

HALLOWED GROUNDS – THE
BASEBALL GROUNDS OF
ROCHESTER, NY

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ROCHESTER, NY... BASEBALL CITY USA

- In 1998, 'Baseball America' named Rochester "Baseball City USA."
- Rochester has been home to amateur baseball since 1825 and professional baseball since 1877.
- Frontier Field is the 9th ballpark to host Rochester's professional baseball teams!



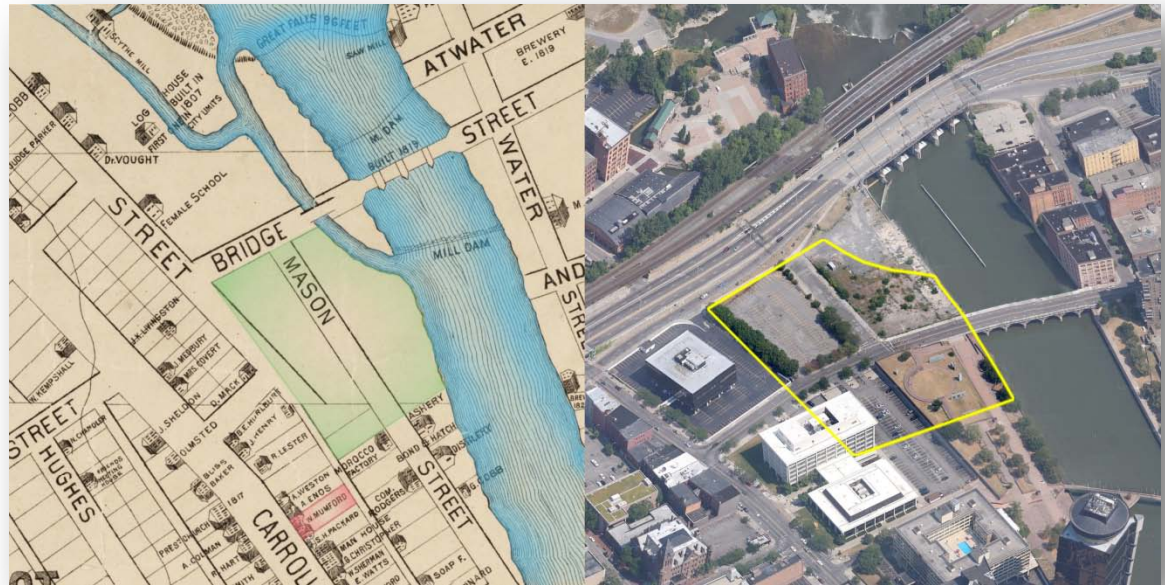
OVERVIEW

Years Used	Ballpark Name	Location
1877 – 1885	Union Street Grounds / Hop Bitters Base Ball Grounds	North Union Street
1886 – 1892	Culver Park Grounds	University Avenue (site of current Gleason Works)
1888 - 1892	Windsor Beach Base Ball Grounds	Windsor Beach (site of current Norcrest Drive)
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MUMFORD'S MEADOW - 1825

- One of the earliest written accounts of baseball describes a team of men that played in a farmer's pasture in 1825 – almost 200 years ago.
- “A base-ball club... met every afternoon... The ball-ground, containing some eight or ten acres, known as Mumford's meadow, by the side of the river above the falls, is now a compact part of the city.”



AMATEUR BASEBALL IN ROCHESTER: 1850s – 1870s

- Before the advent of professional baseball in Rochester, amateurs played at many locations around the city including **Brown's Square**, **Jones Square**, **Franklin Square**, and the **Babbitt Tract**.

