



MEMORANDUM

CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
245 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 305, WATERTOWN, NY 13601
PHONE: 315-785-7741 – FAX: 315-782-9014

TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: Michael A. Lumbis, Planning and Community Development Director

PRIMARY REVIEWER: Joseph Albinus, Planner

SUBJECT: Zone Change – **647 Flower Street**, Parcel Number 4-19-101.000

DATE: June 4, 2026

Request: To Change the Approved Zoning Classification of 647 Flower Street, Parcel Number 4-19-101.000 from Residential to Industrial.

Applicant: Scott Phelps General Contracting LLC

Owner(s): Scott Phelps General Contracting LLC

SEQRA: Unlisted

County Review: No

Comments: The applicant seeks to rezone the property at 647 Flower Street from Residential to Industrial to facilitate the expansion of an existing Storage Yard and Office use on the site. A Storage Yard use is allowed in the Industrial District, but not in the Residential District. Since the Residential District does not allow a Storage Yard use, the existing use enjoys Legal Nonconforming (“grandfathered”) status. Adding onto the current building represents a physical expansion of the nonconforming use, which if the property remained zoned Residential, would require a Use Variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Existing Conditions: The subject parcel currently contains a Storage Yard and Office for a construction business. To the west of the subject parcel is 750 Pearl Street, which contains a parking lot for New York Air Brake and is zoned Industrial.

To the east of the subject parcel, directly across the street, is M66 Hill Street. It is currently comprised of vacant land. The parcel is zoned Residential.

To the north of 647 Flower Street is 649 Flower Street. It is zoned as residential and currently has a single-family residential structure on it.

To the south of the parcel is VL-15 Water Street. It is currently zoned Residential and is vacant.

Please see the satellite map at the end of this Staff Report for an overview of the existing land uses on and in the vicinity of this Zone Change request.

Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan: The City's adopted Comprehensive Plan recommends the future land use for 647 Flower Street as Heavy Industry. The Comprehensive Plan's visions for both character areas are below.

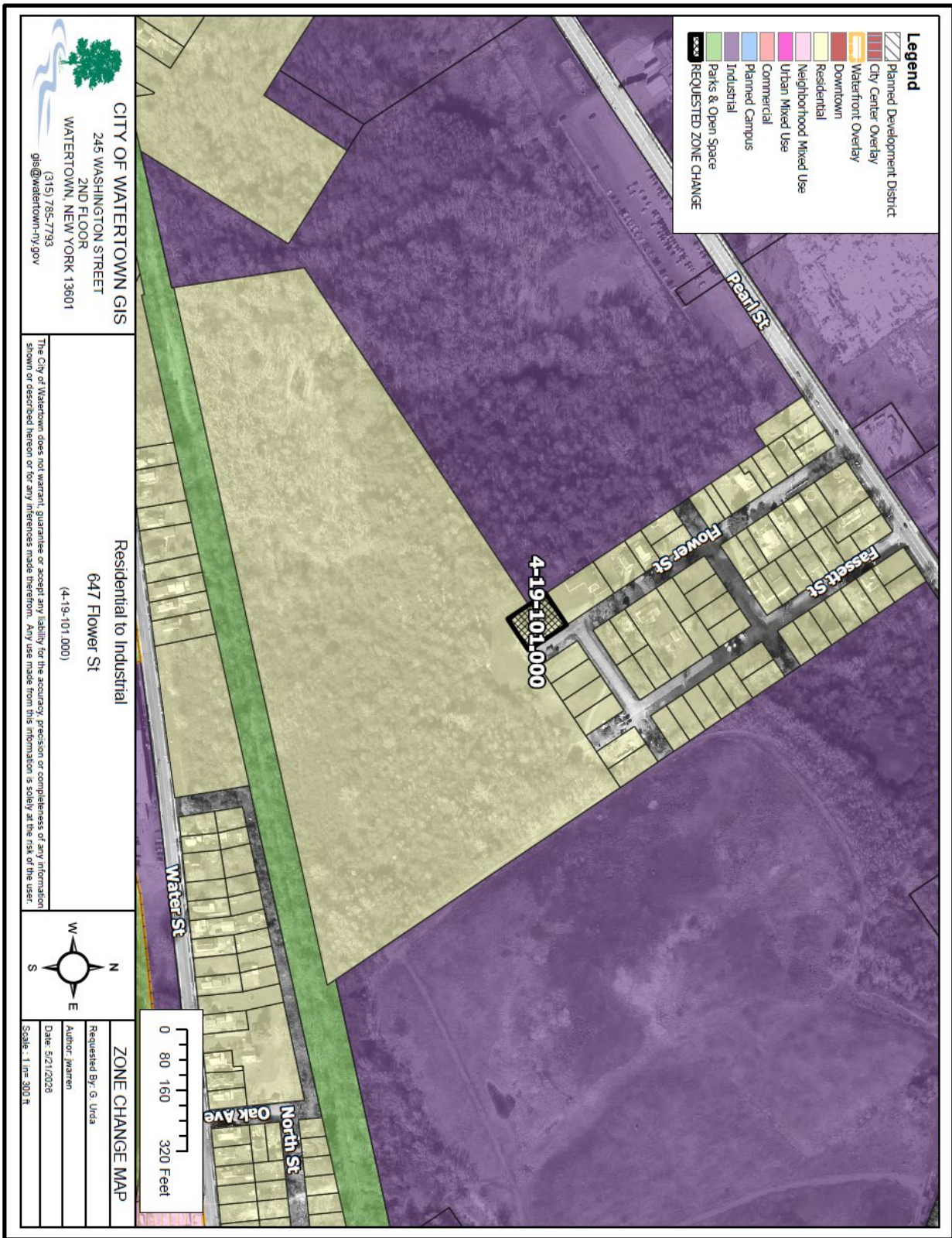
Heavy Industry: *"The Future Land Use Map recognizes an area of the City with the one of the largest employers – New York Air Brake Corp. - and adjacent lands. This area is intended to continue the allowance of heavy industrial uses and provide some expansion capabilities. Buildings vary in height and scale with on-site parking for automobiles and/or trucks.*

