

ADDENDUM TO:

**ALLEN PARK VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL, BUILDING NO. 11
(Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital, Administration/Laundry)
Southfield Expressway & Outer Drive
Allen Park
Wayne County
Michigan**

HABS No. MI-427-F

HABS

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68102**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ALLEN PARK VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL BUILDING 11 (Laundry/Administration Building)

HABS No. MI-427-F

- Location:** Southfield Expressway and Outer Drive
Allen Park, Wayne County, Michigan
- Present Owner:** U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20420
- Present Use:** Vacant.
- Significance:** Building 11 was constructed in 1949 to replace the much smaller Building 13 as the hospital's laundry facility. The building was planned with large open rooms for the washing machines and for sorting the laundry. Smaller rooms provided areas for sewing and folding laundry. On-site laundry service was discontinued at Allen Park in the 1970s or 1980s, when a loading dock was added to ship the laundry off-site. The building was largely converted to office space for hospital administration staff.

While Building 11 was constructed with a red brick façade, it does not exhibit the Georgian Revival details common to many of the other buildings at Allen Park. The stripped-down appearance and flat roof are more in keeping with its later date of construction and its function as an industrial building.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- A. Date of Erection:** 1949.
- B. Architect:** Anonymous Veterans Administration Construction Division staff architect.
- C. Original and Subsequent Owners, Occupants, Uses:** The building is part of a Veterans Hospital complex constructed for and owned by the United States Government from 1939 to the present. Building 11 originally served as the laundry facilities and a portion of the building was later converted into administration space.
- D. Original Plans and Construction:** The original drawings (showing all four elevations, wall sections, and first floor and second floor plans) are dated February 16, 1948. The Veterans Administrations' Director of Construction, Chief of the Construction Division, and Chief of the Design Division signed the drawings.
- E. Alterations and Additions:** The building has had a new loading dock constructed on the south façade. The interior room configuration was changed during the conversion of a portion of the building into administration space. At the same time as the interior alterations, the windows were replaced and the openings altered.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

- 1. Architectural Character:** Building 11 is a two-story institutional structure. It has been altered repeatedly over time, through the conversion of a portion of the interior into administration space, and replacement of all the original windows.
- 2. Condition of Fabric:** The building is in good condition and appears to be structurally sound.

B. Description of Exterior:

- 1. Overall Dimensions:** The overall dimensions of the building measure 186'-3" x 62'-0". The rectangular plan building is two stories in height. The structure is ten bays long and five bays wide.
- 2. Foundations:** The foundation is made of poured concrete.

3. **Walls:** The walls are constructed of common bond red brick, with brick quoins at most of the corners, and a concrete cap around the entire building at its roofline. Sections of the exterior facades feature a tall, plain concrete trim at their base.
4. **Structural System, Framing:** The building is a brick masonry structure.
5. **Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Bulkheads:** A 2½-story high red brick bulkhead addition forms the main entrance.
6. **Chimneys:** There are no chimneys present.
7. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and Doors:** There are three entrances to the building. The first is located in the south wall of the bulkhead, and is the main entry. The second is located in the north wall of the original portion of the building, where it joins the west addition. The third entryway is located approximately two-thirds of the way across the structure's east wall. The first entryway features a pair of doors; the other two entries each have a single door. The doors at the main entrance are glass with metal frames. The doors in the other two entrances are metal with a narrow, vertical, rectangular single-pane window. There are also three large loading dock entrances, one in the center of the south wall of the west addition; two located opposite each other in the east and west walls of the loading dock addition. All contain large, metal overhead doors.
 - b. **Windows and Shutters:** No windows original to the building survive. All have been replaced with fixed, aluminum-frame thermopane windows of a smaller size. Poorly matched brick infill on all sides and in all stories of the structure show the original window locations and dimensions.
8. **Roof:**
 - a. **Shape, Covering:** The building has a flat roof.
 - b. **Cornice, Eaves:** There is no cornice or eave decoration.
 - c. **Dormers, Cupolas, Towers:** There are no dormers, cupolas, or towers present.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

- a. **First Floor:** The building has three different sections on the first floor. The first section is a central core with offices off of the circular hallway. To the east is the second section, which is an open-plan office space. The final section is to the east of the second section and contains the laundry facilities. The building is entered through a lobby on the western end of the south façade of the building. The entry vestibule contains the stairway and elevator up to the second floor. The central core contains restrooms and mechanical equipment. Off of the hallway in the first section are seven offices, a conference room, and two additional mechanical rooms.

