

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Independence Mall

Other names/site number: Delaware CRS # N14763

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 1601 Concord Pike

City or town: Wilmington State: DE County: New Castle County

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____	_____
Signature of commenting official:	Date
_____	_____
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District

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Site

Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	<u>1</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: shopping center

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: shopping center

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, stone, stucco, wood, vinyl

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Independence Mall is a U-shaped shopping center with an interior-parking forecourt, built between 1964 and 1965 by Wilmington developer Emilio Capaldi. Situated on a 5.03-acre parcel, the shopping center is located at 1601 Concord Pike (U.S. Route 202), in the vicinity of the City of Wilmington, Brandywine Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware. Independence Mall's architectural focal point is a replica of Philadelphia's Independence Hall, the original of which is the site of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the namesake of the shopping center. Home to about 50 stores and offices, the shopping center's façade is clad in multiple types of veneers—brick, stone, stucco, and vinyl clapboard—with varied, yet harmonious, Early American-style architectural treatments. While the center is one continuous build, the multiple storefronts and offices display a variety of smaller façade sections ranging from two to ten bays in width, giving the mall a quaint, constructed-over-time, colonial village feel. In addition to Independence Hall, other façade replicas of famous colonial-era Philadelphia buildings are interspersed throughout the mall's inner, public-facing sides, including odes to Library Hall, Carpenter Hall, and New Hall, with Congress Hall and Old City Hall placed at either end of the shopping center wings. These distinctive, decorative facade sections face the forecourt parking lot, while the rear or service façades of the building are stuccoed and generally lack ornamentation.

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While the public-facing façade has been slightly modified over time to accommodate changing tenants and uses, Independence Mall retains high levels of historic integrity for a commercial building, including its location, design, setting, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

Independence Mall is located on the east side of Concord Pike (U.S. Route 202), one mile north of I-95 and the City of Wilmington, in Brandywine Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware. Its forecourt parking lot and commercial sign structure are set close to the busy, six-lane thoroughfare of Concord Pike, making Independence Mall highly visible from this major transportation route. The shopping center stands on its 5.03-acre parcel and is surrounded almost entirely by paved asphalt. The main focal point of the shopping center is its replica façade of Independence Hall, which towers over the rest of the mostly two-story building. The shopping center, because of its U-shape design, is 12-sided. The five primary facades face inwards towards the parking forecourt, while two facades face Concord Pike, and the other five sides face the delivery and service alley that extends behind the building. Only the interior five facades and the two sides facing Concord Pike exhibit Early American-style ornamentation; the service and delivery facades are simply stuccoed with minimal architectural treatment. In front and in between public-facing facades of the shopping center is an almost entirely paved parking lot or forecourt—three narrow, landscaped islands, filled mostly with mowed grass and young trees, run east-to-west. These islands further demarcate parking areas and guide traffic in and out of the mall. Behind the U-shaped building is a continuous asphalt driveway or service alley, which segregates delivery space and workspaces from the customer space (and experience). A commercial sign structure (*non-contributing*) and utility building (*non-contributing*) are also located on the site. The shopping center's sign structure is located on the extreme western edge of the parcel, adjacent to Concord Pike, and comprises an eight-sided brick "gazebo" base with a double-faced, multi-tenant sign, topped with a large, gilded eagle. The small, brick-veneered utility building is located at the far southwestern corner of the parcel.

Situated in a formerly agricultural region of Brandywine Hundred, Independence Mall is sited north of the intersection of Concord Pike and Foulk Road and located within Lenapehoking, the traditional territory of the Lenni-Lenape. Concord Pike, originally established as a toll road in 1811 by the Wilmington and Great Valley Turnpike Company, served as a significant transportation route, linking markets in Wilmington with the farms of Brandywine Hundred and the "great valley" of Chester County, Pennsylvania, beyond. The Concord Pike corridor retained a strongly rural character until explosive suburban growth in the decades following World War II, which brought not only many new housing developments but all manner of businesses to serve the needs of new suburbanites, such as automobile service stations, restaurants, and stores, including strip malls and shopping centers like Independence Mall. Soon after the construction of Independence Mall, Concord Pike was dualized, with increased traffic along the corridor as a result of suburban growth in the region, and the area around the shopping center saw increased development. Concord Pike was expanded again in the late 1980s, adding a third travel lane and left turn lane in each direction.

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In the late-seventeenth century, colonist William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania, granted the Independence Mall property as part of a nearly 1,000-acre tract called *New Wark* to early Brandywine Hundred settler Valentine Hollingsworth, who later passed the property to his son-in-law George Robinson.¹ The land remained in the Robinson family through the end of the eighteenth century, when the Robinsons sold the property to Gunning Bedford, Jr., a member of the Continental Congress and signer of the U.S. Constitution. The land included a two-story, fieldstone dwelling (extant, just north of the Independence Mall site) built by the Robinsons during the mid-eighteenth century, which Bedford expanded and named Lombardy Hall (designated as a National Historic Landmark – NHL/NR # 72000292).² During the mid- and late-nineteenth century, the property was attributed to several owners, including T. Wollaston (1849 *Rea & Price Map of New Castle County, Delaware*), W.H. Bird (1868 *Pomeroy & Beers Atlas of the State of Delaware*), J.T. Bird (1881 *Hopkins & Co. Map of New Castle County, Delaware*), and in the early twentieth century to Harry Emmons, then for a period to the adjacent Lombardy Cemetery Company. In 1963, Independence Mall developer Emilio Capaldi (as Independence Mall, Inc.) purchased a 5.03-acre portion of the property to set in motion his plans for the shopping center.³

Site Design: U-Shaped Shopping Center, 1964-1965 (*contributing*)

Built in two phases in 1964 and 1965, Independence Mall is a U-shaped shopping center. It is thus a 12-sided, two-story, frame building featuring a variety of exterior veneers and asphalt-sheathed rooflines, with the entire building sitting on a poured concrete slab foundation. The five primary elevations of the shopping center face inwards on the forecourt parking lot, with two end elevations at the western side of the center facing Concord Pike. These primary elevations all display a mixture of colonial-inspired architectural features, which creates an overall harmonious and cohesive impression designed to evoke the feeling of a colonial village.

Site Design: Circulation and Parking

A key element in the site design of a commercial space is how goods, services, vehicles, and pedestrians circulate and navigate the spaces. The parking lot at Independence Mall is located adjacent to Concord Pike and accessed by a short driveway. This driveway provides one-way access into the shopping center, while a driveway to the north of it provides one-way egress onto northbound Concord Pike. Located between the “arms” of the U-shaped building is the customer parking lot, also called a forecourt parking lot. Three narrow, east-west landscaped islands divide the asphalt-paved parking lot into four primary parking areas, also oriented east-west. These landscaped islands contain a mix of grass, bushes, trees, and two styles of light polls. The southern-most and northern-most islands are approximately six feet-six inches in width, while the center one is larger—23 feet across at its widest near Concord Pike, narrowing as it runs toward Independence Hall. The contributing sign structure is located at the western terminus of the central landscaped island. In total, this forecourt area accommodates roughly 300 vehicles. Along the front

¹ “Lombardy Hall,” State Historical Marker NC-197, Delaware Public Archives (2008); Larry Nagengast, “History Matters: Hollingsworth Descendants Continue to Honor the Family’s Delaware Legacy,” *Delaware Public Media*, June 16, 2023, <https://www.delawarepublic.org/show/the-green/2023-06-16/history-matters-hollingsworth-descendants-continue-to-honor-the-familys-delaware-legacy> (accessed April 25, 2024).

² “Lombardy Hall;” Nagengast, “History Matters.”

³ New Castle County, Recorder of Deeds, Deed Records Q23, 66 (October 21, 1911); Q24, 360 (June 27, 1941); D64, 285 (November 25, 1958); and P71, 681 (August 15, 1963).

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of the interior of the U-shaped mall are pedestrian sidewalks made of a purple-colored slate flagstone. Additionally, several metal gooseneck, lantern-style streetlights provide lighting for the pedestrian sidewalk. Lastly, a narrow, asphalt-paved service alley runs around the exterior of the shopping mall, providing access to the rear of the commercial spaces and allowing deliveries to occur away from the sight of customers.

Primary Shopping Center Facades

There are 31 shopping center façade segments, described below by elevation and assigned a number between 1-31 for clarity (see section 9, pages 53 and 54 for façade keys).

South Elevation

The south elevation is comprised of eight distinctive façade sections.

1. The westernmost segment, which wraps around to a road-facing elevation, is a stretcher bond brick veneered, two-story, nine-bay section, with a one-bay addition (c. 1975) to the west. The entire façade section, the design of which was inspired by the side elevation of Old City Hall, features a white, nine course, brick water table; a white, doubled brick belt course; and a modillioned frieze band under the eaves of its hipped roof. The original nine-bay façade section is almost regular and symmetrical, except for the placement of the last bay from the west on the first floor. This last bay contains a six-paneled wood door, surmounted by a blind fanlight with a red brick voussoired arch, replete with a large white multi-brick keystone, and two white brick springers to either side. This doorway provides access to the office space on the second floor. Two 15-light wood doors are located in the center bay, providing access to the first-floor interior space. This bay features moulded wood casings, and a large, blind fanlight replete with keystone surmounts the double doors. The rest of the bays in this section contain windows. The first-floor windows are all 12-over-12, with brick sills, blind fanlights, and red brick voussoired arches replete with large white brick keystones and white brick springers. Located between the bays on the first floor are eight lantern-style wall mounted lights. The second-floor windows are shorter in size—they are all eight-over-eight, with brick sills, jack arches of red brick voussoirs, and a white brick keystone. On the second floor, above the central doorway, is a decorative metal balcony. To the west of the original façade section, and closest to Concord Pike, is a two-story, one-bay, brick veneered addition. The exterior façade treatment mimics the architectural elements found on the original section, though the addition is recessed from the front plane. The single bay contains a nine-light metal door.

2. The next façade section moving to the east is slightly recessed from the previous façade plane and features a three-bay, two-story storefront, clad in stone veneer and clapboard with a side-gable roof. The entire elevation features an overhanging shingled pent roof—below the roof, the façade section is clad in stone veneer, while above it is clapboard. In the center bay is a single 15-light wood door, flanked by full-height, single-panel, wood shutters. A lantern-style wall mounted light is installed near the top of each shutter. On either side of the door is a three-part bay window—each part contains a single light. Above the pent roof are four bays, all of which contain identical pairs of 10-light, casement-style, wood windows, flanked by single-panel wood shutters. Under the eaves of this façade section is a dentilated frieze band.

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3. The next façade section to the east, which is flush with the previous façade plane, is a two-bay, two-story, stone veneer and stuccoed storefront with a side-gambrel roof. The architectural focal point of this section is the overhanging second floor, which extends halfway across the sidewalk, and is supported by two square wood posts. It features a modillioned frieze band extending across the base of the overhanging second story, between the posts. The first floor, which features a stone veneer, has a single-light storefront window to the west and a 15-light wood door to the east. Both openings have small, moulded wood casings. The second story also has two openings, both of which contain fixed, 15-light windows with single-panel wood shutters. Two ornate, silver colored, crown-topped lanterns are mounted at the edges of the second-story façade section and were added since 2001.

4. To the east and also flush with the previous façade plane is a three-bay, two-story, side-gabled façade section. The surface of this elevation is comprised of windows and a series of square pilasters of varying heights, and, as such, there is no other exterior wall finishing. At each corner of the façade are two square pilasters running the height of the building, with a simple cornice in place of a capital, and a rectangular panel atop a slightly projecting plain wood base. The first and third bays are identical with fixed 10-by-10 light wood windows, with four-by-four light fixed wood transoms. The center bay features two 15-light wood doors, flanked on either side by square wood pilasters that terminate after the first floor. To each side of the entry is a lantern-style wall mounted light, and above the doors is a rounded cloth canopy. The second-floor features five full-height windows. The windows in the first and last bay are identical—they are both 10-by-10 fixed light wood windows, with four-by-four light fixed wood transoms. The center three windows are also identical. They are 15-light fixed wood windows, with six-light fixed wood transoms. Between the first and second floor, centered above the door, is a decorative metal balcony. A ledge with moulded cornices supports the balcony underneath. Between this façade segment and the preceding segment is a firewall extending above the roof line as well as a running bond brick veneered chimney stack.

5. The next façade section to the east, which is also flush with the previous façade plane, is a four-bay, two-story, stone veneer and stuccoed storefront with a side-gable roof. The first story is clad in a stone veneer, while the second story is clad in clapboard. A thin slate trim band separates the two different exterior treatments. Two single doors are located in the two central bays—each is a 15-light wood door, with thin, unmilled wood trim. Each door is also sheltered by a fixed dome cloth awning. The other two bays are both one-light fixed picture windows, also with thin, unmilled wood trim. The windows are also surmounted with fixed traditional cloth awnings. The second story features four bays, all of which are identical window openings. Each opening contains a pair of 10-light casement style wood windows, flanked by single-panel wood shutters. The windows themselves have been changed since 2001, but the fenestration pattern of this façade section remains the same. Between the second and third bays on the second story are two silver colored wall mounted gooseneck lights. Under the eaves of this façade section is a dentilated frieze band.

6. To the east is another five-bay, two-story, stretcher bond brick veneered section, with a Georgian-inspired pedimented center gable. This façade replicates the front elevation of *Carpenter Hall*. The center three bays comprise the projecting center gable, which also features a full return

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cornice. A 15-light wood door is located in the center bay. It has thin, unmilled wood trim and is topped with a fixed dome cloth awning. Flanking the door are small lantern-style wall mounted lights. The other two bays in the center pediment are both fixed, single-light picture windows with unmilled wood trim, brick sills, and fixed traditional cloth awnings. The other two bays (both recessed from the center pediment) contain 12-over-12 windows with wood trim and brick sills. Three 12-over-12 windows are located at the second story of the pedimented center gable—each topped with a fixed dome cloth awning. Four courses of contrasting white brick form a belt course located only on the three-bay section. Arched white brick window surrounds tie into the belt course. The two other windows on the second story are eight-over-eight windows, with brick sills and brick jack arches topped with white brick keystones. Underneath the eaves of the roof and the full return cornice is a dentilated frieze band. Between the full cornice return and the peak of the center gable is a four-light, fixed fanlight with a white brick sill and a red brick arch.

