

**Former George & Lynch Property (K-7634), 422 and 426 Water Street  
 Tax ID ED-05-77.13-1-07; 08; and 09; 3.38 acres total  
 Various Warehouse and Construction Industry Related Buildings – originally  
 dating circa 1927**



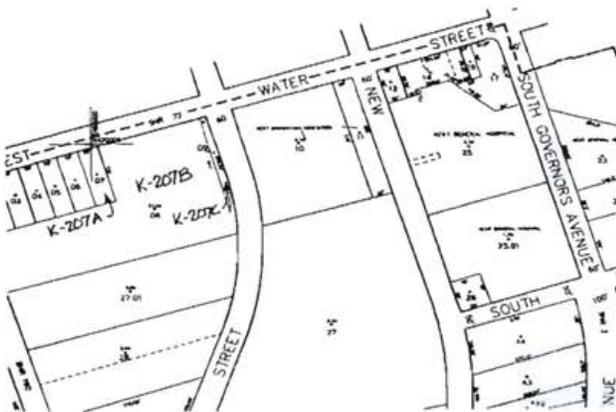
**Description:**

This property is now a vacant lot owned by the State of Delaware (DelDOT). Following appraisal and offer, the lot was directly purchased in 2005 for \$1.2 million dollars in anticipation of the Dover Transit Hub Transportation Project. As of late February, 2009, the transit hub is part of a federal American economic recovery and reinvestment stimulus package (ARRA) that is now subject to Section 106 coordination and

review.

As aerially depicted in 2004 (see above) the lot formally contained a number of buildings and storage units that reflected the George & Lynch, Incorporated contracting business.

The George and Lynch, Inc. property (K-7634) consisted of three adjacent parcels (tax parcels ED-05-077.13-1-07, ED-05-077.13-1-08, and ED-05-077.13-1-00. The below illustration highlights the lots and are labeled as K-207A, K-207B, and K-207C.



Based on deed search, the George and Lynch Inc. company gained title to the largest portion of the property (08 parcel or K-207B) in 1927 and 1932. Several deeds describing the property area from West Street, Water Street south to lands of Henry Spence, and New Streets are depicted in deeds I13-141 and E13-428 from 1927 and D14-121 in 1932. Both Hyland P. George and John P. Lynch were listed and described as co-partners for the George and Lynch construction company.

The company was also referred to as a “venture” in one of the deeds. In all three deeds, Hyland P. George and John P. Lynch purchased the properties from George L. and Lucile S. Gooden. It was also very clear that both George and Lynch wanted the three main deed titles free and clear of any potential liens or past mortgages on the property. It was not until John P. Lynch deceased on or about February 22, 1940 that the 08 parcel or K-207B could be itemized and identified as a parcel asset. Upon the death of either party,

be re-assigned or settled to either surviving co-partner for the continuation of the business. As the surviving co-partner of the company, deeds and plots were then assigned by the Security Trust Company to Hyland P. George by will and direction of John P. Lynch and his surviving wife Agnes. In a deed from the Security Trust Company dated June 3, 1940 (R17-167) more specific parcels were described in which the 08 parcel could be specifically identified. As a result, the deeds of George & Lynch Inc. as a company, venture, or corporation were referred to as the G & L Holding, Inc. until 1995.

The other two bordering properties that consist of the remaining George & Lynch, Inc. property at this location were not fully acquired until 1968 (09 parcel) and in 1985 (07 parcel) under the G & L Holding, Inc. According to deeds and past aerial photography, a circa 1938 residential dwelling, formally dating back to Paul C. Cook and Mary E. Cook (wife), existed on the 07 parcel (K-207A) before it was finally acquired years later and used for the G & L Holding and/or George & Lynch, Inc. operations. It is probable that the original Cook dwelling consisted of a bungalow type building of similar size and style as evidence of remaining dwellings that were built on adjacent lots at the time (K-7630, K-7631, or K-7632).

According to DelDOT records, the improvements upon the George & Lynch, Inc. property included a number of buildings used for offices and for equipment storage and maintenance. Originally, this was the main headquarters for the company.

