



## Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
Governor

**ERIK KULLESEID**  
Acting Commissioner

Ms. Kimberly Konrad Alvarez  
Landmark Consulting, LLC  
83 Grove Avenue  
Albany, NY 12208

8 October 2019

RE Elk Street-Spruce Street Commercial Historic District  
City of Albany, Albany County  
State/National Register of Historic Places evaluation

Dear Ms. Alvarez,

The Division for Historic Preservation (DHP) has recently completed its analysis of the former Elk Street-Spruce Street Commercial Historic District, City of Albany, Albany County, for the purposes of establishing whether or not the area meets the eligibility criteria for State and National Register of Historic Places (S/NRHP) designation as a small historic district. Following a field visit undertaken earlier in the year, and after undertaking documentary source and map research, the DHP has concluded that the area in question—which is roughly bounded by Lark Street, Spruce Street, Henry Johnson Boulevard, and Sherman Street—appears to represent a cohesive and contiguous commercial area that would appear to constitute a historic district. The district is presently identified in our CRIS system as an S/NRHP eligible entity within the larger Sheridan Hollow survey area (16SR00376) sponsored by the Historic Albany Foundation. The next step relative to the identified district will be to compile the necessary S/NRHP documentation while additionally building support among the various property owners that will be necessary to ensure the district can be successfully nominated.

Please keep DHP staff informed about the process to compile the required S/NRHP documentation and in regards to local outreach efforts. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me at (518) 268-2167 or at [William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov](mailto:William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov) if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

William E. Krattinger  
Historic Preservation Program Analyst

Via email only

## **Proposed “Freihofer Historic District”**

### ***Historic Context and Significance Statement for the Commercial Block of Spruce & Elk Streets between Lark St and Northern Boulevard (current Henry Johnson Boulevard.)***

#### **Criteria**

*Criteria A.* The properties are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

*Criteria C.* The properties embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;

#### **Statement of Significance**

The properties along the 200 block of Spruce and Elk Street consist of a former three-story garage and auto dealership showroom, a two-story bakery plant, a one-story ice cream factory all spanning from the south side of Spruce street to the northside of Elk Street, and on Elk Street a number of one- and two-story brick warehouse or commercial garage structures. This proposed commercial district is significant from an architectural and urban planning perspective. From its inception at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this area was developed based on the availability of multiple building lots that would accommodate broad commercial and light industrial structures but with the convenience of transportation and close proximity to both dense residential blocks and the main commercial corridors of Central, Washington and Clinton Avenues and the cross town connector of Northern Boulevard. The block is located within the Arbor Hill/Sheridan Hollow neighborhood which was settled in by many immigrant families such as German and Polish having come from Eastern Europe to Albany as early as 1870.

#### ***Neighborhood Development***

The trapezoidal or wedge-shaped block bound by Spruce Street to the north, Elk Street to the south, Lark Street to the east and Northern Blvd at the west was initially owned by the Families of Jacob Kirchner and Jacob Holler in the 1870s according to the Hopkins Ward Maps of 1876 (Ward 13, Plate K). Jacob Holler was born on 4 May 1821 in Neustadt, Pfalz, Germany and came to the U.S. in 1833 at the age of 12. He died on 23 Nov 1903 and was buried at Eagle Hill, St Paul Lutheran Cemetery in Albany, NY. The 1878 and 1890 City Directories list Jacob Holler as a contractor with George Holler, and John M. Holler his eldest and youngest sons, with home at 240 Washington Avenue and in the summer at Western Ave above the tollgate. John M. Holler is also a carriage manufacturer with places of businesses listed at 282-296 Canal (Sheridan Ave) and 193-199 Spruce, which is opposite the subject buildings of this study.



**JOHN M. HOLLER,**  
AGENT FOR THE HOMER WAGON CO.,  
**Carriage, Wagon and Sleigh Builder,**

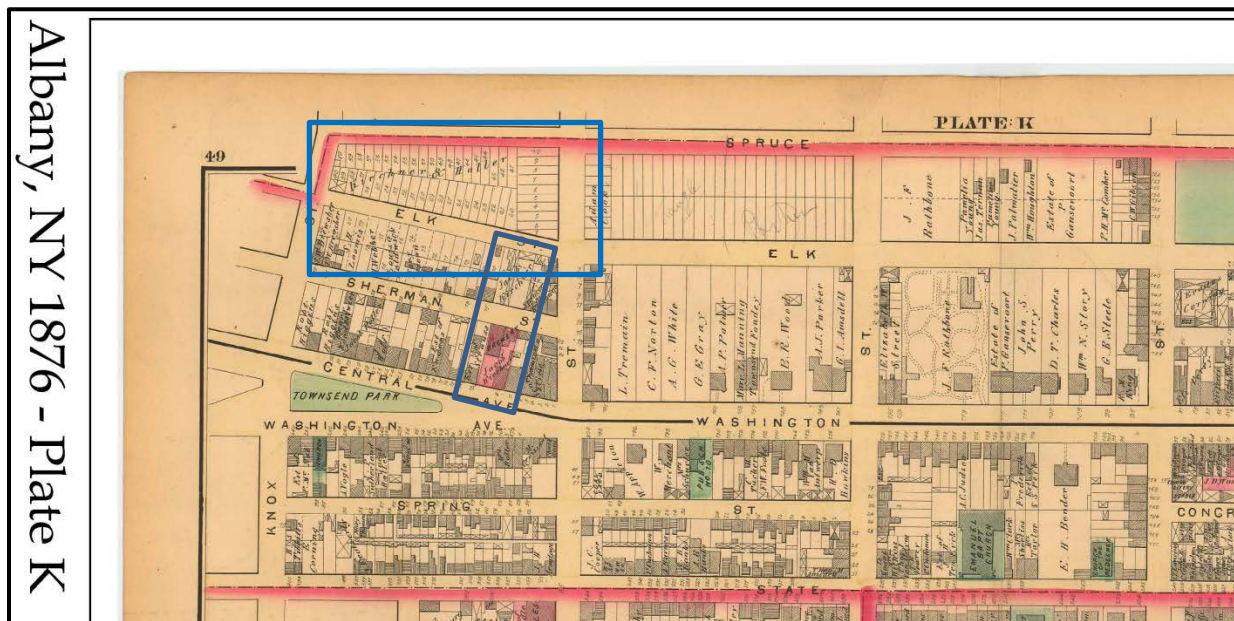
 

282-296 Canal St., 193-199 Spruce St.,  
ALBANY, N. Y.  
Telephone Call 24.

STORAGE FOR CARRIAGES AND SLEIGHS.

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Johann Jacob Kirchner was born about 1811 in Germany and arrived in the U. S. in 1847. He was married to Dorothea Gimlich Kirchner, and when he died in 1882, his property holdings in Albany transferred to Dorothea. Tax Assessment rolls in 1890 indicates that all parcels in this subject block were listed as owned by Dorothea Kirchner and were vacant.



By 1892, according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, there are two and three-story dwellings occupying the lots along the west side of Lark Street and five frame houses along Elk Street (north side) (Numbers 189, 191, 193, 195, 209). The first brick commercial structure to be built in this block was at 199-201 Elk Street which remains intact today. It originally served as a stable and storage building and later for General House Painter, sign painter and paperhanger, John H. Harrigan. The Kirchner family continued a presence on this block well into the late 1910s until the last of the family-owned parcels was sold off. The Kirchner family was involved in a brewery and bottling company having first established Kirchner & Co. Brewery in 1869 until it was renamed in 1877 as J. Kirchner Brewery. When J. Jacob Kirchner died in 1882, the brewery was renamed again, owned by the Estate of Jacob Kirchner Brewery and run by his children, primary Jacob J. Kirchner as a small brewing company until 1916. The main brewery was located at 9 Central Avenue and 8-10 Sherman Street, directly south of this Spruce/Elk block and noted in the 1876 Ward Map shaded in red (smaller blue outline box). A one-story wood frame bottling plant was located one block north at 228 Spruce Street until 1913 when sold and replaced by the F. M. Hosler Ice Cream Company's building. Jacob J. Kirchner was a Marine Corporal who died in 1918 during World War I in France. Jacob Kirchner is buried in Albany Rural Cemetery.