7. Continuing to the east, the next facade section on the south elevation is a six-bay, two-story, stone veneer and clapboard sided portion with a side-gable roof. Like other facade sections on this elevation, the first floor features stone veneer, while the second story is clad in clapboard. The two westernmost bays, a window and a door, comprise the first storefront. The window is a fixed, single-light storefront window with unmilled trim and a fixed traditional cloth awning. The door is one-light with plain, unmilled trim. The next three bays to the east, a door and two windows, comprise a second storefront. The door is also a 15-light wood with plain wood trim, topped with a fixed dome cloth awning. The two windows are both one-light with a stone sill. The last bay on this facade section is a single-light wood door, which provides access to the second-floor offices above. The door has plain, unmilled wood trim and is topped by an elongated fixed fanlight with identical wood trim. Four asymmetrically placed identical windows are located on the second story. The windows are eight-over-eight with two-panel wood shutters. Three silver color wall mounted gooseneck lights are installed under the two western window bays (over the first-story storefront window), with two additional gooseneck lights installed under the two eastern window bays (over the first-story single windows). Underneath the eaves is a dentilated frieze band.

8. The last facade on the south elevation is a seven-bay, two-story, stretcher bond brick veneered section with a side-gable roof; this segment replicates the front facade of *New Hall*. From west to east, the first bay contains a 15-light wood door with thin wood trim, flanked by two lantern-style wall mounted lights. Next is a one-light fixed storefront window with thin wood trim, a brick sill, and a fixed traditional cloth awning. The next two bays mirror the first two—a one-light fixed storefront window, with thin wood trim, a brick sill, and a fixed traditional cloth awning. Adjacent to the storefront window is another 15-light wood door with thin wood trim and topped by a fixed dome cloth awning, with one lantern-style wall mounted light west of the door. The next two bays are also comprised of a 15-light wood door, with thin wood trim, and topped by a fixed dome cloth awning, with one lantern-style wall mounted light west of the door, followed by a one-light fixed storefront window, with thin wood trim, a brick sill, and a fixed traditional cloth awning. The last bay on this facade section is a single-light, nearly full-glaze, wood door, which provides access to the office spaces on the second floor. The door has plain, unmilled wood trim, topped by an elongated fixed fanlight with identical wood trim and a red brick arch, and has one lantern-style wall mounted light west of the door. There are six bays on the second story—all of which are identical windows. They are eight-over-eight with thin wood trim, brick sills, and two-panel

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shutters. Seven silver colored wall mounted gooseneck lights are installed at the second story, with two each beneath the second and third bays from west, and three beneath the fifth and sixth bays. Underneath the eaves is a dentilated frieze band. Between this façade segment and the preceding segment is a firewall extending above the roof line as well as a running bond brick veneered chimney stack.

Southwest Elevation

9. The southwest elevation is comprised of only one storefront, extending across three elevation planes. All three planes are visually the same—the entire façade section is four-bay, two-story, and clapboard-sided. The first plane to the west is located on the south elevation and contains a blind bay on the first floor. A fixed traditional cloth awning is located above the blind bay. To the east are two bays (a window and a door) located on the northwest plane. The wood window is a 44-light fixed storefront type, with unmilled wood trim, topped with a fixed traditional cloth awning. The door is a 15-light wood door with unmilled wood trim. It also has a fixed traditional cloth awning that continues onto the south elevation plane. On the last plane of this façade section are two additional bays, a door and a window. The door is a 15-light wood door with unmilled wood trim, and it shares the traditional cloth awning with the door located in the adjacent bay. The wood window is a 32-light fixed storefront type with unmilled wood trim, topped with a fixed traditional cloth awning. The second story features five identical eight-over-eight windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. One window is located on the south elevation, two windows are located on the northwest elevation, and the last two windows are located on the west elevation. Five silver colored wall mounted gooseneck lights are installed at the second story, with three beneath the second and third bays from northwest, and two beneath the fourth and fifth bays. A dentilated frieze band is located under the eaves of the entire façade section. Between this façade segment and the preceding segment (on the north elevation) is a firewall extending above the roof line.

West Elevation

The west elevation is comprised of six distinct façade sections, the majority of which mimic the facades of the entire historic Independence Hall complex, including the East Wing and the West Wing, each connected to the spired Independence Hall building by brick colonnades. Each of these five pieces of the historic Independence Hall complex are replicated at Independence Mall as distinctive storefronts.

10. The northernmost façade, imitating the east and west wings of Independence Hall, is a five-bay, stretcher bond brick veneered, two-story, hipped-roof storefront. From north to south, there are five bays. Located in the first bay is a 15-light wood door, surmounted by an arched cloth awning, with a lantern-style wall mounted light to the south. Next is a single-light fixed storefront window with a projecting brick sill, moulded wood trim, and a fixed traditional cloth awning. A single-light metal door is located in the central bay, topped by a fixed arched window and flanked to either side by a lantern-style wall mounted light. This door leads to the second story offices. Also flanking this door are two hand-carved wooden signs displaying the names of the offices above, each adorned with a Revolutionary War soldier and the name of the wing, “1776 The Continentals.” The remaining two bays on this façade segment mirror the first two. A large, fixed, single-light picture window, surmounted by a fixed traditional cloth awning, is located to the north

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of a 15-light wood door, which is topped by an arched cloth awning and has a lantern-style wall mounted light to the north. Each combination of door and picture window are for an individual retail space. The second story features four identical eight-over-eight windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. Each window features brick sills and brick jack arches with cream colored keystones. Six silver colored wall mounted gooseneck lights are installed at the second story, with three beneath the first and second bays from north, and three beneath the third and fourth bays.

11. The next façade segment imitates one of the connecting arcades at Independence Hall. The one-story, three-arched, brick arcade projects forward from the previous façade, though the actual side-gable building is recessed. This projecting arcade acts as a shed roof covered porch. The arcade is clad in stretcher bond brick veneer and features three cream colored brick keystones on each arch. Behind the portico are two bays on the first floor, a 32-light modern picture window and a six-panel wood door with wood trim. The first floor of the façade is clad in wood board-and-batten. The second floor features two identical eight-over-eight windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. Just above the windows is a dentilated wood frieze band that runs the width of this façade segment. The second floor is clad in wood clapboards.

12. The next façade segment features the shopping mall's namesake building and architectural showpiece, the replica of *Independence Hall*. This portion of the building is seven-bays, three-stories, and clad in a stretcher bond brick veneer. The center bay is located in a projecting four-story bell tower, topped with a three-story steeple base (with clock), loggia, lantern, and spire. This design of the bell tower and steeple is modeled after William Strickland's 1828 tower and steeple reconstruction at Independence Hall. The entire façade is regular and symmetrical with two four-course stepped belt courses that run the width of the building between the first and second floors and turn at the corners. Three windows flank both sides of the bell tower at the first and second floors. All of the windows are 12-over-12 with moulded wood trim and cream colored brick sills. At the roof level is a balustrade with turned spindles, piers, and urns atop the piers. At each end of the building segment are faux paired end chimneys. The bell tower projects from the façade and is just one bay in width. The first floor features a pair of 15-light wood doors with wood trim. Surmounting the entry is a four-column, flat roof porch featuring a wide entablature with a dentilated frieze. A large Palladian window is located at the second story. Four engaged brick columns project slightly next to and between the three windows. Atop the two smaller windows are heavy wood hoods, and atop the brick columns are Ionic wood capitals. Moulded wood trim and a wood keystone top the arched window. Between the second and third story, a dentilated frieze band continues from the main block of the building across the bell tower. A fixed light rose-window, with cream colored brick trim encircling it, is set into the façade in the middle of four engaged brick columns. The window is centered under another projecting cornice, directly underneath a front-gable pediment atop the cornice. The four engaged columns continue to the top of the fourth floor, where they terminate at moulded columns and another cornice. Set into the middle of the façade and columns is another window—a fixed 30-light with a cream colored brick sill, topped with a brick jack arch containing three cream colored bricks as a keystone. The brick bell tower ends at another roof balustrade. Located on top of the bell tower is a square steeple. A large circular clock, with garland underneath it, is centrally placed—each of the four sides of the steeple features a clock face. At each corner of the clock face is an engaged column. Above the

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clock is another matching roof balustrade. A six-sided, colonnaded open lantern with a metal roof tops the clock. A much smaller, six-sided, slat-sided lantern sits on top of the curved metal-roofed lantern below. Lastly, the entire structure is topped by a metal spire replete with weathervane. In February of 1981, an arsonist set fire to the replica of Independence Hall. While this façade sustained heavy fire damage (estimated at \$1,000,000), the building was reconstructed and restored to its original grand appearance, utilizing in-kind materials.⁴

13. The next façade segment imitates one of the connecting arcades. The one-story, three-arched, brick arcade projects forward from the previous façade, though the actual side-gable building is recessed. This projecting arcade acts as a shed roof covered porch. The arcade is clad in stretcher bond brick veneer and features three cream colored brick keystones on each arch. Behind the portico are two bays on the first floor, a 32-light modern picture window and a six-panel wood door, both featuring wood trim. The first floor of the façade is clad in wood board-and-batten. The second floor features two identical eight-over-eight, double-hung sash, wood windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. Just above the windows is a dentilated wood frieze band that runs the width of this façade segment. The second floor is clad in wood clapboards.

14. The next façade segment replicates the east and west wings of Independence Hall and is the last façade segment associated with the replication of this building. This façade is a three-bay, stretcher bond brick veneered, two-story, hipped-roof storefront. The first and third bays from the north each contain a fixed, single-light picture window. The windows have moulded wood trim, a brick sill, and a brick lintel with a three brick, cream colored keystone. The center bay features a 15-light wood door with an elaborate, oversized wood carved entryway. One-over-one wood panels flank each side of the door. Projecting from the panels on each side of the door are squared, fluted pilasters. Topping off the entire door surround is a segmental arched pediment. The second story features four identical eight-over-eight, double-hung sash, wood windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. Each window features brick sills and brick jack arches with cream colored keystones.

15. The last facade segment is a two-story, four-bay, wood clapboard section with a side-gable roof, slightly recessed from the elevation portion immediately to the north. The first bay to the north is a single-light metal door topped by a fixed, arched window. To the south of the door is a lantern-style wall mounted light, as well as a light fixture with a flared shade similar to the gooseneck lights, which illuminates a hand-carved wood sign depicting Betsy Ross. This door leads to the second story offices in the "Betsy Ross" portion of the building. The remaining three bays are all identical and contain a single-light fixed storefront window with moulded wood trim, topped by a cloth awning. Centered above each storefront window is a gold colored wall mounted gooseneck light. The second floor features five identical bays centered over the three picture windows. They are all six-over-six windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. Underneath the eaves of the roof is a dentilated wood frieze band. The roof features three identical narrow, front-gabled dormers, each with a four-over-four, double-hung sash window.

⁴ Phil Milford, "Dawn Fire Guts Independence Mall Tower," *The Morning News* (Wilmington, Delaware), February 9, 1981.

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Northwest Elevation

16. The northwest elevation contains one façade segment with four bays and matches architecturally the preceding façade segment on the west elevation. This section is two-story, side-gabled, and clad in wood clapboard. The first bay to the west is a 15-light wood door, followed by a fixed single-light storefront window with moulded wood trim, topped by a cloth awning. Centered above the storefront window is a gold colored wall mounted gooseneck light. The third bay is a 15-light wood door with thin wood trim, topped with a cloth dome awning. The last bay is a single-light metal door with plain wood trim, topped by a fixed arched window. This door leads to second story offices. The second floor features two identical bays centered over the storefront window. They are both six-over-six, double-hung sash, wood windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. Underneath the eaves of the roof is a dentilated wood frieze band. Between this façade segment and the preceding segment (on the west elevation) is a firewall extending above the roof line.

North Elevation

The north elevation is comprised of twelve distinctive façade sections.

17 & 18. The first façade to the east (attached to the northwest elevation) is a two-story, three-bay, stone and clapboard clad portion with a side-gable roof. On the first floor, this portion of the façade has been reworked to combine two separate storefronts into one space, evidenced by the different architectural treatments on the second floor. The first story is clad in a stone veneer. Two single-light fixed storefront windows with moulded wood trim flank the center entry door. The door is wood, 15-light, flanked by two 10-light wood sidelights. On either side of the entry is a lantern-style wall mounted light. To the extreme east on this façade segment is a carved wood sign for the door on the northwest elevation. It has a carved golden eagle atop the word “Liberty”—demarcating the “Liberty” suite in the shopping center. The second story retains its two distinct configurations and is clad in vinyl siding. Segment 17 exhibits two bays containing eight-over-eight windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. A six-over-six window is located in a front-gabled dormer, symmetrically placed between the two windows. The second story of segment 18 projects from the plane of the first story and that of the preceding bays to the east. Its second story exhibits two bays containing paired 10-light casement windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. Two silver colored wall mounted gooseneck lights are positioned beneath and between the third and fourth bays. A dentilated wood cornice runs under the eaves of the projecting two bay portion. Between this façade segment and the preceding segment (on the north elevation) is a firewall extending above the roof line.

19. The next façade segment to the west, which is flush with the first floor of the previous section, is a two-bay, two-story, brick and clapboard storefront with a side-gable roof. The first floor features a stretcher bond brick veneer, with a mix of clinker and common bricks. The first bay is a one-light fixed modern storefront window with moulded wood trim topped with a traditional cloth awning. The second bay features a 15-light wood door, with flat wood casing. The second floor is clad in vinyl clapboard and features two identical six-over-six windows with plain wood trim and two-panel shutters. Centered below the second-story windows are three silver colored wall mounted gooseneck lights.

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20. To the west is another two-bay, stretcher bond brick veneer, side-gable roof storefront. The first bay is a one-light fixed modern storefront window with moulded wood trim, topped with a traditional cloth awning. A lantern-style wall mounted light is located east of the door, with a second fixture at the far eastern end of the façade segment, adjacent to and providing light for the doorway located in the preceding façade segment. The second bay features a 15-light wood door, with flat wood casing topped by a domed cloth awning. The second floor is comprised of two identical eight-over-eight windows with wood trim, brick sills, and two-panel shutters. A six-over-six window is located in a front-gabled dormer, centrally placed above the windows on the second story.

21. The next façade segment to the west, which is also flush with the previous façade segments, is a two-bay, two-story, uncoursed stone veneer storefront with a side-gable roof. The first bay is a single-light fixed storefront window with moulded wood trim, topped with a traditional cloth awning. The second bay features a 15-light wood door with thin wood trim, topped by a cloth-domed awning, with a lantern-style wall mounted light east of the door. The second floor is comprised of two identical eight-over-eight windows with wood trim and two-panel shutters. Below the second-story windows and centered on the first-story storefront window are three silver colored wall mounted gooseneck lights.

22. The next façade segment to the west is a three-bay, two-story, clapboard clad storefront with a side-gable roof. A pent roof projects from this façade section. The space under the pent roof is enclosed with board-and-batten cladding, causing this section to project slightly from the previous storefronts. The three bays on the first floor are identical, each containing a pair of 15-light wood doors with plain wood trim. Above the pent roof are two identical eight-over-eight windows with wood trim and two-panel shutters. A dentilated wood frieze band is located underneath the eaves.