Buildings formally on the property from 2004 consisted of a two-story office building (modern), two machine shop warehouse buildings (circa 1933), one storage shed (modern) used for chemical storage, and one storage shed (modern) used for parts storage. The remaining building on the property consisted of a circa 1927 gable structure formally used as a stable, which was later used and converted into functions for various chemicals, materials, and equipment storage. Other fixtures notable on the property included a gravel loading ramp, several smaller storage sheds/lockers (modern), and a radio antenna (modern). The two-story office building was a significant addition to the eastern machine shop.

*Machine Shop plus Office Additions – see end of this report for additional photographs*



Two machine shops and a larger office building addition were also connected by means of another modern addition/connection in the middle and formed one complete larger structure. The machine shops and the original office space present within each shop were built in the first half of the nineteenth century (circa 1933). According to records and direct verbal accounts recorded by the Lynch family (during a 2004 environmental inspection), the second machine shop (east) was completely updated by 1992 and was used for truck maintenance and equipment cleaning purposes. A small office area

was noted in the front and side of the machine shop. Of the two machine shops, the far eastern building has historically been used as a paint shop, but it was converted into a welding shop and a break room. The attic above the break room was used for storage of maintenance and kitchen supplies such as paints, plastic cups, paper plates, paper towels, etc. There is also a small room used for parts and tools storage in the older welding shop (building) area. Both buildings were made of concrete blocks with concrete floors. Larger metal posts with side knee braces were situated along corners of the walls to stabilize the larger gable roof structure. This construction style permitted an open warehouse function for both buildings.

According to the 2004 advertised real estate marketing plan from *Patterson Price*, the property's machine shops consisted of an approximate 4,896 square foot office building (original office and machine & painting shop) and the adjacent 6,341 square foot block shop and repair building.



The modern office machine shop to the far northeast (on right of photograph) consisted of:

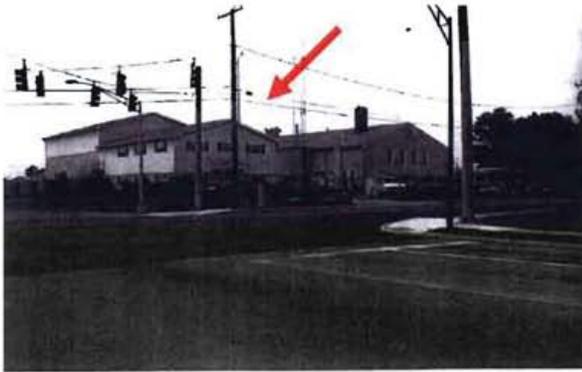
- An interior building area of 4,896 sq. ft. consisting of a two-story office of 3,072 sq. ft and 1,824 sq ft. smaller machine shop.
  - Building height: 16' for the office section; 20' within the shop section.
  - Flooring: concrete slab throughout 1<sup>st</sup> floor and the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor office is of wood frame.
- Roof Structure: Gable 25% pitch with timber rafters and sheathing.
  - Roof Cover: Asphalt shingles.
  - Windows: All windows in the office were double hung (modern) and insulated. The shop consisted of fixed casement openings.
  - Overhead doors/bays: two 20' by 16' within the shop, which were steel and plan glass. All interior doors were solid and hollow core wood.

The twin machine shop situated on the northwest (left of above photograph) was much larger (6,341 sq. ft.) and consisted of a smaller office (1,874 sq. ft.) and a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor storage (1,144 sq. ft.). The main shop was 4,896 square feet and had three garage door bays that were said to be 16' by 16' (although photos appear to be a larger dimension).

As mentioned, each building had been enclosed by a central connection (modern) that consisted of a flat roof. The rear of this addition or enclosure also had an open garage bay. No other information could be obtained.

Lastly, also included in the sale were other office additions and all new shed buildings consisting of all interior fixtures and other amenities for office function. Rather than privately sold by a real estate broker, the Department of Transportation verified the asking price in an appraisal and ultimately purchased the property in 2004.