Much of the development along the south side of Spruce Street began in the early 1910s. The property at the west end of Spruce Street at the corner of what was formerly Northern Boulevard (now Henry Johnson Boulevard) was the first to be constructed as the three-story brick building for the "Boulevard Garage" per specifications of architect, Charles R. Selkirk of Albany. (Permit

approved July 19, 1912) Specifications noted materials including good quality Mechanicville brick, vitrified salt-glazed parapet coping tiles, hemlock lath, New England Adamant plaster, cypress window and door frames, Johns-Manville asbestos roofing and galvanized iron cornice. Because a two-story wood-frame structure was already in place at the northwest corner of Elk Street at the corner of Northern Boulevard (Number 231 Elk), the footprint of this new building jogged around this existing building, but spanned the full depth of the block between Spruce and Elk Streets. The Boulevard Garage was listed in newspaper advertisements and in City Directories as located at 64 Northern Boulevard, and set alongside the Northern Avenue viaduct that spanned between Central Avenue to the south and Sheridan Avenue to the north. The Garage managed by Horace Rayno with master mechanic, Hector Rayno according to the 1915 City Directory, were selling agents for the Marmon car manufacturer. They also provided general automobile repairs and supplies. At the time of its construction, the purchase and possession of an automobile was gaining popularity, however most people did not have driveways or personal garages to keep and store these vehicles. A number of private garages were established where one could store their cars, while also having access to mechanics and supplies to keep them in running order.

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BUSINESS ANNOUNCEMENTS 1105

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**Boulevard Garage Co.**  
— SELLING AGENTS FOR —  
**THE MARMON**  
"The Easiest Riding Car in The World"



**WELDING—TELEPHONE WEST 2400—TIRES**  
**General Automobile Repairing, Supplies, Etc.**  
**Northern Boulevard, between Spruce and Elk Sts. ALBANY, N. Y.**

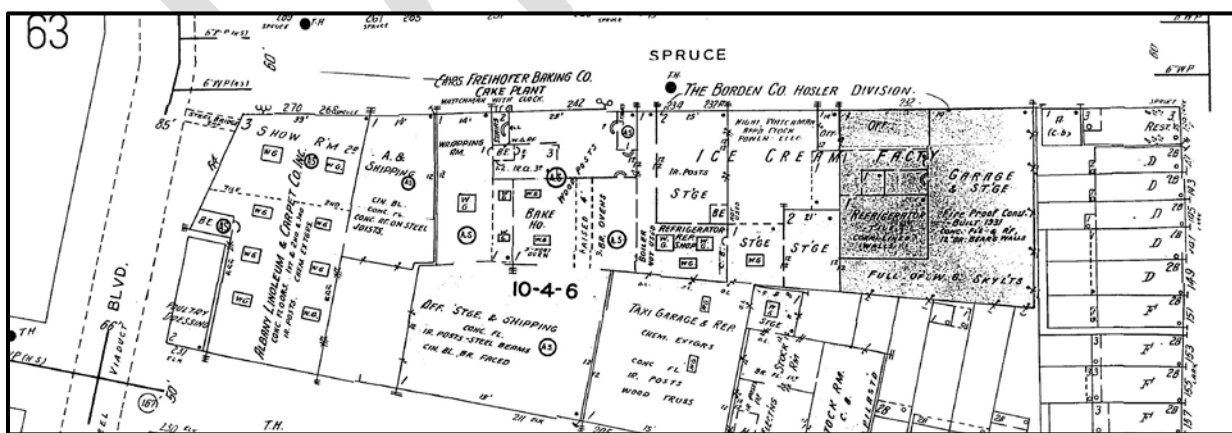
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The corner property on Elk Street was built by Lester Helmes between 1890 and 1908 as a two-story wood dwelling and stable. It remained in the Helmes family until the 1920s when it became more commercial in use, as private car garage on lower floor and furniture storage on upper floors.

Boulevard Garage included large display windows on the north and west elevations at the second and third floors of the building in order to be most visible from the Northern Boulevard viaduct

(built in 1898). There was also a foot bridge from the viaduct to a doorway in the second floor west-facing storefront. Presumably within these display windows were not only the window signage but also the latest model of automobile from the Marmon Motor Car Company. This American automobile manufacturer was established in 1851 by Howard C. Marmon making mill grinding and agricultural machinery until the first limited production of experimental cars began in 1902. Marmons soon gained a reputation as reliable, speedy upscale cars including the 1909 Wasp which featured the world's first known rear-view mirror. The 1913 Model 48 was a left-hand steering car with electric headlights, dash lights, horn and electric starter. Marmon became notable for its various innovations and pioneering works in automotive manufacturing. The stock market crash of 1929 drastically reduced the luxury car market and while the Marmon Company discontinued auto production, they continued to manufacture components for other manufacturers. A new company arose in the merge of Marmon with ex-military engineer, Arthur Herrington. Marmon-Herrington reorganized in 1931 and based in Indianapolis, Indiana with a focus on manufacturing all-wheel drive commercial trucks. They procured contracts for military aircraft refueling trucks and in 1932 built the first all-wheel drive truck and trailer combination. Marmon-Herrington also made multi-stop delivery vans and made its foray into the manufacture of transit buses in 1946 when it produced its first electric trolley bus. It is presumed that as the Marmon Car Company adapted, so did the services and offerings of the Boulevard Garage Co.

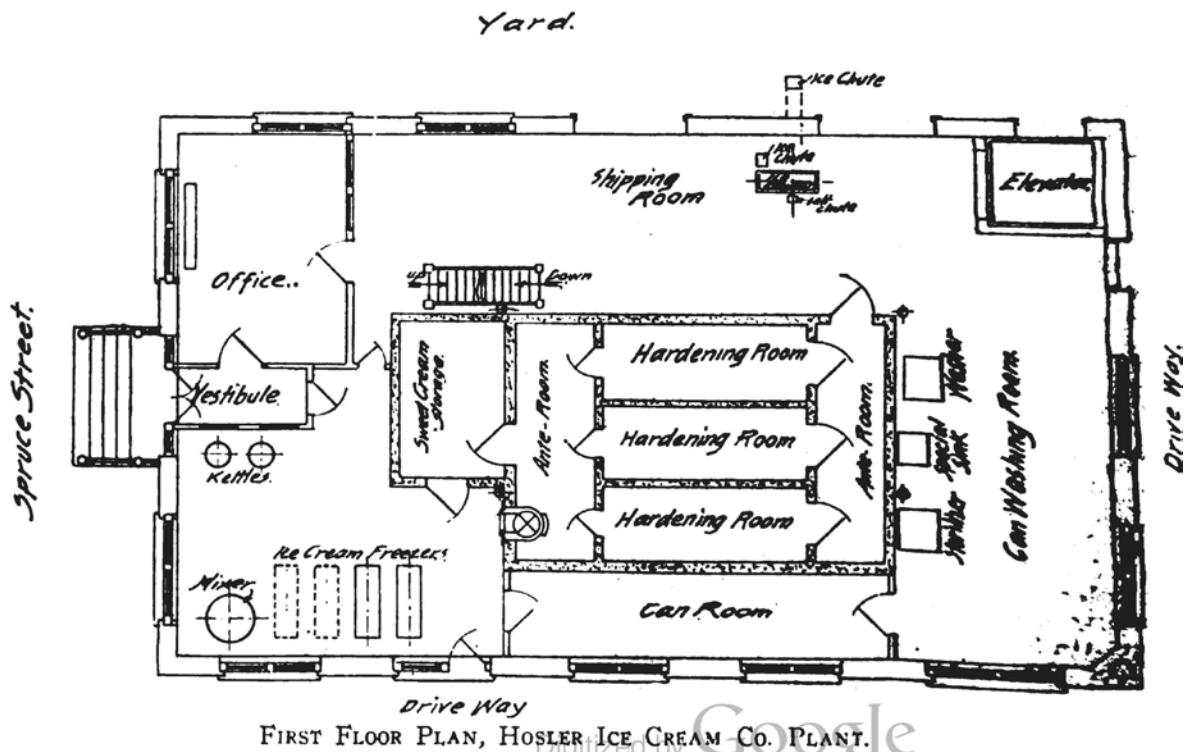
In 1945, the three-story property at 64 Northern Boulevard was acquired by Albany Linoleum & Carpet Company at a cost of roughly \$75,000. The structure at the corner of Elk Street and Northern Boulevard was also acquired by Albany Linoleum & Carpet Co. It was at some point after 1951, that this corner building was altered making it three stories, brick clad and integrated with the property at 64 Northern Blvd/270 Spruce. Henry and Martha Bonsall, were the owners of the company which had been organized in 1924 and since that time served as a wholesale distributor of floor covering materials with Armstrong Cork Company as its largest supplier. At the time of the purchase of the former Boulevard Garage property, Albany Linoleum leased more than two-thirds of the space (2,770 square feet) to the Armstrong Cork Company. The rear building at 231 Elk was leased to the Albany Poultry Company.