23. To the west is a five-bay, two-story, brick veneer storefront with a hipped roof, which projects slightly from the previous façade planes. The Federal-inspired façade features regular and symmetrical fenestration, with a door located in the central bay. Two eight-over-eight windows with wood trim, brick sills, and traditional cloth awnings, flank both sides of the door. The door is nine-light over vertical two-panel with a wood surround featuring wood pilasters, topped with a traditional cloth awning. The second floor features five identical eight-over-eight windows with plain wood trim, brick sills, and two-panel shutters. Two front-gable dormers are centered on the façade. Each dormer features a six-over-six window. The dormers are clad in clapboard. Between this façade segment and both the preceding and following segments are firewalls extending above the roof line as well as running bond brick veneered chimney stacks.

24. The next façade segment is a four-bay, two-story, stone and clapboard-clad storefront with a side-gable roof. The first bay from the east is a three-sided bay window with fixed one-lights and a raised-seam metal roof. The next bay contains a 15-light wood door flanked by single-panel wood shutters, with a lantern-style wall mounted light installed near the top of each shutter. A domed cloth awning tops the door. The next bay also contains a bay window, identical to the previous bay window. The fourth bay is a single-light metal door, topped by a fixed arched window, all trimmed in plain wood. This door leads to the second story offices, in the "Ben

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Franklin” portion of the building. To the east of the door is a carved wood sign with a sunburst and a key with a lightning bolt. The second story is clad in clapboard, while the first story is covered in an uncoursed stone veneer. There are four identical eight-over-eight windows with wood trim and two-panel shutters placed symmetrically across the second story. Underneath the eaves is a dentilated wood frieze band.

25. The next façade segment replicates the front elevation of *Library Hall*. This portion is five-bay, two-story, and clad in a stretcher bond brick veneer. It has a hipped roof with a three-bay projecting pedimented center gable and a large niche over the central door. This three-bay pedimented section is further demarcated from the rest of the façade by utilizing cream colored bricks to imitate four symmetrically placed columns that span the height of the building ending at a full return cornice. The arched niche is also demarcated by the same cream colored bricks and is topped by a brick keystone. Instead of Benjamin Franklin occupying the niche, like at the actual Library Hall, a large pair of wooden scissors is placed in this space. A 15-light wood door is located in the center bay and flanked by fluted wood columns, topped with a cloth dome awning. On either side of the door and within the projecting pediment are two identical eight-over-eight windows. These windows feature brick sills, dome cloth awnings, and red brick voussoired arches, replete with large white brick keystones and springers. The remaining two bays also contain windows, which are eight-over-eight windows with brick sills and dome cloth awnings. The second-floor features two windows on either side of the central niche. Separating the windows on the first floor from the second floor at the first and fifth bays is a two-course cream colored brick belt course, which does not carry across the central three bays. The second-floor windows are identical eight-over-eight windows with wood trim, brick sills, and cream colored keystones. Underneath the eaves is a dentilated frieze band. At the top of each of the four cream colored imitative columns are imitative capitals that project slightly from the frieze band. In the front-gable pediment is a six-light fixed fanlight. It features a cream colored brick sill, as well as a cream colored voussoired arch.

26. The next façade portion to the west is a two-bay, two-story, mansard-roof storefront. The first floor is clad in wood board-and-batten siding, while the second story is clad in asphalt shingles and projects slightly over the first story. The first bay is a fixed one-light picture window with wood trim. The second bay contains a 15-light wood door with thin wood trim. The second-floor features two eight-over-eight windows set in faux front-gable, clapboard-clad dormers. Between this façade segment and the preceding segment is a firewall extending above the roof line.

27. The next storefront to the west is a three-bay, two-story, side-gable portion. Two projecting one-light modern storefront windows with wood trim flank the central 15-light wood door. Above the first story is an asphalt-clad pent roof, beneath which is enclosed with board-and-batten cladding. The second story features two identical eight-over-eight windows with moulded wood trim and two-panel shutters. Underneath the eaves is a dentilated frieze band. A shed roof dormer is centered between the two second-story windows and exhibits a six-over-six window.

28. To the west, the next façade segment is a three-bay, two-story, board-and-batten and clapboard-clad storefront with a side-gable roof. The first-floor features wood board-and-batten siding, underneath a projecting asphalt-clad pent roof. The first bay contains a 15-light wood door with

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plain wood trim, with a wall mounted lantern-style light to the east. The next bay features a one-light fixed storefront window. The last bay is a single-light metal door, topped by a fixed arched window, all trimmed in plain wood, with a wall mounted lantern-style light to the west. This door leads to the second story offices. The second story is clad in clapboard and features two identical eight-over-eight windows with moulded wood trim and two-panel shutters. Underneath the eaves is a dentilated frieze band. Between this façade segment and the following segment is a firewall extending above the roof line

29. The last façade segment on the north elevation, the design of which was inspired by the side elevation of Congress Hall, is a ten-bay, two-story, stretched-bond brick veneered storefront with a hipped roof. The entire façade section features a nine-course white brick water table, a two-course white brick belt course, and a modillioned frieze band under the eaves of the hipped roof. The first bay to the east contains a 15-light wood door with wood trim, topped by a cloth-domed awning. Surrounding the awning is a red brick voussoired arch with a large white brick keystone and a two-course white brick springer to either side. Next is a 12-light over one-panel wood door with plain wood trim. Above the door is an arched blind light with a blind fanlight, replete with a red brick voussoired arch with a large white brick keystone and a two-course white brick springer to either side. A 15-light wood door is located in the sixth bay from the east, flanked by five-light wood sidelights. This door, with moulded wood casings, provides access into the first-floor interior space. A large, blind fanlight, replete with a keystone, surmounts the door. A small lantern-style light is positioned to either side of the door. The last bay also contains a 15-light wood door with wood trim and an arched blind light above. Around the light is a red brick voussoired arch with a large white brick keystone and a two-course white brick springer to either side. The rest of the bays on this section are all windows. The first-floor windows are all 12-over-12 windows with brick sills, blind fanlights, and red brick voussoired arches, replete with large white brick keystones and white brick springers. Located between each first-story bay (except the first and second) and following the last bay are nine lantern-style lights. The second-floor windows are shorter in size—they are eight-over-eight windows—with brick sills, topped with jack arches of red brick voussoirs and white brick keystones. On the second floor, above the main doorway, is a decorative metal balcony.

Roadside (End) Elevations

Two sides of the U-shaped shopping mall wings face west towards Concord Pike. Both sides of the shopping mall exhibit architectural treatments in the Early American style that match the interior facing facades. The roadside elevation to the north was inspired by *Old City Hall*, and the roadside elevation to the south was inspired by Congress Hall. Both buildings flank either side of the real Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Capaldi replicated this entire block in Philadelphia—when observed from the road, the U-shaped building is visually flattened, placing the replicas of Congress Hall, Independence Hall, and Old City Hall in their proper sequence from left to right.

West Elevation (North)

30. This elevation of the shopping mall, added c. 1975, matches the architectural treatments found on the south elevation's westernmost façade section. The elevation is three-bay, two-story, and clad in stretcher bond brick veneer, with a front-gable roof and a full return cornice. The entire façade section features a nine-course white brick water table, a two-course white brick belt course,

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and a modillioned frieze band under the eaves of the gable roof as well as in the full return cornice. A single full metal door is set in the central bay. A single row of white bricks with white voussoirs and a white keystone adorns the door opening. A small lantern-style light is positioned to either side of the door. The first-floor windows are all 12-over-12, double-hung sash, wood windows with brick sills, blind fanlights, and red brick voussoired arches, replete with large white brick keystones and white brick springers. A lantern-style light is positioned north of the first bay and south of the third bay. The second-floor windows are shorter in size—they are eight-over-eight, double-hung sash, wood windows with brick sills and are topped with jack arches made of red brick voussoirs and a white brick keystone. On the second floor, above the central doorway, is a decorative metal balcony. Placed in the gable end, above the full return cornice, is a wood fanlight with a white brick sill and red brick arch.

West Elevation (South)

31. This elevation of the shopping mall matches the architectural treatments found on the north elevation's western most façade section. The elevation is five-bay, two-story, with a stretcher bond brick veneer. The main architectural feature of this elevation is the Georgian-inspired pedimented center gable, which comprises the center three bays. The elevation also features a full return cornice. The entire façade section features an eight- to nine-course white brick water table, a white two-brick belt course, and modillioned frieze band under the eaves of the gable roof, as well as in the full return. A single 15-light wood door is located in the center bay. It is trimmed by a row of white bricks and topped with a blind fanlight and white brick arch with a white brick keystone. A small lantern-style light is positioned to either side of the door. The first-floor windows are all 12-over-12 windows with brick sills, blind fanlights, and red brick voussoired arches, replete with large white brick keystones and white brick springers. A lantern-style light is positioned north of the first bay and south of the fifth bay. The second-floor windows are shorter in size—they are eight-over-eight windows with brick sills and are topped with jack arches made of red brick voussoirs and a white brick keystone. On the second floor, above the central doorway, is a decorative metal balcony. In the gable end, above the full return cornice, is a single-light wood fanlight with a white brick sill and red brick arch.

Service Elevations

Like the interior customer-oriented façades, the service side of the building is also five-sided. However, unlike the primary facades, overall, these elevations feature little-to-no architectural ornamentation. Instead, most of these elevations are covered in stucco with metal doors and vinyl windows. This change in materials indicates a clear hierarchical differentiation of space.

South Elevation

The south service elevation is comprised of 30 irregular and asymmetrical bays. The first 10 bays are located on the side elevation of the Congress Hall replica façade. This portion of the rear service wing features the same architectural treatments as the two other facades of the Congress Hall replica. The entire façade section (first 10 bays) features a nine-course white brick water table, a two-course white brick belt course, and a modillioned frieze band under the eaves of the hipped roof. The first bay is a 12-over-12 window with moulded wood trim, a brick sill, and a brick jack arch with cream colored keystone and springers. The next bay to the east contains a solid metal door with metal trim. Floating above the door is a blind fanlight and a red brick voussoired arch,

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replete with a large white brick keystone and white brick springers. Between the second and third bays is a projecting brick veneered chimney. The next four bays to the east are identical, all 12-over-12 windows. They each have moulded wood trim, a brick sill, and a brick jack arch with cream colored keystone and springers. The next bay to the east is a nine-light over vertical two-panel metal door with wood trim. A blind fanlight with a red brick voussoired arch, replete with a large white brick keystone and white brick springers, is located atop the door. To the immediate east of the door is another projecting brick-veneered chimney. The next bay is a 12-over-12 window with moulded wood trim. A blind fanlight with a red brick voussoired arch, replete with a large white brick keystone and white brick springers, surmounts the window. The last two bays are identical, each containing a solid six-panel metal door. The doors have metal trim and are each topped with a blind fanlight with a red brick voussoired arch, replete with a large white brick keystone and white brick springers.

The next seven bays are located on a stuccoed section of the building—the first two bays from the west contain two solid metal doors without trim. The next two bays on this section contain two fixed six-light vinyl windows with brick sills. A projecting concrete block chimney separates the first four bays from the last three. The fifth and sixth bays are both fixed one-light windows with brick sills. The last bay contains a solid metal door. At the second floor are two bays to the west of the chimney and one bay to the east. The first is a fixed six-light vinyl window with a brick sill. The second bay contains a solid metal fire door, placed above the second and third bays on the first floor. A metal fire escape leads down from this door to the east, in front of windows on the first floor. The third bay contains a fixed single-light window with a brick sill.

The next three bays are located on a stretcher bond brick veneered section of the façade. The first bay is a solid metal door with metal trim. The remaining two bays on this section are boarded up windows. The second story has two asymmetrically placed bays. The first is a single-light fixed vinyl window with a brick sill. The second bay is a solid metal door which opens onto a metal fire escape leading down to the west. At the end of this segment is a projecting brick-veneered chimney.

The next five bays are located on a stuccoed section containing only a solid metal door with metal trim in the central bay, while to either side of it are two enclosed bays with extant sills. The second floor has two asymmetrically placed windows, both single-light fixed vinyl with brick sills. The second floor has two asymmetrically placed bays, each containing a one-light vinyl casement window.

The next façade segment, which begins with a projecting brick-veneered chimney, features three blind bays. The entire segment is clad in brick veneer. The first two blind bays were windows, with brick sills extant. The third blind bay was previously a door. The second floor has two asymmetrically placed bays. The first is a single-light vinyl casement window with a brick sill. The second bay is a solid metal door, opening onto a metal fire escape leading down to the west.

The final façade segment is stuccoed, and the remaining six bays are all solid metal doors with metal trim. There are four projecting, stuccoed concrete block chimneys, located between the first and second bays, third and fourth bays, fourth and fifth bays, and after the sixth bay. The second

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floor contains seven bays. The first bay, located to the west of the first chimney, is a one-light vinyl casement window with a brick sill. The next three bays are located to the west of the second chimney. The second overall bay is a solid metal door which opens onto a metal fire escape that leads down to the east. The next two bays are both one-light vinyl casement windows with brick sills. The next bay, located to the west of the third chimney, is also a one-light vinyl casement window with a brick sill. The next two bays, located to the west of the fourth chimney, contain a solid metal door which opens onto a metal fire escape leading down to the east, and a one-light vinyl casement window with a brick sill. The last bay, located to the east of the fourth chimney, is also a one-light vinyl casement window with a brick sill.

Southeast Elevation

The southeast service elevation is stuccoed and has just one bay—a nine-light over vertical two-panel metal door. The second-floor features three asymmetrically placed bays—all are one-light vinyl casement windows with brick sills.

East Elevation

The east service elevation contains 33 bays on three façade segments. The first façade segment is 14 bays, stuccoed, and features two projecting concrete block chimneys. Two bays are located to the north of the first chimney. The first bay is a solid metal door with metal trim. The second bay is an enclosed window. To the north of the first chimney are six bays—the first, second, and fifth bays are enclosed. The third and sixth bays both contain solid metal doors with metal trim. An enclosed door is located in the fourth bay. To the north of the second chimney are an additional six bays. The first, second, fifth, and sixth bays to the south of the second chimney are enclosed windows. The third and fourth bays each contain a solid metal door with metal trim. On the second floor, there are three bays located south of the first chimney. The first bay is a solid metal door with metal trim. The door opens onto a metal fire escape, which leads down to the north. The next two bays are both one-light casement windows. To the north of the first chimney on the second floor are four identical bays—all one-light casement windows. To the north of the second chimney on the second floor are six bays, with all but the fourth bay containing identical one-light casement windows. The fourth bay contains a solid metal door with solid metal trim and opens onto a metal fire escape that leads down to the south.

