

ALLEN PARK VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL, BUILDING NO. 19
(Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital, Hospital Kitchen, Chapel & Offices)
Southfield Expressway & Outer Drive
Allen Park
Wayne County
Michigan

HABS No. MI-427-K

HABS
MI-427-K

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 19
(Hospital Kitchen/Chapel/Offices)**

HABS No. MI-427-K

- 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 19 was added on to the rear of Building 1's Rear Center Wing in 1948. It originally contained the hospital kitchen and the Staff and Attendants' Dining Rooms. The interior was modified when staff dining was moved to Building 22. While the kitchen remained to prepare food for the patients, the dining rooms were converted to offices and the hospital's chapel.
- Despite its construction date of nearly 10 years later, Building 19 mimics the style and materials of the original complex. The brick façade with a limestone base, regularly spaced sash windows, and cornice maintain a stylistic continuity with the original Georgian Revival-style hospital buildings.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- A. Date of Erection:** 1948.
- 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 19 has continually served as a kitchen and provided support space since its construction.
- D. Original Plans and Construction:** The original drawings are dated November 28, 1944. The Veterans Administrations' Administrator, Assistant Administrator, Director of Construction, and Chief of the Technical Division signed the drawings.
- E. Alterations and Additions:** The individual office spaces on the second floor have been altered to allow for changing uses.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

- 1. Architectural Character:** Building 19, which houses the kitchen, chapel, and offices, is a three-story structure. Its Georgian Revival style complements the original 1939 buildings in the complex.
- 2. Condition of Fabric:** The building is in good condition; it is physically sound and is largely unaltered from its original appearance.

B. Description of Exterior:

- 1. Overall Dimensions:** The overall dimensions of the building measure 120'-9" x 88'-9". The rectangular plan building is three stories. The structure is fourteen bays long and nine bays wide.
- 2. Foundations:** The raised foundation is constructed of poured concrete with coursed dressed ashlar limestone veneer on the building's south, east, and north sides, and common bond red brick veneer on the west side. A limestone water table tops the

foundation and encircles the structure on all sides. The raised foundation is quite tall, enclosing a large first story.

3. **Walls:** The walls are clad with five-course common bond red brick with limestone quoins at the corners.
4. **Structural System, Framing:** The building is a steel structure. The roof and floor are poured concrete slabs.
5. **Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Bulkheads:** There are no porches or balconies. Several pre-fabricated metal bulkheads are present on the roof to shelter the building's air handling systems. The bulkheads were most likely constructed within the last 30 years.
6. **Chimneys:** There are no chimneys present.
7. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and Doors:** The building has three exterior doorways, all located on the north façade. The first doorway is located near the northeast corner of the structure, the second is four bays west of this corner, and the third is next to the northwest corner of the structure. The first and second entries have single metal doors each with a narrow window. The third entry has double metal doors with narrow windows. In between the first and second doorways is a large recessed loading dock entrance for delivery vehicles.
 - b. **Windows and Shutters:** All the windows in this building appear to originally have been six-over-six double-hung metal sashes. Approximately one-third of these on the north and south sides have been altered, either through the addition of brick infill or through the introduction of large, louvered, metal ventilation panels. There are no shutters. All of the windows, with the exception of those in the limestone foundation walls, feature brick jack arches with limestone keystones. All of the windows, including those in the limestone foundation walls, feature limestone sills.
8. **Roof:**
 - a. **Shape, Covering:** The roof is flat with a gravel/asphalt surface.
 - b. **Cornice, Eaves:** A simple limestone cornice surrounds the building on all sides. A red brick parapet wall topped with a limestone cap projects several feet above the cornice.

- c. **Dormers, Cupolas, Towers:** There are no dormers, cupolas, or towers present.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

