

PROPERTY REPORT

Property ID: **-1263381396**

Property Name: National Silk Dyeing Company East Main Street Works
Address: 6-34 Piercy ST
Ownership: Private
Apartment #:
ZIP: 07522
Nearest cross street: Presidential Boulevard
Second cross street:
Distance to property: 0 ft **Compass Direction:** 180 degrees

PROPERTY LOCATION(S):

County:	Municipality:	Local Place Name:	USGS Quad:	Block:	Lot:
PASSAIC	Paterson	Paterson		115	1

Property Photo:



Old HSI Number:

NRIS Number:

HABS/HAER Number:

Description:

The National Silk Dyeing Company East Main Street Works is a complex of industrial buildings dating from circa 1910-1925 occupying the city block bounded by East Main Street, Presidential Boulevard, Piercy Street, Haledon Avenue and Holsman Street. Historically, it also included the circa 1895 Gaede Silk Dyeing works, which is located to the east on East Main Street and was absorbed into National in 1908. The Gaede Silk Dyeing works is covered on a separate form.

As currently composed, the National Silk Dyeing Company complex can be characterized as consisting of three interconnected industrial building types, arranged south to north facing Piercy Street. The southernmost building at the Presidential Boulevard and Piercy Street intersection is a 1.5-story, gabled brick steam plant with yellow-brick smokestack, built circa 1910. At the center of the Piercy Street block are 1-story brick buildings with clipped gable ends and monitor roofs, built circa 1910, that historically housed the works' weighting department where tin bichloride and other chemicals were added to the silk to give it body and "weight." At the north Holsman Street end of the complex is a 4-story, 5-bay, square plan, reinforced-concrete frame building, built circa 1925, that historically housed National's

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Property ID:

Page 1

Principal Investigator: Patrick Harshbarger

(Primary Contact)

-1263381396

Organization: Hunter Research, Inc.

finishing department with a state-of-the-art chemistry lab on the upper floor. In addition to the above, there are various mid-20th-century in-fills and a late-20th-century concrete-block warehouse located on the east side of the property.

Setting:

The dye works is located in a mixed-use industrial/commercial/residential setting on the north side of the Passaic River, which is located approximately 75 ft. south of the steam plant on the opposite side of Presidential Boulevard.

Registration and Status Dates:

National Historic Landmark?:

National Register:

New Jersey Register:

Determination of Eligibility:

Certification of Eligibility:

SHPO Opinion:

Local Designation:

Other Designation:

Other Designation Date:

Eligibility Worksheet included in present survey?

Is this Property an identifiable farm or former farm?

Location Map:

Site Map:



BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Author:	Title:	Year:	HPO Accession #: (if applicable)
Hyde, E. B.	Atlas of Passaic County, New Jersey	1877	
Robinson, E.	Atlas of the City of Paterson, New Jersey	1884	
Robinson, E.	Atlas of the City of Paterson and Haledon, New Jersey	1899	
Mueller, A. H.	Atlas of the City of Paterson, New Jersey	1915	
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1931	
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1915	
Heusser, Albert H.	History of the Silk Dyeing Industry in the United States	1927	

Additional Information:

More Research Needed? (checked=Yes)

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Property ID:

Page 2

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-1263381396

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INTENSIVE-LEVEL USE ONLY:

Attachments Included: 0 Building 0 Bridge
 0 Structure 0 Landscape
 0 Object 3 Industry

Historic District ?

District Name: not applicable

Status:

Associated Archeological Site/Deposits?

(known or potential sites. If Yes, please describe briefly)

Potential industrial archaeology (interior)

Conversion Problem? ConversionNote: 23

Date form completed: 9/7/2012

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

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Property ID:

-1263381396

INDUSTRIAL BUILDING ATTACHMENT

Common Name: 6-34 Piercy Street

Historic Name: Steam Plant of the National Silk Dyeing Co. East Main Street Works

Present Use:

Historic Industry: Textiles

ConstructionDate: 1910 **Source:** Heusser (1927)

**Construction
Start Date:**

**Construction
End Date:**

Building ID:

Style: Vernacular?

