

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

2022-2038 WEST LANVALE STREET (ROWHOUSES) (MIDTOWN EDMONDSON HISTORIC DISTRICT)

HABS No. MD-1442

Location: 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street, Baltimore, Maryland

2022-2038 West Lanvale Street is located at latitude: 39.297547, longitude: -76.650233. The coordinates represent the front entry steps of 2030 West Lanvale Street and were obtained in 2022 using Google Earth (WGS84).

There is no restriction on their release to the public.

Significance: Constructed ca. 1901, the rowhouses located at 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street reflect West Baltimore's early twentieth century growth as a streetcar community that developed in close proximity to the Edmondson Avenue streetcar line. Architecturally, the houses are representative of the many two-story Italianate houses that developers constructed in West Baltimore for working-class families. In addition, the properties are representative of the mid-twentieth century racial transition of West Baltimore. The 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street rowhouses are significant as contributing elements of the National Register-eligible Midtown Edmondson Historic District.

Description: The nine rowhouses at 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street are located on the north side of the block between North Pulaski Street to the west and North Brice Street to the east. They are two-story Italianate flat front rowhouses, with all but 2022 at the eastern end having a similar façade configuration.

The eight rowhouses from 2024-2038 are side-hall-entry houses, each with a raised first story and marble steps, two basement level windows (some boarded over), and three bays on the first and second stories. The first story consists of a door with a transom in the western bay and two windows that match the height of the door. Stone belt courses are below the first-story windows on 2024-2034; segmental arches are above all openings in all nine houses; and stone windowsills are on the facades that retain their brick wall finish. What appears to be the original unpainted stretcher-bond red brick finish is only visible on the façade of 2028. The brick façades of 2022-2026 and 2030 have been painted, and the façades of 2032-2038 have been refaced with Formstone. All the rowhouses have flat roofs that slope from south to north, and all but 2032, 2036, and 2038 have simple projecting painted wood cornices with varying details.

The house at 2022 West Lanvale Street has two bays on the first-story level with the door at the east end of the façade at sidewalk level. A transom is above the

door, and a single one-over-one window is west of the door. Architectural evidence, notably a continuous brick lintel above the first-story door and window and mismatched brick patterning that appears to be infill masonry, indicates that the façade originally had a storefront window. Archival evidence supports this finding, as 2022 is labeled as a store on the 1901 and 1914 Sanborn maps, but it is designated as a dwelling on the 1950 and later Sanborn maps.¹ Similar to the other houses in the block, 2022 has three second-story windows. All openings are capped by segmental arches. Its east elevation, facing North Brice Street, is finished in stucco and has a parapet that descends in four equal sections, with two first- and second-story windows in each of the two rear sections. (North Brice Street divides the 2000 block of West Lanvale Street.)

All the rowhouses from 2022-2038 have small backyards that are entered from a common alley north of the properties. Although the north (rear) elevations of the rowhouses at 2028-2038 at the west end of the block are partially obscured by vegetation and the north wall of 2038 was in a state of total collapse at the time of the survey, it appears that most of these rowhouses had the same original features on their rear elevations: basement-level windows; a west side-hall-entry first-story door with transom accessed by steps; a single, first-story window on the east end; and a rear second-story three-sided wood-framed projection incorporating two second-story windows. Many of the second-story windows have been covered with boards, but those that remain exposed are one-over-one units. The current wall finishes of the projecting second-story room vary and include vinyl siding, asphalt shingles, or stucco. The north masonry walls of 2028-2032 and 2036-2038 are common bond painted brick with segmented arches over the first-story doors and windows. The rear wall of 2034 is smooth stucco. The rear wall of 2026 is painted brick and lacks a second-story projection. Its flat elevation has a basement window, a boarded-up first-story door and transom on the west end, a first-story one-over-one window to the east, and two small one-over-one second-story windows. The rear wall of 2024 is smooth parged brick; it has no basement window; its first story has an east end steel entry door and a single west end one-over-one window; its second story has a three-sided vinyl-clad room projection with a single one-over-one center window. The rear wall parged masonry wall of 2022 extends further north than its neighbors; its first story has a single door on the east end and a steel bulkhead cellar door on the west end; its second-story has a three-sided vinyl clad projection with two one-over-one windows.

