



1140 Ellicott Street – A Summary History

The location of 1140 Ellicott Street in Buffalo, New York has been the site of significant educational endeavors through the Nineteenth, Twentieth and Twenty-First centuries.

Those who passed through the building over the decades for elementary, high school or college classes were taught by dedicated teachers who inspired and guided students to achieve success.

The Health Sciences Charter School is proud to continue this tradition of educational excellence. Offering math- and science-focused studies, our school-to-work high school prepares students for quality, sustainable health care careers.

Architecturally Significant

Designed by E. B. Green (Green & Wicks) and ornamented with neo-Gothic, Classical and Renaissance details, the five-story brick and stone building was commissioned in 1898 and dedicated in 1899. It was constructed by craftsmen who did much of the work by hand. The firm also designed other Buffalo heritage gems such as First Presbyterian Church, the Market Arcade, and Albright Art Gallery.

St. Vincent's Female Orphanage Asylum 1899-1948

The purpose of this new building was to provide a more spacious home to meet the needs of the growing numbers seeking admission to St. Vincent's Female Orphanage Asylum, where young girls lived and were educated. Dormitories, classrooms, a chapel and a convent were included. From 1899 through 1948, an estimated total of 10,000 young women resided there, were educated and trained for work opportunities.

Originally St. Vincent's Technical School for Girls, the institution evolved into St. Vincent's Female Orphanage Asylum as it accepted more impoverished or homeless girls following turn-of-the-century cholera epidemics. The fathers of some of the girls died while serving in World War I, leaving their families destitute.

Its name was chosen by the Rt. Rev. James Timon, C.M., Buffalo's first Roman Catholic bishop, who was a member of the Vincentian order founded by St. Vincent DePaul and dedicated to service to the poor.

1313 Main Street and 1305 Main Street

Two other noteworthy buildings are in proximity to the Green & Wicks structure. At **1313 Main Street** stands the Squier Mansion. It was purchased by George I. Squier in 1864 from Alanson Robinson, who had it built in 1860. The structure was the first building purchased for St. Vincent's facilities and remained part of its growing campus until

closure in 1948. It remains significant as the last surviving example of the Italianate mansions that once existed along Main Street in Buffalo.

Extensively renovated by Cash Realty, owner of both the Squier Mansion and 1140 Ellicott Street since 2001, the mansion, school and gymnasium were purchased by Ellicott Development Company in 2010.

At **1305 Main Street** is a Shingle-style house built for G. Barrett Rich in 1890 and that was home to the Riches for three decades. It served as a convent for Catholic nuns in the mid-Twentieth century. Since 1982, it has been the Little Portion Friary, a charitable not-for-profit social services organization and shelter.

The Gymnasium

In 1935, a two-story gymnasium was built on the north end of the property. George J. Dietel, an architect of Buffalo's striking City Hall, an Art Deco landmark, designed it. Dietel also designed many Catholic churches in the Buffalo area, as well as an addition to Sisters Hospital.

Bishop O'Hern High School 1952-1971

Following the closure of the orphanage and relocation of the technical training program to Laboure Hall at 190 Bryant Street, it became home to a girls high school. Bishop O'Hern High School was dedicated as a monument to "love of God, love of country and love of young people." Its namesake is Bishop Frank O'Hern, born in Hinsdale, NY and educated in Olean schools, who became Bishop of Rochester, NY in 1929. He was recognized as an advocate for education and welcomed orders of religious women to assume school teaching positions.

The Sisters of St. Francis Buffalo/Williamsville were its first teachers. The Sisters of St. Joseph took over the administration and faculty in 1961. When the school closed in 1971, it had graduated thousands of young women who moved on to college or worked as part of Buffalo's business community.

Erie Community College – City Campus 1971-1981

James E. Shenton, then president of Erie Community College, presided at inaugural ceremonies on October 20, 1971, when ECC opened its first urban campus here. Two-year study programs were offered in four areas – liberal arts: humanities and social science; liberal arts: mathematics and science; secretarial science; and business administration. Tuition was \$255 per semester. Four hundred applications immediately were received for classes on the new campus, which eventually reached a capacity 800 students.

In 1981, ECC relocated to another historic place – its present site in the circa-1900 Old Post Office building at 121 Ellicott Street.

Health Sciences Charter School-2011

This architectural and historic gem was unoccupied until September 2011, when the Health Sciences Charter School signed a long-term lease with Ellicott Development and moved in after the building after had undergone a \$6 million renovation, repurposed by Stieglitz Snyder Architecture. Restoration of original design elements and materials was a primary consideration as the building was being transformed into a state-of-the-art learning environment.

The Health Sciences Charter School was founded in 2010 by leading area health care organizations to prepare high school students for careers in the health sciences by offering distinct curricula, real work internships, mentoring and service learning placements.

The school's partners to date include BlueCross Blue Shield of Western New York, Catholic Health System, Community Health Center of Buffalo, Communications Workers of America, Erie Community College, Erie County Medical Center Corporation, Independent Health, Kaleida Health, Univera Health Care and Roswell Park Cancer Institute.