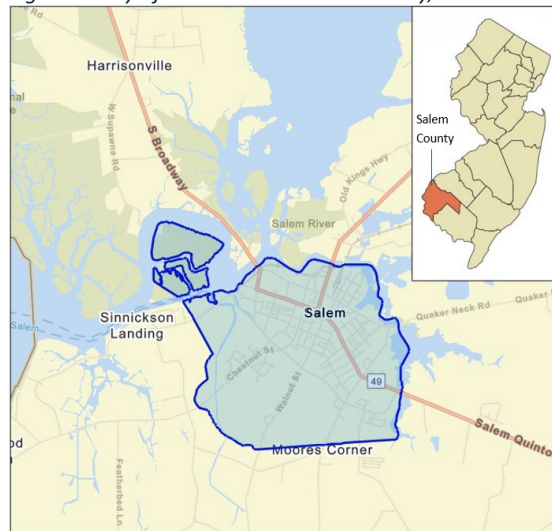
Historical Background

Salem is 2.34 square miles in size and has a population of 5,285.⁸ It is the county seat of Salem County, the southernmost and least populated of the state's 21 counties (the county's population was 68,840 in 2022).⁹ Bordered by Gloucester County to the north and Cumberland County to the east, it is bounded by Delaware Bay and the state of Delaware to the west. This compact, historic city built on a relatively flat coastal plain is surrounded by farms and wetlands and has a long history of shipping and industrial glass manufacturing. The decline of these industries led to rising unemployment and a steady decrease in population over several decades, and today Salem holds the unfortunate distinction of being designated as the second most distressed community in New Jersey.¹⁰

Founded in 1675 by John Fenwick, a Quaker, Salem is one of the oldest cities in New Jersey and is rich in historic landmarks and sites that date back centuries. Its founding established the first Quaker colony in North America, predating the founding of the Quaker colony in Philadelphia.¹¹ The Quakers were influential in communities along the shores of the Delaware River in the 17th century, and notably, were instrumental in the founding of Salem, Penns Neck, and Greenwich.¹² Salem boasts many historic buildings, including the oldest active courthouse in New Jersey, which is also the second-oldest courthouse in continuous use in the country.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, Salem was an important port city whose residents were primarily employed in the shipbuilding industry and in trade. Later, its economy transitioned to heavy commercial and industrial enterprises related to

Figure 2: City of Salem within Salem County, NJ



Source: ESRI map created by BRS, Inc.

Figure 3: Old Courthouse



Photo: BRS site visit 29 April 2025

⁷ <https://www.emarketer.com/insights/digital-grocery-industry/>

⁸ US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022.

⁹ nj.gov/labor/labormarketinformation/assets/PDFs/dmograph/est/copest23.htm and New Jersey Counties by Population (2025). https://www.newjersey-demographics.com/counties_by_population

¹⁰ New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. *Municipal Revitalization Index*. 2023. Salem's score is -26.02.

¹¹ <https://njheartland.org/>

¹² 13. Facts and Figures: Salem County Cultural & Heritage Commission. <https://culture.salemcountynj.gov/project/facts-and-figures/>

the port and railroad, such as glassworks, chemical manufacturing, and bulk fuel storage. As with many port cities across the country, Salem experienced a precipitous decline in industrial and manufacturing operations, leading to the deterioration of this once thriving community. The decline in the city's industrial and commercial port operations – and the related loss of jobs – led to a significant decline in population over the past 50 years. During the same period, poverty and the challenges associated with it increased.

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs employs a Municipal Revitalization Index (MRI) that is used for the allocation and distribution of need-based funding in the state and serves as the State's official measure and ranking of municipal distress. Utilizing eight distinct indicators, the MRI measures social, economic, physical, and fiscal conditions in each New Jersey municipality and then ranks them according to the results. Salem has been ranked the second-most distressed community in New Jersey according to this index, after Camden. The challenges the city faces include the high percentage of individuals living in poverty, which at 31.6% is triple the New Jersey rate (9.7%). The city's median household income is approximately one-third of the state's level, and unemployment (11.6%) is nearly double the county average and almost triple the state average.¹³

The decline in industry has left the residents of Salem with limited employment options and long-term disinvestment in housing and infrastructure. Moreover, Salem has an older housing stock: 47.9% of housing was built in 1939 or earlier, and the mean year housing was built in the community was 1943. A high proportion of housing structures are not well maintained (a natural consequence of declining population and rising poverty), and blighted and abandoned buildings are common. All of these factors, combined with low educational attainment and a continued shortage of employment opportunities, suggest that the ideal solution to food access challenges will also address some of the other factors that contribute to the problem.

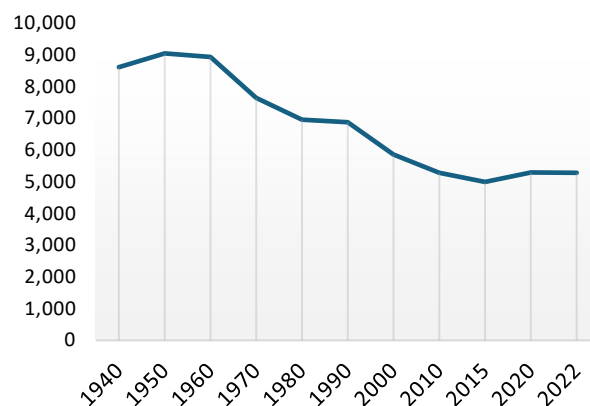
Today Salem is a small but dense urban community within a rural county in which agriculture is a main economic driver. It is noteworthy that Salem's population has begun to grow over the past ten years, and the forecast for the coming five years is for population growth of 3% – compared to a slight decline for the county overall. The city's population is young, with a median age almost 10 years younger than that

Figure 4: East Broadway, 1905



Photo: "Salem City Rewind," Stand Up for Salem

Figure 5: City of Salem population, 1940-2022



Source: NJ State Data Center 2000 Census Publication: New Jersey Population Trends 1790-2000; and US Census ACS 2010-2022

¹³ US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2018-2022.

of the county. This means a growing need for jobs, housing, and retail options, and if these demands are not met, Salem may see its population decline once again.

Aside from its wealth of history and current challenges, one thing that sets Salem apart is its strong sense of community. The city has a tight-knit community of residents who are passionate about preserving Salem's unique character. Throughout the year, there are many events and activities that bring people together, such as the annual Salem Christmas Parade, the Salem Tomato Festival, Movie Nights, and the Salem City Market. These events showcase the city's vibrant culture and foster a sense of pride and community among residents. The city's many churches and other religious institutions also provide gathering places for Salem's residents and attract people from the surrounding area.

Target Site

The target site is three parcels of land owned by the City of Salem, which are located in downtown Salem and bifurcated by New Market Street. The addresses for two of the parcels are 25 New Market Street and 21 New Market Street, and the third parcel is a surface parking lot across the street. 21 and 25 New

Figure 6: Aerial view of the target site (parcels shown outlined in blue)



Source: Rowan University [Parcel Explorer](#)

Market Street abut each other on the west side of New Market Street, and the paved lot is on the east side of the street. 25 New Market Street is situated on a corner lot at the intersection of New Market Street and Carpenter Street. The location of the three parcels is in the heart of downtown Salem, between Salem Middle School and the historic district that runs along Broadway. The target site is zoned C-1 Retail Commercial.

25 New Market, also known as Block 57.01, Lot 12, is 0.21 acres (9,500 SF) and consists of a two-story building that has been vacant for many years.¹⁴ Adjacent to it, 21 New Market is an

unimproved grassy area known as Block 57.01, Lot 11 that is 0.22 acres in size (9,583 SF). Across New Market Street is the third lot, known as Block 63, Lot 1.01 (0.53 acres; 23,087 SF). According to the Salem Tax Assessor, all three parcels are owned by the City of Salem. The city also owns Lots 6-10 in Block 57.01.¹⁵ Lots 6-9 are currently being used for a public community garden, and there are two government

¹⁴ APN/Parcel ID: 13-00057-01-00012. <https://njparcels.com/property/1713/57.01/12>

¹⁵ Tax Assessment Map of the City of Salem in the County of Salem New Jersey, 2020. Page 30. See Figure 4 above.

buildings (including the former municipal building) on Lot 10. A 12-foot ingress/egress access easement is noted on the City of Salem Tax Map, Sheet 28, across Block 57.01, Lots 6-12.

25 New Market Street is listed in city documents as a factory¹⁶ and comprises a two-story 14,280 SF painted red brick industrial style building with a ribbon of large windows (many missing their panes or boarded up) on both the first and second floors of the structure. Along the Carpenter Street frontage is a cracked and deteriorated sidewalk. The sidewalk is interrupted on the southwest (Carpenter Street) side by a driveway apron that leads to a damaged garage door that once provided entrance to the building.

Figure 7: Vacant building on Block 57.01, Lot 12 (25 New Market St.)

Looking southwest toward Carpenter St.



Looking north from the corner of Carpenter and New Market



Photos: BRS site visit 18 December 2024

The city has full access to the site, and on the day the consulting team visited, staff were able to open a door leading from Lot 11 and provide entry.¹⁷ The team toured both the first and second floors, accessing the upper floor by means of a deteriorated staircase on the northeast side of the building. The rectangular floorplan is primarily open on both levels and is supported by interior columns. Although the first floor contained a significant amount of debris and trash, it also appeared to be a storage area and held items such as old shopping carts, boxes, furniture, Christmas decorations, and streetlights. A large freight elevator with a pulley system was visible in the center of the northeastern wall of the building. The elevator appears to have been accessible from Lot 11 – at least at some point in the past. On the second story, there is a series of bathroom stalls in the northwest corner. Standing water and moss was visible on the floor of the second story, and the floor is badly damaged in some areas. The building appears to have a red brick exterior that was mostly painted at some point in the past; the exterior now shows scarring of a blackish material, overgrown vines, dirt, bricks clearly in need of repointing, and broken and boarded-up windows. According to a list of City-Owned Properties as of January 30, 2025, posted on the Housing Office page on the City of Salem website, the building's land parcel is 9,500 SF in size.¹⁶

¹⁶ <https://cityofsalemnj.gov/housing-office/>

¹⁷ The site visit took place on December 18, 2024. Note that the site visit was not a structural or engineering assessment.

Figure 8: 25 New Market St. building interior – First Floor

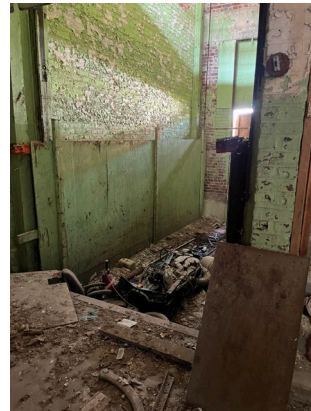
Open area (looking northwest)



Open area (looking northeast)



Elevator shaft



Photos: BRS site visit 18 December 2024

Figure 9: 25 New Market St. building interior – Second Floor

Open area (looking southeast)



Open area (looking southwest)



Elevator shaft



Restroom stalls



Photos: BRS site visit 18 December 2024

Labelled as an orchard on the 1902 Sanborn map, the site was a small portion of a much larger parcel that extended from the rear of the buildings facing West Broadway south to Wesley Street. Carpenter Street did not yet exist on the 1902 Sanborn map. Carpenter Street was constructed sometime between 1909 and 1915, as was Salem High School, which was shown in a smaller footprint on the parcel that is Salem Middle School today. The property immediately adjacent and located to the west of the target site was labeled as C.L. Sinnickson Lumber Yard and continued to be identified as a lumber yard as late as the 1959 Sanborn map. Today this property is a parking lot that extends from Carpenter Street to Hires Avenue and has driveways for ingress and egress on both streets. Records indicate that the building at 25 New Market St. was originally constructed in 1920 as a car dealership, and the freight elevator was used to lift cars to the second-floor showroom. The business owner (the Patrick family) eventually moved to a more conducive site in nearby Mannington. Sometime between 1947 and 1959, the property became the Salem Vocational School. In subsequent years, 25 New Market St. housed multiple short-term uses (including a dress factory) until it was abandoned.¹⁸

Figure 10: 1959 Sanborn map showing the target site, with 25 New Market St. outlined in red



Source: 1959 Sanborn map

Abutting 25 New Market Street is 21 New Market Street – also known as Block 57.01, Lot 11 – which is a vacant, unimproved lot. The area appears to be flat, level, and on the same elevation as surrounding lots. This grassy area is devoid of trees. Former municipal buildings on Lot 10 border the lot. Looking northeast from Lot 11, buildings on Hires Avenue and a brick walkway running from Hires Avenue to West Broadway are visible, as are the rear facades of several buildings that line West and East Broadway. Abutting both Lots 11 and 12 on the western side is a surface parking lot that is privately owned (Block 57.01, Lots 2 and 2.02). A sidewalk dotted with parking meters can be found along New Market Street; another sidewalk runs along Carpenter Street. The 1947 Sanborn map shows a

Figure 11: New Market St. (looking northeast)

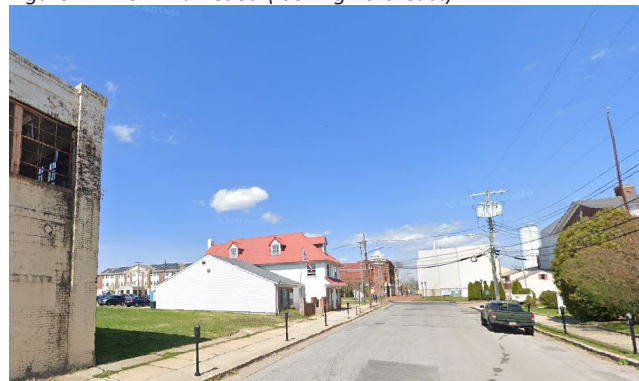


Photo: BRS site visit 29 April 2025

¹⁸ City of Salem Sanborn Maps – 1902, 1909, 1915, 1923, 1930, 1947, and 1959. See full-size maps in Appendix.

building identified as a bowling alley at 21 New Market St. An apparent line drawn through the parcel on the 1959 Sanborn map may indicate that the bowling alley was no longer operational at this time.¹⁸

Block 63, Lot 1.01 is a 0.53-acre vacant, paved lot across the street.

It is the site of the St. John's Pentecostal Outreach Church's community food pantry, which receives support from the Food Bank of South Jersey and feeds hundreds of people every month.

This lot is paved and in fair condition, albeit with some signs of deterioration. There are faded markings indicating parking spaces, and cracked cement parking stop blocks are visible – some strewn

about, and others lined up neatly to

border the lot along New Market Street and the dead-end Belden Street to the northeast. The paved parking area is bordered by a cement sidewalk and a narrow strip of grassy area along its frontage with New Market Street. A grassy strip of land serves as a border on the lot's frontage with Belden Street.

There are no street trees to provide shade or landscaping. According to the Zoning Map, Belden Street appears to have been a through-street that connected New Market Street and Walnut Street.¹⁹ In an aerial photo from 2006, Belden Street still traverses the entire length of the block between New Market Street and Walnut Street. The seven-story County parking garage first appears in a 2010 aerial of downtown Salem, which shows Belden Street in its current configuration as a dead end.²⁰

Along New Market Street, there are two driveway aprons that serve as a means of ingress and egress to the parking lot when it is in use by cars. The southeastern edge of the parking lot is marked by a rusted chain link fence and some landscaping that serves to divide the lot from the cemetery on the other side. At the eastern end of the parking lot is the one-story Union Fire building. Two garage doors open both on the side of Lot 1.01 and on Walnut Street – presumably the latter is the main access for fire department vehicles. Just north of the fire station is a large, seven-story parking structure for Salem County employees that appears to have been constructed across a portion of what was once Belden Street leading to Walnut Street, creating the dead end that exists today. Utility poles with lights can be seen around the edges of the Lot 1.01.

An 1891 Sanborn map shows the R. M. Acton public school in the general location of where the Union Fire building stands today, bordering Lot 1.01 on the east side. Belden Street appears to connect to what is called Walnut Street today, although the street is not identified by any name on the 1891 map. Belden Street was at the time a short street and led to what presumably was open fields, and it was not until the 1923 Sanborn map that Belden Street connected New Market Street to Walnut Street. R. M. Acton School (which on later maps is identified as the Richard M. Acton Public School) was on what is known as

Figure 12: Block 63, Lot 1.01 (looking southeast)



Photo: BRS site visit 29 April 2025

¹⁹ City of Salem Zoning Map. <https://cityofsalemnj.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/SalemCity-Zoning-Map-min.pdf>

²⁰ See aerial photos in the Appendix.

Walnut Street today, and behind the school it appears there were a couple of small structures which the 1902 Sanborn map notes were used for beer bottling and brick storage. New Market Street first appears on the 1915 Sanborn map. The Richard M. Acton school appeared to take over the entire parcel at that time, extending from Walnut Street to New Market Street. However, sometime between 1947 and 1959, the school was demolished, and the 1959 Sanborn map indicates a parking lot at the site on the full parcel from New Market Street to Walnut Street. The Union Fire building was eventually constructed on the Walnut Street side of the parcel sometime between 1981 and 1991, according to aerial photos.²¹

Existing Food Retail Options

A grocery store called Incollingo's Family-Owned Markets (part of a small independent chain) served Salem and some of the surrounding area until it closed in 2017. Approximately 23,600 SF in size, the store was the anchor for a strip mall at the southwest corner of East Broadway and Grieves Parkway that currently has other vacancies, as well.

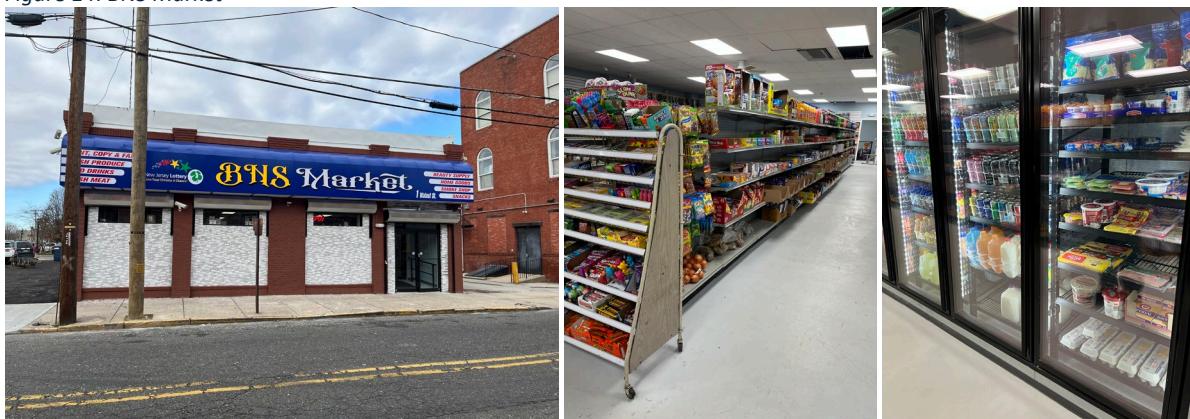
The Incollingo's closure left the following options for purchase of non-restaurant/café food in Salem:

- **BNS Market** on the corner of Walnut Street and Hires Avenue has a wide variety of non-food items (such as lottery tickets, smoking products, and cleaning products) and sells snacks, soda, and candy. It also offers eggs, some dairy products, bacon, hot dogs, and lunch meat. The store has a small selection of baby products.

Figure 13: Site of former Incollingo's Family-Owned Markets



Figure 14: BNS Market



Photos: BRS site visit 18 December 2024

²¹ City of Salem Sanborn Maps (1902, 1909, 1915, 1923, 1930, 1947, and 1959) and aerial photos. See full-size maps and aerials in Appendix.