The second section of the first floor contains two open plan offices, which are accessed from a hallway which wraps around the central core. The space to the south has a smaller office in the southwestern corner of the room. The northern office has three smaller offices. One is in the northwestern corner with an office adjoining it, and the third office is in the southwestern corner of the space. This section of the building has no exterior access.

The third section of the building contains the laundry facilities. This area is separated from the rest of the building and has its own entries. The main entry is through the loading dock on the eastern end of the south façade of the building. The loading dock is a trapezoidal addition which projects out from the original building. The second entry is on the east façade of the building. This section of the building is an open plan with two storage spaces, two mechanical rooms, and restroom facilities located along the northeast wall. The original exterior wall separates the laundry area from the loading dock.

None of the room partitions are original to the building, which was initially built on an open plan. The current floor plan dates to the 1970s renovation of the building.

- b. **Second Floor:** The second floor is located above the first section of the first floor. This level has a central core which contains an office space. Along the western wall are four office spaces. A conference room and the second floor lobby are along the southern wall. A small office is located in the southeastern corner of the second floor. None of the room partitions are original to the building. The floor plan dates to the 1970s renovation of the building.

2. **Stairways:** The closed-string stair has one landing where the staircase doubles back on itself on its way to the second floor. The handrails are varnished wood. The steps are covered with white vinyl tiles and have non-slip tape at the edge of each tread.
3. **Flooring:** The flooring in the hallways, lobbies, mechanical rooms, restrooms, and laundry section is 12" white vinyl tile. The floor in the first floor lobby has 12" orange vinyl tile laid around the border of the room, 24" in from the walls. The floors of the office and conference spaces are covered with tan industrial carpeting.
4. **Wall and Ceiling Finish:** The walls are of drywall which has been painted white. Throughout the building there are coved vinyl baseboards. The drop ceiling has acoustic tiles within a suspended metal frame. The ceiling in the first floor lobby has a barrel vault leading from the entrance to the hallway. The vault is lined with 3" aluminum strips which run the length of the vault.
5. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and Doors:** The entry doors are steel fire doors set in metal frames with small windows in the upper portion. The doors between the first and second floor lobbies and the rest of the structure are steel fire doors set in metal frames. The loading dock doors are steel roll-up doors in steel frames.
 - b. **Windows:** The interior window frames are of metal. There are no sills or decorative interior window trim.
6. **Decorative Features and Trim:** On the second level, wood cabinets and drawers have been built beneath the windows on the northwest wall. The cabinets are utilitarian with no decorative elements and have been painted white.
7. **Mechanical Equipment:**
 - a. **Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation:** The original heating and ventilation system has been replaced with a centralized forced air system. The duct work for the new system is located above the drop ceilings. Multiple vents are located in each room.
 - b. **Lighting:** No original light fixtures remain in the building. Fluorescent lighting fixtures have been installed within the drop ceiling. Fluorescent tubes are suspended from the top of the first floor lobby barrel vault and run the length of the vault.
 - c. **Plumbing:** The restrooms have standard porcelain toilets and sinks.

D. Site:

- 1. General Setting and Orientation:** The Boiler House is located in the east-central section of the complex, just to the west of Building 12, the Garage. It faces south towards Building 13, which houses the Engineering Shops. Employee Parking Area "E" is located immediately to its northwest.
- 2. Historic Landscape Design:** None.
- 3. Outbuildings:** None.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This complex was recorded by URS Corporation, Gaithersburg, Maryland, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, from January to March of 2002. Architectural Historians Amy Barnes, Anne Brockett, and Caleb Christopher completed the fieldwork for this project in January 2002. The photographer was Andrew Baugnet and the Historian was E. Madeleine Scheerer. The project was reviewed by Fred Holycross and Mark R. Edwards.

