

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name Sterrett Brothers' Dry Goods Store
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 112 Capitol Street
city or town Charleston
state West Virginia code WV county Kanawha code 039 zip code 25301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Susan M. Pierce October 11, 2001
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

 N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

 Commerce/Trade: Dry Goods Store / Department / Furniture Store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

 Commerce/Trade: Professional / Law Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

 LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate/Commercial

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u> Cut Stone </u>
roof	<u> Flat Built-up Roofing </u>
walls	<u> Brick </u>
other	<u> Wood </u>

Narrative Description

See 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)

- 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.
- 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.

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

See continuation sheets.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce
Architecture

Period of Significance

1896 -1950

Significant Dates

1890 – Original Construction

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

See 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

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: State Historic Preservation Officer
Division of Culture and History
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

17 444455 4244560
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Kanawha County Tax Map, East Charleston Map 7 Parcel 42

Boundary Justification

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

Parcel delineated by Capital Street and Alley, and adjacent attached buildings

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey H Miller ALLIED AIA, ASID, CSI, IIDA

organization JHMiller + Associates LLC

date August 6, 2001

street & number 1500 Quarrier Street

telephone 304-346-7535 or 304-5417535

city or town Charleston state WV zip code 25311

Additional Documentation

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name KKB LLC contact Brent Kesner

street & number 112 Capitol Street telephone 304-345-2010

city or town Charleston state West Virginia zip code 25301

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 7Page 1**Sterrett Brothers' Dry Goods Store**
Kanawha County, West Virginia**7. Description****Narrative Description**

The building represents an outstanding example of a turn of the century, central business district building. The buildings on both sides of the street in the 100 block of Capitol Street were all built before 1917 and most were built before 1900. By its location in the middle of the block the building has become a very important part of the streetscape in what has become known as the "Victorian Block" of Charleston. While many of the buildings have had at least some renovation, this building is the one of the first to achieve a historically sensitive renovation.

The building originally had three floors with a storefront on the first floor. The first floor had two symmetrical recessed doors with transom area with awning. The second and third floors had six tall, thin, one over one double-hung sash windows, three on a side symmetrically arranged flanking a large center wide window with half level arch wood trim arch. The typical Italianate feeling typified by a rectangular façade stylistic influences with deep wooden fabricated window hoods, brackets under windows and deep projecting eave is evidenced on this building and has been maintained throughout its life. The deep cornice, modillion course and foliate brackets are still in place. Similarly the pronounced decorative "eyebrows" and weightier brackets typically found in this style are evident below all of the windows and have been retained and repaired in the Kesner renovation. The eyebrows, brackets and other trim were executed in wood, rather than stone or cast iron.

Sometime after 1898, but before 1917, a fourth story was added to the building with windows that replicated the windows of the second and third floors and the original cornice were moved to the new roofline. The building served as a significant retail establishment in the City of Charleston throughout its history since its construction by the Sterrett Brothers with continual exclusively commercial/retail occupancy. These occupants were the Sacks Shoe Store, J.C. Penny Company and most recently the Dondale Furniture Company. Its most recent and current occupant is Kesner, Kesner and Bramble, a Charleston based Law firm, which continues the unbroken commercial use of the building.

The building is four stories tall with a full basement. The exterior walls are brick construction on a cut stone foundation. The interior is a timber frame structure with wood floors, exposed wooden columns and beams, which have been retained and exposed. The sympathetic restoration used glazed clearstory to allow the visual imagery of the original retail use to be apparent on all floors. With the exception of some tin ceiling, virtually all of the historic details in the interior have been removed by previous owners. On most floors, the plaster walls have been removed by previous owners exposing the interior surface of the bare brick of the exterior walls. The previous owner replaced (c.1965) the historic first floor façade elements on the Capitol Street elevation with a brick kneewall and trim and modern plate glass windows. Above the first floor the Capitol Street façade has the original window sashes and trim detail that has been repaired and retained. The rear alley façade has been retained and repaired as well.

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Sterrett Brothers' Dry Goods Store
Kanawha County, West Virginia

The Sterrett Brothers Dry Goods Store is significant for Criterion A for Commerce and Criterion C for Architecture. The period of significance begins with construction of the building in 1896 and extends to the fifty year period when it was still used as a commercial retail business.

The building at 112 Capital Street is a historically significant site in the commercial development of the City of Charleston, Kanawha Valley and Southern West Virginia. During the late 1800's, the City of Charleston was rapidly developing as a commercial/industrial/government center. Front Street, along the riverfront, had served as the key business district for the first 70 years of the nineteenth century. Then in the early 1870's, businesses began to locate along Capital and Summers Streets. During the next 30 years, commercial development moved along both of these streets. This construction included 112 Capital Street by the Sterrett Brothers.