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, Common Bond

Physical Condition: Fair

Foundation Materials: Brick, Common Bond

Remaining Historic Fabric: Medium

Roof Finish Materials: Asphalt Shingle

Length: 40 **Stories:** 1.5

Structural System:

Width: 70 **Bays:** 1

Roof System:

Equipment/Machinery:

Transportation Links: airstrip loading dock slip
(checked if applicable) dock rail siding other

Exterior Description:

The steam plant is a 1.5 story, gabled, brick building with corbelled brick cornice. It has had all original fenestration and doorways in-filled with brick or concrete block; some segmental arch lintels are evident in the brickwork. There appears to have been a large doorway on the south elevation at the east end of the building. Today, the only visible entrance is a single, metal door on the south elevation. A small 1-story brick addition is located off the east end of the building adjacent to the 100-ft. tall, circular plan, yellow-brick smokestack. The smokestack has an octagonal plan, red-brick foundation with a corbelled cap that matches the cornice of the steam plant.

Interior Description:

The interior was not available for inspection. According to the 1931 Sanborn map, the steam plant had five boilers and an air compressor.

Alteration Dates:

Alteration(s):	Circa Date:	Date Range:	Source:
Physical alteration	1950	to	In-fill of windows and doors

Architect/Designer:

Type:	Name:	Person/Firm Description:
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Date form completed: 9/27/2012

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Property ID:

Page 4

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-1263381396

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INDUSTRIAL BUILDING ATTACHMENT

Common Name: 6-34 Piercy Street

Historic Name: Weighting Department of the National Silk Dyeing Company East Main Street Works

Present Use:

Historic Industry: Textiles

ConstructionDate: 1910 **Source:** Heusser (1927)

**Construction
Start Date:**

**Construction
End Date:**

Building ID:

Style: Vernacular?

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, Common Bond

Physical Condition: Good

Foundation Materials: Brick, Common Bond

Remaining Historic Fabric: Medium

Roof Finish Materials: Rolled Asphalt

Length: 225 **Stories:** 1

Structural System:

Width: 100 **Bays:** 28

Roof System:

Equipment/Machinery:

Transportation Links: airstrip loading dock slip
(checked if applicable) dock rail siding other

Exterior Description:

The weighting department is a 1-story, 28-bay, brick building with four gable ends facing Piercy Street. The three southernmost gables having clipped ends and monitor roofs. All original windows with segmental arch lintels have been in-filled with brick. Modern overhead metal garage doors have been added in three locations.

Interior Description:

The interior was not available for inspection.

Alteration Dates:

Alteration(s): Physical alteration **Circa Date:** 1950 **Date Range:** to **Source:** Doors and windows replaced and/or in-filled

Architect/Designer:

Type: **Name:** **Person/Firm Description:**

Date form completed: 9/27/2012

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Property ID:

Page 5

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-1263381396

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INDUSTRIAL BUILDING ATTACHMENT

Common Name: 6-34 Piecy Street

Historic Name: Laboratory and Finishing Department of the National Silk Dyeing Company East Mai

Present Use:

Historic Industry: Textiles

ConstructionDate: 1925 **Source:** Heusser (1927)

**Construction
Start Date:**

**Construction
End Date:**

Building ID:

Style: Vernacular?

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, Common Bond

Physical Condition: Poor

Foundation Materials: Modern Concrete

Remaining Historic Fabric: Low

Roof Finish Materials:

Length: 100 **Stories:** 4

Structural System: Reinforced-Concrete Frame

Width: 100 **Bays:** 5

Roof System:

Equipment/Machinery:

Transportation Links: airstrip loading dock slip
(checked if applicable) dock rail siding other

Exterior Description:

The lab and finishing department is a 4-story, 5-bay, 100 ft. x 100 ft. square plan industrial building with exposed reinforced-concrete frame and brick curtain walls. Nearly all original steel-sash windows have been in-filled with concrete block save for a few locations at the southwest corner. The building, an example of a "daylight-factory," has had all original doors removed. Modern metal doors and garage doors have been placed at several locations.