- a. **First Floor:** This level is an open plan warehouse space with a restroom, freight elevator, staircase, office, and loading dock located in the northeast corner of the building.
- b. **Second Floor:** This level has a central hall plan. On the south side of the hall are the mail room, forms crib, collections room and a chapel in the southeast corner. The chapel has a storage room and separate Jewish worship area along the eastern wall. The altar space is raised 4" above the floor level. On the north side of the hall is the medical media department suite and the building management storage and machine rooms. The medical media department suite contains a restroom, a studio, photo processing facilities, printing facilities, an illustration preparation room, and a photocopy room. On the north side of the hall there is also a women's restroom. The stairway and freight elevator are located in the northeast corner of this story.
- c. **Third Floor:** This floor contains an open plan kitchen. Three large refrigerators are located in the southeast corner of the room next to a food storage room. Paper storage and a fourth refrigerator are located next to the staircase and a freight elevator in the northeast corner. A cart wash room is located next to the entrance from Building 1 along the western wall.
2. **Stairways:** The stairway is located in the northeast corner of the building. It is open with metal steps covered with checkered plate steel treads. The balusters and newels are metal and the handrail is wood.
3. **Flooring:** The flooring on the first level is unfinished concrete. The floor on the second level is 12" tan vinyl tiles except in the chapel area where the floor is covered with purple carpet. The third level is covered with tan and light brown ceramic tile ranging in size from 1/4" to 1" and laid in a random pattern. Drains are located in various places in the floor.
4. **Wall and Ceiling Finish:** The walls on the first floor are unfinished with the brick left exposed and have no baseboards. The ceiling is unfinished and the concrete roof structure is visible. The second floor walls are of plaster, painted white with dark brown, coved vinyl baseboards. The drop ceiling has acoustic tiles. The chapel ceiling has 12"

square ceiling panels covered with imitation gold leaf. The ceiling tile suspension system in this room is not visible and therefore cannot be determined. The walls on the third floor are covered with 6" tan ceramic tile. A band of 8" burnt orange tiles running along the bottom of the wall acts as a baseboard. The drop ceiling has acoustic tiles.

5. Openings:

- a. **Doorways and Doors:** The doors on the first floor are steel within steel frames. The doors on the second floor are wood laminate within steel frames. The doors on the third floor are of steel within steel frames. All of the doors leading to the stairwell are steel fire doors with a rectangular wire glass window.
- b. **Windows:** The windows on the first floor have opaque glass, wood sills, and no decorative moldings. The windows on the second floor have clear glass, wood sills, and 3" wood moldings. The window woodwork is painted white. The windows in the chapel have a thin plastic film applied to imitate the look of stained glass. The windows in the kitchen have clear glass, tiled sills, and no decorative woodwork. The window frames are painted white.

- 6. Decorative Features and Trim:** The chapel has ten oak pews in a modernist design in the center of the room. In the Jewish worship area is an ark, an oak cabinet with two doors, which held the Torah.

7. Mechanical Equipment:

- a. **Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation:** The original heating and ventilation system has been replaced with a centralized forced air system. The ductwork for the new system is located above the drop ceiling on the second and third floors. The ductwork for the new system is left exposed on the first floor. Vents are located in each room.
- b. **Lighting:** No original light fixtures remain in the building. Fluorescent light fixtures have been installed within the drop ceiling on the second and third floors and have been suspended from the ceiling on the first floor. In the chapel area on the second floor recessed canister fixtures in the ceiling provide the lighting. Above the ark is an electric fixture designed to resemble an oil lamp, which would have been kept lit at all times for religious reasons.

c. Plumbing and Fixtures: The restrooms have standard porcelain toilets and sinks. The third floor kitchen has stainless steel sinks and plumbing fixtures, including gooseneck faucets and sprayers.

8. Other Features: On the first floor, rows of industrial wood and steel shelving run east to west through the building. A stainless steel walk-in cooler is located in the southeast corner of the space. The second floor contains laminate cabinets and countertops in the medical media workrooms. The doors and drawers are single panels with no visible hardware. The mailroom in the southwest corner of the second floor has wood mail sorting cabinets along the east wall. The forms crib, which is located to the east of the mailroom, contains fixed metal shelves with metal document holders. The third floor refrigeration units are stainless steel with stainless steel doors and hardware. The kitchen area contains ranges, ovens, steamers, pot and pan warmers, a tray line, sinks, dishwasher, and tables, which are all constructed of stainless steel with cast iron elements.

