



# Public Meeting

to discuss the

## Girard Historic District

### National Register of Historic Places Nomination

Thursday, April 28, 2022 at 6:00 pm

At the Girard Borough Building Social Hall, 34 Main Street West, Girard

#### Overview of the Girard Historic District

Derek King, Director of Operations, Preservation Studios

Karen Kennedy, Director of Architectural History, Preservation Studios

#### Question & Answer Session

# *Project Team*

## **PRESERVATION STUDIOS**

**NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION | HISTORIC TAX CREDIT APPLICATIONS |**

**HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEYS | MUNICIPAL SERVICES**

Founded in 2002 by Tom Yots as “Preservation Studio,” Jason Yots joined his father in 2008 forming “Preservation Studios.” Mike Puma and Derek King joined as partners in 2013. Consultation with Preservation Studios and Girard Borough about a National Register historic district on Main Street began in 2020. Beginning in early 2021, Preservation Studios undertook a survey of all potentially eligible properties, researched the origins and history of Girard Borough, and wrote a National Register nomination.

# *Girard Borough – A Brief History*

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- Initially called “The Settlement on the Hill,” Girard Borough was first settled in 1814 and was mainly agricultural with just a few scattered farms.
- The only remaining farmhouse in the district from that era is the Wells-Hutchinson House (1825) at 172 East Main Street.





# *Girard Borough – A Brief History*

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- Girard Township was formed by petition in 1832 from land given by Elk Creek, Fairview, and Springfield Townships.
- Early settlements in the Township were the Hollow (West Girard), Mouth of Elk Creek, and Settlement on the Hill.
- Girard Township was named for Stephen Girard, the great Philadelphia philanthropist who owned large tracts of land in Erie County.



# *Girard Borough – A Brief History*

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- Girard Borough developed as a result of an important transportation route that cut through the area: the Erie Extension Canal which was completed in 1842.
- The canal encouraged the development of Girard to provide services for tourists and trade.
- Settlement increased rapidly and the Borough was officially incorporated in 1846.

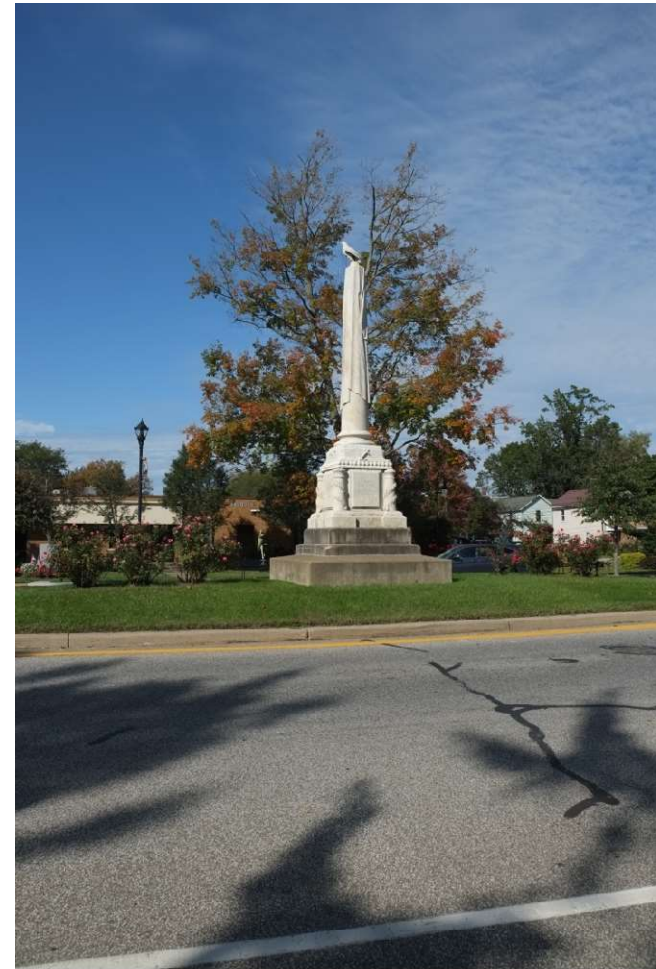


# *Girard Borough*

## *- A Brief History*

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- Dan Rice, the nationally famous circus owner, arrived in Girard by canal in 1853 and established his winter headquarters in town.
- As creator of the touring American circus, his arrival and residence attracted other circus acts to Girard and overtime it became known as a “show town.”
- Rice put Girard on the map by erecting the first Civil War monument in the center of town on November 1, 1865.

