

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DRAFT

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Foster-Hubbard House
 other names/site number N/A
 name of related multiple property listing N/A

Location

street & number 678 West Onondaga Street

N/A

 not for publication
 city or town Syracuse

N/A

 Vicinity
 state New York code NY county Onondaga code 067 zip code 13202

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
 I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
 In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 ___ national ___ statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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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
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	Buildings
0	0	Sites
0	0	Structures
0	0	Objects
1	0	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.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone

walls: Brick

roof: Asphalt

other: Wood, Glass, Metal

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Foster-Hubbard House is located at 678 West Onondaga Street in the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York. Built in 1867, it is a two-and-one-half-story brick masonry building with rear wing and is of distinctive Italianate-style design. The house is set back from the street on a level lot with a large front lawn. A central stone walkway provides access from the public sidewalk to the main entrance, and an asphalt-paved driveway on the east side of the house leads to a large paved parking lot in the rear; a non-historic chain link fence flanks the driveway on the east side while the remnants of a historic fence are present on the west side. A Late Victorian-era stone and brick dwelling is located east of the house, while to the immediate west is a residential complex. Vacant for several years, the Foster-Hubbard House retains substantial physical integrity to the historic period and the bulk of its character-defining Italianate-style features. It consists of the cubic-massed main block and a two-story, rectangular-plan rear wing, both with shallow-hipped roofs with wide overhanging eaves and paired eaves brackets. The roof of the main block is surmounted by a square-shaped cupola terminated by a dome and a decorative finial. The foundation consists of quarry faced ashlar with a dressed stone water-table above. The original entrance has paired glazed-and-paneled doors shielded by a turn-of-the-twentieth-century porch that has Tuscan-order columns supporting a low hipped roof; that feature extends along part of the west elevation. The fenestration is symmetrically arranged on the principal elevation, which is distinguished by a projecting central bay accommodating the entrance at first-story level. Windows are narrow and hung with paired one-over-one sash, unlike on the remaining elevations, where windows were treated as single units. All windows have decorative lintels and bracketed sills, and the façade has decorative corbeling at the eaves. The interior retains the original floor plan and historic features that include a curving staircase, wood flooring and wainscot, plaster-on-lath walls, extensive moldings, and paneled wood window aprons. The historic plan remains largely intact, excepting for minor alterations made to room configurations to accommodate non-domestic functions in more recent times.

Narrative Description

The Foster-Hubbard House is located on the northwest side of West Onondaga Street in the southwestern portion of the City of Syracuse. Once a prominent city thoroughfare lined with first-class dwellings, Onondaga Street is today a combination of residential and commercial buildings that are interspersed with the remaining older houses and some mid-to-late twentieth century apartment complexes. One of those apartments occupies

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the lot adjacent to the nominated property, to the immediate west, its main building constructed along the edge of the property line. In spite of these changes, West Onondaga Street retains its residential character west of its intersection with South Avenue; east of that point it presents a predominantly commercial character. The streets surrounding the western portion of West Onondaga Street contain a mix of mid-to-late nineteenth century through early-twentieth century residences.

The nominated dwelling was oriented with the façade of its main block facing southwards, towards West Onondaga Street. It is symmetrically composed and three-bays wide with a center entrance configuration; the central bay is emphasized by its projection beyond the remainder of that elevation's wall plane. The raised foundation consists of coursed ashlar stone, quarry faced, with a smoothly dressed stone water-table above. The entrance is shielded by a one-story porch that extends along the west portion of the façade and is continued along the west elevation, where it terminates. The overhanging roof is embellished with scrolled wood brackets, treated as pairs and widely spaced at eaves level. Brick corbelling of a rectilinear nature is present at eaves level and is continued from the façade to the east and west elevations of the main block. A cupola is centered on the roof of the main block; it is square in plan and has corner pilasters and a peaked roof surmounted by a small spired dome. Each elevation has paired, one-over-one windows set in arched openings, with peaked gables above. Four low chimney bases are present on the east and west sides of the low hipped roof; all have been capped.

The principal entrance is fitted with glazed-and-paneled double-leaf doors set in a wood surround, which is characterized by rounded moldings enriched with small raised spherical motifs, with a rectangular-shaped transom above. The upper portion of the doors have tall, narrow windows fitted with frosted privacy glass, as does the transom. The lower portion of the doors have smaller decorative panels within which are centered foliate motifs. Both the upper glazed and lower solid panels are framed by applied raised moldings. The stone water-table is continued to the entrance bay, where it serves as a threshold. The window above the door, at second-story level, is round arched; it has a narrow stone sill and a keystone motif and is fitted with a replacement window. The windows in the outer east and west bays are paired; these are fitted with one-over-one wood sash with bracketed stone sills and are spanned by molded lintels with a raised center and corresponding medallions.

Tuscan-order classical columns support the porch roof and bear on wood plinths; the column capitals feature simple round medallion enrichment and the projecting cornice is enriched by modillions. Railing consists of

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square-shaped wood balusters and railing; the ceiling is formed of narrow beadboard and flooring is wood. The front steps are formed of wide stone slabs and the corresponding railings are iron. The porch foundation is concrete that mimics stone. Ornate metal grilles are fitted in two rectangular-shaped openings that punctuate the porch's foundation.

The west elevation of the main block is three-bays deep with a considerable blank expanse between the first and second bays, as is the case on the opposite east elevation; this configuration directly relates to the interior room configuration and fireplace locations. One of those bays, a window at first-story level, is sheltered by the porch. The west elevation of the rear block is two bays deep and is slightly lower in height than the main block. It lacks the architectural elaboration of the main block, given its secondary position, out of view from the street; thus, neither eaves brackets nor decorative corbelling was employed. The main block also has two oval-shaped attic windows, the surrounds of which are incorporated into the raised brick corbelling.

All of the windows in the west, east, and north elevations are hung with one-over-one sash with wood surrounds and aluminum storm windows. At the center of the west elevation is a two-story, five-sided bay window that projects outward from the intersection of the main and rear blocks. The west-facing facet is about one-third wider than the angled corners, and the north side is wider than the opposite south side, due to the slightly narrower width of the rear block. The bay is fitted with one-over-one wood sash windows on three facets and is related to the rest of the elevation by wide, undecorated eaves, plain stone lintels and sills, and the water-table.