The building is a significant example of the Italianate Style of commercial architecture introduced to the three blocks of Capital Street during the period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The skillful design of the exterior divides the building mass into logical and well-proportioned parts. The Gates Building immediately adjacent is another example of this style as are several others along the 100 and 200 blocks of Capital Street. The architectural fabric presented by these and the complimentary structures collocated in this commercial hub give us an interesting look into the past vibrant mercantile history of Charleston.

The building, built originally by the Sterrett Brothers to house their relocated Sterrett Brothers' Dry Goods Store. Charles Sterrett was the son of William S. and Mary (Miller) Sterrett in Mason county, West Virginia. William Sterrett was a well known man, a lawyer by profession and served as county clerk of Mason County. Charles F. Sterrett was president of Sterrett Brothers and had been connected with retailing more or less since he was fifteen years old. He moved to Charleston in 1891.

In a narrative found in *The Capital City Illustrated* by J.C. Tipton, published in 1898, under the auspices of the Charleston Business and Industrial Association, the store is described as the "... largest and finest store in the city and is one of the very best in the State." It was noted: "In every calling, profession or trade, there are some persons with a genius peculiarly their own and such persons invariably go to the front. To this class belong the Sterrett Brothers." The Sterrett Brothers were known for their ability to determine what to buy as well as how to buy it. As a result their store became a fashion emporium, "and the best resort for the best class of trade of the community." At the end of the nineteenth century it was by all odds the largest and the finest store in the city of Charleston. They had a full line of Dress Goods, Ladies Furnishings and a Domestic Department, which occupied the right side of the full first floor for the full 120 feet of the building length. The store carried the only full line of Children's wear in the Kanawha Valley. The second and third floors were devoted to carpets and other floor coverings. The carpet department was the largest and most comprehensive in this section of the state. The Sterrett Brothers were jobbers in these goods and bought directly from the mills at jobber's prices and passed the savings along to their clientele. As was noted in the narrative, their large volume of trade gave them an outlet for great quantities of goods and put them in a position to buy direct from "first" hands; they owned their own property and their expenses were at a minimum point. The foregoing - "enabled them to become leaders in prices at home and to meet competition from abroad".

Another published description of the store's beginnings was featured in the *History of Charleston and Kanawha County and Representative Citizens* authored by W.S. Laidley and published by Richmond-Arnold Publishing Co. some 13 years later. That account noted that:

"Sterrett Brothers was established in 1892 and by 1896 had so prospered and established so excellent a credit that they were able to purchase two very desirable lots across the street from

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Sterrett Brothers' Dry Goods Store
Kanawha County, West Virginia

their first business site, these being at 112 and 114 Capital Street, with dimensions of 50 x 125 feet. Continued prosperity enabled them to improve this property and they now have a fine substantial building four stories in height, with basement, and with 26,000 feet of floor space. The inside finishing of the building is tasteful and appropriate, and is lighted and heated according to the best and most approved modern systems. The firm caters to a discriminating public, but a complete stock is carried suited to almost every taste and purse. In addition to dry goods and notions it includes ladies' and children's wearing apparel and carpets and house furnishings. A recent improvement, the placing of plate glass display window for exhibition purposes, indicates the enterprise of the firm, and met with public approval."

During much of the building's history it was a significant structure located in the retailing center of the city. This was also a major retail center for Southern West Virginia, attracting shoppers from throughout the region. Virtually all of the major retailers were located on or close to the four blocks of Capitol Street between the Kanawha River and Washington Street. Its neighbors included many noted Charleston retail entities such as Schwabe & Company, Coyle & Richardson, Jacob Friedman, Frankenburger & Company, Goldbarth & Strauss, Grand Rapids Furniture, Boston Dry Goods Store and Petty & Wertheimer. In the 1970's the Charleston Town Center Mall was built four blocks west of Capitol Street and most of the retailers either moved to the mall or went out of business.

The city of Charleston, in the early 1980's, designated the Capitol Street area as the "Village District" and took steps to encourage redevelopment of the buildings within the district. Many of the buildings were converted from retail to office or residential uses. Most of the buildings in the "Victorian Block" have followed this trend. The area became popular for professional offices and entire buildings were converted to that use. The lack of easily accessible parking has discouraged a stronger influx of retailers from entering the area. The increased daytime population caused by the conversions has recently caused a resurgence of retail uses at street level.

Although the Sterrett Brothers Building has change its use from retailing to office, its character will continue to be one of the most significant structures reflecting the earlier history of Charleston as the major retailing center of Southern West Virginia. The restoration has made it a beacon of its past. The Sterrett Brothers building has been and continues to be an integral part of the commercial fabric and a home of economic vitality for the city and the region. The site continues to be in the heart of the City's Central Business District and thanks to a recent sympathetic adaptive renovation by Kesner, Kesner and Bramble, will stand for a good many more years. This renovation has excellent potential for encouraging similar rehabilitation, reuse and renewal in other buildings in the immediately surrounding area.

