NPS Form 10-900 (Oct. 1990) OMB No. 10024-0018

# **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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property		
historic name Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
other names Edmondson Terrace, Goose Hill, Bridgeview/Green	eenlawn, Evergreen Lawn, Rose	emont Homeowners/Tenants
2. Location		
street & number Multiple		not for publication
city or town Baltimore		vicinity
state Maryland code MD county Baltin	more code 510	zip code21216/21223
3. State/Federal Agency Certification		
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Ac request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standar Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property See continuation sheet for additional comments).  Signature of certifying official/Title  State or Federal agency and bureau  In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Resignature of certifying official/Title  Signature of certifying official/Title	ds for registering properties in the N th in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion be considered significant ☐ nationa  Date	lational Register of Historic  In, the property
4. National Park Service Certification		
I hereby, certify that this property is:  capture of in the National Register.  capture of See continuation sheet.  capture determined eligible for the National  capture of Register.  capture of See continuation sheet.  capture of Determined not eligible for the National  capture of Register.  capture of Register of See Continuation sheet.  capture of	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

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Edmondson Avenue Historic Dis	strict	Baltimore, MD County and State		
5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)		ount)
<ul><li>☑ Private</li><li>☑ public-local</li><li>☐ public-State</li><li>☐ public-Federal</li></ul>	<ul><li>□ building(s)</li><li>□ district</li><li>□ site</li><li>□ structure</li><li>□ object</li></ul>	Contributing 1693	Noncontributing 13 1706	_ Buildings _ Sites _ Structures _ Objects _ Total
Name of related multiple property is not part of a		number of contrib listed in the Nation	uting resources prev nal Register	viously
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		Current Functions (Enter categories from inst	tructions)	
DOMESTIC/single dwelling DOMESTIC /multiple dwelling DOMESTIC /secondary structur EDUCATION /schools RELIGION/religious facilities	e	DOMESTIC /single dw DOMESTIC /multiple of DOMESTIC /secondary EDUCATION/schools RELIGION /religious f COMMERCE/TRADE	dwelling y structure facilities	
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)		Materials (Enter categories from ins	structions)	
LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate		foundation		
LATE 19TH & 20 <sup>TH</sup> CENTURY Revival	REVIVALS/Colonial	walls		
LATE 19TH & 20 <sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Renaissance	7			
LATE 19TH & 20 <sup>TH</sup> CENTURY Revival		roof		
LATE 19TH & 20 <sup>TH</sup> CENTURY Gothic Revival MODERN MOVEMENT/Intern		other		
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## **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86)

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places _	Edmondson Avenue Historic District	
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property	
	Baltimore, MD	
Section 7 Page 1	County and State	

## **Description Summary:**

The Edmondson Avenue Historic District, including the neighborhoods of Evergreen Lawn, Bridgeview/Greenlawn, Rosemont Homeowners/Tenants, and sections of Midtown-Edmondson, is an area of several hundred structures, predominantly residential in character with the exception of several early 20th century religious buildings, a handful of commercial structures, a number of industrial buildings, and a large section of late 20th century development at the northern edge of the district.

This description begins with a general overview of the area included within the Edmondson Avenue Historic District. This general overview is followed by more detailed descriptions of each of the general rowhouse types found within the district, organized chronologically by date of construction and categorically according the periodization of rowhouse design outlined by Mary Ellen Hayward and Chalres Belefoure in *The Baltimore Rowhouse*. This review of residential construction is followed by a brief review of the schools, churches, and commercial development that accompanied this residential development.

# **General Description:**

General Overview of Development

The earliest development in the area dates from the 1880s and 1890s along Mosher Street between then named Second Street and Third Street. Farther south along Gwynns Falls the mill village of Calverton Heights developed from the 1870s through the 1890s and extended north along Franklin Road and east and north along Boolmingdale Road. A scatter of these earlier structures survive, including a set of duplex rowhouses along Mosher Street and outside the proposed district in a row of duplex worker dwellings on West Lanvale Street built in the late 1860s or early 1870s.

The first period of substantial residential development occurred along the Edmondson Avenue corridor following the extension of the electric streetcar. Development along Lauretta Avenue, Edmondson Avenue, Arunah Avenue, Harlem Avenue, and West Lanvale Street, concentrated between Bentalou Street and Warwick Avenue, all date from the period from 1906 through the early 1920s, built by McIver & Piel and the Piel Construction Company. Subsequent to this initial effort, multiple developers continued to work in the area from the 1920s through the 1950s, completing the development of the original Abell estate and the surrounding parcels along Calverton Heights Avenue, Lafayette Avenue, Mosher Street, Riggs Avenue, Winchester Street and along the north-south streets of Bentalou Street and Whitmore Avenue. The final few rowhouses and public buildings constructed in the 1950s and 1960s included the addition of several public school buildings and the construction of apartment buildings at the northern edge of the district on property formerly included within St. Peter's Cemetery.

Development within the district is primarily organized around eleven east-west streets, excepting the north-south corridor of Bentalou Street and the row of development along the west side of Whitmore Avenue where many of

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District	
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property	
	Baltimore, MD	
Section 7 Page 2	County and State	

the east-west streets within the district dead end. The three through streets, Edmondson Avenue, Franklin Street, and Lafayette Avenue, all also serve as neighborhood boundaries separating the historic areas of Goose Hill and Edmondson Terrace, as well as the contemporary neighborhoods of Bridgeview/Greenlawn, Evergreen Lawn, and Rosemont Homeowners/Tenants. Most of the dwellings are set back from the street, establishing generous front yards that form continuous strips of green space through the district. The small rear yards found in the earliest dwellings expanded in later development to accommodate larger gardens or the later construction of garages.

The rowhouses can be divided into a number of categories reflecting the broad diversity of residential design present in the neighborhood from the 1880s through the 1950s. The earliest buildings are modest Italianate two-story full areaway rowhouses, followed by partial areaway rowhouses along Edmondson Avenue in the 1900s. By the early 1910s, these designs were replaced by wider daylight rowhouses built on Arunah Avenue, Harlem Avenue, and Lanvale Street. The subsequent designs of the 1920s and 1940s add to the diversity with a mix of partial areaway rowhouses and daylight rowhouses in Georgian Revival, Colonial Revival, and even Art Deco styles.

#### Italianate Period Rowhouses

The earliest surviving rowhouses within the district are the full areaway or duplex rowhouses located on the west side of the 1000 block of North Warwick Avenue and the north side of the 2500 block of Mosher Street. Another example of a full areaway rowhouse of a different design still stands on the 2300 block of Riggs Avenue. Built as homes for individuals and households likely employed by nearby industrial and agricultural development during the 1880s and 1890s, these two-story dwellings are comparable to the modest homes built for recently arrived immigrants throughout East and West Baltimore. The two-story brick rowhouses on Mosher Street are two bays wide and have a rectangular plan sheltered by a flat roof. The original windows have largely been replaced with 1/1 vinyl or wood sash replacements, although one dwelling retains 2/2 sash windows. All windows are surrounded by stone sills and lintels. The front doors are wood and located in the bays adjoining the areaway separating each duplex. The front of several rowhouses have been painted or reclad with siding or formstone. Where the wood cornice is intact it features modest block modillions, although in several cases the cornice has been replaced with an unornamented vinyl cornice. The porches are sheltered by a shed roof that spans the full width of each duplex and it supported by simple wooden round posts or metal columns flanking the front entrance and separating the two units within the pair.

Although built after 1914, the homes on the 2400 block of Lauretta Avenue share the characteristics of an earlier period of Italianate rowhouses. Unlike most of the rowhouses built during the later period, these dwellings do not have front porches. This may have been the result of financial limitations at the time of construction or to accommodate the thin band of green space which is preserved across the block. These brick dwellings are two stories high and two bays wide with an English basement, a rectangular plan and a flat front sheltered by a flat roof. The dwellings are served by concrete steps across the small front yard and up to a landing where marble steps access the front door. The front doors are wooden and have tall openings designed to accommodate a transom window above, although few of the original transoms remain. The window opening adjoining the door on the first floor is wide, allowing some dwellings to use two adjoining 1/1 windows or a casement window, rather than a single wide 1/1 sash window. The windows on the second floor are largely 1/1 sash windows with stone

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District	
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property	
	Baltimore, MD	
Section 7 Page 3	County and State	

sills and lintels. The wide wood cornice has three evenly spaced brackets that connect a thin wooden band above the second floor windows up to the cornice.

Artistic Period Rowhouses

One of the most striking architectural elements within the district is the long blocks along Edmondson Avenue with projecting front porches, small yards, and a decorative roofline that stands in sharp contrast to the 1890s Italianate rowhouses to the east and the Colonial Revival daylight rowhouses to the west. Built by McIver & Piel from 1906 to 1908, these distinctive dwellings are located on both the north and south sides of Edmondson Avenue from the 2300 through the 2400 block, the north and south side of the 2500 block on Edmondson Avenue to the east of Whitmore Avenue, and the south side of the 2500 block west of Whitmore Avenue and east of Braddish Avenue.

This type is a bay-front partial areaway brick rowhouses, two stories tall and 3 bays wide by 6 bays deep with fully attached porches on brick foundations above English basements. The rowhouse is sheltered by a flat roof and features a distinctive parapet wall at the edge of the roof, with dwellings alternating between horizontal and triangular pediment details. The entrance to the porch defined by a triangular pediment centered in front of the front door to the dwelling. Similarly, the low brick wall at the edge of each porch also defines the edge of the porch for the adjoining dwellings. Several of the end-of-group units also feature projecting bays on the side walls. Several of these properties have been adapted for commercial use, including the creation of a side entrance on Bentalou Street, or the enclosure of the original porch at Warwick Avenue.

The front door is located in the eastern most bay on both the north and south sides of Edmondson Avenue, creating a mirrored symmetry across the street. The base of the brick porch includes two windows, indicating an English basement. The porch and front door are accessed by a set of six brick, or in some cases cement or wood, steps to access the porch and front entrance. The porch is enclosed with a low wooden railing with vertical stiles, although in some cases this has been replaced with a metal railing or an infill brick wall. Two columns flank the entrance to the porch supporting the triangular pediment centered on the front door. While many columns have been replaced with brick piers or unornamented wooden columns or posts, the original columns featured Corinthian capitals. This design element is repeated in the interior columns of many properties. The windows are largely 1/1 wooden sash, or vinyl replacement, windows on the front and on the rear and sides of end of row units.

The dwellings on the south side of the 2600 and 2700 blocks of Edmondson Avenue are a variation on this type, with less detail and ornamentation, perhaps reflecting an attempt to limit construction cost. On the 2600 block, the dwellings vary by losing the variation in the parapet wall, instead using a continuous straight line for the top of the wall. These dwellings similarly lose the triangular pediment the defined the porch entrance on the prior type, instead using a straight continuous line. On the 2700 block, the dwelling lose the porch entirely, joining the eastern two bays into a single wide window and accessing the front door by a small cement stair. These dwelling also lose the small area of grass that appeared in front of the brick porch in each of the prior types. While dwellings of these types are largely continuous along Edmondson Avenue there are a few exceptions, including a single mid 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial building at the northwest corner of Whitmore Avenue and Edmondson

National Register of Historic Places _	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 7 Page 4	County and State

Avenue, 1940s residential infill at the southeast and southwest corners of Braddish Avenue and Edmondson Avenue, and the Perkins Square Baptist Church at Warwick.

Daylight Period Rowhouses

Following their first few projects on Edmondson Avenue, McIver & Piel transitioned to develop homes following the wider and shallower plan of daylight rowhouses. While their early efforts retained some of the characteristics of the earlier period, most notably the decorative bay windows, the nearly all residential construction in the area following the 1900s employed a plan and elements of detailing that fit within the broader daylight rowhouse type. The first type of rowhouses from this period are those located on the north and south sides of the 2300 block and the north side of the 2400 block Arunah Avenue. Built by McIver & Piel in the 1900s, these two-story brick dwellings have a rectangular plan and are sheltered by a flat roof. The type is characterized by an off-center bay located above the porch. The windows are largely 1/1 sash windows with stone sills and lintels. The end-of-group units include wide porches that span the full width of the unit, projecting bays on the first floor of the exterior side wall, and a cornice that wraps around the corner to follow the roof around the side wall. The dwellings on the south side of the 2400 block of Arunah Avenue are a variation on this type featuring an identical porch and cornice, but replacing the bay with a flat front.

The second type of dwelling is located on the north and south side of the 2300 and 2400 blocks of Harlem Avenue characterized by a two story high bay immediately adjoining the porch. Built by the Piel Construction Company in 1909, these two-story brick daylight rowhouses are sheltered by a flat roof and have a rectangular plan and an English basement. All of the dwellings are set back from the street creating a small green space in front of each bay window. Many of these spaces are edged with bushes. The porch is narrower than those on the prior types to accommodate the adjoining two-story three-part bay window. The porch is faced with stone, which forms a continuous band across the base of the facade for all rowhouses in a group. The porch is sheltered by a shed roof supported by two square brick columns that flank the front entrance. Windows are largely 1/1 sash windows composed of either the original wood or replacement vinyl. The windows on the first level of the projecting bay are topped by transoms with decorative stained glass. The door is flanked by two sidelights and topped by a transom window with stained glass similar to that on the bay window. The bay window is sheltered by a steeply pitched hip roof that mirrors the peaked parapet wall that forms a regular element of the roof. Several of the bay windows are clad with formstone, vinyl siding, or wood siding. On the second floor the window is flanked by brick details that suggest the appearance of columns on either side of the window and either side of the bay. These suggested columns terminate in a raised brick course that forms a continuous element of the street wall in line with the cornice of the projecting bays. The side walls of the end of group units are finished in stucco and include one story projecting bay windows on the first floor.