The main block is three bays deep on the east elevation, while the rear block is four bays deep. Like the west elevation, the main block has decorative corbelling, two small oval-shaped attic windows, and eave brackets. At the rear corner of the main block, where the two blocks connect, is a former first-story entrance with stone lintel; it has been infilled with brick, but an associated pent roof remains. A centrally placed window admits natural light into the interior stairwell, positioned over a grade-level doorway. The doorway, cut through the water-table and foundation, has a stone lintel. Two first-story windows are positioned between the former porch and the grade-level doorway, with a third window positioned slightly higher, near the corner. A doorway, dating to the late-twentieth century, was added between the former ground-level door and the last window bay. It was cut through the water-table and foundation to make the building ADA compliant; it lacks the stone lintels employed for historic-period apertures. The second-story windows are positioned directly over the three first-story windows, with a gap over the ground-level doorway and central window. Those windows have been shortened, though the stone sills and lintels were retained.

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The north elevation of the rear block is two-bays wide, with two second-story windows over a first-story window and door. Another first-story window is located immediately to the west of the door. Both that window and the door have been infilled. All windows have stone sills and lintels; the door also has a stone lintel but the threshold is formed by the water-table. One basement window punctuates the raised foundation, under the easternmost bay. A chimney remains visible above the roofline, centered between the bays. The roof has wide eaves but lacks decorative brackets and corbelling.

The first floor of the main block is asymmetrically configured. Rooms were disposed around a centrally located entrance hall that accommodates the principal staircase; that hallway once extended the full depth of the plan but does not currently, as a partition was constructed, thus truncating it. Large doorways allow for communication between the hallway and front rooms, with the rear rooms opening off of them; that on the east side of the plan retains its double-leaf paneled doors, which have been removed from the opening into the west room. Entered from the principal West Onondaga Street entrance, the hallway is characterized by its high ceilings, narrow wood flooring, plaster-on-lath wall and ceiling finish and plaster ceiling medallion, and the original cantilevered open-stringer staircase. The double-leaf doors and accompanying transom are set within a casing characterized by rounded wood moldings; the casing flares outwards at the bottom, above baseboard level, and is terminated by a molded cornice; this casing type is employed in many areas throughout the main block. The staircase, located against the west wall, is a keynote feature. Nine risers into its run, it turns sharply before completing its rise to second-floor level. At its base is a complexly profiled, turned and faceted newel post, terminated by an octagonal cap that receives the handrail; the associated balusters are treated in similar fashion to the newel. The sides of the risers are enriched with applied stringer brackets, which decrease in size as the stairs ascend. At second-floor level, that decorative motif is continued and there forms a decorative frieze below the railing.

The ceiling in the west front room is plaster-on-lath, as are the walls, and the floor is laid with narrow wood boards. The window on the west wall has a squared casing with a back-banded molding with paneled wood apron below; that casing type, less complex than those used in the hallway and elsewhere, also trims the doorway on the north wall. Astride of that door is a large, non-historic opening in the wall, corresponding with the position of a receptionist's desk in the next room. That area was reconfigured in more recent times to create a professional office space with a narrow hallway astride. Windows in that room retain their original woodwork, including paneled aprons. A second office is reached via the narrow hallway, and it corresponds with the historic room contained within the projecting window bay area. In those office areas original wood flooring

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remains under carpeting, while plaster ceilings are obscured by dropped ceilings. A bathroom was also added to the first floor to accommodate office functions.

The east side of the first-floor plan is given over to a double-parlor configuration, consisting of two rooms with fireplaces against the east wall. Window and door openings into the front parlor are finished with casings that share the characteristics of those in the hall, and this room also has a molded chair rail. Both parlors retain plaster-on-lath wall and ceiling finish. Paneled aprons are located beneath the windows in both rooms, though the treatments vary; the aprons in the front room consist of a single panel with raised moldings, while those in the rear consists of four recessed vertical panels. Both parlors have wood flooring; that in the rear parlor has decorative inlaid edging that aligns the perimeter of the floor. The rear parlor also retains wood wainscoting in the northeast corner and along the south wall, the paneling of which matches that below the windows. The rear parlor window retains recesses that once housed interior folding shutters.

Of the two parlor fireplaces, the front parlor's marble mantelpiece survives, though the mantelshelf has been removed (it remains onsite). Both fireplaces have ceramic tile surrounds and hearths. The rear parlor fireplace retains a pressed metal inset and is trimmed with bluish-green, square-shaped ceramic tiles. That room was later partitioned, on the west side, to create space for a closet and bathroom. A portion of the west wall of the rear parlor has narrow wood paneling. A full bath was built into the space north of the closet, complete with an inset non-historic bathtub, yellow waterproof wall tiles, and a non-historic solid wood door. It is presumed that the closet and bath currently occupy space originally contained within a full-depth center hallway.

The rear block's first-floor space is largely given over to a large room, with the balance of the plan consisting of smaller partitioned areas and a rear staircase; at one time this space accommodated the house's kitchen and pantry. Original room divisions are difficult to ascertain, due to the dropped ceiling and carpeted floor. This area corresponds with the closed-off north end door, the location of which now contains built-in shelving, framed by the original door molding. Against the east wall, and rising to the east, is the enclosed service stair to the second floor, which is now carpeted, and which retains wood railing and square-shaped balusters. The stair to the grade-level east door is adjacent to it, and it retains its original door surround, though the door has been removed. The walls in this area are plaster above high, plain wood baseboards. Window openings retain the original moldings and sills, although some of the moldings are obscured by the dropped ceiling.

Second-floor rooms are disposed around a central hall. Oriented on a north-south axis, it extends from the main block into the wing, where it narrows before terminating near the rear of the plan, at the service stair that leads downwards to the first-floor kitchen area. In the main block, doorways located on the west, south, and east

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walls lead into corresponding rooms. That on the west wall is arched, unlike the other two, which are treated in similar fashion to those in the first-floor hallway. The second-floor rooms generally maintain the historic layout, though some have been subdivided into smaller rooms, as evidenced by physical features. They nevertheless retain wood flooring, along with plaster walls and ceilings—the latter concealed by dropped ceilings—and molded wood trim. The staircase is expressed on the second floor in the adjacent area by a curving plaster wall, located in the north portion of the hall in the main block. Rooms in the main block that maintain original dimensions without having been partitioned are that corresponding with the projecting bay, on the west side of the plan, and the long narrow room on the east side of the plan.

Historic finishes are simpler in the second-floor rooms located in the rear block. All have plaster walls and wood floors, in addition to molded wood baseboards and casings, along with dropped ceilings. The rear service east stair has the original wood railing and square balusters. Two small rooms on the west side were used as a bathroom and washroom and retain early-to-mid twentieth century fixtures.

