

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

1000-1030 NORTH PAYSON STREET
(Commercial Building and Rowhouses)
(Midtown Edmondson Historic District)

HABS No. MD-1441

Location: 1000-1030 North Payson Street, Baltimore, Maryland.

1000-1030 North Payson Street is located at latitude: 39.299848, longitude: -76.649408. The coordinates represent the approximate southeast corner of 1000 North Payson Street and were obtained in 2022 using Google Earth (WGS84). There is no restriction on its release to the public.

Significance: The commercial building located at 1000 North Payson Street and the rowhouses located at 1002-1030 North Payson Street are significant contributing elements of the National Register-eligible Midtown Edmondson Historic District. Constructed ca. 1906, these historic properties reflect West Baltimore's early twentieth century growth as a streetcar suburb that developed in close proximity to the Edmondson Avenue streetcar line and are representative small two-story rowhouses built for middle class workers. In addition, the properties are representative of the mid-twentieth century racial transition of West Baltimore from European American through the mid-1940s to predominantly African American beginning in the early 1950s.

Description: The two-story buildings within the row at 1000-1030 North Payson Street have three-bay flat-front Italianate façades with side-hall entries on the south sides accessed by marble stairs leading to the first floor directly from the sidewalk. All have flat roofs that slope east-to-west behind a decorative projecting painted wood cornice with end brackets. Except for the façades of 1006 and 1008, which have been surfaced with Formstone, and 1000, which is stucco, all façades are stretcher-bond patterned orange brick with stone lintels, windowsills, and belt courses. All of the buildings except for 1000, which covers the entire lot, have full or partial backyards, and are serviced by a rear alley.

The rowhouse façades of 1002-1030 North Payson Street have two small basement windows, two tall one-over-one first-floor windows, and three slightly shorter equally spaced one-over-one second-floor windows. At the northern end of the row, 1030 North Payson Street has a parged masonry support wall that was constructed following the demolition of the adjoining rowhouse at 1032 North Payson Street.

The corner commercial building at 1000 North Payson Street, currently used as a tavern called the Red Door Lounge, has a façade finish of yellow stucco. In contrast to the adjacent residential buildings, the corner commercial building only has a single small glass block first-floor window next to the entry door. The second floor has three tall equally spaced one-over-one windows and a projecting painted wood cornice similar to the neighboring rowhouses. The tavern also has a modern vinyl canopy installed across the width of its façade. The south side elevation of the tavern, facing Mosher Street, is two stories high. The first floor has a steel door located near the center of the wall and does not have any windows. The second floor has three one-over-one windows, and a steel door located off-center that is accessible via a modern exterior painted steel platform and stairway. The two-story elevation is topped by a parapet that steps down from east-to-west in three sections. A stucco-finished chimney, located between the western and center parapet sections, is flush with the south wall. There is a single-story west (rear) addition that has a modern steel door and is topped by a wood roof deck. All wall finishes of the south elevation, including the addition, are yellow stucco like the façade.

The west (rear) elevations on 1002-1010, 1014-1022, and 1026-1028 North Payson Street are configured similar to each other. These elevations feature a single basement level window at the north end, a first-floor door/transom combination with one wide window at the south end, and two narrow second-floor windows. The rear elevations of 1000, 1012, 1024 and 1030 North Payson Street have been significantly modified with a variety of additions. The rear of the tavern at 1000 North Payson Street has a one-story masonry addition extending to the lot line; 1012 has a wood and metal open canopy addition; 1024 has a shingled single-story addition; and 1030 has a second-story wooden deck addition with stairs leading down to the yard.

The west elevations of 1004, 1006, 1016, 1018, 1020 and 1028 North Payson Street have common bond brick with segmental brick arches over the masonry openings; the remaining units are surfaced with stucco. All of the brick walls are painted except for 1004, which has unpainted red brick.

At the time of the survey, the buildings appeared to be occupied and in fair condition except for the rowhouses at 1004, 1006, 1008, and 1022, which were vacant and boarded up.