A variation on this type is located on the north and south sides of the 2300 and 2400 blocks of Lanvale Street with a flat roofline and ornamented cornice. The most substantial difference between this variation and the previous type is that the bay windows are sheltered by a flat roof and the roof line is according flat. In exchange for the variation provided by the projecting parapet, the cornice on these dwellings substitutes a decorative detail in between each unit.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet Section 7 Page 5 County and State Edmondson Avenue Historic District Name of Property Baltimore, MD County and State

The third type of dwelling is located on the north and south sides of the 2300 block of Calverton Heights Avenue, the west side of the 800 block of Bentalou Street, the east and west sides of the 900 block of Bentalou Street. Built in the early 1920s by George Schoenhals, these dwellings are characterized by a centered bay above porch that extends up to the roof line creating an undulating pattern. A similar design appears on the 800 block of Whitmore Avenue and the 2500 block of Lafayette Avenue to the east of Whitmore Avenue. These two-story brick rowhouses are rectangular in plan, two bays wide by five to seven bays deep with flat roofs and projecting brick porches over an English basement. The windows are 1/1 sash windows composed of wood or replacement vinyl. Historically unclad brick, many of the bay windows have been reclad with wood siding or vinyl siding. The end of group units are seven bays deep, in comparison to five bays for fully attached dwellings, and include projecting bay windows on the third floor. This additional space appears to accommodate a separate basement unit accessed by a door located on the side of the brick porch served by a short stair stepping a few feet below ground level. Along Bentalou Street these dwellings are set back from the street creating a terraced front yard. The dwellings are served by cement stairs broken up by a landing at the base of the front porch and supported by a metal handrail. The porch roof is a shed roof the forms a continuous plane across the entire row. The porch is supporting by columns located on brick piers projecting from the brick base of the porch located in between each unit of the rowhouse.

The fourth type of dwelling is located on the north and south sides of the 2300 and 2400 blocks of Lafayette Avenue, the north and south sides of the 2400 block of Calverton Heights Avenue, the north side of the 2600 Edmondson Avenue, south side of the 2600 block of Lauretta Avenue, north and south sides of the 2700 block of Lauretta Avenue, and the 2400 to 2700 blocks of the north side of Franklin Street. Built in the 1920s largely by George Schoenhals, this type is characterized by a green tiled roof and a flat front with brick projections above the roof line separating each unit. These two-story brick dwellings, three-bay wide by three-bay deep, are rectangular in plan, sheltered by flat roofs, with projecting stone porches and English basements. Each porch is detached on both sides, sheltering the western most two bays including the front door in the western most bay. The front door is wooden flanked by two side lights. The windows are largely 1/1 sash windows composed of wood or replacement vinyl with a few 6/1 windows. The dwellings are set back from the street allowing for a generous front yard. On the front the cornice is plain white metal, beneath the green tiles that form a mock mansard parapet roof. This roof and the green Spanish tile, typically composed of sheet metal, is characteristic of the daylight rowhouses in a Georgian Revival style. Between each unit a brick projecting above the roof line defines the corners of the roof. Variations on this type are found on the north and south sides of the 2300 block of Mosher Street, the south side of the 2400 block of Mosher, and the south side of the 2200 block of Riggs. These variations employ a brown tile, rather than the more common green tile.

The fifth type of dwelling is located on the north and south sides of the 2500 block of Calverton Heights Avenue, the 2500 block of Lanvale Street, and the 2500 block of Arunah Avenue. Built by the Harlem Building Company in the mid 1920s, these two-story brick dwellings are two bays wide with an English basement. Although it shares the green tile roof of the prior type, it is distinguished by a centered bay located above the porch. In addition, the rhythm of individual rowhouses separated by the projection of the partition walls above the roof line. These dwellings are grouped into sets of two that sharing a single green tile parapet roof that spans the width of two dwellings. The doors are located in the outer bay within the group, creating an alternating pattern of paired doors and paired windows. On the first level are wood doors, most protected by contemporary storm doors, adjoining

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District	
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property	
	Baltimore, MD	
Section 7 Page 6	County and State	

two immediately adjacent 1/1 sash windows below a transom that extends the full width of both windows. The shed roof porch is supported by wooden columns that rest on brick piers located at the corners of a low brick wall that surrounds the base of each porch. On the second floor, the bay windows windows on each face, all largely 1/1 sash windows.

The sixth type is located on the north and south sides of the 2500 block of Harlem Avenue. Built by the Harlem Building Company in the mid 1920s, this type appears to be an eclectic combination of features from other dwellings to include a two-story bay adjoining the porch and a green tile roof. The building features a stone faced porch sheltering the front entrance. The stone continues to wrap around the base of the dwelling and form a continuous band across the row. The porch is flanked by a two-story bay window that projects out over the stone band at the base of the structure. Below the bay window is a small rectangular horizontal sash window. On the first level, each of the three 1/1 windows on each face of the bay are topped by a transom. The wooden front door is flanked by two sidelights and a transom above.

The seventh type of dwelling is located on the 700 block of Whitmore Avenue, the 700 block of Wilbron Avenue, and the 2500 block of Harlem Avenue, the 2500 block of Arunah Avenue to the west of Whitmore Avenue, and the south side of the 2500 block of Lafayette Avenue west of Whitmore Avenue. Built in the early 1940s by the Realty Service Corporation, this type is in the Colonial Revival style and features a gable roof at the front with a flat sloping roof for the majority of the structure. Along Whitmore Avenue the structures are grouped into sets of two alternating in design. The first design features two front gable dormers above the second floor windows in the northernmost and southernmost bays. The small porch slabs are sheltering by a sloped porch roof that extends nearly the full width of the two dwelling group. The base of the porch is clad in stone and the basement windows, serving an English basement, sit in stone faced window surrounds. This design alternates with an alternate design that features a large centered front gable above two center bays. Immediately below these windows is a narrow curved roof that shelters the cement slab porch. Originally built with 6/1 sash windows, most of the windows are 1/1 vinyl or wood replacements.

The eight type is located on the north and south sides of the 2500 block of Riggs Avenue. Built in the early 1940s by the Riggs Building Corporation, these two-story brick dwellings with a rectangular plan have a somewhat unusual design with streamlined details. The dwellings are arranged in four distinct groups ranging from seven to eleven units. The buildings are set back from the street and follow the contour of the hill, stepping down at both the roof line and the base of the building. The roof line does not have a cornice but is defined by three parallel brick courses spaced a small distance above the top row of windows.

The ninth and final type of dwelling is located on the south side of the 2300 block of Winchester Avenue, the 2300 block of Riggs Avenue, the 2500 block of Lafayette Avenue west of Whitmore Avenue, the 1100 block of Wheeler, the south side of the 2500 block of Mosher Street, and the 900 block of Whitmore Avenue. These properties appear to be all built following 1950. These two-story, two-bay wide brick dwellings feature a false mansard roof, clad only in green and gray asphalt shingle, rather than the decorative green tile found on early dwellings. The type repeats the pattern of door placement found on several other types creating an alternating rhythm of paired doors and paired windows. Pairs of dwellings share a single raised porch, composed of concrete surrounded by a medium high metal railing. Some porches are sheltered by aluminum awnings although most are

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District	
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property	
	Baltimore, MD	
Section 7 Page 7	County and State	

unsheltered. The windows adjoining the door on the first level are two immediately adjacent 1/1 sash windows with brick sash and brick lintels. Immediately above this bay is a repetition of two immediately adjacent 1/1 sash windows. In the bay next to these windows, above the front door is a 1/1 sash window. The rectangular plan is wide and fully attached following the design of earlier daylight rowhouses without the characteristic detailing.

Churches and Schools

Additional structures in the area include the Gothic Revival churches located at Bentalou and Lanvale, Warwick and Edmondson, Warwick and Harlem, and a Tudor Revival church located at Wheeler and Lafayette. More recent church buildings are located Arunah and Warwick and Lauretta and Whitmore (Doswell) both in a Greek Revival style. With the exception of the original 1933 portion of James Mosher Elementary School, designed in a restrained Art Deco style, the three school buildings were all designed and built post-WWII in a variation on the International Style.

Designed by architect A. Cookman Leach and built in 1913, Perkins Square Baptist Church, historically known as Emmanuel English Evangelical Lutheran Church, is a two story Gothic Revival Church composed of gray stone located at Edmondson Avenue and Warwick Avenue. The primary facade is oriented to Edmondson Avenue, with a front gable roof at a moderate pitch clad in asphalt tile. At the southwest corner of the building is a tower extending above the roofline to end with a crenellated parapet wall. The Edmondson Avenue entrance is located at the base of the tower, a second entrance on Warwick Avenue is located at the southwestern corner, and both entrances are served short flights of stone stairs.

Built in 1822, the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Holy Trinity, now known as the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, is a two story church set far back from the street at the corner of Wheeler Avenue and Lafayette Avenue. The gable roof faces on Wheeler Avenue, adjoining a tower of near equal height at the northwest corner of the building. There are two entrances on the Wheeler Avenue side of the building symmetrically arranged around the center of the facade. At the eastern side of the building is a small cross gable. A small one story structure is attached to the church at the southeast corner of the building.

Built in 1922, Saint Marks Institutional Baptist Church, historically known as Immanuel Reformed Church, is a tall two-story Gothic Revival Church composed of gray stone with a primary facade on Bentalou Street at the corner of Lanvale Street. Sheltered by a steeply pitched gable roof, the building has a tower at the northwest corner extending above the full heights of the roof. There are entrances in the base of the tower and in the three bays, defined by three arched openings on the first floor of the Bentalou Street face. Above the projecting bay that includes the entrances is a large rosette window on the second floor.

Built in 1925 as Harlem Park Methodist Episcopal Church, Union Memorial United Methodist Church is a two-story Gothic Revival building composed of gray stone at the corner of Harlem Avenue and Warwick Avenue. The primary facade is oriented to face Warwick Avenue, with a front facing gable and a detailed tower at the southwest corner of the building. One entrance is located in the base of the tower and an additional entrance is located in a rectangular addition at the northeast corner of the building. The

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 7 Page 8	County and State

gable end features a very tall pointed window. At the western end of the building is a large cross gable that projects out at the northern and southern face of the building.

Built in 1933 and substantially expanded in 1955, James Mosher Elementary School was built by Charles L. Stockhausen and was historically known as School No. 80 and later School No. 144. The brick 1933 section is built in an Art Deco style, measures two-stories tall, fifteen-bays wide, and has a rectangular plan sheltered by a flat roof. The primary façade on Wheeler Avenue has two rows of large 6/6 windows arranged symmetrically across the central bay. The central bay features wide double-doors centered within a streamlined stone surround and is topped by a stepped parapet wall. The 1955 addition is attached to the original building on the south side and has a roughly L-shaped plan that establishes a U-shaped plan for the full building. The two-story brick building spans nearly the full width of the block between Wheeler Avenue and Warwick Avenue and has off-center entrances on both Mosher Street and Warwick Avenue. The windows are all metal 1/1 windows arranged in sets of four separately by concrete wall sections. The Mosher Street entrance has an angled concrete overhang to shelter the double-doors. The Warwick Street entrance is more rigidly square and is served by a low set of concrete steps.

Edmondson Avenue Historic District	Baltimore, MD		
Name of Property	County and State		
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)	Area of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)  ARCHITECTURE		
A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.	COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black		
□ B Property 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.	Period of Significance ca1885-1960		
□ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates		
Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)	1906 1949		
Property is:	1747		
A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)		
☐ <b>B</b> removed from its original location.			
☐ <b>C</b> a birthplace or grave.	Cultural Affiliation		
D a cemetery.			
☐ <b>E</b> a reconstructed building, object, or structure.			
☐ <b>F</b> a commemorative property.	Architect/Builder		
☐ <b>G</b> less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.			
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)			
9. Major Bibliographical References			
<b>Bibliography</b> (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one	e or more continuation sheets)		
Previous documentation on files (NPS):	Primary location of additional data:		
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 #	State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Name of repository:		

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places _	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 1	County and State

## **Summary Statement of Significance:**

The Edmondson Avenue Historic District—including the neighborhoods of Bridgeview/Greenlawn, Evergreen Lawn, and Rosemont Homeowners/ Tenants—is an area of residential rowhouse development built largely from the 1900s through the 1940s around the Edmondson Avenue streetcar line. Beginning in 1949, the neighborhood transitioned from a segregated white community to a predominantly African American community in a broader process of racial transition that transformed the West Baltimore region. The district is significant under National Register Criterion A for both its association with the growth of West Baltimore and its association with the racial transition of West Baltimore. The neighborhood also qualifies under Criterion C as an example of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century streetcar suburb.

