NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. Aug. 2002)

OMB No. 1024-0018
(Expires 1-31-2009)

FINAL

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name American Sheet and Tin Mill Apartment Building

other names/site number The Edison Concept Houses

2. Location

street & number 633 West 4th Avenue not for publication N/A
city or town Gary vicinity NA
state Indiana code IN county Lake code 089 zip code 46402

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this __X__ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property __X__ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide _X__ locally.
(___See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
____ entered in the National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined eligible for the National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined not eligible for the National Register
____ removed from the National Register
____ other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

_X_ private
___ public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

_X_ building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Concrete in the Steel City: The Edison Concept Houses of Gary, Indiana

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: multiple dwelling

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: multiple dwelling

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)
Late 19th & Early 20th Century American Movements: Bungalow/ Craftsman

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
foundation _CONCRETE
roof _ASPHALT
walls _CONCRETE
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

_X_ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

____ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

_X_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ENGINEERING
INVENTION

Period of Significance
1910-1958

Significant Dates
1910

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Creighton, D. F.
The United States Sheet and Tin Plate Company

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

____ B removed from its original location.

____ C a birthplace or a grave.

____ D a cemetery.

____ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

____ F a commemorative property.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
_____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
_X_ University
___ Other
Name of repository:
Indiana University Northwest Calumet Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	471220	4605610	3	__	_____	_____
2	__	_____	_____	4	__	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christopher Baas
organization _____ date May 2008
street & number 21116 North Banbury _____ telephone (317)877-7799
city or town Noblesville _____ state IN _____ zip code 46062

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name Fletcher and Marian Chapman
street & number 633 East Fourth Avenue _____ telephone _____
city or town Gary _____ state IN zip code 46402

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

7. Description

The American Sheet and Tin Mill Apartment Building is a two-story, concrete, four-flat building located on the south side of the 600 block of 4th Avenue, in the First Subdivision of Gary, Indiana. The property has a single contributing resource, and is occupied. The building is located on 4th Avenue between Van Buren Street and Jackson Street. Jackson Park is located across 4th Avenue to the north, the Jackson-Monroe Historic District (that contains Edison Concept Houses) is located to the east, and residential properties are located to the south and west.

The apartment building is two stories in height, and has a raised foundation and a flat parapet roof. Stacked porches, one for each story, are located at each end of the structure. The building is oriented east and west, with the long side and main façade facing north onto 4th Avenue. Its plain exterior is embellished with minimal Arts & Crafts style details, and the interior also displays retrained Arts and Crafts style details.

Patterns of fenestration and architectural details are used to divide the asymmetrical main façade into nine bays, not including the two end porches. The entry section is flanked by five bays and a porch to the east, and four bays and a porch to the west (Photos 1 and 2). The building is topped by a parapet wall that slightly projects out from the building's face, and simulates a cornice. The parapet delineates the individual sections with recessed panels and small battlement-like projections. A small, triangular pedimented parapet tops the entry section near the center of the building. The raised basement is delineated by a horizontal concrete band that runs the length of the structure between the porches. It mimics a water table, and also acts a continuous sill for the lower story windows. The wall below the band has several small windows filled with glass block, and metal coal chute doors. The upper story window openings have concrete sills. The exterior walls are finished in a coating of concrete and cinders (Photo 5).[1] Many of the north façade's second-story windows have been replaced with vinyl sashes and storm windows. The south façade's windows have been replaced with wood sashes and storm windows.

The entry section's lower story has a recessed door accessed by concrete steps. The opening to the recess has chamfered corners, and is topped by a broken pediment supported by brackets. The upper story has paired one-over-one double-hung windows. The entry section sits between two plain pilasters that extend from the sidewalk to just past the top of the parapet. The pilasters are slightly wider on the lower story (Photo 3).

The two sections flanking the entry are identical, and have a ribbon of three one-over-one double-hung windows on the lower story, and paired one-over-one double-hung windows on the upper story. Each remaining section has two one-over-one double-hung windows on the lower story, and two one-over-one double-hung windows on the upper story.

The porch end sections are identical, and their roofline is slightly lower than the main block of the building. Although the porches were historically open, they have been enclosed to expand the interior living space. The lower story is accessed from the sidewalk by a set of stairs, and the opening onto the porch has ornately chamfered top corners. The opening has been enclosed with a door. The upper story has a window opening with chamfered corners, and a concrete sill. Its opening has been enclosed with paired one-over-one double-hung windows. There is a formed panel with recessed margins between the first and second stories, and a recessed panel above the second story opening (Photo 4).