Sanborn Insurance Map – Albany, NY 1934-1951 vol. 1, sheet 70.



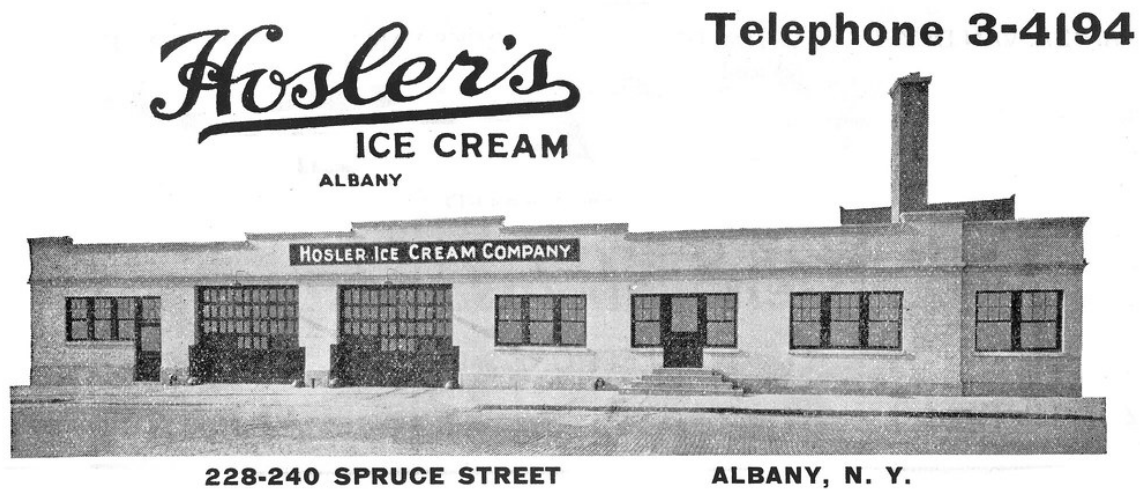
In 1913, the F. M. Hosler Ice Cream Company was incorporated with \$30,000 of capital (Fred. M. Hosler, G. B. Russell, J. H. Vogel and others) and built its modern state of the art production and office facility. Also designed by architect, Charles R. Selkirk, this building originally was constructed as a two-story plus basement structure. Its state of the art factory was published in the "New York Produce Review and American Creamery Journal" noting the layout, the machinery and the production efficiency with which the plant was designed. Although the first permits were issued in March of 1913, review of building permit records indicate that additional construction occurred in 1919 and 1921. Unfortunately these permit documents did not survive and it can only be speculated that this work involved the construction of rear storage facilities, garages and enlarged offices to the east of the original structure.



Frederic Hosler was a German immigrant who was born in 1864 and died in 1940 at the age of 76 in Albany.<sup>1</sup> The Hosler Ice Cream Company had its beginnings in confectionary stores selling homemade ice cream to the point that such large quantities sold necessitated the development of a larger manufacturing plant. They enjoyed great success in Albany, as improvements in refrigeration technology in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century made the production, storage and sale of ice cream in small grocery stores, soda fountains and confectionaries possible. In the 1920s, Hosler's opened an Ice Cream storefront at 207 Lark Street, previously occupied by a grocery store. Hosler is also credited by some sources as the creator of the "Popsicle." In June of 1929, the Albany Times Union reported that the sale of the Hosler as well as the Troy-based Wagar Ice Cream companies were under negotiation by the Borden Milk Products Company of New York. This purchase offer included the acquisition of the 15-year old plant on Spruce Street. Both Hosler and Wagar were two

<sup>1</sup> Frederick M. Hosler and family members are interred within a family mausoleum at Albany Rural Cemetery (Section 130, Plot 13).

of the oldest ice cream manufacturers in the Capital Region. Despite the purchase in 1930, the Borden Company retained the factory location at 232-234 Spruce Street and the Hosler product name as the Hosler Division of the Borden Co. The Sanborn Insurance Map from the time period of 1934-1951 indicates that the one-story garage structure at 232 Spruce to the east of the Ice Cream factory was built in 1931 of fire proof construction and with a roof full of wired glass skylights. A photo from 1940 clearly notes the sign on the building as the "Hosler Ice Cream Company."



Around the same time in 1913, Charles (Carl) Frederick Schupp & Sons, Inc. had purchased the parcels at 240-248 Spruce Street for the construction of a bakery and refrigeration building. The building permits were issued on March 7, 1914 by the Bureau of Buildings. This building was described as being 88'x110', three-stories with a basement and costing approximately \$30,000 in June of 1914. (*"Mill Supplies" Vol. IV, No. 6, Crawford Publishing Comp.*) According to the Engineering News Record (Vol. 71, No. 22, 1914, p. 334) the bakery building was designed by William Allen Balch & Lucius S. Beardsley Architects out of NY City and built by Maurice Mead. Balch & Beardsley Architects were a well-known firm familiar with the design of commercial light-industrial buildings, such as the Paul G. Mehlin & Sons piano factory in Union Square, NYC and the C. F. Mueller Company, manufacturers of macaroni products. The construction of this new bakery coincided with the construction of the new Charles Freihofer Baking Company Albany bakery on Quail Street and Washington Avenue. Both are noted as among the many buildings constructed in the year 1914 in Albany in the Albany Evening Journal, December 26, 1914. ("Year 1914 Notable for New Buildings") Prior to the establishment of this new bakery, Charles F. (Carl) Schupp had come to Albany in 1891 and purchased a bakery business started by his brother Louis Schupp. Carl and his sons had been producing breads, pie and cakes with Rye Bread their specialty from a corner property at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Clinton Street in the South End neighborhood where they had their home and all the requirements of a bakery and retail shop. Carl Schupp died in 1909 prior to the construction of the Spruce Street plant but the business was continued by his sons, William and Charles and daughter Caroline. C. F. Schupp & Sons, Inc. was delivering baked goods by horse and wagon and had trademarked "Holsum" bread, a bread marketed for its pure ingredients



and processing, having not been touched by human hands until it was unwrapped from its dust- and germ-proof waxed wrapper. (Advertisements in the Albany Evening Journal, 1915).

In 1919, news articles reference a minimum of 23 bakeries in Albany including the Freihofer Baking Co. and C.F. Schupp and Sons. That same year, the Freihofer Company increased their regional industry once again with the purchase of the modern bakery and former plant of C.F. Schupp and Sons at 240 Spruce Street, for the exclusive production of cakes. Within a week of Freihofer's operation of the Spruce Street plant, 106 wagons were delivering cakes around the Capital District. (Albany Times Union, 1919)



*New Plant for C. F. Schupp & Sons, Albany, N. Y.  
L. S. Beardsley—Archit. & Eng.*

## **Bakery Architect**

This bakery is 98 ft. x 110 ft. in size and built in mill construction with brick exterior walls. It contains five ovens. Has flour storage in basement, making-up room, bake room, shipping and loading space on first floor, and mixing room on second floor.

I have five baking plants under construction at the present time, and would be glad to send you illustrations and information regarding them.