The earliest history of this area includes the construction of the Calverton Mansion in the early 1800s, the beginning of industrial development around the Gwynn Falls, and the consolidation of the Abell estate in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The expansion of the city in 1888 and the beginning of streetcar service along Edmondson Avenue in 1900 supported the development of the estate of A.S. Abell by builder-developers John F. Piel and John K. McIver. Residential construction expanded during the 1920s and continued up through the early 1940s through the activities of Harry Nichols, George Schoenhals and others. Reflecting this history of suburban development, the district is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the growth of West Baltimore and under National Register Criterion C as an example of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century streetcar suburb with a diverse range of rowhouse designs.

During the post-WWII period, the population of Greater Rosemont, including neighborhoods within the Edmondson Avenue Historic District and nearby neighborhoods of Midtown-Edmondson, Mosher, Winchester, Franklintown Road, Rosemont, Northwest Community Action, Coppin Heights/Ash-Co-East and Easterwood, began a rapid transition from nearly exclusively European American in 1949 to become predominantly African American by the late 1950s. This transition offered many middle class African American households in Baltimore their first opportunity for homeownership and led to the creation of neighborhood organization that took an active role in local civil rights organizing and activism, including opposition to the development of the US Route 40 highway project. The district under National Register Criterion A for its association with the post-WWII racial transition of West Baltimore and the role of the new African American residents in establishing enduring community institutions.

# **Resource History and Historic Context:**

Calverton Mansion and the Abell Estate: 1815-1906

In late 1815 or early 1816, Baltimore banker Dennis A. Smith (1765-1853) commissioned French architect Joseph Ramée (1764-1842) to design a country home on the eastern bank of Gwynns Falls valley, nearly two miles beyond the edge of the city. This early Greek Revival building featured "a raised basement and a two-story portico with an arched ceiling, a peaked roof and a second-story platform for ornamental statuary... a hipped roof and a tall cupola" with an exterior described as a "rough cast of a straw color, the window sills and facings of marble and free stone." Dennis Smith went into bankruptcy around 1819 and Baltimore City and County jointly purchased the property from the Mechanics' Bank of Baltimore for \$44,000. Scharf describes the property in *The Chronicles of Baltimore* writing,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hayward and Shivers, *The Architecture of Baltimore*, 46.

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 2	County and State

"Calverton,' formerly the country seat of Dennis A. Smith, with its splendid mansion, to which the trustees added two wings 130 by 40 feet each, and other necessary out-buildings, and thereby formed the large and elegant alms-house, which in point of extent, convenience, and beauty of location, was not surpassed in its day by any similar establishment in the United States... It contained 306 acres, and was situated about two and a half miles from the court-house in a northwestern direction, on the Franklin road." <sup>2</sup>

The Calverton Almshouse remained in operation through 1866, when Baltimore opened Bay View Asylum, "a new institution for the paupers of the city," on a 46-acre property purchased from the Canton Company. Designed by John W. Hogg, Esq., the sprawling brick building also housed an "insane asylum." The sale of the vacated Calverton mansion and the associated property occurred on April 18, 1866 with the property divided into three large lots and the second lot divided into three smaller portions. A.S. Abell (1806-1888) first purchased a 28-acre portion of the second lot at \$2,610 per acre or \$73,080 total and then continued to purchase the third 67 ½-acre lot at \$1,700 per acre or \$114,750 total.

Born in East Providence, Rhode Island August 10, 1806 to Caleb Abell and Elona Sherpherdson, Arunah Shepherdson Abell was raised in Rhode Island and began work as an apprentice in the office of the Providence Patriot while still in his teens. At age 18 he moved to Boston and then to New York, "bearing flattering letters of introduction to the foremost newspaper men of the metropolis." He began a business partnership that led first to the establishment of *The Public Ledger* in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on February 29, 1836 and then *The Sun* in Baltimore, with the first issue appearing on May 17, 1837. Under the direct management of A.S. Abell, the paper grew rapidly to a circulation of 12,000 copies by its first anniversary. In addition to a succession of grand houses that Abell maintained in Baltimore City, he owned several large suburban estates. These included the 400-acre "Guilford" estate, the 200-acre "Woodbourne" near Govans, Maryland, "Litterluna" in the Green Spring Valley, and the property which was eventually developed as Edmondson Terrace. Following Abell's death at his residence on the northwest corner of Charles Street and Madison Street on April 19, 1888, these properties passed on to his heirs.

Abell evidently intended to divide the Edmondson Avenue property for construction but at the time of his death it remained undeveloped. Following his initial acquisition, Abell expanded his property by purchasing adjoining areas from Samuel T. Hatch and others in 1871, another strip from Daniel J. McCauley in 1874, and a final portion from Christian Bersch in 1879. To the north and west of Abell's property a small cluster of homes were built along Mosher Street from Whitmore Avenue to Wheeler Avenue and the mill village of Calverton Heights continued to grow along the eastern bank of the Gwynn Falls. By 1885, the area west of Bentalou Street became known as "Goose Hill." Recalling her experience in 1884 at the age of 12, Mollie E. Hilton described the area of Goose Hill as a "bit of gentling rising ground topped by a dilapidated wooden shack inclosed [sic] in a patching paling fence, where some ill-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Scharf, *The Chronicles of Baltimore*, 74-75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ihid 75-76

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Hall, Baltimore: its history and its people, 3:3-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid., 3:8-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "BIG REAL ESTATE DEAL."

National Register of Historic Places _ Continuation Sheet	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 3	County and State

smelling goats were kept." In an earlier account of the same area, Hilton described the mix of rural and industrial development,

"Farther on was the First Branch, and beyond that the "lime kilns," where tall hills of oyster shells, rising to a height of eighty feet or more, line the railroad tracks on the east side. This railroad father south formed a trestle bridge spanning a deep valley with a rocky bottom, a very dangerous crossing for foot passengers, and few had the intrepidity to try it. We did once and lived to tell the tale to our parents with the most disastrous results—but let us draw the curtain over the scene that followed!"

The development of any of Abell's four suburban estates was delayed until March 1906 due to an amicable suit between the Safe Deposit Trust Company of Baltimore and others and Charles J. Bonaparte and others, that led to the appointment of the Safe Deposit and Trust Company trustee, "for the purpose of making sales of the undivided real estate belong to the estate of the late Arunah S. Abell." The properties affected by the decision included,

"Guilford, which lies between Charles street extended and the York road; the old Almshouse property, in the western part of the city; Woodbourne, at the intersection of Woodbourne avenue and the Hillen road; Litter Luna, at the intersection of Green Spring avenue and the Old Court road, and other parcels, comprising in all more than 1,400 acres of land in or near the city."

The resolution of this suit and the appointment of the trustee cleared the way for the sale of the Abell Estate on Edmondson Avenue and the beginning of substantial residential development within the district.

#### McIver and Piel Building Edmondson Terrace: 1906-1921

In late June 1906, "a corporation of local financiers" represented by lawyer J. Henry Strohmeyer purchased the 105-acre Abell estate for \$25,898 and announced plans for the development of "1,700 modern two-story brick dwellings, each with a porch, terrace, sewerage connection and other conveniences." Soon organized as the Edmondson Realty Company, the group made immediate plans to construct a nursery where "trees will be raised to be planted on the sidewalks of the houses" while the land was under development. <sup>10</sup> The Fifteenth and Sixteenth Ward Improvement Association, "recently organized for the purpose of establishing a closer relationship between the suburbs of Bloomingdale and Calverton," expressed their gratification at the sale, noting that the planned construction suggests "rapid progress in the development of that neighborhood."

John F. Piel and John K. McIver, the builders selected for the development, began their partnership as early as February 1903. Born in Maryland on March 22, 1877, John Frederick Piel graduated from the Architectural Division at the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> An 1898 map matches Hilton's recollections depicting a scatter of fourteen small structures near the intersection of Rayner and Whitmore Avenues, likely serving the agricultural land-use she observed. "Our Readers Write."

 $<sup>^{8}</sup>$  MOLLIE HILTON, "Baltimore Then And Now."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> "ESTATE OF THE LATE A. S. ABELL."

<sup>10 &</sup>quot;BIG REAL ESTATE DEAL."

<sup>11 &</sup>quot;SHIPLEY TRACT SOLD."

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 4	County and State

Maryland Institute in June 1899.<sup>12</sup> John K. McIver was born in North Carolina in 1872. Their work prior to Edmondson Terrace included a store and office building for William A. Gault & Son designed by Haskell & Barnes at 9 East Lexington Street in 1904, a four-story apartment building at 827 Hamilton Terrace in 1905, as well as other multi-unit residential, commercial and industrial buildings.<sup>13</sup> The two continued their partnership through 1908 when Piel established the Piel Construction Company and McIver continued to work separately as a general contractor and builder.

Although their partnership ended in 1908, McIver and Piel remained neighbors in 1910 when McIver lived on the 240 block of North Fulton Avenue and Piel on the 500 block of North Fulton Avenue. <sup>14</sup> By 1917, Piel had moved to 2400 Arunah Avenue and maintained an office 2546 Edmondson Avenue where he remained through at least 1930. <sup>15</sup> The Piel Construction Company maintained close connections with the Edmondson Realty Company, as Adolph K. Strohmeyer, brother of J.H. Strohmeyer, lived at 2423 Harlem Avenue and worked as an assistant superintendent for the Piel Construction Company. <sup>16</sup>

Work began in late 1906 with the December 16, 1906 sale of ground rent by the Edmondson Realty Company for 23 houses from 2300 to 2444 Edmondson Avenue. By April 18, 1907, contractors John K. McIver and John F. Piel had completed 46 dwelling on Edmondson Avenue with "foundations for that many more" already excavated. The builders planned another 92 dwellings on Arunah Avenue, requiring the grading of Arunah and the grading, macadamizing and curbing of Edmondson Avenue from the Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge to Second Avenue by P. Reddington & Sons. In August 1907, McIver & Piel expanded their project to the south side of Edmondson Avenue with the receipt of a permit for 50 new dwellings to be "erected in two rows between Second and Fourth avenues, 23 in one row and 27 in the other" at a cost of \$100,000. In September 1907, the builders received permits for 36 new dwellings on Arunah Avenue between Bentalou Street and Second Street. The article on the continuing "realty boom" evidenced by the new permits described the large proposed dwellings writing,

"They will be built in a semi-detached style, with yardways between each pair. They will have porch fronts and each will occupy a site 20 by 100 feet. Each will contain seven rooms and a bath and be fitted with electricity and gas." <sup>19</sup>

Some of the earliest advertisements for homes in "Beautiful Edmondson Terraces" appeared in September 1907, suggesting "The best and most complete Houses in Baltimore are in the 2300 and 2400 blocks of Edmondson Avenue." An advertisement the following spring posed the question, "What is there in Life without a good home?"

<sup>&</sup>quot;Ancestry.com - World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918 - John Frederick Piel"; "WON BY HARD WORK."

 $<sup>^{13}</sup>$  "REALTY AND BUILDING"; "FOR STORE AND OFFICES"; "HOTEL JUNKER FINISHED."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Ancestry.com - 1910 United States Federal Census - John B Piel"; "Ancestry.com - 1910 United States Federal Census - John K Mciver."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> "Ancestry.com - World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918 - John Frederick Piel"; "Ancestry.com - 1930 United States Federal Census - John F Piel."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> "WILLIAM B. THOMPSON."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> "FOR 92 NEW HOUSES."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> "MANY RESIDENCES SOLD."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> "REALTY BOOM CONTINUES."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> "Classified Ad 12 -- No Title."

National Register of Historic Places _	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 5	County and State

continuing, "Our effort is to give a good home and the best in the city for the least money, and we have succeeded by the erection of those beautiful two-story dwellings at Edmondson Terraces." Prospective buyers were urged to take the "Edmondson Avenue cars to First street" and see the homes for themselves. One of the first buyers came in April 1907, with the sale of 2319 Edmondson Avenue to Mr. John R. Quendt for \$2,400.

