

REFNUM 90001776

NR: 11-28-90

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name O'Neil's Department Store
other names/site number South Main Street at State Street

2. Location

street & number 226-250 South Main Street N/A not for publication
city, town Akron N/A vicinity
state Ohio code OH county Summit code SUM zip code 44308

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Department Store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Commercial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Limestone, terra-cotta

roof

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

O'Neil's Department Store, constructed in 1928 in the Neo-Renaissance Revival Style, is a six story building which covers 2.33 acres. When constructed, the rear West elevation was three stories. Three additional floors were added to the rear (West) of the building in 1941, making the entire building six stories. O'Neil's Main Street and State Street facades are primarily treated with buff Indiana limestone. These facades are accented by classical motifs detailed in glazed terra-cotta, string and belt courses, shallow balconies and deep cornice. A parking deck was built to the rear (North elevation) in 1946, and an annex to the rear (West elevation) in 1948. The primary elevations are East and South, and are of limestone on the first and second floors, and terra-cotta on floors three through six. The North and West elevations are of brick. The foundation is of concrete, with building dimensions of 217' 6" by 462'6". Floral panels and seven shallow balconies on scrolled brackets occur along the third floor belt course, where bands of paired windows run between pillars to a string course at the fifth story. The balconies begin on the corner to the North elevation, and are featured on the East and South elevations. The top floor has relief panels and a deep cornice. The street address on S. Main Street is: 226-250 South Main Street. (The corner of Main and State Streets).

A renovation project was undertaken in 1984. The construction included the conversion of the North side of the building (354,000 sq. ft.) for office use. Included in the project was a new entrance and lobby off South Main Street. The construction included new elevators which provide access to the upper floor offices, the consolidation of retail office space on the lower three floors, and conversion of the upper three floors to commercial office space. The construction did include the partition of office space. Exterior remodeling was limited to the street level South facade. The East elevation shop windows are enclosed in cement block. The second story features cast iron framed windows which are divided into four equal spaces, each with panes four high and four wide. The remaining openings on the East elevation are single-hung windows. The two brick elevations have steel double-hung windows.

The structural system framing is cast in place concrete frame, with one way concrete joist. The roof is flat with built up roof membrane, surrounded by a brick and terra-cotta parapet.

The interior features high plaster ceilings in the retail areas, with ornamentation on beams and column capitals. The walls are of plaster and metal lath. The flooring on the first floor has some marble, terrazo and carpeting. Some terrazo flooring can be found in the basement. The stairways are utility in nature. The major vertical transportation is by a system of elevators and escalators.

See continuation sheet

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Original service elevators exist from the fifth to sixth floors. The building is heated by steam heat with air conditioning. Lighting is retrofitted flourescent to serve the many different departments of the store.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce

Period of Significance
1928-1940

Significant Dates
1928

Community Planning and Development

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder

Graham, Anderson, Probst & White Architects
Carmichael Construction Company

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. The M. O'Neil Company was Akron's largest department store chain and was the first company to build a major department store in downtown Akron. O'Neil's downtown store was the company's flagship store, with 780,000 square feet of floor space. It served as an anchor for the southern end of Akron's Central Business District. Construction of this six story building was completed in 1928, at a cost of \$3.1 million. Its construction and the subsequent business success of the O'Neil's department store played a leading role in influencing the expansion and development of Akron's Central Business District.

The M. O'Neil Company dates to the last quarter of the nineteenth century when Akron's Business Center was concentrated in its Howard-Market Street area. In 1877, Michael O'Neil and Isaac J. Dyas opened a small dry goods store known as O'Neil and Dyas, on the southwest corner of Market and Main Streets. After ten years of successful operation, they had outgrown their original store, and in 1899, they moved their business south of Market to Main Street. Their dry goods business continued to prosper at its new location, helping to establish Main Street as a viable business section of downtown Akron.

In 1890, Mr. Dyas died and the name of the firm was changed to M. O'Neil & Company. The scope of the business was also rapidly expanded until O'Neil's became the largest department store in Ohio. In 1912, O'Neil's was sold to the May Department Store Company of St. Louis, Missouri. Mr. O'Neil served the store in an advisory capacity for one year, before leaving the firm. Thereafter, Mr. O'Neil remained a prominent member of the Akron community, serving as president of the General Tire and Rubber Company, and taking an active role in business, civic, religious and charitable organizations.