- **49 Deli** at the corner of West Broadway and Front Street sells prepared foods, snacks, beverages, smoking products, and a small variety of non-food household items.
- **Sunoco Snack & Go Food Mart** at the intersection of East Broadway and Yorke Street has the standard selection of soda, snacks, candy, and car products of most gas station mini marts, but it also offers milk, chocolate milk, butter, and eggs and a small selection of bread and frozen meals. The frozen meals are kept in a freezer, but the dairy products and eggs are displayed on unrefrigerated shelves.
- **Family Dollar**, in a small shopping center near 5th Street and Griffith Street, mainly carries non-food household items but also has a variety of shelf-stable boxed and canned goods, beverages, snacks, and a few dairy products. It also has a limited selection of baby products.
- **Dollar General** at 500 Salem Quinton Road (technically just outside of city limits) sells eggs, dairy, shelf-stable meats and hot dogs, as well as a limited selection of frozen meals and a wider selection of boxed and canned foods, snacks, soda, and candy. Most of the store's shelf space has non-food household items. Some baby products are available.

Figure 15: 49 Deli



Photo: BRS site visit 18 December 2024

Figure 16: Family Dollar



Photo: BRS site visit 13 February 2025

Digital Grocery

According to RetailWire, online grocery shopping is predicted to grow over the next five years, with year-over-year growth outpacing that of in-store sales. The Covid pandemic initially helped fuel online sales growth, but recent data shows that purchasing groceries via a digital platform was not a temporary trend. Consumers are still purchasing essential groceries online. Online grocery sales are projected to reach nearly \$120 billion by the end of 2028, accounting for nearly 12.7% of total US grocery sales.²²

Consumers use a variety of digital grocery applications to purchase groceries; however, there are two basic business models. Businesses use either a delivery model or a “click and collect” model. In the delivery model, either the store operates and manages its own digital platform, or the store uses a third-party platform such as Uber Eats, Instacart, or Door Dash. The “click and collect” models have multiple

²² Ryan, Tom. “Is E-Grocery Entering a New Phase of Growth?” RetailWire, 2 May 2024. <https://retailwire.com/discussion/is-e-grocery-entering-a-new-phase-of-growth/#:~:text=Growth%20averaged%205.6%25%20over%20the,anticipated%20for%20in%2Dstore%20selling>

variations, but ultimately the consumer purchases products online and then picks them up at a designated place – at a pickup point inside a store, curbside at a store, or at a warehouse. Walmart Inc. leads the pack in digital grocery sales and was poised to capture more than 26% of the market in 2024 (the most recent data available), which translates to roughly \$58.92 billion in sales. Amazon, Instacart, Kroger, and Target are racing to catch up.²³ Revenues in the US online grocery delivery market have been increasing steadily since 2017,²⁴ and Statista reports that e-commerce revenue from the grocery delivery sector was anticipated to exceed \$257 billion in 2024.²⁵

In the first quarter of 2024, US online grocery sales reached \$31.4 billion, but many grocers are still looking for ways to increase the profitability of this sector of the market. While the numbers indicate improvements from 2023 in the amount spent and the quantity of items purchased, grocers still had issues with the costs associated with selecting the groceries, fulfilling orders, and the costs and logistics of delivery.²⁶ Nonetheless, the model is clearly popular with consumers because of the convenience it offers, particularly to those without access to a vehicle.²⁷ In addition, many stores accept SNAP/EBT just as they do credit and debit cards, which may make online grocery shopping accessible to more consumers – although there is a wide range in pricing, and consumers must take delivery fees into account.

According to the USDA, in 2022 nearly 20% of US shoppers bought groceries online.²⁸ Time constraints are the most frequently cited reason shoppers make online grocery purchases. Interestingly, parents with children are twice as likely as other shoppers to shop online – the convenience of online purchasing is a huge draw for working parents balancing multiple schedules. On the other hand, one of the principal reasons people choose to shop in a store is a preference for seeing and touching the products they purchase.²⁹ This mirrors comments we heard from residents in Salem who expressed a desire to select fresh produce and meat at a brick-and-mortar store where they could choose products in person. In addition, delivery fees can be expensive, whether they are store or non-store (Instacart, DoorDash) delivery charges.

Constraints and Impediments

Many of the challenges facing Salem stem from pervasive poverty, which affects almost one third of the population. It is further complicated by the limited number of job opportunities nearby and long-term disinvestment in housing that has led to vacancies, abandonment, and blight. The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has designated Salem City as a “Distressed City” and an “Urban Aid Municipality” because of its deep poverty. According to DCA’s most recent Municipal Revitalization Index (MRI), Salem is the second most distressed municipality in the state, following Camden. Nearby Penns Grove Borough, also located in Salem County, is ranked third.

²³ <https://www.emarketer.com/insights/digital-grocery-industry/>

²⁴ <https://www.statista.com/forecasts/891082/online-food-delivery-revenue-by-segment-in-united-states>

²⁵ <https://www.statista.com/topics/1915/online-grocery-shopping-in-the-united-states/#topicOverview>

²⁶ <https://www.supermarketnews.com/technology/digital-grocery-sales-hit-31b-q1-grocers-still-have-work-do>

²⁷ Health concerns are another top reason consumers choose online over in-store grocery shopping.

²⁸ <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=108618>

²⁹ <https://www.grocerydive.com/news/parents-more-likely-to-buy-groceries-online-fmi/691831/>

While its position at the confluence of the Delaware River and tributary Salem River supported manufacturing and shipping in the past, Salem is susceptible to coastal flooding and sea level rise due to its location on a flat, coastal plain. Flooding from the Salem River and other local waterways also poses a threat. This adds another layer of complexity and increases the importance of building resilience as the community works toward revitalization. Over the past several decades, the city has faced multiple severe weather events, hurricanes, sea level rise, extreme heatwaves, and droughts.

Approximately 54% of the city's total area is within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 1% flood hazard area; 71% is in the Inundation Risk Zone (IRZ), a State determination of the tidal flood hazard area at significant risk for future permanent or daily inundation; and 89% is in the Climate Adjusted Flood Elevation (CAFE) Zone, which is a state calculation whereby the projected five feet of sea level rise is added to the FEMA base flood elevation.

The target site is located just two blocks south of West Broadway and has a one- to two-block buffer from the edge of the 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Area, also known as the 500-year flood plain. In this area, there is a 0.2% chance of a flood occurring in any given year. However, the site is within about three blocks of a large area of Salem that is in the FEMA 1% Flood Hazard Area (Flood Zone AE), which has a 1% annual chance of flooding – the 100-year flood zone. While this may sound like a small probability, it translates to a 26% chance of flooding over a 30-year period.³⁰ In reality, “100-year flood” is a misnomer, as floods that meet this threshold can occur more often than once in 100 years.³¹

Figure 17: FEMA map of Salem (target site indicated with red pin)



Source: FEMA Flood Map (see full-size map and legend in Appendix)

³⁰ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and FEMA Flood Map.

<https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery=25%20New%20Market%20Street%2C%20Salem%2C%20NJ>

³¹ A *Recurrence Interval* or *Return Period* in statistics measures the frequency of occurrence of a given event over a specified period of time. Generally, the time period is 10 years or longer for Recurrence Intervals that measure the frequency of floods, earthquakes, or other natural events that are used in risk analysis. Simply put, in any 100-year period analyzed, a 100-year flood event may occur once, twice, 50 times, or never.

The FEMA maps (and the maps in the Resilient Salem Resilience Action Plan completed in December 2023) indicate that the site is free from flooding, but the FEMA 1% Flood Hazard Area encircles the target site. This means that any construction or development proposed must address this potential flood risk. The maps in the Resilient Salem Resilience Action Plan clearly indicate that large swaths of Salem’s residential, commercial, and manufacturing districts are under threat from flooding. Open space, critical facilities, cultural and historic resources, ecological resources, employment centers, and residential neighborhoods are all potentially vulnerable to flooding. To minimize any potential future issues from a serious flood event, thought and consideration should be given to how the site is constructed and used. For example, if a grocery store is built at the site, basement storage may not be ideal. Salem’s pervasive poverty and vulnerable populations (as well as its older housing stock) mean that any severe weather event can seriously impact the community and limit its ability to recover. Any new development at the target site should address climate resilience to limit or prevent impacts from future climate events.

Another constraint is that the City of Salem has an older housing stock, with nearly half built prior to 1940, 84% built before 1979, and very little new housing constructed since 2000. This complicates planning for resiliency and sustainability and poses serious health risks. It is perhaps not surprising that 4.6% of Salem children under six years of age showed Elevated Blood Lead Levels (EBLL) in their screenings – the highest proportion in New Jersey.³²

According to the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates from 2022, the City of Salem had a total of 2,850 housing units. The majority (66%) of occupied units were renter-occupied (66.2%), with the remainder (33.8%) owner occupied. In 2022, the median home value in the city was \$65,100. This is significantly lower than the county’s median home value of \$208,200 and

HUD CHOICE PROJECT

Westside Court is a public housing complex composed of 76 garden-style apartments and is the focus of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant in Salem. The goal is for this severely distressed public housing complex – slated for demolition – to be rebuilt as mixed-income housing enhanced by neighborhood improvements and supportive services that will improve the quality of life and increase opportunities for public housing residents and the surrounding Salem community. One element of the HUD planning grant is monetary support for the implementation of an early action activity targeting small but concrete neighborhood improvements selected by the community. At a public meeting on February 13, 2025, attendees overwhelmingly voted to support improved food access through this early action project. Specifically, the project will involve collaboration with Ranch Hope, a local faith-based community organization that is pursuing an ambitious project in conjunction with the public sector and both non-profit and for-profit entities. The proposal envisions a multi-faceted development in Fenwick Plaza (located in the heart of downtown Salem) that includes a non-profit healthy food store and food pharmacy on the first level; offices for the Cumberland County Workforce Development Board on the second floor; and space for youth programming on the third floor. This initiative is in the planning stages, and Ranch Hope is currently pursuing innovative funding sources and partnerships with local food suppliers and public agencies for the project’s implementation. A first phase of this project is anticipated for completion by the end of 2025.

³² Childhood Lead Exposure in New Jersey Annual Report, State Fiscal Year 2020. New Jersey Department of Health.

far less than the state's median home value of \$401,400. According to the 2022 ACS estimates, the median contract rent in Salem City was \$980. Because of the age of housing and low home values – along with the high percentage of landlord-owned properties – the housing stock is severely impacted. Residents are not able to afford regular maintenance or capital improvements, and landlords do not have the financial incentive to do so, given low rental returns. Almost a quarter of housing units were vacant in 2022.

In addition to income, health, and housing challenges, Salem faces unemployment that is almost twice as high as the county average and nearly three times the state average. The unemployment rate of 11.6% (2022) likely does not capture the full extent of joblessness and underemployment: the relatively low proportion of Salem residents over 16 years of age who are in the labor force suggests that a significant number have given up actively looking for work.³³

Even though some of these constraints are not directly related to food access, it is important to note that the challenges Salem faces are complex and interconnected. Low incomes and high unemployment in particular are relevant, because access to food is not only a geographical issue but also an economic one. Health challenges are also relevant. Salem County's incidence of diabetes is almost twice the state average, and obesity rates among adults are also almost twice the state average.³⁴ These health issues are far more common among individuals living in poverty, and they are exacerbated by lack of access to fresh, nutritious food. Lack of access to a vehicle is also connected to poverty and is relevant to access to food, education, health, and employment opportunities, as well as vulnerability in extreme weather events. In Salem, almost 30% of households do not have access to a car.³⁵

Sustainability & Environmental Impact

Salem County contains six rivers and more than 34,000 acres of meadowlands, marsh lands, tidal and freshwater wetlands, numerous lakes, ponds and beaches, an underwater aquifer, and a variety of streams and headwaters. Many of the valuable natural features are among the healthiest and most abundant wildlife habitats in the state.³⁶ 42.6% of the county's total land is utilized for farming and agriculture. Agriculture has been a way of life in the region since the Lenni-Lenape Indians, who were native to the area, farmed the land prior to the Quakers settling in the area in the 1670s.³⁷ The region has remained agricultural in nature; however, shipping, chemical and glass manufacturing, and large industries have thrived in Salem over the past centuries.

No environmental analysis has been done on the three parcels that comprise the target site. There are many known brownfield sites in Salem and the surrounding region, and there are sites (not including the target site) that have been addressed with New Jersey Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund

³³ People aged 16+ who are not employed *and* are not actively seeking employment are not considered to be part of the labor force. The labor force is made up of people who are employed and people who are actively seeking work. The unemployment rate only considers people who are actively seeking work, not those who may be underemployed or people who have become discouraged and stopped looking.

³⁴ Salem County Community Health Profile. New Jersey State Health Assessment Data. New Jersey Department of Health.

³⁵ US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year estimate, 2018-2022.

³⁶ Government Salem County, NJ: About Salem County. <https://www.salemcountynj.gov/about-salem-county/>

³⁷ Salem County Cultural & Heritage Commission: 8. Salem County Economic Development. <https://culture.salemcountynj.gov/project/salem-county-economic-development/>

grants in the past. In 2021, Salem was awarded an \$800,000 US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Multipurpose grant to investigate and remediate contaminated sites in the city. In February of 2025, the EPA approved use of these funds for 25 New Market Street, and a preliminary environmental assessment for the site – as well as investigation of past uses of surrounding properties – is expected to be completed in spring or summer of 2025.

Once complete, a preliminary assessment will provide crucial information on the condition of the site and potential next steps required for further environmental investigation and remediation prior to redevelopment. Because the EPA has approved 25 New Market Street as eligible for funding through the Multipurpose grant, it may be possible for the city to fund both environmental investigation and at least some of any necessary remediation through this grant.

An environmental assessment may also be needed for 21 New Market St. (identified as a bowling alley on Sanborn maps dating back to 1947-1959) and the paved lot at Block 63, Lot 1.01, which once was the location of the Richard M. Acton Public School. Given that cars are frequently parked in Lot 1.01, it is possible that leaked petroleum and/or oil is present. Before these portions of the site can be redeveloped, it is necessary to complete a full assessment and remediate any existing contamination in line with the desired new uses.

Figure 18: 2nd floor interior of 25 New Market



Photo: BRS site visit 18 December 2024

Location/Accessibility and Transportation Analysis

As noted in the Market Analysis section of this study, the most recent USDA data available indicates that Salem County had 16 grocery stores (0.25 stores per 1,000 residents), 11 specialized food stores, 24 convenience stores, and two farmers markets (but no supercenters and/or club stores) in 2016. Nearly all of the food stores (50 of 51) accepted SNAP, but only eight accepted WIC. No information was available on benefit programs accepted at farmers markets.

In conversations with residents and in Community Survey responses, it became evident that there is a hierarchy of the types of food stores people visit. Larger grocery stores, supermarkets, and supercenters are preferred – even if they require a longer trip – because they offer a full selection of products and offer a “one-stop” option that can supply a household for a longer period of time. About 70% of survey respondents prepare meals at home between five and seven days a week, and over half shop for groceries either once a week or once every two weeks. This suggests that a majority of residents look for a store that can meet all of their grocery needs. In fact, 95% of survey respondents usually shop at large supermarkets, although many supplement a large weekly or biweekly visit to the supermarket with trips to local dollar stores, convenience stores, online retailers, the local butcher shop, and farmers markets elsewhere in the county. Residents are more likely to stop in at a local convenience store or dollar store

for an unexpected need or forgotten item, such as a box of cereal or a loaf of bread, even though the prices may be exorbitant compared to those at a supermarket.

Over 60% of survey respondents travel to Woodstown (which has an Acme supermarket) or to Pennsville (which has a Save-A-Lot, an Acme, and a Walmart that sells food but not produce or meat). Others travel as far as Vineland, New Castle (Delaware), Swedesboro, Upper Deerfield, Bridgeton, and Glassboro. Residents who own or have access to cars have the luxury of choosing when and where to shop, allowing them to prioritize price, quality, or freshness. Those without cars have more limited choices. Since Salem is a very small city in the heart of a rural county, the public transportation options are severely limited compared to most urban centers.

NJ Transit bus route #468 travels between the Acme in Woodstown and the Carney's Point Senior Apartments and makes 67 stops, with a trip duration of approximately 75 minutes from start to terminus.³⁸ This route passes through Salem. The bus runs Monday through Friday from 5:30am to 7:10pm; on Saturday the bus runs from 9:30am to 5:00pm. There is no bus service on Sundays. The bus's frequency on weekdays is every 45 minutes to 1 hour and 10 minutes, depending on the time of day, and on Saturdays, the time between buses is lengthened to 1 hour and 15 minutes. Even if a Salem resident is able to coordinate grocery shopping to coincide with bus service, public transit is not the ideal means of travel to purchase and transport groceries for a large household.

NJ Transit bus route #401 travels between Salem and Philadelphia and has three different routes that vary from 67 to 107 stops. Total travel time varies from 55-109 minutes. According to the schedule, each route runs at least once a day, seven days a week; however, Tuesday through Friday on the Woodbury route there is only one bus scheduled, which leaves Philadelphia at 4:29 pm. If a Salem resident misses this bus, there is no "next bus." Presumably this bus serves commuters to Philadelphia, and its schedule has likely been adjusted to accommodate the work schedules of its users. This bus travels through Woodstown but does not stop near the Acme and is therefore not a transportation solution for grocery shopping.

The Salem County Transportation and Resource Guide, prepared by the Salem County Department of Planning and Agriculture (December 2010 and most recently updated in April 2013) highlights a variety of transportation options available for Salem County residents.³⁹ Each option logged in the guide also indicates the hours the mode is in operation, whether a fare is required, contact information, and the type of clientele served. However, many of the transportation options only provide service to each

Figure 19: Bus #468 stop in Salem



Photo: BRS site visit 18 December 2024

³⁸ <https://transitapp.com/en/region/new-jersey/nj-transit/bus-468> and [6294-2713026954.pdf](https://www.salemcountynj.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/planning_board/Transportation%20Planning/transportation%20guide%20April%202013.pdf)

³⁹ Transportation Guide, April 2013. https://www.salemcountynj.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/planning_board/Transportation%20Planning/transportation%20guide%20April%202013.pdf

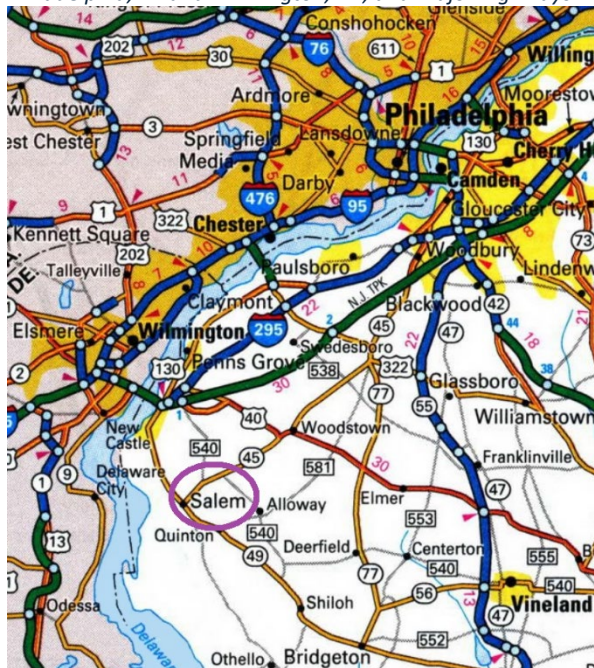
agency's specific clients in the area. For example, the Salem County Office on Aging only provides rides for elderly clients or veterans aged 60 or older, and transportation services only operate Monday through Friday between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Similarly, Senior Cares Center of Salem, Shirley Eyes Development Therapeutic Center, Inc., Veterans Services, Salem County Department of Children and Family Protection, Healthcare Commons, Pearl Transit Corp., and the Arc of Salem County limit their respective transportation services to their clientele. The guide appears to have been published as a resource and a means of codifying the available transportation services, yet it serves to highlight the complexities of living without a personal vehicle for transportation in a rural county.