D. Site:

- 1. General Setting and Orientation:** This building is located in the center of the Allen Park complex, and adjoins Building 1's Rear Center Wing to the west and Building 22 to the east. It faces north, and overlooks Employee Parking Area "E".
- 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 Bagnet 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:

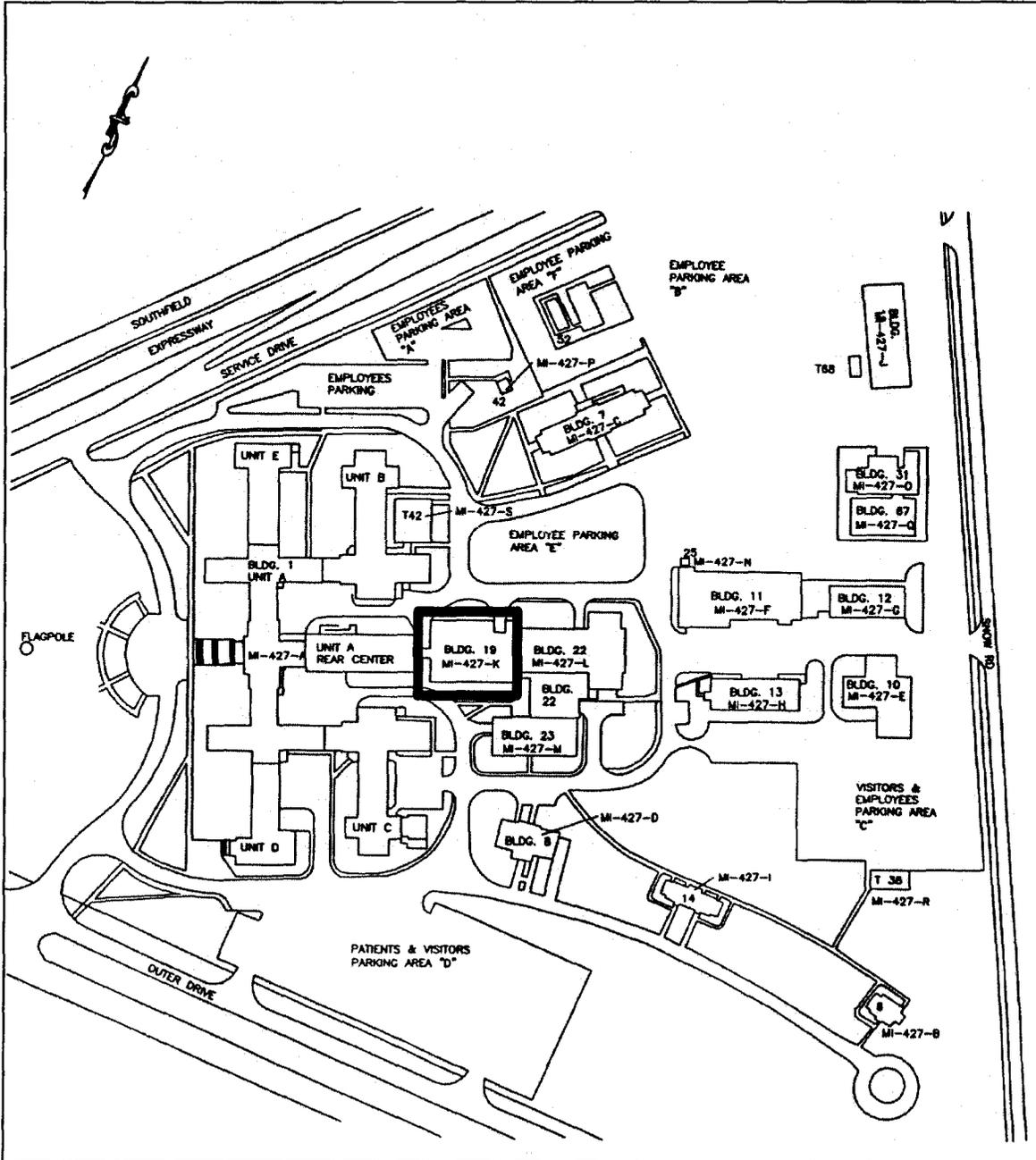
- Ching, Francis D. K. *Building Construction Illustrated*, 2nd ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1997.
- Hoke, John Ray, Jr. *Architectural Graphic Standards*, 9th ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994.