Fifteen years after the sale of O'Neil's to the May Company, the M. O'Neil Company was in need of a larger store. Company officials purchased property for a new building several blocks south of the established business district. Construction of the new building began in 1927, and O'Neil's six story, \$3.1 million department store was opened to the public on March 13, 1928.

The new O'Neil's store attracted other businesses to the southern end of Main Street, including Polsky's Department Store, which remained O'Neils major

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O'Neil's Department Store, Akron, Ohio, Summit County

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competition from its opening in 1930 to its closing in 1978. By the early 1930's, the new Main Street business spurred by O'Neil's had extended Akron's business district south to Exchange Street, more than one-half mile from the Market-Main Street location of O'Neil and Dyas' original dry goods store.

Significant construction that followed O'Neil's opening at its new location on South Main Street was the Akron Civic Theater in 1929. This 3,000 seat theater, designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival Style, was listed on the National Register in 1973. Directly across from O'Neil's on South Main Street is the former Polsky's Department Store that was built in 1930. This gray terra-cotta building, designed in the Art Deco Style, housed O'Neil's major competition for retail trade from its opening in 1930 to its closing in 1978. Polsky's Department Store is a six story, 400,000 gross square foot building, connected to a 130,432 gross square foot parking deck and warehouse structure. (OHI SUM 399-16) The Young Men's Christian Association, at 80 W. Center Street, just to the north of O'Neil's, opened in 1931. This 16 story building opened to the public on March 10, 1931, and occupies a full city block. Designed in the Art Deco Style, with bracketed terra-cotta balconies and geometric ornament of contrasting colored glazed tile in the upper parapets, makes the Y.M.C.A. Building an impressive structure. It was listed on the National Register in 1980.

The Mayflower Hotel, now known as the Mayflower Manor House, was opened in 1931. From its opening in 1931 until the mid 1960's, the Mayflower was known as Akron's best hotel. As such, it hosted most of the city's important social events. As stated on its Ohio Historic Inventory Form, "Its close proximity to the city's two biggest department stores puts it in the heart of the shopping district". The Mayflower was also designed by the firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, the architects of the O'Neil's Department Store.

The O'Neil's building was designed in the Neo-Renaissance Revival Style by the prominent Chicago firm--Graham, Anderson, Probst and White. They are also the architects of Cleveland's Terminal Tower (N.R. 76). The contractor for the O'Neil's store was Carmichael Construction of Akron.

The M. O'Neil Company was a full-line department store. In addition to its downtown store, O'Neil's had expanded to include three branch stores in the Akron area. The downtown O'Neil's, however, was the company's flagship store, and at the time of its closing, the only department store in downtown Akron. O'Neil's Department Store was an anchor for the southern end of Akron's Central Business District, the development of which it helped to shape over fifty years ago.

In 1984, the May Department Stores Company, owner of the M. O'Neil Company, undertook a \$9.38 million renovation of the building. Retailing activities were consolidated to the building's lower levels, and the upper three and one-half floors were converted into an office complex. The purpose of the conversion was to reduce overhead at the downtown store, which had been operating at a loss. The conversion of the portion of the facility to office space would substantially reduce overhead. As part of the renovation, the construction of a new entrance and lobby on South Main Street was completed. New elevators providing access to the upper floors were also included in the renovation.

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O'Neil's Department Store, Akron, Ohio, Summit County

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However, the store never again achieved the success it once enjoyed. O'Neil's closed its retail operation at this store in 1989.

The 1948 annex building is built over a portion of the Ohio Canal. Plans to raze the annex and expose the canal in a park setting have been developed.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Case report and memorandum of agreement. O'Neil's Department Store Renovation March 1983. Department of Planning and Urban Development, City of Akron, OH Ohio Historic Inventory SUM 287-16 M. O'Neil Company, March 1980 Grismer, Kaul H., Akron & Summit County, 1952 p. 275, 279, 430 City of Akron, Department of Planning and Urban Development.