Interior Description:

The interior was not available for inspection.

Alteration Dates:

Alteration(s):	Circa Date:	Date Range:	Source:
Physical alteration	1960	to	In-fill and replacement of windows and doors.

Architect/Designer:

Date form completed: 9/27/2012

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Property ID:

Page 6

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(Primary Contact)

-1263381396

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ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET - Properties

Property ID -1263381396

History:

The National Silk Dyeing Company's East Main Street Works was built in the years immediately after the formation of the merger that led to the incorporation of the company in 1908. National was formed under the leadership of Charles I. Auger, a leader of the silk dye industry in Paterson and partner in the Auger & Simon Silk Dyeing Company at 5th and Branch Streets. Auger, and several other owners, had resisted the attempt a few years earlier by financiers to purchase a number of Paterson dye works and form a conglomeration that would reduce competition and owner-operator independence. Wishing to sustain these dye works under the control of men who were trained dyers and had built up their businesses over the past several decades, Auger provided the leadership under which were merged his company as well as four other Paterson companies (Emil Geering Silk Dyeing Co., Knipscher & Maas Silk Dyeing Company, Kearns Brothers, and Gaede Silky Dyeing Co.) and a fifth company from Allentown, Pa. (Lotte Brothers). National Silk Dyeing immediately became one of the large silk dyeing conglomerates in the nation, perhaps only second in size to the Weidmann Silk Dyeing Company of Paterson, which that same year had been sold to an international conglomerate owned by Gillet et fils of Lyons, France.

National Silk Dyeing did not close down or merge the operations of its plants, but continued to operate them as semi-independent works each with their own plant management sharing a common corporate structure with its headquarters office at 5 Colt Street in downtown Paterson. The Paterson plants affiliated with National Silk Dyeing appear to have been developed over time to carry out various specializations, so as not to directly compete with another, and to give the company flexibility to adapt its operations to market conditions.

The East Main Street Works, which evolved from the Gaede Silk Dyeing Company, was more than doubled in size between 1908 and 1915. The new construction took place on the west side of East Main Street opposite the original plant, which was located on a triangular-shaped lot adjacent to the Passaic River. The plant expansion included a steam plant with air compressors and the construction of a weighting department. Work at this plant was largely devoted to the dyeing, finishing and printing of ribbons. After about 1925, the East Main Street Works also housed the National Silk Dyeing Company's main lab in a new reinforced-concrete frame building at the southeast corner of Holsman and Piercy Streets. This lab was the central research and experimental laboratory under the direction of Dr. Paul Massini, a Swiss-trained chemist. The main lab was located on the 4th floor of the building with finishing operations located on the lower floors.

The National Silk Dyeing Company became financially distressed during the Great Depression and much of its property was broken up and sold. The section of the East Main Street Works on the west side of East Main Street eventually came into the hands of owner Charles B. Johnson, who in 1950 was leasing the works to Hendor Mills Inc., a company specializing in the dyeing of rayon, representing the transition of the works into the handling of synthetics.

Statement of Significance:

The National Silk Dyeing Company's East Main Street Works is significant for its association with the development of one of the dominant company's in Paterson's silk dyeing industry in the early part of the 20th century. The complex, consisting of a steam plant, weighting department, finishing department, and laboratory, were considered state of the art when opened between circa 1908 and 1925. These buildings are representative of a variety of industrial architectural subtypes associated with silk dyeing, and in combination with the adjacent Gaede Silk Dyeing works from which this complex expanded, are important examples of a complete silk dyeing works of the period. Integrity of the buildings has been diminished, particularly through changes to fenestration, but integrity of plant design and layout, as well as setting, feeling and association remain sufficiently intact to convey the original character-defining features of the dye works.