The unfinished attic has wood flooring and, in the portion above the main block, an enclosed staircase that leads upwards to the cupola. The lower walls of that stairwell are fitted with wide wood wainscoting with narrow terminal molding, while the upper stairwell walls and cupola walls have fitted boards of varying width arranged horizontally.

The fully excavated basement is accessed by a staircase from the center hall. Interior bearing walls under the main block are brick with arched doorways, some of which are infilled with cement block. The basement area under the north block contains a coal bin.

Despite an extended period of vacancy, the nominated house still retains considerable physical integrity. Its form, plan and large number of surviving finish features capably illustrate the original building campaign and many hallmarks of the mature Italianate style. Interior alterations are largely reversible, and the plan is largely intact to the historic period, notwithstanding later partitioning.

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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.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1867- ca. 1910

Significant Dates

1867; ca. 1910

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

DeGraff, Simon

Period of Significance (justification)

The cited period of significance, 1867 to ca. 1910, is initiated with the construction of the building and terminates with the addition of the present porch and minor interior alterations.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Foster-Hubbard House, located on West Onondaga Street in the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York, is significant under NRHP Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a largely intact and representative example of Italianate-style domestic architecture erected in the immediate post-Civil War period, and as a representation of the work of architect Simon DeGraff. It is the last of three identical houses DeGraff designed and built for himself and his two daughters on adjacent lots on West Onondaga Street. Those houses at one time served as visible expressions of DeGraff's generosity to his family and his architectural skill, and they helped to shape local tastes in fashionable architecture along West Onondaga Street as it developed as a grand avenue. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, West Onondaga Street developed as a premier Syracuse residential enclave distinguished by grand houses beautified by large lawns and shade trees along both sides of the street. The nominated house was one of many that once lined the street and proclaimed the collective wealth, status, and mind-set of the residents resided there, many of whom ranked among Syracuse's most prominent professionals, politicians and businessmen. The house was built for Myron and Mary Foster by Mary's father, the architect, builder and industrialist Simon DeGraff. It was next the residence of Charles Hubbard, a wholesale druggist, and his wife, Mary, who hosted social functions and other events there. The house is being nominated at the local significance level.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Development of West Onondaga Street

In the mid-to-late nineteenth century, West Onondaga Street evolved from the so-called "Cinder Road," an early path across swampland that provided access to an important early industry known as Mickle's Foundry, a producer of arms during the War of 1812.¹ Drained in the 1830s, the former swamp was soon traversed by a street grid and the first residences were erected shortly thereafter, in the then-popular Greek Revival style. In time West Onondaga Street began to be viewed as a fashionable place to live, as notables such as the city's first mayor, Harvey Baldwin, resided there and entertained important persons such as President Millard Fillmore.² Although not documented, a traditional account asserts that on June 17, 1856, the New York State Republican Party was organized under an elm tree at the corner of West Onondaga Street and South Avenue.

¹ Jack Carpenter, *Streetwise: A Colorful Look at the Avenue in Syracuse* (Syracuse, NY: Pine Grove Press, 1996), 39.

² "Pillars of History," *The Post-Standard*. 1930. Onondaga Historical Association (OHA) clipping file.

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By the late-nineteenth century, West Onondaga Street had developed its reputation as a desirable residential location, due to its proximity to the downtown commercial and governmental center and being only minutes away, by carriage, to the business interests of residents. As the street gained in popularity and as time passed, the style of its houses evolved, as a new generation purchased older dwellings and razed them to make room for grander and more fashionable homes. The earliest surviving houses are Italianate residences built in the 1860s, among them the nominated house. These Picturesque-period dwellings were followed by the newer architectural fashions of the Late Victorian period, foremost among them the Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, and Colonial Revival styles.

By the turn-of-the-twentieth century, residents of West Onondaga Street included civil engineers, lawyers, industrialists, bankers, and prominent local businessmen. Three of the Smith brothers— Monroe C., Wilbert L., and Hurlburt— of the L.C. Smith & Brothers Typewriter Company, a major manufacturer in the city of Syracuse, had houses built on West Onondaga Street. In 1895, Alexander T. Brown, the designer of the *Premier* typewriter for the L. C. Smith Company and the Franklin automobile for the Franklin Manufacturing Company, also had a house built on that thoroughfare. Dr. George Whedon, a local physician and real estate magnate, had two houses built on West Onondaga Street, one of which was located next to the Foster-Hubbard House, and both of which were designed by the prominent regional architect, Archimedes Russell. Other Syracuse families represented on West Onondaga Street were Erastus and Willis Holden, of the E. F. Holden Company, railroad coal agents; Oscar and Frank Soule, owners of Merrell-Soule food processing; and Ross Spaulding of Kennedy, Spaulding and Company, wholesale hardware dealers.

West Onondaga Street was one of countless late-nineteenth century “grand avenues” that could be found in cities across the county. These thoroughfares reflected the wealth, prosperity, and mind-set of the residents who helped shape their respective communities through employment in major industries, philanthropy, and by supporting charities and arts and cultural institutions. Four elements distinguished the development of so-called American grand avenues, as noted in *The Grand American Avenue: 1850-1920*, the first being residential streets designed by, and for, the upper classes. Second, plots were spacious, thus conducive to the creation of spacious lawns and landscaped elements. Third, many of the residences were architect-designed, and were often viewed as fashionable, elegant and at times technologically innovative, employing as they did elements such as elevators, gas and electric lighting, and furnaces. Last, but not least, in urban form, the avenues were straight,

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landscaped streets punctuated by monumental features.³ West Onondaga Street was developed along those lines and some of those character-defining elements remain visible, despite recent in-fill construction and the conversion of many former residences into professional offices.

One of the elements of the grand avenue was beautification of the street itself, largely with shade trees common throughout eastern cities. West Onondaga Street was framed by a double row of elms, with wide sidewalks on each side of the street shaded by their canopy. Residences were set back from the street with wide green lawns and the street was also wide and straight. In the winter months, this made it a suitable racing ground for sleighs. West Onondaga Street became the place for the rich and famous of Syracuse to be seen showing off their fine horses and vehicles.⁴ Benches were set out for the observers of these races.⁵

West Onondaga Street residents took an active interest in the condition of the street, lobbying for street improvements and the best in amenities. Through their efforts, new flag stone sidewalks were installed in 1868 and, in 1878, the cobblestone street was replaced with macadam. The street was repaved with asphalt in 1890, an improvement that was made after much debate, and with a final resolution to have only the best materials and workmanship for the project.⁶

In the early twentieth century, West Onondaga Street entered a transitional period, as the aging residents either sold their buildings or left the property to their children or grandchildren. Following urban trends elsewhere in the country, many of the second and third generation descendants were already living in new residential neighborhoods and had little desire to take on the financial burden of an immense house with corresponding property taxes and maintenance costs. As the houses went up for sale, several appealed to organizations or businesses looking for impressive quarters. By the second decade of the twentieth century, many of the mansions on West Onondaga Street were put to new use, including a hospital, a rectory, an orphanage, and an American Legion outpost. By the 1920s, many of the older residences had been subdivided to house more than one family or accommodated offices and business interests. Additionally, modern apartment buildings were being built alongside single-family homes. The mix of high-style Late Victorian-era mansions and early-twentieth century apartment architecture characterized the physical fabric of West Onondaga Street until the mid-twentieth century.