History: Residential development of the Midtown Edmondson Historic District began around 1887 with the construction of a modest number of rowhouses and

cottages initially built as summer homes for city residents.¹ Major development of the area as a thriving mixed-use neighborhood soon followed with the western expansion of the city's boundary in 1888 and the extension of the Edmondson Avenue Electric Streetcar line in 1900.² These actions led to the development of modest, two-story rowhouses that were built for middle class residents.³ The neighborhood that includes the 1000 block of rowhouses lining North Payson Street remained primarily residential. However, some commercial and industrial development occurred along the railroad line, as is exemplified by the large ca. 1900 Lafayette Mill and Lumber Company facility, located one block southwest at 2100 West Lafayette Avenue, and the ca. 1905 National Biscuit Company warehouse, located one block northeast at 1120 Appleton Street.⁴ The area around 1000-1030 North Payson Street retained its mixed-use character over the years with construction of a warehouse directly behind the North Payson Street row at 2020 Mosher Street in 1941 and the construction of the ca. 1965 Super Pride supermarket on the former site of the aforementioned Lafayette Mill and Lumber Company.⁵

According to an Oct. 5, 1906 advertisement in *The Sun*, the rowhouses at 1002-1032 North Payson Street were offered as “Palatial 7-Room Dwellings” for rent “fresh from the builder” with the “keys available at 1032.”⁶ 1000 North Payson Street, which was not included in the rental advertisement, is depicted as a store on the 1914, 1914 (updated December 1950), 1952, and 1971 Sanborn maps and was in use as the Red Door Lounge tavern at the time of the current survey.⁷

¹ Eli Pousson, “Midtown Edmondson Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (draft), (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2015), 8-1.

² *Ibid.*, 8-8.

³ Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 85.

⁴ Eli Pousson, “Midtown Edmondson Historic District,” 8-23; “Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland,” Vol. 2, 1901, Image 60, Map 167, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573190102/?sp=60&st=image&r=-1.222,-0.164,3.444,1.604,0, accessed 7 January 2024; “Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland,” Vol. 2, 1914, Image 82, Map 181, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573191402/?sp=82&st=image&r=-0.623,-0.152,2.246,1.046,0, accessed 7 January 2024.

⁵ Eli Pousson, “Midtown Edmondson Historic District,” 7-3, 8-30, 8-32; Sanborn Map Company, Baltimore Maryland, 1952, 1971, 1974, and 1982, Collection of Environmental Data Resources, Inc.

⁶ Advertisement, *The Sun* [Baltimore], 5 October 1906, 9, <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 17 July 2019.

⁷ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland, Vol. 2, 1914, Image 82, Map 181, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573191402/?sp=82&st=image&r=-0.623,-0.152,2.246,1.046,0, accessed 7 January 2024; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland, Vol. 2, 1914-1914 (updated Dec. 1950), Image 82, Map 181, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573195002/?sp=82&r=-1.212,-0.047,3.423,1.595,0, accessed

The rowhouses at 1002-1032 North Payson were originally occupied by blue-collar and white-collar Caucasian homeowners. The 1920, 1930, and 1940 census records reveal that the occupants were white, some of whom had been born in or had ancestry in Germany, Poland, or Russia. The listed occupations reflect that throughout this time period, this was primarily a working-class neighborhood. In 1920, the census listed occupations such as a painter, clerk, mechanic, moulder (at iron factory), electrician, stone cutter, factory worker, bricklayer, laundryman, and bread or milk salesman. In the 1930 census, the greater variety of occupation types seem to reflect additional industry and businesses in the area. Occupations included: payroll clerk at a tin company, proprietor of a stationery store, pressman at a box factory, patch maker at a rubber company, meter installer at a gas company, machinist at a bottling company, painter at a paint shop, checker for the electric railway, blacksmith for the railroad, electrician at an electric company, and butcher at a meat company. The 1940 census reflects that some of the residents had positions requiring greater skills, including a nurse, policeman, and owner of an oyster business.⁸

By the time that the rowhouses on the 1000 block of North Payson Avenue were constructed, racial tensions had already developed in Baltimore. According to a 1907 study of housing conditions in Baltimore by Janet Kemp, there was a housing shortage in the city, with overcrowding and unhealthy conditions in areas where African Americans and foreign-born immigrants lived.⁹ The overcrowding led to efforts to protect white neighborhoods. A 1911 British report entitled “The Cost of Living in American Towns” discussed housing in Baltimore, describing, “In those areas of the city which are inhabited by the wage-earning classes a general segregation by race or by colour is discernible...It often happens, especially in the better parts of the city, that when a colored family is able to secure a house in the center of a row hitherto exclusively occupied by whites, the latter will remove at the earliest moment, even at a pecuniary loss.”¹⁰ During the 1910s, there were attempts to pass residential segregation ordinances, but these

7 January 2024; Sanborn Map Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1952 and 1971, Collection of Environmental Data Resources, Inc.