The rowhouses from 2024-2038 West Lanvale Street all have unfinished

¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland. Sanborn Map Company, Volume 2, 1901, Image 49 of 123, Map 153, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573190102/?sp=49&r=-0.651,0.818,1.866,0.932,0; Volume 2; 1914, Image 63 of 124, Map 159, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573191402/?sp=63&r=-0.019,0.658,0.877,0.438,0; Volume 2, 1914 – Dec. 1950, Image 65 of 126, Map 159, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573195002/?sp=65&r=-0.649,0.533,1.851,0.925,0, all accessed 01 October 2023.

basements and have first stories-located approximately 24" above grade. A typical house in this row is entered through an exterior swing door leading to a small vestibule. After passing the vestibule door, one enters a narrow hallway leading to the wooden staircase to the second story. East of the corridor is the living room, which has archways located in the centers of the west and north walls. A covered-up fireplace is located near the center of the east wall in some of the units and two windows penetrate the south wall overlooking the street. In the center of the first-story plan is a windowless dining room that can be entered via the hallway from the west, the living room from the south, or the kitchen from the north through open archways of varying sizes. The north end of the dining room's west wall has a door that leads to stairs to the basement. The kitchen is north of the dining room. The south wall of the kitchen has an archway shared with the dining room and the west wall has a door accessing a small powder room with a sink and water closet that projects into the kitchen. The north kitchen wall has a window on the east end and a door to the backyard on the west end. The east kitchen wall has a counter with upper cabinets, a sink, and a space for a stove or refrigerator.

The second story is accessed from the first-story hallway via a wooden staircase. The stairs exit onto a landing and second-story hallway that is illuminated by natural light coming from a square metal-framed pyramidal skylight with wire glass panes. The master bedroom, entered through a doorway in the south wall of the hallway, features three windows in the south bedroom wall, overlooking West Lanvale Street. A fireplace is near the center of the east wall and a closet with a swing door is located on the west end of the north wall next to the door entering from the hallway. East of the hallway near the center of the plan is a narrow rectangular windowless bedroom, which is afforded some daylight by a small portion of the hallway skylight that overlaps the room's west wall and extends a few inches into the narrow room's ceiling. A third bedroom is accessed through a door in the hallway directly opposite the staircase. The north wall of this bedroom has a large bay extending from the south wall that features two windows overlooking the backyard below. This bay is situated within the cantilevered second-story wood-framed projection that is visible on the exterior of the north wall. Also accessed from the hallway landing through a swing door is a full windowless bathroom with sink, toilet, and bathtub. The bathroom is situated between the second bedroom to the north and the narrow windowless room to the south. Original architectural details remaining in some of the rowhouses indicate that most of the interior doorways, archways, and windows were once framed with fluted wood moldings connected at right-angled corners with decorative corner blocks.

Because the interior of 2022 West Lanvale Street was partially demolished and cluttered with debris, only a limited interior inspection was possible at the time of the survey. It was, however, obvious to the survey team that the plan layout of 2022 differed from those of 2024-2038. Although no interior basement access could be found and the survey identified no basement windows, a bulkhead

basement door with a descending stairway was attached to the west end of the rear (north) exterior wall. Therefore, the building likely has a basement level even though it could not be safely inspected and verified during the survey. The first story was entered from the sidewalk through a swing door located on the east end of the façade that led directly into a front room. In the northwest corner of this space, a small room was framed-out with plumbing lines for a bathroom. Behind this small room was the staircase leading to the second story that rose three risers in a westerly direction to a landing and then turned 180 degrees eastward to access the upstairs hallway. The remnant of a kitchen space appeared on the first story at the north end of the house, although its deteriorated condition prevented verification of its use. Further examination of the first story was not possible due to the dangerous and obscuring existing conditions and debris.

At the top of the stairs a landing and hallway accessed what appeared to have been a bedroom on the south end and another bedroom on the north end of the second story. In between these two partially demolished rooms were the remnants of a full bathroom with a sink, toilet, and bathtub.

All the buildings were vacant at the time of the survey, and except for the well-maintained rowhouses located at 2024 and 2030, all of the buildings were in poor condition. At the western end of the block, the end unit at 2040, which is shown on Sanborn maps up to and including in 1982, had been demolished prior to the start of this survey in 2021.² The house at 2028 was demolished during the time period that this survey was conducted.

