

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

700 NORTH PULASKI STREET (COMMERCIAL BUILDING)
(Faith Christian Worship Center)
(Midtown Edmondson Historic District)

HABS NO. MD-1435

Location: 700 North Pulaski Street, Baltimore, Maryland

700 North Pulaski Street is located at latitude: 39.296437, longitude: -76.650571. The coordinate represents the approximate center of the building and was obtained in 2023 using Google Earth (WGS84). There is no restriction on its release to the public.

Significance: 700 North Pulaski Street contributes to the Midtown Edmondson Historic District's significance for its association with the growth of West Baltimore and the historic district's early-to-mid twentieth century industrial and commercial development along the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad corridor. This section of North Pulaski Street housed the coal yards of the A.F. Lawrence and H.G. Von Heine coal companies from the 1900s to the 1940s. The Maryland Refrigeration Company built the current building ca. 1953 and owned the site until 2003. Faith Christian Worship Center, Inc. purchased the property in 2005, renovated the building, and used it for its religious services and programs until 2023.

Description: 700 North Pulaski Street is a single-story masonry commercial structure constructed of white painted concrete masonry units (CMU) and a brick façade. The building is rectangular in plan, measuring approximately 96'-0" east to west x 108'-0" north to south. The North Pulaski Street façade has a central main entrance with paired wood and glass doors with inset decorative wrought iron. The entrance is accessed by three masonry steps that are flanked by pierced decorative concrete block panels and framed by a painted wood surround consisting of six mitered and stepped wood bands. A non-illuminated sign reading "Faith Christian Worship Center" is centered above the entry doors within the mitered bands.

The portions of the façade that flank the main entrance bay have brick laid in a common bond pattern with Flemish bond every sixth course. The lower portion of the brick wall has a pattern of six projecting horizontal bands. The bands are separated by two brick courses that align with the main wall plane. Each band projects approximately 1" beyond the main wall plane and consists of a single brick course. The south end of the North Pulaski Street façade contains three windows infilled with glass block. Two rectangular electrified box signs have recently been installed in the upper south side of the façade, one atop the other. The sign closest to the coping is a +/- 64" x 36" back-lit metal box sign that holds a white plastic fascia panel printed with "Faith Christian Worship

Center” along with the church’s logo. Mounted directly below that sign is a +/- 64" x 48" metal box sign that contains a digital display panel. The north end of the façade contains a second entrance with a single solid door protected by an outer metal grille security door, and a single large window recently infilled with glass block. According to Cheryl Strickland, a representative of the property, all the glass block elements were installed shortly after the church purchased the property in 2005.¹

The south (side) elevation that faces the church parking area along Harlem Avenue is constructed of painted CMUs except for where the painted brick façade finish wraps the east corner for 24". The wall has seven windows and one single door. The four windows on the east end are infilled glass block with modern metal frames and sill covers, and the three windows at the west end are twelve-pane industrial windows with brick sills and metal security grilles. The single solid paneled entry door near the west end of the wall is protected by a decorative metal grille outer door.

At the north end of the west (rear) elevation is an addition that is almost completely obscured by vegetation. The south side of the addition consists of standard CMUs with a CMU-infilled loading dock door opening with a modern single-leaf steel door. This door is accessed via an exterior wooden platform, staircase, and ramp. The southern end of the rear wall, which is constructed of painted standard CMUs, has five CMU-infilled openings.

The north (side) elevation is constructed of painted CMUs except for where the painted 24"-thick brick façade meets the east corner. The wall has a large, infilled opening near the west end and a small metal vent near the east end. Slightly off-center to the east, there is a small metal vent installed in the CMU wall. A brick chimney is visible above the coping near the center of the wall.

The building has a virtually flat roof of waterproof membrane. The brick façade wall is capped by a masonry coping, and all CMU walls are capped with terra cotta coping units.