### **L. S. BEARDSLEY**

**Architect & Engineer**

**38 West 32nd St.                      New York**

**BAKERIES EXCLUSIVELY**

1913

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/albanygroup/>

The Charles F. Freihofer Baking Company began with the partnership of two brothers, Charles and William, in Philadelphia, PA in 1884, determined to provide home delivery of fresh baked bread made from the finest ingredients. Within a decade the Freihofer Vienna Baking Company was established and expanded with sufficient financial backing. It was the first commercial bakery in Philadelphia and became one of the largest. The basis of the company's success was the assumption that working women in large cities were too busy to have time to bake breads and pastries. Upon a trip from Philadelphia to Montreal in 1911, the Friehofers stopped in Troy and noted the busy industrial activity and the opportunity to expand the family business. By February of 1913, the Charles F. Freihofer Baking Company of Troy was incorporated and established with a baking plant in the Lansingburg section of Troy, under the leadership of Charles' eldest son, Charles C. The first day of sales on March 17, 1913 started out with 15 delivery wagons brought up from Philadelphia. Four days preceding the opening of the bakery, drivers delivered free bread to all the homes in Troy and full page advertisements were run in the Troy Evening Record announcing the new bakery. Each of the sons, Charles C. Edwin and Frank Freihofer had been raised in the baking business and it was the intention for them to all enter the business. Advances in the business included the 70-foot long "traveling" oven that through the use of conveyor belts moved loaf pans from start to fully baked through the plant which were the first to be installed in the U.S; the daily oven-to-home delivery system; the first automatic bread wrapping machine in 1914, and mechanization of all aspects of the bakery production. Freihofer was the first to introduce mechanically sliced bread in the area. In June of 1914, plans had been drawn and ground broken for a second bakery at the corner of Quail Street and Washington Avenue in Albany to be run by Edwin Freihofer (Opened Sept. 30, 1915) and for the construction of a bakery on Albany Street near Brandywine Park in Schenectady to be run by Frank Freihofer. The Albany bakery was described as having been designed to be two- and three-stories in height, 80'x140' and having the capacity to produce 20,000 loaves of bread per day.<sup>2</sup> In each plant, design and construction consideration were given to lighting arrangement, ventilation, cleanliness, and every detail for the best sanitary conditions. Each of the three plants were equipped with special electrically-controlled machinery for every step of the bread baking process to ensure uniform quality.

As noted above, in 1919, the baking company branched out once again with the purchase and set up of its cake bakery plant within the former C.F. Schupp bakery on Spruce Street. An article announcing the acquisition, credits the Freihofer Baking Company and similar bakers with causing fresh baked cakes to be considered a daily necessity along with bread, rather than as a luxury. Freihofer allowed these baked goods to be sold at a moderate cost. The purchase of the Schupp bakery plant, was in response to popular demand received prior to the outbreak of the first World War, to dedicate on bakery plant exclusively to the making of cakes. City Directory listings suggest that Freihofer was using the Schupp Spruce Street bakery prior or during the war in 1916. In keeping with the tradition of the former Schupp bakery mantra, the cakes were advertised as being entirely machine-made, with no human handling, offering thus the most sanity pastries, wrapped and boxed by machinery. With the cake plant in operation, Freihofer offered a different cake each day of the week for delivery. By 1929, the company was operating 120 delivery wagons and had

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<sup>2</sup> Troy Times Record, "Bakery Plant Extension." June 13, 1914, p. 5.

450 employees in the combined regional operation.<sup>3</sup> Freihofer Baking Company was selling almost exclusively house-to-house rather than wholesale and were part of approximately 10% of all bread companies that were exclusively home distributors. In the 1930s trucks were introduced for home delivery, used in combination with horse drawn wagons.

DRAFT

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<sup>3</sup> Albany Times Union, "Bread and Cake Stuff of our Life. " unknown date, 1919.; Troy Time Record, "Freihofer Baking Company Observes 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary." March 18, 1963, p.16.

# NEW ALBANY BAKERY FREIHOFER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

To the Public Officials and Citizens of the Cities of Albany and Rensselaer  
GREETING:

In order that there may be no misunderstanding I shall endeavor to inform you of the TRUE STATUS OF THE CHAS. FREIHOFER BAKING COMPANY.

## MY THREE SONS

Chas. C. Freihofer                      Frank A. Freihofer  
Edwin H. Freihofer

HAVING BEEN REARED IN THE BAKING BUSINESS DESIRED TO MAKE A START FOR THEMSELVES. I accordingly told them to select cities in which they would like to live and rear their families. They selected the cities of ALBANY, TROY and SCHENECTADY and I built a bakery in each of those cities as follows:

TROY, Governed by CHAS. C. FREIHOFER  
SCHENECTADY, Governed by FRANK A. FREIHOFER  
ALBANY, Governed by EDWIN H. FREIHOFER

We have just completed the MOST MODERN AUTOMATIC BAKERY IT IS POSSIBLE TO BUILD---LOCATED AT *Quail Street and Washington Avenue in the City of Albany.*

Truly this BAKERY is a step forward, not only in the baking line but for the city of Albany.

I told you through the press on the 15th day of March, 1914, AND NOW REITERATE

THAT NO PERSON OR PERSONS, INDIVIDUAL OR CORPORATION, THE FREIHOFER BAKING COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA, OR ANY ONE ELSE, HAS ONE DOLLAR OR ANY INTEREST, IN THESE THREE BAKERIES, BUT MY SONS AND MYSELF.

THESE BAKERIES I HAVE BUILT SOLELY FOR MY SONS AND ANY STATEMENT TO THE CONTRARY---IS FALSE AND MALICIOUS.

**We Will, To-day, Tuesday and Wednesday Present Every Family In The Cities of ALBANY and RENSSELAER FREE of CHARGE With A Loaf Of Our FAMOUS PAN BREAD**

### NOTED FOR ITS QUALITY

This bread is made from the finest material  
Modern automatic machinery  
Scientific knowledge  
And cannot be SURPASSED for QUALITY.

### NOW THINK OF THE QUANTITY

Nineteen ounces---19 oz. for FIVE CENTS.  
Thirty-seven ounces---37 oz. for TEN CENTS.

### HOW CAN WE DO IT--?

Because we buy for CASH.  
Because we have AUTOMATIC MACHINERY.  
Because of SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE.  
Because of a THOROUGH SYSTEM.

### OUR OVERHEAD CHARGES ARE REDUCED

NOW THINK OF CONDITIONS.  
WE EXTEND CREDIT TO EVERY FAMILY FOR ONE WEEK---Said week to begin on TUESDAY MORNING AND END MONDAY NIGHT OF EACH WEEK, WHEN WE WILL EXPECT YOU TO PAY OUR SALARIES ON THE WAGON.

WE DELIVER YOUR BREAD BEFORE BREAK-FAST, SO YOU CAN ENJOY GOOD FRESH BREAD.

### NOW REGARDING THE WORKINGMAN

It has been said that we are not the working man's friend---LET'S SEE:

I was born of poor and respectable parents. I know what it is to work long and hard. I worked until I was able to save a few hundred dollars and then with my brother, William, who had just sold his milk route, we started in the BAKING BUSINESS---TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

My brother took a wagon and I baked the bread. We always tried to be kind to the public and to our wives. WE BAKED THE BEST BREAD WE KNEW HOW.

WE GAVE AS MUCH FOR THE MONEY AS IT WAS POSSIBLE TO GIVE. AND WE GREW; UNTIL TO-DAY, WE HAVE A VERY LARGE BUSINESS IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, EMPLOYING NEARLY 800 PEOPLE---THE MAJORITY OF OUR EMPLOYEES OWN THEIR OWN HOMES AND

HAVE BEEN WITH US MANY YEARS AND ARE HAPPY AND CONTENTED.

We believe we pay our employees more money for the same kind of work than any baker we know. We give our employees every possible comfort and kindness. BUT---We will not allow any employee to tell us what he will or will not do, during work hours.

FOR WE KNOW BETTER HOW TO RUN OUR BUSINESS THAN HE DOES.

The bread business has been revolutionized in the past five years and no line of business has seen greater progress, the old methods of baking being obsolete.

We give the working man more for his money, more money for his labor, and a square deal.

We admit our methods are different, very different, but they are the methods that will have to be adopted by all successful bakers.