The next façade segment is clad in a stretcher bond brick veneer and features cream colored quoins. It is three stories tall and nine bays across. On the first floor, all but the central bay are window openings covered in a thin metal. Each window has wood trim, brick sills, and brick jack arches. Over the first two bays to the north is a hipped cloth awning. Below the windows is a two-course, cream colored brick belt course. In the center bay is a pair of solid metal doors with metal trim. There are also nine bays on the second floor placed symmetrically over the openings on the first floor. All bays except the central bays are windows. The windows in the first and last (ninth) bays are glass block with wood trim, brick sills, and brick jack arches. The remaining six windows are identical eight-over-eight windows with wood trim, brick sills, and brick jack arches. In the center is a solid metal door with solid metal trim. The third floor also features nine symmetrically placed bays. All bays except the central bays are windows. The windows in the first and last (ninth) bays are glass block with wood trim, brick sills, and brick jack arches. The remaining six windows are identical six-over-six, double-hung sash, vinyl windows with wood trim, brick sills, and brick jack

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arches. In the center is a solid metal door with solid metal trim. A three-story fire escape is located at the central bay with stairs leading down to the south.

The last façade segment on the east elevation is ten bays across, stuccoed, and features two projecting concrete block chimneys. There are four bays south of the first chimney. The first two are both solid metal doors with metal trim. The third and fourth bays are both enclosed window openings. To the north of the first chimney are five bays. The first bay is an enclosed window opening. The next two bays each contain a solid metal door with metal trim. The last two bays to the north are enclosed windows. To the north of the second chimney is one bay containing a solid metal door with metal trim. There are four irregularly placed bays on the second floor. Two one-light casement windows with wood trim are located to the south of the first chimney. To the north of the first chimney are two bays—a solid metal door with metal trim, and a one-light casement window with wood trim. In front of the metal door is a metal fire escape with stairs that lead down to the north.

Northeast Elevation

The northeast service elevation is stuccoed with scars visible for four missing windows. The second floor features three asymmetrically placed bays. The first bay is a solid metal door with metal trim, which opens onto a metal fire escape. The stairs from the fire escape descend to the northwest. The remaining two bays are both one-over-one windows with eight-over-eight grills and wood trim.

North Elevation

The north service elevation is entirely stuccoed and features 16 irregular and asymmetrically placed bays. There are six projecting, stuccoed concrete block chimneys. They are located to the east of the first bay, then to the west between the third and fourth bays, fifth and sixth bays, sixth and seventh bays, on the eighth bay, and between the ninth and tenth bays, and the fifteenth and sixteenth (last) bays. The first bay, to the west of the first chimney, is a one-by-one window with two horizontal metal bars and no trim. The next two bays to the west are both solid metal doors with metal trim. The next two bays, to the west of the second chimney, are also both solid metal doors with metal trim. The next bay to the west of the third chimney is also a solid metal door with metal trim. The next bay, also a solid metal door with metal trim, is located on the fourth chimney. Another solid metal door with metal trim is located to the west of the fourth chimney. The next two bays to the west of the fifth chimney are also solid metal doors with metal trim, the second of which is located underneath the canted second story. The next bay is also a solid metal door with metal trim. It is located underneath the canted second story, which is now enclosed at the first floor, thus this door is located on a different plane than all the other doors. The next door, also solid metal with solid wood trim, is located in a recessed niche under the canted second story. The next bay, also located underneath the canted second story, has been infilled with cement—previously it contained a door. The next bay to the west is a wood window with trim. The next to last bay is another solid metal door with metal trim. The last bay, located to the west of the sixth chimney, is also a solid metal door with metal trim.

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Interior

The interior of Independence Mall is subdivided into about 50 different shops and office suites, with a varying number of rooms in each. Each shop or suite has some latitude in the number of rooms inside, as well as the walls, ceilings, and other materials used to partition and outfit the spaces.

Sign Structure, 1964, updated 1983 (*non-contributing*)

Located at the extreme western edge of the parcel is a double-faced, freestanding, multi-tenant, high-rise sign built in the Early American style. The base is an eight-sided, brick arched gazebo. Each arch features three tan-colored brick keystones. A frieze band of board-and-batten wood siding is placed between the brick arches and the roof, providing additional space for retail signs. A curved, octagonal metal roof caps the gazebo. Atop the gazebo is a double-faced, multi-tenant sign. The sign is metal, supported by two circular metal posts, which run from the ground (through the gazebo) to the top sign. This multi-tenant sign currently has space to display eight retailers. Above the multi-tenant sign is a large “Independence Mall” sign. This, too, is double-faced—in large red font the word “Independence” is written in script, while the word “Mall” is written in capital serif letters. The “Independence Mall” lettering is placed in an Early American style sign with a scrolled, broken pediment profile and a corbelled frieze—the top and bottom surrounds of the sign are essentially mirrored. To the east and west of the “Independence Mall” sign are “turned” posts, giving this portion of the sign a very distinctive Early American design feeling. Lastly, the entire sign structure is surmounted by a gilded bald eagle. The bird’s wings are spread; its feet are gripping the top of the sign, almost as if the bird is actively landing. Eagles were a very popular design motif in the Early American period.

Much like the various facades of the shopping center, Emilio Capaldi also copied another structure for the gazebo design—again choosing to build in the Early American style. The Brick Lookout, a garden folly located at the nearby Winterthur Museum in northern Delaware, inspired the sign base. The Brick Lookout, built just prior to the construction of Independence Mall in 1962-1963, is a six-sided, arched brick gazebo garden folly.⁵ Also like the sign base at Independence Mall, the Brick Lookout is topped with a multi-sided curved tin roof. The focal point for the lookout, again like at the mall, is a cast iron eagle finial.⁶ The lookout has been *in situ* as a garden folly since 1963 on the “Sycamore Hill” portion of the estate.⁷ Replicating the design of the lookout as the base of the sign gave the structure a greater level of authenticity and charm.

⁵ “Brick Lookout,” Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:c10DvgOnWQMJ:https://winterthur.occell.com/en/brick-lookout-174534.html+&cd=5&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>.

⁶ Betsy Price, “Winterthur’s Follies: First Garden Exhibit Designed to Highlight Estate’s Architecture, Changing Landscape,” *Sunday News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), April 8, 2018.

⁷ Sam Dangremond, “Behold, an Entire Museum Exhibition Dedicated to Garden Follies,” *Town & Country Magazine*, June 11, 2018, <https://www.townandcountrymag.com/leisure/arts-and-culture/g21253069/winterthur-garden-follies-exhibit/>.

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Since the sign's initial construction, it was raised to 50 feet in height in 1983.⁸ With this increase in height, the sign now accommodates space to advertise the store names between the sign base and the Independence Mall sign, and the golden eagle. Despite this modification, the sign retains its original configuration, albeit elongated.

Utility Building, c. 2004 (*non-contributing*)

A small, square, one-story, flat-roofed, poured concrete utility building is located on the extreme southwestern corner of the parcel. The exterior concrete is scored and painted to imitate red brick. Each corner of the building has an untreated poured concrete corner "board." The top of the building features a dentilated concrete trim band. It sits on a poured concrete foundation, and the front (east) elevation is accessed by three poured concrete steps. There is only one opening on the entire building—a solid metal door on the east elevation that provides interior access to the space.

Integrity

Independence Mall is an increasingly rare survival of mid-twentieth century commercial roadside architecture in New Castle County and, in fact, achieves singular status locally—if not nationally—because of its unique combination of elaborate design, persistent theme, and high integrity. In particular, Independence Mall possesses high levels of integrity for location, design, setting, feeling, and association. It possesses this continued integrity despite its commercial function, its location in a dynamic commercial corridor in the suburbs, and its siting along a well-traveled and expanded state highway, Concord Pike—where architectural destruction, renovation, and turnover in ownership is quite high.

Roadside Architecture and Integrity

To fully appreciate the exceptional integrity of Independence Mall, one must consider the tremendous pressure towards change on commercial properties and—as such—their rare survival, their general lack of preservation, and their even scarcer recognition on the National Register. In Delaware, a 1992 document entitled "Historic Context for Evaluation of Commercial Roadside Architecture" produced for the Delaware Department of Transportation cautioned that, by the time of eligibility, "few of the best examples" of roadside property types tended to survive, and that it was "important that outstanding examples of endangered properties be recognized before they are lost."⁹ This context points out one obvious preservation problem of roadside architecture: due to their inherent close proximity to roads, these commercial buildings are intrinsically threatened by the creation of additional travel lanes, road realignment, the expansion of roads into highways, and thereby the construction of highway interchanges. The positioning of auto-dependent commercial buildings along the busiest thoroughfares has posed auto-related preservation challenges, since heavily-trafficked routes have required expansion to meet the demands of increased vehicular traffic—resulting in the frequent demolition of vulnerable, early roadside sites.

In the case of historic shopping malls, the preservation challenge can be especially daunting because, often, they were minimalist, utilitarian, and/or modernist in ornament and featured little

⁸ "Legal Notice," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, Delaware), April 2, 1983.

⁹ Elizabeth Rosin and Martha H. Bowers, "Historic Context for Evaluation of Commercial Roadside Architecture," Delaware Department of Transportation, Archaeology Series No. 99 (Cultural Resource Survey of U.S. Route 113, Milford-Georgetown, Sussex County, Delaware, 1992), 25.

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in obvious façade “design” from the onset, and thus did not attract attention as something worth preserving to casual observers. As such, that Independence Mall exhibited an elaborate theme, design, and historical ornament at its creation in the 1960s was, itself, remarkable from the onset. As architectural historian Richard Longstreth first pointed out, “ornate, historicizing exteriors” for shopping malls were not common due to the cost of construction, as well as the anticipation of changing tastes.¹⁰ Even where ornate design existed, high turnover from original commercial tenants typically occurred within a couple of decades, beginning a cycle where “maintenance levels [were] lowered” and “cheap, expedient remodeling becomes the norm.”¹¹ In fact, Longstreth adds that high levels of preservation at shopping malls is rare because “frequent change is generally seen as essential” at these commercial properties—meaning shopping malls often *must* change, adapt, and evolve in order to survive.¹² Longstreth’s observations are echoed and expanded in the most detailed discussion about the evaluation and preservation of strip malls—a 2009 master’s thesis by Matthew J. Manning—in which Manning observes that, “By its nature, the strip [mall] is in a continual state of flux.”¹³ He notes, “Because of rapid change along the strip, many resources do not last long enough to become eligible for the National Register.”¹⁴ Clearly, market pressures in highly-developed commercial areas frequently lead to demolitions and rebuilding, or at least the extensive renovation, of old commercial structures—especially those at the scale and size of Independence Mall—making their recognition and preservation very rare.

Shopping Malls and Integrity

Integrity analysis for large roadside commercial sites like shopping centers and strip malls must first involve a large-scale, top-down analysis of the overall layout of the property and the massing of the buildings, since destruction, additions, and infill are frequent on sprawling commercial properties. Matthew J. Manning provides valuable insights and guidelines for integrity analysis of shopping centers like Independence Mall. Manning notes that the *location* of the mall, and its proximity to the busy roadway it serves, are also obviously key ingredients of integrity. For *setting*, Manning suggests that it is “often in flux” in commercial areas, but that “the general character of the surroundings” typically remains stable and provides a “constancy” to the setting—and that the roadside location in a “competitive commercial corridor” is also a key part of setting.¹⁵ When it comes to *design*, it is *form*, according to Manning, that is the key feature to consider when evaluating the integrity of a strip mall, since “the strip mall rarely retains both original materials and style.”¹⁶ As such, argues Manning, it is “not style that is most important to the integrity of the strip mall,” but instead, it is “the forms and spaces that characterize the relationship between building and road.”¹⁷ In other words, a good starting point for integrity analysis might be an aerial image that reveals the positioning of buildings, parking accommodations, and circulation patterns

¹⁰ Richard Longstreth, “The Diffusion of the Community Shopping Center Concept During the Interwar Decades,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* Vol. 56, No. 3 (Sept. 1997), 289.

¹¹ Richard Longstreth, “When the Present Becomes Past,” <https://hispl102.umwblogs.org/files/Longstreth.pdf1992>, 6-7.

¹² Longstreth, “The Diffusion of the Community Shopping Center Concept During the Interwar Decades,” 289.

¹³ Matthew J. Manning, “The Death and Life of Great American Strip Malls: Evaluating and Preserving a Unique Cultural Resource,” Graduate Thesis (Miami University, 2005), 62.

¹⁴ Manning, 70.

¹⁵ Manning, 67-68.

¹⁶ Manning, 65.

¹⁷ Manning, 66.

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(see photo 1). Manning especially emphasizes three key elements for evaluating the overall form and layout of shopping centers: the all-important roadside sign (“calling for the attention of the passerby”), the parking lot for automobiles (“signaling comfort and convenience and drawing the eye” to the shopping venues), and lastly, the shape of the building itself (“low and set far back from the road, the building is background”).¹⁸ In sum, “Building, parking, and signage are the essence of the strip,” summarizes Manning, and “when it comes to integrity, these are the elements that are most important to the strip mall.”¹⁹ Manning further concludes that if a mall retains these key elements of its integrity, “it most likely will continue to provide the feelings and associations long connected to the idea and experience of the strip mall: the importance of the highway, the car, and commercialism.”²⁰ In the case of Independence Mall, however, the building is not only “background”—it, in fact, literally rises high to create an immersive visual experience that simulates colonial Philadelphia. While Manning emphasizes “massing and arrangement of spaces” for mall buildings and argues that design should not be measured “in terms of style or ornament,” Independence Mall brings both an additional layer of design and visual theme that adds powerfully to its strong integrity.²¹

High Integrity of Independence Mall

The original design of Independence Mall remains remarkably intact for a large-scale commercial structure in a major suburban corridor. The site plan of the mall remains nearly identical to its initial construction. Except for minor alterations, the mall retains its U-shaped footprint—circled on the perimeter by a narrow service driveway, and enclosing an interior forecourt parking lot, with three axial, landscaped berms dividing four rows of automobile parking—as originally designed. Despite available space for the intrusion of additional commercial structures near the road, Independence Mall remains fully open on its west side (adjacent to Concord Pike/U.S. Route 202), preserving for passersby the open vista of the implied “village” of shops, strongly punctuated by the towering Independence Mall replica as its visual centerpiece, and interrupted only by the mall’s prominent Early American style sign (topped with an American eagle)—itself a key survival that beckons and welcomes shoppers into the complex. In short, when viewed from above, Independence Mall’s footprint is nearly unaltered from its 1960s design, with only a minor addition that slightly extended the north wing, as well as the expansion of two areas of sidewalk to create miniature plazas at the northeast and southeast building junctions. The mall building’s footprint has otherwise not changed, and the original configuration of hardscaping and landscaping survives, preserving original traffic flows and parking patterns (see figure 1).