The modification that this Zone Change would facilitate (legalize and allow for the expansion of a Storage Yard use on the parcel) is consistent with the zoning on the adjacent parcel, 750 Pearl Street. It is also consistent with the future land use map. This zone change request is therefore in harmony with the Comprehensive Plan.

SEQR: The applicant has submitted a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) as part of the application for the Zone Change. The City Council, as the Lead Agency, will complete Part 2 of the EAF and make a determination of significance.

Planning Commission Action: For zone changes, the Planning Commission is responsible for making a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will then vote on the Zone Change after holding a public hearing.

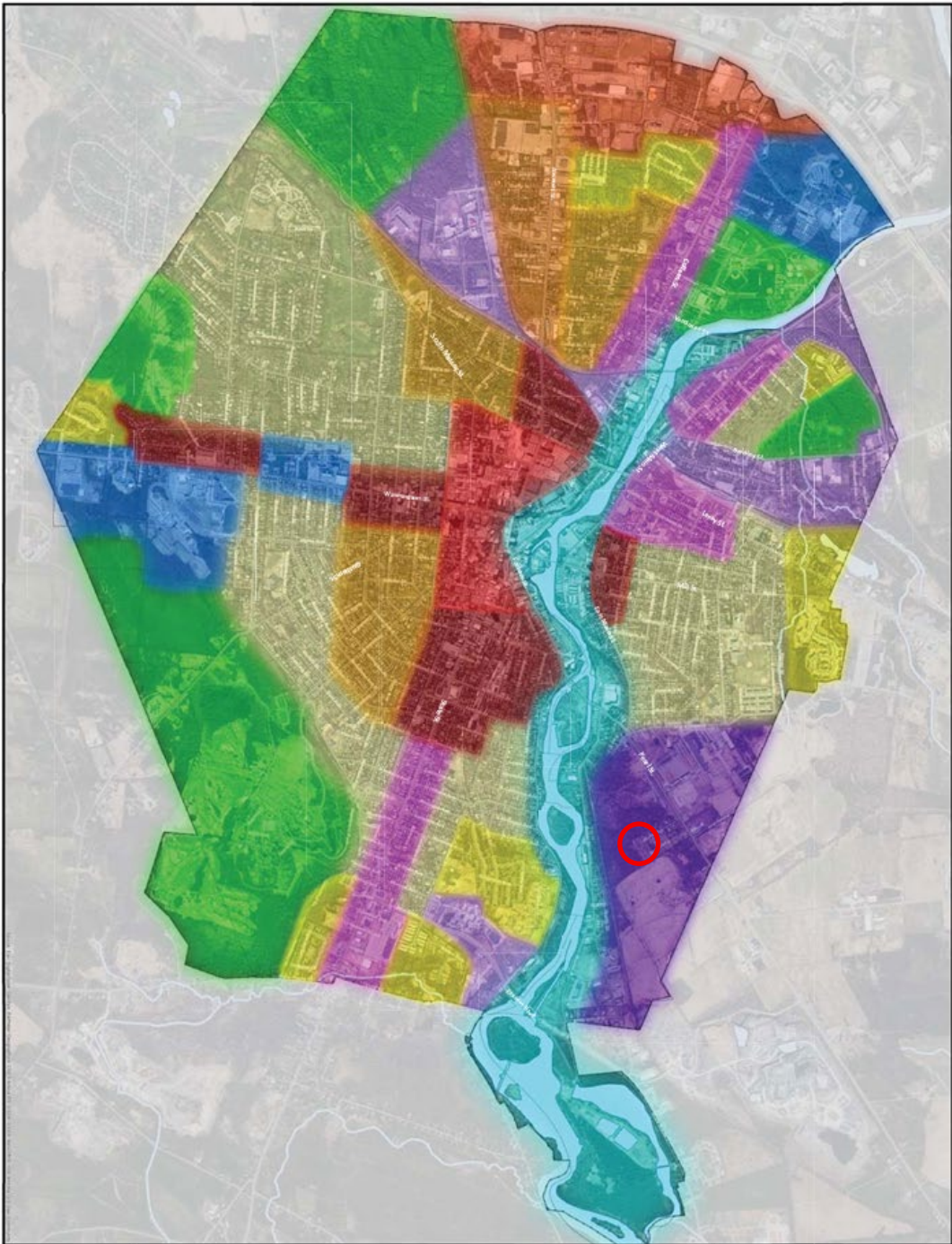
cc: City Council Members
Thomas Compo, City Engineer
Scott Phelps General Contracting LLC