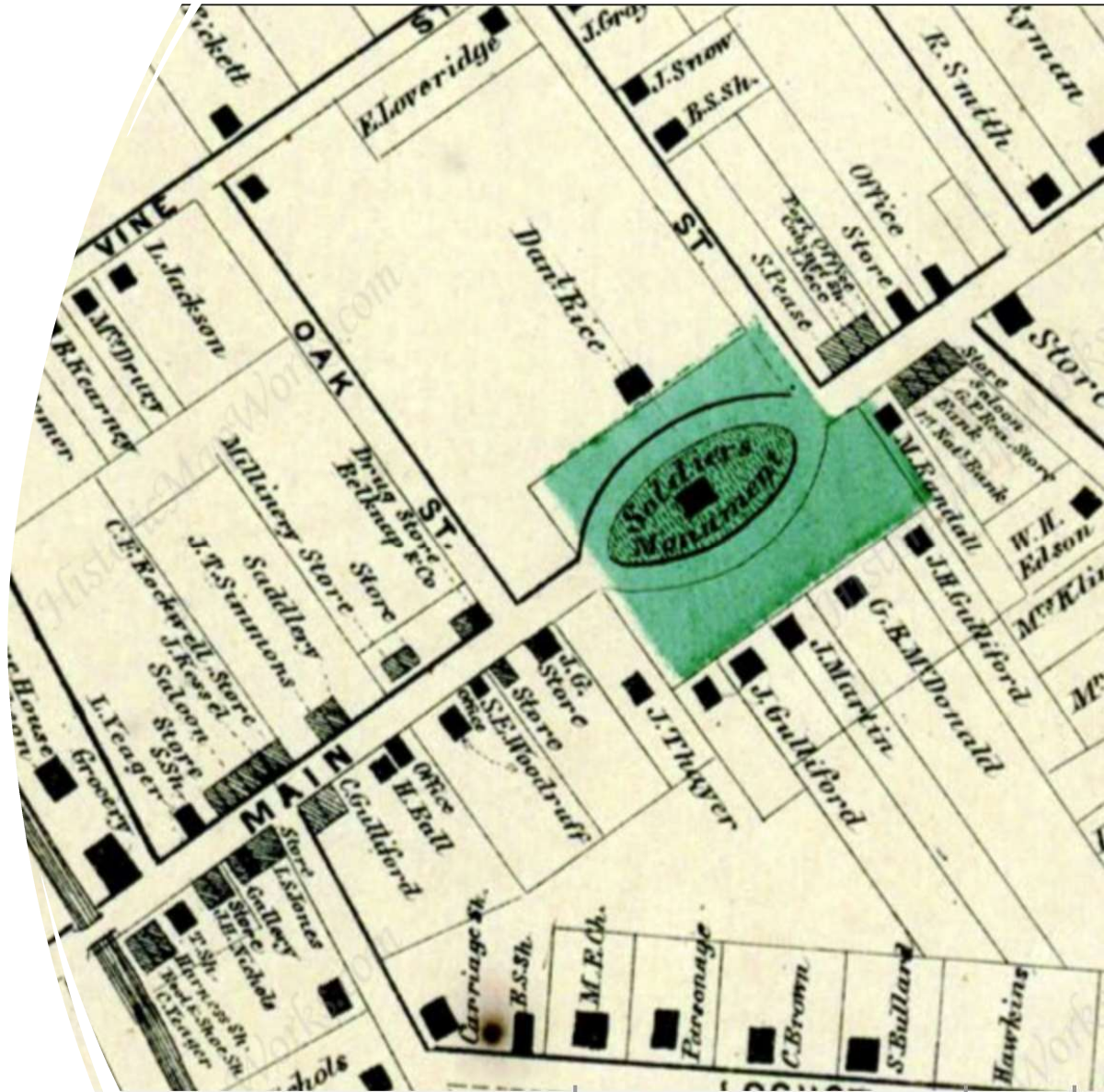




# *Girard Borough – A Brief History*

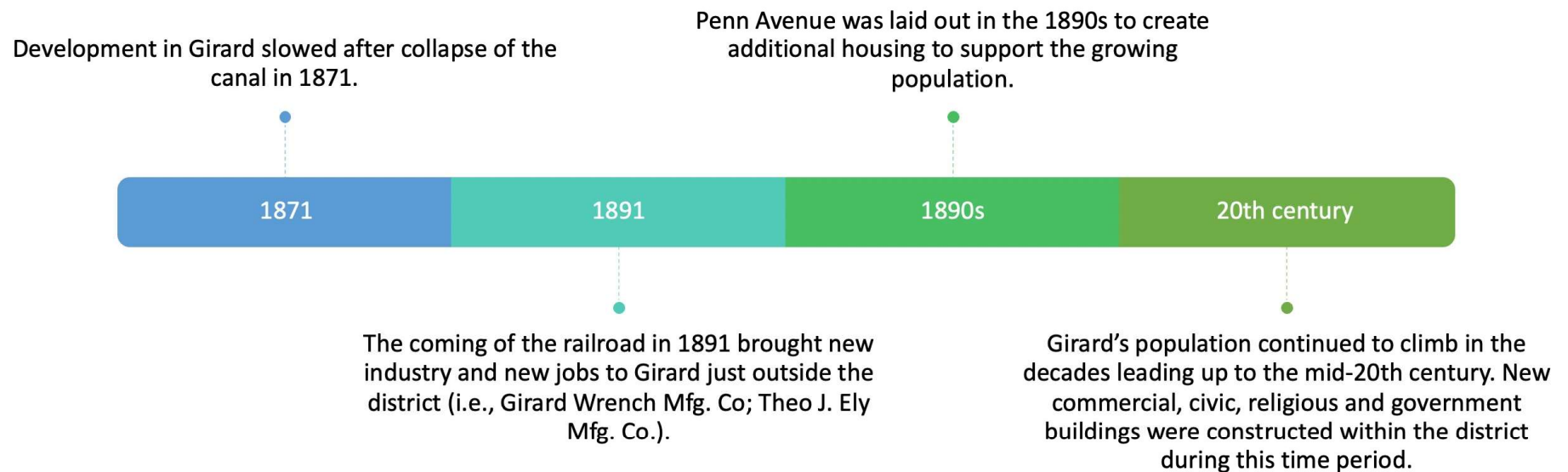
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Between 1855 and 1865, stable residential blocks fanned out on both sides of Main Street, providing a population base to support a growing commercial district.

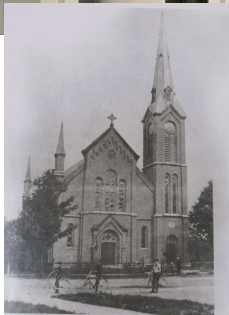
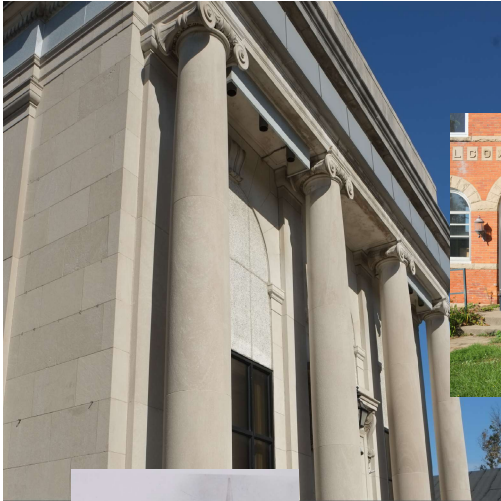


