

THE WILLIAM KESSLER AND ASSOCIATES COLLECTION

Papers, 1980-1981

1.5 linear feet

Accession Number 1214

L. C. Number MS

The papers of William Kessler and Associates were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in January of 1985 by Mr. William Kessler and were opened for research in June of 1986.

The General Motors Poletown project resulted from a joint offer by the cities of Detroit and Hamtramck of a site upon which to build a new GM assembly plant. The area proposed for the plant was bounded by I-94 on the south, Mt. Elliot Ave. on the east, St. Aubin Ave. on the west, and the former Dodge Main site on the north. This offer, made in June of 1980, was intended to insure that the new plant with its estimated 3,800 jobs would be built within the city which was experiencing a severe economic recession.

Acceptance by GM meant the removal of 150 business, 1,500 people, the destruction of the Dodge Main plant and numerous other buildings, and the raising of \$150 million by the city to prepare the site for construction. In order to proceed with the project to meet GM's time requirements, the city entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer, Martha Bigelow, on October 29, 1980.

The architectural firm of William Kessler and Associates was hired by the city to assist in carrying out it's obligations under the terms of the MOA. Generally, this entailed determining whether any areas of significant archeological, architectural, or historical value existed within the project area; and if so, to make a permanent record of their existence. Specifically, Michael Washo, Kessler's Director of Historic Preservation Services was to determine whether the area's architecture as a whole or any specific structures within the project area merited inclusion on the national register. And if that was the case, to make a permanent record of their architectural significance according to national registry standards, including photographs.

The papers of William Kessler and Associates reflect the firms work in studying the architectural significance of the Poletown area in general, and many specific buildings as well. Also included in the papers is much information regarding important historical and archeological elements within the project area.

Important subjects covered in this collection are:

Ethnic Study of Poletown, 1981  
GM Poletown Project, 1980-1981

Poletown Area History, 1980-1981  
Sig. Poletown Architecture, 1930-1981

Among the important correspondents are:

Martha Bigelow  
City of Detroit

General Motors Corp.  
Mike Washo

An index to subjects and correspondents will be found on p. 5.

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3 manuscript boxes

Series I, General Motors Poletown Project, 1980-1981, Boxes 1-3:  
Correspondence, clippings, studies, and other materials relating to  
investigation of archeological, architectural, and historical re-  
sources located within the project area, and documentation of these  
sites.

Non-manuscript Material:

A large quantity of photographs relating to the William  
Kessler and Associates architectural investigation of  
the Poletown area, and specific structures within the  
project area, have been placed in the Archives Audio-  
Visual Collections.

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Series I  
GM Poletown Project, 1980-1981  
Boxes 1-3

Correspondence, clippings, reports, research, and other items concerning the General Motors Poletown project of 1980-1981. Most of the materials are concerned with William Kessler and Associates role in investigating the architectural significance of the Poletown area and it's specific structures, and the recording of these items for inclusion upon the national register. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material.

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8. Individ. Sites: Bohn Aluminum, 1980-1981
9. Individ. Sites: Brown Bros. Funeral Home, 1980-1981
10. Individ. Sites: Bulldog Electric, 1980-1981
11. Individ. Sites: Chene St. Commercial District, 1980-1981
12. Individ. Sites: Detroit Steel Products, 1980-1981
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18. Individ. Sites: Hupp Motor Car Co., 1980-1981
19. Individ. Sites: Immaculate Conception Church, 1980-1981
20. Individ. Sites: Majeske School, 1980-1981
21. Individ. Sites: Maxwell Motor Car, 1980-1981
22. Individ. Sites: Midland Steel Co., 1980-1981
23. Individ. Sites: Paddy McGraws, 1980-1981
24. Individ. Sites: Parke School, 1980-1981
25. Individ. Sites: St. Elizabeth Church, 1980-1981
26. Individ. Sites: St. Hyacinth Church, 1980-1981

Box 2

1. Individ. Sites: St. John's Evangelical Church, 1980-1981
2. Individ. Sites: St. Nicholas Church, 1980-1981
3. Individ. Sites: St. Stanislaus Church, 1980-1981
4. Monograph: Union Town - Labor History of Detroit
5. Monograph: Poletown Historic District, Sept. 1980
6. Newspaper Clippings, Oct. 1980 - May 1981
7. Report: Oral History Group, 1980-1981
8. Report: Poletown Investigation Report, Dec. 1980
9. Research: Architectural Types, 1980-1981
10. Research: Bibliographical Notes, 1980-1981
11. Research: Concerning Documentation and Standards, 1980-1981

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- 12-14. Research: Maps, 1980-1981
15. Research: Misc., 1980-1981
16. Research: Parameters of Study and Findings, 1980-1981
- 17-18. Research: Poletown area notes, 1980-1981
19. Study: Archeological Potential of Area, Feb. 1981
20. Study: Archeological Testing of Project Area, June 1981
21. Study: Beth Olam Cemetery, 1981

Box 3

1. Study: Past Land Use Dodge Main, Nov. 1980
- 2-5. Study: Environmental Impact Statement Prelim. Draft pt. 1-4, 1980
6. Study: Environmental Impact Statement Draft, Oct. 1980
7. Study: Environmental Impact Statement Final, Dec. 1980
8. Study: Site Survey Dodge Main, Nov. 1980
9. Study: Socio-Historical Study of Poletown, Nov. 1980

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