Above: A map depicting the Zone Change request area and the surrounding zoning.



Above: A map depicting existing land uses on the subject parcels for the Zone Change request and the on the surrounding parcels.



City of Watertown Future Land Use

Project:
Comprehensive Plan
City of Watertown, New York
Elan Project Number:
18-010

LEGEND

- Black River Waterfront
- Downtown/Central Business District
- Urban Mixed Use
- Corridor Mixed Use
- Commercial Corridor
- Interstate Commercial
- Residential Apartments
- Residential Medium
- Residential Low Density
- Campus Health & Education
- Light Industry
- Heavy Industry
- Open Space



Date: 07/03/2019
Data Source: City of Watertown
NYS GIS Clearinghouse (gis.ny.gov)



ELAN
Planning | Design | Landscape Architecture | EITC

Note: This map was prepared for a specific project and is not suitable for other purposes without a separate agreement.

Above: The Future Land Use Map in the City’s adopted Comprehensive Plan.

PLN-ZONECHANGE2026-00017 - Shop Addition

Menu

Help

File Date: [05/06/2026](#)

Application Status: [Note](#)

Application Type: [Zone Change](#)

Application Detail: [Detail](#)

Description of Work: [48' x 50' garage addition for storage of construction materials, equipment and tools](#)

Application Name: [Shop Addition](#)

Address: [647 Flower St, Watertown, NY 13601](#)

Owner Name: [Scott Phelps General Contr LLC](#)

Owner Address: [REDACTED] 4

Parcel No: [4-19-101.000](#)

Contact Info:	Name	Organization Name	Contact Type	Contact Primary Address	Status
	Scott Phelps General C...	Scott Phelps Ge...	Applicant	Business, 647 Flower S...	Active

Licensed Professionals Info:	Primary	License Number	License Type	Name	Business Name	Business License #

Job Value: [\\$0.00](#)

Total Fee Assessed: [\\$125.00](#)

Total Fee Invoiced: [\\$125.00](#)

Balance: [\\$125.00](#)

Custom Fields: GENERAL INFORMATION

Reason for Zone Change The property was zoned industrial when I bought it several years a go. Due to a zoning change I cannot add on to the existing buildin g. We have outgrown our storage and need to add more.	Current Zoning District Residential	Proposed Zoning District Industrial
Existing Use Warehouse/ Wholesale Distribution	Proposed Use Warehouse/ Wholesale Distribution	Type of Development Commercial
Number of Parcels in Zone change request 1	Additional Parcel Numbers NA	

LOCATION INFORMATION

Adjacent Land Use Industrial and residential	Historic Status No	Historic Status Description -
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KEY DATES

Approved Date -	Appeal Period End Date -	Expiration Date -
Extension Date -		

Workflow Status:	Task	Assigned To	Status	Status Date	Action By
	Application Intake		Accepted	05/29/2026	Planning Depart...
	Review Distribution	Dana Aikins	In Review	05/29/2026	Dana Aikins
	Building Review	Dana Aikins	Building Rev...	05/29/2026	Planning Depart...
	Engineering Utilities ...				
	Planning Review				
	Fire Review				
	Arborist Review				
	Complete Streets Review				

Task	Assigned To	Status	Status Date	Action By
County Review				
Review Consolidation				
Acquire GIS Map				
Staff Report				
Supervisor Review				
Distribute PC Agenda P...				
PC Meeting				
CC Meeting Notice				
Draft Ordinance and Re...				
Distribute CC Packet				
CC Meeting				
Public Notice				
Draft SeQR Resolution				
Public Hearing				
Final Notification				
Case Complete				

Conditions of Approval:	Group	Type	Condition Name	Short Comments	Status	Status Date	Severity
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Documents:	File Name	Document Group	Category	Description	Type	Document Status	Document Status Date
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[Show all](#)

Application Comments:	View ID	Comment	Date
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Initiated by Product: ACA

Scheduled/Pending Inspections:	Inspection Type	Scheduled Date	Inspector	Status	Comments
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Resulted Inspections:	Inspection Type	Inspection Date	Inspector	Status	Comments
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Required Inspections:

April 16, 2026

Scott Phelps General Contracting LLC
647 Flower Street
Watertown NY 13601

Cover Letter for Zoning change.