History: Residential development of the Midtown Edmondson Historic District began around 1887 with the construction of rowhouses and cottages initially built as summer homes for city residents.³ 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.

Industrial development clustered along the alignments of the Western Maryland and Baltimore and Potomac Railroads further helped to bring about the area's transition from isolated pre-Civil War country estates to the densely developed mix of industrial and residential buildings erected in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. This growth led to the development of modest, two-story rowhouses that were built for middle class residents.⁴

² Sanborn Map Company. Baltimore, Maryland, 1971, 1974 and 1982. "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps." Collection of Environmental Data Resources, Inc.

³ 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.

⁴ Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 85.

Built ca. 1901, the nine rowhouses at 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street were originally part of the ten-unit block of rowhouses and corner stores, as shown on the 1901 Sanborn map. On the 1901 and 1914 Sanborn maps, the two end units, i.e., 2022 and 2040, are shown as stores and the eight intermediate units were residential. On the 1901 and 1914 maps, a one-story frame structure is shown in front of the façade on 2022, the easternmost unit. This appears to have been a wooden awning that was connected to the façade immediately above the first-story level, as currently indicated by a row of infill brick. By the time of the 1950 update of the 1914 Sanborn map, 2022 had been converted to residential use and the one-story frame structure had been removed.⁵

At the turn of the twentieth century, rowhouses such as 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street were constructed to address the need for working-class housing. West Baltimore provided land at lower cost, nearby industries for employment opportunities, and close proximity to streetcar transportation. To accommodate working-class families, developers built smaller two-story Italianate houses that had exterior decorative features such as to emulate larger houses built for wealthier owners.⁶

While the community remained primarily residential, commercial and industrial uses became interspersed, including commercial use in some of the rowhouses' end units. For example, the 1914 Sanborn map shows four end-unit stores within 2-3 blocks of the 800 block of North Brice Street, i.e., a wallpaper store, paint store, bakery, and cobbler.⁷ Industrial development near the railroad tracks in close proximity to the 2000 block of West Lanvale Street includes the Lafayette Mill and Lumber Company, the H.G. Von Heine Coal Yard, the Arrow Laundry, and the Atlas Safe Deposit and Storage Company complex. The neighborhood around West Lanvale Street retained its mixed-use character over the years with construction of a warehouse at 2020 Mosher Street in 1941 and the construction of the ca. 1965 Super Pride supermarket on the former site of the Lafayette Mill and Lumber Company.⁸

In the early twentieth century, primarily working-class Caucasian homeowners and their families occupied this block of rowhouses. Census records from 1930 and 1940 reveal that residents of the 2022-2038 block of West Lanvale Street held a variety of working-class occupations. In 1930, the occupations reflected the industry and businesses of the area, such as storekeeper, plumber, pipefitter, washer in a laundry, laborer, painter, truck driver and elevator operator. In the 1940 census, the occupations of these rowhouses' inhabitants were akin to ten

⁵ Baltimore Sanborn Map 1901, Image 49, Map 153; Baltimore Sanborn Map 1914, Image 63, Map 159; Baltimore Sanborn Map 1950, Image 65, Map 159.

⁶ Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 73.

⁷ Baltimore Sanborn Map 1914, Image 63, Map 159.

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

years prior, with the addition of drivers for a public utility and sugar refinery, utility worker, and jobbing worker. Residents were typically white and owned their homes.⁹

By the time these rowhouses were constructed, however, racial tensions had already developed in Baltimore. Racial tensions of the area were discussed in the media of the time. According to a 1907 study of housing conditions by Janet Kemp, the city's housing shortage resulted in overcrowding and unhealthy conditions in areas where African Americans and foreign-born immigrants lived.¹⁰ The overcrowding led to efforts intended to exclude people of color from white neighborhoods. A 1911 British report entitled "The Cost of Living in American Towns" discussed housing in Baltimore:

In those areas of the city which are inhabited by the wage-earning classes a general segregation by race or by color 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.¹¹

During the 1910s, Baltimore's City Council passed three residential segregation ordinances, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled these unconstitutional in 1917. However, multiple practices continued to restrict the areas of the city in which African Americans could reside. In January 1924, 200 people who represented several neighborhood associations met to coordinate resistance to African Americans moving into Baltimore's western neighborhoods. Subsequently, 1,600 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 Thus, the community remained a white, working-class neighborhood for the next two decades.