The building was renovated when it was converted to a church in 2005 and all original indoor material was removed or covered. The interior was partitioned into twenty-two rooms including one large entry foyer, a large meeting room, four small offices, two restrooms, a large access hallway, a small conference room, a small access hallway, a break room, a commercial kitchen, four utility rooms, an audio/visual control room, the main sanctuary, a large pastor’s office, a pastor’s dressing room and a pastor’s closet. All rooms have gypsum board wall finishes except for the utility rooms, the pastor’s closet, the break room, the kitchen, and the small offices, which have CMU walls. Ceilings in the rest rooms and two of

¹ Strickland, Cheryl (property representative), interview by Steven Patrick, 18 April 2023.

the utility rooms are gypsum board. The remaining two utility rooms have no drop ceilings and are open to structure. All other rooms have suspended grid ceiling systems with lay-in acoustic tiles. All interior fixtures and finishes were in excellent condition at the time of the 2023 survey.

History: The completion of the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad brought industrial development to West Baltimore, starting with lumber yards, as shown on the 1901 and 1914 Sanborn maps. In 1901, the Lafayette Mill and Lumber Company was located at the northern end of North Pulaski Street where it intersects with West Lafayette Avenue. By 1914, the A. F. Lawrence Coal Company and H.G. Von Heine Coal Yard had coal trestles located along the B&P tracks in the area bounded by West Lanvale Street to the south and West Lafayette Avenue to the north.² The 1940 map of railroad sidings in the City of Baltimore shows a siding at this location leading to the “Lawrence, A. F. Coal Co.; Von Heine, Henry G., Inc.” This siding appears to extend south of West Lanvale Street to the approximate location of 700 North Pulaski Street.³

On July 27, 1953, the Maryland Refrigeration Company, Inc. purchased the land at the intersection of North Pulaski Street and Harlem Avenue from the Central Coat, Apron and Linen Services, Inc.⁴ On December 31, 1953, the Maryland Refrigeration Company placed a large advertisement in *The Evening Sun* to announce its move to the new location on North Pulaski Street (see Illustrated Appendix, Figure 1). The advertisement included a rendering of the current building with the letters “MARYLAND REFRIGERATION” spelled out above the main entrance and a round “York” sign above the letters. In addition, the advertisement included a map showing the building’s location on the west side of North Pulaski Street opposite Harlem Avenue and near the Pennsylvania Railroad, which by then had acquired the B&P.⁵ Finally, the advertisement included the following promotional text:

From a small shop on North Greene street back in 1931...then in 1939 to North Howard street for fourteen years...we now move to a brand-new building of our own...

² “Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland,” Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 2, 1901, Image 46 of 123, Map 153, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573190102/?sp=46&st=image&r=-0.688,-0.168,1.98,1.288,0; “Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland,” Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 2, 1914, Image 59 of 124, Map 159, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573191402/?sp=59&st=image&r=-0.612,0.167,2.225,1.192,0; accessed November 2023.

³ Industrial Bureau, Baltimore Association of Commerce, *Location Map (and Key) of Railroad Sidings and Industrial Tracks in Baltimore*, 1940 (on file at Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland).

⁴ Fidelity National Title Insurance Company, *60 Year Title Search, Property Title File No. BP210019, 700 North Pulaski Street, Baltimore, MD 21217*.

⁵ By the mid-twentieth century, the Pennsylvania Railroad had acquired the rail line that was originally the Baltimore and Potomac line.

You are cordially invited to visit us and inspect a very complete display of air-conditioning and allied equipment.⁶

In 1939, J.J. Murphy, president of the Maryland Refrigeration Company, Inc., was listed in *Refrigerating Engineering* as having been approved as a Charter Member of the Baltimore-Washington Section of the American Society of Refrigerating Engineers.⁷ In a 1943 advertisement in *The New York Times*, the company promoted itself as an:

Established firm engaged in distribution, installation and servicing of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning systems... In business 15 years. Ample capital. Handled Refrigerating contracts from \$500 to \$20,000; Air Conditioning from \$250 to \$35,000... Equipment sales for 1942 exceed \$300,000.00. Maryland distributors York Ice Machinery for past eleven years.⁸