[1] "Secures Permits for Six Houses", *Gary Daily Tribune*, August 13, 1910, 1. The Tribune reported that permits were secured for several flat buildings "of plain but attractive architecture." The article further explained the exterior will be "finished with cinders, an attractive finish that has not been used in buildings here [in Gary]."

The east and west facades are identical, and display the building's porch ends. Each story has two, large porch openings that have been enclosed. The lower story openings have ornately chamfered top corners and concrete sills, and have been enclosed with a ribbon of four one-over-one double-hung windows. The upper story has two larger window openings with chamfered corners, and concrete sills. They have also been enclosed with a ribbon of four one-over-one double-hung windows. There are two formed panels between the first and second stories, and two formed panels above the second story windows.

The south, or rear, façade is a plain, unornamented wall punctuated with a door and several windows. A ground-story entry door below a second-story one-over-one double-hung window is located at about the center of the facade. They are flanked on the east by four one-over-one double-hung windows on each story, and on the west by three one-over-one double-hung windows on each story. The south façade of the porches are identical. The lower story opening has ornately chamfered top corners and concrete sills, and has been enclosed with paired one-over-one double-hung windows. The upper story has a window opening with chamfered corners, and concrete sills. It has also been enclosed with paired one-over-one double-hung windows. A formed panel is located between the first and second stories, and a formed panel is located above the second story window. A pilaster-like column is located between the east porch and the structure's main block. Downspouts are located in the parapet of the main block and each porch (Photo 4).

Both stories of the interior have identical layouts of two apartments flanking a central stairwell. There are four flats total: two one-bedroom flats west of the central stairwell, and two two-bedroom flats located east of the stairwell. The central stairwell space runs from the front to the rear of the structure. It has exterior entries from both the front and rear facades, and provides access to all four apartments and the basement. The stairs is comprised of plain, square newel and balustrade posts topped with a simple square cap and molding, and a balustrade of slender vertical balusters between a milled handrail and plain bottom rail (Photo 6).

The one-bedroom flats have a living room, kitchen and pantry, bedroom, and bathroom efficiently clustered around a small hallway that connects to the central stairwell. A door to the porch is located in the living room. The two-bedroom apartments are more linear in layout, and have two bedrooms and a living room across the front of the building, and a rambling hall, kitchen and bathroom across the back. Like the one-bedroom, a door to the porch is located in the living room. The ground-story porches can also be accessed from the 4th Avenue sidewalk.

The basement is divided into four storage rooms, and a coal and furnace room.

The interior walls are formed concrete concealed with panels of weaved lath and plaster. The interior oak woodwork exhibits a restrained Arts & Crafts style. The floors are assembled from slender tongue-and-groove planks, and the baseboards are simple planks topped with a molding. Some walls still have a picture rail. The doors have a large panel over a small panel, and exterior doors have a single light in place of the upper panel. Door and window surrounds simulate a classical entablature supported by column-like jambs (Photos 7-10).

8. Statement of Significance

The American Sheet and Tin Mill Apartment Building is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A as an example of the historic trends in the development and growth of the City of Gary. It represents a novel concept for construction designed, patented, and promoted by inventor Thomas A. Edison, and refined by other architects and inventors. The building is a result of the country's first experiment of this type of large-scale housing production. Constructed for the employees of the U.S. Sheet and Tin Plate Company, it is also representative of a solution to the city's housing shortage caused by the influx of workers to the new mills.

The building is eligible under Criterion C as an outstanding example of early twentieth century company-supplied worker housing that utilized experimental methods and materials of house construction. It was designed by architect D. F. Creighton of Ambridge, Pennsylvania, and exhibits simple, efficient, and homey spaces.

The building is included in the *Concrete in the Steel City: The Edison Concept Houses of Gary, Indiana* (2007, and revised 2008) Multiple Property Document within the historic context of *United States Sheet and Tin Plate Company Concrete Houses of Gary, Indiana, 1910-1957*. The building's period of significance is 1910-1958. Its construction began in 1910, and the fifty year benchmark for eligibility is 1958. By 1910, Gary's private enterprises could not meet the housing demand caused by the new U.S. Steel mill works and its subsidiaries. To help speed the transfer of management level employees, the subsidiary U.S. Sheet and Tin Plate Company constructed worker housing in the form of apartment buildings, cottages, and terraces.