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Scott Phelps, and I have owned/operated a construction company since 2006 in the Watertown area. My company, which consists of 7 employees and myself, has completed many projects over the years. We currently focus on light commercial projects and new home building. Some of our recent projects include the Strand/Laman renovation on Franklin Street and a 4000 square foot new home on Pillar point.

In 2016, I found myself in need of storage/office space and wanted to find a property on the north side of the city of Watertown. I purchased 647 Flower Street which was located at the end of a dead end and perfect for what I was looking for. It had been being used as a location for a snow removal, landscaping company by the previous owner. The property consisted of a 20'x48' garage, a 12'x8' shed, a 10'x20' shed and a 10'x10' shed. The property was also in an industrial zone.

As the years have passed and my company has acquired equipment, tools and materials to be stored, I have found myself in a situation where I have outgrown my current building size. My solution to this was to increase the size of the existing garage on 647 Flower Street by three times. This will give me adequate space to house my equipment, tools and material. Unfortunately, I found that the zoning was changed 3 years ago and my property is no longer in an industrial zone. It has been changed to Residential and therefore my project does not fall under the permitted use any longer.

I apologize for the lengthy backstory but find it to be important in this particular case. As far as specifically addressing the concerns of the cover letter I will add this:

- The scope of the work is to add approximately 2400 square feet of building to the existing.
- The use will remain the same as it has been for 10 years which is storage of construction equipment, material and tools. I will also maintain the current office for paperwork within the facility.

-The property will only be changed by the additional building and all other grass and asphalt areas will remain the same.

I want to thank you for your consideration on this project and use variance. I am hopeful to continue to operate within the City of Watertown.

Scott Phelps



Legend

- Black River
- City Boundary
- Parcels
- ROADS



0 0 0 mi

Author: Web AppBuilder
Date: 5/26/2026
Title:

Schedule "A"

~~ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND~~, situate in the City of Watertown County of Jefferson and State of New York, known as vacant lots M65, M64 and M63 Hill Street.

A CERTAIN LOT OF LAND known as vacant lots M65 Hill Street, M64 Hill Street and M63 Hill Street, each lot approximately 55' x 118' in size and known and designated on the map in the Department of Assessment and Taxation of the City of Watertown, New York as parcel numbers 4-19-404, 4-19-403, 4-19-402. THIS CONVEYANCE was authorized by a resolution of the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Watertown, New York, adopted November 6, 2000.

ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND, situate in the City of Watertown, County of Jefferson and State of New York, being Lot No. Sixty-Six (66) as shown on a map filed in Jefferson County Clerk's Office Oct. 30, 1891 of subdivision of land conveyed by D. Foster Phillips to William H. Smith by deed recorded in Jefferson County Clerk's Office Sept. 25th, 1891 in Liber 264 of Deeds at page 372.
The buildings to be built on the above mentioned Lot are to be placed at least Twenty-Five feet back from the street line and the house worth at least Five Hundred Dollars.

Being the same premises as conveyed by Elaine J. Granger to Jacob S. Johnson via Quit Claim Deed dated November 30, 2011 and recorded in the Jefferson County Clerk's Office on December 1, 2011 as Instrument #2011-17556.

And Also:

ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND situate in the City of Watertown, County of Jefferson, State of New York and being further described as follows:

BEGINNING at a ½" iron pipe with cap set in the southwesterly street margin of Flower Street, said pipe being located southeasterly S. 47°-32'-47" E., 850.00 feet along said street margin from a point at the intersection of the southwesterly street margin of Flower Street with the southeasterly street margin of Pearl Street;

THENCE S. 47°-32'-47" E., along the southwesterly street margin of Flower Street a distance of 120.00 feet to a ½" iron pipe with cap set;

THENCE S. 42°-26'-13" W., a distance of 100.00 feet to a ½" iron pipe with cap set;

