



**JOLIET HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**Local Landmark Application**  
**Joliet Register of Historic Places**

**1. Name of Property**

Historic Name (Original Owner Name): White Store

Common or Current Name: 9 West Cass Street

**2. Location**

Street and Number: 9 West Cass Street

Legal Description: SUB LOT 1, SUB LOT 2, THE WEST 2 FEET OF SUB LOT .3, AND ALSO THE WEST 60.00 FEET OF SUB LOT 7 AND THE WEST 60.00 FEET OF THE SOUTH J.00 FEET OF SUB LOT 8, ALL IN THE ASSESSORS SUBDIVISION OF LOTS 5 AND 6, IN BLOCK 12, IN THE ORIGINAL TOWN OF JOLIET, A SUBDIVISION IN THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 9, IN TOWNSHIP 35 NORTH, AND IN RANGE 10 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Tax number: 30-07-09-431-012-0000

Name of Owner: IL Rock & Roll Museum RTE 66

Owner Address: 9 West Cass St. Joliet. IL 60432

**3. Classification (select one)**

Private  Public - local  Public - state  Public - federal

**4. Category (select one)**

Building  District  Site  Structure  Object

**5. Number of Buildings (specify number of each)**

Contributing: 1

Non-contributing:

6. **Functions** (Describe as residential, commercial, industrial, etc.)

Historic: Commercial

Current: Commercial

7. **Description of Property**

Architectural Classification: Beaux Arts Classicism with Sullivanesque influences

Materials  
Foundation: Concrete  
Outside Walls: Brick, concrete, and glazed terra cotta  
Roof: Rubber rollout

Architect/Builder (if known): Unknown

Size of property: 5,280 square feet (approx.)

Property and Architectural Narrative (*Describe present and historic appearance below*):

The three-story building at 9 West Cass Street was built in 1929-1930 and is a well-preserved example of a late Beaux Arts style / Sullivanesque style commercial building. The world plunged into the Great Depression in late 1929, which halted commercial building activity and ushered out of popularity of these architectural styles. Therefore, the building is late example of both styles.

The south-facing building is three-stories in height and four bays wide. The building was built with a concrete foundation, frame, floors and roof. The exterior walls are 12” thick brick. Granite panels that are 2’ in height line the foundation along the front parts of the building. The building is faced with glazed white terra cotta, which was a common veneer of late examples of both these architectural styles. At the same time, the use of white terra cotta was likely a deliberate decision to further celebrate the intended occupant of the building, which was a dry goods store named the “White Store.” The name “White Store” is inlaid in terrazzo at both of the building’s main, recessed entrances.

Overall, the building exhibits typical features of a commercial building constructed between 1900-1930 with its large metal window frames, structural glass, and recessed front entrances on the ground floor as well as large window openings with multiple units on the upper floors. The south-facing first floor commercial storefront includes large single pane plate-glass windows that encase the entire front with transoms of textured glass. The building features two recessed front entrances, each with a wooden double door with six panel wooden transoms above. The two

front entrances with their exterior and interior entry doors that create entry vestibules were likely later additions. The large window openings separated by vertical piers shows the influence of the Chicago School Commercial style.

Sullivan-esque influences include the building's fenestration and tripartite windows. The building has four, three-part wooden single-pane windows with transoms that extend across the second and third stories on the south (front) elevation. The classical motifs employed on building show the influence of the Beaux Arts style. Decorative terra cotta panels of garland are between the second and third stories. A decorative terra cotta string course is featured between the first and second floors. The building is adorned by a terra cotta parapet with medallions set over the third-floor string course.

The building retains remarkable integrity and remains almost unchanged. The building does show signs of deterioration in some areas with worn-down or broken terra cotta glazing or ornamentation.

## **8. Historical Narrative**

*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community*

The three-story, white terra cotta commercial building at 9 West Cass was completed in late 1929 / early 1930. The developer of the building was Dr. J. J. Coady of Minooka. The building was completed in early 1930 at a cost of approximately \$75,000 (approximately \$1,118,000 in January 2020 dollars), which shows that the (Tinley Star articles, Bureau of Labor Statistics). The first business to occupy the building was the "White Store" and the early history of this building is closely tied to the history of the "White Store" business.

Jackson Jarvis Cohen arrived in Joliet from Chicago and opened the first location of the White Store at 405-407 Cass Street around 1918/1919. The White Store was considered a dry good store and later as a department store. It sold food, cloths and household items. His first Cass Street store was small, with 14 ½ feet of frontage and three employees. He then expanded, occupying 101 feet of frontage and employed 65 people (401-407 Cass Street). This expansion was not big enough to keep pace with business. Therefore, Cohen began to look for a larger space for his business in 1929. He found such space at 9 West Cass Street.