The firm built no additional properties between September 1907 and June 1908, when a short profile on the development repeated the early projection of 1,500 houses suggesting, "When the building operations shall have ceased the section will be one of the best developed in Baltimore." On September 14, 1908, John F. Piel incorporated his operations as the Piel Construction Company and development resumed in the "semi-suburban development called Edmondson Terraces" with an application for a permit to build 16 two-story dwellings on the south side of Arunah Avenue between First Street and Second Street along Arunah Avenue, described,

"The plan of these houses is original. They will be 23 feet 10 inches front by a depth of 40 feet upon lots of the same width of 100 feet depth. The plans provide for a reception hall 11 by 16 feet, with an Eastlake stairway and corner seats. The houses will be heated by steam and will have the latest standard plumbing. Arunah avenue is 66 feet wide, and the company contemplates widening it to 100 feet by having terraces on both sides of the street. The yards will be terraced and hedged."<sup>24</sup>

Sales also continued with five sales on the 2300 and 2400 blocks of Edmondson Avenue with prices ranging from \$2,500 to \$2,700.<sup>25</sup> In March 1909, the firm received permits to build 24 dwellings on Arunah Avenue between Bentalou and First Streets.<sup>26</sup> The Piel Construction Company announced plans for the construction of 39 additional dwellings on Edmondson and Arunah in February 1911 and, in February 1912, applied for permits to build 27 dwellings on Edmondson Avenue between Ashburton Avenue and Calverton Road.<sup>27</sup>

On the evening of March 31, the firm was struck by a serious fire that destroyed the Piel Construction Company stables at Harlem Avenue causing a loss of \$10,000 and the death of 15 horses. Despite the loss, however, construction continued with new permit applications in June 1913 to build 30 two-story dwellings on Harlem Avenue between Warwick Avenue and Bentalou Street, designed as 24'4" wide by 40' deep. Piel Construction Company received a permit in November 1916 for 32 dwellings on 2300-30 and 2400-30 West Lanvale Street at \$70,000. By 1917, J. Henry Strohmeyer had moved his office from 622 Equitable Building to 767-768 Maryland Casualty Tower, where he was identified as the President of the Manasota Land and Timber Company, president of the Edmondson Realty

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "Classified Ad 20 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> "FOR 92 NEW HOUSES."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> "FOR NEW APARTMENTS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> "GAIL PROPERTY SOLD."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> "PIEL CO. TO SPEND \$75,000."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> "TO BUILD 39 BOOSES Piel Co. Plans Extensive Work On Edmondson And Arnnah Aves. w TO ALTER BANK BTJH-DIlfG Mr. James L. TJonolinc To Krcet 1.1 Tifo-Storj\* Houses On T-vTcntT"- Thlra Street."; "COUNCILMEN SEE TRACKS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> "15 HORSES PERISH."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> "PLANT TO COST \$80,000."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> "Other 12 -- No Title."

National Register of Historic Places - Continuation Sheet	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 6	County and State

Company, and president of the Piel Construction Company. In the early 1920s, the Piel Construction Company expanded their development along Lauretta Avenue, completing some dwellings on the 2500 block by August 1921. In December 1921, the city officially platted Lauretta Avenue. 32

Daylight rowhouses and the growth of a streetcar suburb

Much of this early growth and development was driven by the expansion of the Baltimore streetcar system. While the first streetcar serving this area West Baltimore ran along Franklin Avenue in 1899, it was soon replaced by an Edmondson Avenue route in 1900 that turned north at Poplar Grove. From 1890 to 1907 nationally, the miles of streetcar tracks serving American cities grew from 5,783 to 34,404 miles. Hayward described streetcar service as a "prerequisite for rowhouse builders."

Although the development of the Edmondson Avenue corridor was likely slowed by the delay in the development of the Abell estate, the area soon began to catch up with the rapid growth of East Baltimore. The growth is reflected in the decision in June 1923 by the West Baltimore Medical Association to establish the West Baltimore General Hospital at Ashburton Street and Rayner Avenue. Their ambitious initiative to open a 150 bed hospital serving the estimated 50,000 residents of West Baltimore garnered support from the Walbrook Improvement Association, West End Improvement Association, West Baltimore Republican Club, Edmondson Avenue Improvement Association, and the Baltimore Lodge of Elks. An editorial published in September 1923 noted, "It will draw its patients from a territory as large and as thickly settled as many a community which calls itself a city and it will relieve in some measure the congestion that the big hospitals in the city are now facing."

Much of the development by the Piel Construction Company took the form of early daylight rowhouses. Daylight rowhouse designs are largely interpreted as an early 20th-century response to the increasing popularity of the detached dwelling type found in the growing garden suburbs of the period. Daylight rowhouses were typically wider and shallower than the narrow and deep plans that typified the rowhouses of the late 19th century. Developers marketed the presence of at least one window in each room of the dwelling and projecting front porches also found on dwellings throughout the district. With the increasing prosperity of Baltimore residents during the 1920s, the two-story daylight house became exceedingly popular leading to the great success of the large builders and developers most closely associated with the type including Edward Gallagher, James Keelty, Frank Novak, and Ephraim Macht. While Keelty was not active within the district he did work in several of the neighborhoods of Greater Rosemont and it seems quite possible that he took inspiration from some of the early daylight houses built by McIver and Piel on Harlem and Arunah Avenues. Although the plan and room arrangements of the rowhouses built in the area during the 1920s varied, the essential elements of a front porch and substantial windows remained prevalent.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> (Baltimore et al., *Baltimore*.

<sup>32 &</sup>quot;Legal Notice 1 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Linda Flint McClelland, National Park Service and David L. Ames, University of Delaware, *Historic Residential Suburbs*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 127.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> "PLANS COMPLETED TO EQUIP HOSPITAL."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> "Article 2 -- No Title."

National Register of Historic Places _	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 7	County and State

In contrast to the rapid development along Edmondson Avenue, the northern blocks of the district remained slow to develop. The delay was attributed to the distance of these blocks from the nearest streetcar line on Edmondson Avenue and the absence of any transit along Bentalou Street. A 1923 account titled "Growth In Goose Hill Section Retarded By Lack of Car Service," observed,

"In the midst of a residential section of Baltimore, there remains an undeveloped neighborhood, which it is estimated, will accommodate perhaps several thousand modern homes... Home seekers are attracted to this section and all available houses have been occupied. But home seekers do object to walking long distances to the nearest car line and until the carline is laid through this section much desirable land will remain idle."<sup>37</sup>

Edmondson Terrace Improvement Association

The new residents of West Baltimore organized to form the Edmondson Terrace Improvement Association. After securing a regular meeting place at the Emmanuel English Evangelical Lutheran Church, a building just finished in 1913, Association President Robert L. Jones, described the experience and goals of the new organization,

"Our association has taken action on many things in the past and has met with considerable success. A few of the things for which we claim a good share of credit are as follows: Preventing the establishing of a depot and freight yard on the railroad between Edmondson and Lafayette avenues; getting the 'Gilmor short line' street car; getting improvement equipment on the Edmondson avenue line; securing the abatement of several nuisances and making great inroads toward abating others; getting better street-cleaning service and some alley lights."

The serious concern of the neighborhood association with strict land use controls is evidenced by their active opposition to commercial and industrial development throughout the area through the 1910s and 1920s. The organization led a multi-year effort to prevent the Standard Oil Company from locating a gas station at the corner of Edmondson Avenue and Bentalou Street. In 1925 Attorney J.W. Chapman Jr., spokesman and representative for Edmondson Improvement Association, emphasized the "danger of the project to pedestrians and especially to children" and suggested that because the "south side of Edmondson avenue in that block was already rendered unsafe by reason of a garage and a fire engine house the north side should be left unmenaced." The same year, the organization joined with eight "West Baltimore Improvement Associations," the West Baltimore General Hospital, and Bon Secours Hospital to demand resignation of Dr. J. Frderick Hempel, then Assistant Commissioner of Health. The letter calling for the resignation suggested Hempel had "lost either his sense of smell or sense of veracity" for the failure of the Health Department to take action against a rendering plant located near Edmondson and Warwick Avenues.

The neighborhood association also served a social and political function, as in 1921, when association members organized a concert at the Abraham Lincoln School, located at Payson and Mulberry Streets, attended by Mayor

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 37}$  "Growth In Goose Hill Section Retarded By Lack Of Car Service."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> "EDMONDSON TERRACLERS HAVE FOUND A HOME."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> "PLANNING NEW FIGHT ON FILLING STATION."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> "8 GROUPS ASK RESIGNATION OF DR. J. F. HEMFEL."

National Register of Historic Places - Continuation Sheet	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 8	County and State

Broening and over 500 area residents. 41 Other civic organizations also participated in the marketing of the neighborhood. The Women's Civic League, for example, selected a property at 2509 Lauretta Avenue and furnished it as a "model home" for \$500. The Women's Civic League hoped to "offer young couples of moderate means an alternative to the installment plan." The home was described as "an inviting picture...complete in every detail from the porch boxes fresh with ferns to the percolator on the kitchen stove... All the house needs is occupants." 42

Some of the activities of the organization also served to maintain the racial and class segregation of the community. This was an explicit part of the agenda on May 13, 1925 when eighteen neighborhood associations, including the Edmondson Terrace Improvement Association, met at the board room of the Baltimore Association of Commerce to establish the Allied Civic and Protective Association of Baltimore with the purpose to "unite the efforts of the constituent associates in behalf of an effective zoning law and to extend the work of urging property owners to sign agreements not to dispose of their property to negro purchasers." The discussion of the "segregation of negroes" continued.

"It was suggested that all possible publicity be given to anyone who wells a house in a purely white neighborhood to negro buyers in order to make a large profit or who evicts white tenants in order to let his house to a number of negro families at a greater rental. By 'holding up to a public scorn' such actions, it was believed that the practice could be brought to an end."<sup>43</sup>

The organization expressed its opposition to commercial land use and support for racial segregation simultaneous with a concern with property values. During the early 1920s, many white neighborhood associations and new housing developments in Baltimore, Maryland and across the nation adopted restrictive covenants to control changes to property and forbid the sale of properties to any buyer identified as an African American. The constitutionality of these covenants was upheld by the Maryland Court of Appeals in 1924 and remained common until racial covenants were declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1948. During the 1930s and 1940s, the establishment of the Home Owner's Loan Corporation and the practice of "red-lining" and public housing policies that reinforced existing patterns of segregation helped to maintain strict racial segregation within the area of the district. A 1937 "Residential Security" map of Baltimore prepared by the Home Owner's Loan Corporation clearly defined the area of the district as a yellow moderate risk area due to its close proximity to the African American neighborhoods located east of Fulton Avenue, discouraging lenders from investing in the area.

#### Daylight rowhouses by Schoenhals, Nichols and others: 1920-1940

The area continued to grow through the efforts of developer George W. Schoenhals (1883-1963), builder Harry M. Nichols, the Harlem Building Company, the Progressive Building Company, and later the Realty Service Corporation. Building along North Bentalou Street, Calverton Heights and Lafayette Avenues, Schoenhals was a prolific and ambitious developer, whose distinctive green-tiled rows contribute to the character to the northern blocks of the Evergreen neighborhood as a daylight rowhouse suburb. Harry M. Nichols was a typical small builder and developer, constructing dwellings on West Lanvale Street, Calverton Heights Avenue, and North Whitmore closely modeled on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> "MAYOR SPEAKS AT CONCERT."

 $<sup>^{</sup>m 42}$  "Dr. Gildersleeve Hale And Hearty At Ninety-One."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> "PROTECTIVE GROUPS FORM ASSOCIATION."

National Register of Historic Places _ Continuation Sheet	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 9	County and State

the design of the Edmondson Terrace development. The Harlem Building Company similarly marketed their development on Arunah Avenue by comparing the quality of their homes to those by the Piel Construction Company. This development continued through the mid-1920s with the final stage of residential development arriving in the early 1940s with the Realty Service Corporation.

Progressive Building Company: 1922-1924

In June 1922, the Progressive Building Company filed plans to build 16 dwellings at 2519-49 Lauretta Avenue. <sup>44</sup> In October 1922, the firm applied for a permit to build 16 dwellings from 2520-50 Lauretta Avenue again. <sup>45</sup> In March 1923, the Progressive Building Company applied to build 16 dwellings at 2520-50 Lauretta Avenue at the same cost of \$40,000. <sup>46</sup> In March 1924, the Progressive Building Company filed plans for the construction of 37 dwellings at 2300-48 and 2331-53 West Lauretta Avenue at a cost of \$100,000. <sup>47</sup> Sales of the properties were handled by the Progressive Realty Sales, Inc. Progressive Realty Company was active in the Beverly Hills neighborhood of Baltimore during the same period. The Progressive Building Company continued to develop property at Poplar Grove Street and Mulberry Street in 1927.

George W. Schoenhals: 1921-1940

Born in 1883, George W. Schoenhals built over 8,500 houses across West Baltimore, including Evergreen, Mondawmin, Orangeville, Wyman Park, and Liberty Heights. Schoenhals' development firm began its rise with the acquisition of majority ownership of the Mondawmin estate previously owned by Alexander Brown in 1922. Schoenhals died at age 80 on October 4, 1963 at his home at 4546 North Charles Street. Over the course of his long career, he served as a member of Baltimore Real Estate Board, president of the Dover Perpetual Building and Loan Association, and a director of the Equitable Building and Loan Association. Schoenhals' participation in the broader German community in Baltimore may have contributed to the significant German presence in the neighborhood during the early 20th century.

In the few years prior to his work in the area defined by this district, Schoenhals worked in the area of Coppin Heights on 2400 block of Westwood Avenue and Presbury Street and the area of Mosher on the 3000 block of West Lanvale Street. Schoenhals began building dwellings on the 600 block of North Bentalou Street by October 1921, the 800 block in November 1921, the 900 block in June 1922, and the 1000 block in February 1923. <sup>49</sup> In May 1924, Schoenhals purchased the Grafflin Estate extending his ownership of the property adjoining North Bentalou farther north.

Schoenhals' contributions continued in June 1923 when his firm filed plans for a set of 17 two-story brick dwellings at 2300-32 Calverton Heights Avenue with an estimated cost of \$40,000. In December 1923, Schoenhals planned to

<sup>44 &</sup>quot;Real Estate Transaction 2 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> "Dr. Gildersleeve Hale And Hearty At Ninety-One."

 $<sup>^{</sup>m 46}$  "REAL ESTATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

<sup>47 &</sup>quot;REAL ESTATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> "G. W. Schoenhals Dies At His Home."

