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 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 Main Sewerage Pumping Station, District of Columbia

other names/site number DC Water Main Pumping Station (current)

2. Location

street & number 125 O Street, SE (1331 2nd Street, SE) ☐ not for publication

city or town Washington, D.C. ☐ vicinity

state District of Columbia code DC county _____ code 001 zip code _____

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

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

	private
X	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

X	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		**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.)

Public Works/Sewer System Pumping Station

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Public Works/Sewer System Pumping Station

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVAL/Beaux Arts Classicism

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Granite
walls: Brick, terra cotta, sandstone
roof: Concrete (originally slate)
other:

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 main Sewerage Pumping Station in Washington, D.C. is located at the foot of New Jersey Avenue between N and O Streets on the Anacostia River, and is sandwiched between the Nationals Park Stadium on the west and the Washington Navy Yard on the east. The building is a striking three-story brick structure constructed between 1903 and 1907 and put into operation in 1908. The pumping station was designed by the architectural firm of C.A. Didden & Son, with associate architect, Oscar Vogt in a robust Beaux Arts manner reflecting late French Renaissance Revival-style building forms and features. The building—the pumping station superstructure—measures a sizeable 130 feet by 310 feet and sits atop a much larger substructure holding the sewer and storm water trunk lines, and the disposal machinery and equipment. The superstructure is divided into three principal parts consisting of pavilions at the north and south ends connected by a long central wing whose side walls face east and west. The Classically derived building is constructed of steel and is faced with a brownish/red-colored pressed brick with Ohio sandstone and terra cotta decorative elements, including quoining, beltcourses, cornice and cornice brackets, pedimented dormers, and capitals. The red brick walls combined with light colored stone and terra cotta tile trimming give the building a polychromatic appearance that is characteristic of its French Renaissance style. The building is covered with a combination of intersecting roof forms, originally clad in slate and originally featuring monitors and cupolas throughout.

The interior arrangement of spaces corresponds with the building's exterior form. The front pavilion, located at the north end of the building, historically housed the offices and shops for the pumping station, and currently provides office space and meeting rooms. The rear pavilion houses the boiler, while the expansive central wing encloses the engine pump room.

The building still serves as the city's main sewerage pumping station and retains high degree of integrity with few major alterations and no exterior additions. The monitors have been covered up, the cupolas have been removed and the original slate has been clad with concrete, yet the roof retains its overall form and remains an important feature of the building. Similarly, a coal tower, conveyor built, and a chimney stack, historically located at the southern end of the building, have been removed. The pumps and other sewerage disposal equipment have been replaced without change to the exterior of the building and little alteration on the interior.

Narrative Description

Site

The main Sewerage Pumping Station is located on the Anacostia River at the foot of New Jersey Avenue, SE, on a lot of land sandwiched between the U.S. Navy Yard on the east and the Nationals Park Stadium on the west. The building is an imposing, free-standing structure that is rectangular in plan with its long sides running north-south. All elevations are highly articulated architecturally, giving the building equal grandeur from all perspectives. The principal entry to the building faces north to the city, while the opposing end of the building fronts on the Anacostia River with a 125-foot-long barge slip between the building and the main body of water. The building is prominently visible from the river and is a major element of the city's southeast waterfront.

Exterior Description

The striking three-story brick, stone and terra cotta pumping station, constructed between 1903 and 1908 to the designs of the architecture firm of C.A. Didden & Son, with associate architect Oscar Vogt, is designed in a robust Beaux Arts manner reflecting forms and features of the late French Renaissance Revival style. The building measures 130 feet by 310 feet and is divided into three principal parts consisting of pavilions at the north and south ends and a long central wing whose side walls face east and west connecting the two. These three building parts articulate distinct interior functions of the building: offices and shops, the engine pump room, and the boiler room. The building is set upon a raised granite foundation and has brownish-red pressed brick walls with heavy sandstone and terra cotta trimming. The three parts of the building are covered with different, intersecting roof forms which give the building a distinctive roofline despite some alterations to it. The following narrative description addresses each of the three sections of the building:

North End Pavilion/Office and Shop Block: The north end pavilion of the building measures 120 feet x 75 feet and offers three interior floors that historically housed the sewerage department offices and shops. Still actively used for offices, the pavilion faces north to the city and serves as the primary public and staff entrance to the pumping station. The north elevation is thus the building's most formal and richly decorated façade. It is divided into nine equal bays, each approximately six-feet wide and separated by double-height pilasters. The façade is buttressed at the ends by brick piers with terra cotta quoining and features an elegant pedimented stone entry located in the center bay. A highly ornate upper story, located above a projecting terra cotta cornice, is decorated by pedimented dormers. The quoined end piers span the first and second stories of the building and feature alternating header and stretcher quoins flush with the face of brick. The piers are capped by a terra cotta entablature with oversized modilions located at the center of the piers and supporting the projecting cornice above. Each of the four bays to either side of the central entry has large, single, superimposed windows recessed slightly into the wall surface. The first-story openings have large-paned, 2/2 windows with flat stone lintels, while those of the second story feature brick segmental arches with stone keystones and impost blocks. A plain brick spandrel separates the first and second story windows. The pilasters separating the window bays, set upon two plinth blocks, are similarly quoined like the end piers, but here the quoining is flush with the brickwork rather than projecting from it, thereby giving the pilasters a geometric pattern. The limestone capitals of the pilasters further accentuate the geometric patterning of the pilaster in the placement of a flat roundel at its center. This uncarved decorative feature is typical of the late Renaissance.

The central entry door is located on the first story and features a stone pedimented surround which projects boldly from the plane of the wall. The surround is set upon a torus plinth that is carried across the façade, serving as a base for the pilasters and sill for the window bays. This plinth in turn rests upon the building's raised granite base which, due to the slope in grade, is higher at the center and western side of the façade than the eastern side. The stone is softer and warmer in color than the white terra cotta quoining and other trimming. The surround, somewhat weathered, is layered with exterior pilasters forming a frame around an interior architrave with crossettes. The architrave is broken at the center to allow for the building's name, DC SEWER DIVISION/MAIN PUMPING STATION to be placed on a raised stone or terra cotta panel. The entry door opens at ground level such that the opening is cut partially into the granite base and partially into the stone surround. Currently, a double wood and glass replacement door features a single light transom with a larger transom above it. Originally, the doors were taller reaching to the height of the larger transom. This transom features a demi-lune diapering pattern with translucent glass fitted into wood tracery.

Surmounting the door architrave is a segmental arched pediment which projects further beyond the projecting architrave. The arched pediment is most conspicuous for its ornamental shield whose oval central surface is undecorated, but whose surround offers curving and Baroque-like sculptural embellishments. Behind and above the pediment, is a partial second-story window set within the central bay, identical to those to either side.

Above the second story, a terra cotta entablature and projecting cornice, supported by the double-height pilasters, spans the façade and serves as a base for the pedimented dormers above. Although articulated on the exterior as an attic story, the dormers open on the interior to a full third floor. There are three of them—one on-center and the others surmounting the second and eighth bays. Each one features a single window recessed into a crossetted architrave surround with pilasters framing the surround and supporting the pediment. Splayed stone voussoirs with a bracketed keystone on-center break the top rail of the crossetted architrave and provide visual support for the bottom cornice of the pediment above. Two Baroque scrolls buttress the outside pilasters, terminating the sides of the dormers. At either end of the building, framing the edges and located above the double-story end piers, are engaged pavilion-like decorative features. Trimmed in terra cotta and limestone, these features include a round arch springing from extruded impost blocks with paired mutules, a blind recessed brick panel set beneath a limestone over-panel, and the whole capped by a cannonball finial.

The east and west sides of the north end pavilion have the same dimensions, but are articulated differently with that on the east side being divided into three bays and that on the west side into five narrower bays. In both cases, double-story pilasters separate the bays, defined by windows on the first and second stories with brick spandrels between them. The windows on the first story are rectangular with stone lintels and the windows of the second story are segmental arched with stone keystones. End piers with stone quoining buttress the pavilions' corners, as on the front façade, while a projecting cornice divides the lower stories from the attic story above. On the east elevation, an arched entry is located in the center bay of the façade with a single dormer located on-center of the parapet wall above it. On the west elevation, and in each of the five bays, the windows are arranged with rectangular openings on the first story and segmental arched windows above. Five dormer windows are equally spaced above each of these bays, projecting above the parapet wall. At the corners, above the end piers of both end pavilions, are pavilion-like decorative features trimmed in terra cotta and limestone. These decorative pavilions are like those of the façade with round arches capped by cannonball finials.

The front end pavilion is covered with a hipped roof with a gable monitor at the ridge. The roof originally featured two octagonal cupolas at the ridge of the monitor. The cupolas have been dismantled and the whole roof has been covered with a concrete sheathing.

Central Wing/Engine Pump Room:

The central wing connecting the north and south end pavilions extends 170-feet long spanning twelve bays and encloses the expansive engine pump room on the interior. This central section is recessed from the end walls of both the north and south pavilions, though not equally so. Both the north and south end pavilions project well beyond the central wing on the east side, yet project just slightly beyond it on the west side. The west elevation of this central wing is arranged with twelve identical bays filled with superimposed windows on the first and second stories. The stacked windows in each bay are set within a segmental arched architrave surround of brick with stone keystones and impost blocks and feature pairs of 12-light windows in the first story, with pairs of nine-light windows surmounted by a multi-light transom above in the second story.

A terra cotta cornice separates the second story of the west elevation from the attic level. The attic level consists of single window openings with multi-light sash in each bay, alternating with pedimented dormers at the second, fifth, eighth and eleventh bays. The pedimented dormers are trimmed in terra cotta and feature a full pediment, but lack the more elaborate detailing of side volutes that decorate the pediments on the front and side wall elevations of the north pavilion.

The east elevation of the central wing also extends twelve bays deep, but here, 1-1/2-story rooms of brick construction project from the hyphen at either end, filling in the intersection between the hyphens and end pavilions, leaving just the five central bays fully exposed. These protrusions are covered with flat roofs behind a brick parapet wall, decorated on-center by an arched roundel serving as a louvered vent and rising above the roof line. Above and behind these projecting rooms, the main wall of the wing is exposed at the second-story level revealing the brick segmental arches with transom lights that match the openings in the bays on the five central bays of the elevation. As on the west elevation, single window openings alternating with pedimented dormers at every third bay culminate at the attic level of east elevation of the building.