It became apparent in conversations with stakeholders and residents that there are two main groups that people in the community fall into with respect to food access. The first group tends to have very low incomes and may also lack a vehicle. They may be dependent on public transit, carpools, borrowing a car, or using a ride shares program (e.g., Uber or Lyft) to get to a food store, or they may rely on the food pantry – or both. They may also patronize local convenience stores and dollar stores. The second group has more financial comfort and is likely to own a car and use it to commute to their place of employment and other necessities. This second group has the means to travel to a store to purchase groceries, and although they may wish Salem had its own supermarket, they are able to drive to a store in another community. Unlike the first group, this group is able to choose where they shop and how they get there.

As was noted in the Market Analysis, there are a significant number of people (e.g., county and municipal employees, business owners, etc.) who live outside of Salem and travel to the city for work, and a similarly significant number of Salem residents who travel outside of the city for employment. Only half of Salem residents work within Salem County, and the average work commute time is about 27 minutes. Residents indicated during conversations that they often choose to shop for food at a store that is near their place of employment (if that is not Salem) or along their route to or from work.

Although public transportation choices for individuals are limited, the City of Salem and Salem County are conveniently situated to take advantage of roadways, railways, the port, and even regional airports. While the predominantly one-lane roads within and immediately surrounding the city are not major thoroughways, they connect to a national supply and distribution network in relatively close proximity. The County has 18 miles of a short-line railroad that connects directly to the larger, national CSX freight railway system. Port Salem offers 80,000 SF of prime warehouse and storage space and is conveniently located a short distance from the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, Wilmington (Delaware), the Port of Baltimore, Philadelphia, the Delaware Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean. Salem is within easy driving distance of the Delaware Memorial Bridge, Interstates 95 and 295, and the New Jersey Turnpike, as well as US Routes 40 and 49. US Route 55 was completed in 1988 to

Figure 20: Salem (circled) is located in close proximity to Philadelphia, PA and Wilmington, DE, and major highways



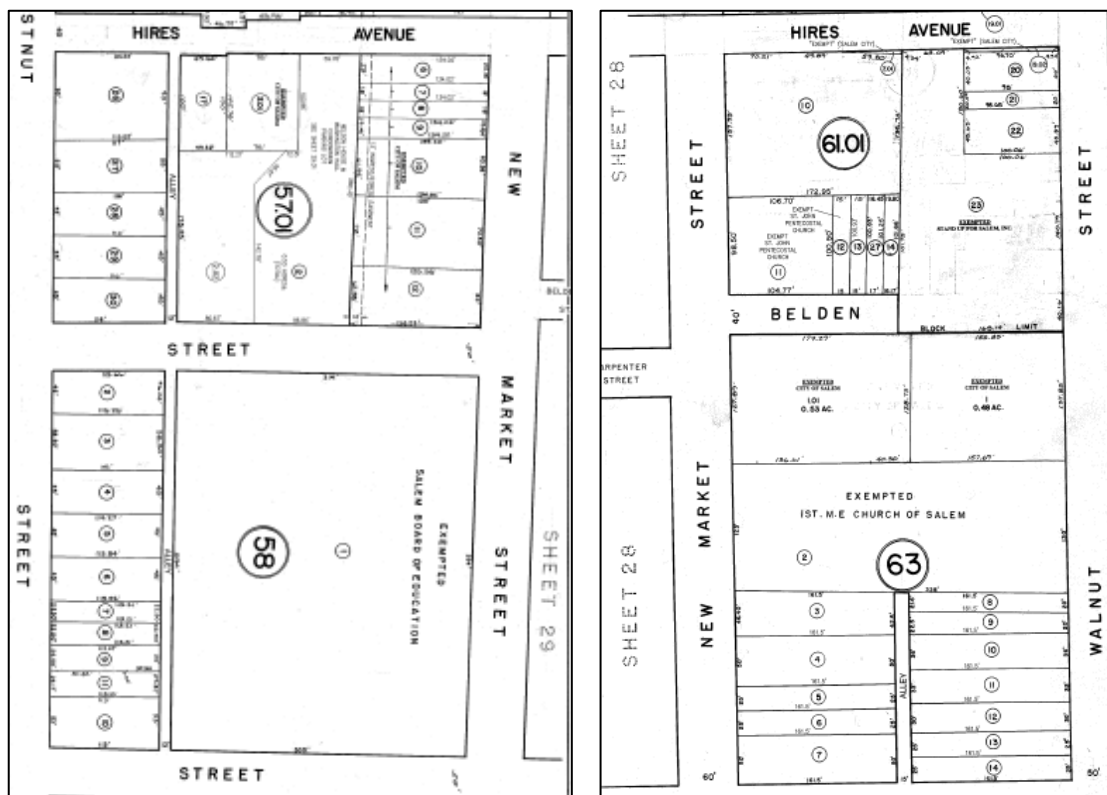
Source: US-Atlas.com

improve distribution access for agricultural and industrial businesses looking to transport their products to markets within and outside of Salem County.⁴⁰ Finally, Salem County is within driving distance of two international airports (Philadelphia and Atlantic City) as well as two regional airports (New Castle Airport and Spitfire Aerodrome). All of these linkages provide businesses in Salem with a logistical advantage that allows efficient access to a national distribution and supply network.

Legal and Regulatory Considerations

The target site at 25 New Market Street is a vacant, two-story industrial or manufacturing style building that is noted in city documents as having been a factory. The site is designated on the Zoning Map of the City of Salem as being in the C-1 Retail Commercial zone.⁴¹ While zoning and tax maps are generally consistent in the way they reflect the existing layout of the blocks and streets in the community, there is a discrepancy between the tax maps and the Zoning Map with respect to Belden Street. On the Zoning Map, Belden Street connects to both New Market Street and Walnut Street, completing a rectilinear block. On the Tax Assessor Maps (and as was clear on the site visit), Belden Street is accessible from New Market Street but dead ends in the middle of the block to the east and no longer connects to Walnut Street. An aerial view (as shown in Figure 4 and Figure 17) shows Belden Street on the northeastern

Figure 21: Target site on Salem's Tax Map



Source: City of Salem tax map, pages 28 and 29

⁴⁰ Salem County Economic Development: Transportation & Infrastructure. <https://choosesalem.com/transportation-infrastructure/>

⁴¹ The City of Salem Zoning Map is dated April 22, 1976, Revised July 1, 1977.

border of the city-owned surface parking lot. A seven-story parking garage was constructed at this location and appears to be at least part of the reason Belden Street became a dead end. This parking structure is owned by a local nonprofit organization called Stand Up for Salem, Inc.

According to Chapter 130 on Land Use in Salem's code, there are three distinct classifications for commercial uses: RLC denotes Residence Limited Commercial, C-1 denotes Retail Commercial, and C-2 denotes General Commercial. Article XII articulates which uses are permitted in each of these respective districts, as well as additional requirements for construction at a particular site. The box below indicates the uses permitted for the target site, which is in the C1 Retail Commercial District.

What does the zoning permit?

The following uses are permitted in a C-1 Retail Commercial District as detailed in 130-60(B):

- (1) Any use permitted in RLC Residence - Limited Commercial Districts.
- (2) Retail store.
- (3) Restaurant, cafe or catering establishment.
- (4) Theater and other place of amusement, recreation or assembly.
- (5) Residential apartments containing kitchen and bathroom facilities, subject to the minimum square footage requirements for apartments set forth in § 130-56, and further provided that residential apartments shall not be permitted on the first floor/street level. **[Amended 12-5-2005 by Ord. No. 05-36]**
- (6) Hand laundry; automatic or self-service laundry (laundromat); or self-service synthetic dry-cleaning establishment or synthetic cleaning establishments.
- (7) Newspaper publishing or job printing establishment.
- (8) Bakery or confectionery shop, for the production of articles to be sold only at retail on the premises.
- (9) Public garage, motor vehicle service station, automobiles sales agency, parking garage or lot, provided that all facilities are located and all services are conducted on the lot.
- (10) Any use of the same general character as any of the above permitted uses, provided that no use which is noxious or hazardous shall be permitted.
- (11) Accessory use on the same lot with and customarily incidental to any of the above permitted uses, and signs when erected and maintained in accordance with the provisions of Article XVII hereof.

While neither a supermarket nor a grocery store is specifically listed as permitted in the text of the regulations, it is assumed that a retail store – which is permitted – could mean a retail food store. For the

purposes of this study, it is assumed that this use is permitted at 25 New Market Street. The area regulations in 130-61 further specify how parcels in this district can be constructed and used.

First, with respect to the *Building Area*, not more than 60% of the area of each lot can be occupied by buildings. The existing building at the target site occupies almost the entirety of the lot, which would classify it as a pre-existing building that is nonconforming with respect to the regulations. Article XVI General Regulations, 130-77 of the Land Use regulations specify five options for nonconforming buildings or uses: Continuation, Extension, Changes, Restoration, or Abandonment. Based on the explanations for each option, the proposal would likely fall into the changes or restoration categories. Changes are

Figure 22: 25 New Market St.

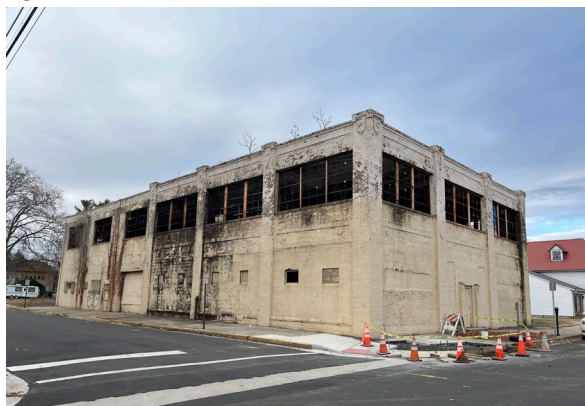


Photo: BRS site visit 18 December 2024

defined as changes to the building or land where the nonconforming use is located such that it changes to a conforming use or to a more restricted use; a less restricted use is not permitted. (The building appears to have once been used for some type of manufacturing or automotive use, neither of which is permitted in the C-1 district under today's regulations.) Changing the building to a retail food store would be likely be permitted.

Next, 130-61 specifies that a *Front Yard* is required along each street frontage that a parcel abuts. For a corner lot like 25 New Market Street, a front yard is required on both frontages –

Carpenter and New Market Street. However, the regulations note that the front yard on the long side of a corner lot (Carpenter Street) may be reduced to a depth of not less than 10 feet. Reducing the requisite size of the front yards for corner lots enables better layout and use of the parcel, making it more attractive to developers. While the regulations note that buildings used exclusively for commercial purposes are not required to provide a side yard, there is a caveat: when side yards are provided, they cannot be less than five feet in width, and when the lot is used for business and abuts a residential district, a side yard of at least five feet is required along the frontage that borders the residential district. Finally, a rear yard of 20 feet is required.

One of the limiting factors and a major constraint to the redevelopment of the building at 25 New Market Street is the size of the land parcel (9,500 SF). Aside from the requirements for side, front, and rear yards, the regulations specify that the site design needs to address off-street parking, off-street loading, access, exterior lighting, buffering and screening, and landscaping requirements. There are additional requirements for stormwater and utility design. Even Lots 11 and 12 combined (about 19,083 SF) would present size constraints, given necessary site improvements such as off-street loading space, exterior lighting, screening, buffering, and landscaping.

Street access for food delivery trucks is another of the site's potentially limiting factors. Although there is a garage opening on the Carpenter Street side of the building at 25 New Market Street (which does not have a raised loading dock), Carpenter Street is a relatively narrow city street of about 23 feet in width. There is no area for trucks to park or turn around, and because the Salem Middle School is directly

across Carpenter Street from 25 New Market, the area tends to be very busy with cars, buses, and pedestrians on school days in the morning and mid-afternoon.

The requirement for off-street parking per Schedule G specifies that for a retail store or service business, parking should be provided at a rate of one parking space per 150 SF of gross leasable area. If just the existing building were renovated as a grocery store (without additional construction on Lot 11), this roughly 14,280 SF of retail space⁴² would require 96 parking spaces (of 9 feet by 18 feet each), as well as drive aisle widths that permit easy circulation. An assessment of the city-owned paved lot across the street (23,958 SF) would be required to determine if it could accommodate the required parking spaces, drive aisles, and ingress/egress points.

Conclusions

Development of a grocery store, farmers market, or other food retailer at the target site has its challenges and is not the perfect solution for improving food access in Salem. Located in downtown Salem near the middle school, downtown businesses, municipal and county offices, and other resources, the target site on New Market Street has its advantages. However, it also has significant constraints. The existing building at 25 New Market Street is not particularly large, and renovations to redevelop the site as a new retailer would be extremely expensive – even if environmental remediation is unnecessary, which is unknown at this point. Considerations such as zoning requirements for retail use, parking, and access for both customers and food delivery present additional hurdles.



Challenges the city faces include low incomes and a high rate of unemployment. Almost a third of residents live in poverty, and food access is just one of many problems – although it is a problem Salem residents of all income brackets tend to agree on. While its position at the confluence of the Delaware River and tributary Salem River supported manufacturing and shipping in the past, Salem is susceptible to coastal flooding and sea level rise due to its location on a flat, coastal plain. Approximately 54% of the city's total area is within the FEMA 1% flood hazard area. And the city's limited public transportation network does not support potential customers without cars who live outside the target site's immediate area. All of these factors are relevant to a decision about whether the site is suitable for redevelopment as a new food retailer.

Despite the site's relatively small size, it is large enough for a small or medium-sized grocery store. But small stores face additional challenges in establishing a reliable supplier and maintaining affordable prices. Small stores tend to have higher prices (unless they have supplemental funding or a non-

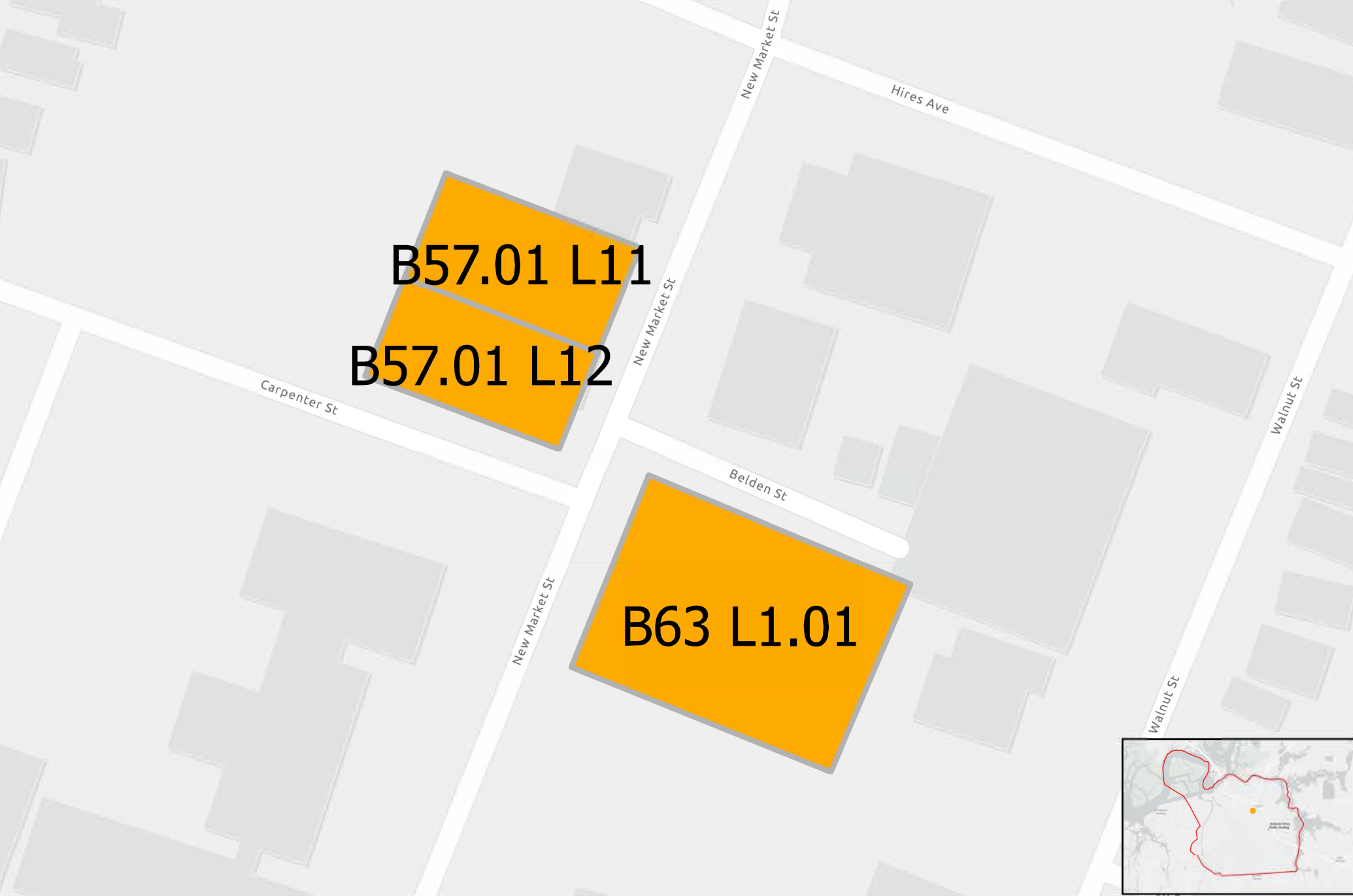
⁴² Note that actual retail space would be less when accounting for the elevator, stairwell, restrooms, storage, offices, and any other essential non-sales retail components.

traditional structure). It is essential that a new retailer in Salem accept SNAP and WIC benefits, both to improve food access in the community and to attract a large enough customer base to be sustainable. A substantial percentage of Salem residents purchase food with these benefits, and if a new store is more expensive than supermarkets in other towns, any residents who have the means to travel to other supermarkets will continue to do so. This is because SNAP benefits are for a fixed dollar amount, incentivizing program participants to stretch their benefits by seeking out the best values.


Another challenge is addressing the needs of two distinct groups in Salem – the large group of residents with extremely low incomes, and the group with mid-level and higher incomes. Both feel that improving food access is a top priority. This second group generally has access to a vehicle and is able to travel to a supermarket in another town, even if it is inconvenient. They could be served by a new grocery store in Salem, as long as it carries the right mix of products and is responsive to their needs. But for the large, low-income group – which may not have access to a car – a new store along a traditional model will not solve the issue of access to food if it is not healthier and much more affordable than what convenience stores and supermarkets offer. In fact, for a significant proportion of Salem’s population, food pantries and other sources of free emergency food will continue to be essential no matter what new retailer is developed.

Research has shown that a lasting solution must be customized to address the specific needs of a community. The ideal solution for Salem will address a multitude of problems, including food access, education and training, employment, and health. The next section of this study – *Part 3: Site Development Plan and Recommendations* – focuses on actions that can be taken to address food access issues for as many Salem residents as possible.