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Sterrett Brothers' Dry Goods Store
Kanawha County, West Virginia

9. Major Bibliographical References

Tipton, J.C., "Charleston and its Resources, the Capital City Illustrated" 1898 published by Charleston Business and Industrial Association

Laidley, W.S., "History of Charleston and Kanawha County West Virginia and its Representative Citizens" 1911 published by Richmond-Arnold Publishing Company

Cohen, Sam, "Kanawha County Images, A Bicentennial History 1788-1988" 1987, published by Charleston, WV: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company and Kanawha Bicentennial, Inc.

"Sheet 3 - Sandborne Maps - Charleston, West Virginia - 1933"

"Charleston Daily Mail"

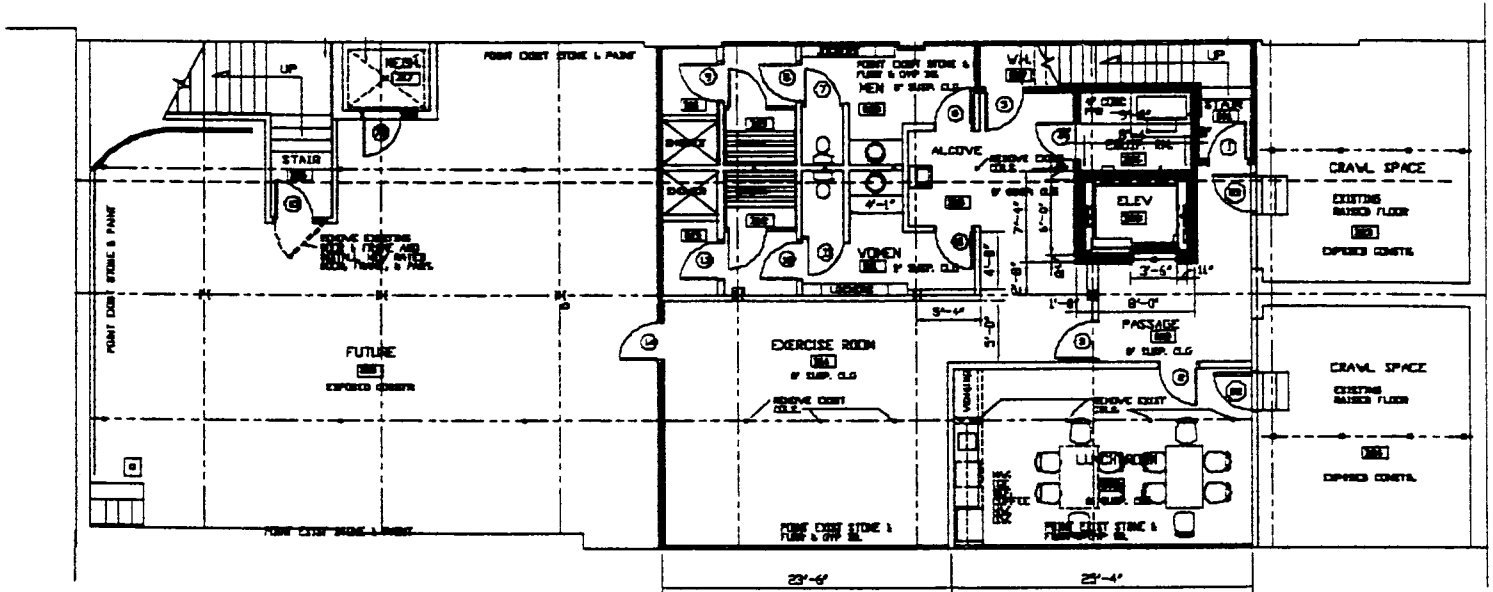
Interviews:

Brooks F. McCabe by Jeffrey H Miller, Charleston, November 2000

John Blagg by Jeffrey H Miller, Charleston, May 2001

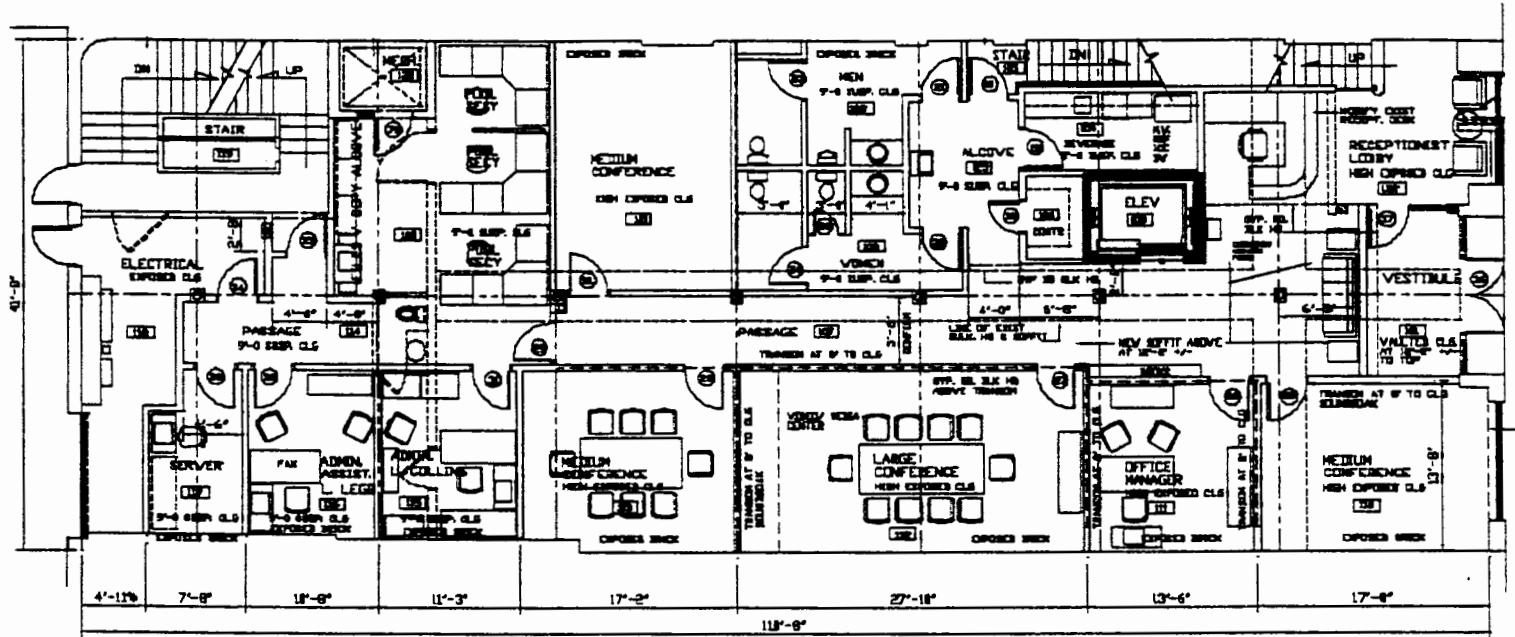
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*See these drawings of
Lower Level Plans?*



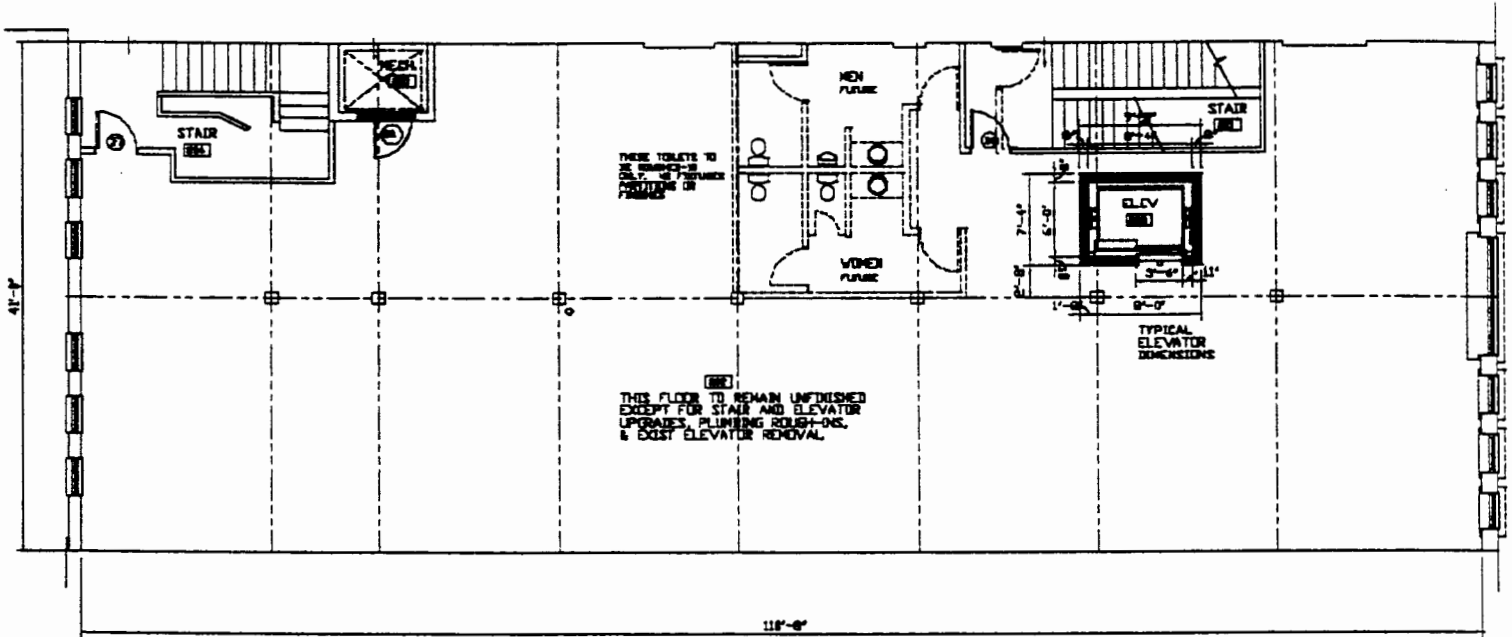
BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

