ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

Cataloguing Lower Merion Township's Archive

Madeline Cohen, Class of 2024
CITYB350, Professor Jeff Cohen
Field Supervisor, Greg Prichard

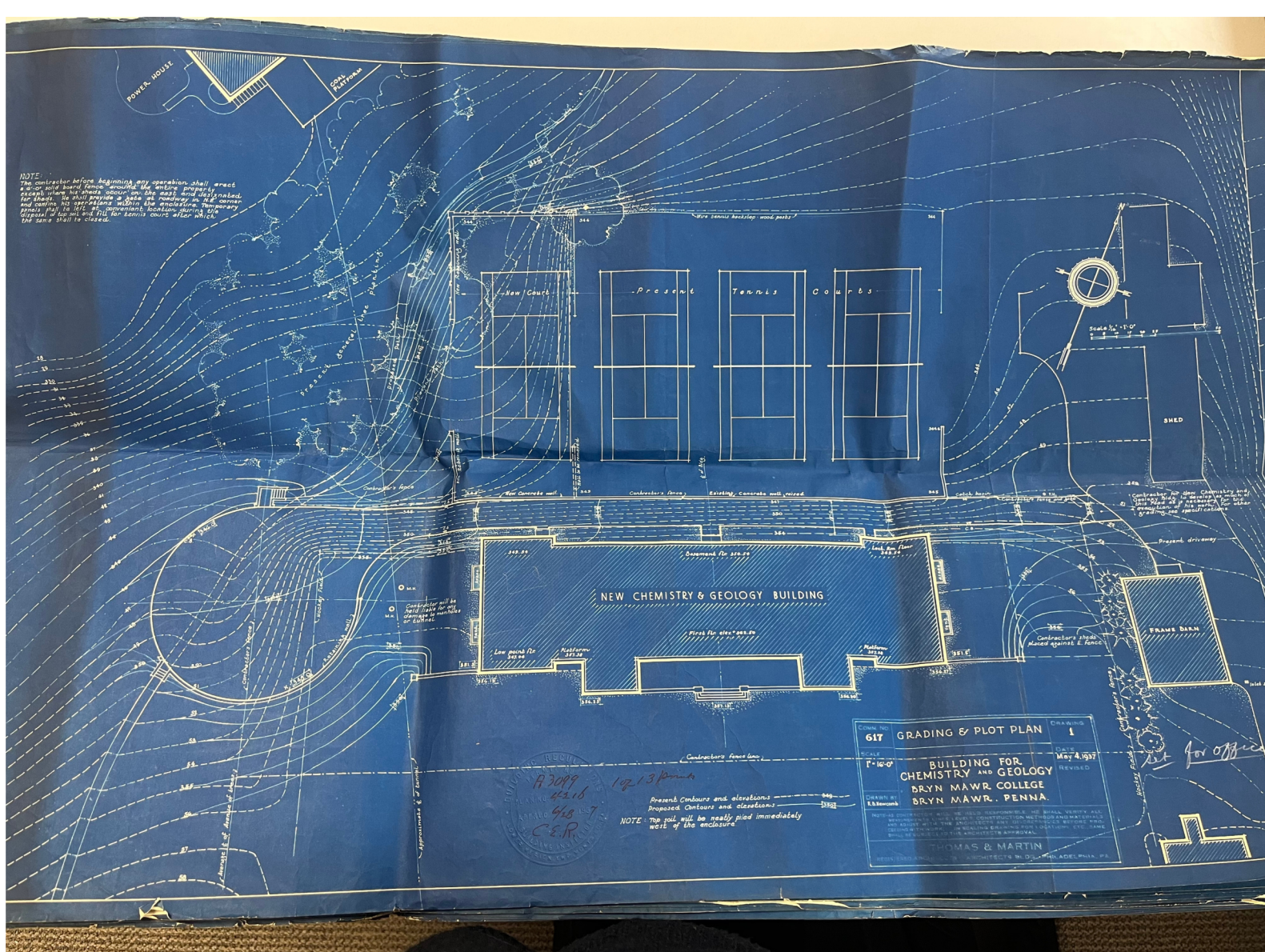CAREER & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT CENTER BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

WHY IS CATALOGUING IMPORTANT?

Cataloguing architectural drawing sets preserve records of the form of the building at their genesis – buildings that inevitably change and often disappear over time. These records are made discoverable by researchers. They can easily locate specific projects through attributes such as location, date, architect, client, and purpose.

These records are valuable to the township's officials. They provide information on the built fabric of the past as it has evolved over decades. This information is made useful to architects, engineers, and landscape architects working on projects on or near a property that is well documented. Researchers benefit from these records as they track the changing physical history of places within Lower Merion Township.

THE DRAWINGS:

Lower Merion Township holds thousands of architectural drawings and blueprints in their archive from the 1920's until today. The purpose of collecting these records is to aid in regulating building. Most of the projects collected are residential buildings, but include academic, commercial, and public buildings as well. Each drawing set typically includes plans, elevations, sections, and plot plans.

BUILDING FOR CHEMISTRY AND GEOLOGY
BRYN MAWR COLLEGE
BRYN MAWR, PENNA.
SEAL DATE: 06/28/37
THOMAS & MARTIN, REGISTERED ARCHITECTS

PROCESS:

The archive is organized on shelves by project number. The project years I worked with were from 1937 and 1938. Each project had been assigned a specific number which I then input into an Excel spreadsheet, along with the project's title, address, building type, number of sheets, sheets content, seal date, drawing date, architect, and builder.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- ☑ Experience working in an office setting

- ☑ More exposure to reading architectural drawings

- ☑ Learned about the history of buildings and planning in Lower Merion Township

- ☑ Learned to identify development patterns within specific time periods

- ☑ Database management and Excel skills