Beginning in the late 1940s, neighborhoods in the Midtown Edmondson area began transitioning from white to African American. The change was driven by several factors including: the rapid growth of Baltimore's African American population during the 1940s and 1950s as part of the Great Migration; the intense overcrowding and deterioration of housing conditions in the

⁹ United States Census Data, 1930-1940.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ *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.

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

neighborhoods where African American were allowed to reside; and the movement of white households out of the center city to the areas of new development of the suburbs (a pattern known as “white flight”).¹³ Evidence of formalized segregation can be found in newspaper listings, tracking the changes to the residential makeup of neighborhoods. For example, real estate offerings for nearby North Payson Steet were listed under the category title “COLORED HOMES” in the June 9, 1946, edition of *The Sun*.¹⁴ By the time of the 1950 census, most of the houses on the 2000 block of West Lanvale Street were occupied by African Americans. The occupations noted on the census continued to reflect a working-class neighborhood: barber, train tracks molder, plumber, steel mill laborer, painter, bookbinder, wireman and bricklayer.¹⁵ Baltimore’s white flight accelerated between 1955-60. Although the Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibited discrimination in housing, by the late twentieth century, the 2022-2038 block of West Lanvale Street remained home primarily to African Americans, mirroring its surrounding neighborhood.

Sources: “Colored Homes Low Down Payments.” Classified Advertisement. *The Sun* (Baltimore), 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 Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore*, 19.

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Orser, Edward W. *Blockbusting in Baltimore, The Edmondson Village Story*. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994.

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

¹³ Ibid.,” 8-29 - 8-30.

¹⁴ “Colored Homes Low Down Payments,” Classified Advertisement, *The Sun* (Baltimore, MD), 9 June 1946, 38, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, accessed 17 July 2022.

¹⁵ United States Census data, 1950.

Power, Garrett. “‘Apartheid Baltimore Style:’ The Residential Segregation Ordinances of 1910-1913.” *Maryland Law Review* 42 (1983): 2. Cited in Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore*, 18.

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

____. Sanborn Map Company, Volume 2, 1901, Image 49 of 123, Map 153, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573190102/?sp=49&r=-0.651,0.818,1.866,0.932,0.

____. Sanborn Map Company, Volume 2, 1914, Image 63 of 124, Map 159, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573191402/?sp=63&r=-0.019,0.658,0.877,0.438,0.

____. Sanborn Map Company, Volume 2, 1914 – Dec. 1950, Image 65 of 126, Map 159, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm.g3844bm_g03573195002/?sp=65&r=-0.649,0.533,1.851,0.925,0, all accessed 01 October 2023.

Sanborn Map Company. Baltimore, Maryland, 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, 2024

Project Information: Documentation of 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street was undertaken in 2021-2024 as mitigation in accordance with the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Tunnel Replacement Program. 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street will be demolished to make way for 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. Renee Bieretz prepared large-format photography. Christopher H. Marston, HAER Architect, advised the project.

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(Midtown Edmondson Historic District)

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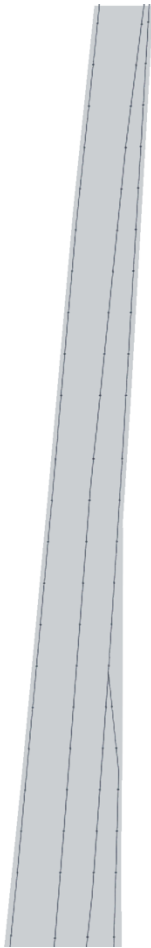
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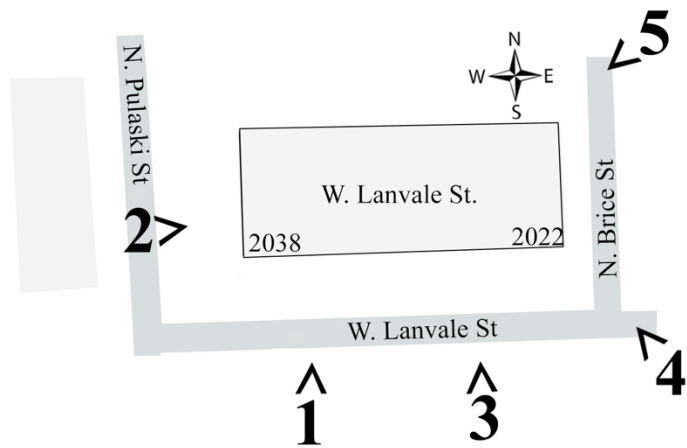
Renee Bieretz, photographer, September 2021 (views 1-2); November 2022 (views 3-5); May 2024 (views 6-7)