This long central section of the building is covered with a gable roof originally clad with slate and capped by four octagonal ventilator cupolas. Although the cupolas have been removed and the roof covered with concrete, the original gable form remains prominent.

South End Pavilion/Boiler House:

The south end pavilion, housing the building's boiler room, is the highest of the building's three distinct sections in order to accommodate elevated coal storage bunkers. The pavilion measures 120 feet long and 60 feet wide and is covered with a modified gable roof with a monitor at the ridgeline and gambrel-shaped parapet end walls on the east and west sides. The south elevation of the pavilion faces the river, while the two exposed side elevations face east and west. The south elevation is eight bays long with seven equally arranged and identical bays extending from west to east. The eighth and easternmost bay, the ingress point for the building's coal supply, is wider and capped by a pediment giving this end of the building greater architectural prominence. The entrance to the pavilion is located in the fourth bay from the west (the center of the seven equally arranged bays), and is clearly distinguished by an engaged pediment surround. The pediment is of terra cotta tile and features a full pediment above a crossetted architrave and a ¾-round torus molding that interrupts the architrave header. The bays to either side, separated by brick pilasters, comprise stacked windows on the first and second stories. The first story window has a rectangular opening with 30-light sash, while the second story window opening is segmentally arched with 25-lights. The arch is brick with stone keystones and impost blocks. One exception to the stacked window arrangement occurs in the first bay from the west. Here, the first story has a small brick room projecting from it, rather than a simple window.

The pilasters between each bay are capped with terra cotta capitals and carry a cornice with a wide terra cotta frieze across the entire façade. Above the unornamented frieze, the attic level is defined by single square windows with 10-light sash. Squat brick pilasters separate the attic level bays and visually support a terra cotta parapet wall above.

The east end bay is double the width of the other seven bays and, above the continuous cornice, is capped by a pediment in the attic level. The second-story window, like those on the other bays, is segmentally arched, but is wider. The attic-level window within the pediment is also segmentally arched like that below it, but unlike the attic-level openings in the other bays. The window is recessed into the wall with brick reveals forming its window surround. The rest of the pediment

wall is filled with brick, including a stepped decorative detail following the raking cornice of the pediment. The impost blocks upon which sit the cornice returns are ornamented with carved stone.

The south slope of the roof historically had a series of seven roundel dormers above each of the seven equal bays, along with glazed side walls in the gable monitor. The roundel dormers have been dismantled and the monitors covered over. The original slate roof has been clad with concrete.

The east and west end walls of the south pavilion are similarly detailed with wide brick corner piers framing four equally spaced bays. The bays are separated by slightly projecting double-height brick pilasters set upon the building's granite base as well as upon its own base of terra cotta (also found on the end piers). These bays are filled with single openings on the first and second stories, with the first story having rectangular openings and the second, segmental arched ones. The first story openings have stone sills and lintels and multi-paned sash. The second-story windows have segmental brick arches with stone imposts and keystones as found elsewhere on the building. The cornice with its wide frieze continues around to the sides of the pavilion from the south façade. Above this cornice rises a tall gambrel-shaped parapet end wall. At the two corners of this end wall are decorative features of terra cotta applied to the brick. These pavilion-like features are also found on the end walls of the north pavilion. A broad, unarticulated brick wall spans the area between these decorative pavilions. However, at the center of the end wall at its height, is a large segmental window opening framed above by a brick arch formed with alternating brick and terra cotta and below by a terra cotta frieze with triglyphs and metopes. A central uncarved medallion with garlands sits at the center of this frieze. A terra cotta cornice with scroll brackets at the ends caps the pediment above the segmental arched window and culminates the wall surface.

Interior Description:

The interior of the building is divided into three sections as defined on the exterior. The north end pavilion houses the offices and shops of the sewer department, while the central wing, called the engine room, is a soaring, open space for the massive pumps, and the southern end pavilion is the boiler house.

The north end pavilion is divided into three with the entrance bay located in the center section. Shops and store rooms historically occupied the east and west sides on the lower floors, while offices were housed in the upper floor. The principal entry opens on the first floor into a lobby with a stair hall and engineer's room located immediate off of it. The stair hall contains an ornate wrought iron winder stair against the west interior wall providing access to the upper floors. The stair is elegantly detailed with iron filigree balusters spanning more robust iron newels at the landings, and a broad iron stringer. The lobby then leads directly into a double-height hall, (now employee snack room) with a gallery above it encircling the room. The hall leads through a tall round-arched opening with paired doors and a lunette transom above, into the main engine pump room. The room has plaster walls with stone baseboards and wainscoting, and plaster crown moldings. Blind arches are located next to the arched door opening for the sake of symmetry. The gallery at the second floor level is surrounded by an iron railing adding to the decorative nature of this double-height hall.

Historically, the rooms to the east and west sides of the central lobby, were dedicated to shops and store rooms. The machine shop and blacksmith shop were to the east, while store rooms, and parts room were located to the west. Facilities, including toilets and showers were accommodated at the southwest corner of the north end pavilion.

The second floor of this pavilion has at its center, the open gallery that provides direct viewing down into the engine room. A large arched opening whose broad, round-headed arch is constructed of glazed tile and filled with double replacement doors, leads onto a balcony in the engine room proper. The ceiling of this gallery space is coffered. To either side of the gallery, there was, historically, a drafting room to the west and a storage loft to the east. Offices for the sewerage department were historically and are still located in the third floor of this north end pavilion.

The engine room is located in the central wing of the building and is entered through a large arched door connecting to the north end pavilion. The engine room is one large, open space that soars the full height of the building from below ground level to the roof trusses and features a traveling crane that runs the length of the room. The walls are of glazed brick and are divided into twelve bays on the east and west sides (as on the exterior) of superimposed windows. The windows flood the interior of the room with natural light, just as the original monitor roof and the cupolas did historically. The twelve bays are divided by double-height glazed brick pilasters all of which have oversized plaster lion's heads atop the capitals.

The northern end wall of the room is equipped with a cantilevered balcony at the second floor level overlooking the engine room. This balcony is accessible from the gallery level of the north end pavilion and offers a close-up view of the plaster

lion's head capitals. On both the north and south end walls of the room, the wider center bay is divided from the flanking bays by pairs of pilasters, both of which are capped by lion's heads. A bronze dedication marker, located in the center bay of the south end wall, is surmounted by a decorative arch and central roundel. The dedication panel reads:

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
District of Columbia
Erected 1903-1908
Commissioners of the District of Columbia
Henry B. F. MacFarland
Henry L. West
Lt. Colonel John Biddle, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A
Major Jay J. Morrow, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.
Major W. V. Judson, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.
Captain Chester Harding, Assistant Engineer Commissioner
Captain William Kelly, Assistant Engineer Commissioner
Asa B. Phillips, Engineer
C.A. Didden, G.A. Didden & Oscar Vogt, Associate Architects

The floor of the engine room is equipped with the system's massive pumps on the east and west sides and four large openings in the center aisle. The pumps have been replaced, but historically consisted of five sewage pumps and eight storm water pumps. The four large openings in the center have 16-foot diameters, protected by railings which allow access, as well as light and ventilation into the basement level of the engine room. A traveling crane is mounted above the large side windows at a height of 35 feet above the engine room floor providing access to the engines. The traveling crane has a 91-foot span and 15-ton capacity with a hook that can descend below grade via the large floor openings.

The one-story protrusions, measuring 50 feet by 104 feet and located on the east exterior wall of the central wing and engine room house the storm water screen chamber and the sewerage sedimentation chamber, respectively. The sewage is carried into the sedimentation chamber, where it is drawn into centrifugal pumps, and impelled to a siphon chamber, which forces the sanitation water to rise to a sufficient height to be forced through the siphons to the outfall sewer across the river. The storm water pumps draw the storm water from the storm water screen chamber and discharge directly to the Anacostia River.

The Boiler Room is located in the south end pavilion and houses the boilers that provide the steam to run the pump engines. The boilers were originally coal fed and thus required large coal storage bunkers and coal-handling equipment, containing the driving and crushing machinery. A coal unloading tower that carried the coal from the barge slip at the river's edge into the boiler house originally stood atop the barge slip with enclosed conveyors connecting the coal tower to the south end pavilion. Since the boilers are no longer coal-fired, this barge unloading tower and associated equipment is no longer extant on the site.

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

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.)

- [X] 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.
- [X] 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.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1903-1908

Significant Dates

1908

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Clement A. Didden
George A. Didden
Oscar Vogt

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance for the main Sewage Pumping Station extends from 1903, when construction of the building was begun, until 1908 when the building was put into operation.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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

The Sewerage Pumping Station is a striking three-story building designed by the architecture firm of C.A. Didden & Son with associate architect Oscar Vogt in a robust Beaux Arts manner reflecting the late French Renaissance Revival style of architecture. Begun in 1903 and put into operation in 1908, the pumping station was the culmination of a major rebuilding of the city's sewerage disposal system and was the "vital organ" of that system. All of the city's sewage was carried to the building's substructure where it was then pumped and siphoned across and down river to the outflow sewer at the present-day Blue Plains Sewerage Treatment Facility. As the principal above-ground feature, the building was executed in a highly visible and sophisticated manner that would celebrate the engineering feat of the complex and underground sewerage disposal system.

The building's design and development corresponded with the rise of the City Beautiful movement which, in an effort to beautify the city, sought to improve the city's municipal services and buildings, among other civic improvements. At the time that the pumping station was being constructed, the city was engaged in other municipal projects including the erection of street infrastructure (paving and lights), construction of new and innovative public school buildings, a water pumping station, public convenience stations, and bridges. In addition, and as part of the McMillan Commission Plan, the District began the laying out and landscaping of the city's urban park system. At its completion, the Sewerage Pumping Station was one of the first and most visible of these city buildings deliberately designed to reflect the tenets of the City Beautiful Movement.

The Sewage Pumping Station is an excellent example of a high-style public works project that is a direct manifestation of the City Beautiful Movement, and as such, the building meets National Register Criterion A, with Urban Planning and Engineering as the Areas of Significance.