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 # Determination of eligibility
E.O. 11593 16 - March 1983

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property _____

UTM References

A

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4	5	4	7	5	0	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Northwest corner of South Main Street and State Streets with a street address of 226-250 South Main Street

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Cimperman
 organization George Dobra & Associates date July 5, 1990
 street & number 631 Leader Building telephone (216) 779-0020
 city or town Cleveland state OH zip code 44114

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Continuation Sheet**

O'Neil's Department Store, Akron, Ohio, Summit County

Section number 10 Page 1

ALL THOSE TWO (2) certain pieces or parcel so land situated in the City of Akron, County of Summit and State of Ohio, separately bounded and described in accordance with a Plat of Survey prepared by Kenneth Jensen and Associates, Engineers and Surveyors, dated April 13, 1983 as follows:

PARCEL 1

KNOWN as part of Lot C in the Town Plat of South Akron as surveyed and numbered by Joshua Henshaw, Surveyor, and recorded in the Recoprds of Portage County, Ohio, Book H, pages 18, 19 and 20 and in the transcribed Record of Plats of Summit County, Ohio, on page 4 and also a part of vacated West State Street as duly vacated by Ordinance of the Council of the City of Akron, Ordinance Records, Volume 6, page 545.

BEGINNING at a point in the northerly line of West State Street, which point is one hundred eighty seven (187) feet distant northwesterly from the intersection of the westerly line of South Main Street and northerly line of West State Street as measured along said State Street line; thence northwesterly along the said northerly line of West State Street twenty-nine (29) feet to a point; thence northeasterly parallel to the westerly line of South Main Street two hundred seventeen and five-tenths (217.5) feet to a point on the southerly line of West Center Street, which point is distant two hundred sixteen (216) feet northwesterly from the intersection of the westerly line of South Main Street and the southerly line of West Center Street, measured along the southerly line of West Center Street, twenty-nine (29) feet to a point; thence southwesterly parallel to the westerly line of South Main Street two hundred seventeen and five tenths (217.5) feet to the place of beginning.

CONTAINING 6307.5 square feet, more or less.

PARCEL II

SITUATED in the City of Akron, County of Summit and State of Ohio and known as a strip of land across the premises of Grantee (formerly of J.F. Seiberling) situated on the west side of South Main Street in said city of Akron, sixteen feet in width at grade of track for the location of and iperation of one railroad track, said strip of land so located that the center line of the railroad track thereon will extend diagonally by curve from a point in the northeast boundary line of the land of Grantee (formerly J. F. Seiberling) to a point in the southerly boundary line of land of Grantee (formerly J.F. Seiberling) eight feet west of the west line of garden alley when produced northerly.

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O'Neil's Department Store, Akron, Ohio 1983-984 Summit County

Section number 10 Page 2 LEGAL DESCRIPTION PARCEL 1 MAY 19, 1989

Situated in the City of Akron, County of Summit and State of Ohio, being a part of the Town Plat of South Akron as surveyed and numbered by Joshua Henshaw, Surveyor, and recorded in the Records of Portage County, Ohio, Book H, pages 18, 19 and 20 and in the Transcribed Record of Plats of Summit County, Ohio, page 4, more particularly described as follows:

- A. All of lots 16, 17 and 18 as shown on said Town Plat
- B. A strip of land 19.5 feet in width lying immediately southerly of contiguous with Lot 18, said strip of land being a part of vacated West State Street as vacated by Ordinance of the Council of the City of Akron, Ohio, passed on June 10, 1895, and recorded in Akron City Ordinance REcords, Volume 6, page 545

all of which is bounded and described as fillows:

Beginning at the intersection of the existing northerly line of West State Street (60 feet) and the westerly line of South Main Street (99 feet);

Thence N $63^{\circ} 09' 10''$ W 165.00 feet along said northerly line of West State Street and the southerly line of the original M. O'Neil Company building to a point, said point being the southeasterly corner of Garden Alley (20');

Thence N $26^{\circ} 59' 20''$ E 217.47 feet along the easterly line of Garden Alley to a point in the southerly line of West Center Street (20');

Thence S $63^{\circ} 08' 40''$ E 165.00 feet along the southerly line of West Center Street to a point in the westerly line of Main Street;

Thence S $26^{\circ} 59' 20''$ W 217.45 feet along the westerly line of South Main Street to the place of beginning and containing 0.8237 acres of land as surveyed in May, 1989 by Kenneth W. Jensen, Registered Surveyor No. 4869

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O'Neil's Department Store, Akron, Ohio, Summit County