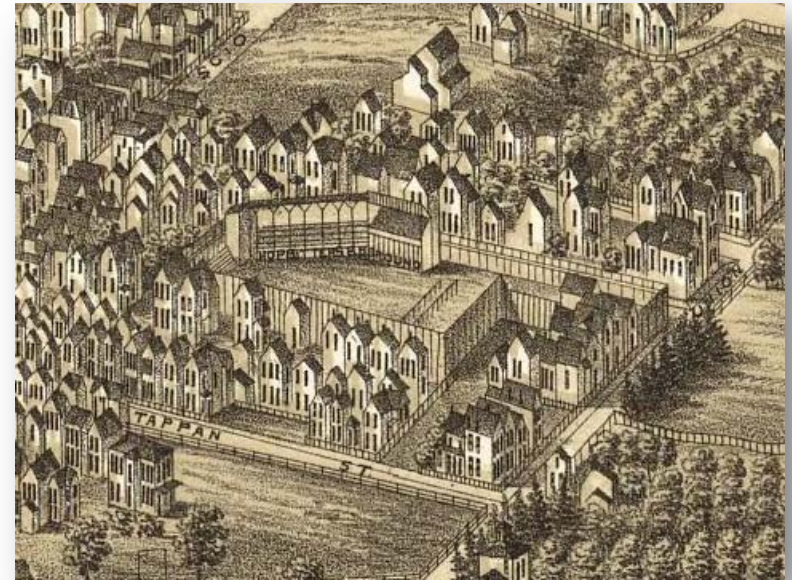
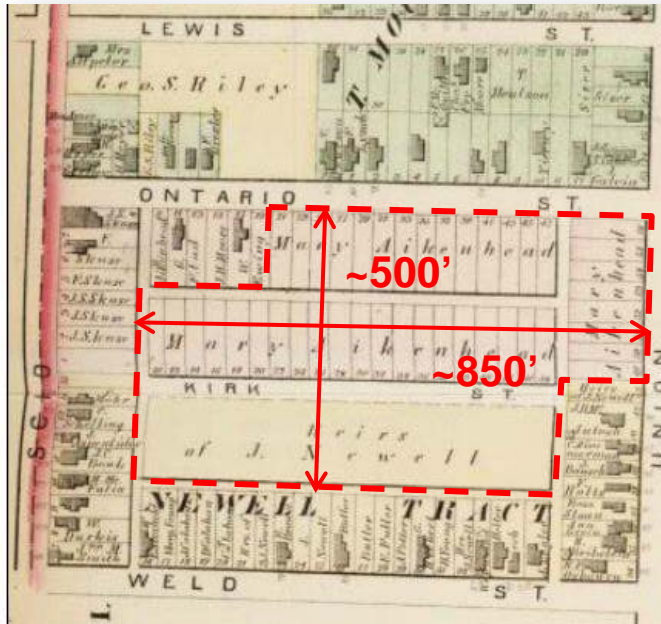


↑ Brown's Square is one block from Frontier Field.

← Jones Square is depicted in a lithograph on the cover of the "Live Oak Polka"

ROCHESTER'S FIRST PERMANENT BALLPARK (1877 – 1885)

- In 1877, with the formation of Rochester's first professional team, the first permanent ballpark was erected on North Union Street not far from the current site of the Rochester Public Market.