 $<sup>^{49}</sup>$  "Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title"; "REAL ESTATES DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> "REAL ESTATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 10	County and State

split the cost with city for paving Calverton Heights from Wheeler Avenue to Warwick Avenue. <sup>51</sup> In February 1924, Schoenhals announced further plans for the construction of 31 two-story brick dwellings at 2301-2325 and 2401-2435 West Lafayette Avenue for \$90,000. <sup>52</sup> With this expanded development plan, Schoenhals also expanded his agreement with the Baltimore Paving Commission to cover the cost of paving Lafayette Avenue from Warwick Avenue to Bentalou Street. <sup>53</sup> The city provided additional investment in February 1924 with a vote to spend \$1,900 on inlets and drains on Calverton Heights between Bentalou Street and Wheeler Avenue. <sup>54</sup> By the spring, Schoenhals began to sell properties on the 2300 block of Calverton Heights Avenue. <sup>55</sup> Schoenhals also acquired additional property beyond the boundaries of the original Abell estate by purchasing an adjoining parcel from Albert W. Rayner in June 1924 for \$7,765.89. <sup>56</sup> A few weeks later, Schoenhals applied for a permit to build 11 two-story brick dwellings at 2805-25 West Lafayette for \$25,000. <sup>57</sup>

By September 1927, Schoenhals was selling dwellings on the 2300 block of Mosher Street, as well as the 2500 block of West Lafayette Avenue. <sup>58</sup> Schoenhals featured a sample home at 2315 Mosher Street furnished by Amberg & Jordan,

"Distinctive homes, with stone porches, concrete floors; Terrazzo steps, sills and coping. Metal weatherstripped and caulked by Chamberlain, Six rooms, tiled bath, hot-water hear, hardwood floor, twentieth century decorations and attractive electric fixtures; modern throughout. A home for the hard-to-please home buyer." <sup>59</sup>

Like many builder-developers, Schoenhals building in West Baltimore stopped with the start of the Great Depression. Across the country, housing starts dropped by over 90% from a high of 937,000 in 1925 to 93,000 in 1933. <sup>60</sup> By September 1940, Schoenhals had returned to the neighborhood to build dwellings on the south side of the 2300 block of Riggs Avenue. These new dwellings were a very modest interpretation of the American neocolonial style and sold quickly.

Harry M. Nichols: 1924-1927

Born on September 15, 1882 in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, Harry M. Nichols was, in 1910, working as a contractor and resided at 1438 West Lanvale Street. <sup>61</sup> By 1919, Nichols maintained an office at 2404 Edmondson Avenue. Initially working in partnership with his brother Alton T. Nichols under the firm name Nichols Brothers, his

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> "Developers Will Share Expense In Street Paving."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> "REAL ESTATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> "TO LAY PAVEMENTS ON TWELVE STREETS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> "\$2,000,000 PLAN FOR SEWERAGE IS SENT TO P. I. C.."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> "Other 23 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> "Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> "REAL ESTATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> "Classified Ad 5 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> "Classified Ad 3 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 155.

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 61}$  "Ancestry.com - 1910 United States Federal Census - Harry M Mchale."

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 11	County and State

work within the district appears to have been undertaken largely as an individual. He remained a resident on West Lanvale Street in 1920 but by 1930 was residing on Skidmore Road in Anne Arundel County. <sup>62</sup> By 1942, Nichols had returned to the city residing at 3706 North Charles Street where he remained until his death on August 2, 1970. <sup>63</sup>

Harry Nichols began work in the area in June 1924 with 24 two-story brick dwellings at 2500-46 West Lanvale at an anticipated cost of \$75,000. <sup>64</sup> During the course of construction an accidental gasoline fire severely burned Alton Nichols. <sup>65</sup> In October 1924, Harry Nichols advertised "New Ground Rents" at Edmondson Terraces on the 2500 block of West Lanvale with 7-room, 2-bath duplex homes from his home and office at 1438 West Lanvale. <sup>66</sup> Nichols continued to build along the 2500 block of Calverton Heights Avenue, filing plans for the construction of 24 two-story brick dwellings at a cost of \$80,000 in July 1925. <sup>67</sup> In November 1924, Nichols requested paving for Calverton Heights Avenue and Lanvale Street from Whitmore Avenue to Warwick Avenue, providing half the cost for the improved infrastructure. Nichols continued to complete the 800 block of North Whitmore by December 1927. <sup>68</sup>

Harlem Building Company: 1924-1927

The Harlem Building Company began in March 1924 with their first project being a set of 34 two-story brick dwellings on the 2500 block of Arunah Avenue at a cost of \$135,000. The firm appears to have had some relationship to the Piel Construction Company, as a September 1924 advertisement declared "You Remember the Houses Built By Piel Construction Company. We now have some built in the same workmanlike, substantial and attractive manner." In 1926, the firm developed the 2500 block of Harlem Avenue, advertising the limited availability of the remaining "wide-front homes" in June 1926. Their connection to the Piel Construction Company is further reinforced by the 1927 development on the 300 block of East 29th Street in the Peabody Heights section advertised as "Piel' Built Modern Homes."

Small scale builders: 1921-1925

In addition to large scale development, the area hosted several small scale builders, including those working on more marginal property, such as the short block of Spedden Street immediately adjoining the railroad tracks. These builders are less concentrated in a single neighborhood and only completed a handful of development projects across their careers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> "Ancestry.com - 1920 United States Federal Census - Harry M Nichols"; "Ancestry.com - 1930 United States Federal Census - Harry M Nichols."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> "Ancestry.com - U.S. World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942 - Harry M Nichols"; "DEATHS."

 $<sup>^{64}</sup>$  "REAL ESTATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> "BURNED AS TANK EXPLODES."

<sup>66 &</sup>quot;Classified Ad 5 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> "REAL ESTATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> "Classified Ad 2 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> "Classified Ad 14 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Classified Ad 6 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> "Display Ad 51 -- No Title."

National Register of Historic Places _	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 12	County and State

Along Riggs Avenue, the 2000 block had begun development by 1921, with an advertisement from D.M. Hite for 2206 Riggs Avenue, a "modern" dwelling with six rooms and a bath. In March 1925, M.L. Saulsbury applied for a permit to build ten two-story brick dwellings at 2201-19 Riggs Avenue for \$30,000. Discourse Library 1910s primarily as a real estate agent. Although the builder is unknown, the development of Franklin Street occurred during this same period in a style quite similar to those dwellings built by George W. Schoenhals. An advertisement in May 1925, described the 2400 block of West Franklin Street as "nearing completion" with "20 modern, 2-story, 18-foot-front, 6-room, daylight dwellings." The dwellings sold quickly, as advertisements in May 1926 suggested only 2 of the 20 remained up for sale. In 1924, E.J. Schlissler filed plans for 27 two-story brick dwellings at an estimated cost of \$65,000 on Homewood Avenue near 22nd Street, at the southeast corner of Lafayette Avenue and Spedden Street, and on the west side of Spedden near Lanvale Street.

Realty Service Corporation: 1940-1941

The last stage in the pre-WWII residential development began in early 1940 with the construction of a row of Colonial Revival attached dwellings on the 600-700 blocks of North Whitmore, followed by Arunah Avenue between Braddish Avenue and Whitmore Avenue, Wilbron Avenue, and Harlem Avenue between Wilbron and Braddish Avenue. These dwellings were built by the Realty Service Corporation then transferred to the Realty Sale Corporation, with an office at 3706 North Charles Street, for sale. A March 1940 advertisement describes the "Elegant New Homes" on Whitmore Avenue writing,

"Ultra modern homes in every respect, 3 bedrooms, cedar closets, 2 baths, hardwood fls., club room and porch with terraza floors. Colonial stairway. Unexcelled kitchen. Insulated H-W. Heat, Oil Burner, summer and winter hookup."

The description is followed by the declaration that the price of \$3750 made the dwellings the "Most Reasonably Priced Houses in Baltimore." In March 1940, the Realty Sale Corp. advertised dwellings on 700 block of Whitmore as "Ultramodern homes in every detail." The development of the 2500 block of Arunah Avenue proceeded in early 1941.

Riggs Building Corporation: 1948-1949

The Riggs Building Corporation purchased property at the 2500 block of Riggs Avenue with financing from Walker & Dunlop, Inc. in December 1947. Beginning in September 1948 the Riggs Building Corporation began to advertise dwellings on the 2500 block of Riggs Avenue under the heading "New one-family homes going fast!" described

<sup>72 &</sup>quot;Classified Ad 14 -- No Title."

<sup>73 &</sup>quot;Classified Ad 24 -- No Title."

<sup>74 &</sup>quot;Classified Ad 5 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title."

<sup>76 &</sup>quot;Classified Ad 3 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Display Ad 40 -- No Title."

 $<sup>^{78}</sup>$  "REAL ESTATE DEALS AND BUILDING NEWS."

National Register of Historic Places _	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Page 13	County and State

"Ultra-modern Home with Picture Windows." The firm ceased advertising in June 1949, likely evidence of the completed sale of all dwellings on the block.

Additional Post-WWII Development: 1950s

The limited rowhouse development following WWII occurred primarily during the early 1950s. In August 1950, the property at Mosher Street and Whitmore with 100 feet frontage on Mosher and 50 feet on Whitmore remained undeveloped when it was advertised for sale. The dwellings were likely constructed in late 1950 or early 1951, as a May 1951 advertisement described the dwelling at 905 Whitmore Avenue, under the heading "Vacant Colored Homes" as "Only 2 yrs. old. Duplex. 2 complete apts. 2 tile baths." Similar dwellings located along Lafayette Avenue, Whitmore, Warwick, and Winchester all likely date from the early 1950s.

Melvin Cade National Guard Armory

This later period development also included the addition of a major military and civic building at the northwestern corner of the area, on a property that had remained largely undeveloped through 1945. The Maryland National Guard Armory, later named the Melvin Cade National Guard Armory, moved to the site in 1960 from 306 Armory Place. The new building immediately became a civic and social center for the broader region, hosting dance parties, lecturers, and neighborhood meetings throughout the 1960s and 1970s. After the death of Melvin H. Cade, commanding officer of the 229th Battalion of the Maryland National Guard, in 1964, the Maryland National Guard renamed the building in his honor.

Winchester Apartments and additional multifamily development: 1960s-70s

The final period of residential development began in the late 1960s with the construction of a number of multifamily apartment buildings at the northern edge of the district. Built in 1968, Winchester Apartments was a FHA financed \$1,582,000 project, including 11 three to four story buildings on a 3.5 acre site with rents ranging from \$74 a month for a one bedroom to \$92 a month for a three bedroom. The "walkup design" by Baltimore architect Donald A. Radcliffe, included carpeted and air-conditioned apartments, off-street parking for 100 automobiles and a central laundry room. The building was one of seven Baltimore FHA sponsored projects, including Bruce Manor in Madison Park South, Cherrydale and Cornerstone Housing in Cherry Hill, Forest Heights apartments in Forest Park, and Frederick Heights in Irvington. Radcliffe's other projects included "patio homes" located in the Thunder Hill neighborhood (1970) and Village of Long Reach (1971) in Columbia, MD, the Colgate Professional Building (1984), located at Route 24 and Colgate Drive, Harford County, and the Palladium, a 6-acre banquet and catering facility at Liberty Heights Avenue and Druid Park Drive within the Park Circle Industrial Park (1985).

<sup>79 &</sup>quot;Classified Ad 14 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> "Classified Ad 30 -- No Title."

<sup>81 &</sup>quot;Classified Ad 3 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> "New Low Rent Units On Cemetery Land."

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86) OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places – Continuation Sheet	Edmondson Avenue Historic District  Name of Property
Section 8 Page 14	County and State

From "blockbusting" to neighborhood organizing in West Baltimore: 1950-1968

Racial transition and "blockbusting" in West Baltimore

Following WWII, decades of pent up demand for decent and affordable housing initiated a period of rapid racial transition that continued from 1940s through the 1960s, transforming the neighborhoods of Greater Rosemont within only a few years from segregated European American neighborhoods to largely African American neighborhoods. Reflecting the deep significance of this experience for white and black residents alike Edward Orser notes, "the massive upheaval caused by blockbusting and white flight in the 1950s and 1960s, left an indelible stamp on the area's social geography, as tangible as the brick rowhouses that line the street." For many of the new African American residents moving to Bentalou Street or Edmondson Avenue, these rowhouse neighborhoods served as their first opportunity for home-ownership. In their new neighborhoods, African American residents organized to establish neighborhood associations that have served as enduring institutions advocating for Greater Rosemont residents. However, these opportunities were also accompanied by threats of violence, dramatic changes for local churches and schools, and the arguably exploitative practices of realtors or "blockbusters."

Racial transition was a common experience in a number of Baltimore neighborhoods from the 1900s through the 1940s. From the beginning, this history of racial transition was accompanied by a parallel history of racial exclusion, as white residents and local leaders enacted a range of social and legal strategies designed to maintain segregated housing conditions. In the seminal *American Apartheid*, Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton describe the process of how "large black ghettoes were created in American cities during the first half of the twentieth century by a distinct process of neighborhood transition.... Whites, in essence, adopted a strategy of tactical retreat before an advancing color line."<sup>83</sup> In his study of post-WWII racial transition in Chicago, Arnold Hirsch similarly notes, "More than a simple legacy of the past, the contemporary ghetto appeared a dynamic institution that was continually being renewed, reinforced and reshaped."<sup>84</sup> The transition experienced by the residents within the neighborhoods of Greater Rosemont during the early 1950s was a significant event in both the local history of race and housing and the broader national context of post-WWII racial transitions.