As stipulated in the deed in which Henry and Clara Ford donated the land on which the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital is located, when the property ceases to be used as a veterans hospital, the land is to revert in ownership to the Ford family heirs. Since inpatient and outpatient veteran medical service is now provided at the John D. Dingell Veterans Administration Hospital in Detroit, which opened in 1996, and the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital ceased all operations in 2002, the land is to be turned over to the Ford Motor Land Development Corporation (FMLDC) in compliance with the original deed. A Congressional appropriation of \$14 million, to be disbursed to the FMLDC over a seven-year period beginning in 2002, was designated for the demolition of the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital complex.

PART IV. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Collections:

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Architectural Drawings Collection. Allen Park Medical Center. John D. Dingell Medical Center Collection. Detroit, Michigan.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Architectural Drawings Collection. Allen Park Medical Center. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Collection. Washington, D.C.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Information and Media Section Collection. Allen Park Medical Center. John D. Dingell Medical Center Audio Visual Collection. Detroit, Michigan.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Office of Facilities Management Collection. Allen Park Medical Center. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Collection. Washington, D.C.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Photograph Collection. Allen Park Medical Center. John D. Dingell Medical Center Audio Visual Collection. Detroit, Michigan.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Photograph Collection. Allen Park Medical Center. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Collection. Washington, D.C.

B. References:

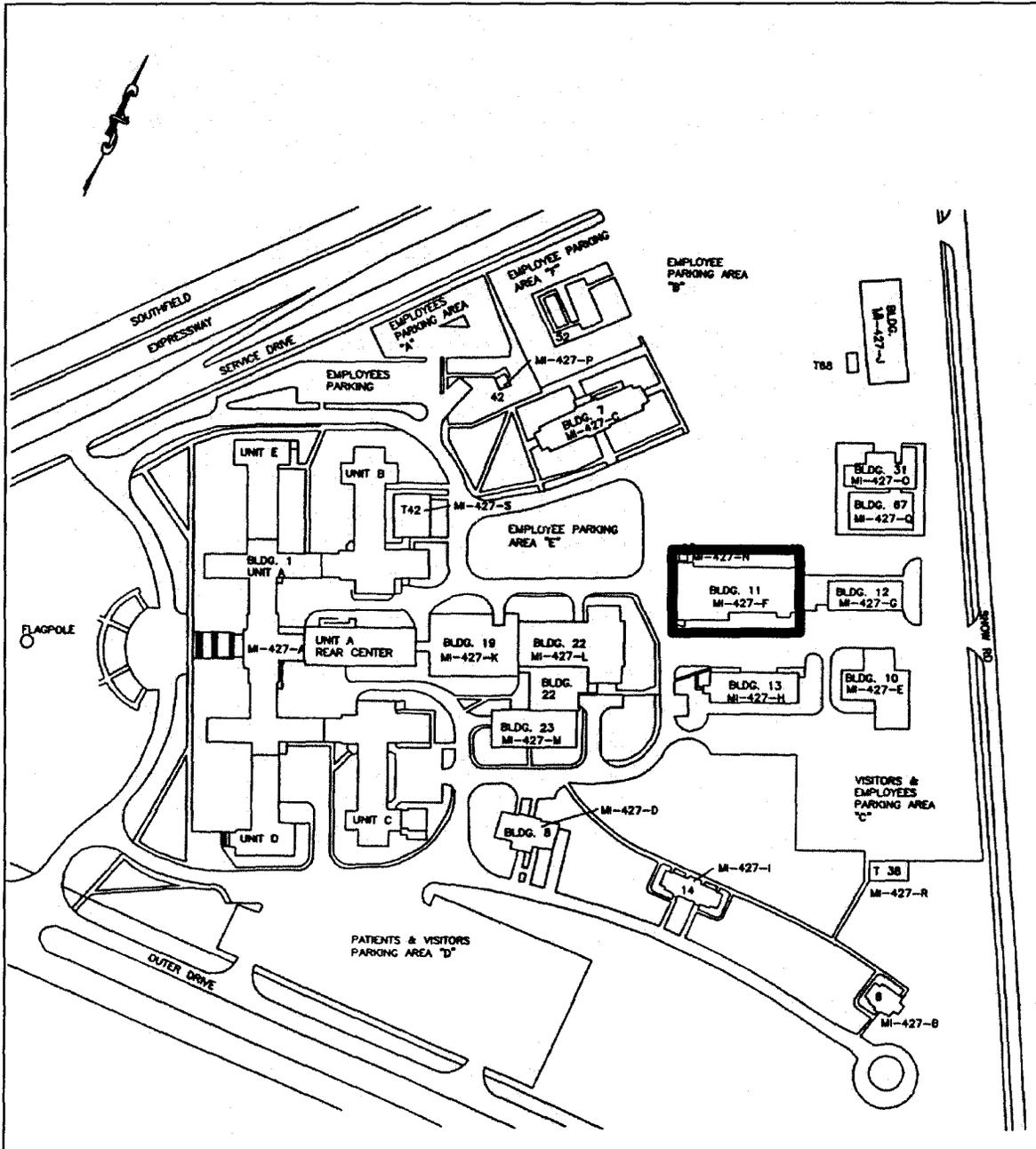
Ching, Francis D. K. *Building Construction Illustrated*, 2nd ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1997.

