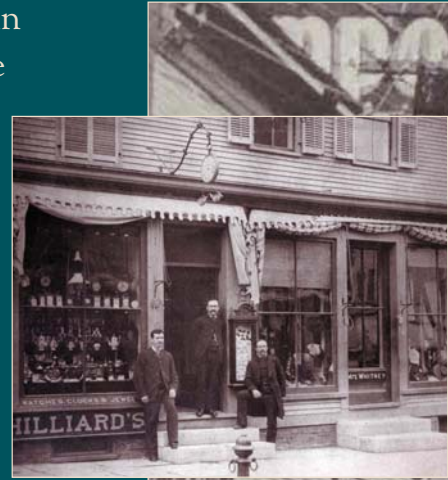


Church Street



Had you stood in this location in the early 1800s, you would have had to lift your skirt off the dirt lane to step up onto the plank sidewalk or guard your hat from the danger of low wooden canopies. Pedestrians competed with horse and carriage on this “road to the brick church” at the top of Church Street, as residents used to call it. Laid out as part of a 1797 grid plan, Church Street was among Burlington’s first north-south corridors.

The street, anchored on the north by the 1816 brick church (now Unitarian) and on the south by the 1790s Courthouse Square, was the traditional path between the waterfront, the Square, the Church, and an active settlement at the head of Pearl Street. As the waterfront quickly evolved as the city’s manufacturing center, Church Street had become Burlington’s primary commercial district by the early 1830s and continues to be the heart of area commerce. The upper two blocks of Church Street were closed in July of 1980 to create a pedestrian mall that was expanded by 2004 to include all four blocks from Pearl to Main Street.



90 & 92 Church Street, c. 1885



View of Church Street looking north: Bridesmaid store, Daniel Kerns, and the Opera House on left; Warner Block and Isham’s on right.



Chateausque Richardson Block, c. 1895.



Sherman's Block, c. 1917.

The architecture along Church Street dates from the 1820s to the present. Many buildings are large, high-style, masonry Italianate or Queen Anne commercial blocks, but there are also earlier gable-front residences and modest wood frame business blocks. Buildings on Church Street have received Art Deco renovations, 20th century replacements after fire loss, and historic renovations illustrating the desire of Burlington merchants to build to the highest quality while offering the most modern of building materials and style.

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