³ Jan Cigliano and Sarah Bradford Landau, eds., *The Grand American Avenue: 1850-1920* (San Francisco, CA: Pomegranate Books, 1994), xxii.

⁴ Dennis J. Connors, *Crossroads in Time* (Syracuse, NY: Onondaga Historical Society, 2006), 66.

⁵ *Syracuse Journal*, Dec. 25, 1878, OHA clipping file.

⁶ "Street Improvements," *Syracuse Journal*, June 16, 1890, 4.

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Mid- to late twentieth century housing needs coupled with decisions made on the local and federal level led to a further decline in single-owner residency on the street. More of the older housing stock was replaced with large apartment complexes that weakened the historic character of West Onondaga Street. The 600-block remains one of the most intact sections of the former grand avenue and the Foster-Hubbard House is one of the earliest examples of the sort of fashionable architecture that made West Onondaga Street one of Syracuse's most desirable residential corridors.

The Foster-Hubbard House

In 1860, prosperous farmer John Holland Johnson owned a 30-acre farm and a brick house located on West Onondaga Street. When he died in 1865, his young widow, Eliza, began selling off parcels, including approximately five acres that she sold in 1866 to Simon DeGraff. That parcel was located on the north side of West Onondaga Street, west of the Johnson home. This event formed the beginnings of West Onondaga Street as one of the Syracuse's preeminent residential corridors, which continued through to the turn-of-the-twentieth century. As more parcels were subdivided and sold, West Onondaga Street was improved with a series of new dwellings, designed by leading Syracuse architects such as Albert Brockway, Archimedes Russell, and Asa Merrick.

Simon DeGraff, who noted himself as an architect in his 1854 publication, *The Modern Geometrical Stair-builder's Guide*, built the nominated brick house for his daughter, Mary E., and her husband, Myron Foster. DeGraff built a second brick house for himself on a slightly larger lot west of the first house, and a third for daughter Jane Amanda "Jennie" McCracken and her husband, William. All three houses were of similar design and were described in an 1867 account in the *Syracuse Journal* as "three large first-class brick houses. They are constructed with the utmost care and forethought and supplied with every conceivable convenience for the comfort of a family. The houses are built upon the same plan and will be occupied by Mr. DeGraff and his children. The grounds around are spacious, and when put in order will be elegant and attractive."⁷ Within the house DeGraff designed is an excellent example of the stair type described and illustrated in his own book.⁸ "Every mansion consisting of more than one story is indebted to this portion of architecture for ornament and utility," DeGraff noted in that work.⁹

⁷ *Syracuse Journal*, 10-29-1867. Cited in a document dated 4-22-1980 in the files of OHA.

⁸ Simon DeGraff, *The Modern Geometrical Stair-Builder's Guide* (Philadelphia: T.F. Bell, 1860 edition), plate 13.

⁹ DeGraff, *Stair-Builder's Guide*, 1.

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DeGraff set the pattern for occupancy of West Onondaga Street by being one of the first industrialists to buy property and build a substantial house there. By the time of its construction, DeGraff was a partner in the Draper & Company Iron Works and owned the Fancy Iron Works on James Street, and he had made a reputation for himself as a skilled bridge builder. Bridges were built to his designs throughout central New York and, as his reputation grew, he was commissioned to design and build bridges in Indiana and Michigan, as well. Many of his bridges were of the through-truss type and based on Squire Whipple's original bowstring design, the 1841 patent of which was no longer recognized at the time DeGraff was active in the field.

DeGraff's work was ambitious in scale, as described in the following account of a Monroe County bridge:

Simon DeGraff aggressively pushed Whipple's arched truss to unparalleled lengths. DeGraff departed from the 'standard' in 1866 and began to build bridges of thirteen or more panels, spanning up to more than two hundred and thirty feet... The bridge at Cox Ferry may have been DeGraff's greatest. It is mentioned in histories of the Town of Wheatland, New York, by Slocum (1908) and Schmidt (1953). Additional information is included in the Proceedings of Monroe County Board of Supervisors (1969 and 1911) '.... on the 6th day of April, 1869, they entered into a contract with S. DeGraff, of the city of Syracuse, a practical bridge builder, and a man of large experience, to erect an iron bridge on the improved Whipple plan. A single span bridge, twenty-two feet six inches wide, 230 feet long, height of arch twenty-seven feet six inches.¹⁰

Twenty-five bridges designed by Simon DeGraff have been documented. In most cases, the framing components were constructed by the Draper & Company Iron Works of Syracuse.

As DeGraff became more prominent in the Syracuse business community, he assumed important positions such as serving as a director of the Third National Bank of Syracuse and the Fifth Ward Railway Company. His sons-in-law worked with him at Draper & Company; census records listed Myron Foster's occupation as bookkeeper. In 1872, DeGraff purchased the Aetna Iron Works in Newcastle, Pennsylvania and moved his entire family there. DeGraff subdivided his West Onondaga Street property into three lots to sell the houses individually: the nominated house was sold Henry and Emaline Leonard in June 1872; his own house was sold to William H. Niven; and the McCracken house was purchased by William H. H. Neal, co-owner of Neal & Hyde wholesale dry goods. DeGraff's house was demolished in 1962 and replaced by an apartment building.¹¹ The McCracken house suffered a severe fire and was demolished in 1979, though the cupola was salvaged.¹²

¹⁰Jim Stewart, "Simon DeGraff, Adventurous Bridge Builder," *The Rochester Engineer*, August 2007, 43.

¹¹Anonymous document dated 4-22-1980 clipping files of OHA.

¹²Document in Onondaga Historical Association (OHA) clipping file, dated 12-30-1979.