In September 1929, Cohen entered into an agreement with developer Dr. J. J. Coady to lease the entire three-story building at 9 West Cass Street for \$10,200 annually (\$152,000 annually in January 2020 dollars). It is likely that the lease agreement was made early enough in the building process that Cohen influenced the design of the building given the building's color,

level of architectural ornamentation, and ultimate cost of completion. Upon completion, the large, elegant, white building certainly conveyed that the “White Store” was the premier purveyor of dry goods in the city.

The popularity of the White Store continued. By 1937, the White Store had outgrown the space at 9 West Cass Street, and the business moved around the corner to the building at 235 North Chicago Street, which was the building most people remember as the White Store. The White Store closed for good in the 1980s. The White Store building at 235 North Chicago Street was demolished in January 2011 to make way for the Joliet Junior College City Center Campus.

After the White Store business relocated from 9 West Cass Street to 235 North Chicago Street, the Goldblatt Brothers Department Store took over the 9 West Cass Street building using it as their annex to their other building, which was located almost across the street at the southwest corner of Cass and Chicago Streets (now Bays Professional Center). The Goldblatt Department Store utilized the 9 West Cass Street building from 1938 to the late 1950s. Around 1960, the building changed occupants once again to the Silver Dollar Store, which was known for handing out silver dollars as change after a purchase. From 1977 thru 1998 By-Rite Furniture Store occupied the space where local residents could purchase fair-priced furniture. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the third floor of the building was known for housing Jack’s Gym, a local boxing establishment. The building was owned by the Steelman Group from 2013 thru 2019. In 2019, the Illinois Rock & Roll Museum on Route 66 purchased the property and is currently renovating the building for a museum.

Before 1938 the building was numbered 305-309 W. Cass St. The address 305-309 W. Cass St. first appears in the Joliet Directory as a combined address in 1930.

## 9. Statement of Significance

Period of Significance: 1929 / 1930

Significant Date: 1929 / 1930

Describe why this property is being nominated (architectural style, historical significance, etc.):

The three-story building is a well-preserved example of a late Beaux Arts style / Sullivanesque style commercial building. The building is historically significant for its association with Jackson Jarvis Cohen’s White Store, who was the founder of the White Store. The building

changed hands several times over the last century and has been mostly vacant for the last ten years; however, the building façade is remarkably unchanged since the structure was built.

10. **Bibliography** (Major references):

Will County Supervisor of Assessments  
Will County Treasurer  
Joliet Township Assessor  
HABS Survey Joliet, 1987  
City of Joliet Directories: 1891, 1895, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1906, 1912, 1916, 1918, 1920, 1927, 1938  
1898 Sanborn Map – Library of Congress  
1924-1954 Sanborn Map, located at Joliet Public Library  
1965 Sanborn Map, located at Joliet City Hall  
Joliet Then and Now, Robert Sterling, copyright 2004

11. **Form Prepared By**

Name/ Title/ Phone Number: Candace Johnson, Commissioner (815-666-3567), Sara Stovall, Commissioner (815-641-0341), and Jayne M. Bernhard, City Planner (815-724-4052)

Organization/Applicant Name: Joliet Historic Preservation Commission

Applicant Address: 150 W. Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60432

Property interest of applicant: Preservation

Date of Application: 03/16/2020

12. **Supporting Documentation** (indicate attachments or inclusions)

Owner Consent Form     **X**  
Location Map:           **X**  
Plat of Survey:         **X**  
Photos:                   **X**

12. **Local Historic Landmark Designation Standards (FOR STAFF USE ONLY)**

- a) **Significant value as part of the historical, cultural, aesthetic, artistic, social, ethnic, or other heritage of the nation, state, or community.** *The building is of significant value as part of the economic history of Joliet. The construction of the building exemplifies the*

transition from small, “mom and pop” dry-good retail stores to large, multi “department” stores as well as from an agriculture-based society where people grew or made their daily necessities to a consumer-based society where people bought their daily necessities. The chosen architectural style for the construction of the building shows the forethought that went into marketing and advertising of the store. Finally, the size of the department store, when completed, demonstrates the store’s significance as a premier retail destination in the greater Joliet area.