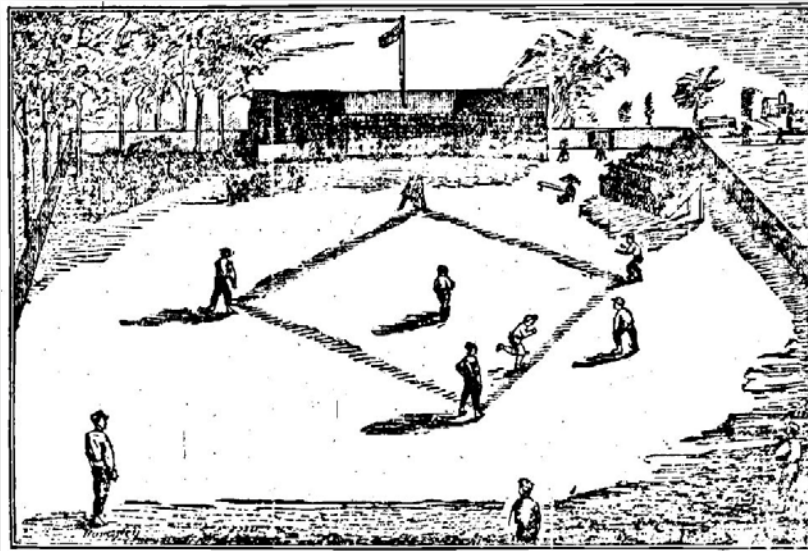


↑ Hop Bitters Base Ball Ground – detail of 1880 illustration of the city of Rochester

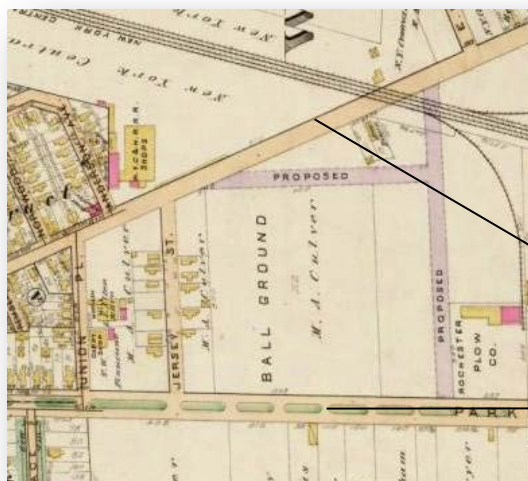
← The shape illustrated by the dotted red line roughly corresponds to the shape of the ballpark depicted in the 1880 lithograph. The area depicted is large enough for a baseball field.

CULVER PARK GROUNDS (1886 – 1892)

- Culver Park Grounds, located on University Avenue at the current location of the Gleason Works, opened in 1886.
- Professional baseball was played there through the 1892 season. Amateur teams played there in 1893.
- A fire destroyed the primary grandstand in October 1893.



↑ The new Culver Park Grounds, as depicted in the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, May 9, 1886

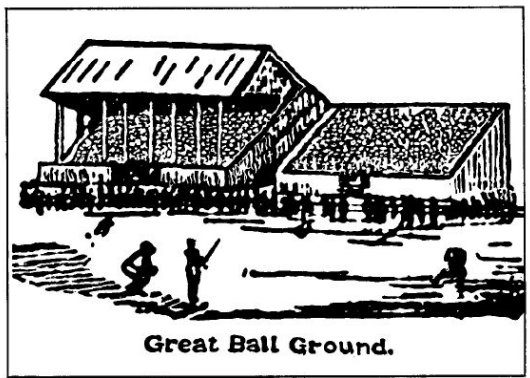


University Avenue (now Atlantic Avenue)

Culver Park (now University Avenue)

WINDSOR BEACH BALL GROUNDS (1888 – 1892)

- Blue laws prohibited the playing of baseball games in the city on Sundays.
- Gen. Brinker, owner of ballclub and RW&O railroad line – entrepreneurial venture