Hoke, John Ray, Jr. *Architectural Graphic Standards*, 9th ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994.

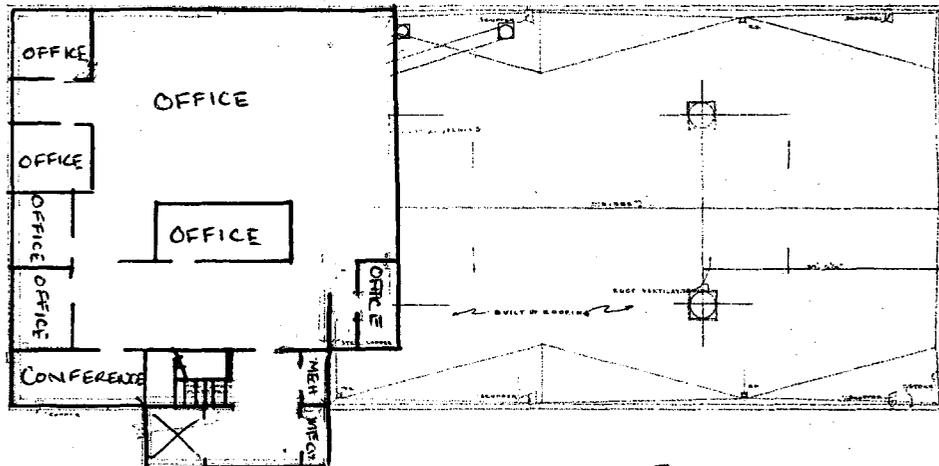
McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991.

Mollenhoff, Gjore J. and Karen R. Tupek. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form for Allen Park Veterans Administration Medical Center," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1980.