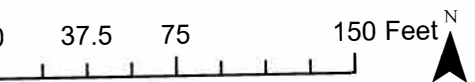
Appendix: Full-size Maps and Aerial Photos



Legend

-  Salem City Boundary
-  Target Site

Salem Food Security Planning Study Target Site Location



Target Site Location by Block and Lot

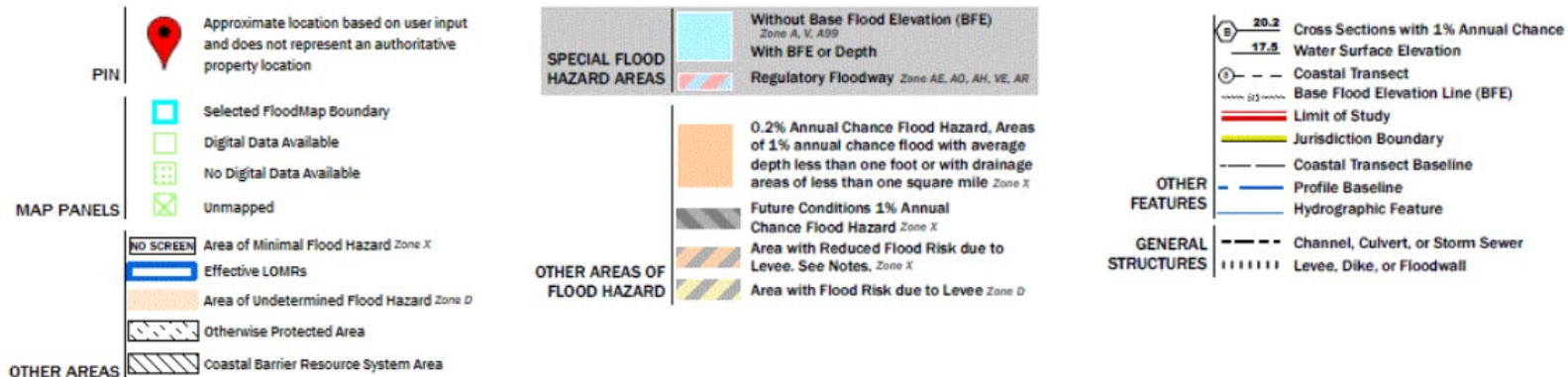


Source: Rowan University Parcel Explorer

[https://www.nj-map.com/parcels/parcels/?override=1&zoom=19&lat=39.57069154867758&lng=-75.46804905599998&sc=0&show=1&basemap=Mapbox%20Satellite%20\(Labeled\)&layers=&ois=&oms=&po=99](https://www.nj-map.com/parcels/parcels/?override=1&zoom=19&lat=39.57069154867758&lng=-75.46804905599998&sc=0&show=1&basemap=Mapbox%20Satellite%20(Labeled)&layers=&ois=&oms=&po=99)

FEMA Flood Map Service Center: 25 New Market Street

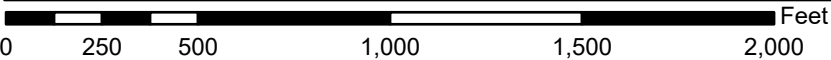
<https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery=25%20New%20Market%20Street%2C%20Salem%2C%20NJ>



National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMMette



75°28'24"W 39°34'28"N



1:6,000

75°27'47"W 39°34'N

Basemap Imagery Source: USGS National Map 2023

Legend

SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS		Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Zone A, V, A99
		With BFE or Depth Zone AE, AO, AH, VE, AR
		Regulatory Floodway
OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD		0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile Zone X
		Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone X
		Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee. See Notes. Zone X
		Area with Flood Risk due to Levee Zone D
OTHER AREAS		NO SCREEN Area of Minimal Flood Hazard Zone X
		Effective LOMRs
		Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard Zone D
GENERAL STRUCTURES		Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
		Levee, Dike, or Floodwall
OTHER FEATURES		20.2 Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance Water Surface Elevation
		17.5 Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance Water Surface Elevation
		Coastal Transect
		Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
		Limit of Study
		Jurisdiction Boundary
		Coastal Transect Baseline
MAP PANELS		Digital Data Available
		No Digital Data Available
		Unmapped



The pin displayed on the map is an approximate point selected by the user and does not represent an authoritative property location.

This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on **3/17/2025 at 8:39 PM** and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

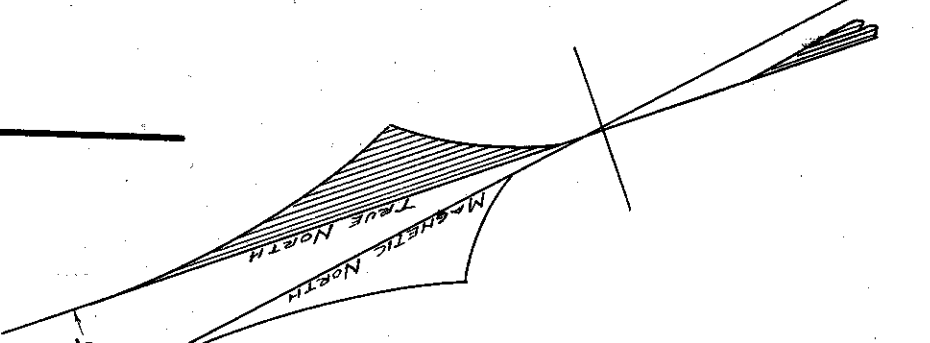
This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.

MARKET ST.

SHEET 28

28

MARKET STREET



SHEET 29

VANMETER TERRACE

SHEET 30

BROADWAY

PLAZA DRIVE

SHEET 29

SHEET 29

FIFTH ST.

SHEET 29

WEST

CHESTNUT STREET

STREET

SHEET 30

REVISIONS		
DATE	NAME	NO.
02-29-2016	CHARLES E. ADAMSON	42627

LOT 22 BLOCK 57 UNASSIGNED, 5/7/75
LOT 20 BLOCK 57 UNASSIGNED
LOT 16 BLOCK 57 UNASSIGNED
LOT 3 BLOCK 57 UNASSIGNED

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY		
APPROVED AS A TAX MAP PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 175 LAWS OF 1913		
BY <i>C. Adamson</i>	STATE SUPERVISOR	
DATE JUN 15 1959	SERIAL NO.	242

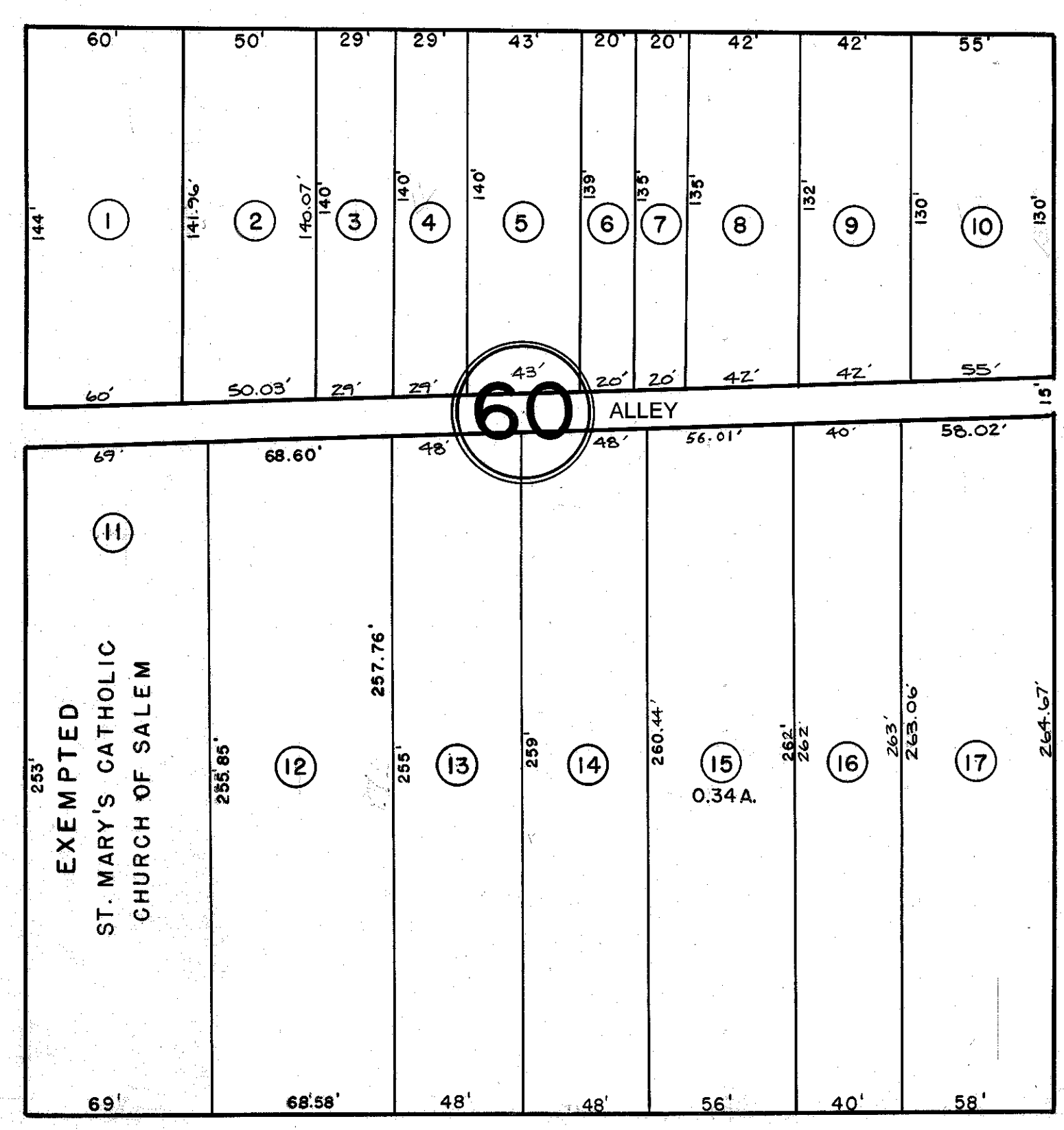
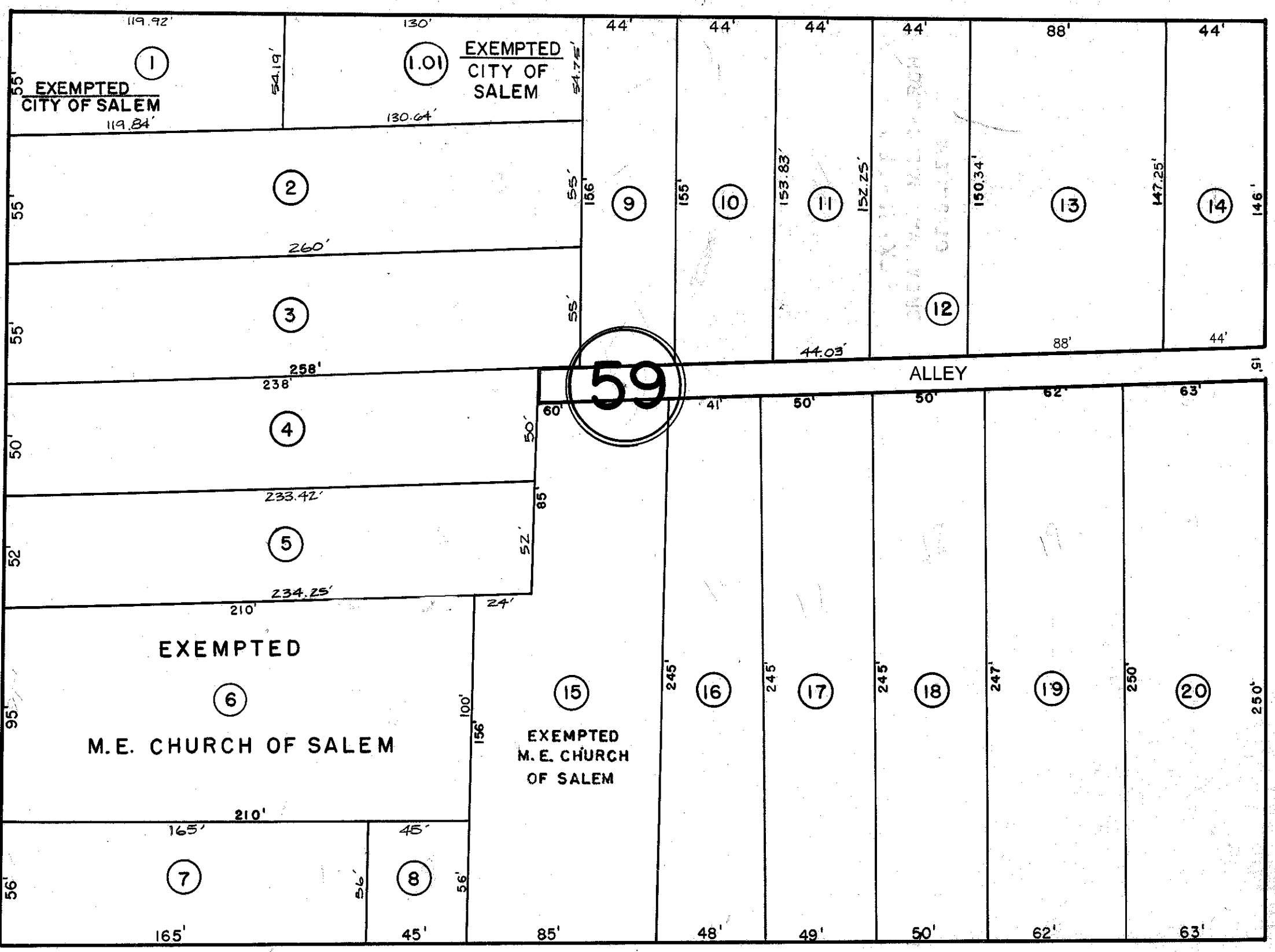
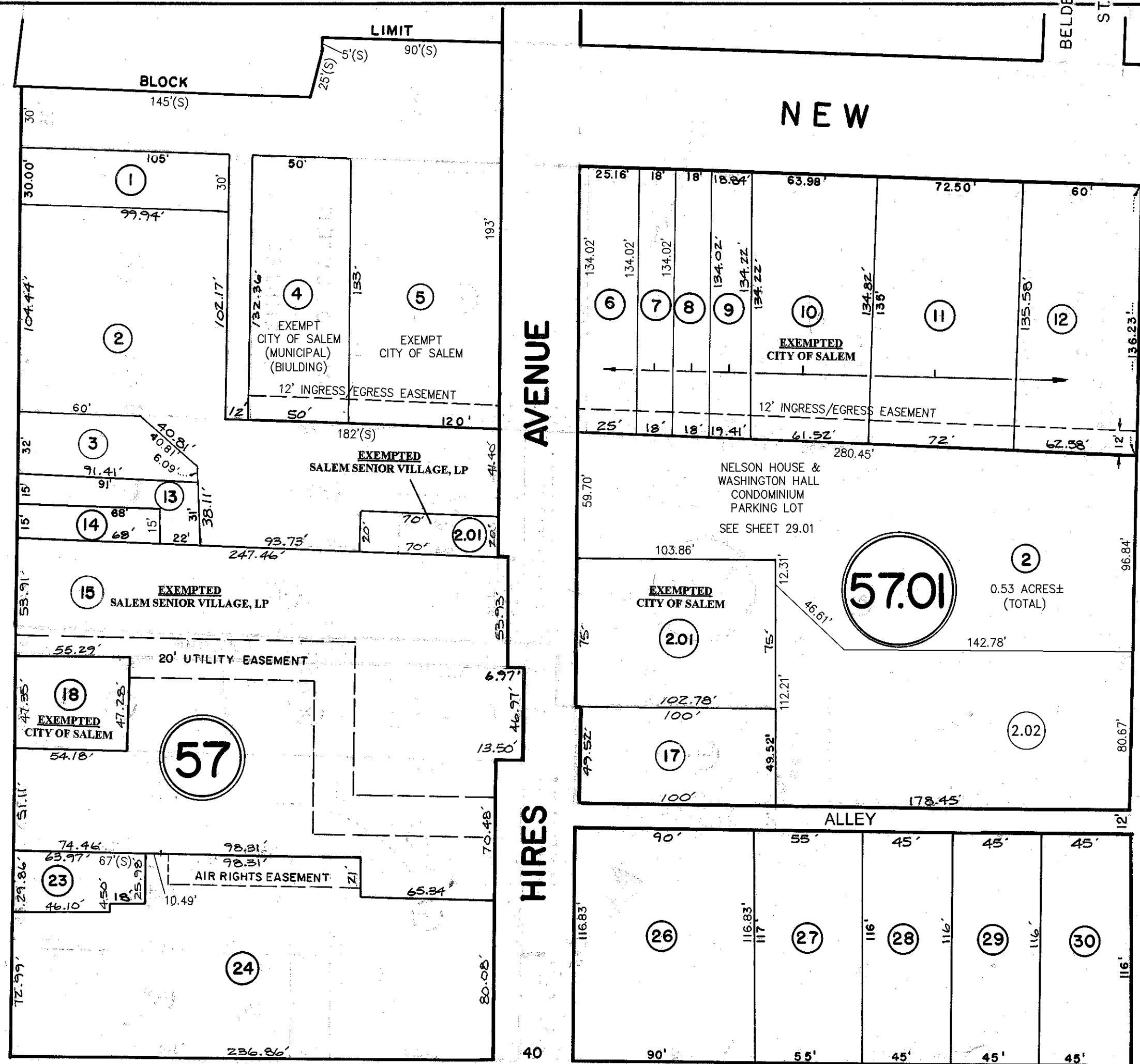
TAX MAP
CITY OF SALEM
SALEM COUNTY, N.J.
SCALE: 1"=50'

SKINNER & COMPTON, ENGRS.