In addition, the building, designed by local architect Clement A. Didden & Son with Oscar Vogt, represents a sophisticated example of a Beaux Arts-style building, a style that was particularly popular during the City Beautiful era as it embodied the characteristics of civic pride. While there are many examples of Beaux Arts design in the District, particularly among the federal government office buildings, the Sewerage Pumping Station provides an exceptional example of a municipal public works building reflecting the style. The building thus meets National Register Criterion C with Architecture as its Area of Significance as an excellent example of its type (sewerage pumping station) and its style (Beaux Arts Classicism).

The Period of Significance for the building extends from 1903, when construction of the building began, until 1908 when the building was put into operation.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Community Planning and Development: The Sewerage Pumping Station is a direct reflection of the City Beautiful Movement and one of the principal public works projects implemented as part of the 1901 Senate Park Commission Plan (McMillan Commission Plan) for the District of Columbia. The Senate Committee on the District of Columbia, chaired by Senator James McMillan since 1890, had been devising a comprehensive plan for Washington's future aesthetic development. This plan included, most notably, the development of a street plan beyond the city's original L'Enfant Plan, the establishment of a parks in and around the city, a design for the National Mall, and the development and completion of public works, namely that of a clean water supply and sewerage system. Like these other projects, construction of the city's sewerage system, including the Sewerage Pumping Station was carried out under the direction of the Corps of Engineers in coordination with the District's Engineer Commissioner.

Engineering: The Sewerage Pumping Station, put into operation in 1908, was conceived and constructed as a vital link in a major rebuilding of and expansion to the city's earlier and inadequate sewerage disposal system. The pumping station was designed to receive all of the city's sewage and storm water and to pump it across and down the Anacostia River to the city's outflow sewer at present-day Blue Plains Sewerage Treatment Center. The pumping station was the final culmination of a major improvement to the city's sewage disposal system that began in 1893 and was hailed at the time as a major engineering achievement.

Architecture: The Sewerage Pumping Station, designed by local architect Clement A. Didden & Son with Oscar Vogt, associate architect is an exceptionally well designed public works building reflecting a sophisticated Beaux Arts style. The building's design was the result of a design competition, held and awarded in 1900, and was indicative of the City Beautiful Movement, and the District's effort to improve the aesthetic beauty of the city. The building's general layout was based upon a schematic design presented to the invited architects at the time of competition, while the building's elevations and details were the collaboration of Clement A. Didden, his son George A. Didden, and Oscar Vogt, associate architect. The building was completed in 1908 and was one of the first city buildings to be completed as part of the McMillan Commission Plan.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Early Sanitation in Washington, D.C

The Sewerage Pumping Station, completed in 1907 and put into operation in 1908, was conceived and constructed as a vital link in a major rebuilding of and expansion to the city's earlier nineteenth-century sewerage disposal system. The pumping station was designed to receive all of the city's sewage and storm water and to pump it across and down the Anacostia River to the city's outflow sewer at present-day Blue Plains Sewerage Treatment Center. The pumping station was the final culmination of a major improvement to the city's sewerage disposal system that began in 1893.

The District of Columbia's sewerage system, considered one of the oldest in the United States, began around 1810 when the city constructed a series of sewers and culverts to safely drain storm and ground water from the streets.[i] By 1850, most of the streets along Pennsylvania Avenue, from First to Fifteenth streets had springs or well water piped in. By 1859, the Washington Aqueduct was supplying river water throughout the city. The city's first sewerage disposal system essentially consisted of carrying and discharging the sewage into the nearest body of water (Tiber Creek, Rock Creek, the Potomac River and the Anacostia River). This early sewerage system serving the District was a combined system that carried and discharged both sewage and storm water into local waterways. By the mid-nineteenth century, especially following the Civil War-era surge in population, there was a marked increase in water pollution in the nation's capital. A series of recurring epidemics of smallpox, cholera, typhus, typhoid, scarlet fever and malaria took many thousands of lives.

From 1871-1874, as part of a larger effort to implement a city-wide infrastructure improvement program that similarly addressed hygiene issues, the city's Board of Public Works under Governor Boss Shepherd built 120 miles of sewer lines and 30 miles of new water mains. The Tiber Creek sewers were built and the Washington Canal was filled in, thereby eliminating the foul-smelling and pestilent waterway (while transferring the noisome conditions to the marshes along the Potomac and Anacostia rivers). Although an impressive undertaking, much of the work was poorly planned, structurally unsound and hydraulically inadequate.[ii] In addition, the low-lying areas of the city flooded frequently preventing proper surface drainage, further exacerbating unsanitary conditions. Unhealthy conditions and high death rates due to inadequate sanitation and drainage continued to plague the city. An 1880 article addressing the sanitary drainage of Washington City concisely noted the city's need to address the problem, "The waste incident to human life constitutes here as elsewhere a most dangerous element of a problem whose solution is the sanitary engineer's chief task."[iii]

Still, it would be almost another decade before Congress, in 1889 and in the interest of public health, passed an Act authorizing President Harrison to "appoint a board of sanitary engineers to report on the existing sewerage system, and to make recommendations for the extension of the system."[iv] The Board was tasked with recommending "a comprehensive system of sewage and draining which would effectively remove the sewage from the inhabited parts of the District, and dispose of it in an unobjectional manner, both to those in and out of the District, which would prevent the rain water of

[i] The city's drains were not all built at the same time and were not linked together to form a "system" as we know it today. See DC Water website, www.dcwater.com for more information on the history of the city's water and sanitation system.
[ii] See DC Water website.
[iii] "Suggestions for the Sanitary Drainage of Washington City," *The American Architect and Building News*, August 14, 1880, Vol. 8, p. 242.
[iv] Ben Winslow, "Sanitation of the City of Washington II: The Sewage Disposal System," *Scientific American*, Sept. 8, 1906, Vol. XCV, No. 10, p. 173.

heavy storms from causing inconvenience and damage by flooding, and which would make provision for preventing the freshets in the Potomac River from overflowing the low area in the central part of the city."[v]

The following year, in July 1890, after an exhaustive study, the three-member Board consisting of engineers Rudolph Hering, Samuel M. Gray and Frederick P. Stearns, presented plans and recommendations for a revised sewage system. The Board recommended that the city's combined storm water and waste water disposal system be retained, but that it be substantively revised and expanded.[vi] As per the Board's recommendations, the sewage of the entire city would be collected and carried to a single point (the pumping station), and then forced across the Anacostia River by centrifugal pumps to an outfall sewer where it would be discharged into the Potomac River three miles below the city at the present Blue Plains Sewerage Treatment facility.

For the purpose of sewerage disposal, two separate collection systems were devised—one for the "usual level" areas of the city, and one for the "low-area" district of the city. The low-area district was defined as that area essentially south of E Street. In both cases, the system was designed so that the sewage would flow into sewers and then be directed into larger interceptor sewers which would in turn carry the sewage to an enormous trunk sewer. The trunk sewer would deliver the sewage directly to the city's main pumping station at the foot of New Jersey Avenue on the Anacostia River. The purpose of the pumping station was several fold: 1) to take the sewage brought there and to lift it to a sufficient height in order to force it through a siphon that would carry it to the outfall sewer; 2) to pump the storm water into the river; and 3) to insure the elimination of floods in the low-lying sections of the city.

Design and Construction of the Sewerage Disposal System

Following adoption of the proposed sewerage plan for Washington, D.C. in 1890, the Engineering Department in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, began the two-decade-long design and construction process. In the first years after adoption of the system, efforts were focused on building the sewers, interceptors and trunk lines. Between 1893 and 1900 Congressional approvals and appropriations were made for construction of the first four interceptor sewers. In each subsequent year until completion of the system, Congress approved funding for the continued construction of sewers, intercepting sewers, trunk sewers, outfall sewer, pumping station and siphon. Planning for the pumping station began in 1898 when Congress appropriated $25,000 for the preparation of plans for the building, to be constructed at the foot of New Jersey Avenue on the Anacostia River.[vii]

The site for the Sewerage Pumping Station was selected for a variety of reasons. Notably, the site provided a convenient place for the construction of inverted siphons under the river and it offered the shortest river crossing obtainable. At the same time, it was the natural terminus for the trunk sewers, and finally, a public space was available at the site which provided ample room for the pumping plant, settling chamber, conduit connections and the tidal gates outside.[viii]

In 1897 engineer Asa B. Phillips was given charge of the design and construction of the disposal system, including the engineering and machinery of the pumping station.[ix] A 1905 article in the *Washington Times* praised Phillips for his design of the system, worked out "step by step," including the mechanics of the pumping station. Phillips was described as "hitherto a practically unknown employee of the city," yet a man who has "poise, originality and genius for detail which would make him a great leader in war." The article describes the underground system as a "gigantic monster of the shape of an octopus with great round tentacles stretching out everywhere." The pumping station was further elaborated upon as,

[v] "New Sewerage System of Washington," The Engineering Record, Vol. 58, No. 5, August 1, 1908, p. 132.
[vi] The Board also recommended that any new extensions built to serve new areas, be constructed as a separate system, using separate lines to carry storm water and sanitary flows.
[vii] "New Sewage System, Plans for Pumping Station," *The Washington Post*, October 4, 1898. In this article, then Engineer Commissioner, Capt. Lansing H. Beach stated, "The idea is to pump the sewage from the foot of New Jersey Avenue, across and under the Eastern Branch, over the St. Elizabeths Asylum Hill, when the sewage by natural gravity will flow into the river. This will put an end to the terrible condition of the B Street and James Creek canals and the Anacostia River, and will overcome one of the worst menaces to the health of the city. The pumping station itself will probably cost about $600,000, but at the rate Congress has been making appropriations for this sewage work which has been going on since 1892, I am afraid it will be many a day before our plans are carried out."
[viii] "New Sewerage System of Washington," *The Engineering Record*, Vol. 58, No. 5, p. 134.
[ix] "New Sewerage System of Washington," *The Engineering Record*, Vol. 58, No. 5, p. 132.

> "the head of this monster, a vast half-submerged labyrinthal structure…a half-built but even now a most wonderful structure with its great catacombs of screen tidal and sediment chambers, its runs, its reservoirs, and its vast pumping room. It is this immense plant—in capacity of pumping power the greatest in the world—that is to do the work gravity did before and relieve the city of all its sewage and storm water."[x]

In all descriptions, poetic and technical, the pumping station was hailed as "the heart of the system" or the system's "vital organ." The pumping station actually consists of two integral parts: the substructure and the superstructure. The substructure, which covers a 200 x 700-foot plot of land, is the underground plant comprising the infrastructure and equipment for handling the sewage. The superstructure, essentially a shelter for the machinery of the pumping station, is the pumping station building proper that is the subject of this nomination. This building, centrally located atop the larger substructure and measuring generally 130 feet x 310 feet, was designed to house the engine room, the boiler, the shops and offices of the plant.