Eligibility for New Jersey and National Registers: Yes No National Register Criteria: A B C D

Level of Significance: Local State National

Justification of Eligibility/Ineligibility:

The National Silk Dyeing Company's East Main Street Works is recommended eligible under Criterion C as an important representative example of an early 20th century dye works with good surviving examples of a steam plant, weighting department, finishing department and laboratory. It is recommended eligible under Criterion A for its association with the events that led to the establishment and growth of the National Silk Dyeing Company as one of Paterson's leading silk dyeing and finishing firms.

Total Number of Attachments: 3

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Property ID:

Page 7

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-1263381396

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List of Element Names: Steam Plant
Weighting Department
Laboratory and Finishing Department

Narrative Boundary Description:

The property boundary is tax block 115, lot 1 shown on the 2006 Paterson tax map accompanying this report.

Date Form Completed: 9/27/2012

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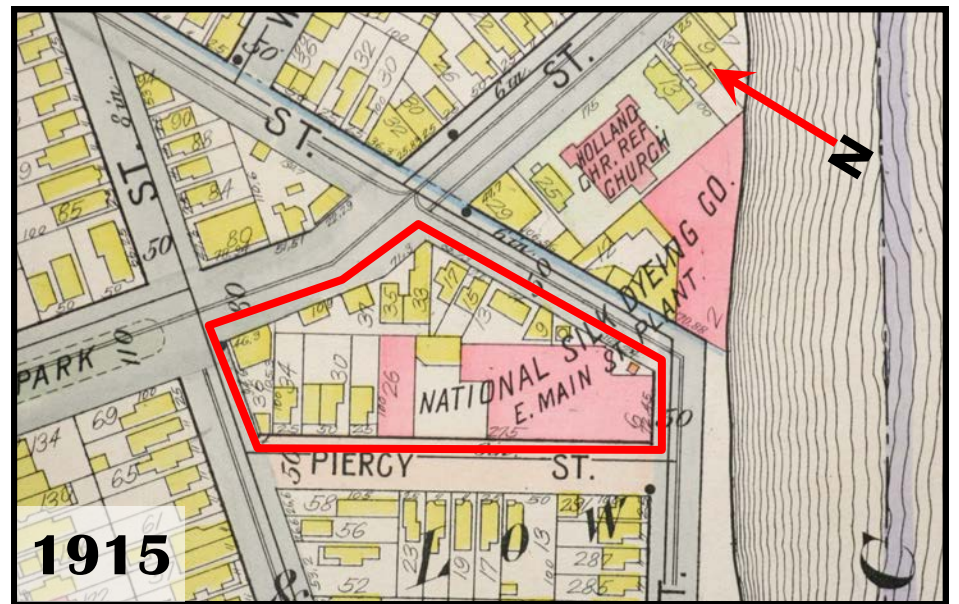
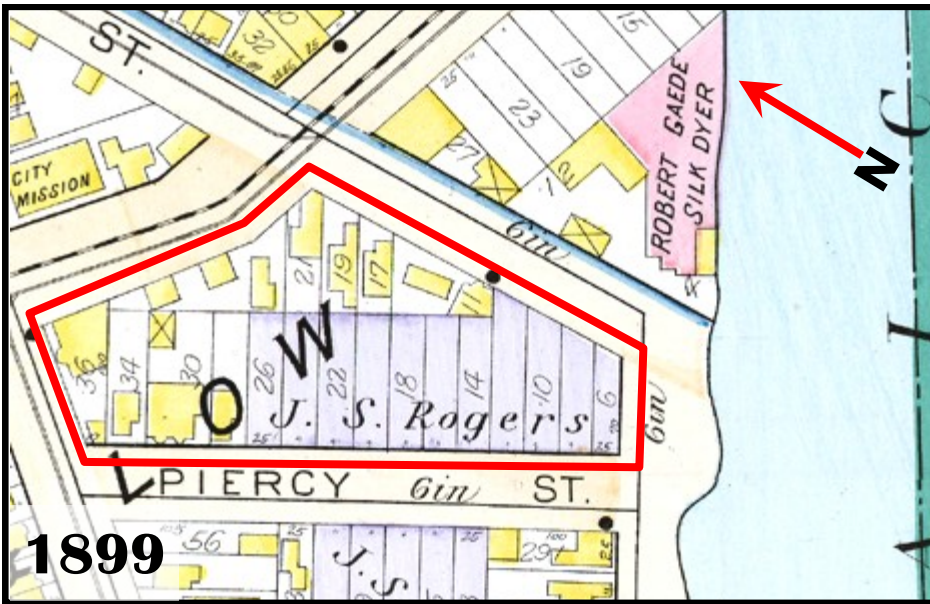
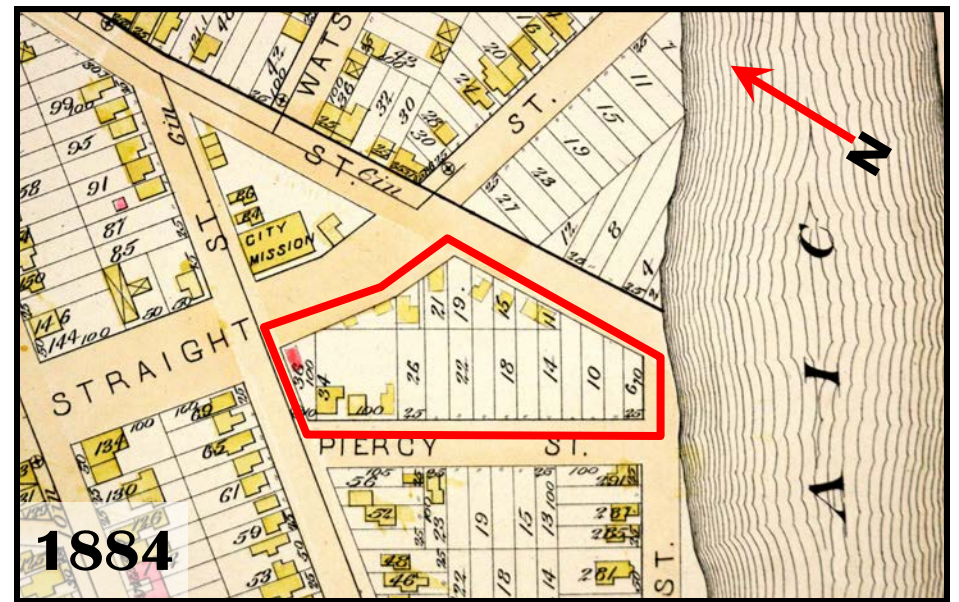
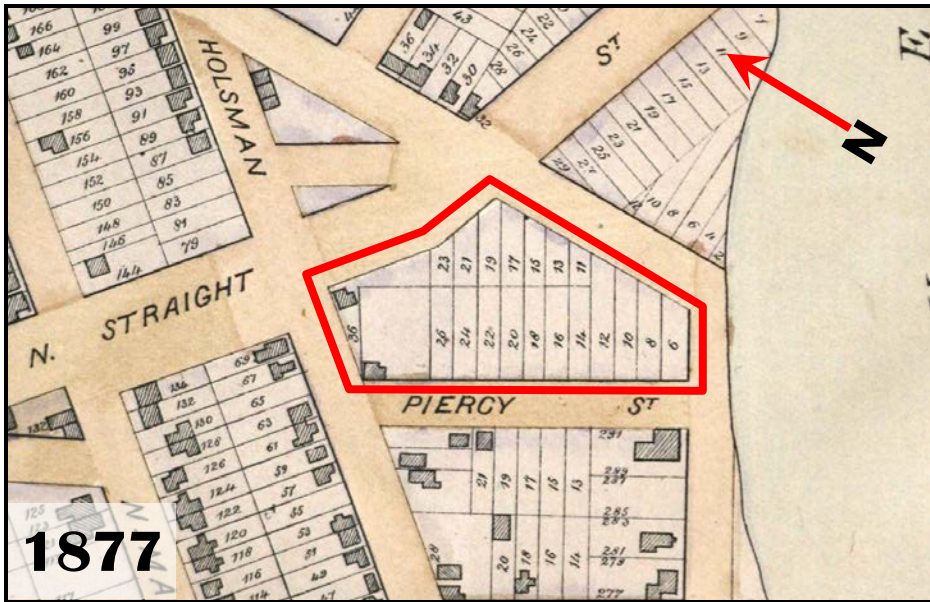
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-1263381396