I have tried to make myself understood by the public and beg to remain

Most Respectfully Yours,

**CHAS. FREIHOFER BAKING CO.**

September 20, 1915

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/albanygroup/>

By 1942, Freihofer had acquired all the parcels to the rear of its 242 Spruce plant on Elk Street including 209 (22'x85'), 211 (22'x85'), 213, 215, and 217 Elk which had been vacant. The two buildings at 209 and 211 Elk were the last to be purchased and as a result gave them a street frontage of roughly 240 feet and all the property to the rear of its Spruce Street building. A building permit to demolish the newly acquired Elk Street buildings was issued on April 19, 1942 and Freihofer noted its plan to build an addition to its bakery. It is unclear when exactly construction began but a one-story brick and concrete block Storage and Shipping building is built before 1951 and later in 1953 the former one-story brick Pine Hills Taxi garage (80'x120') is purchased for \$40,000 and connected to the adjacent building and to the pastry building.<sup>4</sup>

Production and progress continues into the 1960s as the company celebrates its 50 years in the business with the third generation of Freihofer's leading the company. At that point 730 persons were employed by Freihofer in the Capital Region and there were about 250 trucks in their fleet. Eventually large changes occur such as the retiring of the last delivery horses, the replacement of all the wagons with trucks, then finally the end of home delivery in the 1970s. By the 1980s bakery production has ended in Troy and Schenectady, and Freihofer Execs say the antiquated production plants need to be replaced in order to compete with bigger competitors. A new 50,000 square foot bread plant is opened in 1980 and a central bakery complex built on 15 acres in western part of Albany. In 1987 the Freihofer Company is sold to General Foods Corp for more than \$100million, and later sold to Best Foods.

The Freihofer Spruce Street property is sold to Topo Mondial Corporation, which buys, sells and refurbishes baking machinery, in 1988, when all equipment is removed. The building is leased to Albany Auto Parts until they close in 2013.

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<sup>4</sup> The Knickerbocker News "Friehofer Buys Garage In Elk St." Sept. 2, 1953.

### *Neighborhood Development*

Arbor Hill was developed between 1825 and the turn of the century by the wealthy Van Rensselaer family in a grid street pattern and served as a home to industrialists, business owners, and lumber barons conducting commerce stemming from the Erie Canal. Later, emergence of the City as a major transfer point for east-west shipping increased the demand for residential and commercial construction. Sheridan Hollow got its name from the steep topography on the southern edge of Arbor Hill and this section of the neighborhood encompasses roughly all the area south of Clinton Avenue and closest to Lark Street and Central Avenue and just north of the city's central business district. This area includes the length of Sheridan Avenue and Orange Street and consists of many row structures providing apartments and single unit dwellings. With the 1870 annexation of the land to the west of Northern Boulevard, the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were marked by a building boom along Clinton and the cross streets with many of the remaining undeveloped lots, particularly along the western sections, bought and speculative rowhouses built. Construction began to come up Lark Street, the first one west of downtown Albany that crossed the Sheridan Hollow ravine (since filled in) at grade and then with Lexington Street extended northward a few blocks, brick rowhouses were built there as well. Most were rented to the various laborers and craftsmen moving into the area. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries Sheridan Hollow was a predominantly immigrant neighborhood with a high rate of turnover as immigrant families moved up in social status to other neighborhoods and new immigrants moved in. Between 1917 and 1936 the turnover rate was 91%. The Arbor Hill area retains much of its nineteenth century historic character, although demolition and redevelopment have taken its toll in some parts.

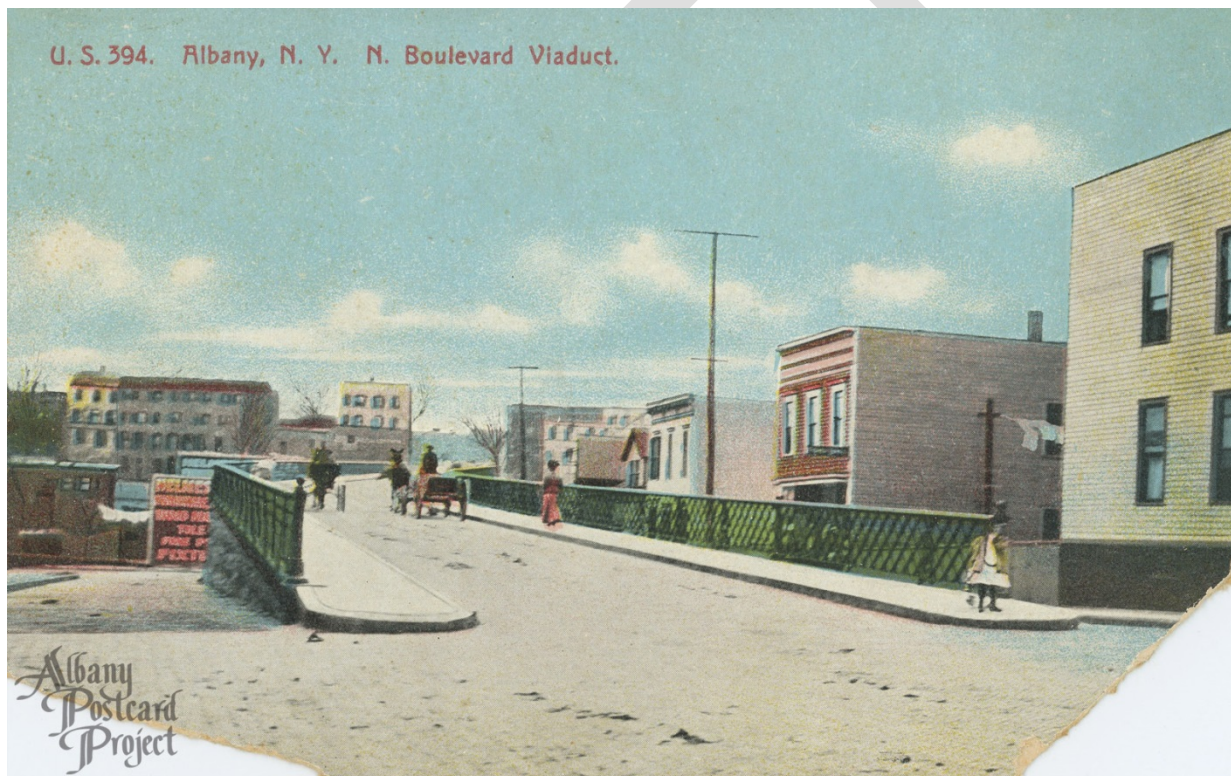
Sheridan Hollow was settled in the late 1700s, except for the eastern tip, which was settled earlier, and has always been home predominantly to a relatively lower income population. The Fox Creek ran through the ravine and was prone to flooding, as well as the unpleasant downhill draining of dumped horse manure (into the 20<sup>th</sup> century). The Fox Creek travels underground and empties into the Hudson River. The Sheridan Hollow neighborhood developed with mixed residential and light industry business thanks to its convenient location in the City of Albany immediately north of the State Capitol and just South of the Arbor Hill Neighborhood. Topographically, Sheridan Hollow is a ravine, essentially making it physically invisible to the vibrant government and commercial entities to its immediate south. In the late 1800's and early twentieth century, the Swan Street viaduct carried residents from upper class Arbor Hill over Sheridan Hollow to the City's employment center along Washington Avenue. A similar bridge exists today, carrying Route 9, Henry Johnson Boulevard, over Spruce and Sherman Streets. Originally settled by low-income Irish immigrants,

Sheridan Hollow historically has been a mixed use neighborhood, and businesses included commercial printing, auto services and metal working. Additionally, based on further research with Sanborn maps, earlier historical maps and interviews with individuals who had previously done research concerning Sheridan Hollow, we know that the neighborhood was home to small tanneries, a bakery, a brewery, pharmacies and paint shops. Sheridan Hollow has two historic districts that have been developed to protect the historic fabric of the City's boulevards. The Clinton

Avenue and the Lark Street historic districts are primarily comprised of historic brownstones and Italianate residential buildings.

The sway-backed shanties of Sheridan Hollow -- bordered by Hawk and Swan streets -- were cobbled together on reclaimed bottom land after Fox Creek was channeled into a buried culvert around 1840. Despite the sewer line, sanitary conditions were poor. Cisterns and outdoor privies were located next to each other, and frequent flooding contaminated the water supply, sickening residents with cholera, typhoid, dysentery and other diseases. Roundworm and whipworm were common. Before indoor plumbing arrived in the 1920s,

The Northern Boulevard Viaduct was built in 1898 as a way to connect the neighborhood of Arbor Hill with Central Avenue and Washington Park. It was replaced with its current structure in 1980 and eleven years later in 1991, the boulevard was renamed for World War I hero, Henry Johnson.