The unique historical theme of the mall also survives and is expressed in its name, design, architecture, and materials. Still named “Independence Mall,” it features an Independence Hall replica as its visual centerpiece, faithfully reconstructed and restored at significant expense after a fire in 1981 (making even the restored version 43 years old). Similarly, though more recently, the iconic Carpenter Hall replica façade on the north wing was also faithfully reconstructed in brick after a 2008 fire. The freestanding, double-faced, high-rise sign for Independence Mall retains key “historic” elements of its original design, including its Early American styling, with original carved

¹⁸ Manning, 66.

¹⁹ Manning, 66.

²⁰ Manning, 67-68.

²¹ Manning, 67-68.

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wooden elements like the turned posts and gilded American Eagle sculpture. During the early 1980s, when the sign structure was made taller to accommodate a new multi-tenant sign beneath the mall's primary sign, the "historic" style gazebo that served as the sign's base was reconstructed, and the primary box sign at the top (with its Early American scrollwork and historic lettering) appears to have been faithfully reproduced using some of its original elements.

The mall building, itself, retains one of the most critical elements for its historical theme and design—the individual historical “facades” that create the illusion of a historical village or town square. The sprawling mall structure is punctuated not only by the replica of Independence Hall but also facades inspired by other early Philadelphia buildings—like Congress Hall, Library Hall, Philosophical Hall, and New Hall—lending this monumental strip mall the appearance of many separate historical buildings and dwellings. This long-term retention of unique, individual “facades” to create the illusion of a village or town square, rather than succumbing at some point to a remodeling campaign to homogenize its overall aesthetics, makes this mall a highly significant survival and itself contributes significantly to its design integrity and significance.

Though less important to its overall design integrity, even the architecture of each individual “façade” tends to retain substantial levels of integrity, though they certainly demonstrate varying levels of loss, alteration, and material updates. When completed in 1965, the mall's original design featured 32 distinct historical facades. Today, there are 31 segments. Though Independence Mall is actually a single, large structure, the retention of so many original “facades” (with key features of their original appearance intact) contributes to a high level of design and “feeling” integrity for the overall visual composition of the mall structure.

The most significant loss of original design elements at Independence Mall includes roof features (cupolas and several chimneys) and some pent roofs (missing on individual facades, though they are often replaced with a modern awning to mimic the visual effect of the former pent roofs). Further, windows that originally featured muntins or false muntins to create the appearance of the small panes in “Early American” shoppe windows have been replaced with vinyl or composite windows that eliminate that design feature. Large, arched transom windows have also been added above several doors that lead to stairways to second-floor businesses (to illuminate interiors for safety). However, these losses and alterations do not substantially erode the overall design of Independence Mall, which retains its original site plan, building shape, circulation patterns, historic theme, and Early American design—all of which are clearly apparent to even the casual passerby on Concord Pike.

Integrity Conclusion

Independence Mall possesses high levels of integrity for location, design, setting, feeling, and association. For these criteria, it also meets or exceeds the standards identified in the Delaware Department of Transportation report “Historic Context for Evaluation of Commercial Roadside Architecture.”²² Of particular note is the context's statement that “the association with the automobile as seen in a property's location and setting are intrinsically important to roadside architecture,” emphasizing the inclusion of “direct access to an improved road in a setting that

²² Rosin and Bowers, 25-26.

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incorporates the automobile as evidenced by a drive court and/or on-premises parking.”²³
Independence Mall retains its site configuration and layout, in addition to generally retaining its original building design and much of its early fabric, further enhancing its integrity as an intact commercial architecture site.

²³ Rosin and Bowers, 25.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1964-1965

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Emilio Capaldi

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Independence Mall is significant at the local level under Criterion A for representing three distinct areas of significance. First, Independence Mall is an excellent and well-preserved local example of a post-World War II, suburban, automobile-centric shopping center design. Secondly, Independence Mall is highly significant as one of only 37 known reproductions of Independence Hall nationwide—itsself a significant building trend that sought to commemorate and enshrine national memory and values through replica building. (Independence Mall is, in fact, the only known mall complex in the United States constructed as a replica of Independence Hall.) Lastly, it is exceptionally important as the most extensive and intact example of post-World War II commercial architecture featuring Early-American-style design in northern Delaware.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

“Be It Known to All:” The Grand Opening of Independence Mall

In a full-page ad placed in Wilmington’s *Evening Journal* on October 22, 1965, builder Emilio Capaldi proudly announced the official grand opening of his one-of-a-kind shopping center in Wilmington, Delaware. As if channeling a colonial town crier in a village square, Capaldi’s advertisement declared:

Be It Known To All...that the Independence Mall, Wilmington, U.S. Route 202 the Concord Pike, cordially invites all citizens to a Grand Opening and Open House on Saturday, the Twenty-Third day of October, and continuing through the following week, that all may see how Independence Mall blends the informal charm of our Colonial Heritage with Modern Facilities for your shopping convenience (see figure 2).²⁴

The main attraction awaiting guests at the new shopping center was a grand, detailed reproduction of the famous Independence Hall in Philadelphia, which served as the striking visual centerpiece of the U-shaped shopping center. The planned events for the weeklong celebration of Independence Mall’s opening, like the mall itself, relied heavily on ties to the colonial American past to entice attendees and shoppers. Besides being invited to tour the reproduction Independence Hall building replete with an “exact replica” of the Liberty Bell (cast at the McShane Bell Foundry in Baltimore and housed on the building’s first floor), guests could also visit the other colonial era “recreations” of famous Philadelphia buildings—including Old City Hall, Philosophical Hall, Library Hall, the Betsy Ross House, the Letitia Penn House, and Carpenter Hall.²⁵ Adding to the historical associations and the colonial appeal of the new shopping center was its location, sitting

²⁴ “Emilio Capaldi Presents...Independence Mall, Wilmington...,” *Evening Journal* (Wilmington, DE), October 22, 1965.

²⁵ “Emilio Capaldi Presents...Independence Mall, Wilmington...,” *Evening Journal* (Wilmington, DE), October 22, 1965; “Independence Mall of Wilmington,” *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), May 1, 1965.

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directly adjacent to Gunning Bedford, Jr.'s house, Lombardy Hall—historic home to one of Delaware's signers of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. Other themed Early American attractions for visitors included hostesses dressed in colonial garb, surrey rides, and a number of door prizes.²⁶ Like the mall itself, even these advertised door prizes highlighted an interesting blend of historical nostalgia and new technology, offering a weekend gateway to Colonial Williamsburg and a new color television set.²⁷

Far from just a kitsch marketing gimmick, Emilio Capaldi envisioned Independence Mall as a new Delaware landmark, a destination shopping experience that could immerse visitors in a recreated past—and even educate them about Independence Hall and early American history without having to visit Philadelphia or Colonial Williamsburg. As the mall was being finished in 1965, Capaldi planned ongoing “guided tours” at the site, replicating the tours popular at several open-air historical museums at the time. A journalist covering the construction of the new mall confidently observed that “when completed it will be a Delaware landmark,” and even noted that the soaring steeple of the Independence Hall replica would soon be “the highest point in the state of Delaware.”²⁸ The grandiosity of the tower was emphasized by pointing out that its “illuminated, four-sided electric clock” featured “hands six feet in length.”²⁹ Capaldi himself told reporters that it was his sincere hope that Independence Mall would make such an impression on visitors that it would soon “become a part of the lore of Delaware.”³⁰

Retaining much of the original design and theme as established by Emilio Capaldi in 1964-1965, and now owned by Independence Plaza, LLC, which is managed by Capaldi's daughter, Roseanna Richards, Independence Mall is significant at the local level under Criterion A as an upscale shopping center built in the Early American style popular in the 1950s, '60s and '70s in the United States. Key to Capaldi's design approach was the extensive use of replica buildings and recreated historical facades, including a full-scale reproduction of Independence Hall—the only known example of a shopping center in the United States with this type of design. Even without its Early American style architecture and the Independence Hall replica, the mall's surviving overall form—its original site layout, building massing, and circulation system—makes it a strong local example of a post-World War II suburban shopping mall with an automobile-centric design.

CRITERION A

Shopping Leaves the City: The Rise (and Design) of Auto-Related Shopping Centers

Independence Mall is significant under Criterion A as a local example of post-war, automobile-driven, commercial architecture located in the rapidly suburbanizing transportation corridor north of the City of Wilmington. Several historical factors pushed retail activities out of downtowns in

²⁶ “Emilio Capaldi Presents...Independence Mall, Wilmington...,” *Evening Journal* (Wilmington, DE), October 22, 1965.

²⁷ “Emilio Capaldi Presents...Independence Mall, Wilmington...,” *Evening Journal* (Wilmington, DE), October 22, 1965.

²⁸ “Independence Mall of Wilmington,” *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), May 1, 1965.

²⁹ “Independence Mall of Wilmington,” *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), May 1, 1965.

³⁰ “Independence Mall Here to Copy Historic Buildings,” *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), September 14, 1963.

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post-World War II America. Residential suburban growth, consumer (auto) mobility, and an increase in disposable income, coupled with the decline of downtowns, urban renewal programs, and white flight, resulted in the rise of a myriad of newly created shopping-specific building forms on the outskirts of cities.³¹ Freestanding supermarkets, shopping centers (strip malls), and indoor malls became just a few of the dominant retail-oriented property types. Often, these new commercial spaces combined many different types of retail stores in one space.

Over one decade, between 1950 and 1960, the population of suburban New Castle County nearly doubled, with an increase of more than 100,000 residents.³² Prior to this, during the earliest suburban development in the first part of the twentieth century, new settlements were mostly limited to streetcar suburbs sited along a few trolley lines extending from the City of Wilmington. However, between 1940 (just prior to the U.S. entering World War II) and 1957, automobile ownership in the United States had doubled, from about 27 million to 54 million vehicles owned.³³ The post-World War II years witnessed a tremendous expansion of housing into rural areas, which had previously been out of practical reach for most people.³⁴ Many of these new suburbanites were veterans and their young families buying homes through the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, known as the GI Bill, "which created a Veterans Administration program to help the sixteen million soldiers and sailors of World War II purchase a home."³⁵ This, along with other New Deal-era mortgage reforms, furthered the post-war urban exodus—creating demand for both new housing and new commercial enterprises to serve the growing (and mobile) suburban populations.³⁶ Although the historical significance of this growth may be obscured by familiarity, the suburbanization of Wilmington is one of the most significant events in Delaware's history—of which the construction of new shopping centers, like Independence Mall, played a large role.³⁷

In response to early suburbanization, retail businesses followed their customer base out of the city to the suburbs. New design solutions to the relocation of retail and commercial spaces began appearing on the American landscape in the 1920s and 1930s in the form of strip malls and small shopping centers. These early commercial spaces contained grocery stores, pharmacies, and hardware stores, but only a small number were constructed nationwide.³⁸ It was not until the post-war period that the growth of these buildings exploded. In 1950, there were only about one hundred shopping centers in America, but by 1953, that number had tripled.³⁹ This trend of retail and

³¹ For an in-depth discussion and analysis of the rise of automobile consumer culture, see Richard Longstreth's *City Center to Regional Mall* as well as *The Drive-In, the Supermarket, and the Transformation of Commercial Space in Los Angeles, 1914-1941*; Longstreth, *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), 223.

³² "City's Population Drops to 94,262 as County's Soars," *Journal-Every Evening* (Wilmington, DE), May 23, 1960.

³³ Based on statistics from the USDOT Federal Highway Administration.

³⁴ Susan Mulchahey Chase, David L. Ames, and Rebecca J. Siders, "Suburbanization in the Vicinity of Wilmington, Delaware, 1880-1950+/-: A Historic Context" (Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, University of Delaware, 1992), 14.

³⁵ Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 204.

³⁶ Chase, Ames, and Siders, 81.

³⁷ Chase, Ames, and Siders, 3.

³⁸ James J. Farrell, *One Nation Under Goods: Malls and the Seductions of American Shopping* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2010), 6.

³⁹ Farrell, 7.

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commercial relocation to suburbia continued throughout the next several decades. By 1962, there were 5,000 shopping centers nationwide.⁴⁰ By 1964, the year construction began for Independence Mall, the number of shopping centers rose again to 7,600. By 1980, the number had almost tripled, to 22,100 shopping centers nationwide.⁴¹ The construction of new shopping malls (of all shapes and forms) during the 1950s, '60s, '70s, and '80s coincided with a tripling of the suburban population between those same decades nationally. Shopping centers, indoor malls, and strip malls became one of the most conspicuous symbols of American suburbia. The strip mall, of which Independence Mall is an example, was the most ubiquitous of all shopping mall types constructed in the twentieth century. Nearly two-thirds of all malls were strip malls.⁴²

Site Design: Independence Mall's U-Shaped, Auto-Friendly Layout

While pervasive on the landscape today, and thus not often appreciated for their architecture, early strip malls and shopping centers were carefully planned sites, with highly designed buildings and layouts to facilitate high volumes of automobile dependent shopping. Starting in the 1920s and 1930s, the proper design and siting of shopping centers and strip malls received national attention in architectural journals. In 1932, the *Architectural Record* published an article about the necessary design components for these new building types. By definition, strip malls and shopping centers were a planned group of connected shops. The relationship between automobile and building was one of the key components of their design. Shopping centers were primarily placed along major transportation routes, designed to capture suburban commuters.⁴³ These new buildings were located on the periphery of residential developments, instead of in the middle of them.⁴⁴ Additionally, they featured off-street parking that did not interfere with traffic on main roadways.⁴⁵ This was purposeful, as finding parking in downtown central business districts was an increasing problem. Customer parking and access was segregated from service and delivery access. Authors recommended that this separate access should be "away from the main frontage of shops," ideally located in a separate alley.⁴⁶ One author suggested that the forecourt arrangement of parking, like at Independence Mall, was a more attractive design than straight strip malls.⁴⁷

Architecturally, strip malls and shopping centers shared several characteristics and were planned to exhibit a harmonious central design.⁴⁸ Most of these buildings were one-story in height and featured only retail or commercial spaces. This was a departure from the mixed-use central business districts in American cities, with living space above street-level businesses. While the shopping centers featured sidewalks in front of the storefronts, these were the only pedestrian spaces, as these were not buildings designed to be walked to. Lastly, each shopping strip or center

⁴⁰ Charles Belfoure, "Edmondson Village Shopping Center," Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Crownsville, Maryland: Maryland Historical Trust, September 2017), Section 8, 10.