#### *Modern Office*



OFFICE / MAINTANENCE SHOP AT CORNER OF WATER STREET AND QUEEN STREET

The main office (circa 1994) consists of a two-story building addition located in the front of the northeast machine shop. The timber framed and sheathed with vinyl siding and an asphalt roof, the building looked like it had been well maintained. The office has wooden paneling (modern) on the walls acoustic ceiling tiles, and carpeted floors. Much of it was stripped and salvaged in the conditional sale of the property. This building functioned as a modern addition and relocated the George and

Lynch, Inc. office and mechanical employees to a better and larger working environment than previous office space situated inside both machine shops.

#### *Other buildings*

#### *Chemical Storage Shed*



SMALL CLASS "D" FRAME STORAGE BUILDING

The new chemicals storage shed (modern) located west of the machine shops and north of the old shed stable building has a small office built within this building. Consisting of a gable roof and with no ornamentation, the building consists of concrete blocks and was built approximately 1994. It has a solid concrete floor with no floor drains. Most of the chemicals and supplies were stored on metal shelves in cardboard boxes. There were car/tuck batteries, fire extinguishers, various lubricants, chlorinated chemicals, and sprays.



SMALL METAL STORAGE BUILDING

### *Parts Storage Shed*

The parts storage (pole barn) shed was located west of the machine shops and north chemical storage shed of the old shed stable. Consisting of a gable roof with no ornamentation, it was also built within the same timeframe (circa 1994) as the chemical storage building. It was made of wooden timbers and seamless metal sheathing like a pole barn, but pre-manufactured. Various parts were organized by type and were stored on the wooden shelves. No chemicals were stored in this building.

### *Stable Shed*



POLE SHED

The last structure on the site is an old stable shed dating circa 1927 made of wood timbers. With a side gable metal roof and sheathed over with seamless metal, this structure was built as a stable shed for animal storage and care. It is approximately 24 feet in width, but stretches approximately 450' long. The original stable section was situated on the far-east, but has been added onto over the years for additional open shed storage and equipment parking. During the early twentieth century,

George and Lynch Inc. stocked work mules or donkeys on the property as part of its construction efforts. It is uncertain how many animals, but several photographs (see below) depict their early work effort on Delaware roadways. The photograph below originated from State Contract 37 near Drawyers Creek along the DuPont Highway. The roadway was re-constructed circa 1924-25. It is uncertain whether or not the George and Lynch, Inc. company were the contractors on this project (i.e. no known DelDOT records). However, based on various photographic evidence from Department records,

mules, donkeys or horses were evident on various projects. They carried dirt in carts and were common in early construction projects. Animals were used for transporting fill or necessary dirt to or away from the job location and for grading. Other uses were also common since dump trucking and other mechanical equipment was not commonplace at the time. The animals provided a source of labor in the construction industry, but were quickly phased out in the 1930's over improved automotive technology.



Having been expanded or elongated into an open shed to the west, the stable shed on the George and Lynch Inc. property was later

converted and used for storage of various landscaping supplies, waste products, old parts, tires and equipment. The eastern corner of the stable (appearing original) was also transformed into a small waste oil, lubricant, and hydraulic fluids storage area with four bay garage doors. It is uncertain whether or not the original stable shed that formally sheltered animals had any original physical fabric from the alterations and conversions over the years.

In 2004, the entire property site was completely fenced with no trees or other noteworthy vegetation. Sections have been paved or stoned with crusher run.

Historically and over the years a number of smaller storage buildings were located on the property, but were removed prior to 2004. During and after the acquisition process by DelDOT in 2004-06, many of the interior fixtures, equipment, and heavy steel principal posts were stripped by the company for other purposes or sold as scrap. During this property transition, George & Lynch, Inc. had already held another main office off Little Creek Road in Dover and in New Castle. As such, all business operations were ultimately transferred over.