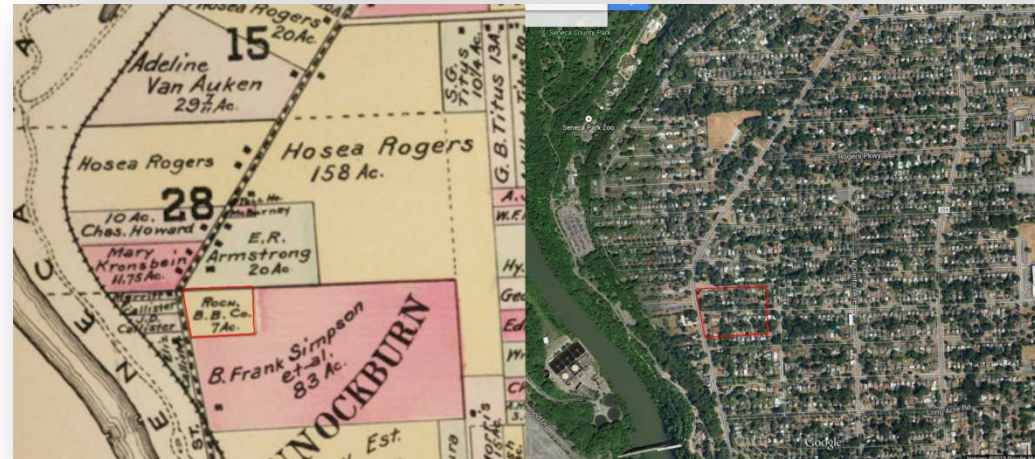
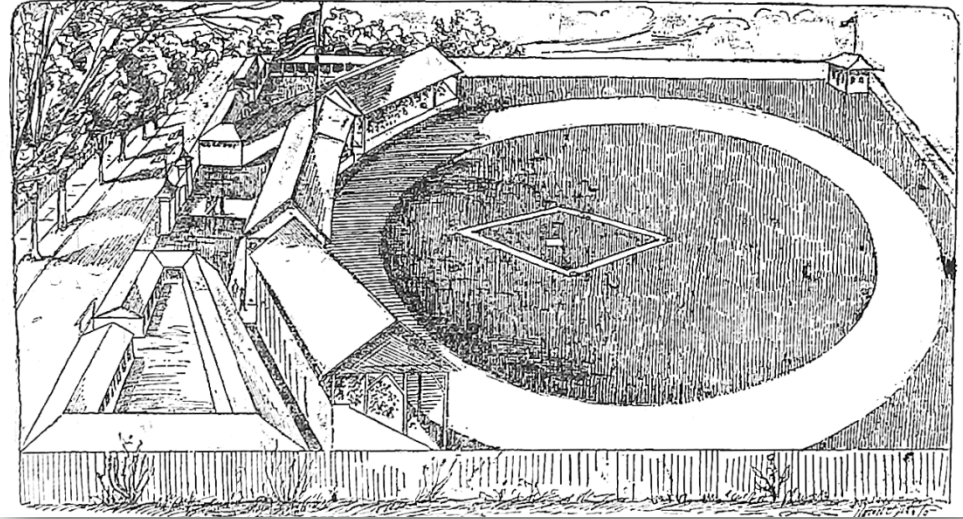
↑ Illustration of Windsor Beach ballpark, 1888



↑ Composite image of Windsor Beach area

RIVERSIDE PARK (1895 – 1897)

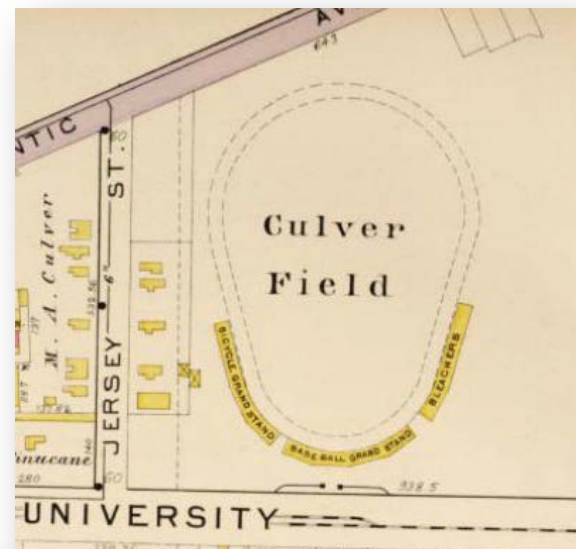
- Rochester had no professional team in 1893 or 1894. Rochester joined the Eastern League for the 1895 season.
- 3 co-owners, the “Big 3,” chose to build a new ballpark rather than rebuilding the burned Culver Park Grounds.
- Catering to the bicycle craze that swept Rochester in the late 1800s, the ballpark was designed to include a bicycle track as well as the baseball diamond.
- Sunday Blue Laws continued to be a problem.