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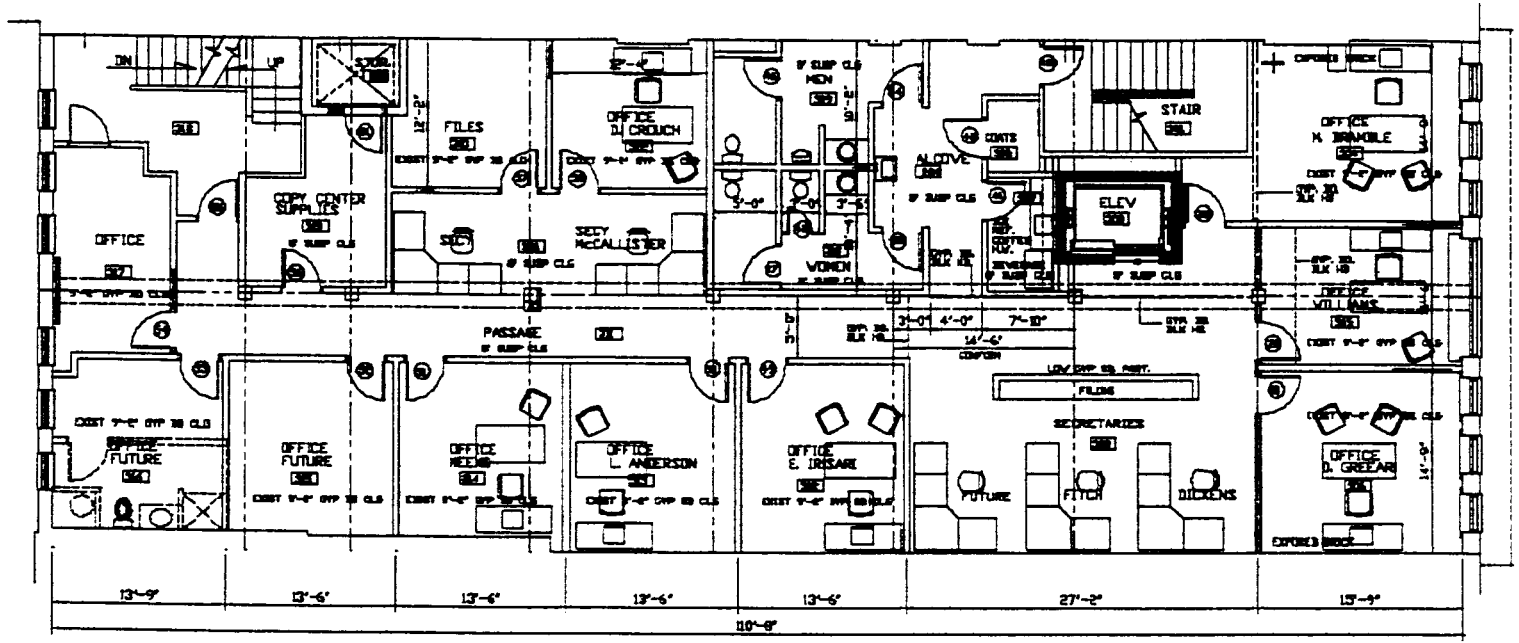
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