### ***Architects & Architectural Descriptions***

As noted much of Spruce Street developed as smaller vacant house lots were combined to create larger parcels attractive for commercial/light industrial development. Given the close proximity to Route 9 (Northern Boulevard, now Henry Johnson Boulevard), Central and Clinton Avenue, Spruce, Elk and Sherman Streets were often the site for stables, wagon and later automobile garages or commercial uses that relied on these means of transportation.

Three prominent architectural firms are responsible for most of the buildings that exist today in the proposed district, although only the larger structures have their architects documented or recorded. The first commercial building constructed along Spruce Street was the Boulevard Garage building at the southeast corner of Spruce and Northern Boulevard. In 1912, building permit #6683 records include specifications for a garage to be built for the Boulevard Garage Company. Charles R. Selkirk, Architect at 356 State Street, Albany, NY is noted as the architect of record.<sup>5</sup> Charles R. Selkirk was also the architect for the original “warehouse” building designed and constructed at the middle of Spruce between Lark Street and Northern Blvd. for the Hosler Ice Cream Company.<sup>6</sup> The latter building was published in *Refrigerating World, New York Produce Review & American Creamery and Ice Cream Trade Journal* in 1913 praising the innovations in refrigeration and production methods incorporated into the design of this new plant. Charles R. Selkirk (born 1885) was a local architect working in his uncle, Alexander (born 1868) Selkirk’s firm located at 31 N. Pearl Street in Albany. Alexander was a prominent residential architect and many large homes on Manning Blvd, Madison Avenue, and State Street are attributed to him. Charles came from a long line of accomplished, creative designers with his father Charles (born 1855) an art designer and his grandfather Alexander also having worked as an architect. Charles, the younger, seems to have worked primarily in commercial design.

These two buildings constructed between 1912 and 1913 began to establish the character and scale of this block of Spruce Street, and the following year in 1914, an additional commercial/light industrial structure was built on the combined lots between them. The March 7, 1914 *Albany Evening Journal* states that a permit for a three-story brick bakery plant had been issued by the City Bureau of Buildings to C.F. Schupp & Sons. The building to be erected at 242 Spruce Street, west of Lark Street. Further announcement of this development was published in the *Engineering News-Record* noting that C.F. Schupp and Son of Albany, NY will erect a bakery and refrigerator building to be 88’x110’ in dimension and with three stories and basement at an estimated cost of \$30,000. The firm of Balch & Beardsley Architects of 38 West 32<sup>nd</sup> St, New York City completed the plans and the construction contract was awarded to Maurice Mead.<sup>7</sup> William Allen Balch and Lucius Simeon Beardsley, were a firm familiar with the design of commercial light-industrial buildings, such as the Paul G. Mehlin & Sons piano factory in Union Square, N.Y. City and the C. F. Mueller Company, manufacturers of macaroni products. Unfortunately very little is known on William Balch, but the

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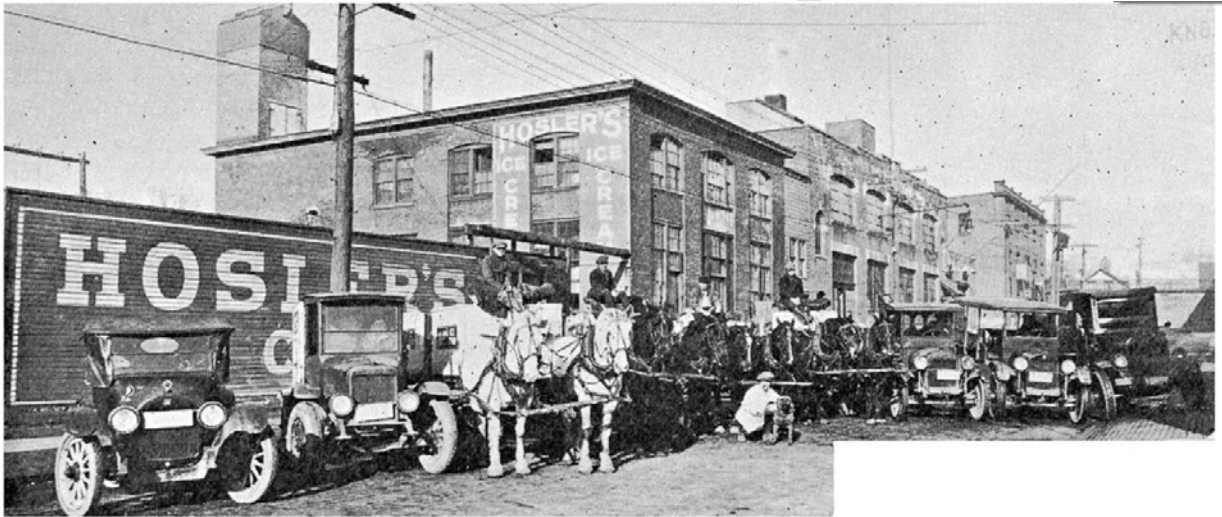
<sup>5</sup> Permit # 6683, Roll 24, page 127 of city of Albany Building Dept Permit Plans Microfilm Rolls, Albany County Hall of Records. Eleven pages of specifications, no drawings survive. Approved July 19, 1912.

<sup>6</sup> Permit # 8319, Roll 35 of city of Albany Building Dept Permit Plans Microfilm Rolls, Albany County Hall of Records. Twelve pages of specifications and full set of scanned architectural drawings (plans & elevations). Approved March 19, 1913.

<sup>7</sup> Engineering News-Record, Vol. 71, No. 22, page 334. 1914, McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.



*American Architects Directory* indicates that Lucius Beardsley was born in East Longmeadow, Massachusetts in April 1890 and worked for a number of ateliers and firms, most notably Warren & Wetmore in 1911-1913. The partnership with Balch only lasted from 1913-1915 after which in 1916 Beardsley was practicing on his own. He retired in 1954.<sup>8</sup> It appears that around the time of the Schupp & Sons bakery construction, Balch had started doing more high-end residential work, and Lucius Beardsley, having both an architectural and engineering background was taking on the light-industrial and commercial design work of the firm. His advertisement in 1913, notes that he is working almost exclusively on bakeries with five plants under construction at that time.



*View of south side of Spruce Street in 1924 showing the Hosler Ice Cream plant, with the Schupp & Sons Bakery in the middle and the Boulevard Garage Company building at the far end.*

Another prominent Albany-based architect that worked on Spruce Street was Charles A. Schade. Schade was born in Albany in 1910, and was educated at Pratt Institute and Yale University finishing in 1936. He worked as a draftsman and designer in his father, William C. Schade's firm from 1938-40 and as partner from 1946-1949 after serving in the US. Navy during World War II. He ultimately organized his own practice in 1950. Some of his notable works included the Sinclair-Valentine Ink Plant in Albany; Hilltop Motel in the Town of Colonie; McKownville Methodist Church; First Congregational Church addition in Albany; and National Commercial Bank & Trust. His work was modern in design, given his career spanned the mid-twentieth century. He designed a number of local churches as well as factories, each with a modern take on traditional forms with simplified wall planes and minimal and streamlined details. In 1963, Schade designed a new 50'8" wide by 81' deep plain brick building addition to the old Schupp & Sons Bakery at 242 Spruce Street, then owned and operated by the Charles Freihofer Baking Company. This building apparently replaced the original two-story brick building previously designed by Charles Selkirk for the Hosler Ice Cream Company, for which a demolition permit was applied for and granted on Sept. 30, 1963.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *American Architects Directory*, First Edition, 1956, p. 32.

<https://aiahistoricaldirectory.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/AHDAA/pages/20644319/1956+American+Architects+Directory>

<sup>9</sup> City of Albany Building Permit #108114, Sept. 30, 1963 for the Demolition of the 2-story brick building described as the "rear of 211 Elk Street on Spruce." Box 050, File 012, Albany County Hall of Records.