In short, the two principal machine shop dwellings and the property were functionally used as a maintenance facility for vehicles and equipment, storage of industry equipment, as well as a paint shop. Over the years expansion and new offices were constructed, while changes and alterations upon the circa 1933 machine shops have occurred on the property. Many changes reflected the growing and changing business operations of George & Lynch, Inc. It is also apparent that other alterations or changes on the property were influenced by various OSHA and other safety needs.

Other uses (past and present) of secondary buildings were for the storage of petroleum and oils based products. Such activities would have also included the cleaning solvents and metals as well as cleaning of other parts and equipment. For approximately 75 years, the main office or headquarters for the George and Lynch, Inc. company presided at this location. Other main offices were and are presently located in Dover (Little Creek Road), New Castle, and Gumboro, Delaware.

Based on past aerials and DelDOT Real Estate Records, the following key information can be interpreted regarding some key alterations.

- By 1968: The aerial shows a total of six structures present on the site located on the northern part of the property. There is one small structure in the southeastern corner of the property. The site appears to be more congested with debris, parked cars, and equipment. Between 1961 and 1968 South Queen Street was also built and extended south along the eastern border of the property. Also, between 1961 and 1968, the two machine shop building were altered with the enclosure in the middle.
- Between 1961 and 1968, three of the six total buildings predating 1961 are still present. Others have been removed and replaced with more modern buildings in

the early 1990's. Existing buildings (pre-1961) were also renovated, added onto, and altered. This included both original office areas within both machine shops. The elongated open stable shed that once formally housed and stored animals (mule and/or donkeys) had also been altered by conversion of use for various industry measures.

The George & Lynch, Inc. facility was demolished beginning in April of 2006 by contract administration of DelDOT by EPB Associates, Inc for \$41,000. Environmental clean-up such as the removal of broilers, oil tanks, and other soils and items was a separate effort.

**Applicable Historic Context(s):**

Geographic Zone: Upper Peninsula; Time Period: Urbanization and Early Suburbanization 1880-1940+/-; Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture, Engineering, and Decorative Arts theme (construction industry related warehouse & support buildings – infrastructure related).

**Early History of the Property and George & Lynch, Inc:**

George & Lynch, Inc. is said have its beginning business origins starting in 1923. Hyland P. George and John P. Lynch began the business in 1923 “with a wheelbarrow and a truck”, beginning as a sidewalk and grading contractor. Most of their early efforts involved contracting business with the State Highway Department - i.e. Delaware Department of Transportation. Nearly a dozen years later they had added larger road work, sewer work, water lines, and various concrete and hot mix projects to their repertoire. Growing and expanding over the years they have become the one of the largest construction company in Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Historically for the Department of Transportation, the George & Lynch incorporated company started with slag and surface treatments on Delaware road projects in Kent and Sussex Counties. According to DelDOT Records (note: 1923-24 records unavailable) the earliest contracts awarded to the Dover based company of George and Lynch, Inc. were:

1925

- CS 38 Vines Creek to St Georges Church
- CS 46 Cannon to Atlanta
- CK 24 Maryland line to Kenton

1926

- Contract 73 Vance Neck Road
- CK 31 Rising Sun to Lebanon
- Contract 62 White Oak Road
- CK Smyrna to Wendalls Corner

By 1927, the George & Lynch, Inc. construction company migrated their road building efforts into New Castle County with the 4' concrete widening under State Contract 79. This road was/is U.S. 40 and improvements began at the Maryland State Line and ended at State Road (U.S 13). Although not the first, it was recognized as one of the first interstate widening projects in Delaware.

Throughout the late 1920's and into the 1930's George & Lynch Inc. continued their efforts with the Department of Transportation's road building efforts participating in various facets in the final dualization of the DuPont Highway: the Nation's first dual highway. In 1934 the company completed one of the last segments for the dual highway under State Contract 286. This effort included the 20' dual widening of the DuPont Highway from Dover to Bishops Corner (Cheswold). State Contract 286 is claimed to be the sixth and final phase of the DuPont Highway. However, according to DelDOT records, the Smyrna dualization through town is really the final completed segment under State Contract 285. Completed before Labor Day 1934, this Smyrna segment on U.S. 13 did not have a grassy divided median as abdicated by Chief Engineer W.W. Mack. So, it was not highly regarded compared to other dual sections.