1902 Irondequoit map:
“Roch. B.B. Co.” →

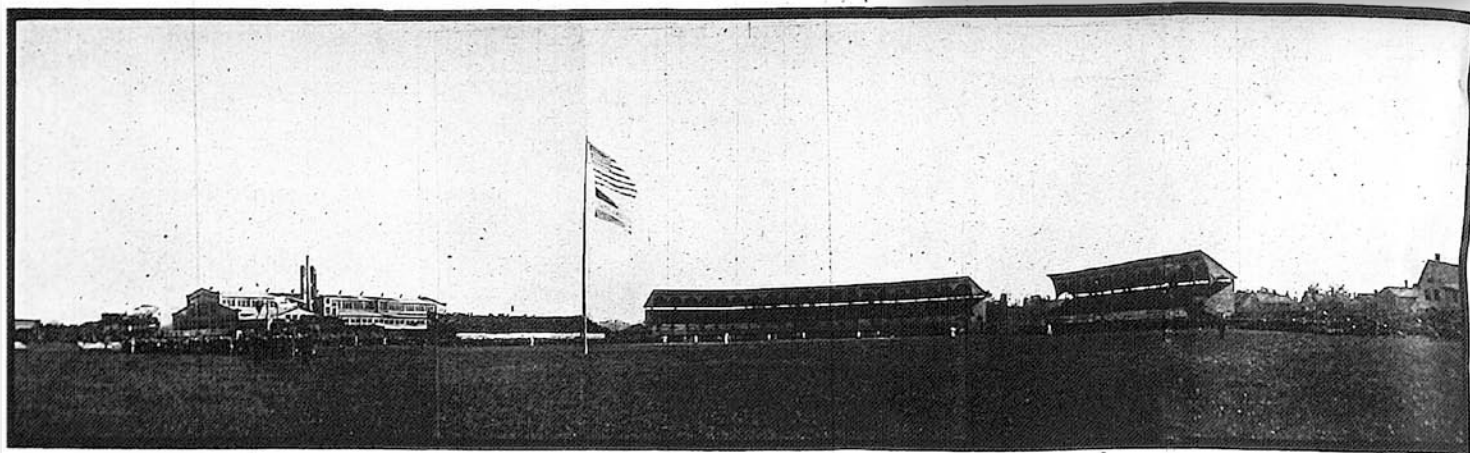
CULVER FIELD (1898 – 1907)

- Rochester fielded a new club for the 1898 season and built a new baseball field at the former location of the Culver Park Grounds, now called Culver Field.
- Like Riverside Park, Culver Field also had a bicycle track, this one slightly larger at 1/3 mile.
- Tragedy struck again –Culver Field suffered from a collapse of the first base side bleachers during a game in May of 1906, resulting in over three hundred injuries and a number of lawsuits.