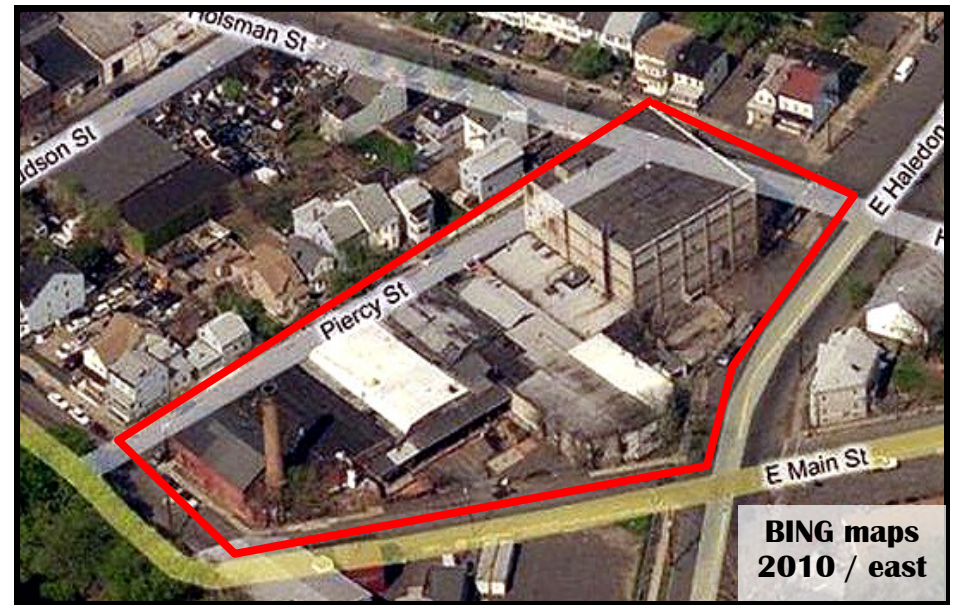
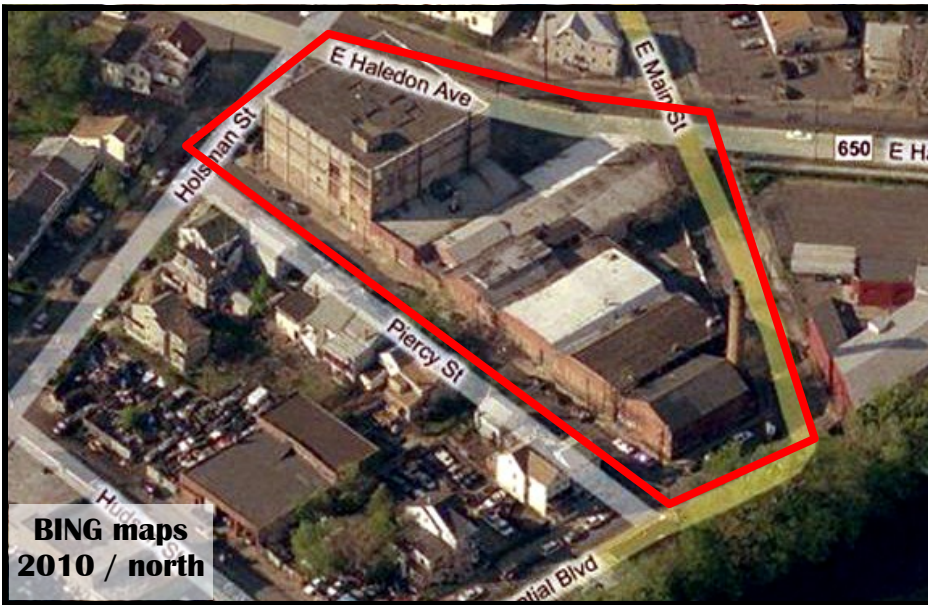
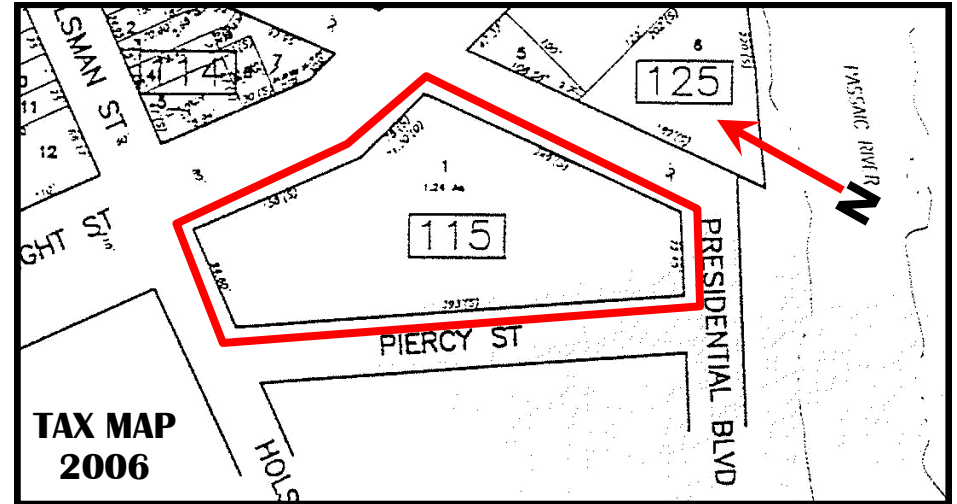
Page 8