⁴¹ Belfoure, "Edmondson Village Shopping Center," Section 8, 10.

⁴² Belfoure, "Edmondson Village Shopping Center," Section 8, 10.

⁴³ "Drafting and Design Problems: Neighborhood Shopping Centers," *Architectural Record* (May 1932), 328.

⁴⁴ "Drafting and Design Problems," 329.

⁴⁵ "Drafting and Design Problems," 325.

⁴⁶ "Drafting and Design Problems," 328.

⁴⁷ "Drafting and Design Problems," 327.

⁴⁸ "Drafting and Design Problems," 328.

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would ideally feature a single clock tower, flagpole, or sign-tower signaling the group of shops and the name of the center.⁴⁹

Many strip malls and shopping centers constructed in the post-war period contained these prescribed landscape and architectural features, including Independence Mall. Independence Mall possesses nearly all of the features of a post-war shopping center and is an excellent example of this property type. Located off of a primary thoroughfare connecting early Wilmington suburbs to the city, Independence Mall is adjacent to northbound Concord Pike (U.S. Route 202). One driveway provides access into the mall, while another driveway leads out. Unlike classic strip malls, Independence Mall is a 12-sided U-shaped building, featuring a prominent automobile forecourt sited in the arms of the “U” with two-way traffic. A large service driveway or alley encircles the building, segregating the shopping areas from service spaces. Architecturally, the design employed at Independence Mall is harmonious—and in the Early American style. While two-stories in height, as opposed to a traditional one-story plan, this allows for office spaces above retail spaces. Lastly, an iconic Early American sign, surmounted by a golden eagle, demarcates the entrance to Independence Mall. While other shopping centers and strip malls exist in a high number across northern New Castle County, Independence Mall is the most architecturally grand example of a U-shaped shopping center and survives with the highest levels of integrity (for construction photos and other early photos depicting the site layout of the mall, see figures 3-8).

Independence Hall as American Icon: Independence Mall and Replication Architecture

Unquestionably, the focal point and showpiece of Independence Mall is the replica of the State House in Philadelphia, better known as Independence Hall. For centuries, Independence Hall has served as a symbol of America itself—as the birthplace of American democracy and freedom. The two most important documents in America’s history were drafted in Independence Hall—in 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, and in 1787, delegates from the new nation drafted the U.S. Constitution (see figure 9-12). Historian Charlene Mires, in her book *Independence Hall in America Memory*, states that buildings like Independence Hall have enhanced significance “because they allow individuals to participate in the process of remembering...aspects of the nation’s history.”⁵⁰ Mires refers to places important to national history as “sites of memory”—a phrase borrowed from French historian Pierre Nora. Sites of memory are essentially places that “allow individuals to connect with a past that lies beyond personal memory and to form a collective perception of the nation.”⁵¹ Buildings themselves play an important part in collective memory, as they outlast the original people associated with them and allow new groups an “opportunity to embed their collective memory in a physical entity...creating a version of the past that will survive from one generation to the next.”⁵² The creation of Independence Mall in Wilmington, like that of about 37 other replicas of Independence Hall across the country, allows the builders and subsequent users a chance to create and embed their own memories in a physical entity, to participate in a remembered version of early American history, and to venerate and remember an important site of national memory.

⁴⁹ “Drafting and Design Problems,” 329.

⁵⁰ Charlene Mires, *Independence Hall in American Memory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), ix.

⁵¹ Mires, xiv.

⁵² Mires, xiv.

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While Independence Hall today “represents the founding ideals of the nation” and “preserves national and international symbols of freedom and democracy,” it was not until after the Civil War that the building emerged as an important national icon.⁵³ This was due in large part to the 1876 Fourth of July Centennial Exhibition held in the City of Philadelphia. This exhibition not only celebrated the birthplace of America but also notably ushered in the Colonial Revival movement.⁵⁴ Interest in the Colonial era of American history had been stirred at the exhibition, which featured a replica Colonial kitchen, George Washington relics, and even a replica of George Washington’s New Jersey headquarters.⁵⁵ However, this resurgence of interest in America’s past was directly tied to the distressing conditions of the post-Civil War period. In the mid-1870s, America was in the throes of the Industrial Revolution, and immigration and urbanization were at an all-time high. As a reaction to the rapid pace of change, Americans turned towards their Colonial past for comfort. For decades following the Centennial Celebration in Philadelphia, Colonial-style housewares, furniture, and architecture grew in popularity.⁵⁶ It was during this anxious moment in American history that Independence Hall emerged as a symbol of American freedom.

Like all buildings, Independence Hall had a significant limitation to being viewed as a national icon—its place in public memory could only extend as far as its public recognition.⁵⁷ Despite the building’s local admiration, and even its rise in popularity due to the Centennial Exhibition, Independence Hall was a static object in Philadelphia. However, in 1893, the birthplace of American freedom was venerated in an interesting new way with the construction of the first known replica (see figure 13). While not concerned with creating an authentic copy, architect John Notman constructed the bell tower from Independence Hall and placed it onto a Victorian house form at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago as the official Pennsylvania State Building.⁵⁸ This replica allowed the symbol of independence to travel outside of Philadelphia.

It is important to note that it was not Independence Hall alone that was replicated during the early Colonial Revival period. Architectural historian William Rhoads notes that, during the late-nineteenth century, several Americans sought out historic homes to align themselves with the Colonial past. He states, “Many patriots could not find original monuments of the Revolution that might serve as residences, but in the late nineteenth century reproductions became available.”⁵⁹ One often-recreated house was the John Hancock House, originally located in Boston but unfortunately demolished in 1863. A replica of the house was also featured at the Columbian Exposition as the Massachusetts Building.⁶⁰ Additionally, the state of Virginia also constructed a

⁵³ “Independence National Historical Park (U.S. National Park Service),” National Parks Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, <https://www.nps.gov/inde/index.htm> (accessed February 8, 2021); John Maass, “Architecture Americanism; Or, Pastiches of Independence Hall,” *Historic Preservation* Vol. 22 (April-June 1970), 18.

⁵⁴ Mires, 120-121;135.

⁵⁵ Mires, 135-136.

⁵⁶ Mires, 135-136.

⁵⁷ Mires, 146.

⁵⁸ Mires, 176; Maass, 18.

⁵⁹ William B. Rhoads, “The Colonial Revival and American Nationalism,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* Vol. 35, No. 4 (Dec. 1976), 240.

⁶⁰ Rhoads, “The Colonial Revival,” 240.

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replica at the same exposition, crafting a duplicate of George Washington's Mount Vernon.⁶¹ Both houses were replicated across the country during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, including a duplicate of Mount Vernon called Hill-Stead, now listed as a National Historic Landmark (NR# 91002056).⁶² Completed in 1901 in Farmington, Connecticut, it was designed by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White in collaboration with Theodate Pope Riddle, one of America's first female architects.⁶³ In fact, Delaware also has its own Mount Vernon lookalike—Dauneport (NR# 100008081), built in 1933 by architect Mary McLaughlin Craig for Amy du Pont, located in Chateau County just a few miles northwest of Independence Mall.⁶⁴ While the John Hancock House and Mount Vernon represent often-copied domestic structures, Independence Hall served as architectural inspiration for public buildings. The state of Pennsylvania produced three more replicas of Independence Hall at subsequent expositions—at the Jamestown Exposition (1907), the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in San Francisco (1915), and at the New York World's Fair (1939).⁶⁵ All three replicas were constructed with changes made to the original design of the building but created the same overall effect, transporting Independence Hall to audiences far beyond Philadelphia.⁶⁶

By the 1930s, the nation abounded in buildings strongly influenced by Independence Hall.⁶⁷ The goal was not to create an exact copy of the building but adapt its architectural characteristics to suit the replica building's needs. During the 1920s and 1930s, Georgian-revival architecture was seen as an appropriate style for educational buildings. It was thought that the style would help imbue an appreciation for the nation's past.⁶⁸ In fact, several Independence Hall derivatives were constructed on educational campuses. The first of which was constructed at John Hopkins University (Gilman Hall) in 1915.⁶⁹ Other replicas of Independence Hall constructed on college campuses or at other educational institutions include examples at Columbia University (1920), Dartmouth College (1926-1928), Princeton (1930), Bucknell University (1930), William Penn Charter School (late 1920s, Philadelphia, PA), St. Georges School (1927, Newport, RI), Harvard University (1930), Howard University (1937-1938), Brooklyn College (1930s), Mercer University (1932), Colby College (1939), and Bellarmine-Jefferson High School (1944, Burbank, CA).⁷⁰ Independence Hall also served as design inspiration for a number of non-academic buildings, several of which were civic or museological buildings. Stock Yards National Bank was constructed in 1925 in Chicago, IL. Reading Hospital (West Reading, PA), Security Benefit Association Hospital (Topeka, KS, see figure 14), and Freeport Village Hall (Freeport, NY) were all constructed in 1929. Architect Robert O. Derrick designed a pair of replicas in 1929 in the Detroit

⁶¹ Rhoads, "The Colonial Revival," 241.

⁶² Rhoads, "The Colonial Revival," 241; David F. Ransom, "Hill-Stead," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, September 1990).

⁶³ Ransom, "Hill-Stead."

⁶⁴ Kimberley Showell, Michael J. Emmons Jr., and Catherine Morrissey, "Dauneport House," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (University of Delaware: Center for Historic Architecture and Design, September 2022).

⁶⁵ Mires, 176; Maass, 18-19.

⁶⁶ Mires, 176.

⁶⁷ Mires, 178.

⁶⁸ Mires, 178.

⁶⁹ Maass, 20.

⁷⁰ Maass, 19-22.

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metro area, the first at the Henry Ford Museum (Dearborn, MI) and the second for the Liberty Motor Car Company Headquarters (Detroit, MI). In most cases, these replicas adopted the most iconic feature of Independence Hall—its brick bell tower and steeple—projecting a sense of the Colonial past, as well as order and stability on the landscape.

While the majority of replicas of Independence Hall were constructed prior to World War II, others were constructed in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, as the meaning and memory associated with the original building continued to shift. Historian John Maass notes that these later replicas experienced an ideological shift from the pre-war replicas. He states, “The post-World War II buildings based upon Independence Hall display a subtle shift... the building is supposed to make a point.”⁷¹ Mires, in her book, states that during the Cold War, Independence Hall became a symbol to “support the American way [of life]” and served as a “beacon of American freedom” in direct opposition to the spread of Communism.⁷² She also notes that the building “acquired enhanced significance” for immigrants to the United States during this time as they sought freedom in their new homes.⁷³ For many émigrés, the Colonial-inspired architecture emulated in Independence Hall replicas expressed a “sought-after sense of security and belonging.”⁷⁴

The majority of the post-war replicas of Independence Hall were constructed either as banks or at theme parks and tourist venues, a notable shift from the pre-war replicas’ strong educational association. Of the entire collection of Independence Hall replicas, Independence Mall is the only known shopping center ever constructed (see figure 16 for a list of known replicas). Two of the first post-war replicas were constructed as banks—one in Chicago and the other in Kew Garden Hills, New York. In 1954, French émigré Sidney L. DeLove opened the “Independence Hall of Chicago” as the Cook County Federal Savings and Loan association, as well as a patriotic museum and headquarters for his “Independence Hall Association.”⁷⁵ While bearing little resemblance to the original, DeLove honored Independence Hall, stating that his building represented “a symbol of our national origin; the American Flag waving above its room, symbol of our land; the Liberty Bell ensconced in its tower, symbol of individual freedom. Together they reign, expressing in the thunder of their silence that which mere words cannot possibly say.”⁷⁶ The Queens County Savings Bank in the Kew Garden Hills section of Queens, New York, was also constructed in 1954 (NR# 05000630, see figure 15). The design of the bank is attributed to the bank president Joseph Upton, who was a native of Philadelphia.⁷⁷ The new building was envisioned as a reminder “to local residents, both native and immigrants, of our nation’s history.”⁷⁸ Upton spoke about the symbology of the new building at the bank’s opening day dedication, remarking, “Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell are symbolic of the freedom and character of the American people to progress and grow. And it is logical that these two symbols be adapted to a savings bank, for savings are a basic

⁷¹ Maass, 23.

⁷² Mires, 235.

⁷³ Mires, 236.

⁷⁴ “American Revivalism: This Country’s Love Affair with the Colonial Revival,” *The Magazine Antiques* (May/June 2011), <https://www.themagazineantiques.com/article/american-revivalism/>.

⁷⁵ Mires, 238-239.

⁷⁶ Mires, 238-239.

⁷⁷ Kathleen A. Howe, “Queens County Savings Bank,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, May 2005), Section 8, 2.

⁷⁸ Howe, Section 8, 2.

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essential to progress and growth.”⁷⁹ He went on to say that “we chose Independence Hall...for our Kew Garden Hills office as a reminder of these simple truths,” and that “the freedom and independence of the American people-and in fact of all people throughout the world-must emanate from those close to the local scene,” inviting the people to “visit this reproduction of a historic shrine.”⁸⁰ In both cases, these buildings were envisioned as symbols of American democracy and freedom.

Additionally, during the 1950s, ‘60s, and ‘70s, Independence Hall became a popular tourist destination as heritage tourism boomed during the post-war period. At Knott’s Berry Farm amusement park in Orange County, California, another replica of Independence Hall was constructed and dedicated on July 4, 1966. Mires attributed this copy to the popularity of Independence Hall as a tourist site, providing Americans on the west coast a chance to see the building.⁸¹ Mires goes on to also mention that one could “express patriotism by shopping at ‘Independence Mall’ near Wilmington, Delaware, a strip shopping center with an imitation Independence Hall as its focal point.”⁸² Mires stated that “such replica buildings made it possible for patriotic Americans to make their pilgrimages to the bulwark of democracy” in landscapes of consumption.⁸³

While the construction of Independence Mall was perhaps seen as gimmicky by some observers, the impetus behind the construction was far more complex than Mires states. Emilio Capaldi was a first generation Italian-American citizen. For Capaldi, love of his country, American history, and Colonial architecture were a balm to the stress of everyday life. In an article about Capaldi and the Independence Mall project published in *The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine* in 1964, he stated, “‘Whenever the pressure of a new business threatened to get me down,’ he says with a laugh, black eyes flashing, ‘I didn’t take a tranquilizer. I took a trip to Philadelphia so I could relax and amble through the streets and admire the old homes like when I was a kid.’”⁸⁴ He stated that on one of his frequent trips to Philadelphia, where he spent hours sketching Colonial-era buildings, he conceived the idea to replicate Independence Hall as opposed to the new strip malls “which are springing up everywhere. They leave no impression on you after you leave them,” he stated. “They’re sort of long, gray lines with dits and dots of neon. Right? That’s why I wanted to build something different, something that *adds* to the over-all appearance of my city.”⁸⁵ After he completed Independence Mall, Capaldi planned a second similar replica shopping center—this time in Delaware’s state capitol of Dover. In fact, Capaldi had hoped to build an Independence Mall in every state across the county.⁸⁶ A 1965 newspaper article discussing the construction of the second mall notes, “The shopping center would be built on lines similar to the Independence

⁷⁹ Howe, Section 8, 3.