In 1934, the company also was awarded the new 22' concrete construction of the Industrial Highway near Edgemoor (i.e. now sections of Governor Printz Boulevard). Considered a necessity for the heavy industries and trucking east of Wilmington and parts north, it provided the first critical link and bypass for Wilmington to the shipping ports, rail roads, and the early manufacturing, chemical, and steel industries located near Edgemoor and Claymont.

For over 75 years the company in centrally based in Dover (and later in New Castle and Gumboro) continued its long track record with DelDOT by building and improving roads, highways, and bridges throughout Delaware. Sections of the interstate highway and State Route 1, Delaware's principal roads and highways, were also completed by the company during various decades. Although cursory information was researched, DelDOT records indicate that various projects were awarded within each county by the George & Lynch, Inc. More importantly, as a company, they have been awarded and dominated more public contracting awards in Kent and Sussex County than any other company incorporated in the State.

Beyond building, reconstructing, and resurfacing roads, the George & Lynch, Inc. company also have established construction of residential communities, marinas, and waste water treatment plants. Other notable tasks over the years include airport construction, asphalt, sand and select borrow supply, and construction of landfills, utility and piping installation, trenching, and other site work. Today, George & Lynch, Inc. is still headquartered in Dover, Delaware with office, equipment, and maintenance facilities in Dover (Little Creek Road) as well as New Castle, and Gumboro, Delaware.

In sum, beginning in 1923, the George & Lynch, Inc. company has grown to be one of the largest, most diverse infrastructure contractors serving the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Now headquartered off Little Creek Road and within the industrial

sector of Dover, George & Lynch Inc. currently employs over 360 construction professionals specializing in a wide variety of heavy, infrastructure related construction services. Over the years and currently, the majority of the work has been self-performed. Thus, many skilled and experienced employers have worked for the company and may projects do not involve the over supply or use of additional subcontractors .

### **Evaluation and Recommendation:**

Taken as a whole, the post-1961 buildings and alterations essentially dominate the property. Very little integrity could be conveyed in the remaining architecture or conveyed in a historical events on the property. Various functions and operations have since been altered. The larger lots or plots of lands as originally obtained in the late 1920's and early 1930's by Hyland P. George and John P. Lynch have since been subdivided and sold off, leaving what remains as the original downtown core on approximately 3.38 acres. The company and the property's facilities have since changed with the times in order to remain competitive in the construction industry related market. As such, the George and Lynch, Inc. company can still be considered as one of the main industry leaders within the Delaware and Maryland area. Its long standing history with infrastructure projects is a recognizable feat that has helped changed and transformed the landscape for various parts of Delaware (and mostly in Kent and Sussex County). The company and history of successful projects is distinguished for this State and region. However, because of its own success, the remaining architectural and/or historical elements that stood on the property during 2004 are not worthy of National Register recognition. They lack integrity of design, feeling, setting, and materials. Since DelDOT's acquisition of the property and prior to demolition, the relocation of the company to other office regions of the state, had also resulted in the some integrity loss of location. Before DelDOT intervened and purchased the property in 2004, the company was already in the process of moving and selling the facilities with the intent to salvage what they could on the property.

More importantly, the historical events and feats that could be considered eligible under Criteria A can not be conveyed on the property. They occurred elsewhere. Construction and infrastructure projects were simply administered out from this location as well as other secondary company yards – both in New Castle and Gumboro. The broad patters of history, notably construction related, were not created or did not physically occur at this location, but were administered and sectoried out.

Beyond the main offices, which had been altered, this was a storage, maintenance, and operations yard and building facility. The office complex from which the administration of contracts and infrastructure projects would originate from had been altered, converted to new uses, and moved into a modern affixed building. The remaining architectural integrity that remained by 2004 could not be conveyed or appeared so altered that it is difficult to disseminate for its potential historical association.