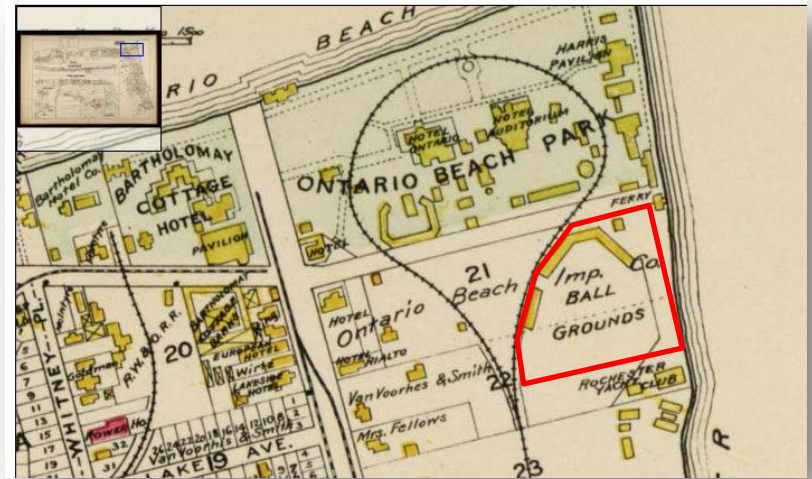
Detail of Rochester city map, 1900 ↗

Culver Field on opening day, May 14, 1906 (Rochester Herald, May 20, 1906) →



ONTARIO BEACH PARK (CA. 1898 – CA. 1902)

- Located at Charlotte beach, west side of Genesee River outlet
- Supplemented Culver Field as a location for Sunday ballgames.
- Hosted at least one Major League game - a Cleveland / Brooklyn matchup in 1898



BASEBALL PARK AT BAY STREET (1908 – 1928)

- Opened for the 1908 season, Baseball Park at Bay Street was host to Rochester's professional team for 21 seasons, through the 1928 season.
- Fans (and even automobiles) packed the farthest reaches of the outfield grass on overflow occasions.
- Babe Ruth was one of the only players to hit a ball over the right field fence, during a barnstorming appearance in 1921.



Detail of Rochester city map, 1910 ↗



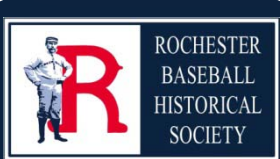
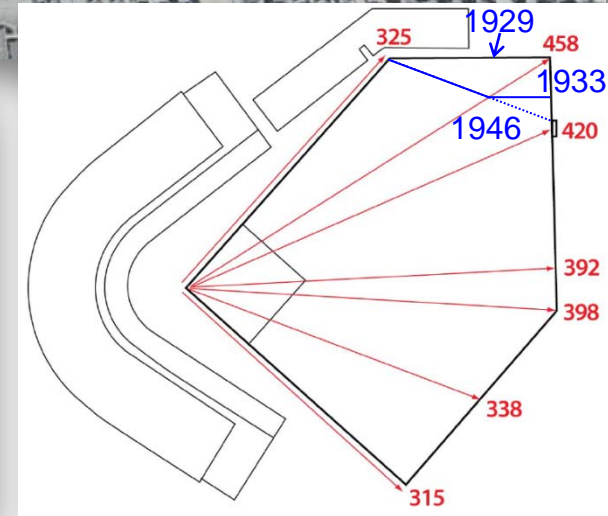
*Panoramic view of the outfield wall and advertising, ca. 1912-13 ↗
(courtesy Gary Albright)*

13,000 fans pack Bay Street Baseball Park on opening day, 1909. →



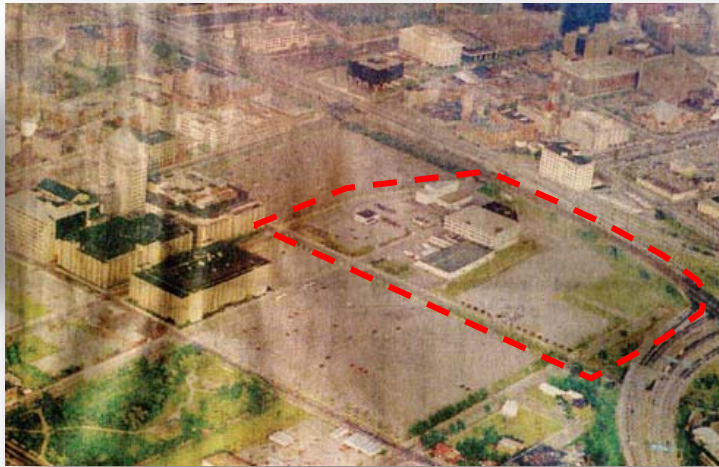
RED WING / SILVER STADIUM (1929 – 1996)

- Built by parent Cardinals at a cost of \$415,000. Opened in 1929.
- Nicknamed the “Taj Mahal of the minor leagues.” Rivalled many major league stadiums of the era.
- Renamed Silver Stadium in 1968 to honor Morrie Silver, savior of professional baseball in Rochester.
- Major renovation in 1986-87 offseason.