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In April 1874, the Leonard family sold the property to John D. and Emma Gray. John D. Gray was another prosperous businessman who, with his brother Harry H. Gray, owned and operated the Gray Shoe Manufacturing Company. The Grays, whose household included three children, a relative, and two servants, occupied the house for six years before selling it to Mary Elizabeth Bairnard Hubbard, wife of Charles Hubbard. Her husband owned a wholesale pharmaceutical business, Charles Hubbard, Sons & Co., and served as the Syracuse Water Commissioner for several years, as well as the treasurer of the Businessman's Association and Exchange. He died in 1905 and the business was passed down to his sons, George B. and Charles H. Hubbard, and remained in operation until being sold to Elliot Drugs in 1969.

Mary Hubbard was a prominent member of local women's religious and philanthropic organizations, and was listed in the Syracuse Blue Book, the local social register. She was frequently mentioned in the society pages of the local newspapers and her home was the site of numerous society gatherings: "The sewing society and sociable of the Fourth Presbyterian Church will be held this afternoon and evening at the residence of Mrs. Charles Hubbard, at No. 123 West Onondaga Street. Tea will be served from five-thirty until eight o'clock, to which all are invited."¹³ Her guest lists regularly included the wives of local industrialists, businessmen and political leaders. These events were often co-hosted with Mary's daughter, Ida Florence, and their beautifully decorated home was frequently described the social news:

Mrs. Charles Hubbard and Miss Ida Florence Hubbard gave one of the most important social affairs of the week on Thursday afternoon, when they opened their home for a large reception. The house was very beautifully decorated. The reception room was in green and white, quantities of white chrysanthemums and asparagus ferns were used. The library mantel was banked with yellow carnations and maidenhair fern and the bookcases were topped with yellow flowers and foliage. In the back parlor pink carnations in tall vases formed the decoration. The dining room was prettiest of all... There were several hundred callers.¹⁴

When Mary Hubbard died in May 1921 at eighty-one years of age, she bequeathed the house to her children, who subsequently sold it.¹⁵ The sale ended the forty-one year occupation of the Hubbard family, the property's longest tenure, as well as its recognition as one of the socially prominent addresses in the city.

Subsequent owners did not occupy the same social sphere as the Fosters and Hubbards. With relatively lower incomes, owners began sharing occupancy of the house with related, and eventually unrelated, households. Sisters Minnie K. Clarke and Nellie Ryan purchased the house from the Hubbard estate, moving their families

¹³"Penny Lines," *The Standard*, February 10, 1881.

¹⁴"Among Those Present During the Past Week: Receptions," *The Syracuse Journal*, October 24, 1903.

¹⁵"Mrs. Hubbard left Estate of About \$60,000," *Syracuse Herald*, June 2, 1921.

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from their shared home on Seymour Street to the large house on West Onondaga Street. Minnie's husband was William F. Clarke, a local grocer, whose store was located a short walk from the house. Nellie's husband, Martin, was a brakeman on the railroad. The 1930 census indicates that a third working-class family resided there, as well. The Clarke-Ryan family struggled during the Great Depression, taking out multiple mortgages on the property. However, the financial burden became too great, and in 1942 the house was seized by the bank.

At that time, it came under the jurisdiction of the Home Owner's Loan Corporation (HOLC), a New Deal program intended to stimulate home-buying by encouraging banks to make more loans for home purchases, encourage the building of new homes and, in the process, create jobs. The HOLC ranked neighborhoods by desirability, taking into account factors such as proximity to manufacturing, aging housing stock, the number of minority residents, and populations that included Jews, immigrants, and non-Protestant residents. West Onondaga Street was rated as a C-Third Grade neighborhood by the HOLC, with mortgages that were allowed a fifteen percent federal backing. The housing in the West Onondaga neighborhood was older, often in need of repair due to age and the financial difficulties of many owners. According to the HOLC, the neighborhood had an "infiltration of a lower grade population" that made it difficult for re-investing in property along the street.¹⁶

In 1943, the HOLC sold the property to Charles and Alice Engleman, the last non-corporate owners of the house. In 1957, it was sold to 678 West Onondaga Street, LLC, the first of several holding companies to own it, and was divided into six apartments in 1959. In 1972, the offices of the Metropolitan Commission on Aging for Syracuse moved to the building, followed by the Child and Family Services of Onondaga County (1976). In June 1977, the organization purchased the building and used it as an office building for two decades. During that time, the interior was partially adapted for office space. Child and Family Services sold the house in 1999, but in 2014 the city seized it for back taxes. It was then sold to an organization known as *All Things Oz*, which failed to maintain the property. In 2018, it was acquired by the Greater Syracuse Land Bank.

Architectural Context

The nominated house remains a largely intact and representative example of Civil War-era Italianate-style domestic architecture in the City of Syracuse and is the last survivor of a group of three designed and built by Simon DeGraff. The three buildings that once formed a cohesive group were nearly identical, and they helped establish the tone for the high-style architecture that gradually came to characterize West Onondaga Street

¹⁶Conversation with Professor Emanuel J. Carter, Jr., SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry, July 20, 2018.

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towards the turn of the twentieth century.

The Italianate style was, with the Gothic Revival, central to the mid-nineteenth century Picturesque movement. It was an extremely versatile style with a wide range of expression, and one employed for a wide range of building types in both urban and country environments. The style in its various manifestations was inspired by the country villas of Italy and was introduced to the American public by, among others, Andrew Jackson Downing and Samuel Sloan, who were instrumental in shaping American popular taste at the mid-century point. In the introduction to his influential 1850 book, *The Architecture of Country Houses*, Downing stated that Americans needed good houses for three reasons:

The first is, because a good house...is a powerful means of civilization. A nation, whose rural population is content to live in mean huts and miserable hovels, is certain to be behind its neighbors in education, the arts, and all that makes up the external signs of progress...The second reason is, because the individual home has a great social value for a people...The third reason is, because there is a moral influence in a country home—when among an educated, truthful, and refined people, it is an echo of their character—which is more powerful than any mere oral teaching of virtue and morality.¹⁷

Downing's various writings championed both the Italian and Gothic styles, which he felt were well-suited to the needs of American domestic architecture, and which formed a conscious break from a long-entrenched classical traditions that culminated in the Greek Revival, a mode which Downing found poorly suited for domestic purposes. In his discussion of the "Villa in the Italian Style" in *The Architecture of Country Houses*, Downing offered the following sentiments:

[The Italianate style] is remarkable for expressing the elegant culture and variety of accomplishment of the retired citizen or man of the world, and as it is capable of the most varied and irregular as well as very simple outlines, it is also very significant of the multiform tastes, habits, and wants of modern civilization. On the whole, then, we should say that the Italian style is one that expressed not wholly the spirit of country life nor of town life, but something between both, and which is a mingling of both.¹⁸

When Simon DeGraff purchased property along West Onondaga Street, that area exemplified the mingling of country and town life observed by Downing, being that it was part of a former farm that was relatively close to the urban center of Syracuse; as such, it afforded suitable space upon which to develop a villa and in a suitably open and Picturesque setting.