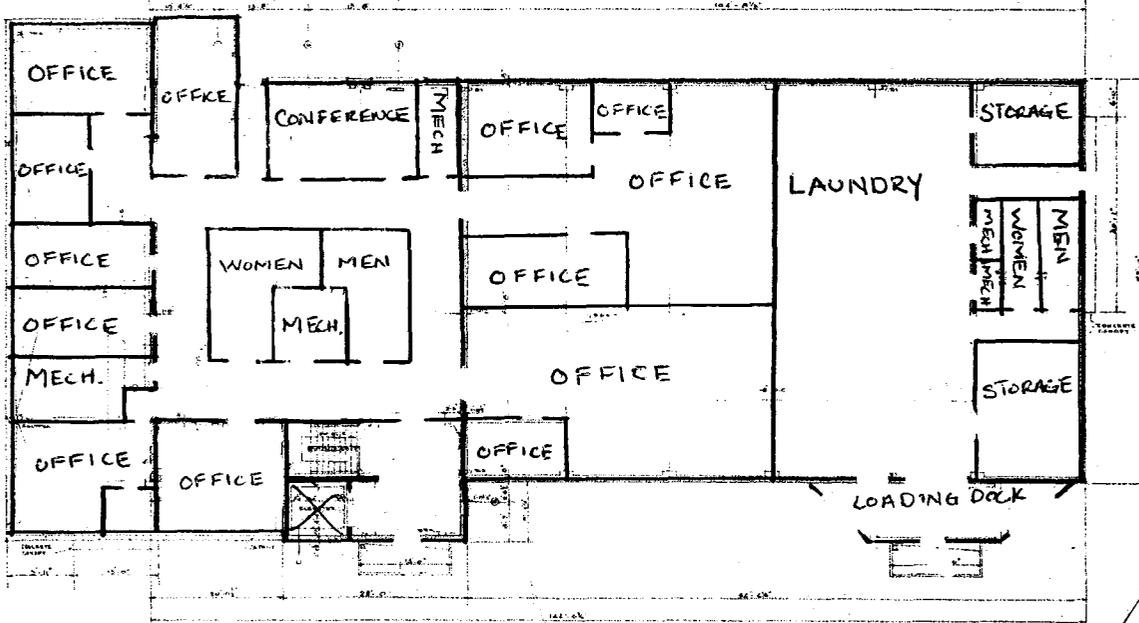
Site Plan



Reduced Copy of Current Plan, February 2002



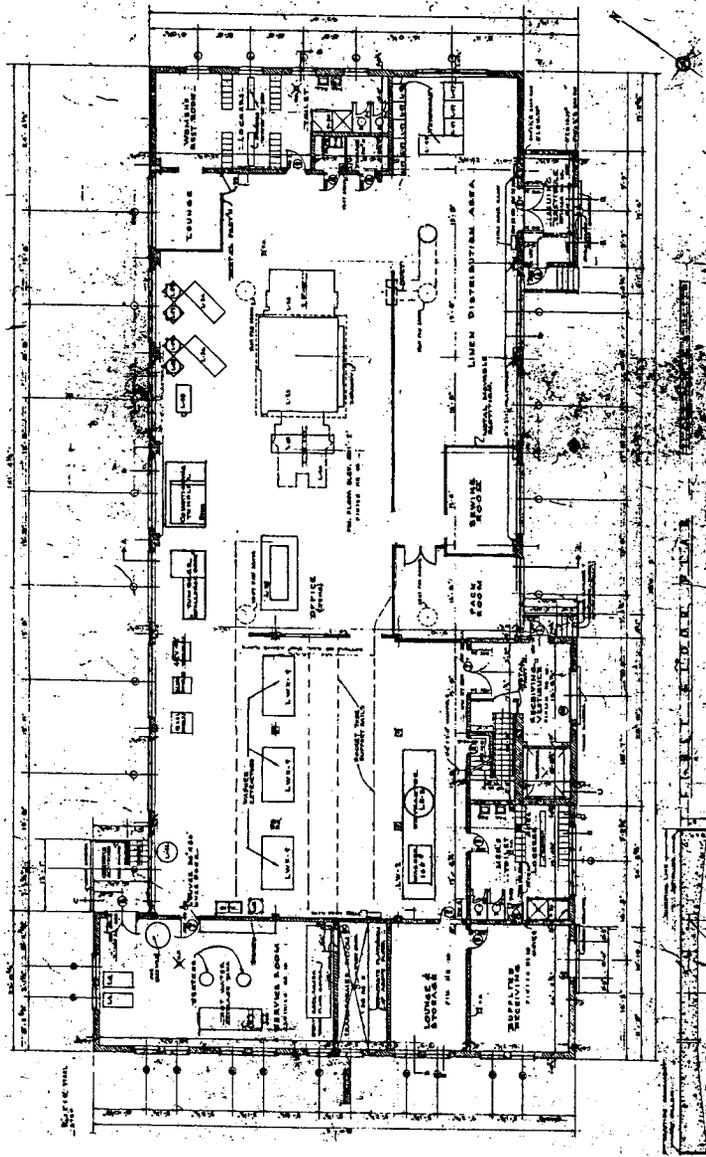
SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