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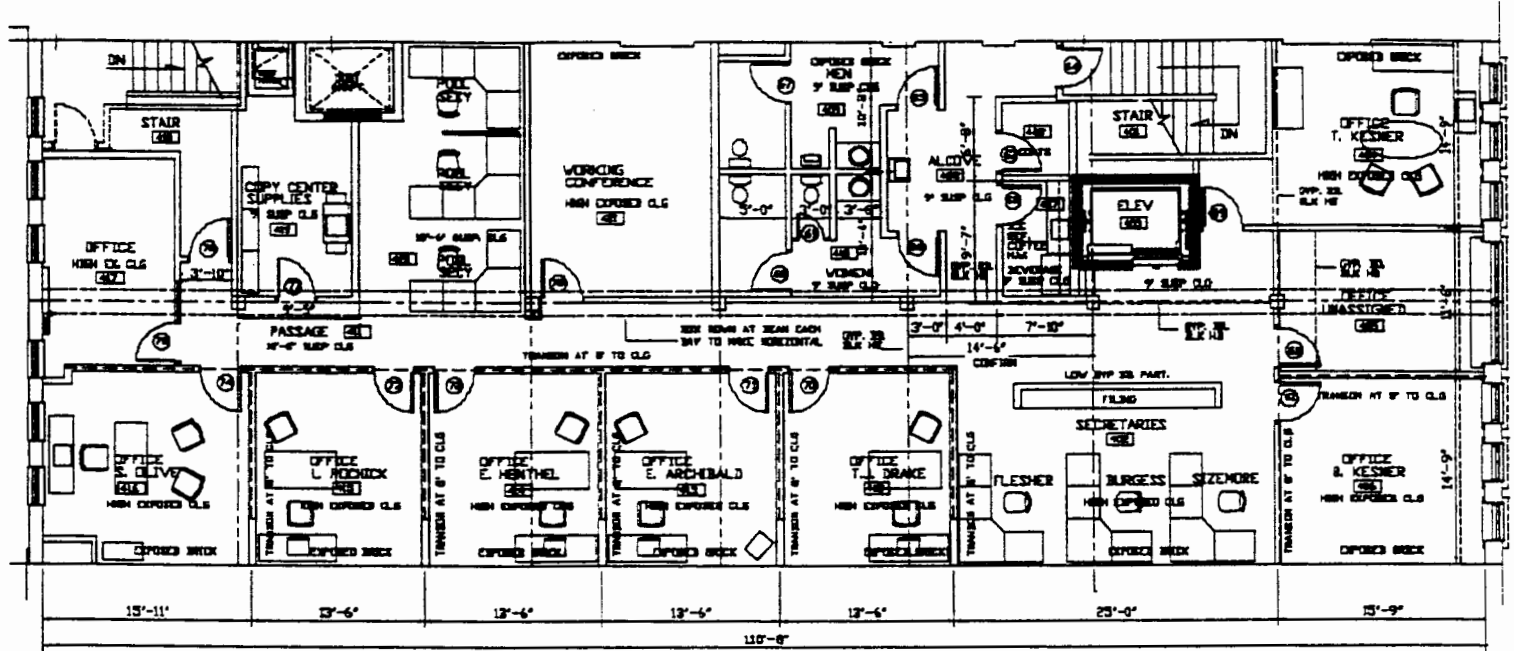
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

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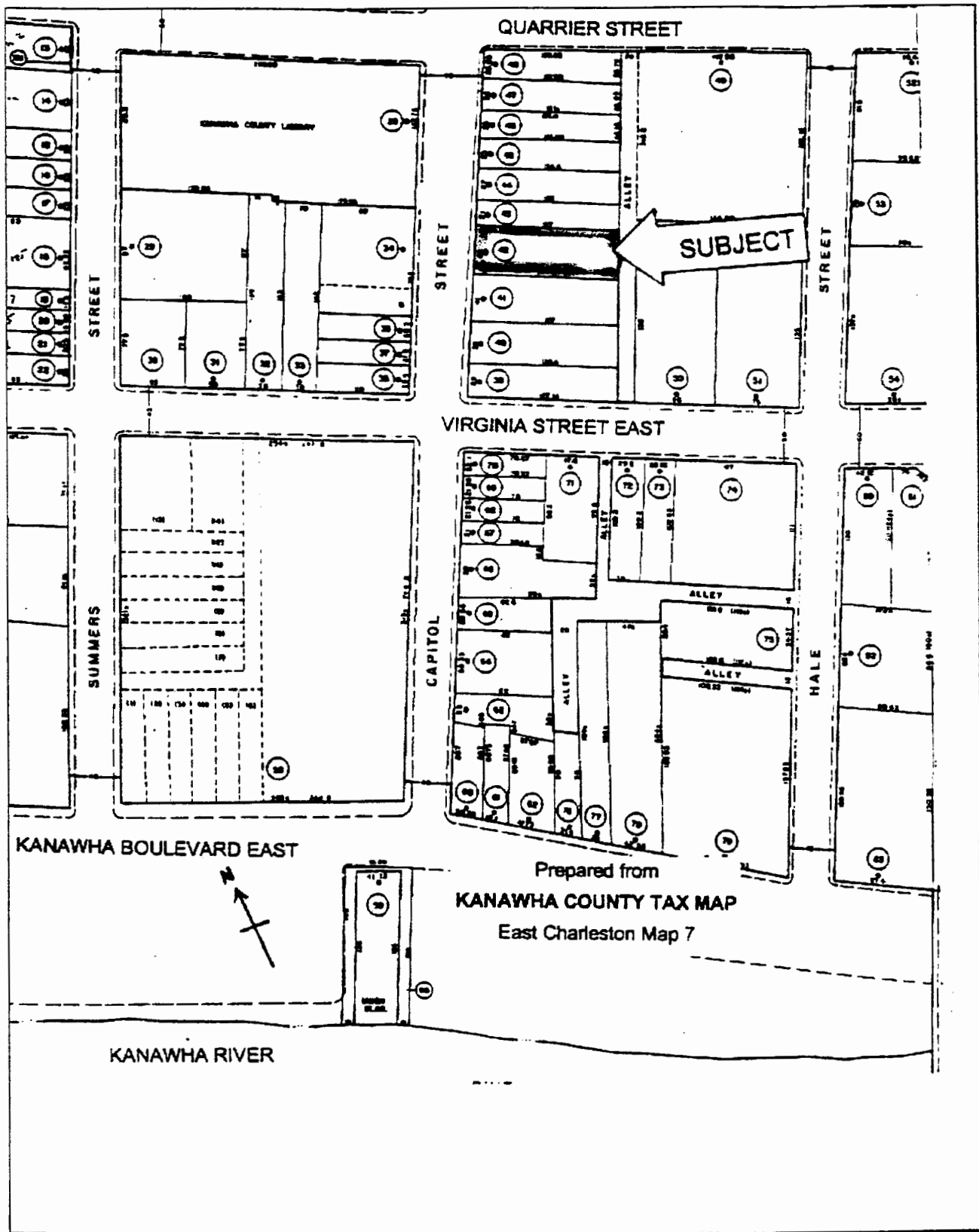
THIRD FLOOR PLAN