¹⁷A. J. Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1850; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969), xix-xx.

¹⁸Downing, *Country Houses*, 285-286.

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It may be safely surmised that DeGraff designed the nominated house, along with the other two that no longer remain, given his work in the architectural field; all exhibited characteristics that link them, theoretically, to Downing's writings. DeGraff's West Onondaga Street houses included the major hallmarks of the Italianate style, and they relate the house to the cubic-massed type with cupola that was popularized by Sloane and others in the 1850s, and which became a patent form in central New York by the 1860s.

While tastemakers like Downing and Sloane established the Italianate as an important American architectural idiom in the 1840s and 1850s, the style continued to flourish in the 1860s and 1870s, though by the latter period detailing had become more robust and ornate. The nominated house, while rooted to some extent in the earlier period, nevertheless exhibits this increased enthusiasm for ornamental treatments, as seen in features such as the brick corbelling, heavy rounded moldings and elaborated staircase details. While the placement of three largely identical houses adjacent to one another may seem unusual, it is not without precedent, even for high-style architecture in the period. During the 1840s two largely identical Italian villas were erected in Newport, Herkimer County, to the plans of noted American architect Alexander Jackson Davis, an important antebellum tastemaker and sometime collaborator of Downing. Those houses were in large measure mirror images of one another.

The exterior of the Foster-Hubbard House remains largely intact to the 1860s, save the original porch that was replaced with the present iteration in the early twentieth century; that feature represents a return to classicism in its unfluted Tuscan columns and modillioned eaves. And despite several owners and recent modifications, the interior of the Foster-Hubbard House retains much of its original plan and finish features. As such, it capably illustrates many salient aspects of the Italianate style as manifested in the immediate post-Civil War period.

Foster-Hubbard House
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“Architects.” *Syracuse Then and Now Website*. <http://syracusethenandnow.org/Architects/architects.htm>.

Carpenter, Jack. *Streetwise: A Colorful Look at the Avenue in Syracuse*. Syracuse, NY: Pine Grove Press, 1996.

Cigliano, Jan and Sarah Bradford Landau, editors. *The Grand American Avenue: 1850-1920*. San Francisco, CA: Pomegranate Press, 1994.

Connors, Dennis J. *Crossroads in Time*. Syracuse, NY: Onondaga Historical Society, 2006.

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Downing, A. J. *The Architecture of Country Houses*. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1850; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969.

Stewart, Jim. "Simon DeGraff, Adventurous Bridge Builder", *The Rochester Engineer*, August 2007.

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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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Renaissance Studio, Syracuse NY

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.49
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>405318</u> Easting	<u>4765649</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cynthia Carrington Carter & Andrea Zlotucha Kozub
organization _____ date 20 April 2020
street & number 1335 Woodworth Road telephone 315-246-5384
city or town Skaneateles state NY zip code 13152
e-mail streetscapepres@icloud.com

Foster-Hubbard House
Name of Property

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Foster-Hubbard House
City or Vicinity: Syracuse
County: Onondaga State: New York
Photographer: Cynthia Carrington Carter and Greater Syracuse Land Bank
Date Photographed: May and October 2018 (Carter), Unknown date - pre-2018 (GSLB website)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0001
Street view facing northwest.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0002
Rear view facing southwest.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0003
Northwest corner facing south.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0004
View of cupola from the front of the building.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0005
Details on roofline, porch, and exterior window frames.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0006
View of porch facing northwest.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0007
Front door.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0008
Porch column.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0009
Entry hall.
- NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0010

Foster-Hubbard House

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Front staircase.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0011

Front parlor doors open.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0012

Front parlor doors closed.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0013

Back parlor on east side of house, showing fireplace, paneling, and shutter cupboards.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0014

Decorative firebox in back parlor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0015

Flooring detail in back parlor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0016

Back parlor closet.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0017

First floor bathroom.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0018

Looking through doorway of front west room (reception) into hall and front parlor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0019

View from front west room (reception) into administrative space.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0020

Administrative hallway on first floor, facing north.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0021

Tower room office space.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0022

North wall showing sealed rear doorway.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0023

Eastern staircase, first floor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0024

Eastern staircase, second floor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0025

Bannister of front staircase, second floor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0026

Second floor hallway by front stairs, facing west.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0027

West front room on the second floor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0028

Second floor bedroom, west side.

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NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0029
Upstairs tower room.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0030
Sink room, second floor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0031
Northwestern room, second floor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0032
Northeastern room, second floor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0033
Divisions in upstairs hallway, facing south.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0034
Eastern bedroom, second floor.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0035
Second floor side bedroom.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0036
Attic stairs.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0037
Arched recess on south wall of attic.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0038
Stairs to cupola.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0039
East wall of cupola.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0040
Arching basement doorway.

NY_OnondagaCo_FosterHubbardHouse_0041
Sealed archways in basement.

Property Owner:

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

name N/A
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Foster-Hubbard House
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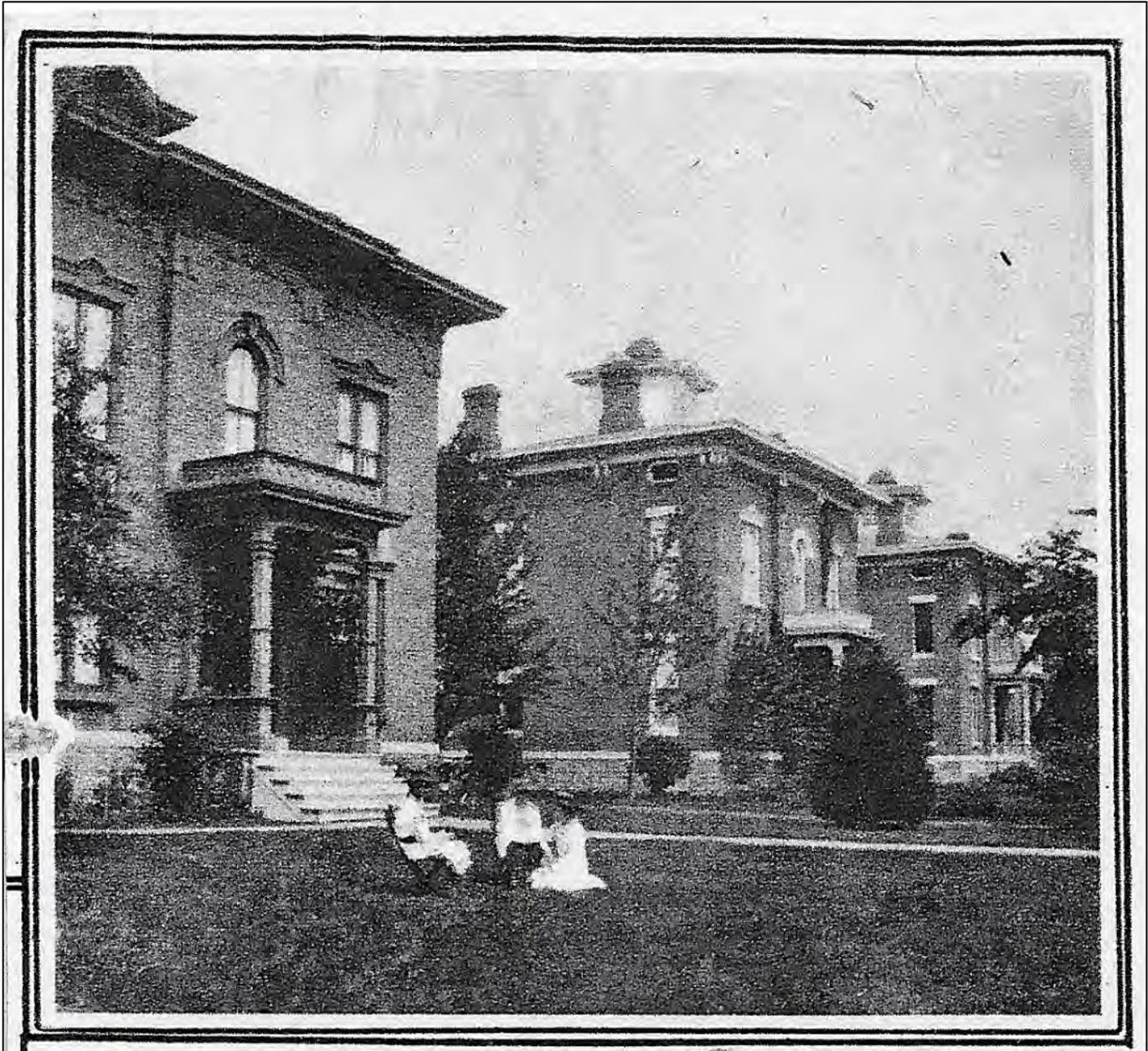
Onondaga County, NY
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Sketch First- and Second-Floor Plans (not-to-scale)

Foster-Hubbard House
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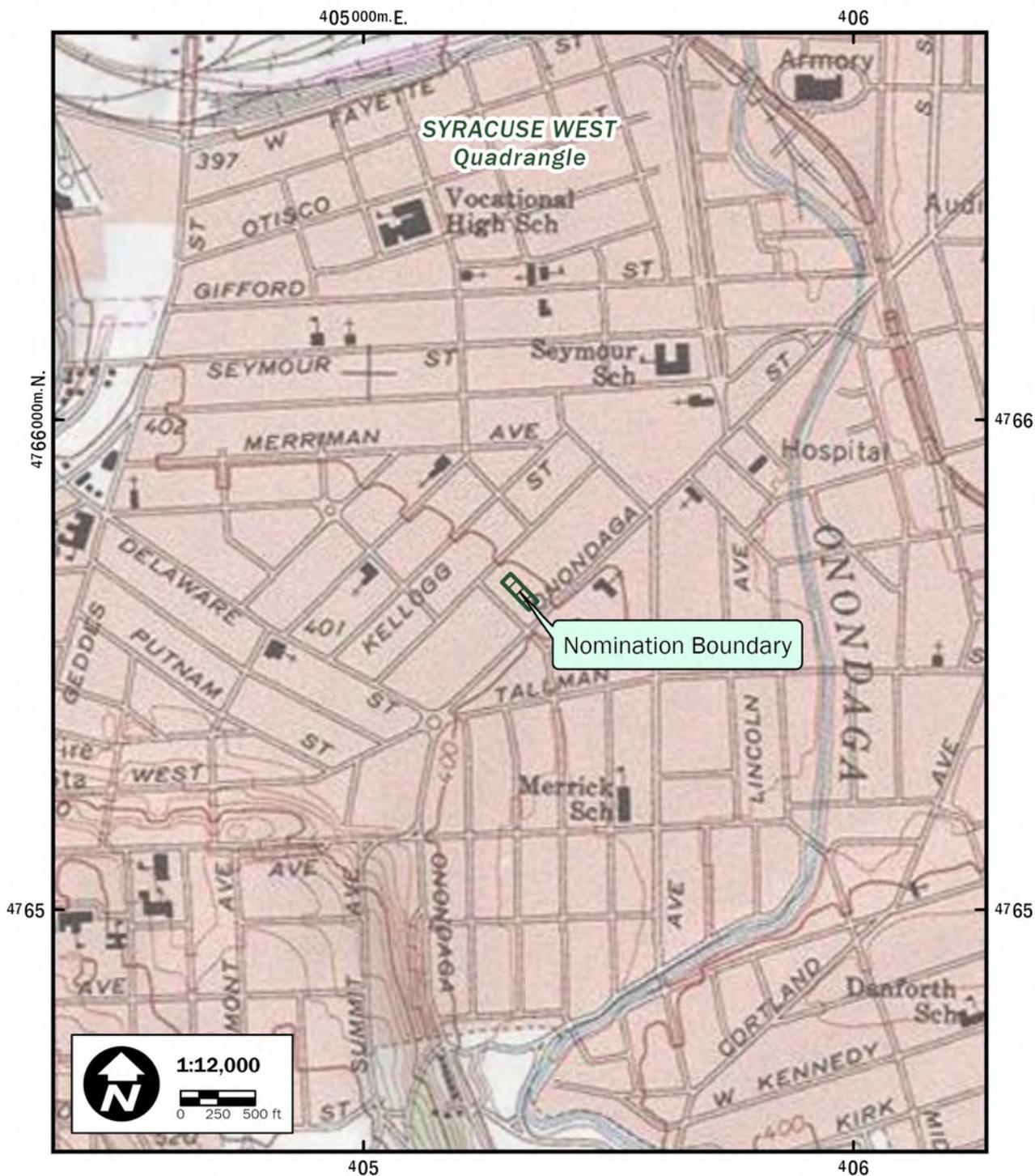
Above, undated photo of the three DeGraff family homes—678 West Onondaga Street is the house in back; note the original porches. Courtesy of Onondaga Historical Association.