City telephone directories and newspaper advertisements indicate that the Maryland Refrigeration Company was a distributor for two nationally known companies, the York Corporation and the Taylor Freezer Corporation.⁹ Founded in 1874 as the York Manufacturing Company, the York company's first focus was making and storing ice and refrigeration. In 1903, the company expanded its operations into the air conditioning business.¹⁰ The Taylor Brothers Churn and Manufacturing Company incorporated on October 18, 1911, in St. Louis, Missouri, listing John E. Taylor as its agent.¹¹ In April 1928, the company incorporated in Delaware as the Taylor Freezer Corporation, described as dealing in "refrigerating plants, refrigerators, ice cream cabinets. 20,000 shares."¹² A September 1935 advertisement by the Maryland Refrigeration Company, Inc. in *The Evening Sun* listed for sale "Taylor Freezer, Equipt from

⁶ Maryland Refrigeration Co., Inc., "We Are Moving," advertisement, *The Evening Sun* (Baltimore), 31 December 1953, 7, <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 25 April 2023.

⁷ *Refrigerating Engineering* 38, no. 1 (July 1939): 56, <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 20 May 2023.

⁸ Maryland Refrigeration Co., Inc., "What Have You to Sell in the Baltimore Territory?," advertisement, *The New York Times*, 28 February 1943, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: S-11, accessed 20 May 2023.

⁹ The Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company of Baltimore City, annual telephone directories, 1946-2014, (on file at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland); Maryland Refrigeration Co., Inc., "York, The Name You Can Always Trust in Air Conditioning," advertisement, *The Evening Sun*, 8 July 1958, 29; Taylor Freezer, classified advertisement, *The Evening Sun*, 9 September 1935, 28, <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 21 May 2023.

¹⁰ "York International Corp. – Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on York International Corp." Reference for Business, <https://www.referenceforbusiness.com/history2/79/York-International-Corp.html>, accessed 17 May 2023.

¹¹ OpenCorporates, "Taylor Brothers Churn and Manufacturing Company," https://opencorporates.com/companies/us_mo/F00002152, accessed 21 May 2023.

¹² "Charters Filed at State House," *The Morning News* (Wilmington), 19 April 1928, 14, <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 21 May 2023.

York Freon Machine, used in demonstration at Timonium Fair.”¹³ Early twentieth-century newspaper advertisements for commercial facilities throughout the country reflect commercial facilities’ pride in installing a Taylor Freezer in their respective locations.

After filing for bankruptcy under Chapter 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Code in 2003, the Maryland Refrigeration Company, Inc. sold the property to a private owner.¹⁴ Two years later, the Baltimore City Council voted on a proposed ordinance to create a Substance Abuse Treatment Center at 700 North Pulaski Street, but there is no indication that this center was ever developed.¹⁵ On November 29, 2005, the Faith Christian Worship Center, Inc. purchased the property.¹⁶ The non-denominational congregation renovated the building and used it for their services and programs for almost twenty years. The church’s presence on social media reflects an active congregation with religious programs, community outreach activities, and fellowship events, including Bible studies, prayer nights, choir, Men’s prayer breakfasts, fall revival, spiritual assessments class, addiction ministry, HIV/AIDS Awareness, New Year’s Eve watch night, book release party, women’s skating party, Valentine’s Day event, and women’s fellowship.¹⁷

Sources: “Baltimore City Council Public Hearing on Bill No. 05-0194.” Advertisement. *The Sun* (Baltimore), 19 August 2005, B7. <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 25 April 2023.

“Charters Filed at State House.” *The Morning News* (Wilmington), 19 April 1928. <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 21 May 2023.

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Environmental Data Resources, Inc. *The EDR-City Directory Abstract, 2100 West Lanvale Street, Baltimore, MD 21217*, 20 May 2019.

Faith Christian Worship Center, Inc. Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/fwcwbaltimore/>, accessed 21 April 2024.

¹³ Taylor Freezer, classified advertisement, *The Evening Sun*, 9 September 1935, 28, <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 21 May 2023.

¹⁴ Fidelity National Title Insurance Company, *60 Year Title Search, Property Title File No. BP210019, 700 North Pulaski Street, Baltimore, MD 21217*.

¹⁵ “Baltimore City Council Public Hearing on Bill No. 05-0194,” advertisement, *The Sun* (Baltimore), 19 August 2005, B7, <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 25 April 2023.

¹⁶ Fidelity National Title Insurance Company, *60 Year Title Search, Property Title File No. BP210019, 700 North Pulaski Street, Baltimore, MD 21217*.

¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/fwcwbaltimore/>, accessed 21 April 2024.

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Industrial Bureau, Baltimore Association of Commerce. *Location Map (and Key) of Railroad Sidings and Industrial Tracks in Baltimore*, 1940 (on file at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland).

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Maryland Refrigeration Co., Inc. "York, The Name You Can Always Trust in Air Conditioning." Advertisement. *The Evening Sun*, 8 July 1958. <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 25 April 2023.

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Personal interview of Cheryl Strickland (property representative) by Steven Patrick, 18 April 2023.

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_____. Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 2, 1914, Image 59 of 124, Map 159. https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573191402/?sp=59&st=image&r=-0.612,0.167,2.225,1.192,0, accessed November 2023.

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Taylor Freezer. Classified advertisement. *The Evening Sun*, 9 September 1935.
<https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 21 May 2023.

York Heating and Air Conditioning. Advertisement. “Because York Listened...”
The Sun, 4 May 1986. <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 25 April 2023.

“York International Corp. – Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on York International Corp.” Reference for Business. <https://www.referenceforbusiness.com/history2/79/York-International-Corp.html>, accessed 17 May 2023.

Historians: Nancy L. Zerbe; Steven Patrick, ARCH², Inc., 2024

Project

Information: The documentation of 700 North Pulaski Street was undertaken in 2022-2024 as mitigation in accordance with the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program, previously the Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Tunnel Replacement Program. 700 North Pulaski Street will be demolished to make way for the realignment of the Northeast Corridor associated with a new 1.9-mile-long tunnel north of the existing tunnel alignment. The documentation project was sponsored by the United States Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), in coordination with the Maryland Historical Trust. It was prepared by Nancy L. Zerbe, Principal Investigator, and Steven Patrick, Historian. Jet Lowe prepared the large-format photography. Christopher H. Marston, HAER Architect, advised the project.

ILLUSTRATED APPENDIX

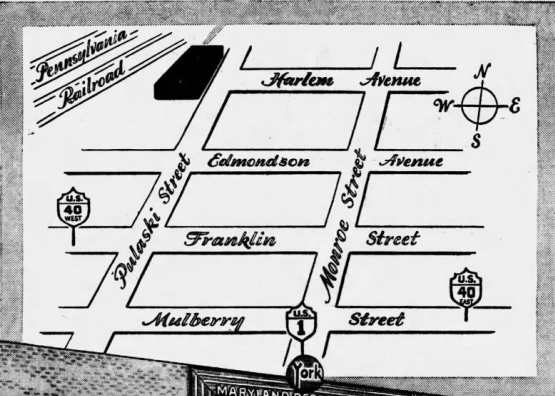
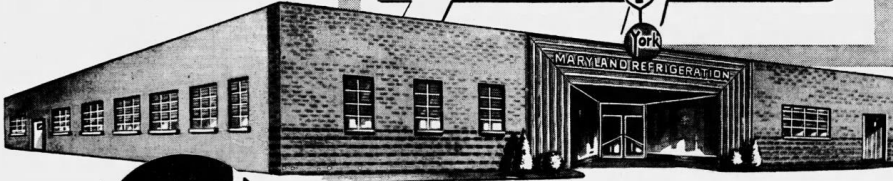
WE ARE
moving

Maryland Refrigeration Company, Inc.
announces its new location
700 North Pulaski Street

After the first of January we will be located at our new address.

From a small shop on North Greene street back in 1931 . . . then in 1939 to North Howard street for fourteen years . . . we now move to a brand-new building of our own. Each step forward has been made possible by the warm support of our customers, friends and employees . . . and we pledge our sincere efforts to continue to merit their confidence.

You are cordially invited to visit us and inspect a very complete display of air-conditioning and allied equipment.

York
refrigeration
air-conditioning

Headquarters for Mechanical Cooling Since 1885

Air-Conditioning • Certified Maintenance

Maryland Refrigeration Company, Inc.
700 North Pulaski Street . . . OUR NEW PHONE NUMBER Gllmor 5-2225

Figure 1. Maryland Refrigeration Co., Inc. "We Are Moving." Advertisement. *The Evening Sun* (Baltimore), 31 December 1953. <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 25 April 2023.