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NATIONAL SILK DYEING, EAST MAIN ST.
6-34 Piercy St., Paterson, NJ B 115 L 01
Site Development Maps 1877, 1884, 1899, 1915



**NATIONAL SILK DYEING, EAST MAIN ST.
6-34 Piercy St., Paterson, NJ B 115 L 01
Site Development Maps, 1931, 2006, 2010**



**NATIONAL SILK DYEING, EAST MAIN ST.
6-34 Piercy St., Paterson, NJ B 115 L 01
Photographs, historic / contemporary**



NATIONAL 1: Oblique overview of Dye Houses and Boiler House (right) looking northwest along Piercy St. from corner of Presidential and Piercy.



NATIONAL 2: Oblique overview of Dye Houses, Stripping Room and 1920s mill (left frame), looking northwest along Piercy St. from about mid point of the site.



NATIONAL 3: Oblique overview of Stripping Room, Ribbon Finishing Room and 1920s Finishing mill (left frame), looking northwest along Piercy St.



NATIONAL 4: oblique overview of Dye / Weighing Houses, looking southeast along Piercy St from about mid point of the complex.

**NATIONAL SILK DYEING, EAST MAIN ST.
6-34 Piercy St., Paterson, NJ B 115 L 01
Photographs, historic / contemporary**



NATIONAL 5: Oblique view of the Boiler House looking north from the corner of Piercy St. and Presidential Ave.



NATIONAL 6: Oblique view of the Boiler House looking southwest from the corner of Piercy St. and Presidential Ave.



NATIONAL 7: Overview of north side of the complex, looking southwest from East Main St., Boiler House at left frame, and rear of Dye House at right frame.



NATIONAL 8: oblique overview of loading docks and rear of Dye Houses, looking northwest from Presidential Ave.