The Sewerage Pumping Station: Design Competition

City engineer Asa Phillips has been credited as the principal designer of the entire sewerage system, including all of the infrastructure, the pumping station and equipment for handling the city's sewage. The city contracted out the architecture of the sewerage pumping station superstructure to the local architecture firm of C.A. Didden & Son, in association with architect Oscar Vogt, though Asa Philips and David E. McComb, superintendent of Sewers were apparently responsible for the overall layout of the pumping station superstructure[xi]. The selection of C. A. Didden & Son with Oscar Vogt resulted from a design competition sponsored by the City Commissioners in conjunction with the Corps of Engineers in 1900. In July of that year, the Commissioners of the District of Columbia issued a letter to "prominent"[xii] architects inviting them to enter a design competition for the sewerage pumping station's superstructure.[xiii] The Commissioners sent letters to a select group of designers including the architecture firms of Marsh & Peter, Appleton P. Clark, Ferdinand T. Schneider, Sherman & Sonneman, Clement A. Didden & Son, and Waddy B. Wood.[xiv] According to the invitation letter, applicants would be sent "blue prints showing the general arrangement and approximate dimensions" leaving the "structural details, as well as the architectural treatment of the subject, to the architect."[xv] These schematic blueprints have not been found as part of the research for this nomination.

In addition to certain other criteria, the invitation required that submitted drawings include the following: front, rear, and side elevations, outline plans showing interior arrangements, sections, plans and details of coal pockets and details of the chimney.[xvi] Of the invited architects, Ferdinand T. Schneider and Marsh & Peter declined to participate, owing to "a pressure of other business" and "limited time." Based on correspondence, it appears that in addition to C.A. Didden & Son, Sherman and Sonneman, Appleton P. Clark, and Waddy B. Wood all entered the competition.

According to the letter submitted to the architects, the winning applicant would be "awarded the work of drawing the detailed plans and the specifications for the building…details will be worked out by him in connection with the officials of the Sewer Department of the District of Columbia." The letter notes that "a jury consisting of the Engineer Commissioner, the Senior Assistant to the District Commissioner and an architect to be selected by the competing architects will examine

[x] "Washington's Gigantic Sewerage Plant: Most Powerful in the World," *The Washington Times*, April 9, 1905, p. 12.
[xi] The *Washington Times* article, "Washington's Gigantic Sewerage Plant," notes, "Asa E. Phillips, the engineer in charge of the plans and construction of the sewage system, and David E. McComb, superintendent of Sewers, are the men who finally overcame the difficulties. To Asa Phillips, mainly, credit for this original sewage system, and especially its pumping station, is due."
[xii] The term "prominent" was used by the city's Engineer Commissioner.
[xiii] The pumping station building is essentially a shelter for the machinery of the pumping station, and not an enclosure for the entire plant. As described by Roy Meinzer in his 1937 thesis, Asa Phillips first designed the equipment for handling the sewage, while the architects were to design a building to house the boiler, engines, shops and offices. Thus the substructure, measuring 200 x 700 feet went beyond the confines of the superstructure which measured 138 x 300 feet.
[xiv] See the District of Columbia Archives, RG 17, Box 75, Department of Public Works "Pumping Station." Letters of Invitation to submit proposals for the design of the pumping station were sent to the architects listed above and can be found in this record group. Other correspondence to and from the architects and contractors can also be found in this record group.
[xv] A letter dated July 5, 1900 from D.E. McComb, Superintendent of Sewers to Captain D.D. Gaillard of the Army Corps of Engineers notes the following: "I have prepared general plans and sections of the pumping station, and recommend that an architectural competition be invited upon the lines which were adopted in the circular of May 21, 1900 inviting competition in the presentation of plans for the pumping station proposal by the Water Department." District of Columbia Archives, RG 17, Box 8574/11.
[xvi] See "Proposed Letter to Prominent Architects, Inviting Competitive Designs for the Sewage Pumping Station," District of Columbia Archives, Record Group 17, Department of Public Works, Construction, "Pumping Station," Box 8574/10.

the drawings and estimates and make recommendations to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia who will make the award."[xvii]

On November 20, 1900, the Executive Office of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia produced an official order recognizing C. A. Didden and Oscar G. Vogt as the winners of the completion:

> Ordered: That the design for the sewerage pumping station submitted by C.A. Didden and Oscar G. Vogt, associated architects, having been found the most satisfactory for the purpose and object in view, the work of preparation of detail plans and specifications is hereby awarded Messrs. Didden and Vogt; compensation for said plans and specifications, complete, to be three per cent of the estimated cost of so much of the pumping station as is covered by their designs and specifications. Official copy furnished Engineer Superintendant by Order: W. Tindall, Secretary.[xviii]

Neither the winning competition drawings, nor the other competing entries have been located. However, the final architectural plans, elevations, and sections for the pumping station as made by C.A. Didden & Son and Oscar Vogt still survive.[xix] These plans, on file in the District of Columbia Department of Real Estate Services Archives, present the building as it was constructed and as it essentially stands today.

In February 1901, prior to completion of the drawings for the superstructure, Congress appropriated $400,000 (in the first of what would be several such appropriations),[xx] and authorized the city to enter into contracts, as necessary for the machinery and equipment for the sewerage pumping station. In August 1901, the machinery contract had been let to Allis-Chalmers Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Although it would be another fifteen months before construction of the building would begin, its construction was heavily anticipated. At the announcement of the award of the contract to Allis-Chalmers Company, the press noted that the building to hold this massive machinery is "expected to be a model of its kind."[xxi]

In November-December 1902, two years after Didden & Son were hired to design the superstructure, the city opened a bidding process for the construction of the pumping station. An advertisement soliciting proposals for the building's construction appeared in newspapers in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, PA, Baltimore, MD and New York. The advertisement announced that sealed proposals would be received "for constructing the substructure and foundations…and also constructing the superstructure, including stack, coal tower, conveyor bridge, etc., complete, of the Sewerage Pumping Station, Washington, D.C."[xxii] Ultimately, eight different companies were hired to build the substructure, chief among them, the Ambrose B. Stannard Company of New York. The substructure included the foundation, the seawall, the piers upon which rests the building, the coffer dams, the cast iron suction and discharge mains, and the sediment basin. The superstructure, consisting of the building housing the equipment and the supporting members for the engines, was constructed by the Ambrose B. Stannard Company, and the American Bridge Co. The equipment, including the engines, pumps, boilers, screens, sluice gates, elevator, crane, coal handling mechanisms, recording and metering apparatus, etc., was installed by nine companies.[xxiii]

According to his contract, Stannard was to complete the superstructure as designed and specified by C.A. Didden & Son and Oscar Vogt within two years by December 31, 1904. In actuality, it took Stannard five years to complete construction of the building. In May 1903, work was well under way, according to an article in the *Washington Times* that reported on its progress, "The substructure of the new station has been brought up to the level of the ground surface, and material for

[xvii] The letter notes that "plans not accepted will be returned." Unfortunately, none of the competition drawings were included in the correspondence papers in RG 17.
[xviii] See "Sewage Pumping Station Plans, Order awarding plans to C.A. Didden and Oscar G. Vogt," D.C. Archives, Record Group 17, Box 8574/22.
[xix] The actual drawings are located in the District of Columbia Department of Transportation Archives in the basement of the Reeves Center at 14th and U Streets, N.W. Digital images
[xx] As budgeted, the pumping station was not to exceed $750,000; as completed, the building and its machinery would cost a total of $1,575,000. See, "District Appropriation Bill Reported to Senate, A Large Increase for Sewers," *The Washington Post*, February 2, 1901, p. 4; "New Pumping Station," *The Washington Times*, May 17, 1903.
[xxi] See "New Sewage Pumping Plant," *The Washington Post*, August 4, 1901.
[xxii] See the language for the advertisement as presented by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia in District of Columbia Archives, RG 17, Box 8574/58, November 6, 1902.
[xxiii] See, "The History and Construction of the Main Sewerage Pumping Station at the Foot of New Jersey Avenue, Washington, D.C." Thesis prepared by Roy Crawford Meinzer, The University of Maryland, 1937.

the superstructure is being placed in shape. It will completely cover a site 130 x 310 feet. The base is granite, while the superstructure will be out of Ohio sandstone, terra cotta, and mottled brick, with a slate roof and copper ornamentation." The article also included an artistic rendering of the building, describing it as being in the "French Neo-Grec style."[xxiv]

In November 1904, as the original proposed end-date approached, contractor Ambrose B. Stannard was granted an extension to June 1905. This construction delay was not considered consequential, however, since the building would not be put into operation until the still-incomplete sewerage disposal system was finished. The June 1905 completion date also came and went with little notice in the local press until finally in March 1907, a photograph of the building appeared in the *Washington Times*, with an accompanying article noting its completion. The construction delays seem not to have altered the public's perception of the building and the system, described at this particular time as, "As perfect as Money and Brains Can Make It." At that time, the sewage disposal system, nearly ready to be put in operation, was hailed as "one of the largest, most complete and modern plants of its kind in this country and is equipped with every known mechanism and devise for the prompt and practical disposal of the sewage of the city." [xxv]

The 1907 Annual Report of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia (June 30, 1907) pronounced the building "practically completed, with the exception of the dikes proposed along the low portions." The report summarized the purpose of the almost completed building,

> "Practically all sewage which formerly discharged into the James Creek Canal and which formed a serious menace to the health of the city has been diverted into the intercepting sewers and is carried to the pumping station at the foot of Second Street southeast, where it is pumped and discharged at the outlet of the system, at Magazine Point, near Alexandria, on the Potomac River. All sewage which formerly discharged into the old Seventeenth Street Canal has also been similarly diverted. Connections are now being made to divert all sewage, which formerly was discharged on the water front of the city to the pumping station, where it will be pumped and discharged at the sewer outlet above referred to. The amount of water in the river at the point of discharge is believed to be sufficient to dilute the sewage, so as to make it inoffensive, and the outgoing tides will carry it down the river."[xxvi]

Several articles in engineering trade magazines were devoted to detailed descriptions of the city's new sewerage system and its equipment. One of these articles, published in August 1908 in *Engineering Record*, focused exclusively on the pumping station building and its equipment. The article includes a detailed description of the building, its parts and function. The highly ornamented, Classically derived Beaux Arts building was divided into three parts consisting of a front and end pavilion with a central wing connecting the two. The front pavilion, rising three stories in height, was dedicated to offices and shops, while the rear pavilion housed the boiler and accommodated elevated coal storage bunkers. The central wing enclosed the engine room, including massive pumps originally designed with an aggregate capacity to pump 360 cubic feet of sewage per second.