The concrete buildings are the first large-scale attempt of employing Thomas Edison's concept of providing affordable and sanitary housing for the working classes. Beginning in 1906, Edison patented metal forms and a process for casting a house in a single pour. While Edison never successfully employed his invention, the concept was assumed and developed by others, including the Reichert Manufacturing Company (that patented the forms used in Gary). The method was described in 1920 as "small, light-weight unit steel forms."[2] Their advantage over other concrete forming systems (for instance wood or hydraulic forms) was the ability to be assembled with unskilled labor in repeated applications. The forms were invented and patented in Milwaukee, Wisconsin by August Reichert in 1911, and sold under the name of Reichert Adjustable Metal Forms. Apparently, it was further refined about 1919 and renamed Metaforms. The company is still actively producing concrete related products.

2 Whipple, *Concrete Houses: How They Were Built*, 10.

The apartment building at 633 West 4th Avenue is arguably the most significant of the remaining concrete resources. The apartments were the first of the buildings to be erected, and 633 is the only remaining apartment building of the six constructed. Furthermore, the apartment buildings, along with the cottage at 608 Polk Street, are the only resources constructed entirely of formed concrete. The subsequent terraces and cottages have formed concrete shells, but wood frame interiors.

The Multiple Property Document presented the houses' historic context, significance, and conditions for listing. To be eligible for listing, the four-flat apartment building must individually display the integrity of design, location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The building's overall design must be intact. The exterior appearance and interior spaces must represent original design and construction, the concrete building material must not be covered or altered, and a representative portion of the historic woodwork must remain. Porches can be enclosed, but should still appear as a porch. Representative interiors could include intact volume of primary living spaces, details such as woodwork and other materials that might assist in defining "representative." The apartment building must be in its original location, and in a setting representative of the First Subdivision's streetscapes and housing. Historic materials must be represented to a degree that adequately illustrates the architect's design, especially the concrete walls and cast details, and interior woodwork, plaster, and windows. The workmanship of the cast concrete exteriors and interior woodwork must be evident. It must retain the feeling of a residential area in an early twentieth-century industrial city.

The building maintains a high degree of integrity. Although the end porches have been enclosed, the exterior is unchanged. The interior has a few minor alterations that are reversible. The downstairs two-bedroom was divided to create an efficiency apartment, but its original floor plan has been restored. The windows have been replaced, but with similar one-over-one double-hung sashes, and in the original sizes and groupings. Almost all the original woodwork remains, although some has been painted, or stained a lighter color.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Baas, Christopher. *Concrete in the Steel City: The Edison Concept Houses of Gary, Indiana* Multiple Property Document, 2007.

Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. *Lake County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory*. Indianapolis, 1996.

Whipple, Harvey. 'How Will the Individual Owner Get a Concrete House?' in *Concrete Houses: How They Were Built*. Detroit: Concrete-Cement Age Publishing Company, 1920.