- b) **Association with an important person or event in national, state, or local history.** At time, this building has not been identified as being associated with an important person.
- c) **Representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method or construction or use of indigenous materials.** This three-story white-terra cotta building at 9 West Cass Street is a well-preserved example of a late Beaux Arts style / Sullivanesque style commercial building. The building features decorative terra cotta panels of garland and a decorative terra cotta string course as well as other classical motifs of the Beaux Arts style. Sullivanesque influences include the building’s fenestration and tripartite windows. There is only one other building of this genre in downtown Joliet, which is the Crystal Square Building at 79-81 North Chicago Street.
- d) **Notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, or artist whose individual genius has influenced an era.** At time, this building has not been identified as a notable work of a master builder.
- e) **Identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.** The building is an established, visual feature in downtown Joliet owing to its distinct glazed, white, terra cotta three-story facade.
- f) **Owner preferences.** The current owners approve of the proposed landmark designation of this property.
- g) **Economic and functional potentials.** This building continues to have economic and functional potential as a commercial building.

13. **Identification of Significant Historical and Architectural Features (FOR STAFF USE ONLY):**

Whenever a building, structure, object or district is recommended for local historic designation, the Commission shall identify the "significant historical and architectural

features" of the property so that current and future owners as well as the public can understand which elements are considered most important in preserving the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on an evaluation of the property, staff recommends that the Commission shall:

- Identify the entire front (south-facing) exterior elevation, including windows, as the building's primary significant features.
- Identify the two front entrances with their exterior and interior entry doors that create entry vestibules as secondary significant features since they were likely later additions. The Commission may approve more significant changes to secondary significant features. Staff considers the front elevation to include the front portion of the west elevation that has glazed, white terra cotta.
- Exclude the remaining portions of the west elevation as well as the north and east elevations as significant historical and architectural features of the property. It is recognized that more significant changes to these three elevations will be necessary to meet new needs, including adding windows and doors to provide light and ventilation required by code for a new use. These three elevations may be modified without the Commission's review.