Elk Street developed with smaller lots and fewer combined for commercial use until well after the 1940s with the exception of two structures, a taxi garage at 201-205 Elk and a repair shop at 210, both present by 1934. The first double lot development was a two-story brick stable building at 199-201 Elk Street with construction at some point between 1890 and 1908, which remains today as the oldest commercial structure on the block. The combined lots of 201-205 and 208-212 Elk both for large one-story garage or repair shops were built between 1912 and 1913. Into the 1930s many of the parcels consisted of residential dwellings, occupied by laborers such as painters, sign makers, electricians, and auto mechanics. In 1915, C. F. Schupp & Sons Inc. purchased the parcels at 213, 215, and 217 Elk Street which consisted of wood frame houses and 219 and 221 Elk are owned by Boulevard Garage but remain as vacant parcels. By 1919, the parcels at 213, 215, and 217 Elk Street had been purchased by the Freihofer Baking Company along with the purchase of 242 Spruce Street from the C.F. Schupp & Sons bakery company. The Elk street properties however are noted as being vacant. Tax Assessment rolls of 1920 do indicate that the two-story wood residence at 209 Elk as well as those at 214, 216, 218 and 222 Elk are all standing as “ruins” suggesting a fire dramatically impacted this block by the end of the 1910s. No building permit has been found suggesting that Freihofer intentionally took the residences at 213-217 down. It is likely that they of C. F. Schupp & Sons purchased the parcels as a result of the fire given the location directly behind the Spruce Street bakery. The only building left standing at the center of this block is the two-story brick stables at 211 Elk in private ownership of Augusta Ulrich. It was not until January 1942, that the Freihofer Baking Company adds 209 and 211 Elk to their property ownership on this side of the block through acquisition.<sup>10</sup> In April 1942, an application to the Albany Bureau of Buildings by Coyle Wrecking and Lumber Corp. on behalf of owner, Charles Freihofer Baking Company was made for a permit to demolish the brick stable building known as 211 Elk Street.<sup>11</sup>

At some point between 1942 and 1951 a new one-story addition to the Freihofer Baking Company Cake Plant was constructed on the combined footprint of parcels 209, 211, 213, 215 and 217 Elk Street. This new office, storage and shipping department of the cake plant was thereafter referred to as 211 Elk Street, and was constructed of concrete block, steel beams, iron posts and faced with brick. In late August of 1953, Freihofer bought the former Pine Hills Taxi building and garage at 201-205 Elk Street<sup>12</sup> which subsequently was connected to the new one-story building at 211 Elk Street with new doors cut through the dividing walls. At the same time, building permit records indicate two window openings on the Elk Street façade were bricked up, given the new function of the building as storage. These parcel purchases gave the Freihofer Baking Company a combined frontage of 240 feet on Elk Street with nearly all the property at the rear of its cake plant at 242 Spruce Street.

Other significant commercial structures on Elk Street include the one story addition to 199-201 Elk Street to serve as a stock room when 199 Elk housed an electrical contractor’s business. The ghost

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<sup>10</sup> “Bakery Buys Elk St. Lots,” *Albany Times Union*, Feb. 1, 1942; “Freihofer Co. Has Frontage In Elk St.” *The Knickerbocker News*, Jan. 24, 1942, p. 10B. Freihofer purchases 209 Elk, a 22’x85’ lot from John J. Kiernan in January 1942 for \$66. Freihofer purchases a two-story brick stable on a 22’x85’ lots from the Estate of Frederick Ulrich in January 1942 for \$1,900.

<sup>11</sup> “211 Elk Street Will Be Razed” *Albany Times Union* April, 19, 1942, p. C-7.

<sup>12</sup> “Freihofer Buys Garage In Elk St.” *The Knickerbocker News*, Sept. 2, 1953.

sign painted on the west side of the building indicates the business was “E.G. May.” Edward G. May Electrical Contractors were established in 1919 and were operating out of this location until at least 1967 according to City Directories. Number 194 Elk Street (parcels 194-196) was built in the late 1930s-1940s to house a lumber warehouse. Later it was purchased by the Freihofer Baking Co. and used as a Warehouse annex. Number 206 Elk Street (parcels 202-206) was built by 1910 and spanned the full depth of the block from Elk to Sherman Street. It was owned by John Shaw from at least 1910 until purchased by Anthony Metzner in 1918 who started Armory Garage Company with addresses listed as both 27-29 Sherman Street and 202-204 Elk Street. This was the start of the Armory Automotive dealership that remains a large Albany-based business to this day. Anthony Metzner started the garage to store the new fashionable driving machines during the winter months. The business name was chosen because the garage was located close to the landmark Washington Avenue Armory. Later in 1936, the business move just a few blocks south to the five story building at 9-11 Central Avenue having a huge commercial elevator, allowing them to lift cars and display them for sale behind floor-to-ceiling windows on all five floors.<sup>13</sup> After WWII in 1948-49, Armory expanded and moved to the western edge of the city where it remains today at the corner of Colvin and Central Avenues. By 1924, Armory Garage expanded to include the large one-story garage structure at 210 Elk Street (parcels 208-212) where repairs, rebuilding, storage and auto sales took place. Ghost signs on the building reference this former use, as well as the later occupant “Lektro-Kleen Carpets.” Another auto repair garage was constructed at 216 Elk Street (parcels 216-218) in the late 1940s. This one-story concrete block and brick faced three-bay structure includes a central garage door flanked by steel window openings. Lastly, the final commercial building at 228 Elk street fills a single parcel and connects with 47 Sherman Street serving as a warehouse for a restaurant beverage distributor after 1935 and by 1951.

All of the commercial structures on Elk Street are of brick or concrete construction with steel framing reflecting their early to mid-twentieth century period, their utility/light industrial functions and an emphasis on fire-proof construction, especially in light of the loss of many wood-frame houses on this block in the first quarter of the century. This block of Elk Street was primarily automobile-focused, whether due to the auto sales, repair and storage services offered, or the materials and product receiving or delivery functions of the bakeries, ice cream plant, or carpet dealers. While originally built up in the late nineteenth century with wood framed residences, loss of buildings to fire and commercial expansion in this block gradually changed the character to what has existed for the most recent past century.




The proposed “Freihofer Historic District” has been named such since the Charles Freihofer Baking Company gradually expanded to most of the buildings on the south side of Spruces Street, spanning to the north side of Elk and including the annex on the south side of Elk Street. It was by far the largest commercial business on this block through much of the twentieth century and having a significant regional presence. However the history and the other enterprises that made Spruce and Elk between Lark Street and Northern Boulevard, as noted above played a significant role in development of this section of the Sheridan Hollow neighborhood.