⁸ United States Census data, 1920-1940.

⁹ Janet E. Kemp, *Housing Conditions in Baltimore* (Baltimore: Baltimore Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor, 1907), cited in Edward W. Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore, The Edmondson Village Story* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 30.

¹⁰ *The Cost of Living in American Towns: Report of an Enquiry by the Board of Trade into Working Class Rents, Housing and Retail Prices, Together with the Rates of Wages in Certain Occupations in the Principal Industrial Towns of the United States of America* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1911), 80, cited in Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore*, 19.

laws were ruled unconstitutional in 1917.¹¹ In January 1924, 200 people representing several neighborhood associations met to coordinate resistance to African Americans moving into Baltimore's western neighborhoods. As a result of this meeting, 1600 property owners in the area bounded by North Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Bentalou Street signed a commitment to not sell their houses to African Americans.¹² Evidence of formalized segregation can be found in newspaper listings such as the real estate offering for 1032 North Payson Street listed under the category title "COLORED HOMES" in the June 9th, 1946 edition of *The Sun*. The rowhouses at 618, 817, and 902 North Payson Street were similarly listed in the same advertisement.¹³

Despite these measures to keep West Baltimore racially segregated, the Midtown Edmondson Historic District eventually experienced white flight as people of color moved into the historic district's dwellings and white occupants moved out of the area to the suburbs.¹⁴ By the time of the 1950 census, all but two of the houses in the 1000 block of North Payson Street were occupied by African Americans. The listed occupations continue to reflect a working-class neighborhood, with a noticeable increase in residents working in service positions, including restaurant cook, chief cook, waitress, bus girl, laborer, hotel porter, and chauffeur.¹⁵ By the late twentieth century, the area was primarily home to African American residents.

Sources: Advertisement. *The Sun* [Baltimore], 5 October 1906.
<https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 17 July 2019.

Advertisement. *The Sun*, 9 June 1946. <https://www.newspapers.com>, accessed 17 July 2019.

The Cost of Living in American Towns: Report of an Enquiry by the Board of Trade into Working Class Rents, Housing and Retail Prices, Together with the Rates of Wages in Certain Occupations in the Principal Industrial Towns of the United States of America (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1911):, 80. Cited in Edward W. Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore, The Edmondson Village Story* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 19.

¹¹ Garrett Power, "'Apartheid Baltimore Style': The Residential Segregation Ordinances of 1910-1913," *Maryland Law Review* 42 (1983): 2, cited in Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore*, 18.

¹² Eli Pousson, "Midtown Edmondson Historic District," 8-21.

¹³ Advertisement, *The Sun*, 9 June 1946, 38, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, accessed 17 July 2022.

¹⁴ Eli Pousson, "Midtown Edmondson Historic District," 8-29 - 8-30.

¹⁵ United States Census data, 1950.

Hayward, Mary Ellen and Charles Belfoure. *The Baltimore Rowhouse*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland.

____. Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 2, 1901, Image 60 of 123, Map 167.
https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573190102/?sp=60&st=image&r=-1.222,-0.164,3.444,1.604,0.

____. Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 2, 1914, Image 82 of 124, Map 181.
https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573191402/?sp=82&st=image&r=-0.623,-0.152,2.246,1.046,0.

____. Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 2, 1914 (updated December 1950), Image 82, Map 181.
https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573195002/?sp=82&r=-1.15,-0.064,3.299,1.595,0, all accessed 7 January 2024.

Sanborn Map Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1952, 1971, 1974, and 1982. "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps." Collection of Environmental Data Resources, Inc.

United States Census data, 1920-1950.

Historians: Nancy L. Zerbe, Steven Patrick, ARCH², Inc., 2023.

Project

Information: The documentation of 1000-1030 North Payson Street was undertaken in 2021-2023 as mitigation in accordance with the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program, formerly the Baltimore & Potomac

(B&P) Tunnel Replacement Program. 1000-1030 North Payson 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, of ARCH², Inc. Renee Bieretz prepared the large-format photography. Christopher H. Marston, HAER Architect, advised the project.