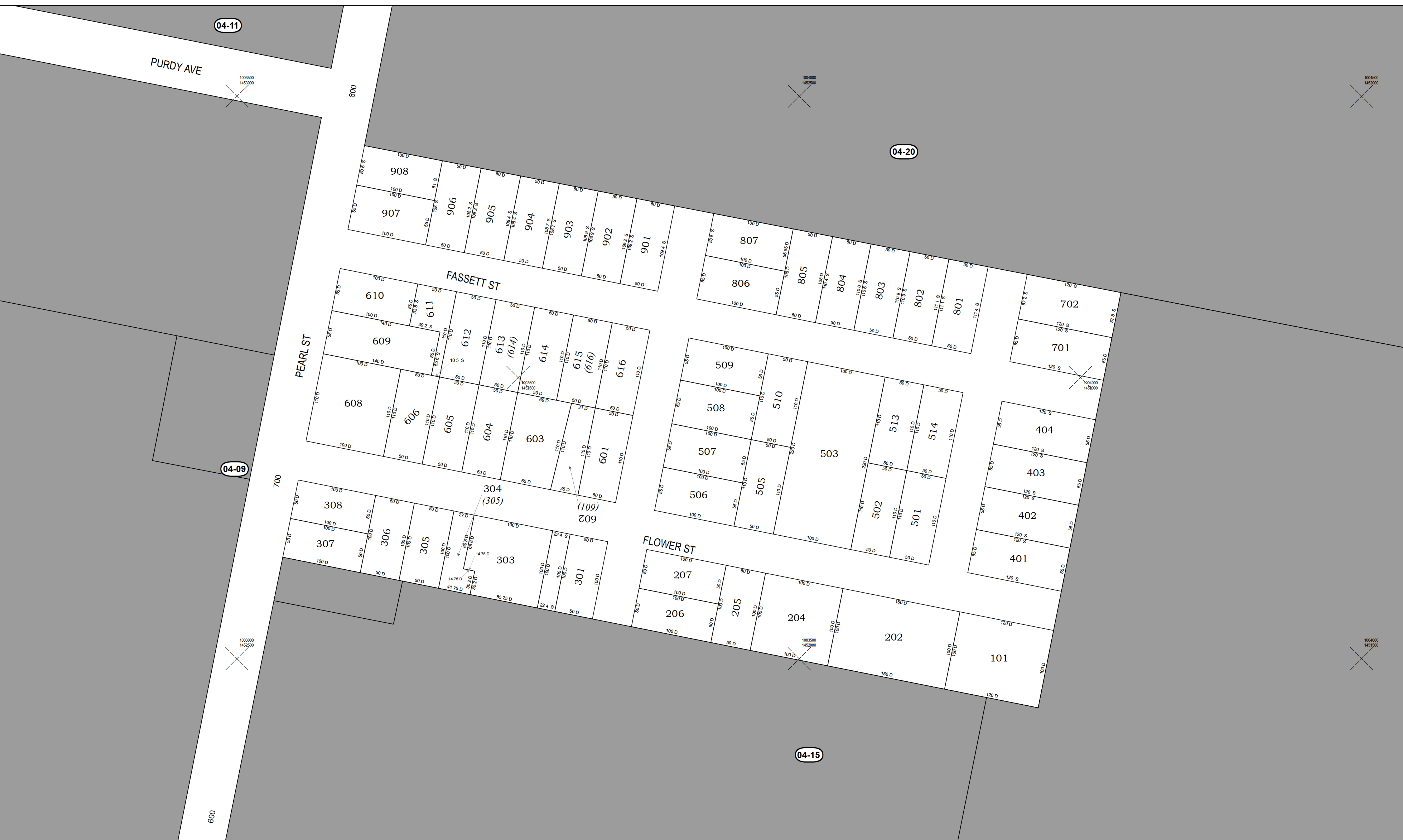
THENCE N. 47°-32'-47" W., a distance of 120.00 feet to a ½" iron pipe with cap set;

THENCE N. 42°-26'-13" E., a distance of 100.00 feet to the POINT of BEGINNING.

CONTAINING 0.275 acres of land more or less.

Being the same premises as conveyed by David W. Johnson and Patricia A. Johnson to Jacob S. Johnson via Warranty Deed dated November 30, 2011 and recorded in the Jefferson County Clerk's Office on December 1, 2011 as Instrument #2011-17555.

Intending to convey Tax Parcel #4-19-101.000, 4-19-401.000, 4-19-402.000, 4-19-403.000 and 4-19-404.000.



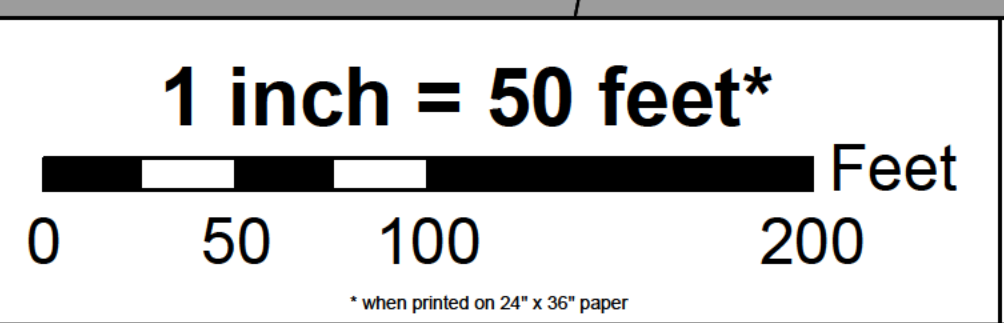
Prepared by
City of Watertown GIS
 For
City of Watertown
Assessment Department

For Tax Purposes Only
Not to be Used for Conveyance

NAD 83 STATE PLANE
 CENTRAL ZONE, US FEET

Parcel	Date

- Property Line
- - - Historic Property Line
- ▭ Building Outline
- ⊕ Railroad
- ⋯ City Boundary (124,000)
- ⋯ School District Boundary