FRONTIER FIELD (1997 – PRESENT)

- Designed by Ellerbe Beckett and built by Christa Construction firm at a cost of \$35.8 Million.
- Opened in summer 1996. First baseball season 1997.
- Design cues taken from structures in surrounding Brown's Race neighborhood
- Several additions over the years: first-base-side roof (and Hardball cafe) (1999-2000), new field (2007).



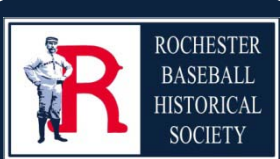
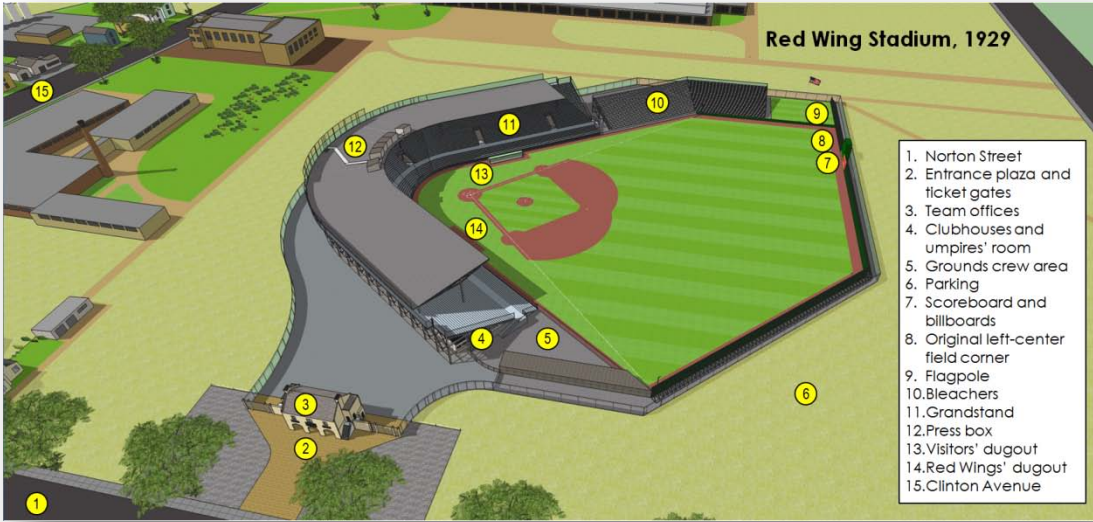
Top right: Photo credit: Joe Territo. Above: early Frontier Field design, July, 1994. Left: 1993 aerial view of the eventual Frontier Field location (Democrat and Chronicle). Far left: 2011 aerial photo (pdga.com).