⁸⁰ Howe, Section 8, 3.

⁸¹ Mires, 254-255.

⁸² Mires, 254-255.

⁸³ Mires, 254-255

⁸⁴ Doris Wilson Weinsheimer, “Wilmington Plans an Independence Mall,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine* (Philadelphia, PA), July 26, 1964.

⁸⁵ Doris Wilson Weinsheimer, “Wilmington Plans an Independence Mall,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine* (Philadelphia, PA), July 26, 1964.

⁸⁶ Roseanna Richards (current owner and Emilio Capaldi’s daughter), phone conversation with Catherine Morrissey, February 11, 2021.

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Mall.”⁸⁷ However, the City of Dover did not approve Capaldi’s initial vision—stating that the proposed steeple would detract from the “charm” of the Old Statehouse and Legislative Hall.⁸⁸ Unfortunately, Capaldi passed away before this second shopping mall project was completed. While the State of Delaware purchased the building in 1966, it never truly replicated Independence Hall or Capaldi’s first Colonial-inspired shopping center.⁸⁹ For Capaldi, his replica was far more than a landscape of consumption. He envisioned these malls serving as civic centers, each as a “place to look into the past,” with guided tours of the replica buildings and a source of pride to for their respective cities.⁹⁰

The meaning attached to Independence Hall has changed over the centuries since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. To so many Americans, the building embodies the principal tenants of American democracy and freedom. These replica buildings together can be understood as a class of objects that seeks to participate in the remembrance of American history and should be not derided as gimmicky or crude architectural derivations—because they were not constructed as such. As Mires said, buildings outlast people, and through this replication of a national shrine, it allows new generations to embed their own memory and pride in a physical entity.

Defining Replicas of Independence Hall as an Architectural “Type”

Defining Independence Hall replicas as an architectural type is relatively straightforward, since each replica simply mimics the key architectural features of the famous Independence Hall in Philadelphia. To qualify as a replica of Independence Hall, the structure must exhibit several of the most iconic, character-defining features of the original building. Most important is a visually prominent tower, featuring multiple vertical segments, rising above a wider rectangular block (typically two stories high). Like at the original Independence Hall, the iconic towers of replica buildings are typically more than twice the height of the main building, soaring the equivalent of about five stories high. The towers are typically of brick construction for approximately the bottom half, with the upper portion (clock house, bell tower, and steeple) being of wood construction painted white. The lower portion of the tower usually features two brick segments divided by a prominent, dentilated cornice, and features a large, signature Palladian window above the central entryway. The upper segment of the brick portion of the tower usually features a circular window and a rectangular sash window, as well as vertical brick pilasters. Above the brick portion of the tower, the wooden portion features a cubic clock house (with the clock often flanked by swag ornamentation), which is itself topped with an octagonal, arcaded bell tower. Above the bell tower, a steeple rises from a smaller, secondary dome. Above the brick portion of the tower, finials in the shape of urns typically ornament two or three sections of the wooden tower. As for the wider, lower main block of the building, replicas always copy its brick construction (though sometimes by using brick veneer), with the most faithful replicas featuring three bays of rectangular windows

⁸⁷ “Mall for Dover,” *The News Journal* (Wilmington, Delaware), March 6, 1965.

⁸⁸ “3 Dover Steeples Are 1 Too Many,” *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), March 11, 1965.

⁸⁹ “State Balks at Purchase of Shopping Center,” *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), July 14, 1966; “Budget Unit OKs Mall Purchase,” *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), July 23, 1966.

⁹⁰ Doris Wilson Weinsheimer, “Wilmington Plans an Independence Mall,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine* (Philadelphia, PA), July 26, 1964; “Independence Mall of Wilmington,” *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), May 1, 1965. Capaldi’s Dover shopping center was demolished in 1982 to make room for the construction of two new office buildings.

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to either side of the tower, usually being 12-over-12 sash windows. The roofline is almost always dentilated, beneath a shallow pitched roof that is usually crowned with a white-painted balustrade. The roof is also usually framed with end chimneys, like the original Independence Hall.

Most replicas of Independence Hall feature most of these architectural elements, though some are more interpretive or derivative than others. At Independence Mall, Emilio Capaldi included all of these key features, as well as other architectural details—including the single-story arcades flanking each side of the main building—making it one of the better Independence Hall replicas in the country.

Independence Mall: An ‘Early American Village’ Type of Shopping Center

Independence Mall is also significant at the local level under Criterion A as the grandest and most visible example of an ‘Early American Village’ style shopping center in New Castle County. Creating a “colonial” American feel by reproducing the architecture of historic and iconic Philadelphia buildings, arranged in a U-shaped layout to simulate an intimate early American village, Emilio Capaldi crafted an elaborate and distinct shopping destination in the ‘Early American’ style, popular in the U.S. after World War II.

Independence Mall joined in with and arguably influenced this mid-century design trend of creating Early American “village” shopping malls in New Castle County. While there is no scholarship that defines the overarching design characteristics for this specific type of commercial building during the post-World War II era, there were clear architectural patterns in their design—which typically channeled the more widespread trend of Early American design for commercial properties.⁹¹ Despite the growing popularity of modern, forward-looking commercial design following World War II, many newly built commercial buildings were also constructed in the Early American style. For commercial properties, this often involved cupolas or bell towers with Classical architectural elements, roof gables or Classical pediments, dentilated cornices at roof lines, wall siding that replicated wooden clapboards (usually painted white) or brick or stone (often as veneers), sash windows or large windows with small panes and wooden muntins, shutters on windows, Classical columns or pilasters, Classical doorway surrounds with pediments, and “lantern” style light fixtures to create a more traditional feel (see figure 17). Oftentimes these newly constructed commercial buildings, especially shopping centers, were constructed by the same builder as neighboring subdivisions, with the commercial buildings reflecting the architectural treatments found in the new housing development. Like their newly constructed residential counterparts, Early American commercial buildings seamlessly blended Colonial-

⁹¹ The Early American movement that followed World War II witnessed a proliferation of architectural expressions, channeling colonial or early national styles to celebrate American traditions. Though most scholarship about the Colonial Revival movement has focused on the period between 1876 and 1940, the revival of early American themes in architecture and the decorative arts did not cease with World War II—and, instead, experienced a widespread resurgence and popularization during the 1950s, ‘60s, and ‘70s. While many people associate post-World War II America with Modernist and “Contemporary” design movements, which consciously broke *away* from such earlier American traditions, the aesthetic fascination with early American history—and its designs and icons—never truly faded. In fact, it seems to have surged to new heights during the 1960s and ‘70s as a more popular, and more widespread, movement among middle-class and even working-class Americans. However, the Early American design movement is distinct from the earlier Colonial Revival movement due to its even freer interpretation and use of traditional design elements.

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inspired design, new construction materials, and the conveniences of modern technology. These commercial buildings typically featured only select elements of early American architecture, again to achieve a particular look, idea, or sentiment, and this resulted in entirely new forms. As with post-war Early American dwellings, the construction of Colonial-inspired commercial buildings grew nationwide in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s in shopping centers, restaurants, gas stations, and other commercial structures.

Shopping centers designed in an Early American "village" style took things a step further by creating the appearance of a grouping or cluster of buildings that imitated a village or town square. Though often incorporated into a single building, or perhaps a few structures, the "village" feel was accomplished through a number of strategies that visually implied separate structures—including varying roof heights, different façade materials (usually as veneers), and alternating variations such as roof dormers, pent roofs, and projecting or recessed facades to create the appearance of individual buildings and to imitate historic villages that had developed over a period of time.

Independence Mall's 'Early American Village' Design

Emilio Capaldi took things a step further with his own shopping mall replicating an Early American village, patriotically modeling his buildings after important and iconic buildings connected to the founding of the United States. The main design concept employed at Independence Mall to create a "village" environment was the extensive use of replicas of colonial-era architecture from Philadelphia. Besides the architectural showpiece and namesake for the mall, Independence Hall, several other famous historic building facades were replicated, including the Betsy Ross House, the Letitia Penn House, Library Hall, Carpenter's Hall, New Hall, Congress Hall, and Old City Hall (see figure 18-20 for newspaper coverage and figures 21-27 for original buildings replicated by Capaldi).⁹² Though many of the original buildings in Philadelphia were freestanding, Capaldi's careful arrangement of the individual facades as part of unified, single building allowed them to be connected through hallways and allowed individual businesses to occupy more than one "building" segment. The distinct building facades thus masked a more flexible interior space inside. All of Independence Mall's façade segments, 31 in total, display colonial-inspired design features including sash windows, shutters, and dentilated mouldings, as well as gooseneck and lantern-style lights. These individual façade segments, employing contrasting rooflines and a variety of exterior wall treatments (brick, stone, clapboard, and board-and-batten siding), give the building the appearance of a "colonial village."⁹³

The specific location and setting of Independence Mall also carried strong historical overtones and connections to the nation's founding, adding a certain historical gravity to Capaldi's historical village square approach. Underscoring Delaware's own connection to the Founding Fathers and the creation of the United States, Capaldi's replica colonial village was situated directly next door to Lombardy Hall (see photo 19), designated a National Historic Landmark (NR # 72000292) as the home of Gunning Bedford, Jr., a signer of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. In fact, within a year

⁹² *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), May 2, 1964; "Independence Mall of Wilmington," *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), May 1, 1965; "Independence Mall Here to Copy Historic Buildings," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), September 14, 1963.

⁹³ "Site Work to Begin: \$1 Million Mall Toes 'Go' Line," *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), April 30, 1963.

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of completing Independence Mall, Capaldi purchased Lombardy Hall with the intention of opening it for tours for visitors at the shopping mall (see figure 29).⁹⁴ Had this plan been carried to fruition, the Independence Mall property would have blended, in a single site, the true historic home of one of Delaware's 'Founding Fathers' with a complex of replica buildings associated with the founding of the nation. Underscoring the iconic power of the replicated buildings at Independence Mall, a period newspaper characterized them all as "historically significant shrines" for Americans.⁹⁵ Capaldi viewed Independence Mall as more than just a shopping center, hoping that his "copy of an historical area" would "become a part of the lore of Delaware."⁹⁶ Independence Mall would be a monument, a destination, and even serve as a sort of museum. One newspaper reported that Capaldi hoped, "As at Williamsburg, visits for schoolchildren and other groups will be arranged for conducted tours to study the results of research."⁹⁷ Capaldi felt like the construction of Independence Mall not only added to the overall aesthetic appearance of Wilmington, but the building itself could be used as a gathering place, as well as a "haven for civic activities."⁹⁸ He said, "I want the mall to be a place where families can come on Sundays to listen to concerts, to enjoy art exhibits and to look into the past."⁹⁹ Independence Mall would thus serve not only as a spectacular monument to the American past and a stylish place for commerce in the present, but it would also serve Delawareans as a community focal point for the future.

Comparison: Early American Shopping Centers in Northern Delaware

Independence Mall is the grandest and most visible example of an Early American style commercial building in New Castle County and is certainly the best surviving local example of an Early American "village" type of shopping center. Several comparable shopping centers with Early American styling survive in New Castle County, at varying levels of preservation and integrity. These commercial buildings were often built along primary thoroughfares, constructed at the edges of new post-war subdivisions, during the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. They exhibited a variety of forms—strip malls, U-shaped buildings, and even Colonial style "villages."

Fairfax Shopping Center and Subdivision

Constructed in 1950 and located just one-half mile north of Independence Mall, on the east side of Concord Pike, Fairfax Shopping Center is perhaps the earliest commercial center to participate in the local post-war "colonial" building trend. Conceived by Wilmington developer Alfred J. Vilone, the project was developed in conjunction with and intended to be a suburban center of commerce for the Fairfax subdivision of colonial-inspired homes, developed just to the east (see figure 31). An article published in the *Wilmington Morning News* announcing the near completion of the shopping center describes it as "conforming to the colonial Williamsburg type of architecture" and as "gleaming white, accented by its Colonial lines," further declaring it "a shopping center the

⁹⁴ "Builder Buys Home of Signer Bedford," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), January 19, 1966; "E. J. Capaldi, Builder, Dies of Auto Fumes," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), May 23, 1966.

⁹⁵ *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), May 2, 1964.

⁹⁶ "Independence Mall Here to Copy Historic Buildings," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), September 14, 1963.

⁹⁷ "Independence Mall Here to Copy Historic Buildings," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), September 14, 1963.

⁹⁸ Doris Wilson Weinsheimer, "Wilmington Plans an Independence Mall," *The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine* (Philadelphia, PA), July 26, 1964.

⁹⁹ Doris Wilson Weinsheimer, "Wilmington Plans an Independence Mall," *The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine* (Philadelphia, PA), July 26, 1964.

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likes of which is seldom found in this part of the country.”¹⁰⁰ As a forerunner to Independence Mall, the Fairfax “shoppes”—as they were often advertised—also capitalized on the regional suburban traffic along the heavily-traveled Concord Pike corridor, serving the commercial needs of the rapidly developing post-war suburbs in north Wilmington and beyond. Today, the Fairfax Shopping Center has been heavily modified, and almost all elements of its Early American design have been removed, leaving the shopping center with little integrity to its original design.

Possum Park Mall / Liberty Plaza

Created in the mid 1960s on the heels of Independence Mall, Possum Park Mall, which was later expanded and renamed Liberty Plaza, is designed with a “colonial village” aesthetic, though is much smaller in scale and has been recently renovated, stripping away many of its Early American features. The original part of the complex, situated just east of Newark along Kirkwood Highway, is arranged in two linear sections forming an L-shape, with the portion facing the road boasting the more “village”-like appearance. Possum Park Mall / Liberty Plaza was renovated in 2024, removing original materials from the individual facades, leaving this shopping center with little integrity to its original design.