The relationship between racial transition and racial segregation is clear beginning in 1910 when Baltimore became the first city in the United States to enact a law requiring racial segregation. In response to the attempt by George W. F. McMechen to move onto the 1800 block of McCulloh Street in 1910, Baltimore established a formal segregation ordinance which forbid black residents from moving to designated "white blocks" and white residents from moving to designated "colored blocks." On December 20, 1910, Baltimore Mayor John Barry Mahool signed into law the West Segregation Ordinance, named for sponsor Councilman Samuel L. West, which identified each block in the city according to the racial identity of the majority of each block's residents in 1910. While the West Segregation Ordinance was soon overturned as unconstitutional, its passage and the multiple subsequent attempts to enact a municipal law to enforce racial segregation reflected the deep resistance of white Baltimore residents to racial integration. As a consequence, the area of Old West Baltimore, including the neighborhoods of Harlem Park, Sandtown-Winchester, and Upton, became a predominantly African American community and together with a segregated area in East Baltimore some of the only areas open to African American residents.

<sup>83</sup> Massey and Denton, American apartheid, 78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Hirsch, *Making the second ghetto*, xvi.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet Section 8 Page 15 Edmondson Avenue Historic District Name of Property Baltimore, MD County and State

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

During the 1910s and 1920s racial transition in West Baltimore neighborhoods was occasionally accompanied by violence against black residents and white residents that rented or sold properties to black Baltimoreans. Around the beginning of WWII, the "color line" had stabilized around Pulaski Street to the north of Franklin Street and Fulton Avenue to the south of Franklin Street. Beginning in the late 1940s, however, neighborhoods at the edge of Old West Baltimore began to transition from white to black. The rapid change was driven by a number of factors including the rapid growth of Baltimore's African American population during the 1940s and 1950s, the intense overcrowding and deteriorating housing conditions within historically segregated African American neighborhoods, and the movement of white households out of the center city to the areas of new development in the Baltimore suburbs.

From Jan 1941 to November 1941 alone, housing vacancies for units open to African American occupancy shrank from .8% to .1%. An October 1948 editorial in the Baltimore Sun described the "colored section of most cities" as "already dangerously overcrowded" and noted that only 2% of new housing built in 1948 was open to African Americans, despite representing 20% of Baltimore's total population. By 1950, Baltimore had 226,053 black residents, representing 23.8% of the population but occupying only 19.4% of dwelling units. This pattern continued into the early 1950s, as of the 53,000 permits issued new homes in Baltimore metropolitan area from 1950 to 1953, only 3,200 of those were at all open to African American households—even as the black population increased another 10%.

When African American residents began responding to this housing crisis by purchasing homes in formerly segregated white neighborhoods some white resident responded with violence. In August 1948, a house on the 1300 block of Payson Street just to the north of the district was subject to an arson attempt, attributed to retaliation against a white Jewish home-owner who had "broken" the block by selling a property to an African American homeowner in 1946. The first of the few recorded incidents of violence against these new residents occurred in July 1950 after Ms. Beatrice Sessoms, a native of North Carolina who moved to Baltimore in 1948 and initially roomed in a house on Brantley Avenue, moved with her nephew to the 2300 block of Lauretta Avenue.

These initial movements soon accelerated, particularly in west and northwest areas of Baltimore. Lula Jones Garrett, a columnist for the *Baltimore Afro*, observed in a column titled "Change-the-Address New Game on Baltimore Front" writing, "What with the local yokels forsaking the ghettos and moving into swankier mansions, it takes a special edition of the directory to locate your best friends these days." Among the new home-owners recently arrived on Bentalou Street were Everett Lane, attorney and Mrs. Lane who moved from Division Street, teacher Theresa Thompson, ARC executive Anne Fulwood, and Bettye Murphy and Frank Phillipses at 2047 Bentalou Street.

By September 1950, a page of real estate advertisements clearly suggests the accelerating pace of the transition listing by Crane & Crane, Inc. for 2216 Riggs Avenue with the description, "OWNER will SACRIFICE for quick sale," under the heading of "Colored-Vacant, Small down payments, Comp. renovated." On the same page properties on North Bentalou Street are sold as "Choice Colored Homes, All Vacant," and properties are listed from the 2300 blocks of Lauretta and Mosher by the Alliance Realty Company and W. Burton Guy & Co. Inc. By September 1951, the Morris Goldseker Company was operating in the area with listings from the 2300 to 2500 blocks of Edmondson, the 2300

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> "The Small Proportion Of New Housing For Negroes."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> "Racial Hatred Blamed in Baltimore Arson Case."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> "Home Buyer Standing Guard Against Hoodlums."

 $<sup>^{88}</sup>$  Lula Garrett, "Change-the-Address New Game on Baltimore Front."

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 16	County and State		

block of Calverton Heights, 2500 block of Arunah Avenue, 2400 to 2600 blocks of Lauretta Avenue, and the 900 block of Whitmore. By January 1952, African American household likely resided on nearly every block within the proposed district.

The process of this rapid transition is closely associated with negative accounts of realtors or "block-busters" using a range of tactics to take advantage of both white sellers and black buyers. For example, during the 1940s and 1950s many African American households purchased home under land-installment contracts or buy-like-rent arrangements, also known as lease option contracts, that allowed home-owners to purchase property without an initial down payment or closing charges. However, these arrangements did not immediately transfer title to the property and the contract could still be terminated if the new home-owner missed a single payment. Although the black home-ownership rate rose by 194% between 1940 and 1950, in comparison to 58.8% for whites, a 1955 survey by the Maryland Commission on Interracial Problems and Relations found that 53% of their respondents had purchased their homes through such arrangements rather than regular financing. In the late 1960s, an interracial fair housing coalition known as the Activists, organized and launched a three-year protest campaign against the Morris Goldseker Company specifically targeting these practices as exploitative. Another example is found in the account offered by Tom Cripps to Antero Pietella, of the attempts to induce panic selling in white sellers. In 1947, Cripps witnessed a man with suit in the area around his home at 2323 Mosher Street carrying signs "This House is Not for Sale," with the implication that the neighborhood was imminently threatened with transition. In fact, his family was the first household on the block to sell their property to a black family when they sold the property to Ellsworth F. Davage, a Baltimore County school teacher, and his wife Elizabeth in 1949.

Although little evidence documents widespread physical violence on a scale comparable to white antagonists in Detroit or Chicago, the State Commission on Interracial Problems observed in 1958, "The problem it said, is not with violence 'but with the frigid withdrawal' of whites from the Negroes." During the late 1950s, the State Commission and others finally engaged with the ongoing process of racial transition with the beginning of advocacy and organizing efforts to promote "neighborhood stabilization." This withdrawal is evidenced by the rapid departure of the white congregations of the Arunah Brethren Chapel, the First Nazarene Church, the Emmanuel English Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Harlem Park Methodist Church, and the Immanuel Reformed Church from 1951 to 1957, all within a six year period. By 1960, most of the white residents had left the neighborhood and the area of Greater Rosemont had transformed to include well over 75% African American residents where they composed substantially less than 25% a single decade prior.

This narrative is complicated by a more complete story that includes the role of the new African American residents in building and sustaining a community in Greater Rosemont. As the Edmondson Terrace Improvement Association and other organizations played an integral role in the community during the 1910s and 1920s, a host of new community organizations emerged in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s to support local residents and, most notably, resist the development of the East-West Highway Project.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore*, 133-136.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Pietila, *Not in my neighborhood*, 102-103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> "NEGRO GAINS SEEN SLIGHT."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> See the section on churches at the end of this document for more information on the histories of each church in the district.

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 17	County and State		

Evergreen Protective Association

In the context of rapid racial change, a group of residents organized to establish the Evergreen Protective Association in September 1951. According to a later history, the residents hoped to "promote good neighborhood relations and communication," as well as "maintain high residential standards." The organization's initial boundaries included the 600-700 blocks of Whitmore Avenue, lower 2500 Arunah, Harlem, and Rayner Avenues, the 700 block of Wilbron Avenue and Albert Street.

Examples of their advocacy on behalf of neighborhood residents include their November 1952 effort to quiet services held at the Peace and Harmony Free Will Baptist Church located in a dwelling at Edmondson and Wheeler Avenues. A concerned neighbor remarked, "The Peace and Harmony Free Will Baptist Church moved into this neighborhood a few weeks ago, and there hasn't been any peace and harmony since then." The organization also made charitable donations, including committing to a lifetime membership in the NAACP in the early 1960s. He recommitment to civil rights activism included providing "sandwiches, coffee and milk" along with the League of Women Voters and the Dunbar PTA, to students from Dunbar High School engaged in a sit-in at the Baltimore Department of Education in the spring of 1964. The organization also offered social opportunities to members, such as a "Musical Tea" in May 1967 featuring dramatic soprano soloist Mrs. Naomi Williams in a concert at Union Memorial Methodist Church.

The engaged character of the neighborhood organization also reflects the significant professional and middle-income presence in the neighborhood. An extended piece on the neighborhood in August 1967 highlighted several residents on the 2500 block of Harlem Avenue. 11 teachers, two ministers, a nurse, two beauty salon proprietors, three Social Security Administration employees, and "a number of retired persons." One of the residents was Warren Peck at 2507 Harlem Avenue, an arts and crafts teacher for the Baltimore Department of Education who purchased his home for \$11,500 in 1952. Another was Morgan Professor Dr. J. Welfred Holmes, a co-founder of the Evergreen Protective Association, and his wife Fannie Ellen Story at 2559 Harlem Avenue.

The sole white household on the block, included Ms. Julia A. Knoerr, and her two brothers, residents of 2525 Harlem Avenue since they purchased the home in 1926 for \$6,915. Knoerr explained, "The real estate people used to call me all the time, but I settled them-- I made it clear that I didn't intend to move anywhere... I like this neighborhood and it is a good place to live." She continued to recall how the neighborhood transitioned in the early 1950s, "I thought it was silly the way people began to move out, but some people will complain about anything... Most of the people here knew each other when I moved here. I know more of my neighbors now than I did then."

In the early 1970s, the Evergreen Protective Association worked closed with neighboring organizations to resist the development of the proposed East-West Highway. At a hearing in February 1971, Evergreen Protective Association

<sup>93 &</sup>quot;Neighbors Protest Conduct Of Church."

<sup>94 &</sup>quot;Display Ad 3 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> Dennis Crosby, "Dunbar: Progress Report."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> "Other 5 -- No Title."

<sup>97 &</sup>quot;2500 block Harlem Ave. is atypical slice of Baltimore."

<sup>98 &</sup>quot;DR. HOLMES FUNERAL SET."

 $<sup>^{99}</sup>$  "2500 block Harlem Ave. is atypical slice of Baltimore."

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet Baltimore, MD Section 8 Page 18 County and State

member William Perry commented, "They got 200 million bucks [for the highway] and, baby, it's going to come through regardless of what we say and do here tonight... The only way to stop this thing is to mobilize the people, to lie down in front of the bulldozers and stop it." In the 1980s, with a rise in drug traffic and associated violence in West Baltimore, the Evergreen Protective Association worked closely with police and in 1986, established the "Chemical People Task Force" to "appraise youth of alternatives to taking drugs." 101

#### Greenlawn Neighborhood Association

In Greenlawn, neighborhood organizer and later City Councilperson Mary B. Adams reflected on the significance of neighborhood planting efforts, stating, "We are very concerned about beautifying the community, particularly the Rosemont area, and our members never stop making attempt to do something to make their lawns and backyards more attractive... We now have pride in our community." Adams served as the president of the Greenlawn Neighborhood Association from the early 1960s through the early 1970s, with projects including cleaning up and planting the backyard and front lawns of 250 homes in the 2300-2500 blocks of West Lafayette Street, 2300-2500 Mosher, 900-1400 Wheeler, 900 Warwick. The Greenlawn Neighborhood Association worked as a member of CAIN (Community Action to Improve the Neighborhood) coalition, which included neighborhood associations in Bridgeview, along Bentalou Street and Riggs Avenue. 102

Resisting the "Road to Nowhere"

In addition to the Evergreen Protective Association and the Greenlawn Neighborhood Association, neighborhood organizations grew to include the Rosemont Neighborhood Improvement Association (1954) and regional Alliance of Rosemont Community Organizations. The power of these organizations became clear when in 1965, residents of the area, "became aware that the highway they had heard 'talk' about for years was becoming a reality." The proposal for the East-West Highway would require the demolition of nearly 800 homes and 68 businesses, isolating another 400 households in a fragment south of the highway. With support from preservationists concerned with the affect of the project on Leakin Park, as well as "suburban residents worried about relatives lying in rest in Western Cemetery," residents began to organize in opposition to the project. <sup>103</sup>

By 1969, in the context of two decades of rapid racial transition in West Baltimore and the recent surge of violence following the assassination of Martin Luther King, the coalition of white and black activists opposed to the development of the highway could be understood as a rare moment of interracial solidarity. At an August 1969 hearing in Rosemont, one witness commented, "You did one good thing... You brought white and black together and this is a beautiful thing." Another witness reflected how, for white communities in East Baltimore, representing by activists including Barbara Mikulski from Highlandtown, and black communities in Rosemont, "the threat of the road is acting like a zipper. It is pulling people together." In addition to now Senator Barbara Mikulski, neighborhood leaders engaged in the effort included George and Carolyn Tyson, Walter Orlinsky, Norman Reeves and Parren Mitchell. In

<sup>100 &</sup>quot;U.S. Roads Aide Agrees Greater Priorities Exist."