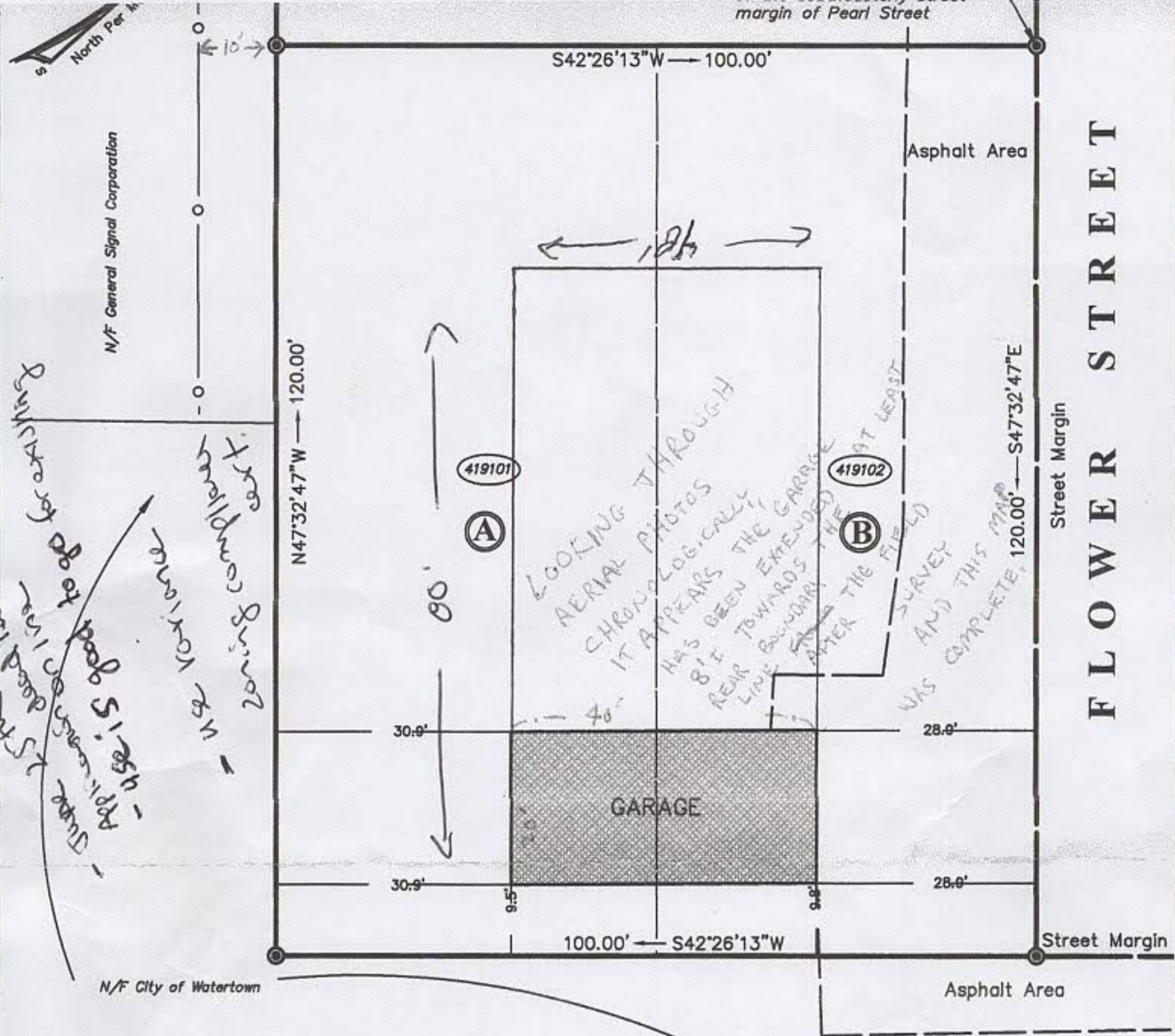
Tax Map

City Of Watertown

Jefferson County, NY

Section 04 Block 19

Printed Date: 6/3/2024



Handwritten notes:
 N/F General Signal Corporation
 N/F City of Watertown
 10' →
 100.00' ← S42°26'13"W
 120.00' → N47°32'47"W
 60.00' →
 30.9' →
 30.9' →
 100.00' ← S42°26'13"W
 28.9' →
 28.9' →
 120.00' → S47°32'47"E
 Street Margin
 Asphalt Area
 100.00' ← S42°26'13"W
 Street Margin
 Asphalt Area

- LEGEND:**
- ⊙ - 1/2" IRON PIPE WITH CAP SET
 - Ⓐ - LOT NUMBER
 - 419101 - TAX PARCEL NUMBER
 - FENCE LINE
 - LOT LINE

DEED REFERENCES:

Parcel "A"
 James M. McCauley, City Comptroller of the City of Watertown to Elaine J. Granger
 Liber 1799, Page 111
 Recorded July 10, 2001

Parcel "B"
 James M. McCauley, City Comptroller of the City of Watertown to Elaine Granger
 Liber 1799, Page 108
 Recorded July 10, 2001

Total Area = 0.275 Acres±

NOTE:

This survey was prepared without the benefit of an Updated Abstract of Title and is subject to any changes which may occur as a result of a complete title search.