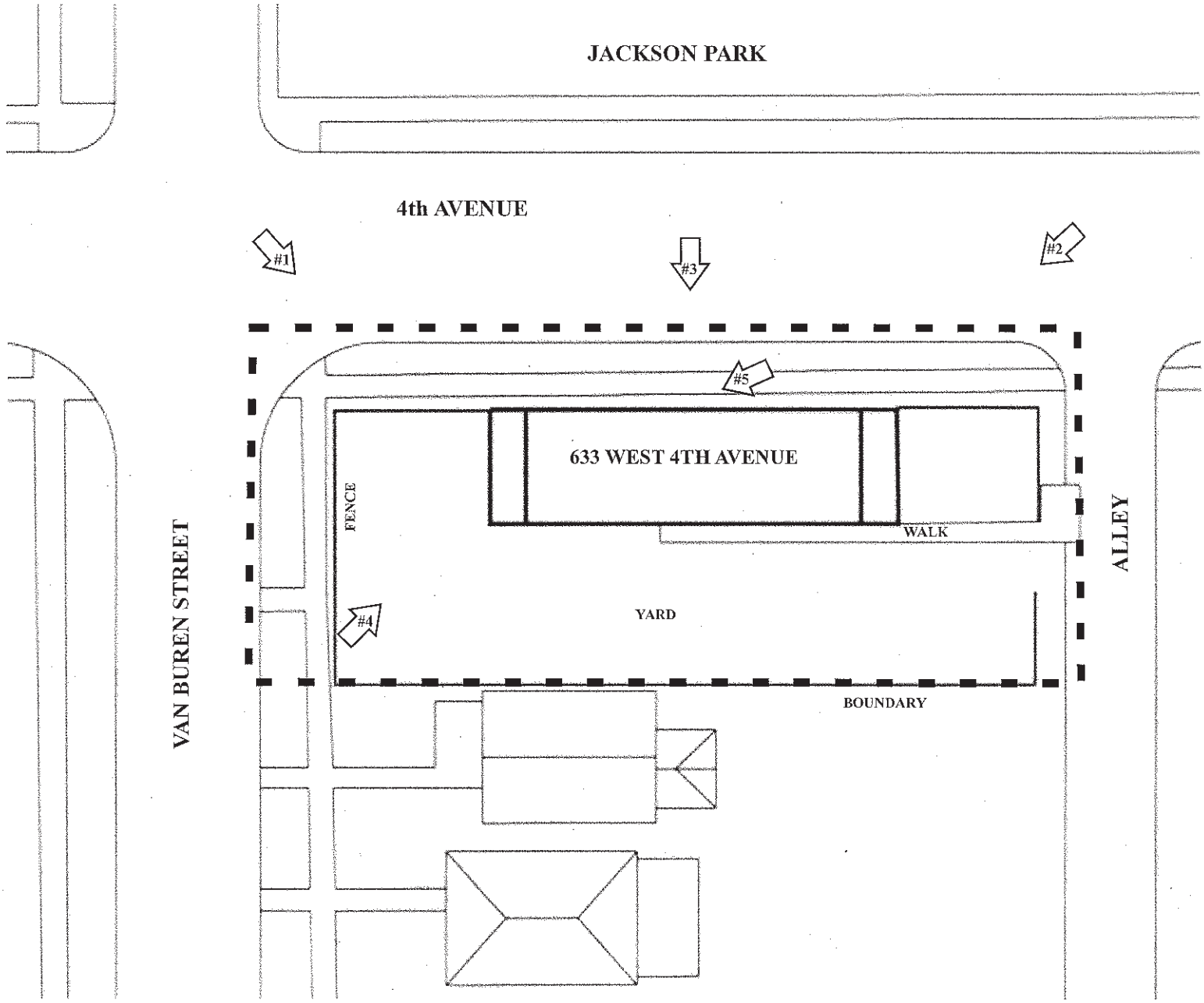
10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is a rectangle that starts at a point of beginning at a position on south curb line of 4th Avenue, even with the east curb line of Van Buren Street; then east to a point even with the east property line of 633 West 4th Avenue; then south to a point on the southeast corner of 633 West 4th Avenue; then west to a point on the east curb line of Van Buren Street; then north to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary uses easily identifiable points to define its limits, includes all contributing resources, and excludes neighboring properties.

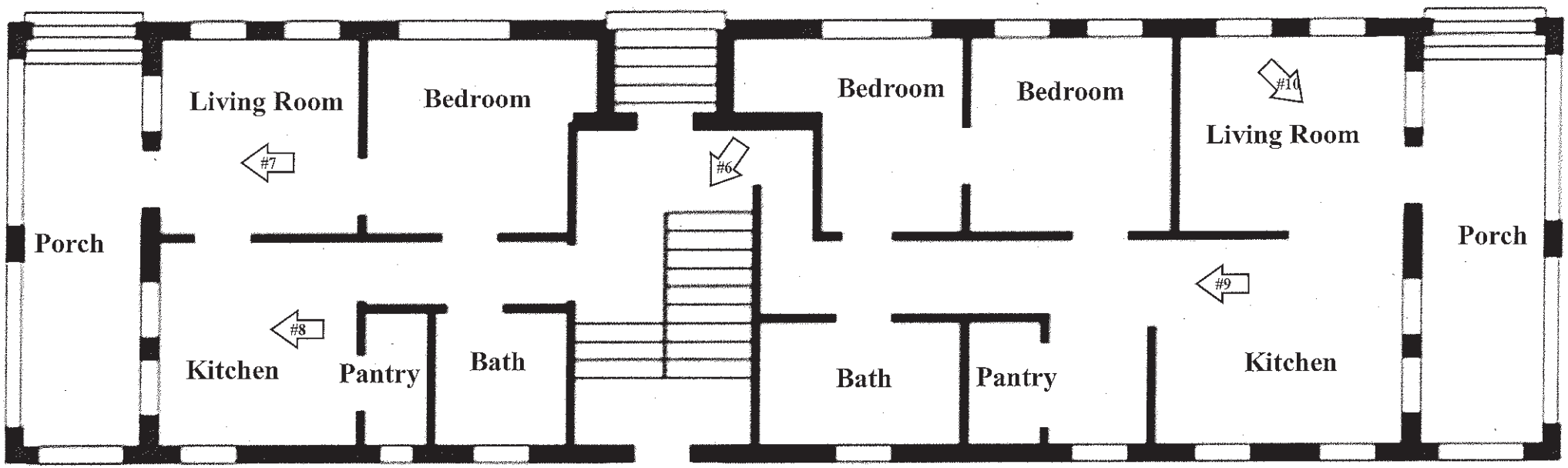


American Sheet and Tin Mill Apartment Building
633 West Forth Avenue
City of Gary, Lake County, Indiana