While it could have been strictly utilitarian in appearance, the design of the Sewerage Pumping Station was exceptional. The grand Beaux Arts building was a product of the City Beautiful Movement and one of the first municipal government buildings to be constructed following adoption of the 1901 McMillan Commission Plan.

The City Beautiful Movement, the McMillan Plan, and the Design of the Sewerage Pumping Station

The design of the Sewerage Pumping Station is a direct reflection of the ideals of the City Beautiful Movement. The City Beautiful Movement, which grew out of the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, was the visual expression of

[xxiv] "New Pumping Station," *The Washington Times*, May 17, 1903.
[xxv] "Five Million Dollar Plant for Pumping City's Sewage Will Soon Be in Operation," *The Washington Times,* March 31, 1907.
[xxvi] *Annual Report of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia Year Ended June 30, 1907*, vol. 1, Report of Commissioners Miscellaneous Reports, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907. In addition to discussing the benefits of the new sewerage pumping station, the report raises the issue of sewage purification, an issue that the local press and trade publications had been, from a present-day perspective, notably silent about. The report states, "The practical completion of the sewage-disposal project makes it wise to consider the subject of sewage purification, when the population of the District shall be increased beyond the capacity of the Potomac River to dilute the sewage so that its discharge into the river in a crude condition will not be admissible. The sewage-disposal system has been based upon the discharge of sewage from a population of 500,000 persons. After that limit is reached it will be necessary to partly purify the sewage before it is discharged, in order to prevent the creation of insanitary river conditions. The subject of sewage purification is still in an experimental stage." The Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant opened in 1938.

an urban reform movement which sought to improve cities both physically and morally through civic enhancement, sanitation, and beautification projects. The movement flowered nationwide during the first decades of the twentieth century, but in no place was it more prominent than the nation's capital. Due to the publication and progressive implementation of the Senate Park Commission Plan of 1901-1902 (the McMillan Plan), the capital city became an urban model of the City Beautiful Movement. The McMillan Plan is best known for its re-design of the National Mall, along the lines intended by L'Enfant, and for its re-establishment of the Classical Revival style on a monumental scale. However, the Plan was not limited to the federal government and its monumental core, but extended beyond the original city to the whole of the District of Columbia.[xxvii]

In its broadest context, the McMillan Commission Plan of 1901-1902 was a comprehensive plan comprising a set of written and visual proposals for Washington's future aesthetic development. The Plan's formal beginnings date to March 1901 when Senator James McMillan directed his Senate Committee on the District of Columbia to report to the Senate a plan for the improvement of the entire park system of the District of Columbia. The subcommittee was to coordinate projects proposed or already underway in the District of Columbia with newly proposed buildings to serve a variety of public functions. McMillan wanted these buildings to be part of a coherent, comprehensive plan that would take into account the city's growth for at least half a century. To that end, the District Committee established the Senate Park Commission, or the McMillan Commission, naming two nationally prominent architects Daniel Burnham and Charles Follen McKim, national noted landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and later, sculptor Augustus Saint Gaudens as members of the Commission, with Charles Moore, McMillan's Secretary, acting as their guide.

James McMillan's efforts at developing a comprehensive plan for the District of Columbia pre-date the formal establishment of the commission. Since 1890, McMillan had chaired the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia which initiated numerous improvements to the city. Under McMillan's direction, the water supply and the filtration system had been improved and a comprehensive sewer system begun, the Permanent Plan of Highways for a street system beyond the L'Enfant Plan had been developed, and the city's transportation system consolidated and reorganized. In January 1901, McMillan sent a report summarizing these accomplishments as well as future projects that would make Washington a "beautiful city." In this report, McMillan highlighted, among other items, the purchase and establishment of parks and parkland, the reclamation of the Anacostia Flats, the extension of a street system beyond the L'Enfant Plan, the elimination of railroad tracks on the National Mall, the construction of a new railway terminal, the completion of an increased water supply, the installation of a filtration plant, and, "the proposed speedy completion of the sewer system according to a carefully matured plan."[xxviii]

The Sewerage Pumping Station represents the culmination of this "carefully matured plan" for the city's sewage disposal. Designed in 1901-1903 and constructed 1903-1908, the Sewerage Pumping Station, upon its completion, became one of the first city buildings to be implemented as part of the McMillan Plan and with funds appropriated from Congress. The Beaux Arts design of the building though not the white marble of the city's new federal buildings reflected the Classical Revival-style aesthetic promoted by the Plan. Its design was the result of a design competition—a process favored by the Plan to encourage quality design—and its construction was overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Sewerage Pumping Station is, along with the Bryant Street water pumping station, and the Connecticut Avenue Bridge over Rock Creek (the Taft Bridge), recognized as the first of the city's major public works projects to be completed as part of the "Plan to Beautify the City" with direct appropriations from Congress.[xxix] From its site on the Anacostia River and visible to all across the river, the sewerage pumping station was meant to embody all that was new and beautiful about the city.

Clement A. Didden, Didden & Son, Architects, and Oscar Vogt, Associate Architect

[xxvii] See Frederick Gutheim and Antoinette Lee, *Worthy of a Nation, Washington, D.C. from L'Enfant to the National Capital Planning Commission*, Second Edition, Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, MD, 2006, p. 141-143.
[xxviii] Pamela Scott, Capital Engineers: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Development of Washington, D.C.: 1790-2004, Office of History Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Alexandria, VA, 2005, p. 131-134.
[xxix] Daniel Garges, Secretary to the Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia, "Commercialism Will Not Retard a City Beautiful," *The Washington Post*, July 29, 1906, p. 9-9. In this editorial, Garges acknowledges the vital role the federal government played in funding the city's public buildings. In addition to discussing the acquisition of parks in and around the city as part of the "plans to beautify city", Garges highlights the sewerage and water pumping stations and the bridge over Rock Creek.

Clement A. Didden (1837-1923) was born in Brakel, Westphalia and he was trained at the Holzminder School of Architecture near Minden, Germany. He was the sixth generation of his family to become an architect. His father, Franz Anton Didden, was a master carpenter and architect. Didden left Germany in 1862 for England and went on to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa where he practiced architecture until 1865 when he returned to Minden. In 1866, Didden moved to New York and secured a position with firm of Fernbach, Hunt and Post (lead by prominent architects Henry Fernbach, Richard Morris Hunt and George Brown Post) where he worked for about four years.

Around 1870-71, Didden moved to Philadelphia and worked for the firm of Fraser, Furness, and Hewitt. John Fraser, the firm's D.C. representative and an architect responsible for a number of buildings in Washington, left the firm in 1872. Following Fraser's departure, Furness and Hewitt sent Didden to Washington to serve as its local representative. As the representative of Furness and Hewitt, Didden served as a connection between the architectural communities of Washington, DC, and Philadelphia. Although he never received the same level of national recognition as those he worked for, such as Richard Morris Hunt and Frank Furness, Didden was heavily influenced by their designs. Didden remained the D.C. representative of Furness and Hewitt until 1876 when he formed a brief one-year partnership with Peter J. Lauritzen. Afterwards, Didden established his own practice, which later included his son, George, and was then called C. A. Didden & Son. Didden practiced architecture until his retirement in 1921.

Didden is best known for the many row houses he designed throughout the city. His earliest buildings, row houses at 1207-1219 Q Street, NW, and 1609-1615 13th Street, NW, are characterized by their patterned red brick, symmetrical fenestration and minimal ornamentation. By the late 1880s, however, Didden's row houses became more ornate with molded brick cornices and string courses, although they retained the elements of order and symmetry, as well as Classical features and details. His buildings often feature arched openings and steep roofs articulated by pedimented dormers.

Didden received a number of projects from his friends in the German community. In particular, Didden designed the National Capital Brewing Company and a country estate for his friend, brewer and fellow German immigrant, Albert Carry. Afterwards, Carry retained Didden to design a number of buildings, including apartments on Capitol Hill. Didden is also credited as architect for the German Orphan Asylum on Good Hope Road, SE, built in 1890, but since demolished.

Didden is perhaps best remembered for the no longer extant Portner Flats, which he designed for brewer and real estate investor Robert Portner between 1897 and 1902. At the time of its construction, it was the largest apartment house in Washington. Although it had been initially nicknamed "Portner's Folly" because its location on 15th Street between U and V Streets was far removed from downtown, the first section of luxury apartments constructed on the corner of 15th and U Streets in 1897 proved a success. Construction soon began on the northern wing, followed by the Romanesque-style middle section in 1901. The building featured a range of projecting bays and the main entrance, which was two stories taller than the flanking wings, was emphasized with an arched balcony. In *Capital Losses*, James Goode notes that the Portner Flats were the last large-scale Victorian building erected in Washington.

Clement Didden's son, George Didden, was born in D.C. in 1874 and was educated at George Washington University (1897-1901). In 1899, he was working as a draftsman and in May 1901, he received a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the Corcoran Scientific School at the George Washington University. That same year, city directories list George A. Didden architect. D.C. building permits indicate that C.A. Didden & Son was working as a firm by 1902, designing a variety of building types including row houses, stores, apartment buildings, warehouses, stables and industrial buildings including a boiler house and a blacksmith shop. At the time of the competition for the Sewerage Pumping Station in 1900, however, George Didden was still a student in the architecture school at George Washington University. At that time, Joseph Hornblower, a noted local architect and principal in the firm of Hornblower and Marshall, was professor and dean of the university and may well have encouraged or even influenced the younger Didden in his competition submission with his father. Clement A. Didden had previously, in 1899, competed in a design competition for the design of Armstrong Manual Training School, but lost out to local architect Waddy B. Wood. In 1902, while working on the pumping station, Didden & Son entered a competition for a municipal hospital, but was not awarded the project.