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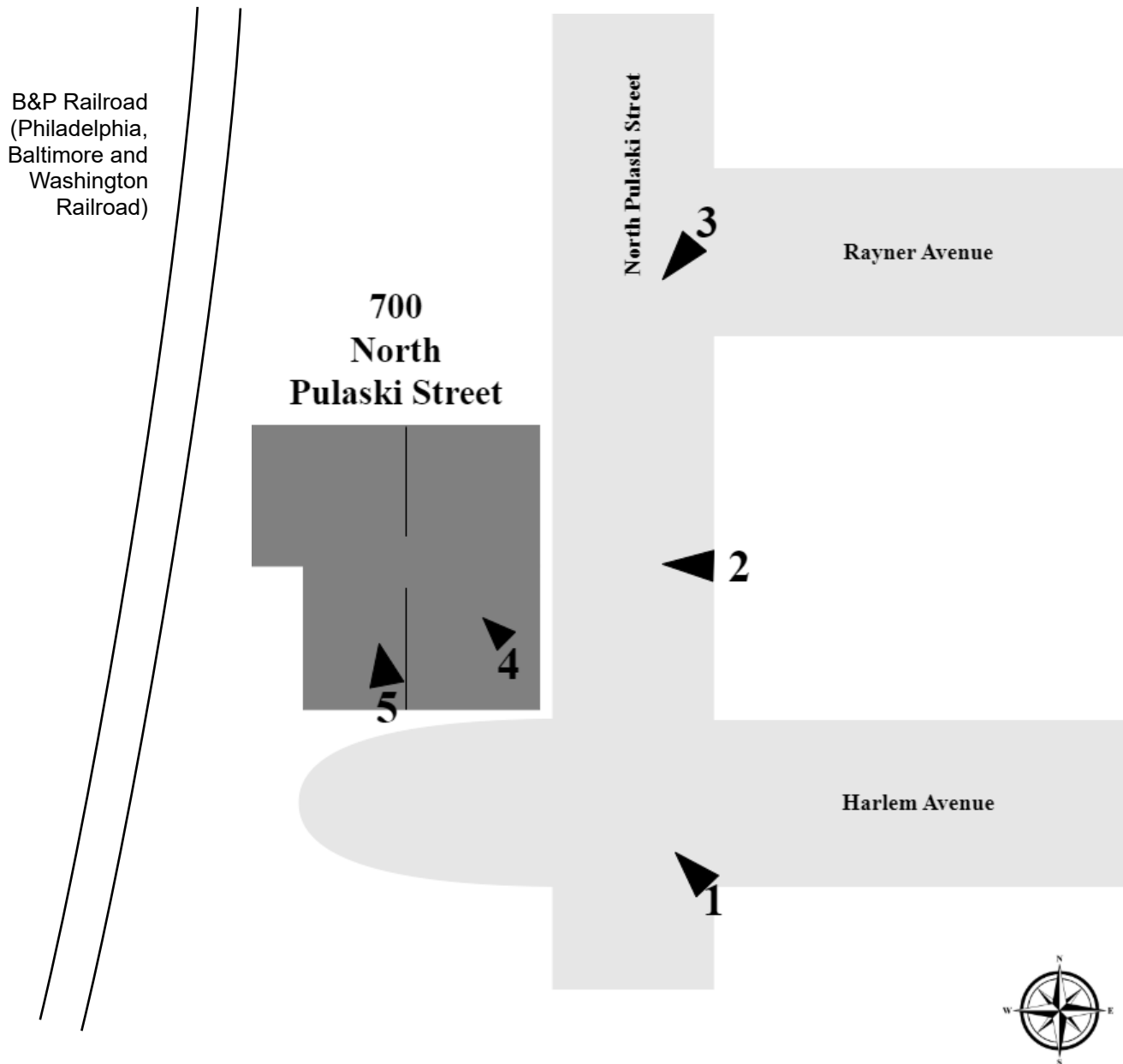
(Faith Christian Worship Center)
(Midtown Edmondson Historic District)
700 North Pulaski Street
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Jet Lowe, photographer, June 2023

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