MAY 19, 1959
REVISED JANUARY 19, 1960
REVISED APRIL 1, 1966

DEC. 1, 1967
REVISED
REVISED

28



SHEET 27

27

SHEET 27

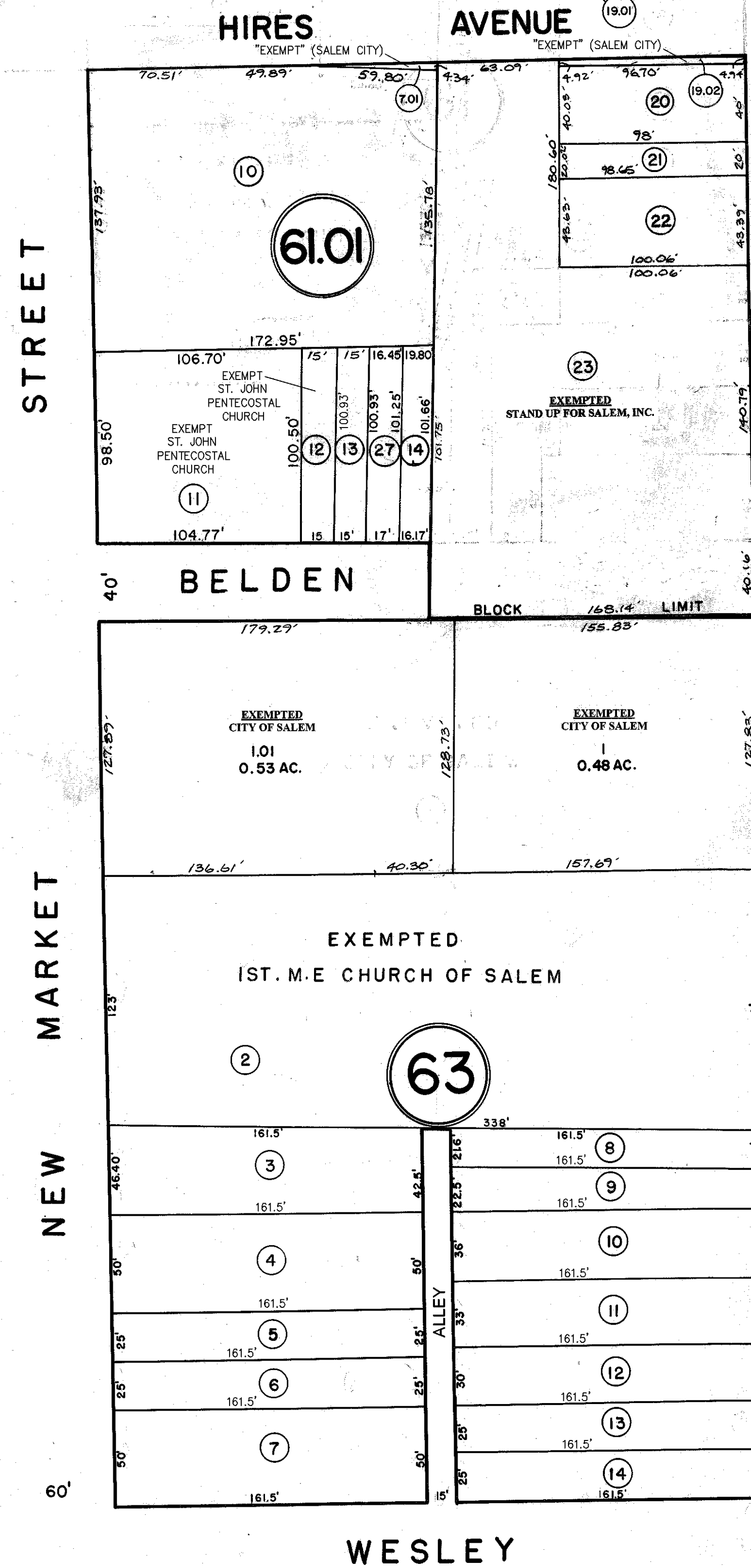
SHEET 37

REVISIONS		
DATE	NAME	NO.
10-1-2014	CHARLES E. ADAMSON	42627
02-29-2016	CHARLES E. ADAMSON	42627

SHEET 28

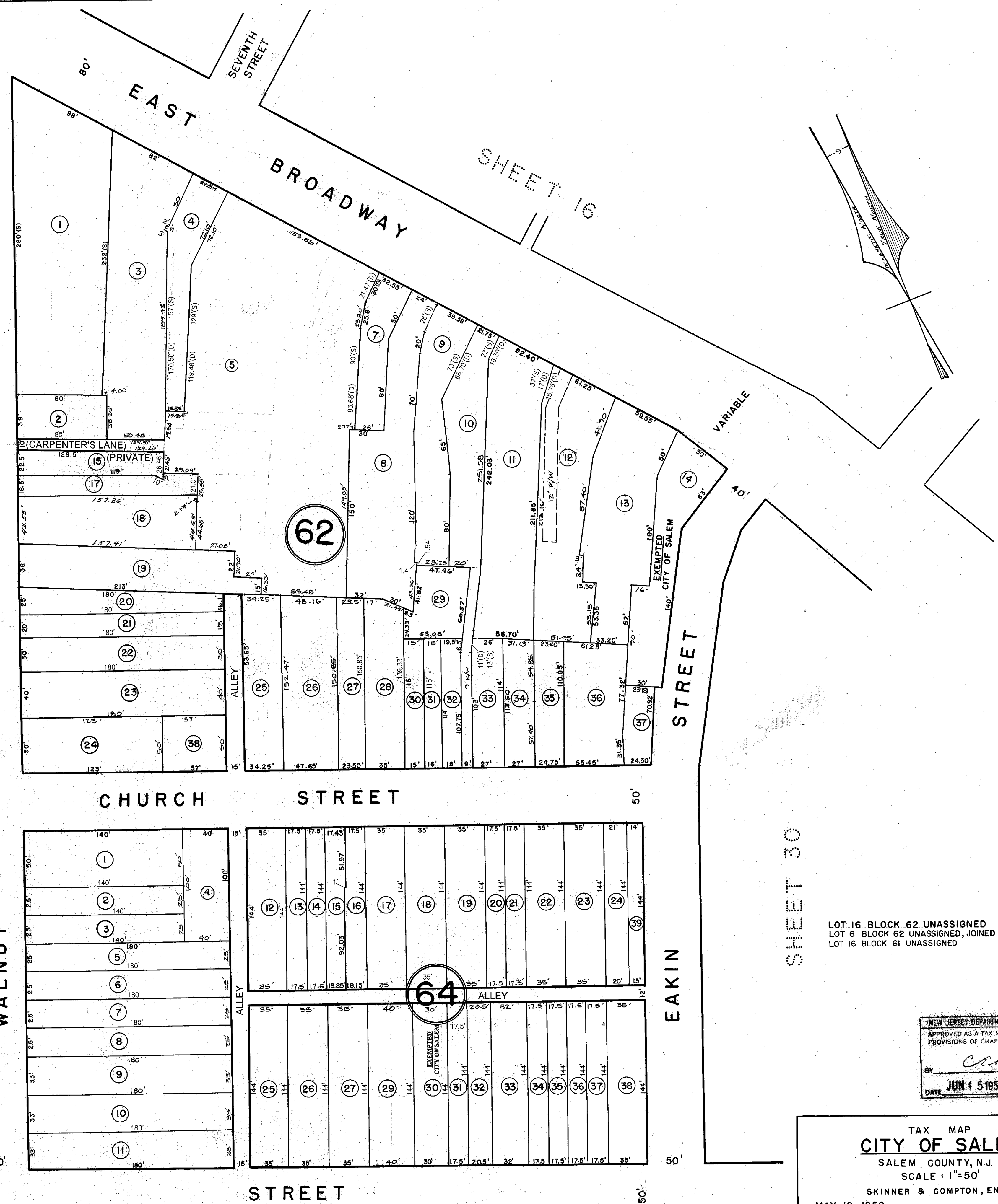
CARPENTER STREET

SHEET 28



STREET

WALNUT STREET

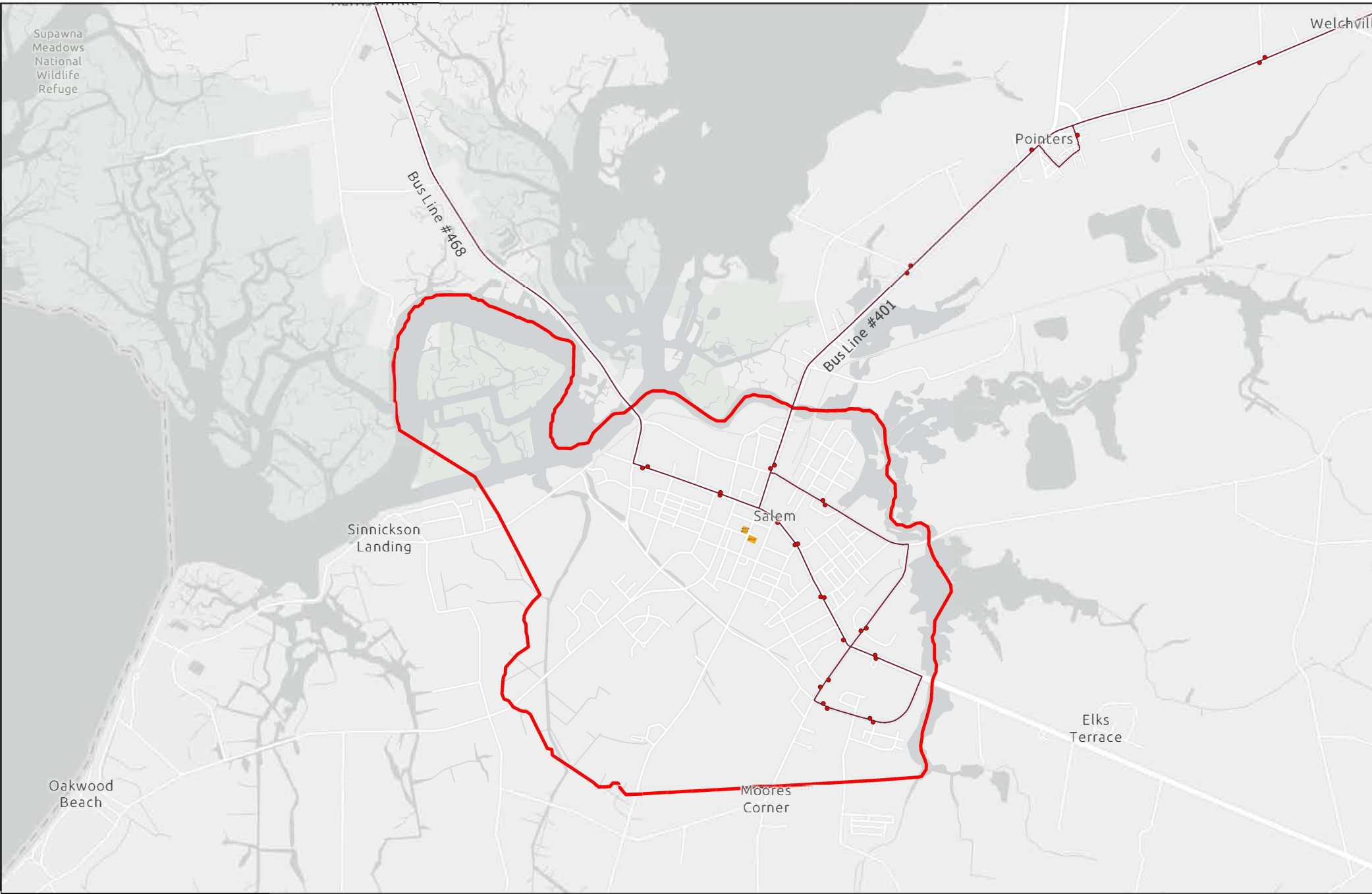


SHEET 30





LOT 16 BLOCK 62 UNASSIGNED
 LOT 6 BLOCK 62 UNASSIGNED, JOINED TO LOT 5, 8/6/85
 LOT 16 BLOCK 61 UNASSIGNED

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY	
APPROVED AS A TAX MAP PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 175 LAWS OF 1913	
BY <i>C. Adams</i>	STATE SUPERVISOR
DATE JUN 1 5 1959	SERIAL NO. 242

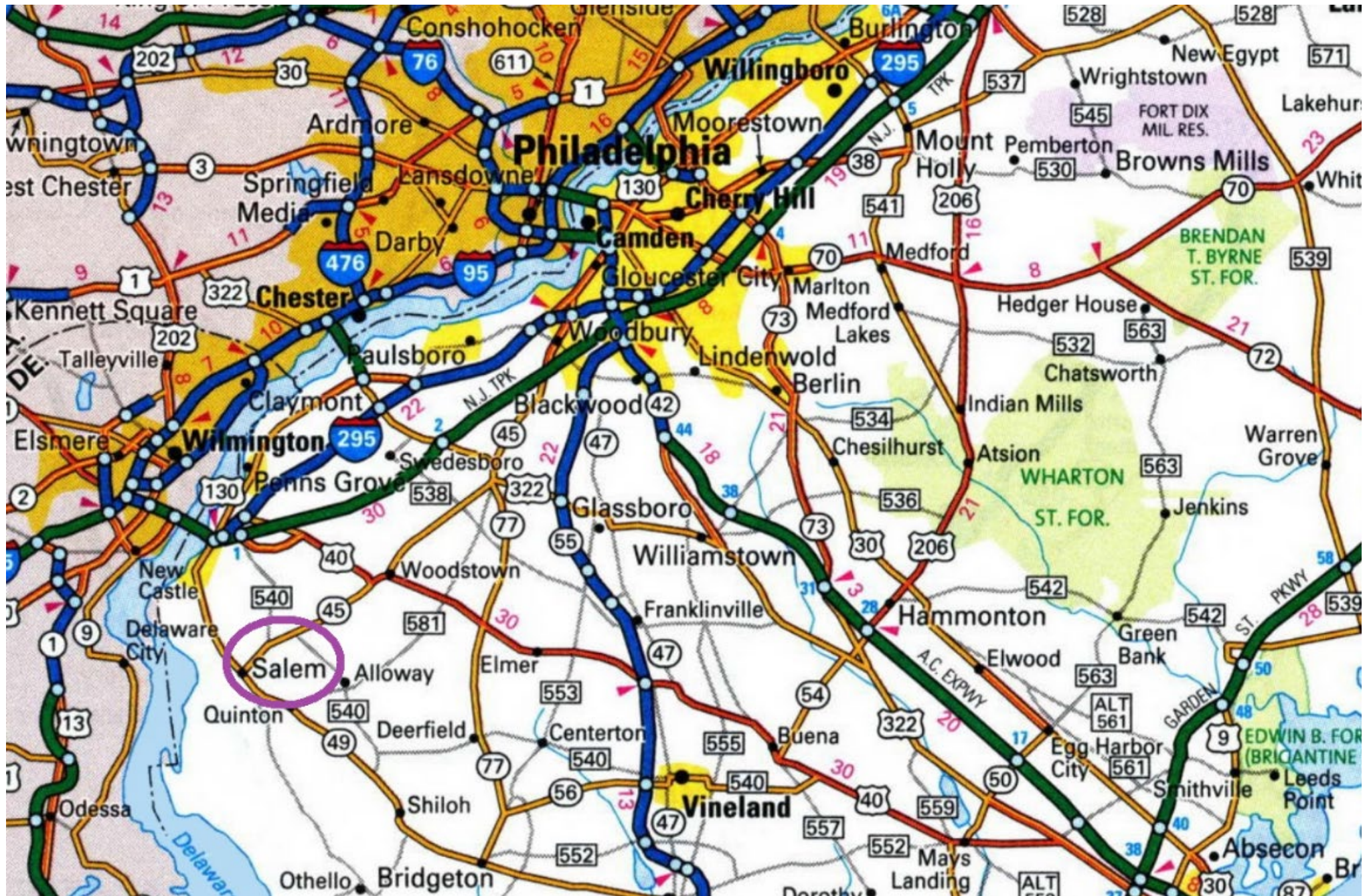
TAX MAP
CITY OF SALEM
 SALEM COUNTY, N.J.
 SCALE: 1"=50'
 SKINNER & COMPTON, ENGRS.
 MAY 19, 1959
 REVISED JANUARY 19, 1960
 REVISED 11-7-62 APRIL 1, 1966



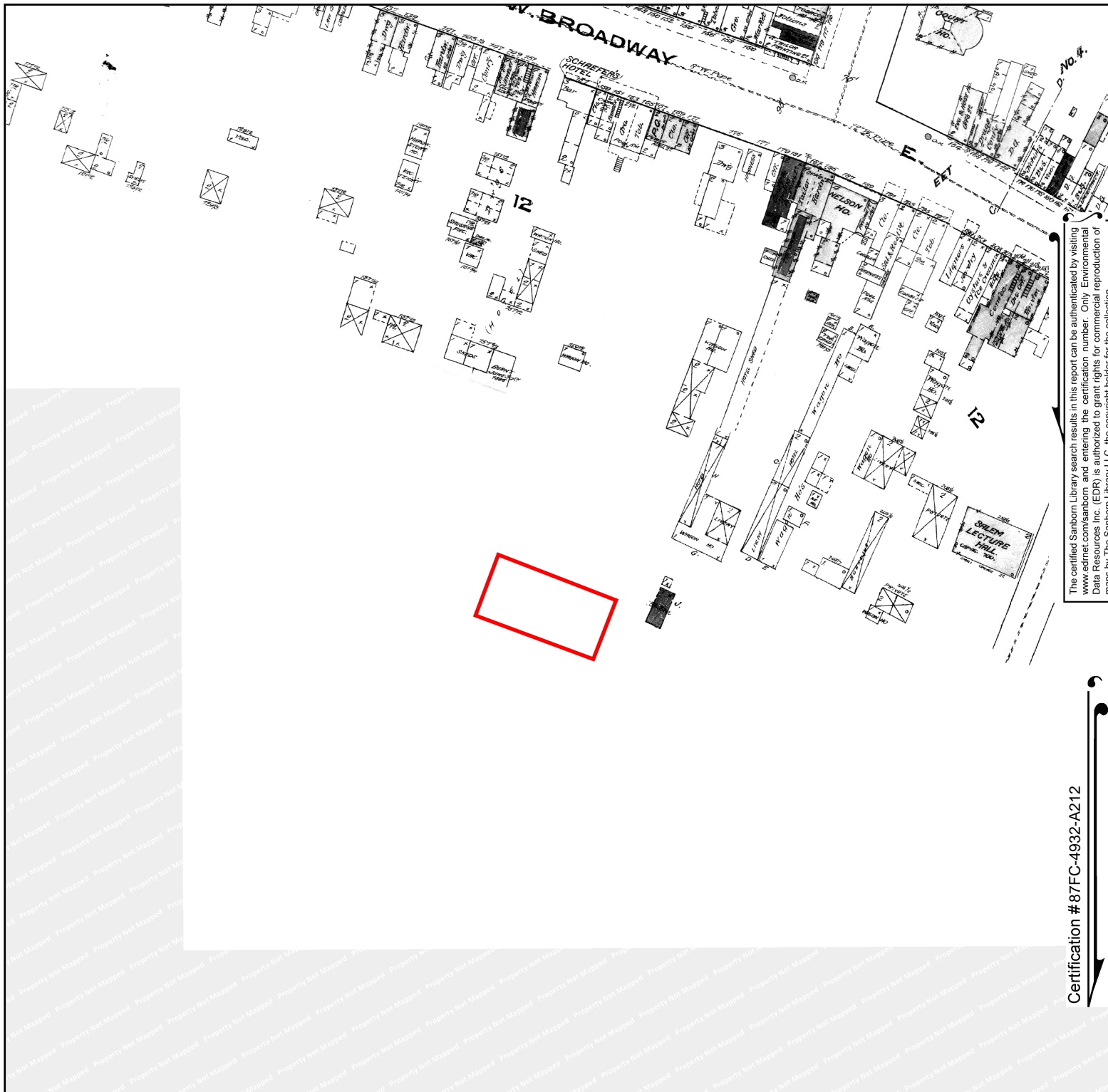
Legend

-  Salem City Boundary
-  Target Site
-  Bus Line
-  Bus Stops

Salem (circled in purple) is located in close proximity to Philadelphia, PA and Wilmington, DE, and major highways are easily accessible.



Source: [US-Atlas.com](https://us-atlas.com/federal/new-jersey-interstate-map.html#google_vignette) (https://us-atlas.com/federal/new-jersey-interstate-map.html#google_vignette)



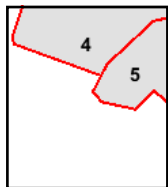
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Certification #87FC-4932-A212

Site Name: 25 New Market, Salem
 Address: 25 New Market Street
 City, ST, ZIP: Salem, NJ 08079
 Client: BRS, INC
 EDR Inquiry: 7964457.3
 Order Date: 04/21/2025
 Certification # 87FC-4932-A212
 Copyright 1885

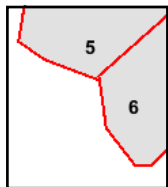


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 Outlined areas indicate map sheets within the collection.