Oscar Vogt first appears in city directories as an architect in Washington in 1894. However, the D.C. building permits do not record him as an architect unitl 1902. During the 1900s and the 1910s, Vogt appears to have been actively engaged designing a range of buildings from a saloon and inspector's quarters at a slaughter house to dwellings, warehouses and stores. His 1906 design for the Hotel Warwick (never built) was illustrated in the *Washington Post*, showing a grand French Empire-style building with a rusticated base and tall Mansard roofs. By 1920, Oscar Vogt and George A. Didden had become partners, together designing modest-scaled stores and dwellings.

The D.C. Sewerage Pumping Station was by far the most consequential building designed and constructed during the careers of all three architects, either independently or in partnership. Clement A. Didden was the most seasoned and accomplished of the three architects, and thus likely the lead designer of the building. Although the building's Beaux Arts form and features diverge from Didden's predominantly Victorian predecessor buildings, many of the ornamental details on the pumping station's exterior recall ornamentation in some of Didden's earlier work, particularly in the manipulation of Classical elements.

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"New Sewage System," *The Washington Post*, October 4, 1898, p. 10.

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"The Pumping Station Conduits and Outfall Sewer of the Washington Sewerage System," *The Engineering Record*, August 29, 1908, vol. 58, p. 237

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"Suggestions for the Sanitary Drainage of Washington City," *The American Architect and Building News*, August 14, 1880, Vol. 8, p. 242.

"Washington's Gigantic Sewerage Plant," *The Washington Times*, Sunday, April 9, 1905, p. 12.

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Main Sewerage Pumping Station — Name of Property
Washington, D.C. — County and State

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:

__X__State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	326171 E	4304876 N	3			
2				4			

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

The Sewerage Pumping Station, located at 125 O Street SE, occupies Lot 800 in city Square 771 W.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Sewerage Pumping Station has occupied this site since it was constructed in 1903-1908. The building sits upon the lot of land that was carved out of the site for the building's construction.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kim Williams, National Register Coordinator
organization D.C. Historic Preservation Office date April 2012
street & number 1000 4th Street, SW telephone 202 442-8840
city or town Washington, D.C. state zip code 20024
e-mail Kim.williams@dc.gov

Main Sewerage Pumping Station | Washington, D.C.
Name of Property | County and State

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: Sewerage Pumping Station
City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.
County: State:
Photographer: Kim Williams
Date Photographed: March 2012
Description of Photograph(s) and number:

North Elevation looking southeast
1 of 18

East Elevation looking northwest
2 of 18

East Elevation looking northwest (detail)
3 of 18

West Elevation looking north
4 of 18

North Elevation looking south
5 of 18

Detail of Entry Door in North End Pavilion
6 of 18

Detail of Dormer in North End Pavilion
7 of 18

East Elevation of North End Pavilion
8 of 18

West Elevation of North End Pavilion
9 of 18

Main Sewerage Pumping Station | Washington, D.C.
Name of Property | County and State

South Elevation looking North
10 of 18

West Elevation looking North
11 of 18

East Elevation of South End Pavilion looking West
12 of 18

East Elevation of South End Pavilion, detail of Gable End
13 of 18

Interior, Engine Pump Room, view looking south
14 of 18
Interior, Engine Pump Room, South End Wall
15 of 18

Plaque on South End Wall in Engine Pump Room
16 of 18

Interior, View of Entry Stair
17 of 18

Interior, View of Mezzanine level in Reception are looking towards Pump Room
18 of 18

Property Owner:

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

name District of Columbia Government (DC Water)

street & number 5000 Overlook Avenue, S.W. telephone 202 787-2000

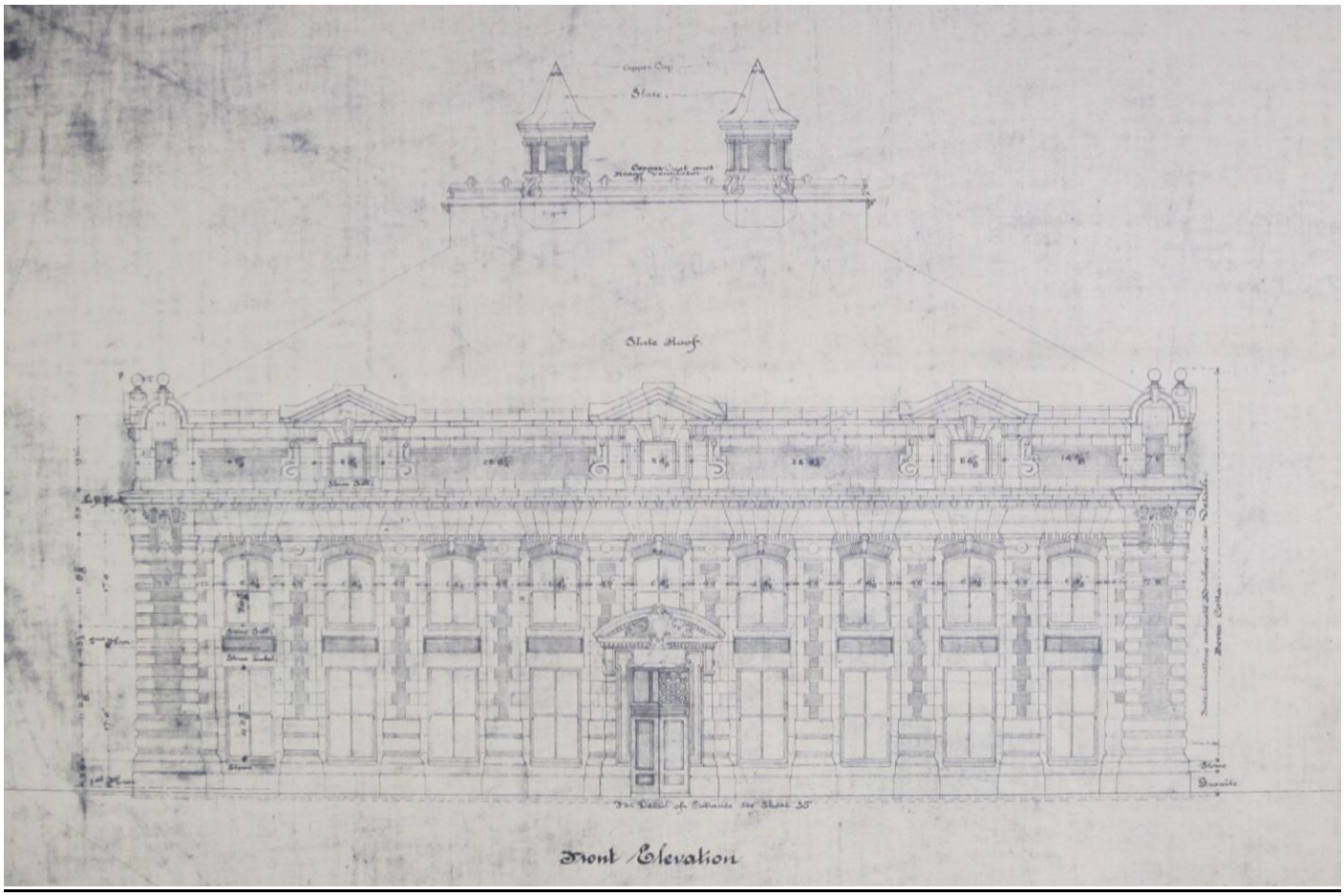
city or town Washington, DC state zip code 20032

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
Name of Property
Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page 1



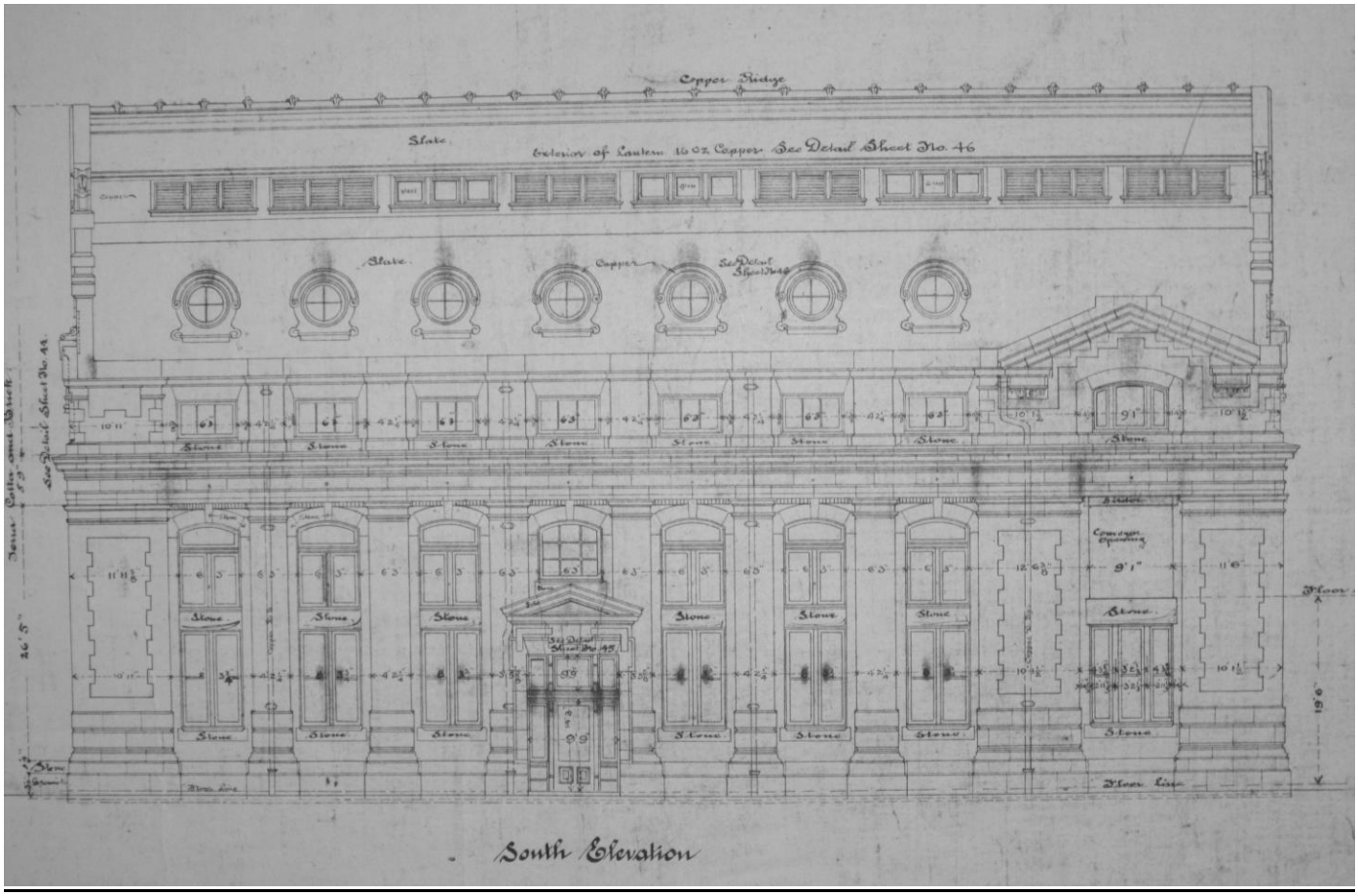
North Elevation Sewerage Pumping Station
C.A. Didden & Son, Architects and Oscar Vogt, Associate Architect, ca. 1902
Department of General Services, Archives (Reeves Center, B-2)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
Name of Property
Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page 2