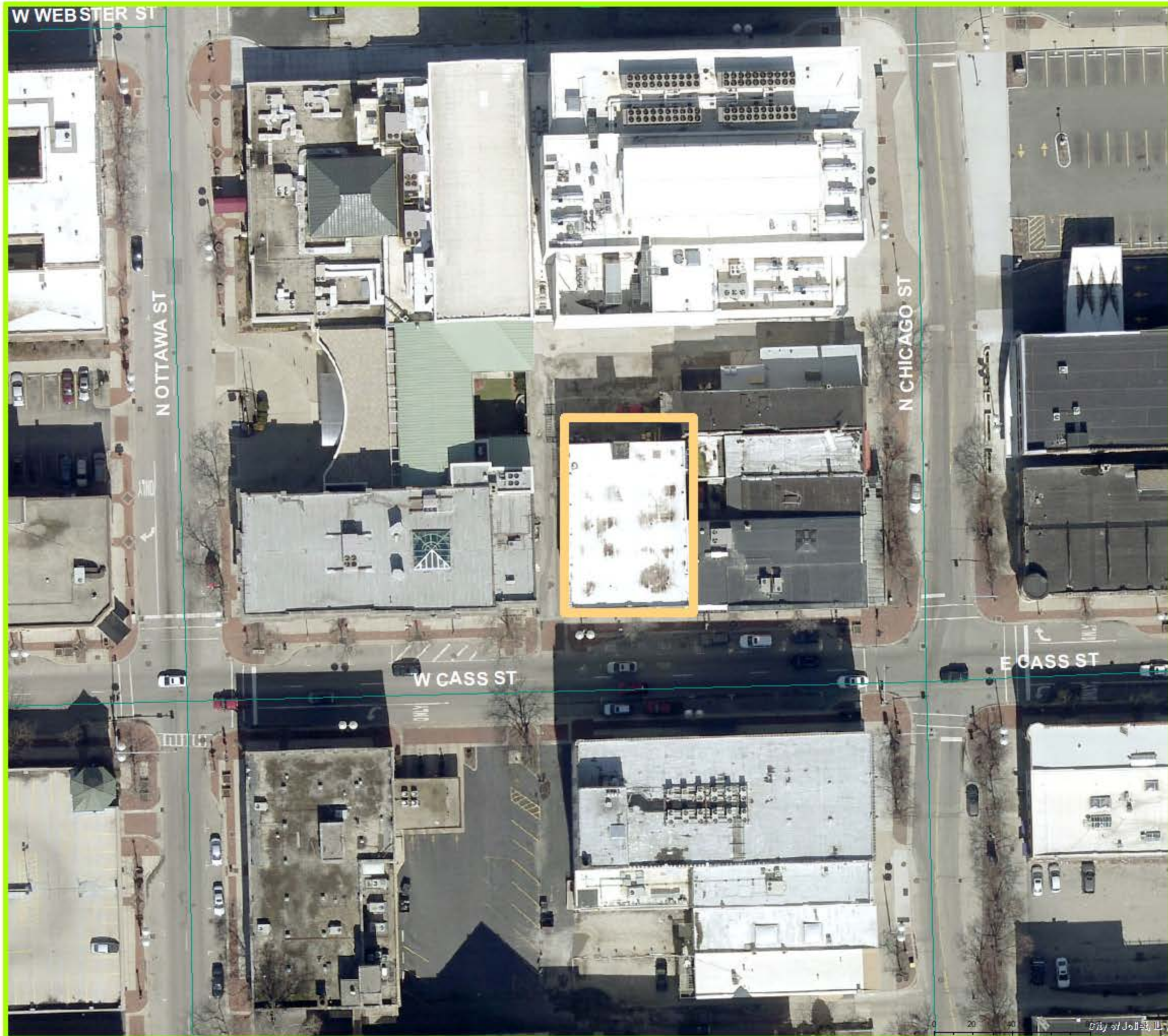




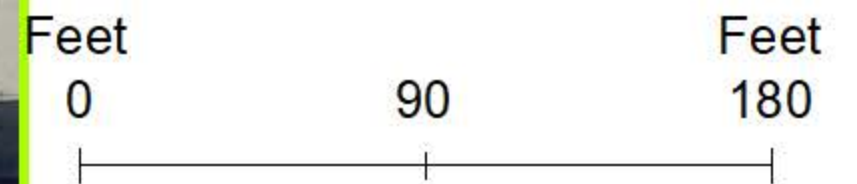








# Context Map





## Owner Consent Form

### Local Historic Landmark Designation

Property Address 9 W. CASS

I (We) certify that I (We) are owner(s) of the property for landmark designation and that I (We) (check appropriate answer)

Approve of the proposed designation.

Disapprove of the proposed designation.

Owner comments:

- \* Pending <sup>MUSEUM</sup> Board approval
- \* Pending approval of primary & significant features

Name: Ron Romero

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: Ron Romero

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: 2911 REARDON

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: RON@RoadtoRockford

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 3-11-20

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# PLAT OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