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Foster-Hubbard House
City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York

678 West Onondaga Street
Syracuse, NY 13204



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

 Nomination Boundary



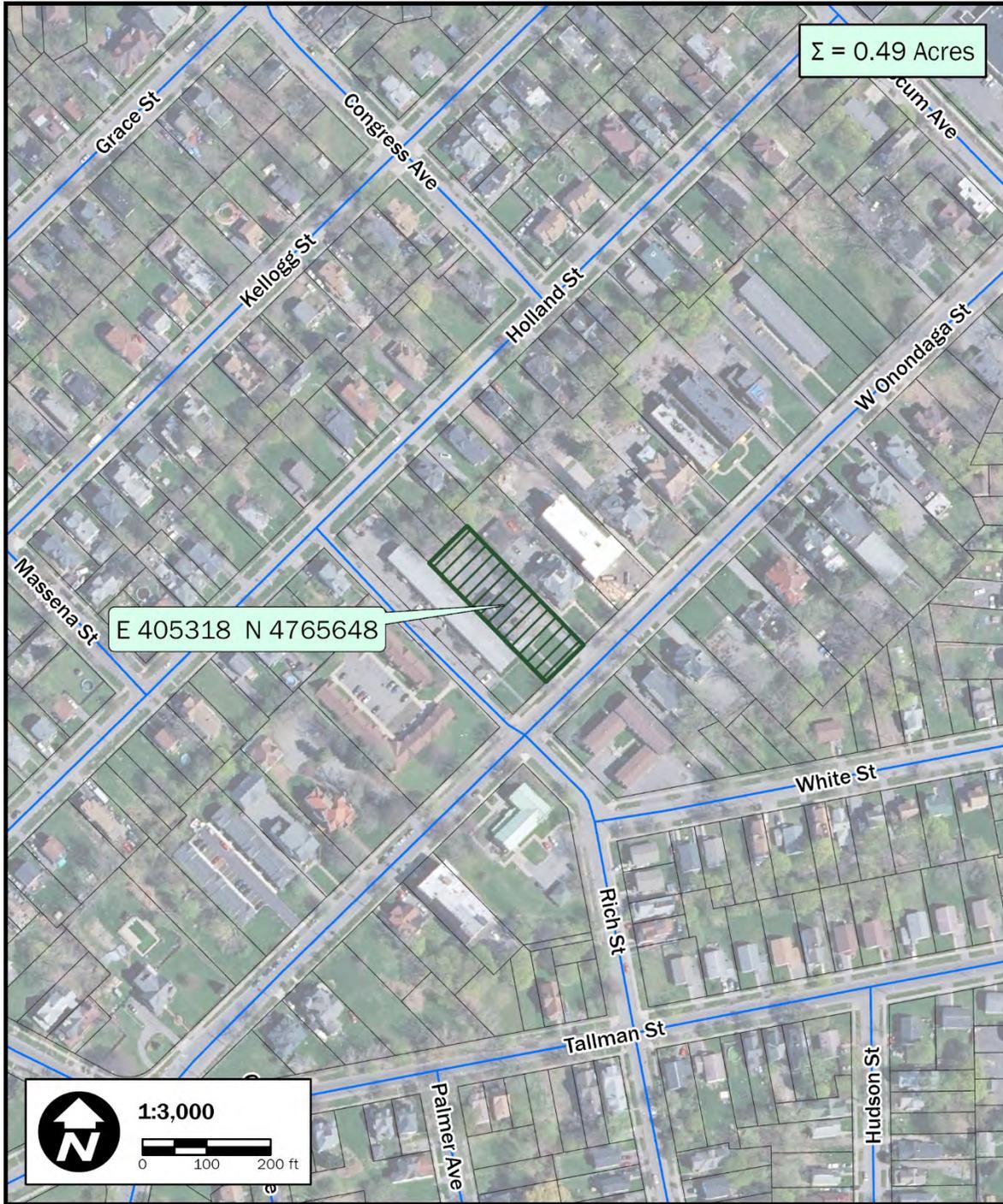
Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

Foster-Hubbard House
Name of Property

Onondaga County, NY
County and State

Foster-Hubbard House
City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York

678 West Onondaga Street
Syracuse, NY 13204



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

 Nomination Boundary



Foster-Hubbard House
Name of Property

Onondaga County, NY
County and State

Foster-Hubbard House
City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York

678 West Onondaga Street
Syracuse, NY 13204



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

 Nomination Boundary



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

Photo Log for 678 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY.



Photo 1 – Street view facing northwest.



Photo 2 – Rear view facing southwest.

Photo Log for 678 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY.



Photo 3 – Northwest corner facing south.



Photo 4 – View of cupola from the front of the building.



Photo 5 – Details on roofline, porch, and exterior window frames.



Photo 6 – View of porch facing northwest.

Photo Log for 678 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY.



Photo 7 – Front door.



Photo 8 – Porch column.



Photo 9 – Entry hall.



Photo 10 – Front staircase.



Photo 11 – Front parlor doors open.

Photo Log for 678 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY.



Photo 12 – Front parlor doors closed.



Photo 13 – Back parlor on east side of house, showing fireplace, paneling, and shutter cupboards.



Photo 14 – Decorative firebox in back parlor.



Photo 15 – Flooring detail in back parlor.



Photo 16 – Back parlor closet.



Photo 17 – First floor bathroom.



Photo 18 – Looking through doorway of front west room (reception) into hall and front parlor.



Photo 19 – View from front west room (reception) into administrative space.



Photo 20 – Administrative hallway on first floor, facing north.



Photo 21 – Towerroom office space.



Photo 22 – North wall showing sealed rear doorway.



Photo 23 – Eastern staircase, first floor.

Photo Log for 678 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY.



Photo 24 – Eastern staircase, second floor.



Photo 25 – Banister of front staircase, second floor.

Photo Log for 678 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY.



Photo 26 – Second floor hallway by front stairs, facing west.



Photo 27 – West front room on the second floor.



Photo 28 - Second floor bedroom, west side.



Photo 29 – Upstairs tower room.

Photo Log for 678 West Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY.



Photo 30 - Sink room, second floor.



Photo 31 - Northwestern room, second floor.



Photo 32 - Northeastern room, second floor.



Photo 33 – Divisions in upstairs hallway, facing south.



Photo 34 - Eastern bedroom, second floor.



Photo 35 - Second floor side bedroom.



Photo 36 - Attic stairs.



Photo 37 – Arched recess on south wall of attic.



Photo 38 - Stairs to cupola.



Photo 39 – East wall of cupola.



Photo 40 - Arching basement doorway.



Photo 41 - Sealed archways in basement.