Section number 10 Page 3 LEGAL DESCRIPTION - PARCEL 2 - MAY 19, 1989

Situated in the City of Akron, County of Summit and State of Ohio, being a part of the Town Plat of South Akron, as surveyed and numbered by Joshua Henshaw, Surveyor, and recorded in the Records of Portage County, Ohio, Book H, pages 18, 19 and 20 and in the Transcribed Record of Plats of Summit County, Ohio, page 4, more particularly described as follows:

- A. Part of Lot C as shown on said Town plat.
- B. A strip of land 19.5 feet in width, lying immediately southerly of and contiguous with Lot C, said strip of land being a part of vacated West State Street as vacated by Ordinance of the Council of the City of Akron, Ohio, passed on June 10, 1895, and recorded in Akron City Ordinance Records, Volume 6, page 545.

All of which is bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the existing northerly line of West State Street (60 feet), and the westerly line of South Main Street (99 feet);

Thence N 63° 9'20", E 185' along said northerly line of West State Street, and southerly line of the original M. O'Neil Company building to a point, said being the southwesterly corner of Garden Valley (20 feet), and the true place of the beginning for the parcel herein described;

Thence N 63° 9'10", W 2' along the northerly line of West State Street to a point;

Thence N 26° 59'20"E 217.48' to a point in the southerly line of West Center Street (20 feet);

Thence S 63° 8'40", E 2' along the southerly line West Center Street to the northwesterly corner of said Garden Alley;

Thence S 26° 59'20", W 217.48' along the westerly line of said Garden Alley to the true place of beginning, and containing 0.0100 acres of land (434.96 S.F.) as surveyed in May 1989, by Kenneth W. Jensen, Registered Surveyor No. 4869.

WATERS ST.

BOWERY ST.

RAMP

3 LEVEL PARKING DECK

CENTER ST.

MAIN ST.

STAIR #1

STAIR #2

O'NEILS DEPART. STORE
6 STORIES

STATE ST. OFFICE BLDG.
3 STORIES

STAIR #3

STAIR #4

STATE ST.

GARDEN ALLEY RUNS
UNDER BLDG.

NORTH

WEST — EAST

SOUTH

SUMMIT
COUNTY

O'NEILS DEPARTMENT STORE

AKRON OHIO

NO SCALE

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

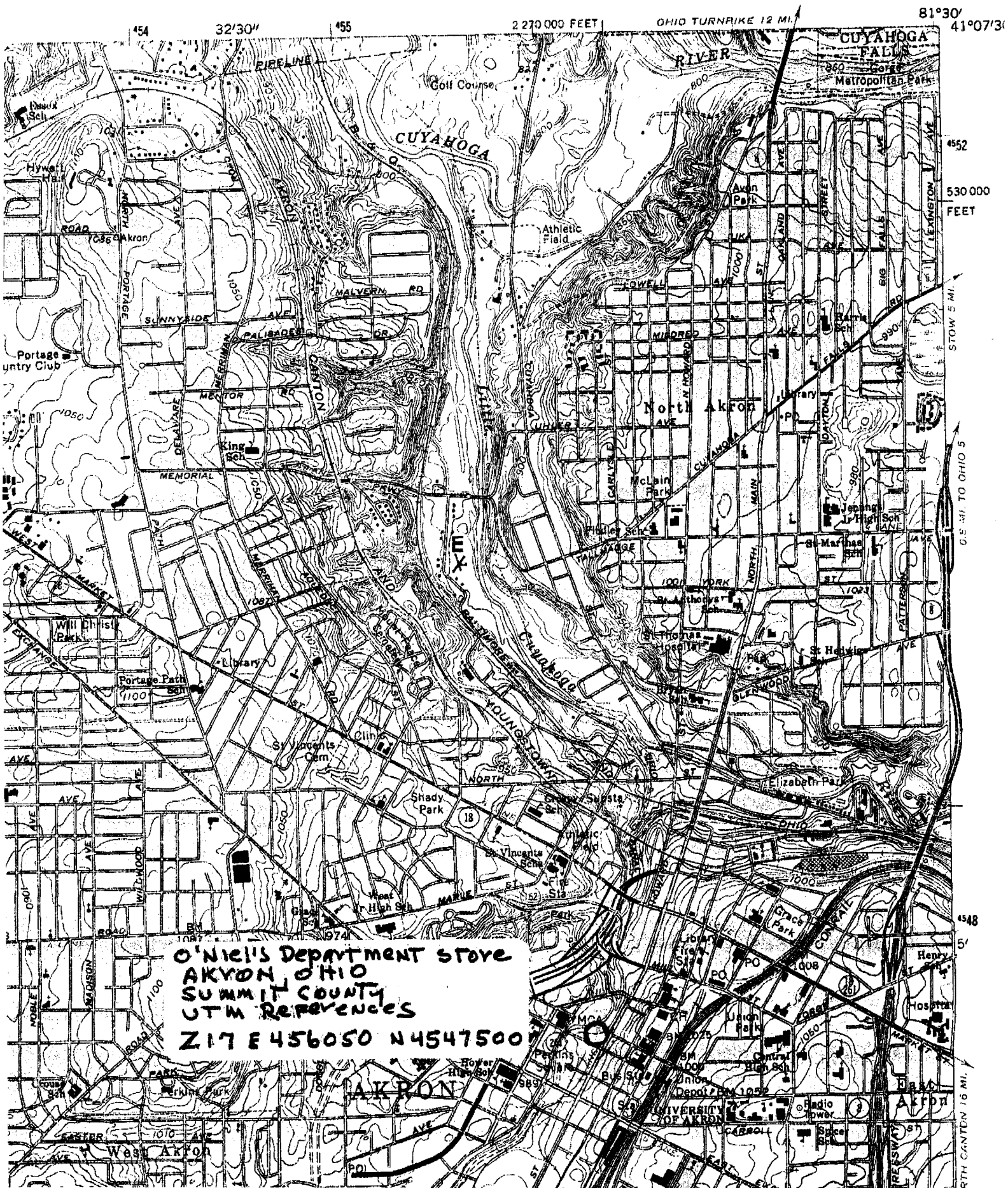
O'Neil's Department Store, 226-250 South Main Street
Akron, Ohio
Summit Co-nty