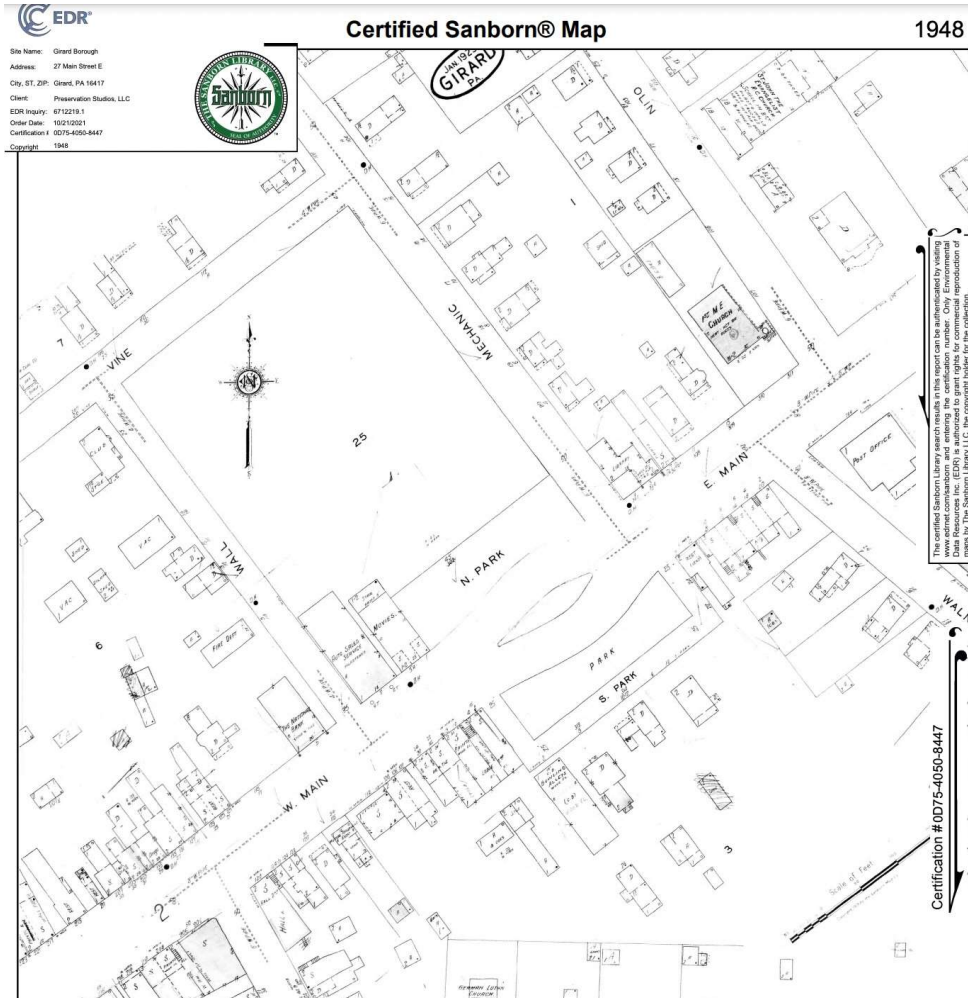
## Girard Borough – A Brief History

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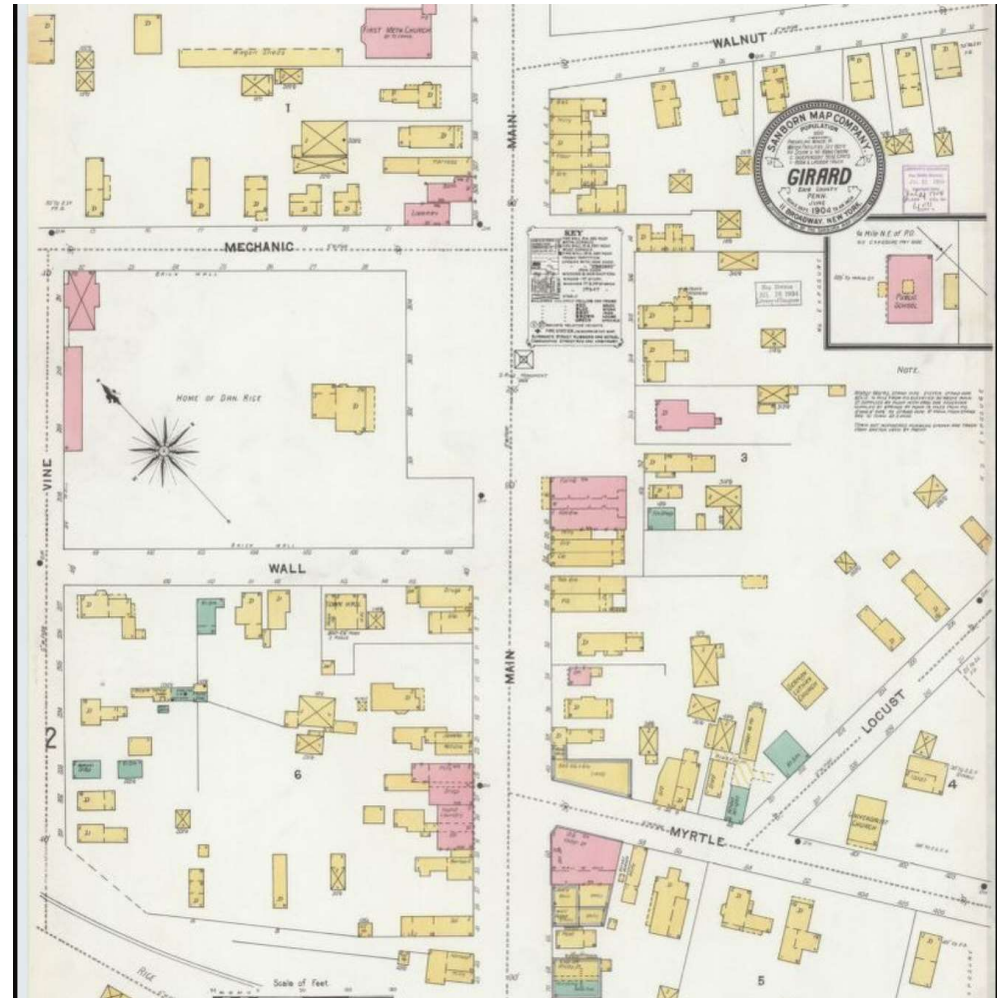








1948 Sanborn Map of Girard Borough



1904 Sanborn Map of Girard Borough



*Historic and modern-day photos of the north  
side of Main Street, looking east*