In all, this is a relatively modern and altered property. As a construction related business operation, the location and physical site of the property does seem to make a

contribution to the broad patterns of American history by association. However, this can not be fully conveyed by the elements and alterations that were extant in 2004. Alterations and changes have occurred. So much, that the property does not retain integrity to be considered eligible under Criteria A or C as a construction related business operation.

Criteria consideration B was also considered for purposes of this property evaluation. Hyland P. George (1891-1954) is noted as one of the most influential figures in the development of Delaware's highways from 1923 until his death in 1954. He is a member of DeIDOT's elite Wall of Fame consisting of 13 members. He, as the administrator and former CEO of the George & Lynch, Inc. company, holds the distinction of being responsible for the construction of many of the state's most important highways and roads.

In short, Hyland P. George led his contracting firm, George and Lynch Inc., to become one of the most dominant in Delaware. Beyond the early projects already described, his firm undertook the widening and resurfacing of U.S. 113, the dualization of U.S. 13 south of Dover, and the construction of the Mispillion Bridge in Milford – all notable projects at the time. However, Hyland's construction company was not fully vested to him until 1940. He was a co-partner for nearly 17 years with John P. Lynch who also owned and operated the business. Although Hyland received most of the company's credit in the following years, the Lynch co-portion of the company was still vested in the company after John P. Lynch's death.

Following 1940 and with the death of his co-partner, Hyland P. George continued to operate the George & Lynch, Inc. construction company for approximately 14 years with vested assistance from the Lynch family. Although accounts may not demonstrate this speculation, but it is apparent that his direct hands-on involvement with company were somewhat limited or changed dimensionally. Following 1940, Hyland P. George become more involved in Delaware politics. According to records, he was delegate to the Republican National Convention from Delaware in 1944, 1948, and 1952. As a republican running in 1948, he lost the election to become the 65 governor to Elbert Nostrand Caravel. Speculation would have it, but with very little checks and balances in place at the time, a company's CEO widely active in road building, contracting, and infrastructure projects, while also involved with politics can raise questions on popularity and integrity (both positive or negative) as person. As never holding an elected political seat, Hyland's role in Delaware politics is presumed insignificant.

Based on limited research efforts, little information could be obtained on Hyland P. George's co-partner John P. Lynch. However, it can be concluded that both Hyland and John became co-founders of the of the George & Lynch, Inc. company beginning in 1923. They operated the business together for 17 years and both family generations continue to do so today. The business continues to operate and flourish today as one of Delaware's oldest contracting businesses.

Taken together, the property is not recommended eligible under National Register Criteria B. Although his company's contributions to infrastructure improvement and development in Delaware (and nearby Maryland) are significant, Hyland P. George could be considered a significant person in the contractor's profession. However, for purposes of this evaluation, this is a business related property of the George and Lynch, Inc. company and not of the individual. Important events directly associated with Hyland P. George have actually occurred and are better associated at a specific job location and not on the property, itself. In addition, it is uncertain what his direct role really was in various awarded projects over the years since many hired employees under the company's name would had really taken undisclosed credit for the company's success. It would seem appropriate that Hyland P. George's residential dwelling, the place he resided as an individual and as co-founder of the George & Lynch, Inc. might be considered eligible under this criteria.

The buildings on the property have been demolished, so no new construction methodologies can be obtained. Even so, the past construction of the former machine shops consisting of concrete blocks and interior steel framing would have been common for an early warehouse type building. In addition, assuming the extent of the original framing was evident, the stable shed that formally housed animals would have been of common framing and construction, too. Limited photographic evidence suggest that the shed additions were of common framing. Together, they are likely not to provide new information on the construction type and methods that are not already available through other means. Based on past aerials (1937, 1954, 1961, 1968), there were former outbuildings on the property. However, given the extent of ground disturbance by heavy equipment, paving, new buildings, and other ground alterations of a construction industry related property, it is likely that this property is not eligible under Criteria D. The two main machine shops and modern office addition were also hooked up to public water and sewer.