MD-1442-1	View of façades of 2034-2038 West Lanvale Street, looking north.
MD-1442-2	View of side elevation of 2038 West Lanvale Street, looking east.
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MD-1442-4	Perspective view of 2022-2038 West Lanvale Street, looking northwest.
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MD-1442-7	Interior view of 2032 West Lanvale, looking north in second floor bedroom.

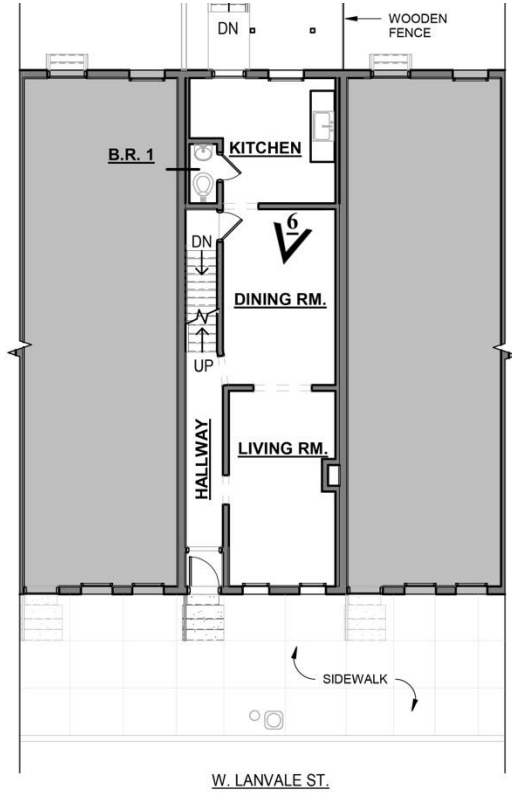
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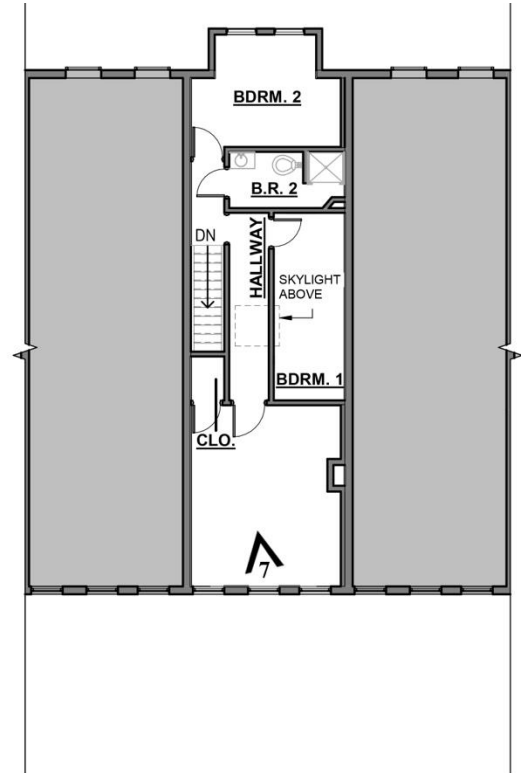
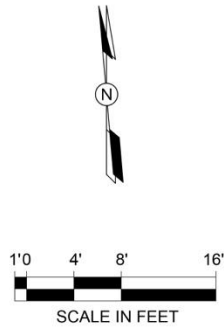
B&P Railroad
(Philadelphia,
Baltimore and
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EXISTING CONDITON SKETCH
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
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