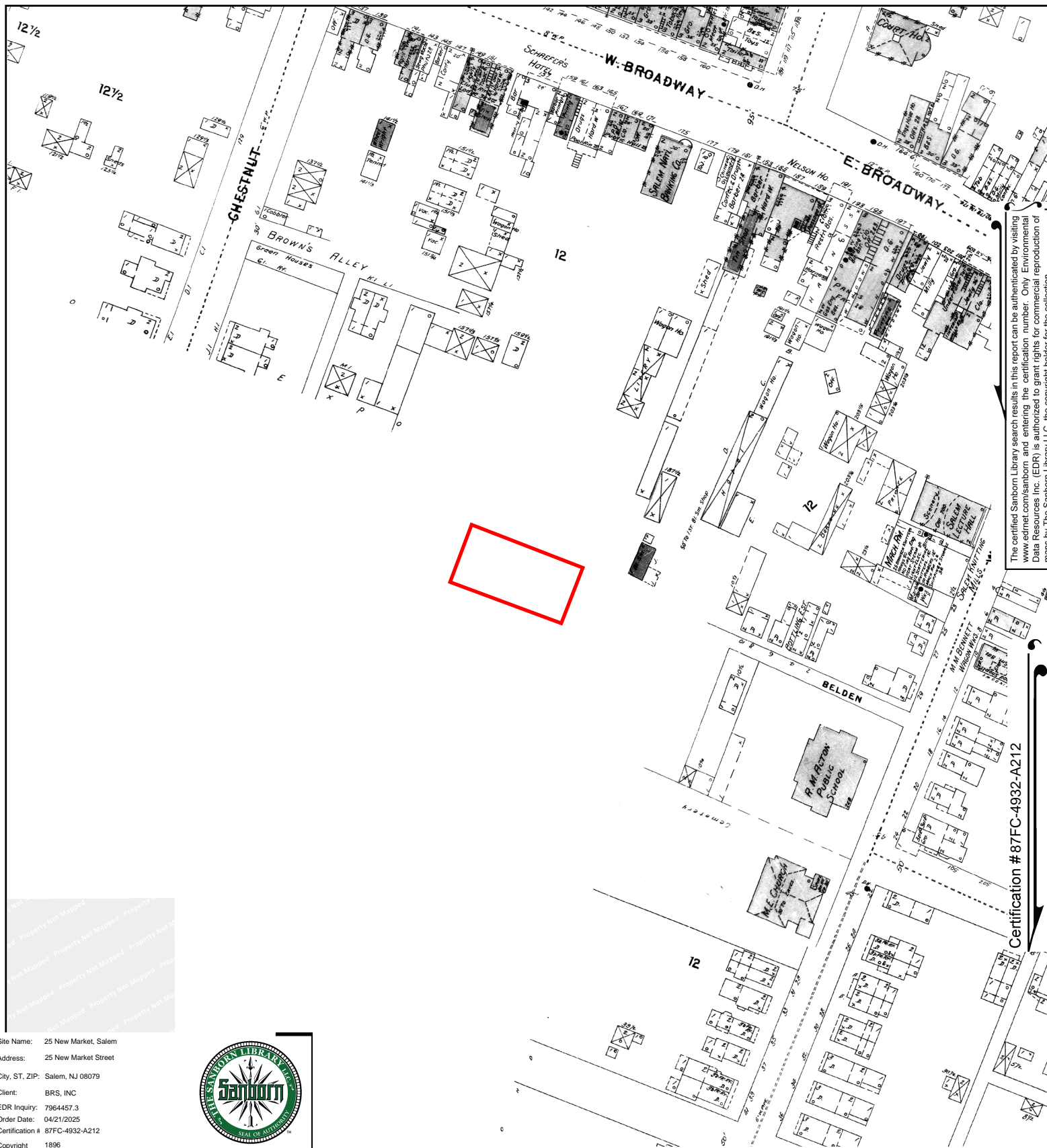


Volume 1, Sheet 5
 Volume 1, Sheet 4





7964457 - 3 page 14



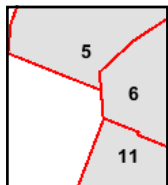
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Certification #87FC-4932-A212

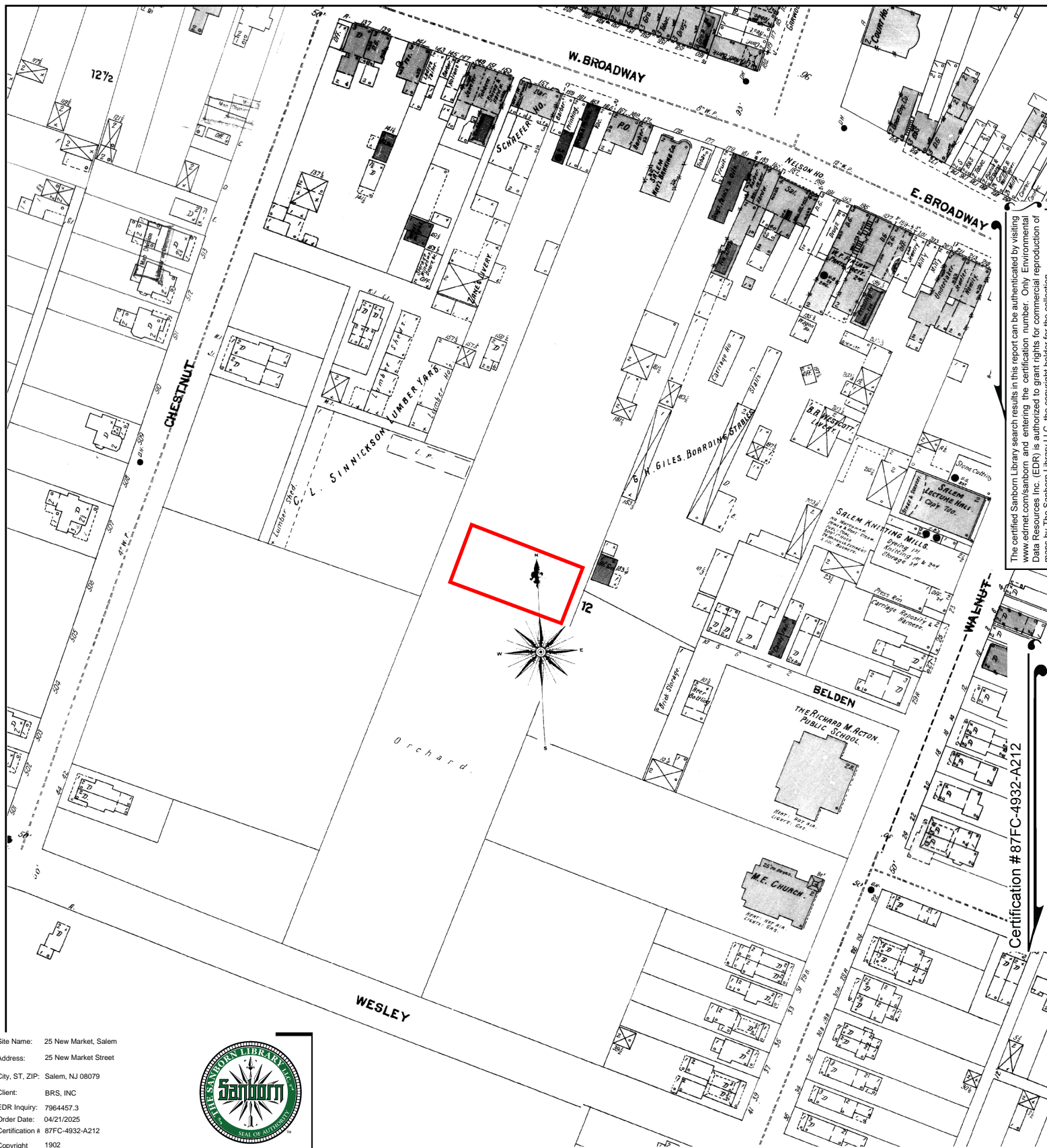
Site Name: 25 New Market, Salem
 Address: 25 New Market Street
 City, ST, ZIP: Salem, NJ 08079
 Client: BRS, INC
 EDR Inquiry: 7964457.3
 Order Date: 04/21/2025
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 Copyright: 1896



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Volume 1, Sheet 6
 Volume 1, Sheet 5
 Volume 1, Sheet 11



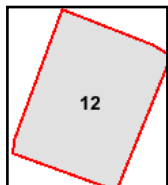
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Certification #87FC-4932-A212

Site Name: 25 New Market, Salem
Address: 25 New Market Street
City, ST, ZIP: Salem, NJ 08079
Client: BRS, INC
EDR Inquiry: 7964457.3
Order Date: 04/21/2025
Certification #: 87FC-4932-A212
Copyright: 1902



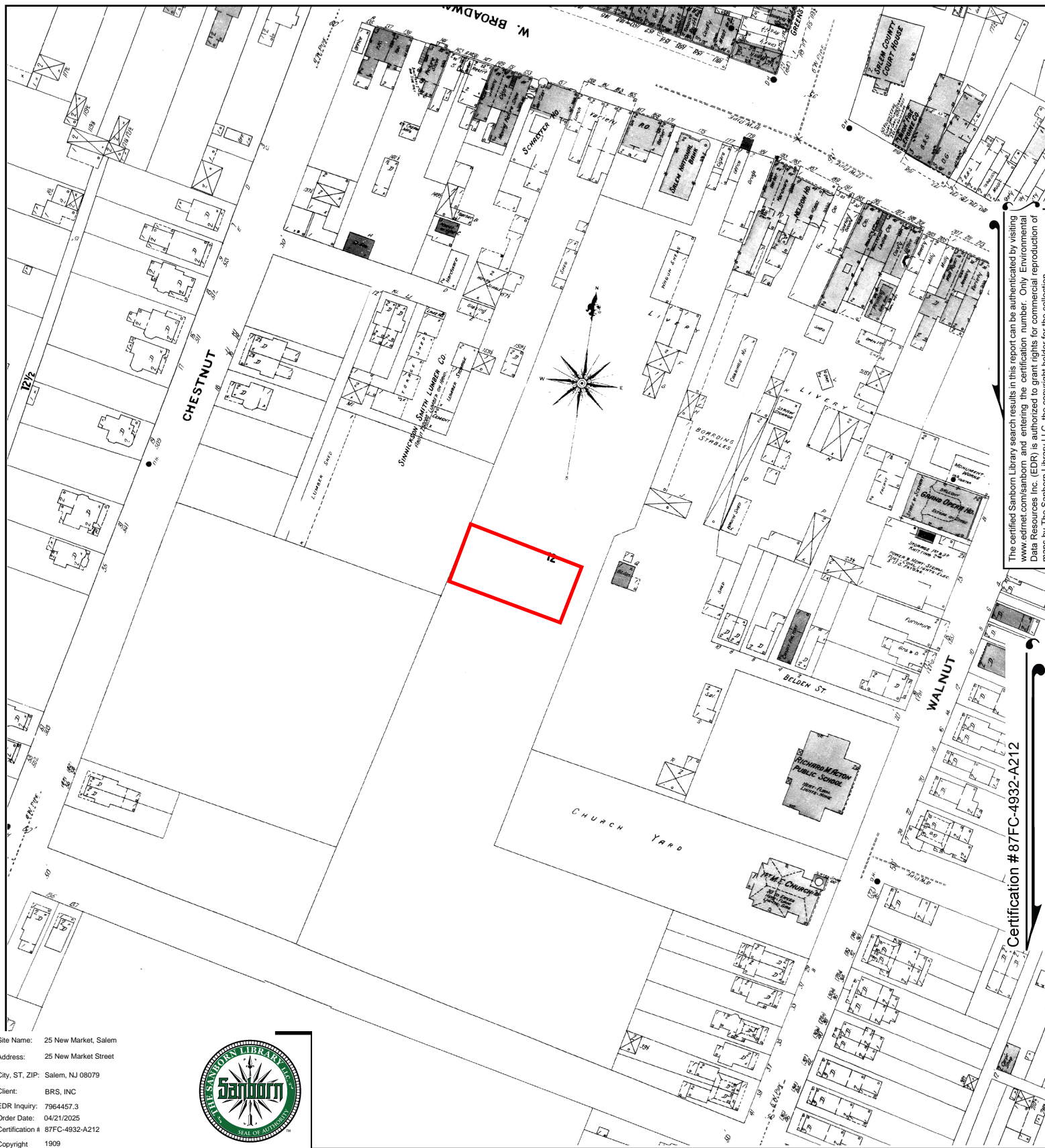
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Outlined areas indicate map sheets within the collection.



Volume 1, Sheet 12

0 Feet 150 300 600





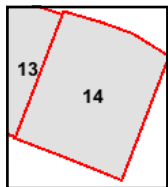
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Certification #87FC-4932-A212

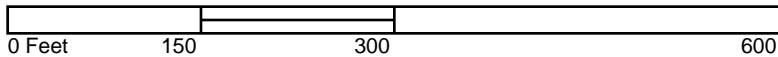
Site Name: 25 New Market, Salem
 Address: 25 New Market Street
 City, ST, ZIP: Salem, NJ 08079
 Client: BRS, INC
 EDR Inquiry: 7964457.3
 Order Date: 04/21/2025
 Certification #: 87FC-4932-A212
 Copyright: 1909

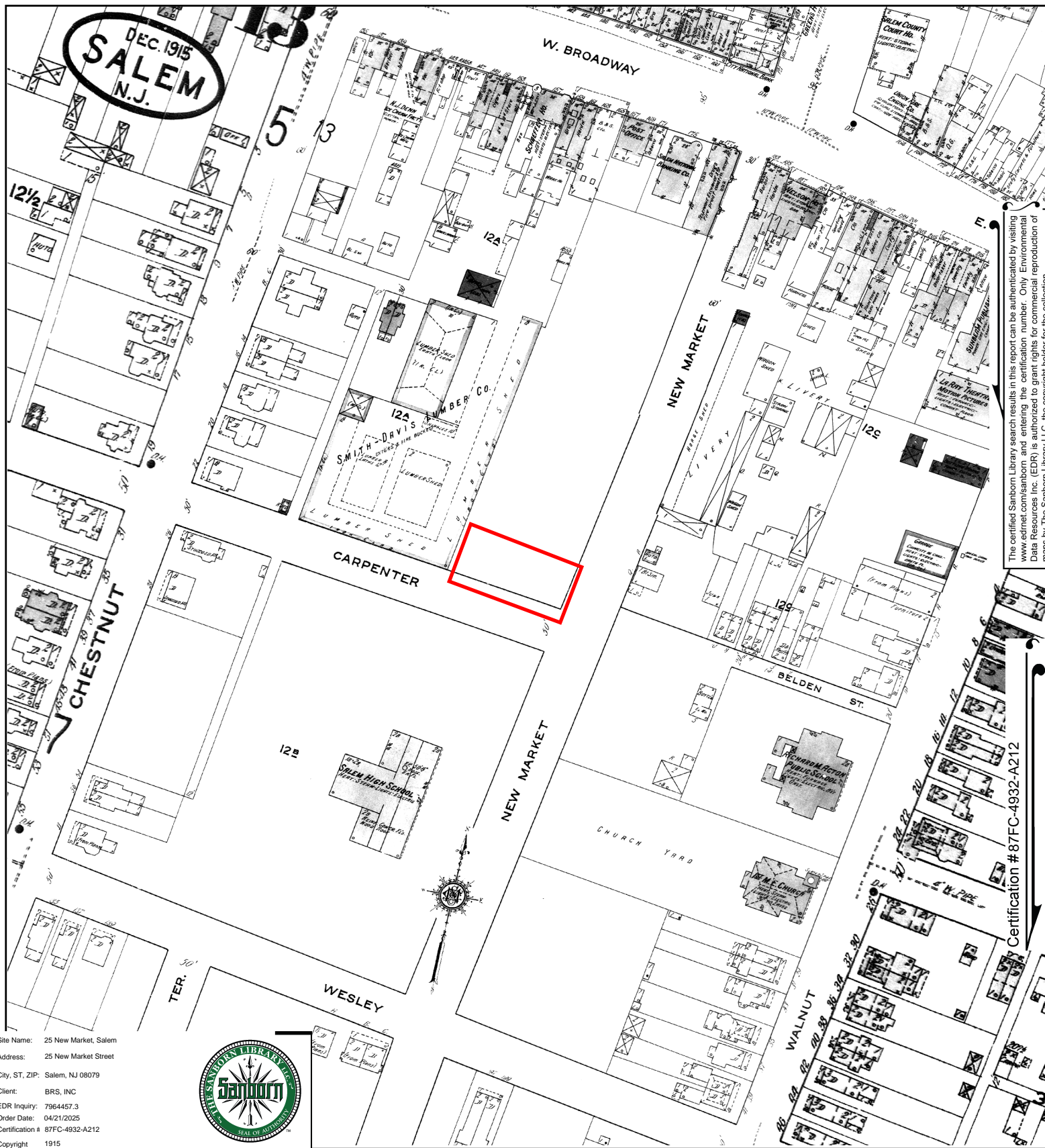


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Volume 1, Sheet 13
 Volume 1, Sheet 14





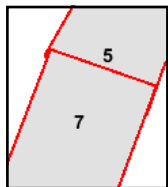
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Certification # 87FC-4932-A212

Site Name: 25 New Market, Salem
Address: 25 New Market Street
City, ST, ZIP: Salem, NJ 08079
Client: BRS, INC
EDR Inquiry: 7964457.3
Order Date: 04/21/2025
Certification #: 87FC-4932-A212
Copyright: 1915

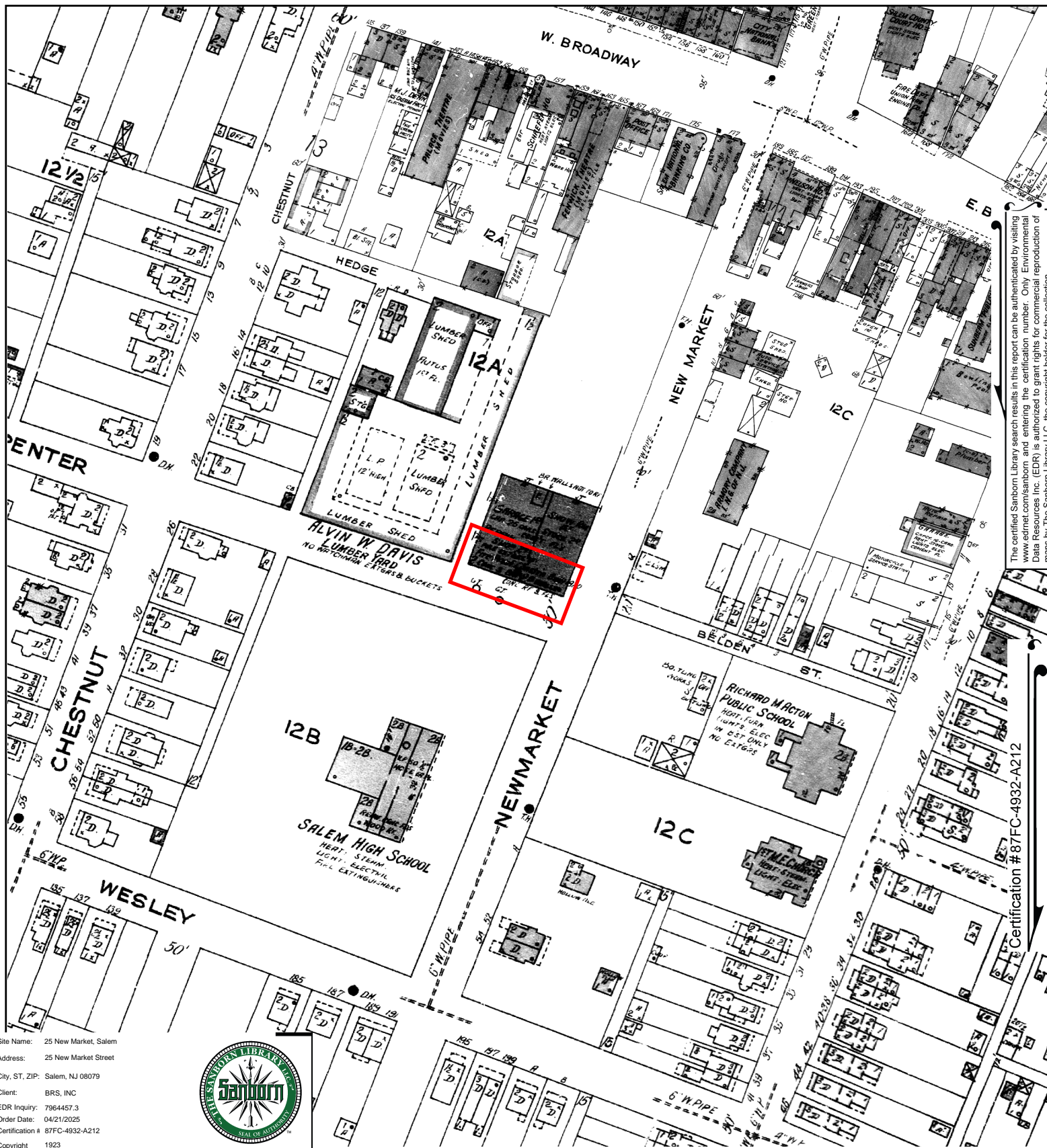


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Volume 1, Sheet 5
Volume 1, Sheet 7