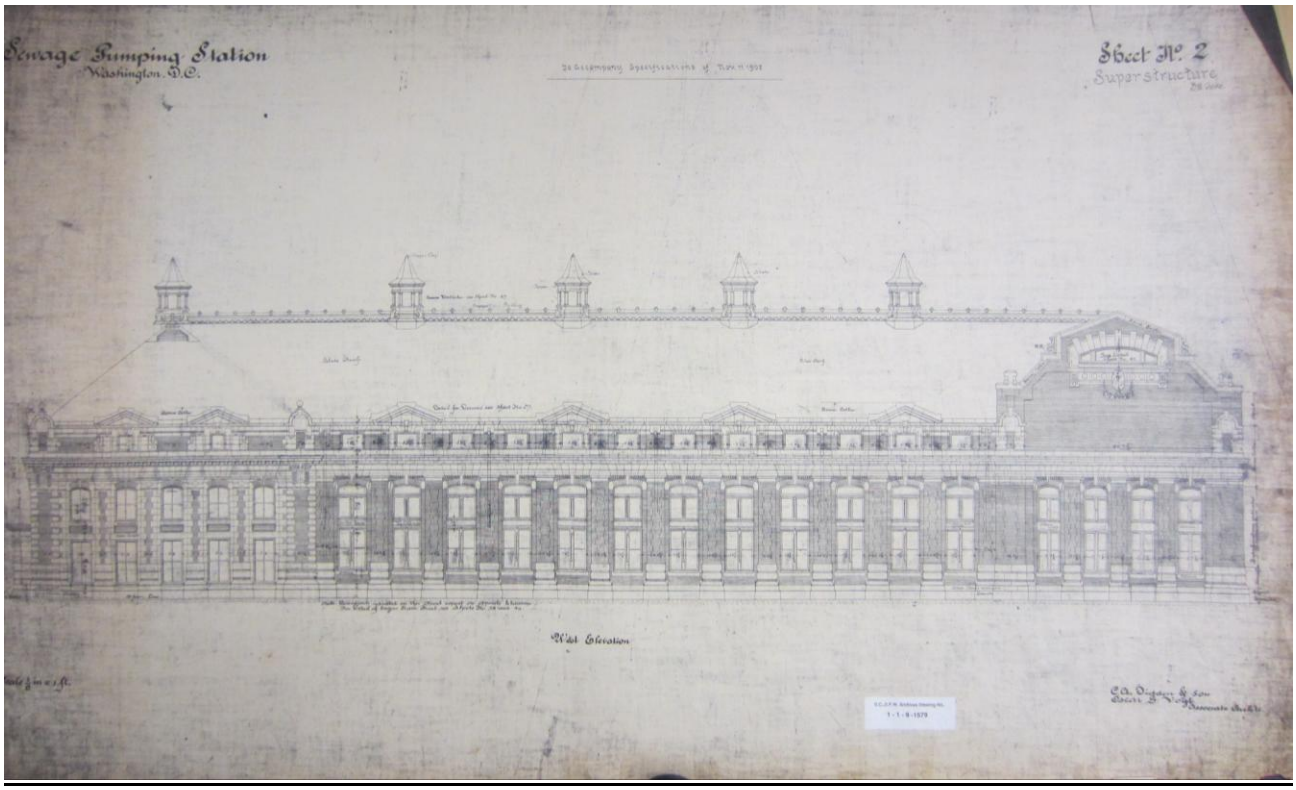
South Elevation, Sewerage Pumping Station
C.A. Didden & Son, Architects and Oscar Vogt, Associate Architect, ca. 1902
Department of General Services, Archives (Reeves Center, B-2)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
Name of Property
Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page 3



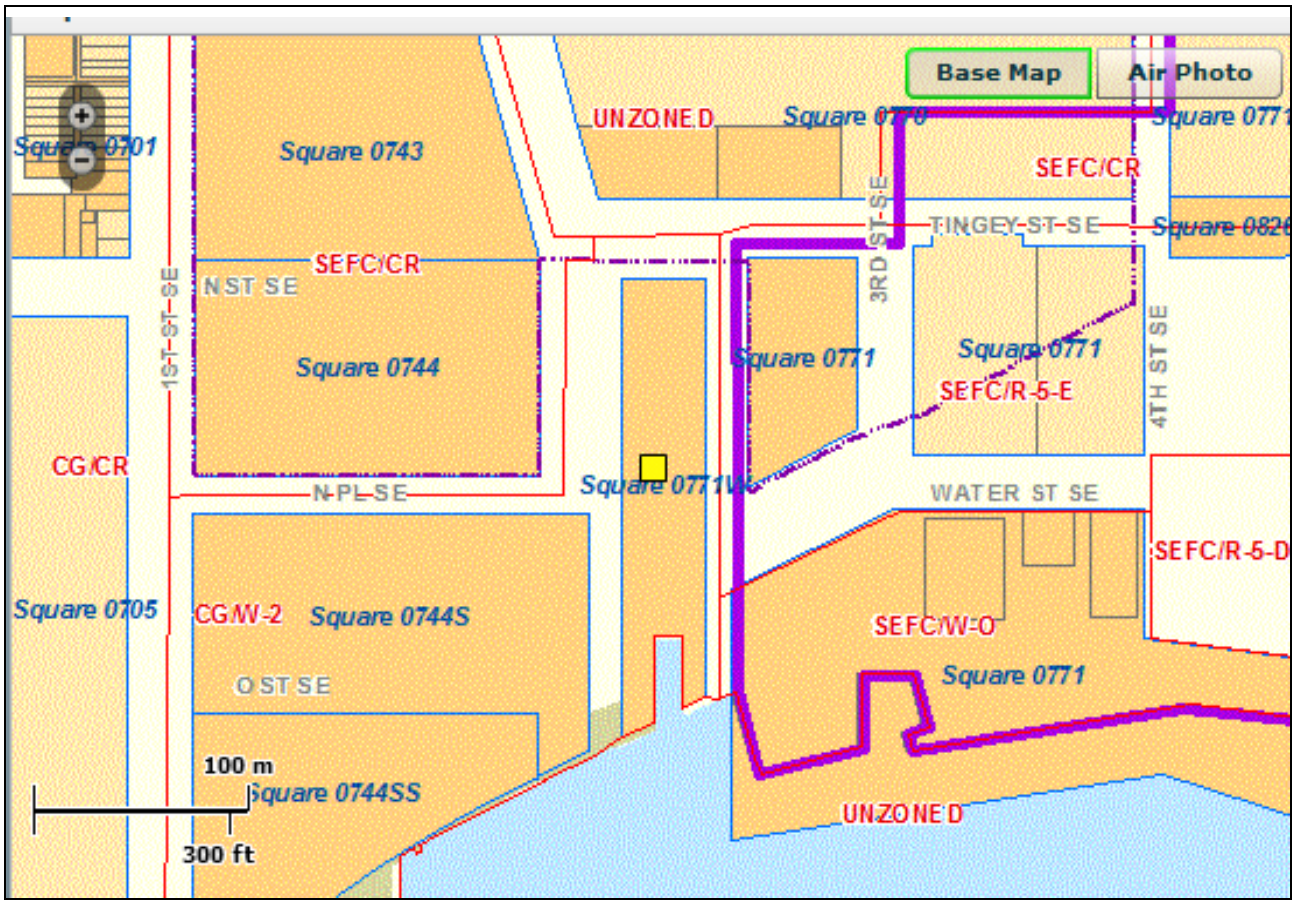
West Elevation, Sewerage Pumping Station
C.A. Didden & Son, Architects and Oscar Vogt, Associate Architect, ca. 1902
Department of General Services, Archives (Reeves Center, B-2)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
Name of Property
Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number ____ Page 4



Site Map of Sewerage Pumping Station, Square 0771W
District of Columbia Office of Planning
Property Quest Map, 2010