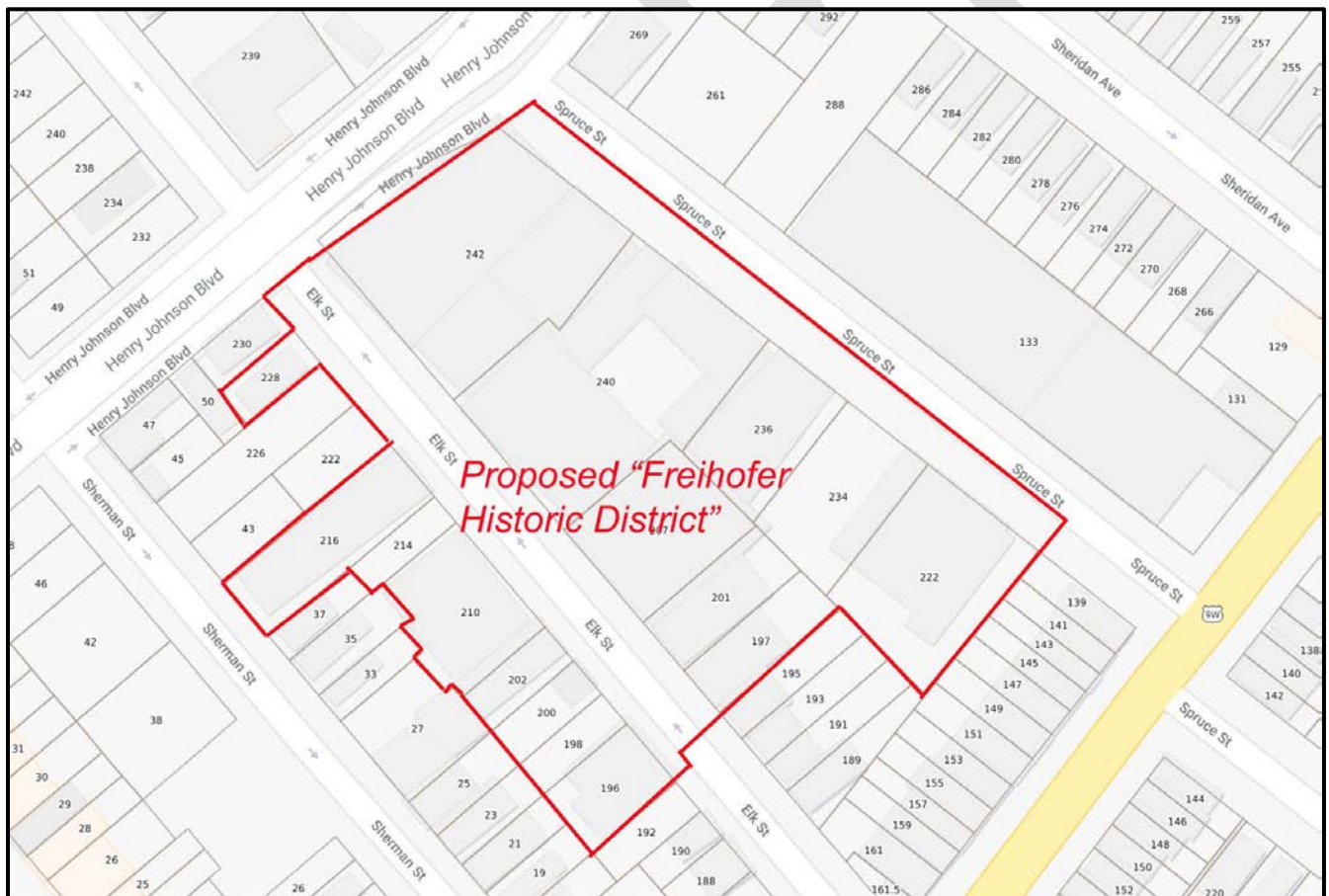
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<sup>13</sup> A Knickerbocker News article says Armory Garage was in this building from 1936 to 1948, when they moved uptown. The Metzner family owned the building until 1959, when it was sold for use as a furniture store.

**Contributing Building List:**

Property No.	Property Name	Date of Const.	Dates of Major Alt.	Architectural Style	Architect /Builder	Image
64 Henry Johnson (Northern) Boulevard (Presently referred to as 242 Spruce St.)	Former Boulevard Garage Building	1913		Colonial Revival	Charles R. Selkirk	
242 Spruce Street (Presently referred to as 240 Spruce St.)	Former C. F. Schupp & Sons Bakery (Purchased in 1919 by C. Freihofer Baking Co.)	1913		Colonial Revival	Lucius S. Beardsley	
236-238 Spruce Street	Freihofer Baking Plant addition	1963		Light industrial	Charles A. Schade	
228-232 Spruce Street (Presently referred to as 222 Spruce St.)	Hosler Ice Cream Plant	1930		Modern	Unknown	
196 Elk Street	Friehofer Warehouse Annex	c.1935		Modern	Unknown	
199-201 Elk Street (Presently referred to as 201 and 197 Elk St.)	E. G. May Electrical Shop	c.1900	c.1940 (construction of addition at 199 Elk St.)	Colonial Revival & Modern	Unknown	
201 Elk Street (Presently referred to as 207 Elk St.)	Former Pine Hills Taxi Garage (Purchased by Freihofer in 1953)	1913	1953 (connected to 211 Elk St.)	Modern	Unknown	
202-210 Elk Street (Presently referred to as 202 and 210 Elk St.)	Former Armory Garage	1912		Modern	Unknown	

211 Elk Street (Presently referred to as part of 240 Spruce St.)	Freihofer Baking Co. Cake Plant	1942	1953; 1963	Modern	Unknown	
216 Elk Street	Repair Garage	c. 1950		Modern	Unknown	
228 Elk Street	Beverage Warehouse	c.1950		Modern	Unknown	



***Proposed "Freihofer Historic District" – PHOTOS***



*64 Henry Johnson Boulevard (Presently referred to as 242 Spruce St.) – view of Spruce Street elevation.*



*64 Henry Johnson Boulevard – view of Elk Street elevation.*



*242 Spruce Street (Presently referred to as 240 Spruce St.) – front (north) elevation*



*242 Spruce Street (Presently referred to as 240 Spruce St.) – detail of west side entrance*



*236-238 Spruce Street – front (north elevation)*



*236-238 Spruce Street – side (east) elevation*





*228-232 Spruce Street (Presently referred to as 222 Spruce St.) – front (north) elevation*



*228-232 Spruce Street (Presently referred to as 222 Spruce St.) – side (west) elevation*



*196 Elk Street - front (north) elevation*



*199-201 Elk Street (Presently referred to as 201 and 197 Elk St.) – front (south) elevation*



*199-201 Elk Street (Presently referred to as 201 and 197 Elk St.) – view of painted wall sign on west elevation.*



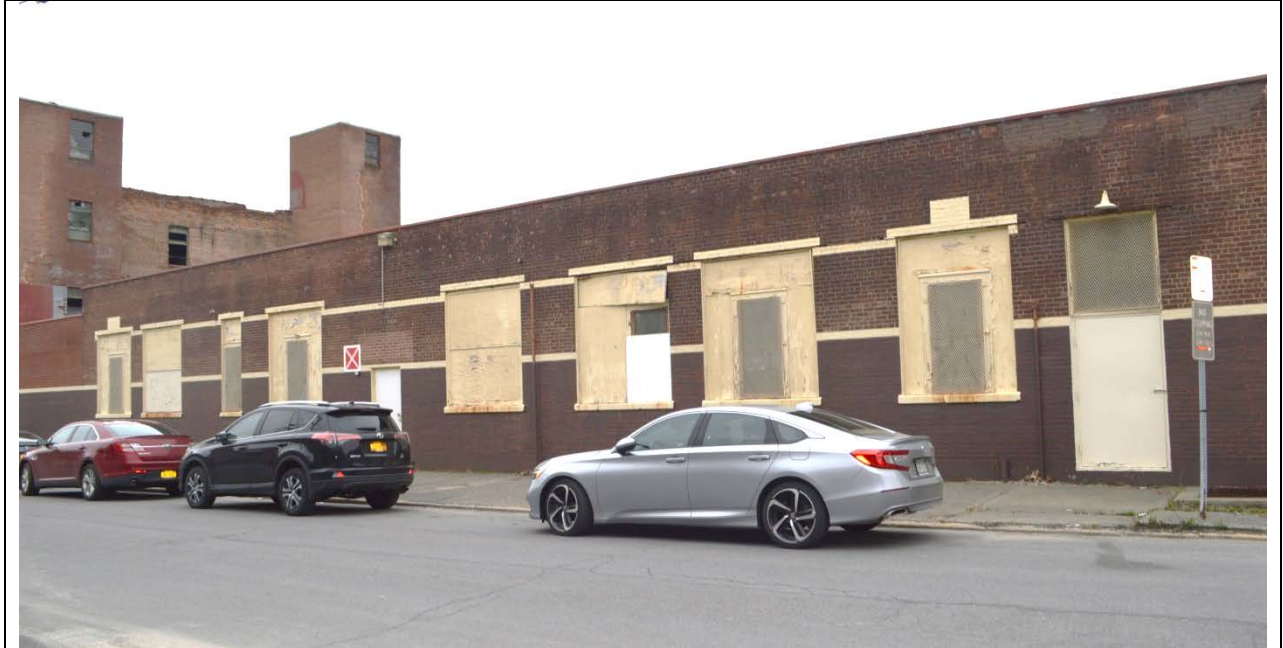
*201 Elk Street (Presently referred to as 207 Elk St.) – view of front (south) elevation.*



*202 Elk Street - view of front (north) elevation.*



*210 Elk Street – view of front (north) elevation.*



*211 Elk Street (Presently referred to as part of 240 Spruce St.) – view of front (south) elevation*



*216 Elk Street – view of front (north) elevation.*



*216 Elk Street – view of side (west) elevation.*



*228 Elk Street – view of side (east) and front (north) elevations*



*228 Elk Street – view of front (north) elevation.*