MAP REFERENCE:

"Survey Map of the Lands of Elaine J. Granger, 649 Flower Street, City of Watertown, County of Jefferson, State of New York", dated July 13, 2004, prepared GYMO P.C.

**COPYRIGHT © 2004
 GYMO
 ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING
 & LAND SURVEYING, P.C.**

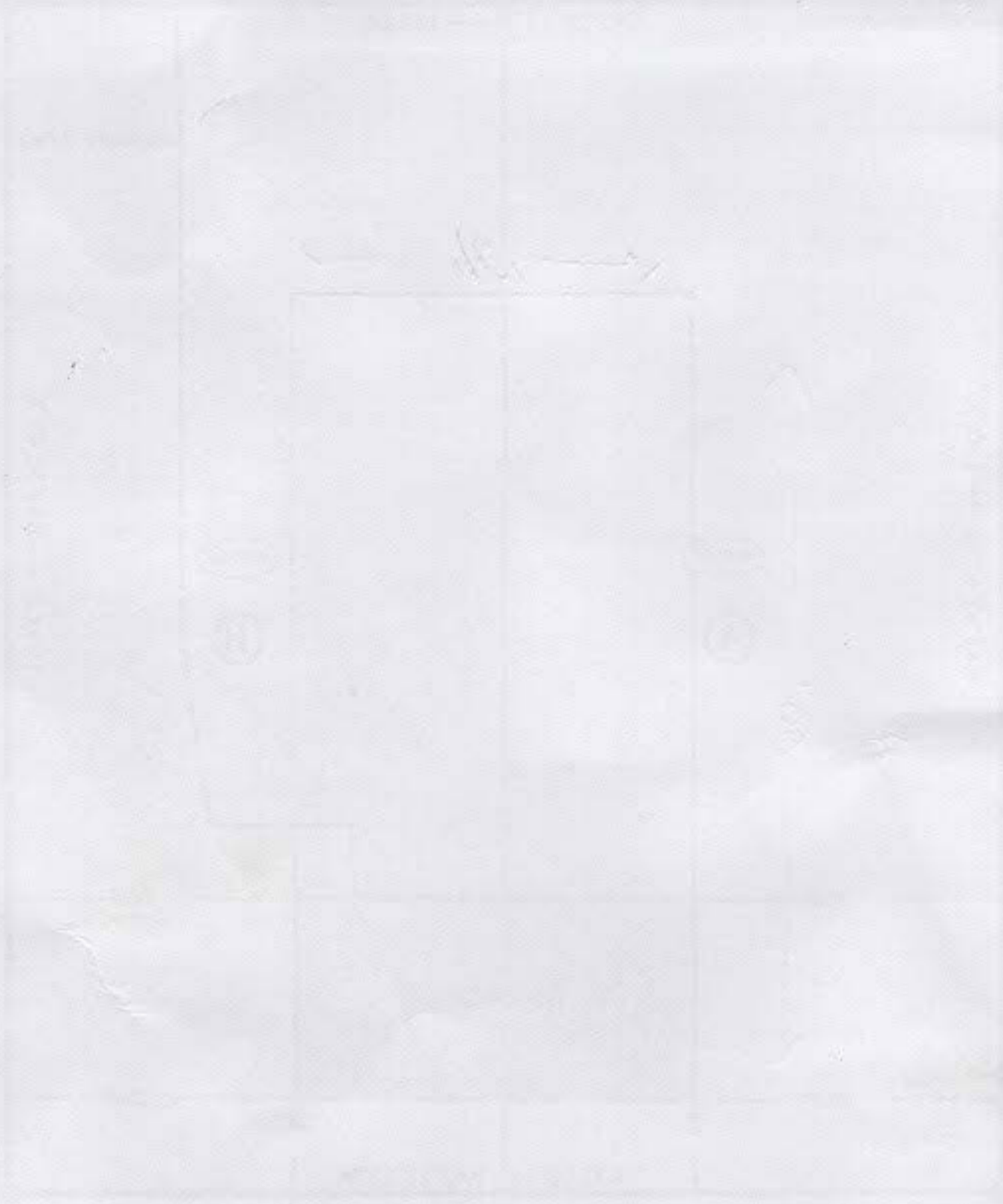
WARNING - UNAUTHORIZED ALTERATION OR ADDITION TO A SURVEY MAP BEARING A LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR'S SEAL IS A VIOLATION OF SECTION 7209, SUBDIVISION 2, OF THE NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION LAW.