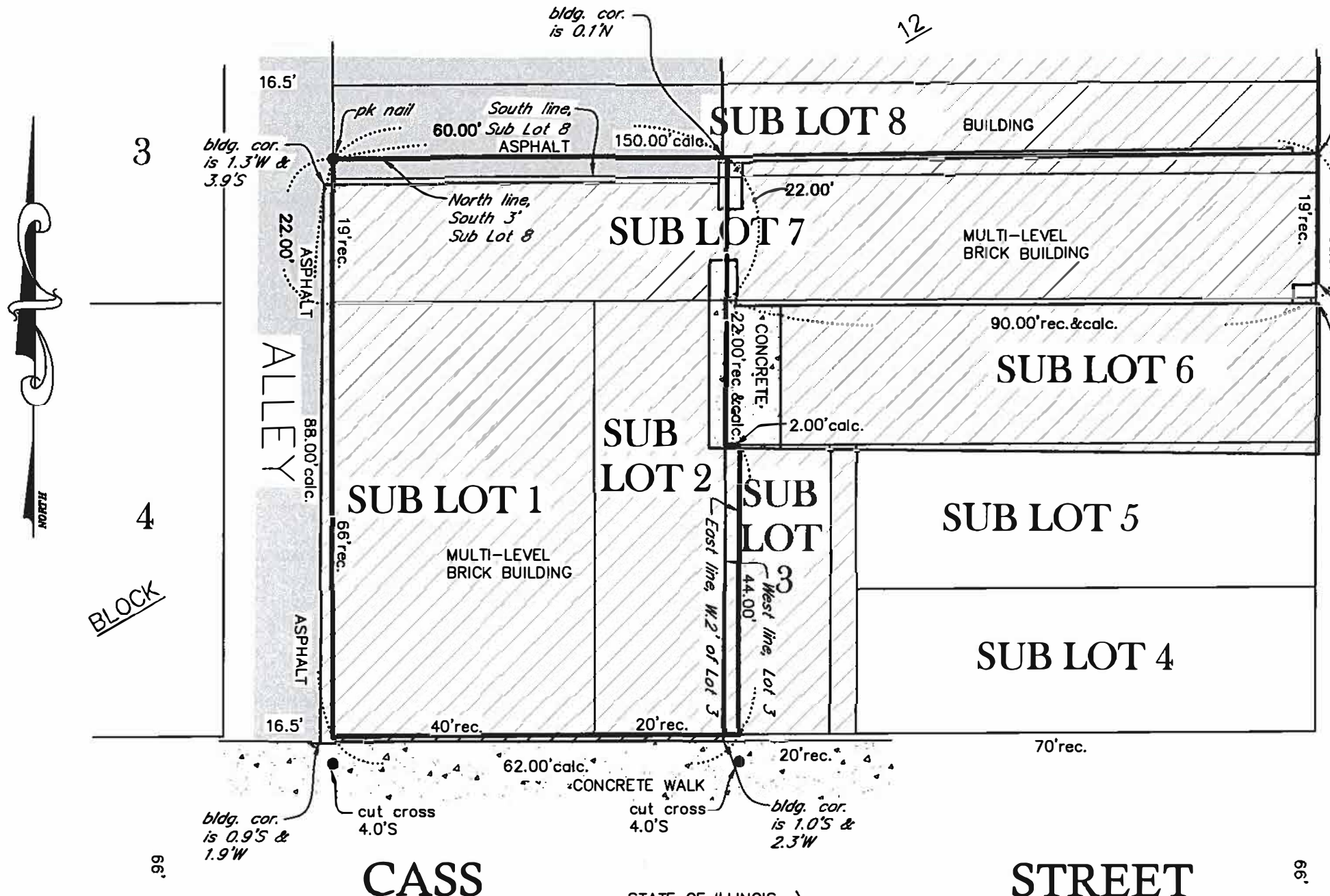
## LEGAL DESCRIPTION

SUB LOT 1, SUB LOT 2, THE WEST 2 FEET OF SUB LOT 3, AND ALSO THE WEST 60.00 FEET OF SUB LOT 7 AND THE WEST 60.00 FEET OF THE SOUTH 3.00 FEET OF SUB LOT 8, ALL IN THE ASSESSOR'S SUBDIVISION OF LOTS 5 AND 6, IN BLOCK 12, IN THE ORIGINAL TOWN OF JOLIET, A SUBDIVISION IN THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 9, IN TOWNSHIP 35 NORTH, AND IN RANGE 10 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

CHICAGO STREET

## LEGEND

- meo. MEASURED
- rec. RECORDED
- calc. CALCULATED
- FOUND SURVEY MONUMENT
- SET 5/8" REBAR UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED



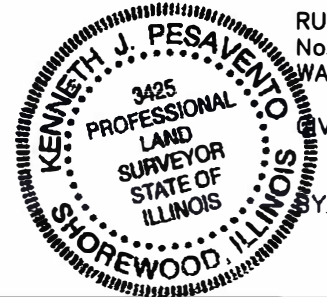
CASS STREET

STREET

STATE OF ILLINOIS }  
COUNTY OF WILL }SS

RUETTIGER, TONELLI & ASSOCIATES, INC., ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL DESIGN FIRM No. 184-001251, DOES HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAT OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION WAS PREPARED UNDER ITS DIRECTION AND BASED ON EXISTING SURVEY INFORMATION.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL THIS 14<sup>th</sup> DAY OF August, 2019



*[Signature]*  
ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR (MY LICENSE EXPIRES 11-30-2020)  
TO ENSURE AUTHENTICITY OF THIS DRAWING, IT MUST BEAR THE EMBOSSED SEAL OF THE DESIGN FIRM OR PROFESSIONAL LICENSEE WHO PREPARED THIS DRAWING.

REVISIONS			
No.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY

**RT & A** **Ruettiger, Tonelli & Associates, Inc.**  
 Surveyors • Engineers • Planners • Landscape Architects • G.I.S. Consultants  
 129 CAPISTA DRIVE - SHOREWOOD, ILLINOIS 60404  
 PH. (815) 744-6600 FAX (815) 744-0101  
 website: www.ruettigertonelli.com

DATE: 08/14/2019	SCALE: 1" = 20'	DRAWN BY: tw	CHECKED BY: KP
PREPARED FOR: ILLINOIS ROCK & ROLL MUSEUM PO BOX 1251 JOLIET, ILLINOIS 60434		FIELD BOOK: PAGE: DRAWING No.: 119-0806-LD-2	
DRAWING TITLE: PLAT OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			