Photographer: Bruce S. Ford, Department of Planning, City of Akron
Date of Photographs: April, 1990
Negatives stored at the Department of Planning and Urban Development, 401 Municipal Building, Akron, Ohio.

- OH No. 1 - East elevation, looking south
- OH No. 2 - North elevation, looking west
- OH No. 3 - East elevation, looking north
- OH No. 4 - South elevation, looking north
- OH No. 5 - Detail south elevation, 5th & 6th floors
- OH No. 6 - Detail east & south, elevation 6th floor
- OH No. 7 - Detail east & south, elevation 2nd & 3rd floors
- OH No. 8 - Interior detail - Ceiling and column capitals
- OH No. 9 - Interior main floor - street level
- OH No. 10- Service escalators - 5th & 6th floors
- OH No. 11- Interior upper floor, appearance 5th floor
- OH No. 12- Interior 6th floor, rear section

AKRON WEST QUADRANGLE OHIO-SUMMIT CO. 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

768 III N
HUDS.



O'Neil's Department Store
 AKRON OHIO
 SUMMIT COUNTY
 UTM REFERENCES
 Z17 E 456050 N 4547500

81°30' 41°07'3"

4552
530 000
FEET

STOW 5 MI.

C.S. 31 TO OHIO 5

4548

RTH CANTON 10 MI.

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

Ohio Historical Center
1982 Velma Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43211-2497
(614) 297-2470



**OHIO
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**
SINCE 1885

December 27, 1990

City of Akron
405 Municipal Building
Akron, Ohio 44308

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: O'Neill's Department Store, 226-250 South Main Street, Akron,
Summit County, Ohio

This is to inform you that the O'Neill's Department Store nomination listed above has been entered into the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior (NR listed 11/28/90).

The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended. All nominations are approved by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Enclosed is information explaining the purposes and goals of the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

W. Ray Luce
State Historic Preservation Officer

WRL/JW:dwh
Enclosure

x.c. Jeff Brown, Regional Coordinator
Mayor of Akron, Donald L. Plusquelcic
John Cimperman, prepared forms
NEFCO
State Senator Roy L. Ray
State Representative Vernon L. Sykes

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: O'Neil's Department Store

County: Summit

Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

Multiple Property Nomination form

Photograph(s)

Photograph(s) (copies)

USGS map(s)

USGS map(s) (copies)

Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

Correspondence

Other _____