Peddler’s Village

A decade after the creation of Independence Mall, brothers Joseph and Mario Capano developed Peddler’s Village, a smaller but similar “colonial”-inspired office and shopping center. Located within the actual colonial crossroads village of Christiana, the Capanos suggested that the design of their complex would, in fact, “complement historical interests in the Christiana area. An early advertisement targeting tenants for the commercial center exclaims, “You must see the plans to appreciate this Williamsburg approach to community shopping!”¹⁰¹ Another declares it to be “Delaware’s miniature Williamsburg...in shopping center form.”¹⁰² Two additional office buildings, built in the mid 1980s and early 1990s, stand at the rear of the complex with additional parking and, while less stylized, conform to the overall colonial-inspired architecture of the center. Peddler’s Village survives with some of its original materials intact, but it has lost its original layout through the addition of the two office buildings. This complex also never had the grandeur of design similar to Independence Mall.

Powder Mill Square

In the mid-to-late 1970s, Powder Mill Square opened in Greenville and, in name, pays homage to the nearby Eleutherian Mills and powder yard (a National Historic Landmark and National Register historic district, NR #660002590). The shopping center and business complex takes on a similar “colonial village” aesthetic akin to Independence Mall but on a smaller scale and with somewhat less elaborate architectural flair. Powder Mill Square consists of two spans, each with several mostly two-story building segments, with staggered roof lines and building setbacks. Two larger standalone buildings, one predating the complex and the other a later construction, are located within the center and have more modern facades that conform less to the village aesthetic. Today, Powder Mill Square arguably exhibits a similar level of design integrity to Independence

¹⁰⁰ “Fairfax Shopping Center ‘Show Window’ of Project,” *Wilmington Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), November 18, 1950.

¹⁰¹ Real estate subsection, *Evening Journal* (Wilmington, DE), May 31, 1973.

¹⁰² Real estate subsection, *Evening Journal* (Wilmington, DE), September 10, 1974.

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Mall, but it was constructed in a more piecemeal way, at a smaller scale, and with a more scattered layout—and it thus lacks the visual cohesion of Independence Mall. Furthermore, its primary construction and expansion circa 1977 makes it ineligible due to the 50-year rule.

Peoples Plaza

Even after America’s bicentennial and the height in popularity of “Early American” design, colonial-inspired commercial architecture continued to appear on the landscape. Peoples Plaza, located in Glasgow, was built in the mid-to-late 1980s. Expanded in the early 1990s, the traditional “colonial” aesthetic was continued with the addition of two large two- and three-story brick office buildings constructed in a Georgian style, and it also features traditional gables, colonnades, and multiple towers with cupolas and spires. However, this shopping center does not aspire to a “village” appearance, its architecture is not as elaborately designed, and it is presently ineligible due to the age of its construction and renovations.

Today, Independence Mall remains in operation as a boutique retail, office, and restaurant complex under the stewardship of Emilio Capaldi’s daughter, Roseanna Capaldi Richards. While Richards has completed renovations of the mall for the commercial needs of the twenty-first century, Independence Mall continues to reflect its initial Early American style and design, and showcase its centerpiece Independence Hall replica, staying true to Emilio Capaldi’s original vision.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Center for Historic Architecture and Design, University of Delaware

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): Delaware CRS # N14763

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 5.03 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 39.780835 | Longitude: -75.544101 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

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Or
UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries for the National Register nomination for Independence Mall align with the current tax parcel boundaries for New Castle County tax parcel #0611000031.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries coincide with the current tax parcel for Independence Mall, as well as the historic tax parcel for the shopping mall as well. It is a 5.03-acre rectangular parcel of land, bounded to the west by Concord Pike (U.S. Route 202), to the south by Weldin Road, to the north by Lombardy Hall (NHL/NR # 72000292), and to the east by Lombardy Cemetery and the Jewish Community Cemetery.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Catherine Morrissey, Associate Director (primary author), Michael Emmons, Assistant Director, and Kimberley Showell

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date: August 2024

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Delaware Cultural Resource Survey Information

Time Period: 1940-1970 +/- Suburbanization and Early Ex-urbanization

Geographic Zone: Piedmont

Historic Period Themes(s): Architecture, Engineering and Decorative Arts;
Retailing/Wholesaling; Settlement Patterns and Demographic Changes

Correlation with State Historic Preservation Plan 2018-2022

Goal 1: Strengthen/Expand Delaware's Core Federal/State Historic Preservation Program

Strategy 7: Address gaps and biases in the state's inventory of historic properties

Actions 7a: Prioritize cultural resource survey and National Register nominations to address under-represent communities or property types [MID-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE]

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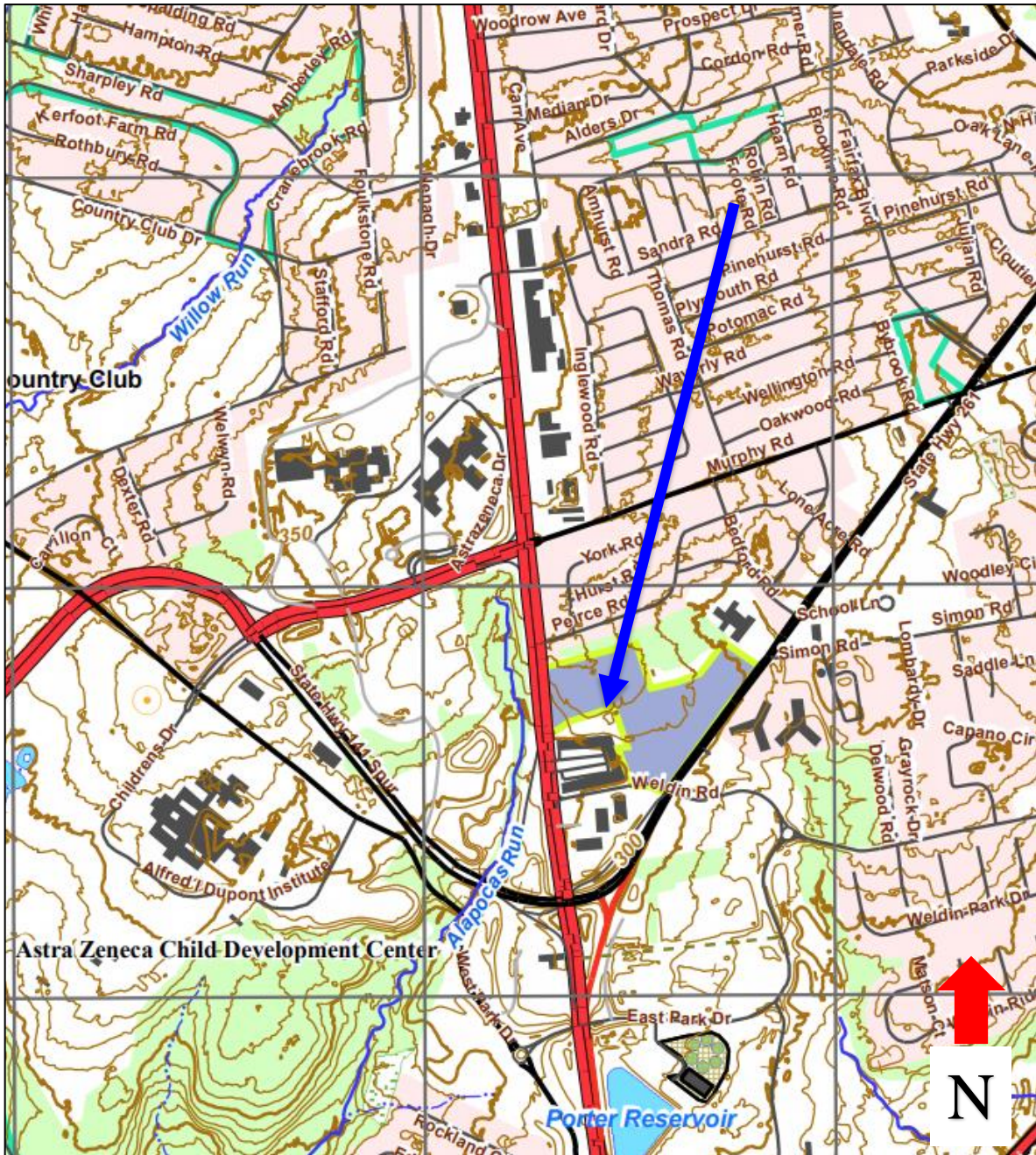
Independence Mall (Parcel # 0611000031) in pink, New Castle County Tax Parcel Map.



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USGS Quad Map, 7.5 Minute, Wilmington North, 2011 (Coordinates Lat:39.780835, Long:-75.544101).



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FAÇADE KEY: segments 1-15, 30, and 31 on south, southwest, and west elevations.



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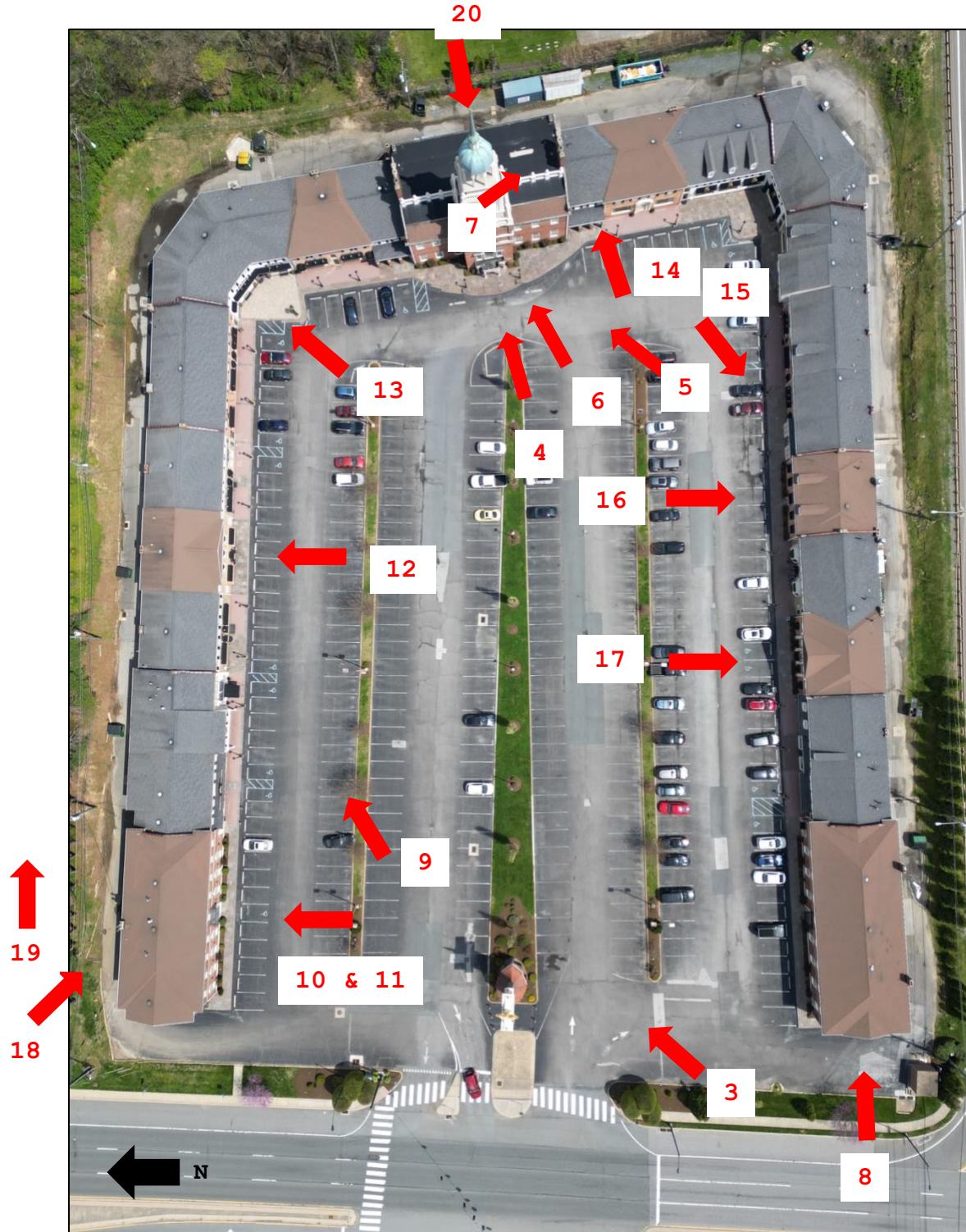
FAÇADE KEY: segments 16-29 on northwest and north elevations.



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PHOTO KEY
(Aerial taken by M. Emmons, 2024)



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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Independence Mall

City or Vicinity: Wilmington

County: New Castle State: Delaware

Photographer: Michael J. Emmons, Jr.

Date Photographed: April 14, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 20:

Aerial environmental view, showing Independence Mall in relationship to U.S. Route 202 (Concord Pike), as well as Lombardy Hall and Lombardy Cemetery bordering the property, looking north/northeast.

2 of 20:

Aerial view looking straight downward at the Independence Mall property, showing building form, parking forecourt, and circulation lanes, with U.S. Route 202 (bottom) to the west and the Independence Hall replica (top) to the east.

3 of 20:

View of the central axis of Independence Mall, showing roadside sign, the north row of "village" buildings, and the replica of Independence Hall, looking northeast.

4 of 20:

View of Independence Hall replica, looking east.

5 of 20:

Perspective view of Independence Hall replica, looking northeast.

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6 of 20:

Detail view showing architectural detailing on the tower of the Independence Hall replica, looking east.

7 of 20:

Interior, Independence Hall replica, perspective view of multistory stair hall with Georgian style finishes, looking southeast.

8 of 20:

View of Congress Hall replica that fronts U.S. Route 202 (Concord Pike), looking east.

9 of 20:

Perspective view of the north row of the shopping mall, showing historic building facades facing parking forecourt, looking northeast.

10 of 20:

View of south elevation of Old City Hall replica, showing brick wall veneer with Georgian style details, facing north.

11 of 20:

Detail view of south elevation of Old City Hall replica, showing cornice mouldings and detailing, facing north.

12 of 20:

View of Carpenter Hall replica facade, looking north.

13 of 20:

View of facades at the junction between north and east segments of Independence Mall, looking northeast.

14 of 20:

View of "South Wing of State House" façade, with replica brick arcade of Independence Mall, looking east.

15 of 20:

Perspective view of south wing of Independence Mall, showing south row of "village" building facades, looking southwest.

16 of 20:

View of a five-bay, Federal-inspired façade, looking south.

17 of 20:

View of Library replica façade, looking south.

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18 of 20:

Perspective view of rear service elevation of Independence Mall's north wing, showing service driveway, looking east.

19 of 20:

Environmental view showing Lombardy Hall (left), former home of Gunning Bedford, Jr. (signer of the U.S. Constitution), in relationship to Independence Mall (right), looking east.

20 of 20:

Aerial environmental view of Independence Mall, showing rear elevation of the Independence Mall replica and the rest of the mall's east wing, looking west.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.