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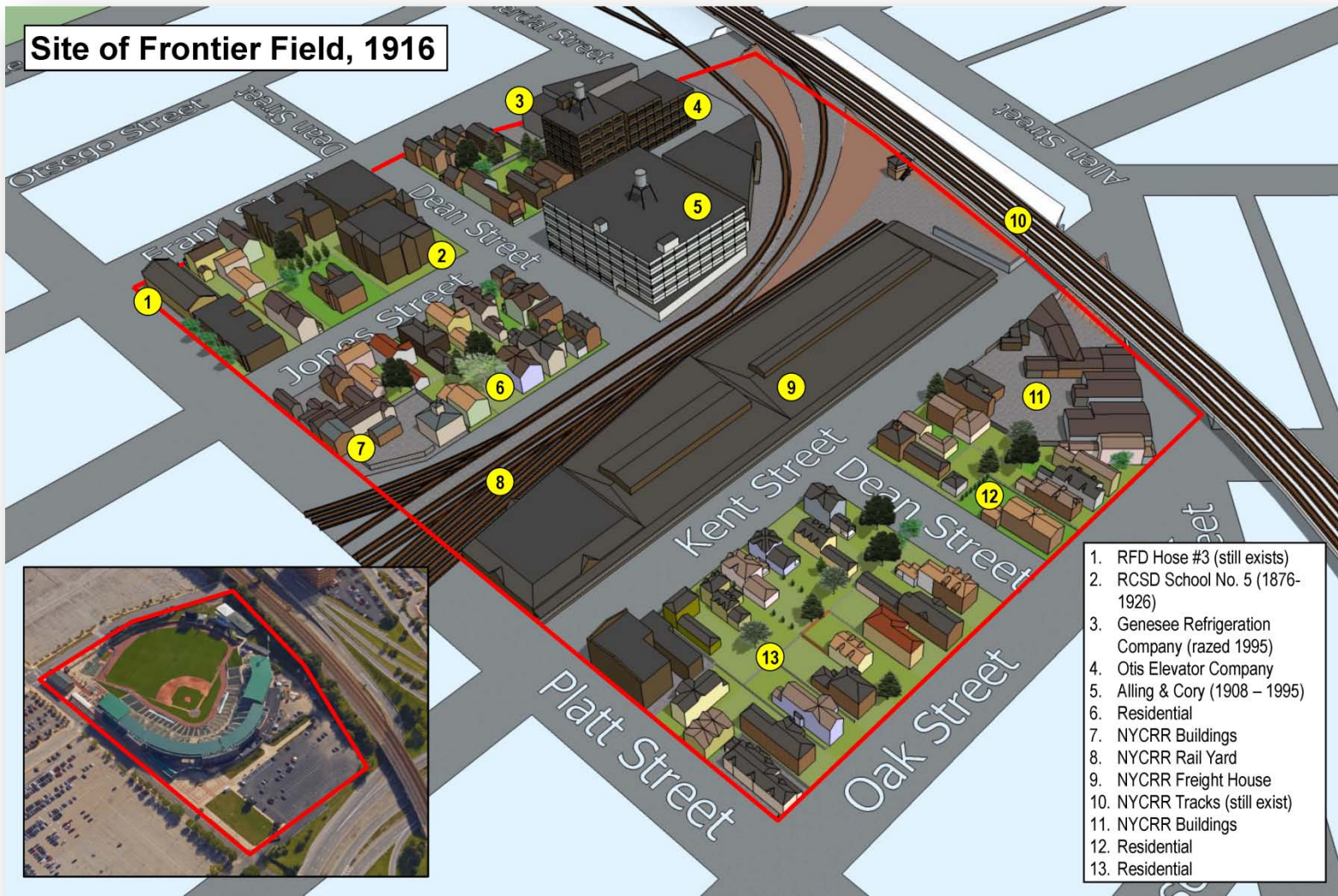


BRINGING THE BALLPARKS TO LIFE: 3D SOFTWARE MODELING



3D SOFTWARE MODELING, CONT'D

- Based on plat maps, photos and written descriptions
- One of the best ways to visualize buildings, streets and objects that no longer exist
- Can illustrate multiple angles

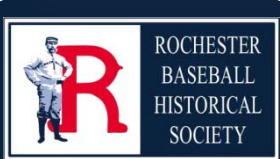


3D SOFTWARE MODELING, CONT'D




Bay St. Park

Union St. Grounds



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Ballparks & Early Base Ball Grounds:

- Hallowed Grounds: A Look at Rochester's Ballparks. Adobe pdf. (copyright Paul Bielewicz. Do not use without permission. Contact: pbielewicz@yahoo.com)
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