 $<sup>^{101}</sup>$  Catherine D Gunther, "Evergreen group 'terrific' in aiding stabbed members."

<sup>102 &</sup>quot;Planting project due for school children."

 $<sup>^{103}</sup>$  JAMES D DILTS, "Being avoided by 3-A is Rosemont's success story."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> JANELEE KEIDEL, "An expressway bridges a gulf between people."

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86) OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 19	County and State		

July 1970, the coalition state and city officials announced that each of several possible highway routes through Rosemont had been rejected. Regrettably the threat of demolition, as well as the displacement of 400 households for the highway, led to a pattern of disinvestment that has affected the area through the present, evident in a 1980 article which remarked,

"Today, a visitor in Rosemont can be overwhelmed by contrasts. There are boarded-up houses and freshly painted ones, litter-strewn lots and large old homes with beveled-glass windows that remain elegant." <sup>105</sup>

#### **Schools and Churches**

Churches and schools both played a central role in the development and transitions of the neighborhoods within the Edmondson Avenue Historic District. The history of each church and school is summarized in the following sections, each with a heading noting the historic name of the building, date of construction, dates for any substantial changes, and the contemporary name of the building.

The Emmanuel English Evangelical Lutheran Church hosted the Edmondson Terrace Improvement Association for many of their early meetings. The church, along with others in the neighborhood, served as a steadfast ally in the opposition to commercial and industrial development within and nearby the neighborhood during the 1910s and 1920s. The construction of churches and schools also reflected the growing population and density of the area, as development expanded in the early 1920s, as Protestant Episcopal Church of the Holy Trinity and the Immanuel Reformed Church were both built in 1922, the land was purchased for James Mosher Elementary School in 1923, and the Harlem Park Methodist Episcopal Church was built in 1925.

As these institutions and buildings tracked the growth of the neighborhood in the 1910s and 1920s, they similarly reflected the dramatic and rapid changes in the area during the 1950s. The Arunah Brethren Chapel sold their building in 1951, the First Nazarene Church closed in 1953, and the Emmanuel English Evangelical Lutheran Church left their building in late 1954, the Harlem Park Methodist Church merged with another congregation and built a new church in Catonsville in 1953, and the Immanuel Reformed Church followed out to Catonsville in 1957. In addition, the racial transition of the neighborhood preceded the desegregation of Baltimore public schools in 1954, causing a dramatic impact on enrollment at James Mosher Elementary School. Significant overcrowding forced the expansion of the building in the early 1955, and the continued need for facilities as these African American households remained in the neighborhood is clearly found in the construction of Calverton Junior High School in 1960 and Lafayette Elementary School in 1963.

#### Churches

Emmanuel English Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1913 (Perkins Square Baptist Church)

On February 24, 1913, the congregation of the Emmanuel English Evangelical Lutheran Church filed an application to construct a new building, "86 feet by 60 feet and two stories high" at the northwest corner of Edmondson and Warwick Avenues following plans prepared by Architect A. Cookman Leach. Alfred Cookman Leach graduated from the Maryland Institute Freehand Division in 1896 and worked as a partner of the firm of Tormey and Leach. Examples of

 $<sup>^{105}</sup>$  "Rosemont won I-170 battle; war continues."

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 20	County and State		

Leach's religious architecture include the Highland ME Church (1906) at Highland and Pratt Streets, the Trinity ME Church South (1927) on Liberty Heights Avenue, and the Alpheus W. Wilson ME Church South (1927) at University Parkway and Charles Street.

Established in 1888, the congregation had formerly occupied a building at the corner of Schroeder and Pierce Streets, which in October 1912 "sold to a congregation composed of deaf-mutes" that had pevious held services in the West End Hall located at Baltimore and Gilmor Streets. <sup>106</sup> Builder C.C. Watts received the \$82,000 contract for the "shell work" of the church on a site measuring 127 feet on Edmondson Avenue and 100 feet on Warwick Avenue. <sup>107</sup> Pastors from ten Evangelical Lutheran Churches throughout Baltimore participated in the cornerstone laying ceremony on July 13, 1913. The church had organized the first of a series of outdoor services the prior Sunday and planned to continue outdoor meetings at the site of their new building through July and August. <sup>108</sup> Within the cornerstone, at the southeast corner of the building, the church placed, "copies of *The Sun*, of the church constitution, the proceedings of the last synod, a list of officers of the congregation, a hymnal and a bible." The granite building was expected to be "ready for opening about October 1" and was designed to include a Sunday school in the basement and an auditorium above. <sup>109</sup>

The Perkins Square Baptist Church, established in 1881, purchased the building at Edmondson and Warwick Avenues in January 1956 and completed their move to that location by 1958 or earlier. 110

Protestant Episcopal Church of the Holy Trinity, 1922 (Holy Trinity Episcopal Church)

The planned construction of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Holy Trinity was announced in May 1921, with a proposal for a "Tudor period" building composed of "gray stone" to be located "on the site of the old circus grounds, Bentalou street and Lafayette avenue." The parish house would be completed first and "fitted up as a chapel for worship." Rev. W. Weir Gilliss conducted the first services at the site within a "portable chapel on the grounds." The church was formerly located at Gilmore Street and Riggs Avenue. 112

Bishop John Gardner Murray laid the cornerstone to the "initial building, a parish house and Sunday-school, of the Church of the Holy Trinity" on June 11, 1921. The first service in the new building took place on Sunday, January 29, 1922 in the completed parish house and Sunday school of Holy Trinity Church, which the congregation continued to use "temporarily for church services until the completion of the church auditorium."

Immanuel Reformed Church, 1922 (Saint Marks Institutional Baptist Church)

<sup>106 &</sup>quot;HARFORD FARM SOLD."

 $<sup>^{107}</sup>$  "Open Air Services At Many Churches."

<sup>108</sup> Ihid

<sup>109 &</sup>quot;TEN PASTORS TAKE PART."

 $<sup>^{110}</sup>$  "Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title."

 $<sup>^{111}</sup>$  "CHURCH ON CIRCUS GROUNDS."

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 112}$  "Bishop Murray Ordains P.E. Priest And Deacon."

<sup>113 &</sup>quot;Other 2 -- No Title."

 $<sup>^{114}</sup>$  "P.E. CHURCHMEN FAVOR ANOTHER CONGREGATION."

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 21	County and State		

At a ground-breaking ceremony on June 24, 1922, 12 trustees, including Charles C. Zies, Sr. and John H. Weller, signed a contract for the construction of the new building. 115 Plans filed a few days later for a "white marble" structure with a capacity of 750 people at a cost of \$50,000. 116 In May 1924, the new building served as the site of celebration for the "golden jubilee" of the Baltimore Classis of the German Synod of the East of the Reformed Church in the United States, including lectures by Rev. Dr. H.G. Schlueter on "The Historical Background of Baltimore Classis" and Rev. J.G. Grimmer on "Baltimore Classis Then and Now."

In the late 1950s, the church followed others in the neighborhood in a move away from the area, breaking ground on April 7, 1957 at a site on Edmondson Avenue west of Rolling Road in Catonsville. The new building is a "contemporary brick church." By 1959, the original building was home to St. Mark's Baptist Church, also known as St. Mark's Institutional Baptist Church.

Harlem Park Methodist Episcopal Church, 1925 (Union Memorial United Methodist Church)

Organized in 1875 by Samuel H. Cummings at Gilmore and Mulberry Streets, the Harlem Park Methodist Episcopal Church relocated to Harlem Park in 1880 under the leadership of John F. Goucher. The church constructed a new building in 1906 under the leadership of Rev. E.L. Watson and then moved again to Harlem Avenue and Warwick Avenue under the leadership of Rev. E.P. Fellenbaum. The new building was described as a "two-story structure,"

"Gothic in design, with an auditorium seating 800 persons. In addition, there will be an educational building, equipped with 10 rooms for Sunday-school work. In the basement will be a social hall. A recreation room with bowling alleys and a lecture room that may be converted into a gymnasium also are planned." <sup>120</sup>

At a mortgage burning ceremony in 1947, Fellenbaum recalled that some criticized the project, and the \$100,000 mortgage, as "Fellenbaum's Folly." The congregation laid the cornerstone for the new building at 4:00 PM on May 2, 1925. The Harlem Park Methodist Episcopal Church was dedicated at 3:00 PM on November 21, 1926 with Bishop William Fraser McDowell officiating. 123

In May 1953, the Harlem Park Methodist Church merged with the Grove Methodist Chapel, erected in 1857 on Johnnycake Road in Baltimore County, to form the Wesley Memorial Methodist Church in Catonsville, Maryland. Their building was offered for sale at \$210,000. 124 Bishop E.A. Love of the Washington Conference appointed the

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 115}$  "Trustees Signing Contract For Church At Ground-Breaking."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> "GIRLS' CONFERENCE TO OPEN NEXT WEEK."

 $<sup>^{118}</sup>$  "Immanuel Church To Break Ground For New Building."

<sup>119</sup> REQUIRES CITATION

<sup>120 &</sup>quot;REFORMED CHURCH ACQUIRES NEW SITE."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Methodist Church Burns Mortgage."

<sup>122 &</sup>quot;TO WORSHIP IN NEW CHURCH TOMORROW."

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 123}$  "New Harlem Park M. E. Church Will Be Dedicated Tomorrow."

<sup>124</sup> REQUIRES CITATION

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 22	County and State		

Reverend N.B. Carrington as the leader of the Union Memorial United Methodist Church and assisted in securing help from the Washington and Baltimore Conferences and the Board of Missions to purchase the property. 125

The church had previously moved from Pine and Franklin Streets to North and Madison Avenues in 1951 and had fewer than 100 members when it moved to Harlem Avenue in 1953. By the time of Rev. Carrington's retirement in 1961, however, the church had grown to over 600 members. Carrigton began pastoring at Union Memorial United Methodist in 1952, and also worked as the supervisor of the AFRO's pressroom. He later commented, "I married, baptized and buried many of them down there -- matter of fact they call me the AFRO's chaplain." Commenting on the success of the church in paying off the building's \$225,000 mortgage in 8 years, Carrington noted, "Those are the kind of people we have in our congregation. They wanted to get it out of the way and they worked hard to do it."

"Gospel Hall," ca 1934 (First Abyssinia Baptist Church)

By 1934, the corner of Arunah Avenue and Warwick Avenue was the site of the "Gospel Hall," later known as the Arunah Chapel or Arunah Brethren Chapel. The property remained in active use by a Brethren congregation through 1951 when the building was listed for sale by Weaver Bros., Inc. A January 1951 advertisement described the building,

"Small Church -- Excellent cond. Cor. Warwick & Arunah Ave. Ideal for lodge & meeting hall 1st flr. Auditroium, lge. rms. with folding door partitions & cloak room. 2nd flr. 1 rm., lge. kit. & ladies' lounge. Men's rm. in basement. Slate roof. Oil ht." 127

In November 1953, the building was briefly home to the Church of God in Christ. By July 1954, the St. James Church of God, previously located at 1404 West Franklin Street, had moved to the building. The new tenant applied for permit to build 10'x6' masonry vestibule but met with stiff resistance from neighborhood residents who "complained the new construction would block the view from their porches and cut off the free circulation of air." By the early 1960s, the First Abyssinia Baptist Church had moved into the building. According to an account from a neighborhood resident, the First Abyssinia Baptist Church was substantially rebuilt at the site.

First Nazarene Church, 1925 (Doswell Cathedral)

The First Church of the Nazarene was dedicated on October 26, 1925 and continued to occupy the building through June 1953. The building then became used as Doswell Chapel. In 1962, Doswell was assigned to the Diocese of Puerto Rico, from his position as director of the church's mission regions for Delaware, Maryland, DC and Virginia. Bishop Doswell attended Douglass Junior College, Loyola College, and took courses through John Hopkins University. The congregation is now known as the Doswell Cathedral and appears to have been substantially altered in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Rev. Carrington was also employed as a foreman in the pressroom of the Baltimore Afro.

<sup>126 &</sup>quot;2500 block Harlem Ave. is atypical slice of Baltimore."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Classified Ad 17 -- No Title."

<sup>128 &</sup>quot;Church Vestibule Request Opposed."

 $<sup>^{129}</sup>$  "Rev. Doswell elevated to bishopric."