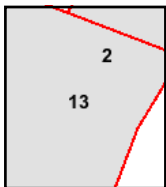




Site Name: 25 New Market, Salem
 Address: 25 New Market Street
 City, ST, ZIP: Salem, NJ 08079
 Client: BRS, INC
 EDR Inquiry: 7964457.3
 Order Date: 04/21/2025
 Certification #: 87FC-4932-A212
 Copyright: 1923



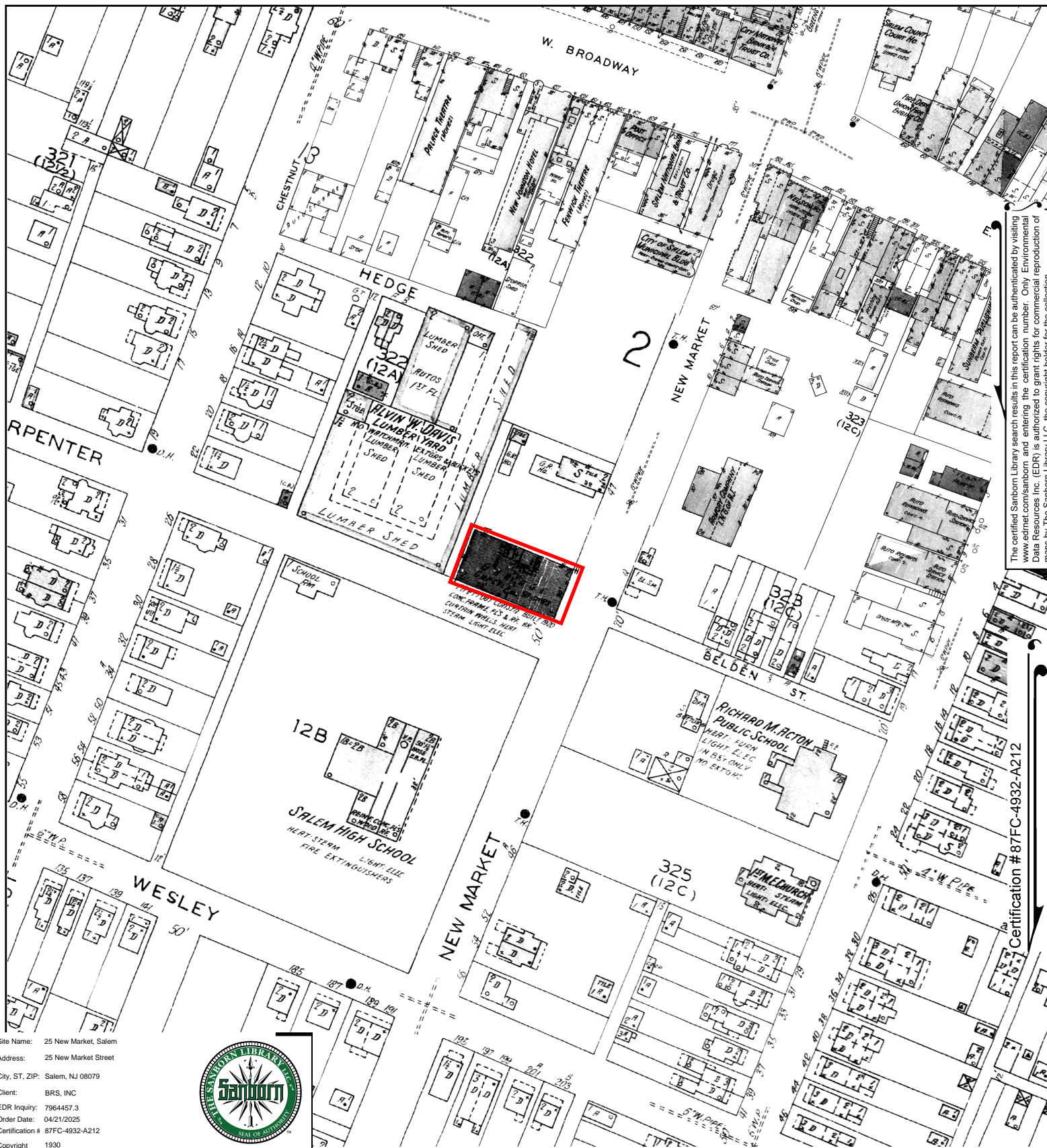
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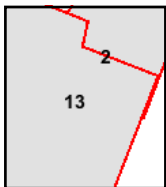
Volume 1, Sheet 13
 Volume 1, Sheet 2

0 Feet 150 300 600



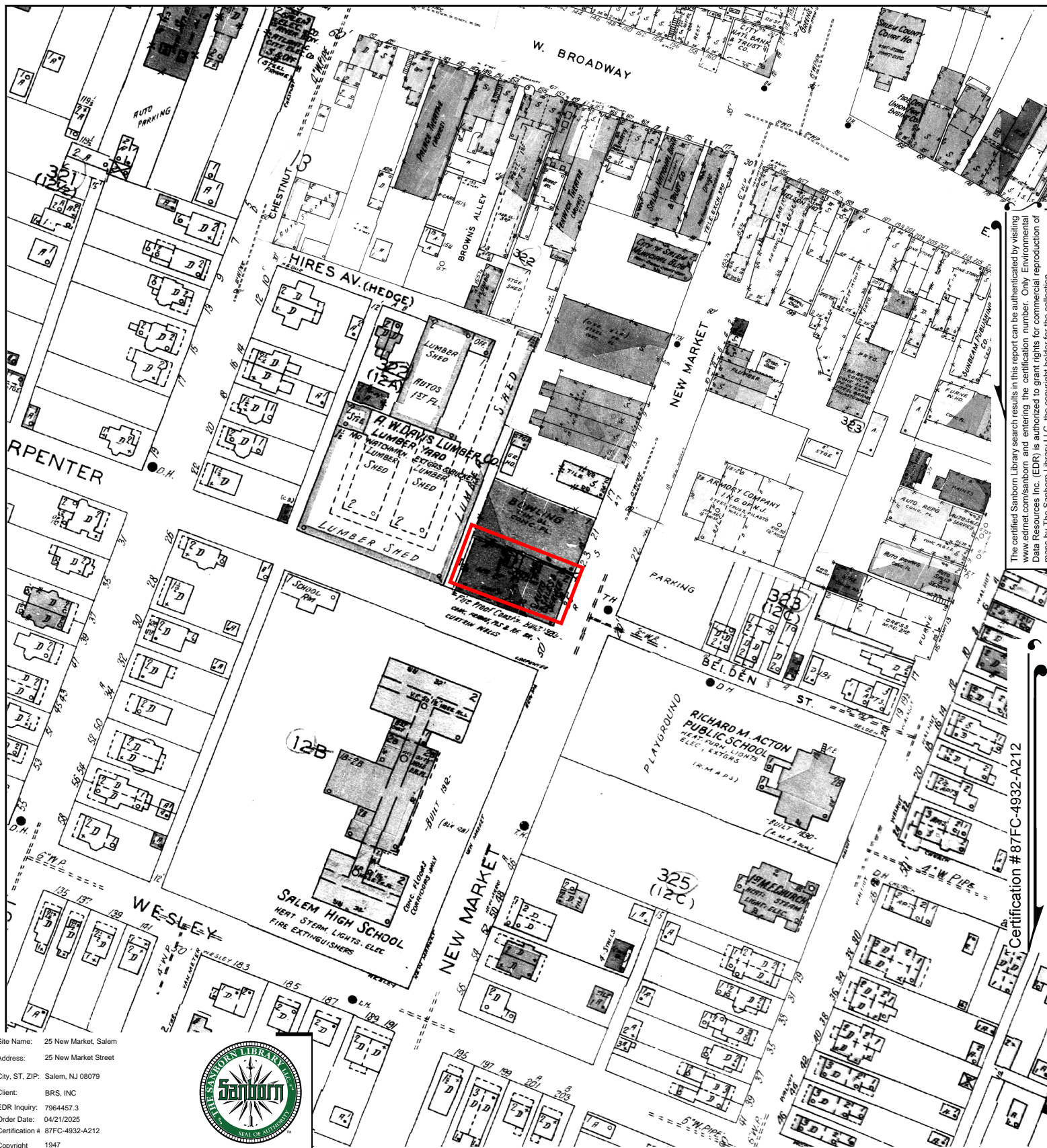


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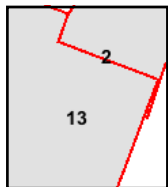
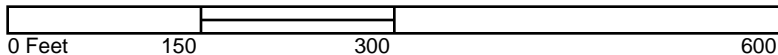


Volume 1, Sheet 2
 Volume 1, Sheet 13



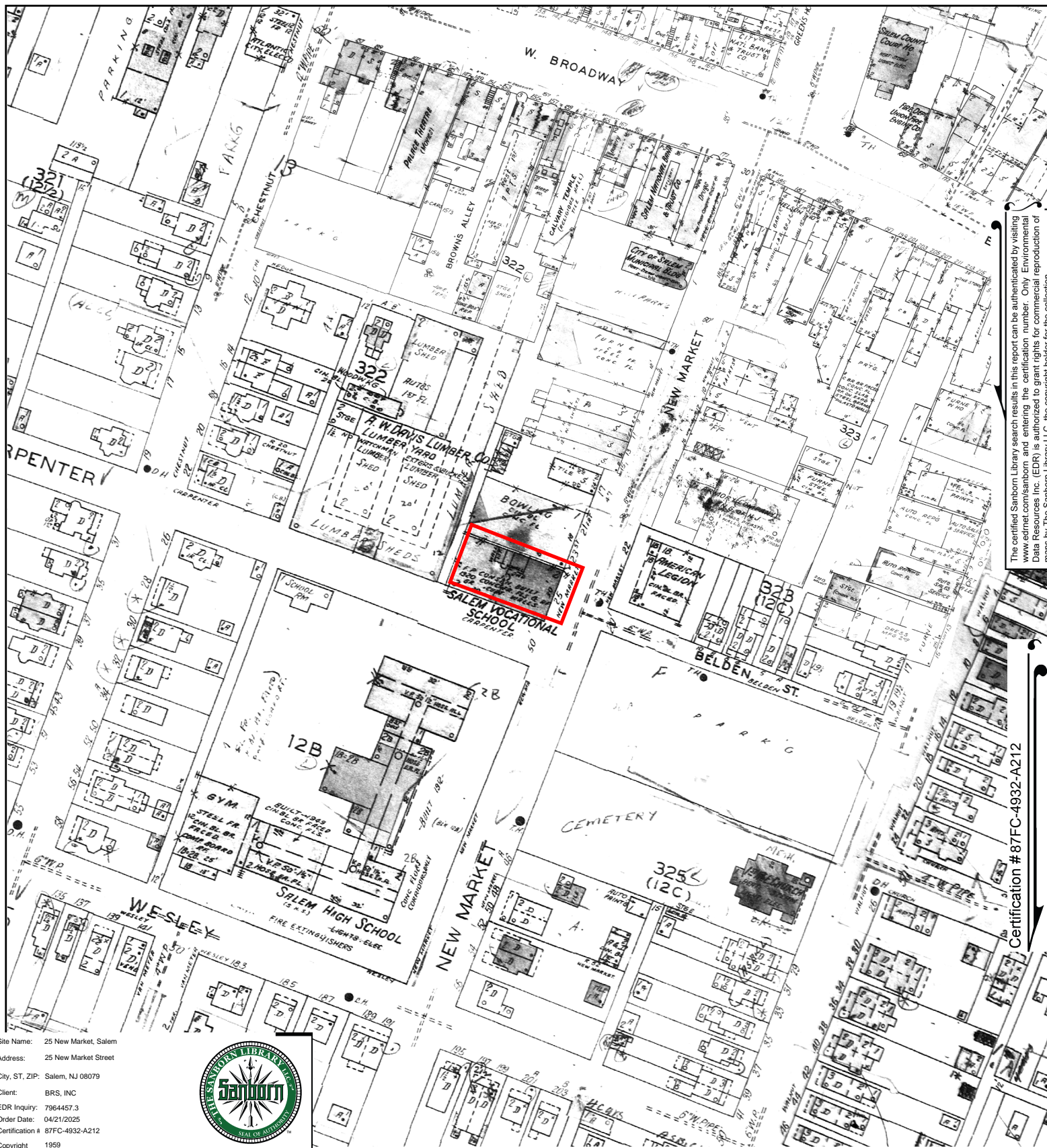


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Volume 1, Sheet 13
 Volume 1, Sheet 2





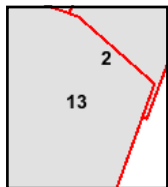
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Certification # 87FC-4932-A212

Site Name: 25 New Market, Salem
 Address: 25 New Market Street
 City, ST, ZIP: Salem, NJ 08079
 Client: BRS, INC
 EDR Inquiry: 7964457.3
 Order Date: 04/21/2025
 Certification # 87FC-4932-A212
 Copyright 1959



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Volume 1, Sheet 2
 Volume 1, Sheet 13



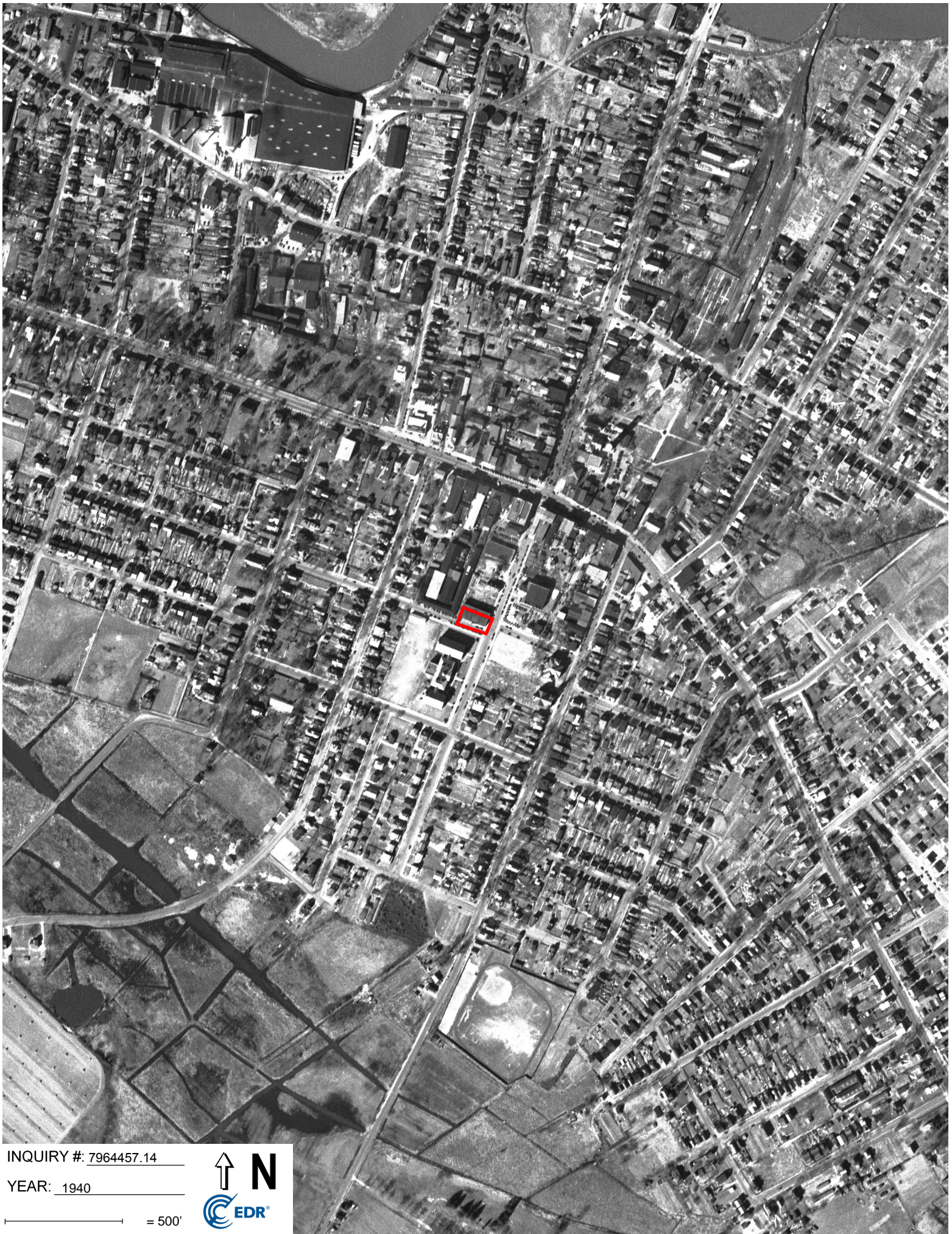


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YEAR: 1931

— = 500'





INQUIRY #: 7964457.14

YEAR: 1940

— = 500'



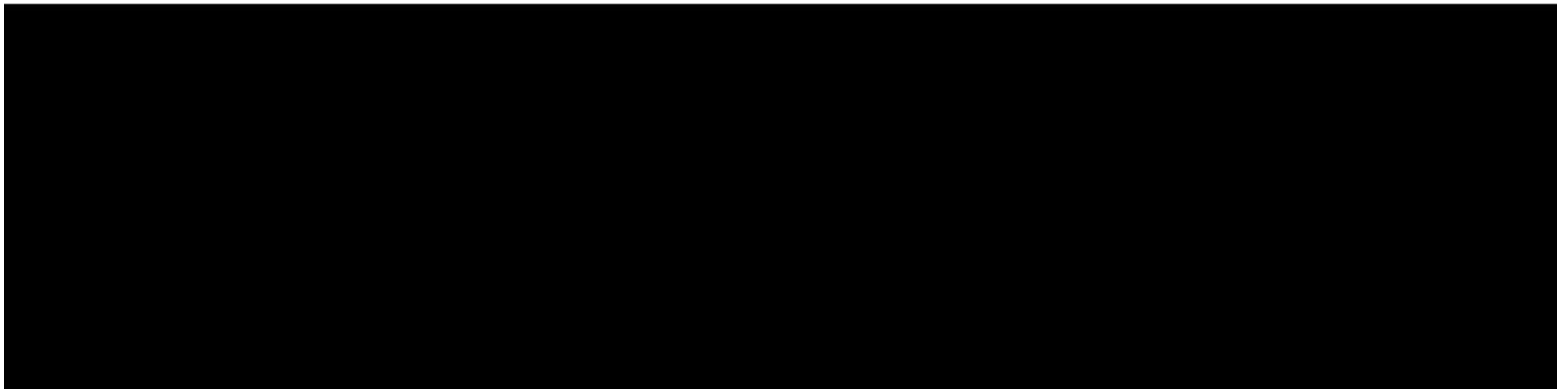


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YEAR: 1951

— = 500'