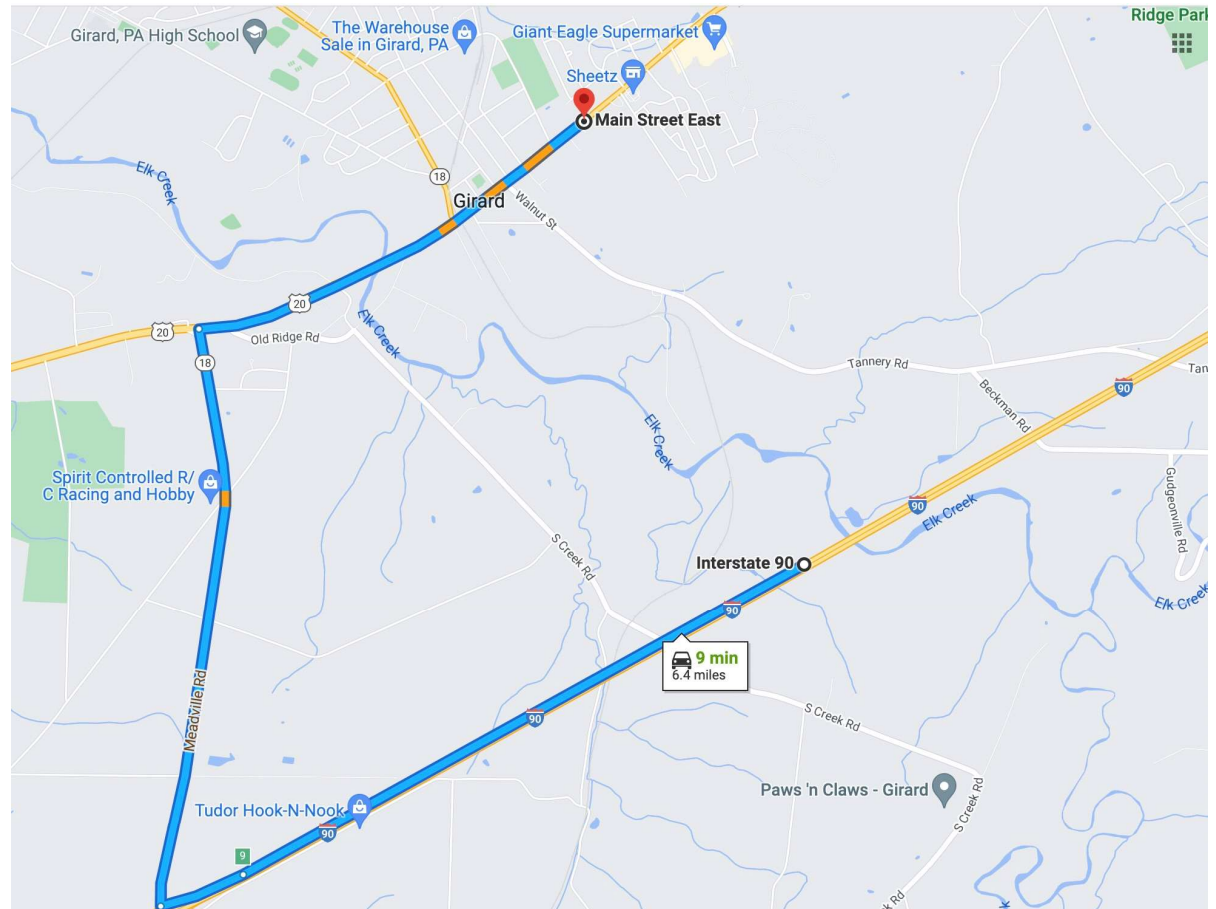




# *Girard Borough – A Brief History*

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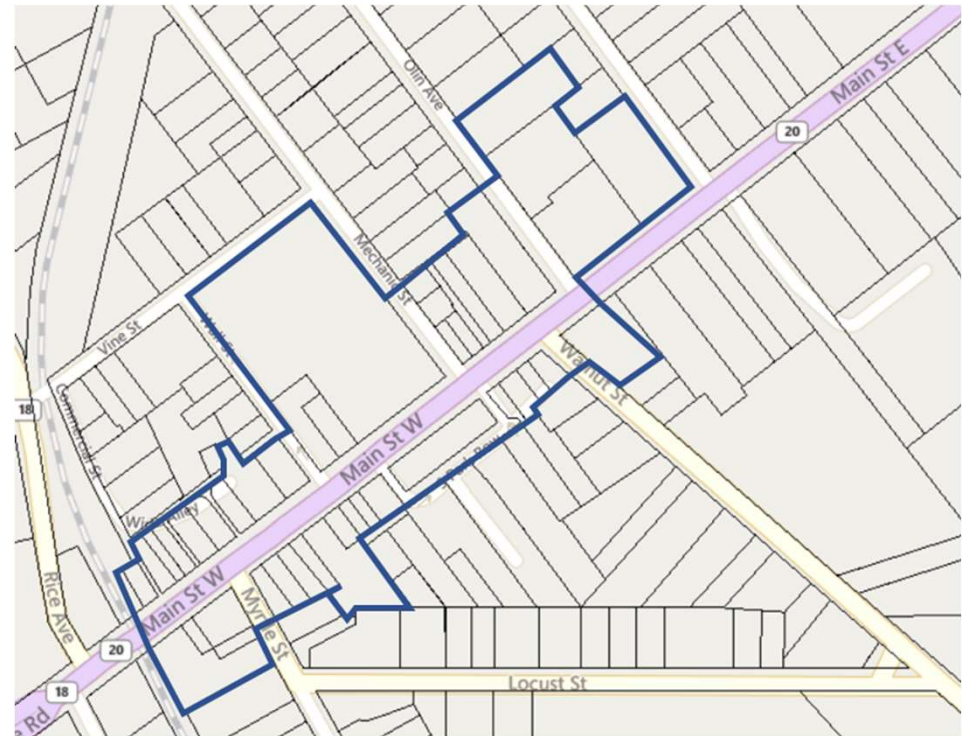
- Construction of the I-90 ended further development, allowing travelers to bypass Girard's commercial district.