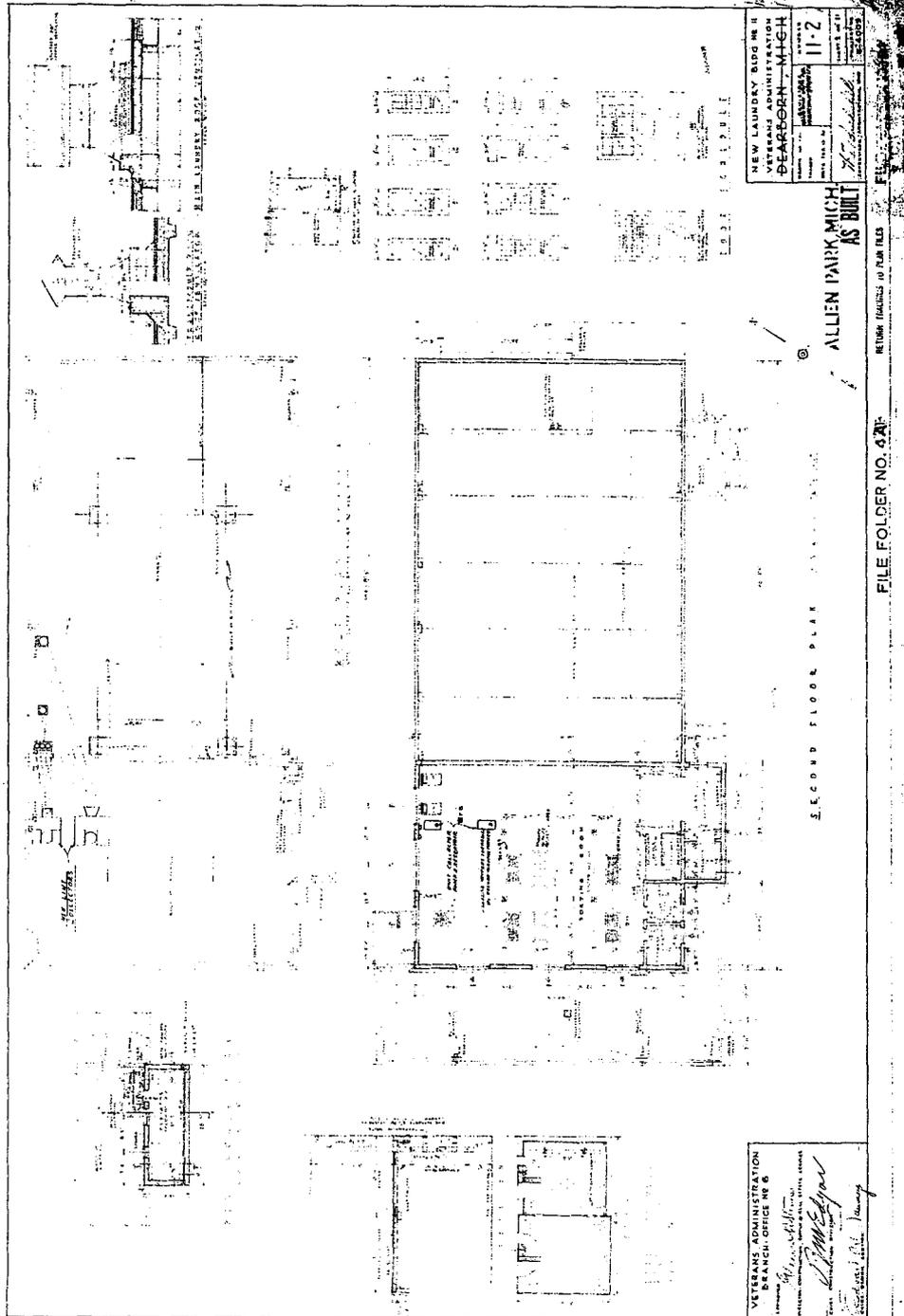
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Reduced Copy of Historic Plan, dated February 16, 1948. On file at the John D. Dingell
Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Detroit, Michigan