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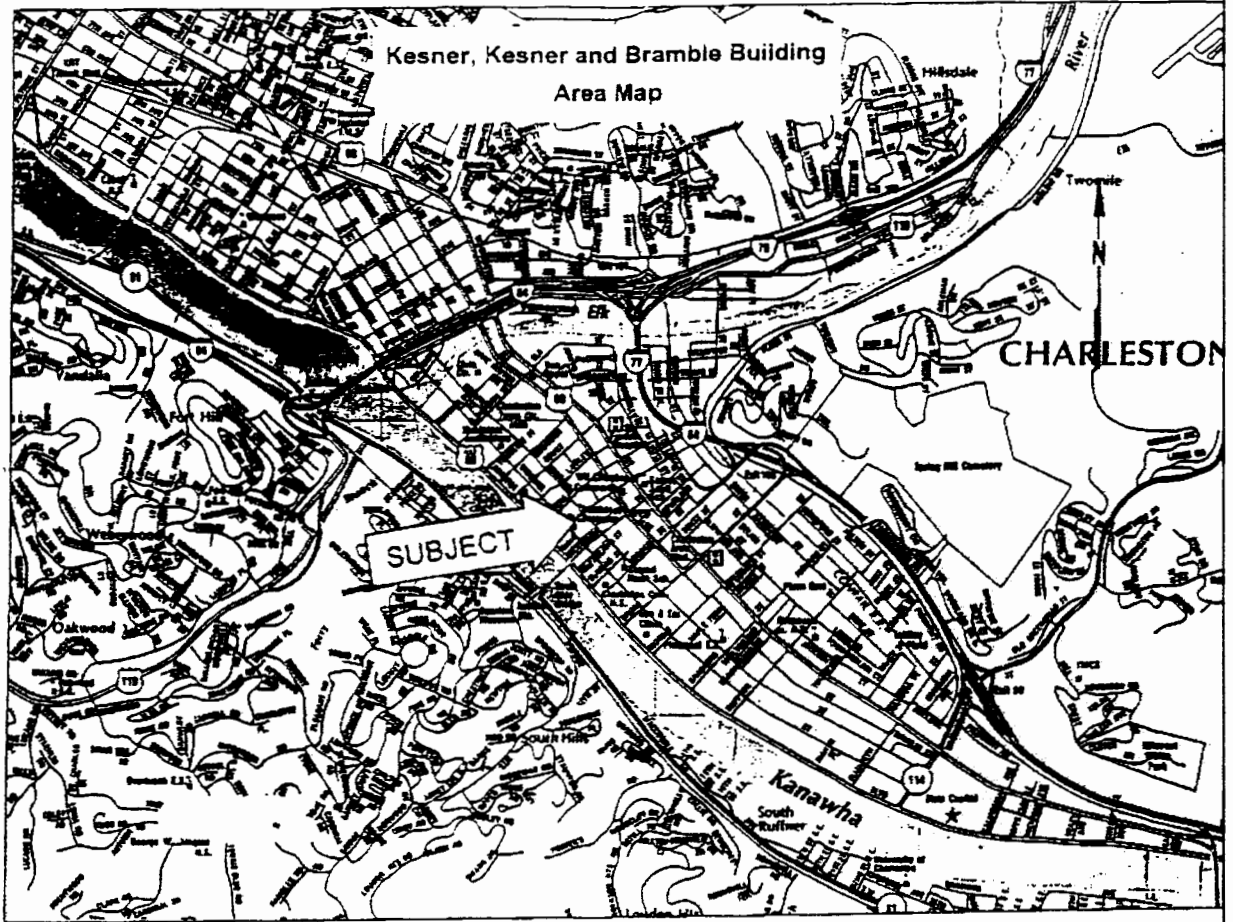