## *Where is the proposed Historic District and why is it important*

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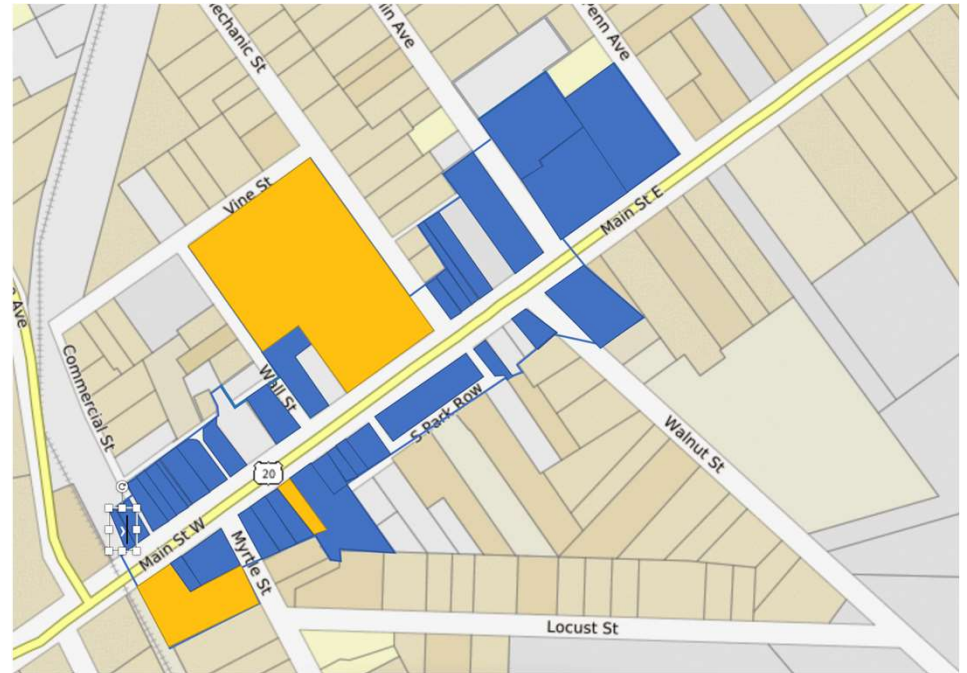
- The District is sited in downtown Girard along Main Street's commercial corridor.
- The district comprises the majority of Main Street between Penn Avenue and the railroad tracks.
- It includes most major historic commercial, civic, and religious buildings constructed during the height of Girard's development, between 1825 to 1955.



## *Where is the proposed Historic District and why is it important*

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- The District is significant in the areas of commerce and community development. The nomination charters the growth and expansion of Girard during its height of economic success between 1825-1955.
- The District is also significant in the area of architecture. It is an intact commercial corridor that retains a historic streetscape and buildings constructed in popular architectural styles from the 19th to mid-20th century.
- The blue area indicates the “contributing” properties while the yellow area indicates “non-contributing” properties.





## *Examples of Architectural Styles in the District*



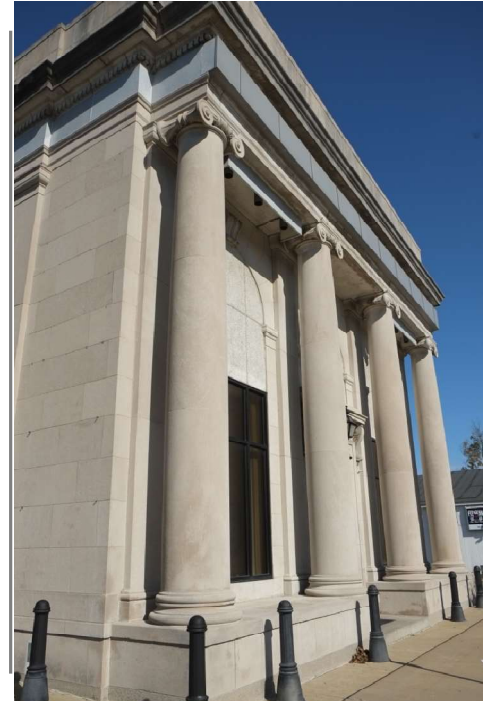
Greek Revival style with  
Italianate updates



Italianate style



Romanesque Revival style



Neoclassical style

## Examples of Contributing Properties



- Based on the survey, **32 buildings** are contributors and date from the period of significance (POS) (1825-1855)
- **6 buildings** were determined not to be contributors.

### *Why Not Contributing?*

- Loss of integrity
- Constructed after the period of significance
- Loss of integrity can be due to alterations to original materials and windows, and/or additions.

## Examples of Non-Contributing Properties



Loss of integrity



Constructed after POS