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
Name of Property
Washington, D.C.
County and State
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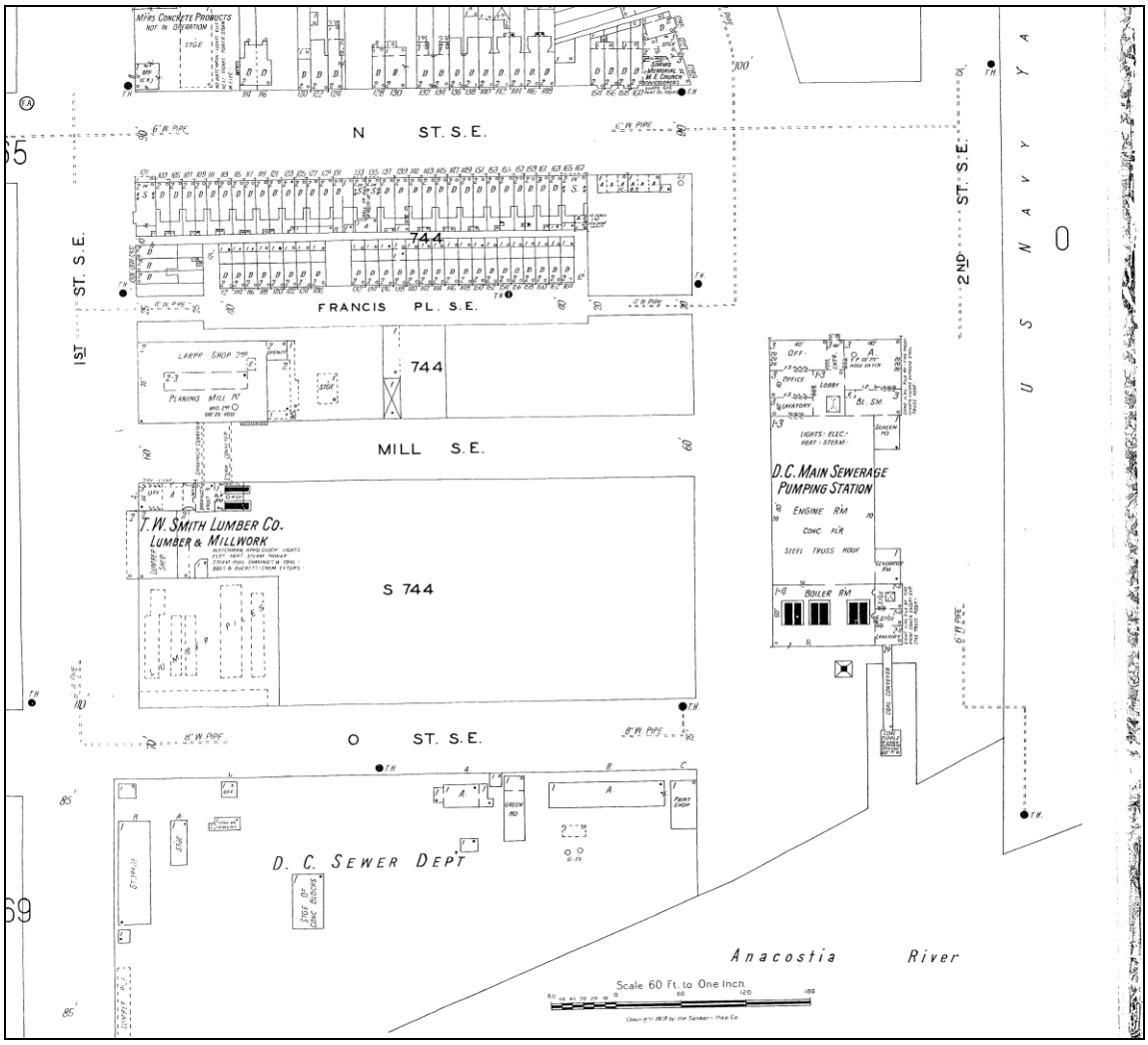
Section number ____ Page 5



Map Showing Sewerage Pumping Station
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1927

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
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Washington, D.C.
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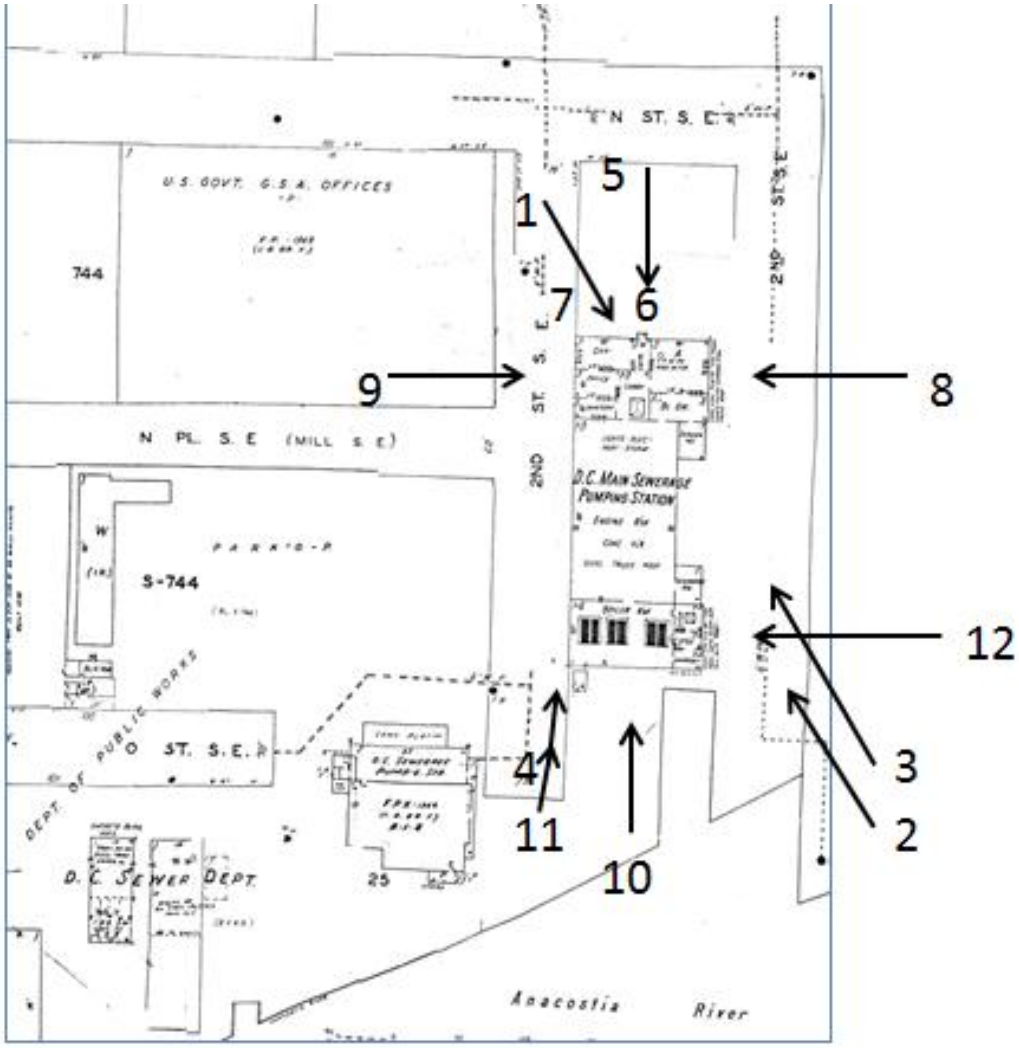
Section number ____ Page 6



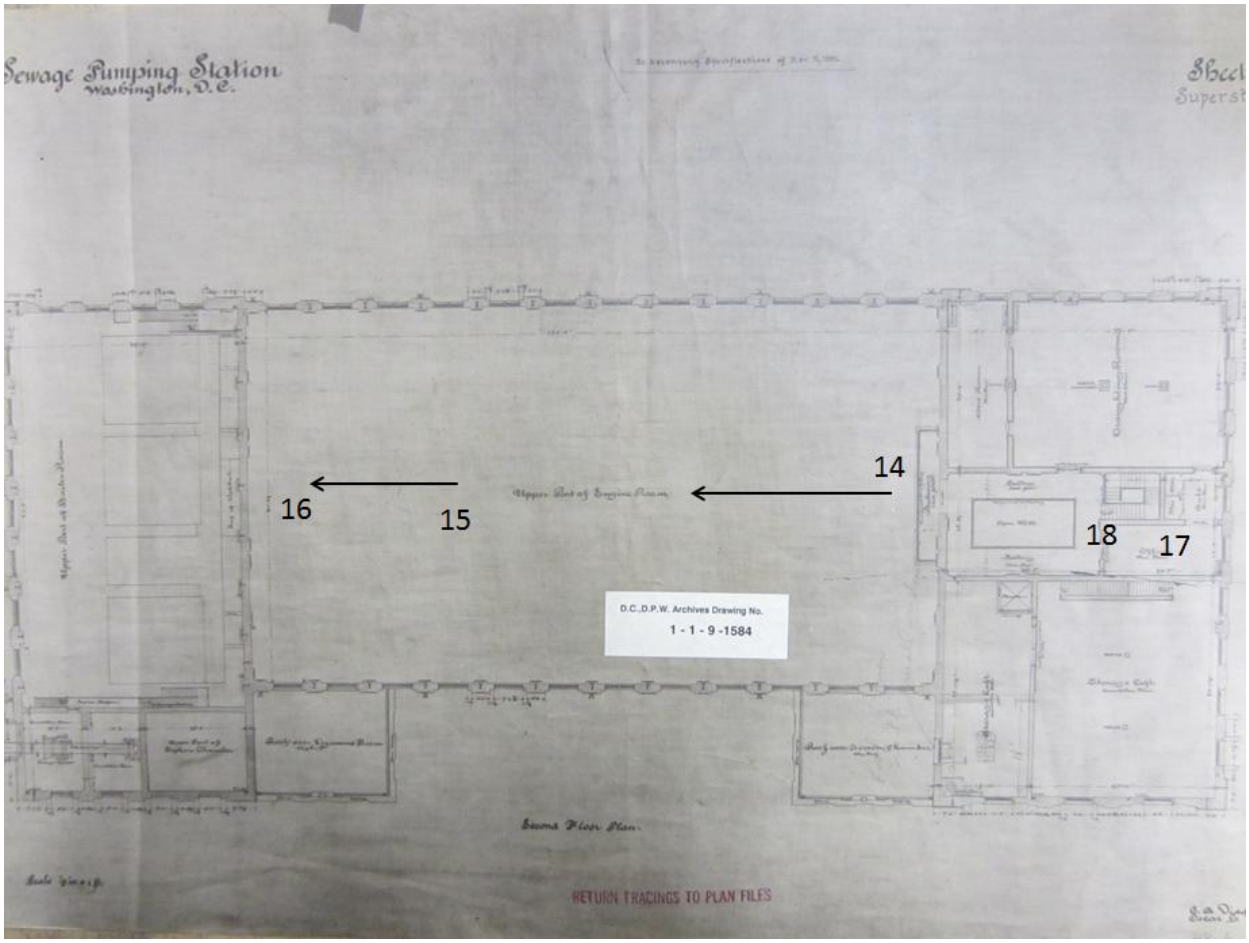
Key to Photographs 1-12
Photo 13—Detail

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Main Sewerage Pumping Station
Name of Property
Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page 7



Key to Photographs 14-18