FOURTH FLOOR PLAN

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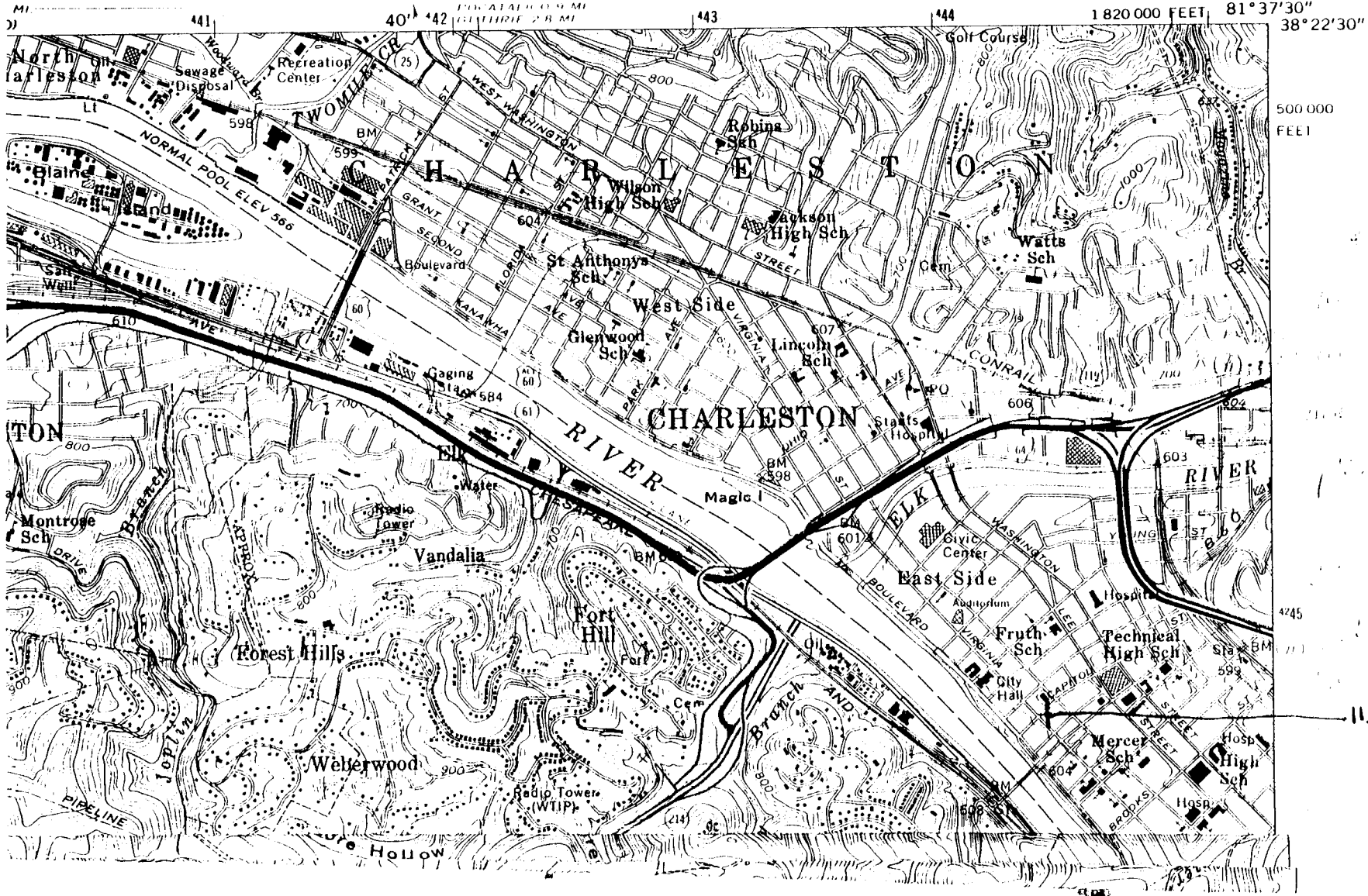


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CHARLESTON WEST QUADRANGLE
WEST VIRGINIA—KANAWHA CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW/4 CHARLESTON 15' QUADRANGLE

4680 1 INE
(BIG CHIMNEY)



500 000
FEET

112 CAPITOL ST

CHARLESTON WEST QUADRANGLE
WEST VIRGINIA—KANAWHA CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

SW/4 CHARLESTON 15' QUADRANGLE

4660 1 NE
(BIG CHIMNEY)



441 40' 42' POCATALIGO 9 MI. GUTHRIE 2.8 MI. 443 444 1 820 000 FEET 81° 37' 30" 38° 22' 30"

500 000
FEET

BIG CHIMNEY 7 MI.
ELKVIEW 12 MI.

STERRETT
BROTHERS
DRY GOODS
STORE

4245
77

17 444455
4244560

STATE CAPITOL 1 MI.
WEST VIRGINIA TURNPIKE 4.2 MI.
TURNPIKE 3.4 MI.



112