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 23	County and State		

#### **Schools**

James Mosher Elementary School, 1933 (1955 Addition)

James Mosher Elementary School began development in 1923 with the purchase of a 7-acre tract north of Edmondson Terraces, "directly upon the old Edmondson avenue circus grounds," for \$30,000. A new school could relieve overcrowding for nearby schools,

"The center of the new school property is the site of the center ring of the regular three-ring circus... Indirectly a new school upon this site will help School 63, which is in Walbrook, where residents have been concerned greatly about inadequate school facilities. It will be of more direct benefit to Schools 86, 78, 62 and 65." <sup>130</sup>

Unfortunately for local residents, the project was beset with delays and by July 1929 the funds originally appropriated for the new school were used instead to build Gwynn Falls Junior High. In the six year interim, the neighborhood grew from 350 to over 500 dwellings and students attending overcrowded schools at Payson and Saratoga and Poplar Grove and Lafayette Avenues were forced to study in portable structures. <sup>131</sup> At a meeting in November 1929, local residents formed a Parent Teacher Association for the prospective school with 50 members including Hugh H. Jones, Jr. as President, Robert S. Crow, Secretary, and Mrs. Elmer E. Soper, Treasurer. The representatives of the school board present for the meeting "each assured the audience the school would eventually be built on the property." <sup>132</sup>

In December 1930, the Baltimore School Board received a permit for "the erection of three portable school buildings on the old circus lot at Wheeler avenue and Mosher." Classes started at the new school in February 1931 with plans for the Public Improvement Commission to "erect an elementary school" in the near future. In August 1931, the school board finally appropriated \$90,000 out of the surplus on \$10,000,000 school loan to plan the construction of School No. 80. The successful bid on the contract for construction of the new building came from Charles L. Stockhausen at \$87,700, who undertook the construction with workers employed on a thirty-hour per week schedule under a local policy for maximizing employment during the early years of the Great Depression.

Beginning in 1899, Charles L. Stockhausen served as a general contractor throughout in Baltimore with projects including the General Baking Company (1925) at North Avenue and Harford Road and the Fairfield Farms Dairy Company Building (1927) at Front, Exeter and Colvin Streets. <sup>137</sup> Under the management of general manager Charles Albert Cummins, the firm's extensive work on public school buildings includes School No. 83 (1906) at Lakewood Avenue and Oliver Street, School No. 96 (1906) at Pulaski and Ramsay Streets, a 1912 addition to School No. 13 at Patterson Park Avenue and McElderry Street, Western High School, and the Polytechnic Institute on North Avenue,

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 130}$  "OLD CIRCUS GROUNDS WILL BE SCHOOL SITE."

 $<sup>^{131}</sup>$  "LETTERS to the EDITOR."

<sup>132 &</sup>quot;PROTEST MEETING FEAST OF AMITY."

<sup>&</sup>quot;SOUTHEASTERN SCHOOL SITE IS SELECTED."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> "Additions At Polytechnic And Govans School Open."

 $<sup>^{135}</sup>$  "ALLOTS \$745,000 FOR TWO SCHOOLS."

 $<sup>^{136}</sup>$  "BIDS ARE OPENED FOR NEW SCHOOL"; "2 BUILDERS AGREE TO 30-HOUR WEEK."

 $<sup>^{137}</sup>$  "Stockhausen, Charles L. -- Philadelphia Architects and Buildings."

National Register of Historic Places _	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 24	County and State		

Northeastern Junior High School (1922) in Clifton Park, City College, and many others. <sup>138</sup> The firm continued through the late 1930s but ended following Stockhausen's death in November 1943.

In August 1933, the Baltimore Board of Awards gave the Baltimore Asphalt Block and Tile Company, "a contract for paving with sheet asphalt Warwick Avenue, from North avenue to Windsor avenue, and Wheeler avenue from Mosher street to Riggs avenue." At a cost of approximately \$22,000, the paving was intended to "improve the approaches to the school on North avenue for white handicapped children now under construction and School No. 89, Wheeler avenue and Mosher street." The new school was finally declared ready for occupancy on September 7, 1933. 140

The school remained a white segregated school through the late 1940s. The rapid racial transition of the area, however, created massive challenges for the management of Baltimore's still segregated public school system during the early 1950s. As school officials observed that "entire city blocks were vacated during the three months of summer by white persons and supplanted by Negroes,"

"The ingress of Negro home owners and dwellers in hitherto white neighborhoods in northwest and northeast Baltimore during the summer months has presented a problem which is bound to perplex the School Board until some kind of relief can be obtained either through construction of new facilities or through the use of portables."

141

At the beginning of the school year in 1952, school administrators had only anticipated 370 students at School No. 144 but, surprised by "'tremendous' turnover from white to Negro population in areas adjacent to these schools" had to manage a near overwhelming enrollment of 608 students. The year following School No. 144 was still described as having "very heavy" enrollment of 900 students and an expectation of continued growth. 143

In response to the rapid growth, the school administration proposed a \$925,000 addition, later reduced to \$725,000, for School No. 144. Funded by a November 1953 bond issue, the contract for the addition was awarded to Philip Vizzini & Son, Inc. <sup>144</sup> In April 1955, Mayor Thomas D'Alesandro laid the cornerstone for the new building already half complete by the time of the ceremony. The addition was designed to provide "classrooms and two kindergartens for more than 900 children." <sup>145</sup>

Phillip Vizzini established his construction firm in 1918 and attended the Maryland Institute night school earning a certificate in architecture in 1920. In 1945, Vizzini expanded and incorporated as Philip Vizzini & Son Inc. The firm

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> AVERY McBEE, ""Bonaparte" Of Building."

 $<sup>^{139}</sup>$  "Local Moose Women To Attend Convention."

 $<sup>^{140}</sup>$  "3,000 NEW PUPILS TO BE ENROLLED."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> "POPULATION MOVE STUMPS SCHOOL BOARD."

<sup>142</sup> Ihid

<sup>143 &</sup>quot;Influx Of Students Taxes Baltimore School Facilities."

 $<sup>^{144}</sup>$  EDWARD C BURKS, "BUDGET O.K.'D BUT TAX RATE IS UNDECIDED."

<sup>145 &</sup>quot;CITY SLATES NEW PROJECTS."

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 25	County and State		

specialized in school construction and—by the end of the firm at Vizzini's retirement in 1972—the firm had completed 42 schools in Baltimore, Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County. 146

Calverton Junior High School, 1960 (Calverton Elementary/Middle School)

The Calverton Junior High School was one of three junior high schools started in the late 1950s around the "school within a school' principle" which divided each school into "four almost self-contained units." The contract for the building was awarded on October 22, 1959 to John McShain, Inc., a general contractor, for their bid of \$3,735,000. Additional participants in the project included the architecture firm Meyer and Ayers, mechanical engineers McNeill and Baldwinn, and structural engineering firm J.L. Faisant and Associates. The new building, located on a 14-acre site, was designed to include 48 standard classrooms, 42 oversized classrooms, a gymnasium, an auditorium, a cafeteria, and a library.

Composed of Richard Winston Ayers (1910-1995) and Julius Caesar Meyer (1897-1979), Meyer and Ayers also designed Woodmore Elementary School (1954), Frankford Elementary School (1955), Groveland Elementary School (1957), and Northwest High School (1963) among a wide range of other residential, commercial, and civic buildings. <sup>149</sup> Philadelphia based John McShain, Inc. was one of the largest construction contractors in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s, with prominent projects including the Pentagon, the State Department Building and the Jefferson Memorial. <sup>150</sup>

Regrettably the school struggled with high profiles incidents of violence over the course of the late 1960s and 1970s, including the death of teacher in 1975 while attempting to intervene in a fight between students. <sup>151</sup> The Baltimore school board closed the school for a 3 day period in May 1975 to allow teachers and administrators and opportunity to reorganize and institute new disciplinary policies. <sup>152</sup> Both the incidence of violence and the responses by teachers and administrators occurred within the context of school desegregation efforts in the early 1970s.

Lafayette Elementary School, 1963 (The Empowerment Academy)

In May 1962, the Baltimore Department of Education announced plans to construct the Lafayette Elementary School at 801 Braddish Avenue with 24 classrooms, two kindergarten rooms, a library, auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria. Designed by Baltimore architect Benjamin Brotman, the new school could accommodate 820 students, allowing some relief for overcrowding at Mary E. Rodman Elementary School, School No. 145. Born December 25, 1912, Brotman

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 146}$  "Philip Vizzini, 95, builder of 42 schools - Baltimore Sun."

<sup>147 &</sup>quot;'School Within School' Idea O.K.d."

<sup>148 &</sup>quot;Contract Is Let On New School."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Meyer & Ayers -- Philadelphia Architects and Buildings."

 $<sup>^{150}</sup>$  Fowler, "John McShain, 90, Constructor Of Pentagon and Kennedy Center."

Additional publicized incidents of crime at the school include a mugging in 1965, vandalism at the school in 1969, an incidence of violent crime in 1969, an assault on teacher in 1971, vandalism in 1974 and 1975, a weapons charge against a student in 1975, an incidence of sexual assault in 1975, and an assault on student 1982.

<sup>152</sup> JEANNE E SADDLER, "'A new day'."

<sup>153 &</sup>quot;Lafavette Elementary School Is Planned"; "New School."

<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 8 Page 26	County and State		

studied design at the at the Maryland Institute and Johns Hopkins University, then worked as the Chief Draftsman in the office of Hal A. Miller from 1948 to 1951 before starting his own firm in 1954. <sup>154</sup>

Philadelphia based non-union contractor John J. Driscoll Company received the contract at a cost of \$940,000 and construction began in June 1962. While the contractor anticipated within a few months in August 1963, union officials suggested that due to "shoddy workmanship" the contactor had committed a violation of the specifications for the school construction contract. The charge prompted the city comptroller, Hyman A. Pressman to organize a commission to investigate the issue eventually finding 90 defects in the building. These defects were apparently minor, however, as the builder suggested they could repair the defects for the negligible cost of \$900. Lafayette Square Elementary School closed in at the end of the school year in 2003. The school reopened as the Empowerment Academy, a public charter school started through Baltimore's New Schools program.

 $<sup>^{154}</sup>$  "Brotman, Benjamin (b. 1915) -- Philadelphia Architects and Buildings."

<sup>&</sup>quot;New School."

 $<sup>^{156}</sup>$  "SCHOOL SUM PUT AT \$626."

National Register of Historic Places	Edmondson Avenue Historic District		
Continuation Sheet	Name of Property		
	Baltimore, MD		
Section 9 Page 1	County and State		

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<b>National</b>	Register	of Hist	oric F	'laces
Continua	ation She	et		

Edmondson Avenue Historic District

Name of Property

Section 9 Page 2

Baltimore, MD

County and State

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Edmondson Avenue Historic District

Name of Property

Baltimore, MD

County and State

Section 9 Page 3

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Edmondson Avenue Historic District

Name of Property

Baltimore, MD

County and State

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National Register of Historic Places - Continuation Sheet	Edmondson Avenue Historic District
	Name of Property
	Baltimore, MD
Section 9 Page 6	County and State

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"WON BY HARD WORK." The Sun (1837-1985), June 7, 1899.

http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1647372402&Fmt=7&clientId=41143&RQT=309&VName=HNP.

Edmondson Avenue Historic District  Name of Property	Baltimore, MD County and State	
	County and State	
10. Geographical Data		
Acreage of Property 160 acres		
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)		
1 1 8 S 3 5 6 8 5 3 4 3 5 1 6 1 7 3  Zone Easting Northing 2 1 8 S 3 5 6 5 8 2 4 3 5 0 6 2 4 4	Zone         Easting         Northing           1         8         S         3         5         7         4         4         0         4         3         5         0         6         5         7	
Verbal Boundary Description	See continuation sheet	
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)		
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)		
11. Form Prepared By		
name/title Eli Pousson, Field Officer  Organization Baltimore Heritage	date	
street & number 11 ½ West Chase Street	telephone _410-332-9992	
city or town Baltimore state MD	zip code <u>21201</u>	
Additional Documentation		
Submit the following items with the completed form:		
Continuation Sheets		
Maps		
A <b>USGS map</b> (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.		
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.		
Photographs		
Representative black and white photographs of the property.		
Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)		
Property Owner		
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)		
name Multiple		
street & number	talanhana	
city or town state	zin code	

Paperwork Reduction Statement: This information is being collected for applications 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. 470 et. seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1 County and State

### **Verbal Boundary Description:**

The boundaries of the Edmondson Avenue Historic District are roughly defined by Winchester Street, Braddish Avenue north of Edmondson Avenue, Edmondson Avenue west of Braddish Avenue, Franklintown Road north of West Franklin Street, West Franklin Street, and North Bentalou Street. St. Peters Cemetery forms the northern boundary, the adjoining railroad tracks and associated industrial development form the eastern boundary, West Franklin Street forms the southern boundary, and Franklintown Road and Braddish Avenue form the western boundary.

## **Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries of the Edmondson Avenue Historic District are set to conform to include the historic development of both Goose Hill and Edmondson Terrace as both areas developed through 1960. The boundaries are also drawn to conform to the neighborhood boundaries as defined by the City of Baltimore, and include the full area of Evergeen Lawn, Bridgeview/Greenlawn, and Rosemont Homeowners/Tenants, as well as the area of Midtown-Edmondson located west of the railroad tracks at the eastern edge of the district.

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Name of Property

Section 10 Page 2

County and State

Figure 1 Sketch map of Edmondson Avenue Historic District, boundary line in green Falls