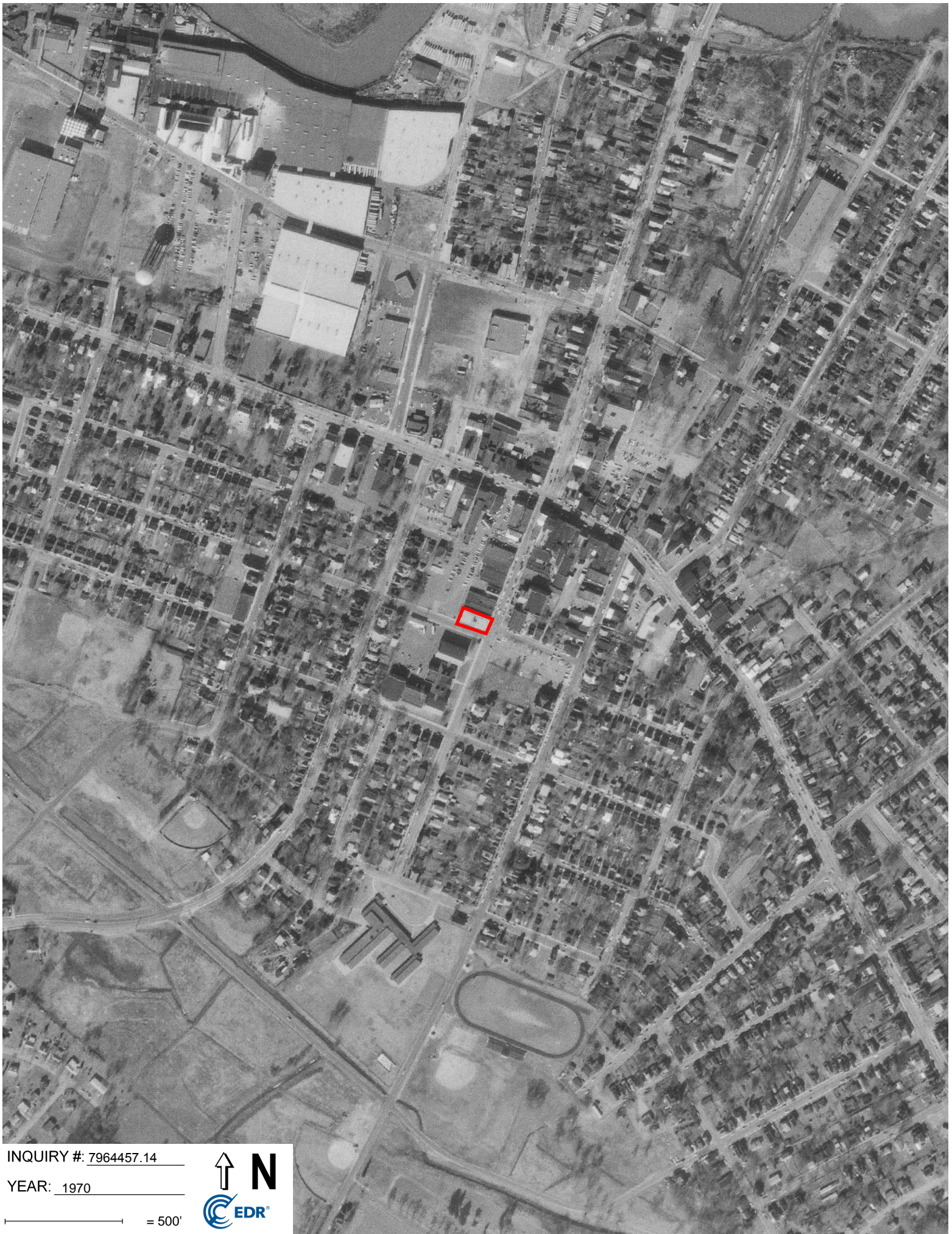


INQUIRY #: 7964457.14

YEAR: 1962

— = 500'





INQUIRY #: 7964457.14

YEAR: 1970

— = 500'





INQUIRY #: 7964457.14

YEAR: 1974

— = 500'





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YEAR: 1981

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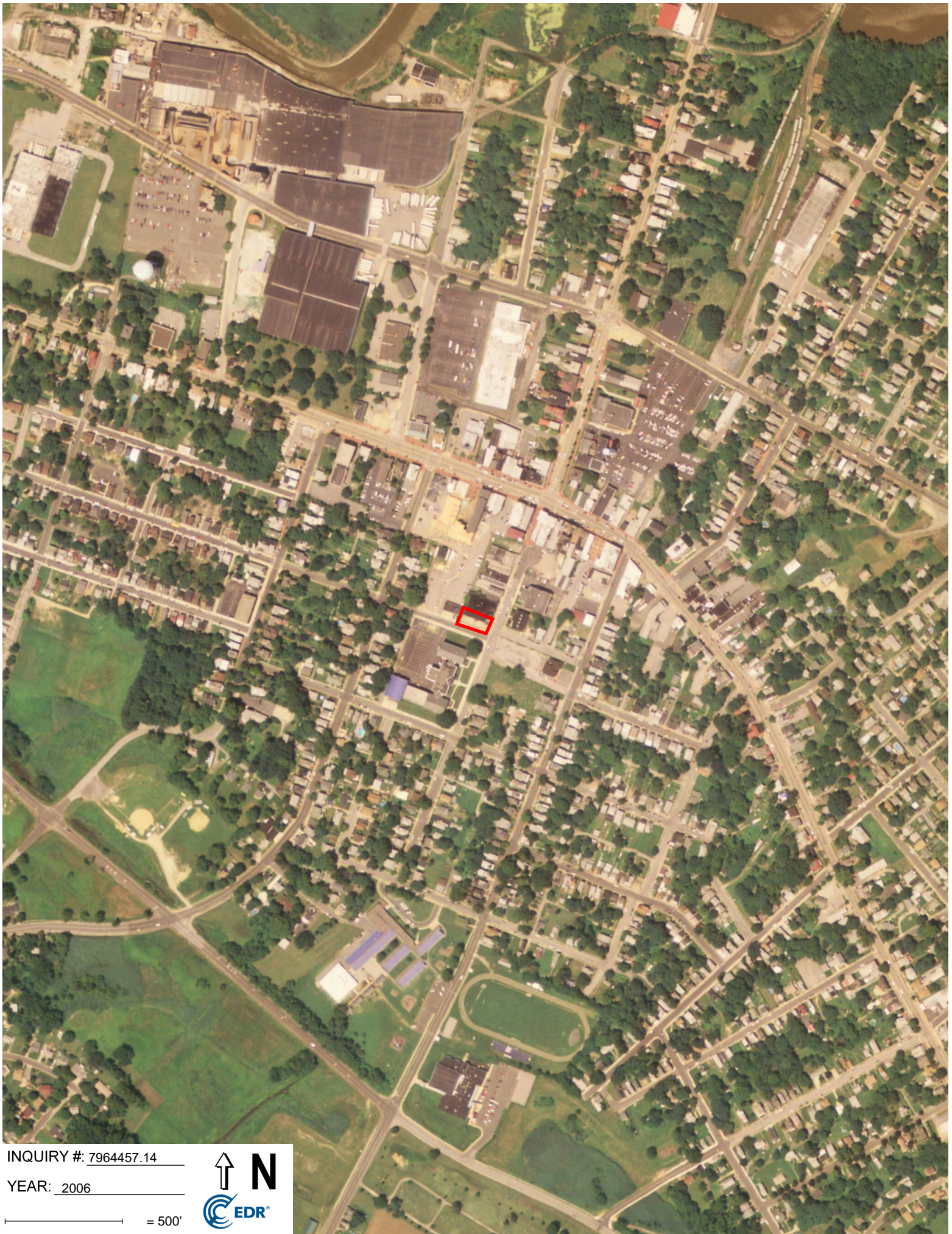


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YEAR: 1997

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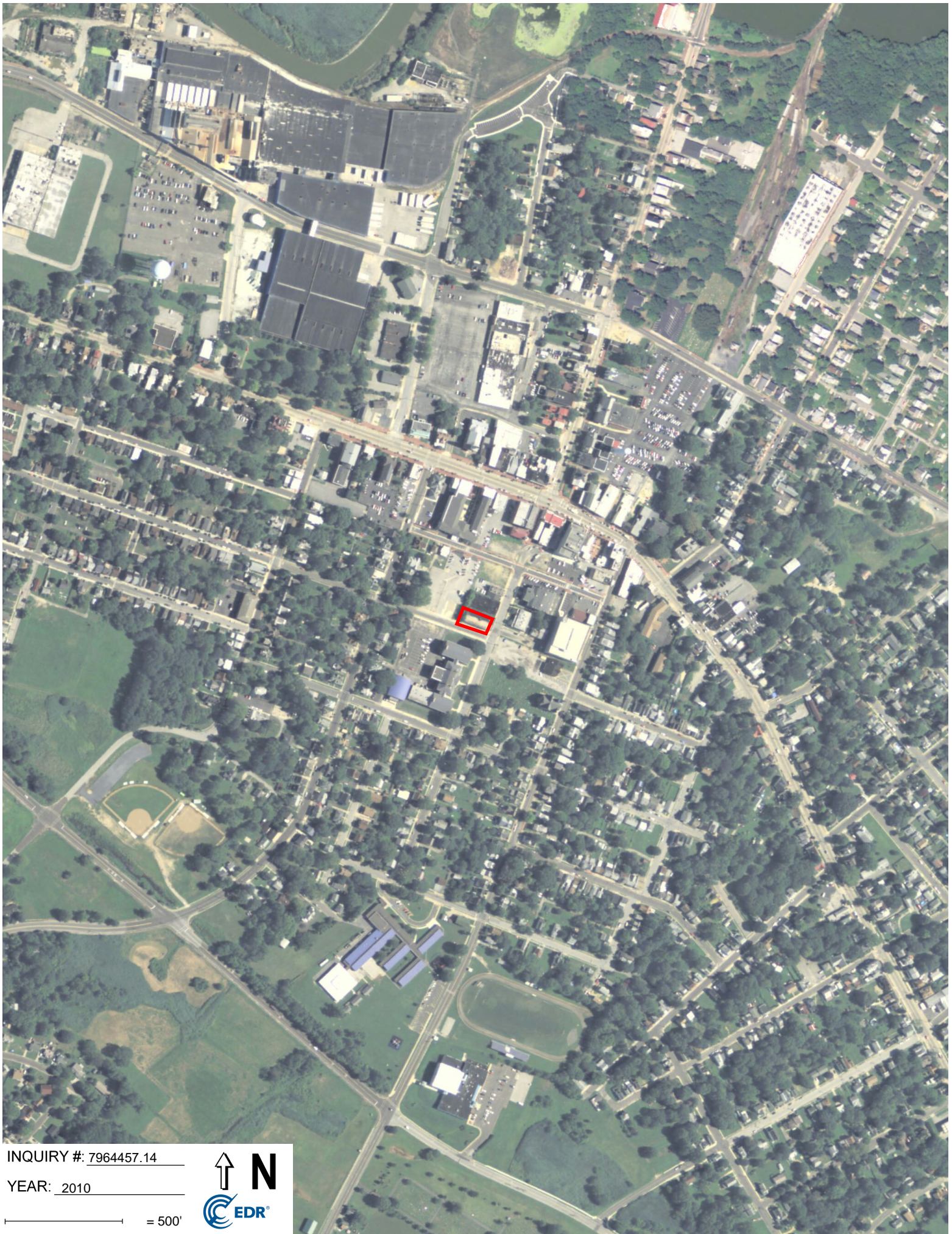


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YEAR: 2006

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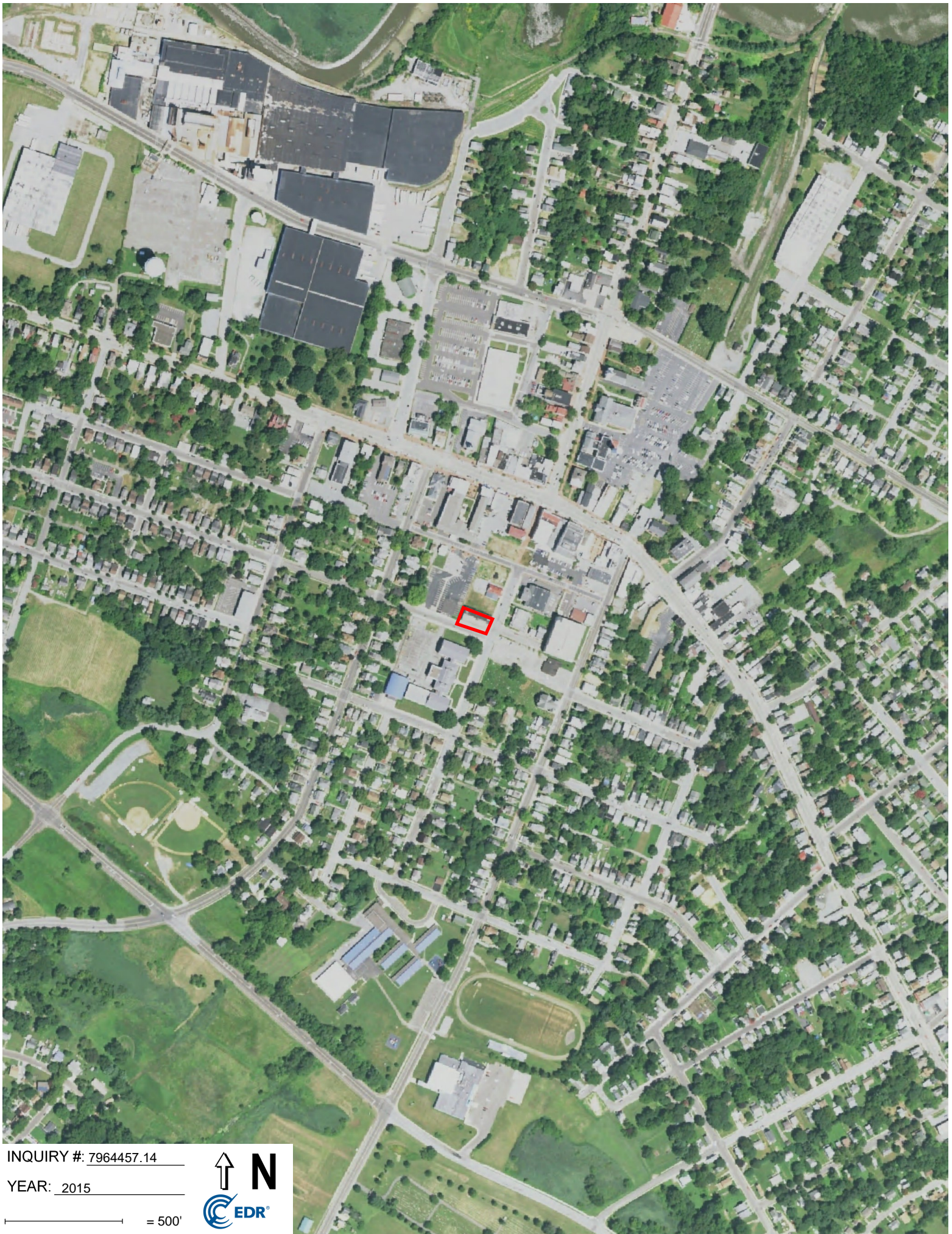


INQUIRY #: 7964457.14

YEAR: 2010

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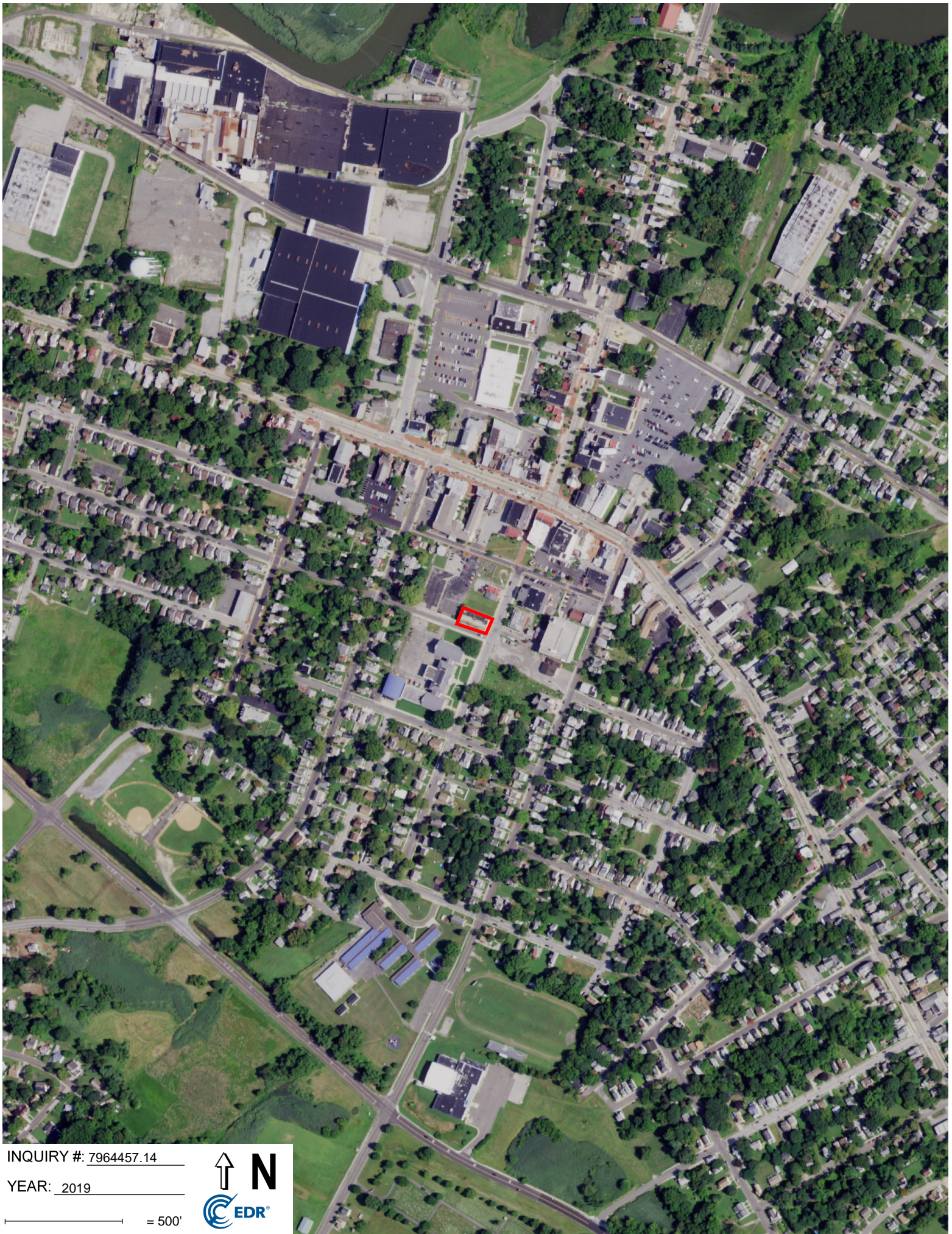


INQUIRY #: 7964457.14

YEAR: 2015

— = 500'





INQUIRY #: 7964457.14

YEAR: 2019

— = 500'