ALLEN PARK VETERANS
ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL
BUILDING 19
(Hospital Kitchen/Chapel/Offices)
HABS No. MI-427-K
(Page 8)

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

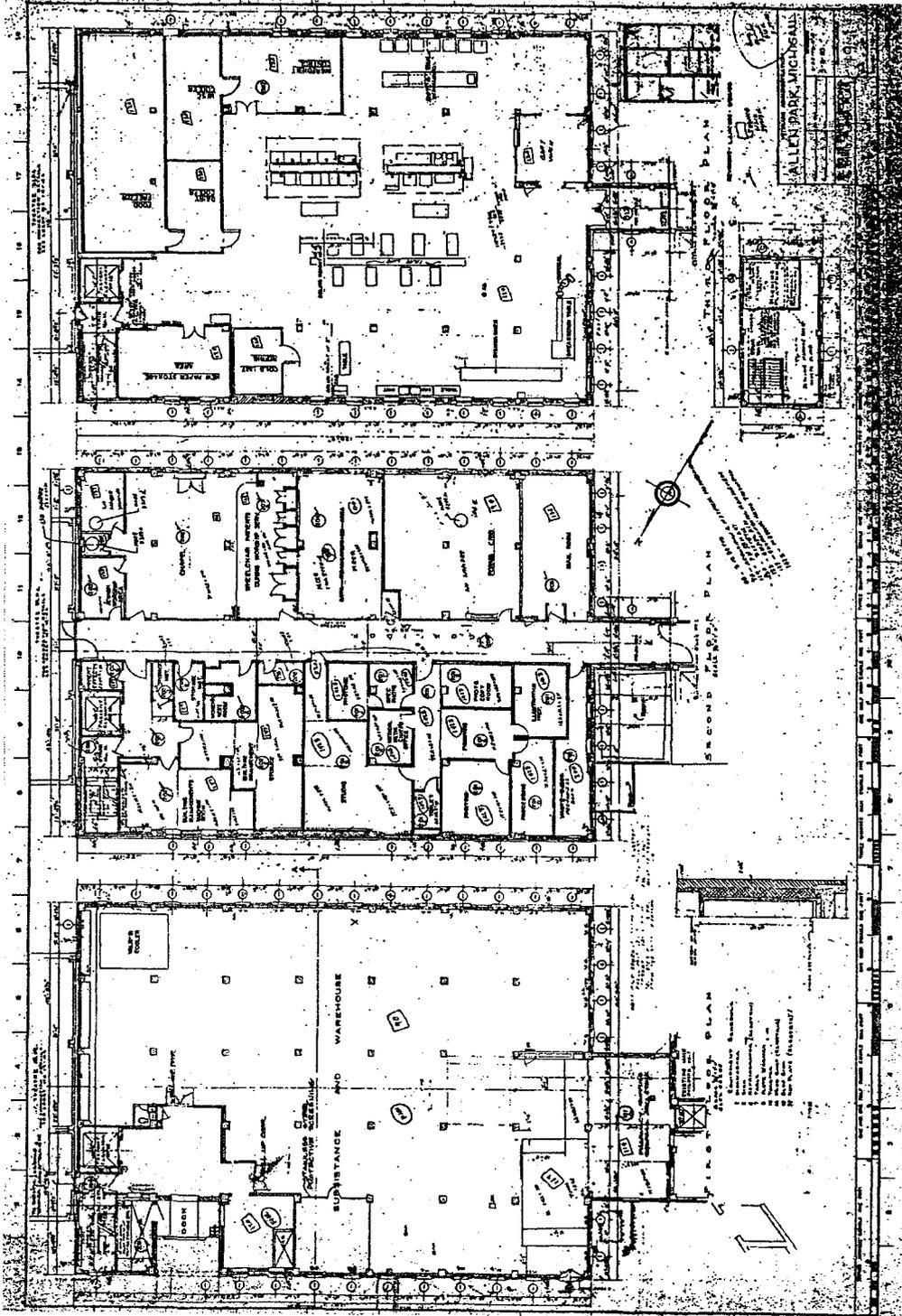
Mollenhoff, Gjore J. and Karen R. Tupek. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-
Nomination Form for Allen Park Veterans Administration Medical Center," U.S.
Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1980.

Site Plan



ALLEN PARK VETERANS
ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL
BUILDING 19
(Hospital Kitchen/Chapel/Offices)
HABS No. MI-427-K
(Page 10)

Reduced Copy of Current Plan, February 2002



ALLEN PARK VETERANS
 ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL
 BUILDING 19
 (Hospital Kitchen/Chapel/Offices)
 HABS No. MI-427-K
 (Page 11)

Reduced Copy of Historic Plan, dated November 28, 1944. On file at the John D. Dingell
 Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Detroit, Michigan