As a vacant property and with some information on the past spatial arrangement of buildings, CRS inventory form to document the 2004 conditions has been prepared. The CRS form information is located at the State Historic Preservation Office.

2007 Digital Orthophotography





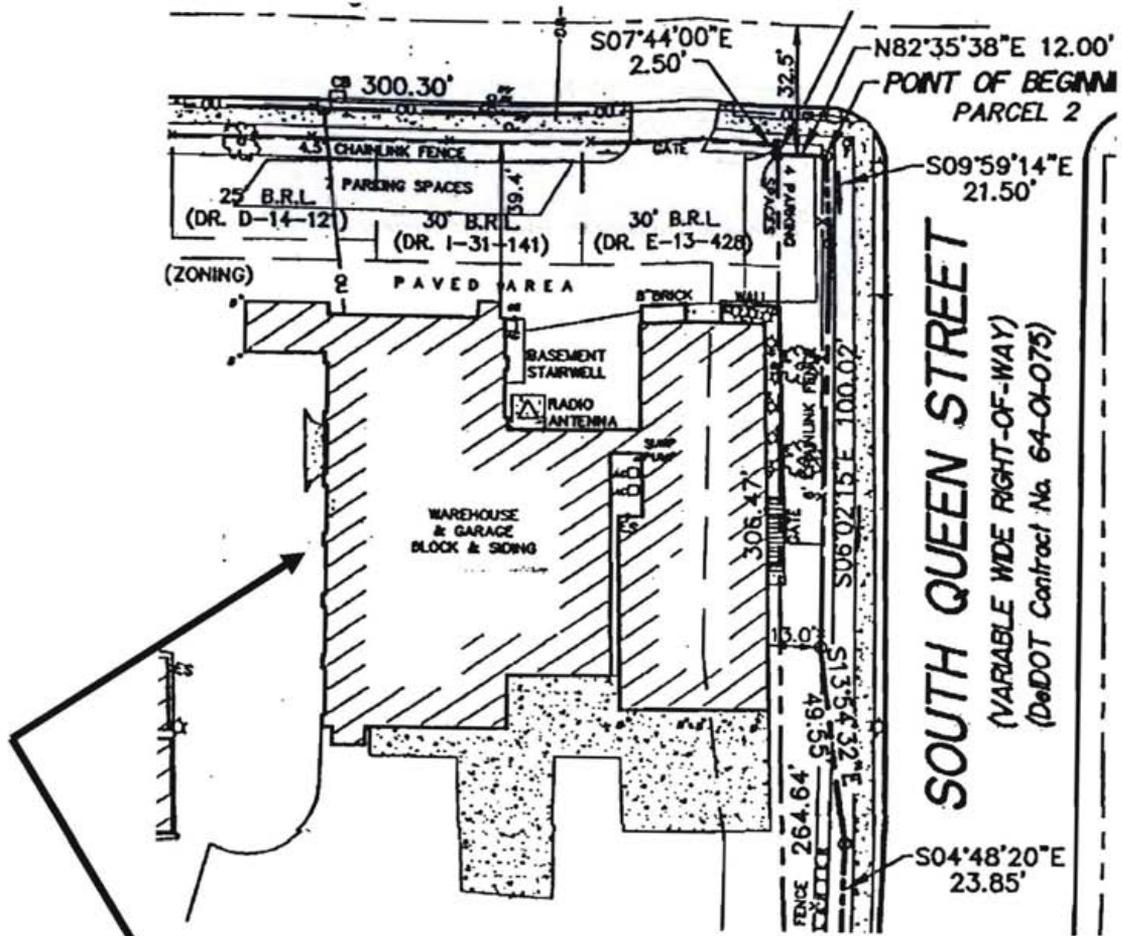
Photos taken in 2004 during appraisal – looking south



K-207  
Tenant: George & Lynch, Inc.  
4/4/05



Machine shops and modern office with some interior photographs taken 2004



MAINTENANCE SHOP