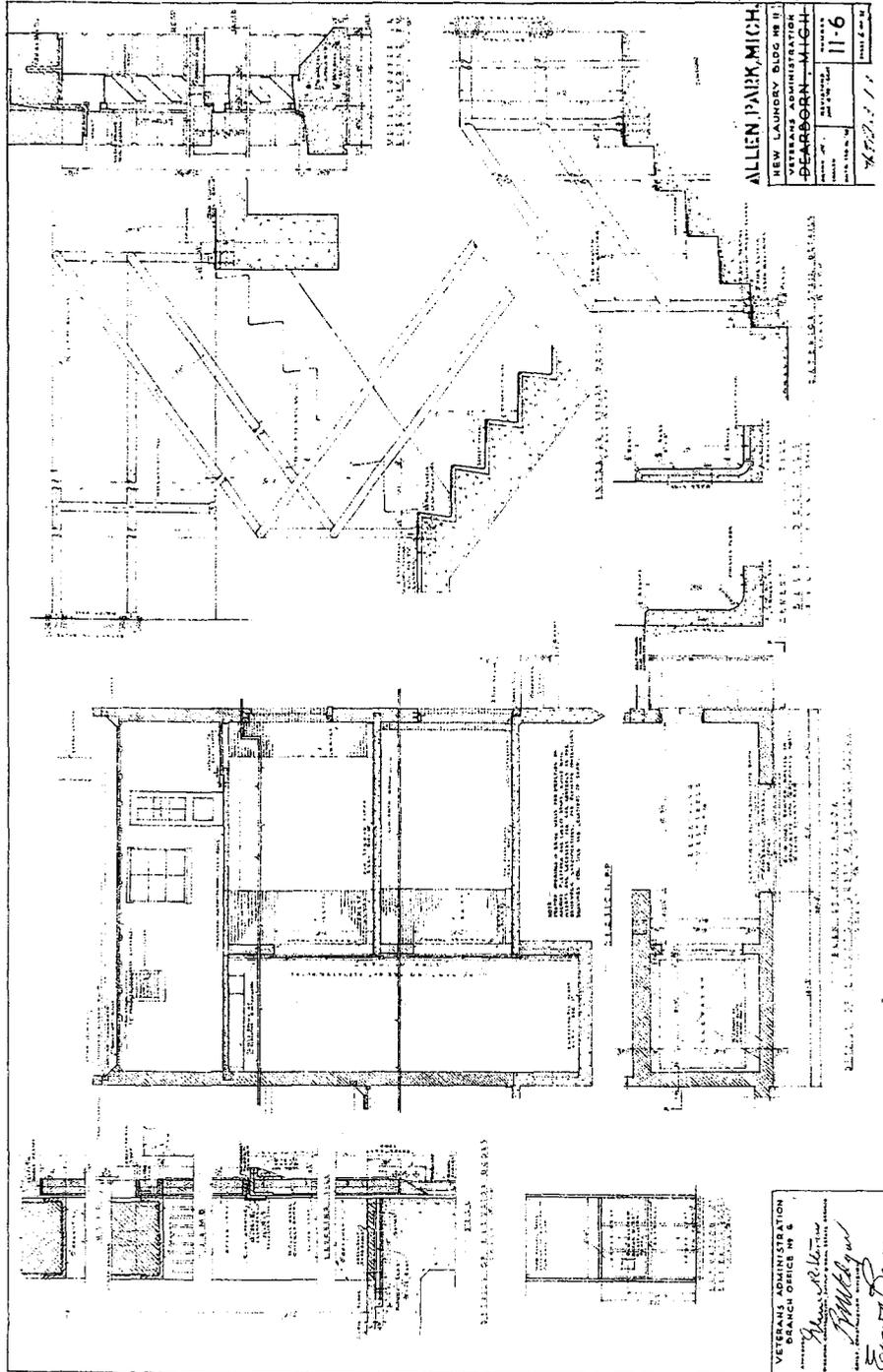
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