PROPOSED SUBDIVISION PLAT (ASSEMBLAGE)

Date:	2/7/2005
Scale:	1"=20'
Drawn By:	C.G.P.
Checked By:	

**PARCELS "A & B" of the LANDS of -
 ELAINE J. GRANGER
 651 FLOWER STREET
 CITY of WATERTOWN**

1870 MARCH 21



100
100
50
50

100
100
50
50

100
100
50
50

Short Environmental Assessment Form

Part 1 - Project Information

Instructions for Completing

Part 1 – Project Information. The applicant or project sponsor is responsible for the completion of Part 1. Responses become part of the application for approval or funding, are subject to public review, and may be subject to further verification. Complete Part 1 based on information currently available. If additional research or investigation would be needed to fully respond to any item, please answer as thoroughly as possible based on current information.

Complete all items in Part 1. You may also provide any additional information which you believe will be needed by or useful to the lead agency; attach additional pages as necessary to supplement any item.

Part 1 – Project and Sponsor Information			
Name of Action or Project: Rezoning 647 flower street to Industrial			
Project Location (describe and attach a location map): 647 Flower Street. End of road			
Brief Description of Proposed Action: 2400 square foot addition to existing garage. Use will be storage of construction materials, tools, and equipment.			
Name of Applicant or Sponsor: Scott Phelps General Contracting		Telephone: [REDACTED]	
		E-Mail: scott@scottphelps.com	
Address: 647 Flower Street			
City/PO: Watertown		State: NY	Zip Code: 13601
1. Does the proposed action only involve the legislative adoption of a plan, local law, ordinance, administrative rule, or regulation? If Yes, attach a narrative description of the intent of the proposed action and the environmental resources that may be affected in the municipality and proceed to Part 2. If no, continue to question 2.			NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			YES <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does the proposed action require a permit, approval or funding from any other government Agency? If Yes, list agency(s) name and permit or approval:			NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			YES <input type="checkbox"/>
3. a. Total acreage of the site of the proposed action?		.275 acres	
b. Total acreage to be physically disturbed?		.055 acres	
c. Total acreage (project site and any contiguous properties) owned or controlled by the applicant or project sponsor?		.275 acres	
4. Check all land uses that occur on, are adjoining or near the proposed action:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural (non-agriculture) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential (suburban)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Forest <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic <input type="checkbox"/> Other(Specify):			
<input type="checkbox"/> Parkland			

	NO	YES	N/A
5. Is the proposed action,			
a. A permitted use under the zoning regulations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is the proposed action consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is the site of the proposed action located in, or does it adjoin, a state listed Critical Environmental Area? If Yes, identify: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. a. Will the proposed action result in a substantial increase in traffic above present levels?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Are public transportation services available at or near the site of the proposed action?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Are any pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes available on or near the site of the proposed action?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Does the proposed action meet or exceed the state energy code requirements? If the proposed action will exceed requirements, describe design features and technologies: _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Will the proposed action connect to an existing public/private water supply? If No, describe method for providing potable water: _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Will the proposed action connect to existing wastewater utilities? If No, describe method for providing wastewater treatment: <u>There is an existing</u> <u>septic system for current bathroom</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. a. Does the project site contain, or is it substantially contiguous to, a building, archaeological site, or district which is listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places, or that has been determined by the Commissioner of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to be eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Is the project site, or any portion of it, located in or adjacent to an area designated as sensitive for archaeological sites on the NY State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archaeological site inventory?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. a. Does any portion of the site of the proposed action, or lands adjoining the proposed action, contain wetlands or other waterbodies regulated by a federal, state or local agency?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Would the proposed action physically alter, or encroach into, any existing wetland or waterbody?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, identify the wetland or waterbody and extent of alterations in square feet or acres: _____ _____ _____			

14. Identify the typical habitat types that occur on, or are likely to be found on the project site. Check all that apply:

Shoreline
 Forest
 Agricultural/grasslands
 Early mid-successional
 Wetland
 Urban
 Suburban

15. Does the site of the proposed action contain any species of animal, or associated habitats, listed by the State or Federal government as threatened or endangered? Northern Long-Eared Bat	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16. Is the project site located in the 100-year flood plan?	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>
17. Will the proposed action create storm water discharge, either from point or non-point sources? If Yes, a. Will storm water discharges flow to adjacent properties? b. Will storm water discharges be directed to established conveyance systems (runoff and storm drains)? If Yes, briefly describe:	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
18. Does the proposed action include construction or other activities that would result in the impoundment of water or other liquids (e.g., retention pond, waste lagoon, dam)? If Yes, explain the purpose and size of the impoundment:	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>
19. Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the location of an active or closed solid waste management facility? If Yes, describe:	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>
20. Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the subject of remediation (ongoing or completed) for hazardous waste? If Yes, describe: The property has not been the subject of remediation of hazardous waste but the NYS DEC environmental site database includes parcels in the general vicinity that have been the subject of remediation for hazardous waste which is why this box is checked.	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE IS TRUE AND ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE



PRINT FORM