NORTH

NO SCALE

#1 PHOTO NUMBER AND DIRECTION OF VIEW



NO SCALE

American Sheet and Tin Mill Apartment Building
633 West Forth Avenue
City of Gary, Lake County, Indiana

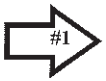
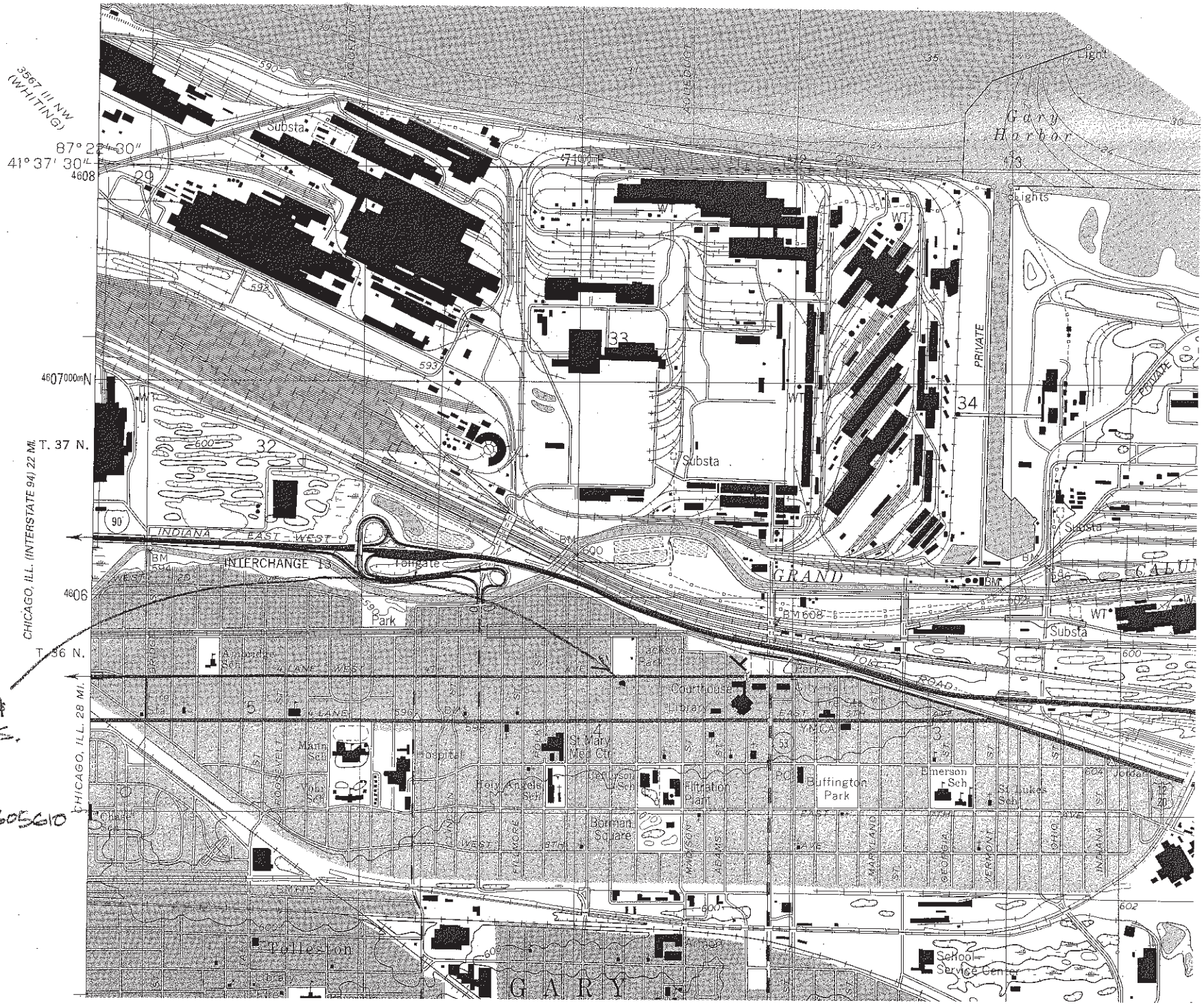


PHOTO NUMBER AND DIRECTION OF VIEW

Note: Plan shows the building's ground floor, but Photos 6, 9, and 10 are of the second floor.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



AMERICAN SHEET & TINPLATE APTS.
633 W. 4TH AVE.
GARY, LAKE CO., IN

UTM: 16 471220 4605610