HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

813 NORTH PULASKI STREET (INDUSTRIAL BUILDING)

(Apostolic Bible Study Church) (Midtown Edmondson Historic District)

HABS No. MD-1450

Location: 813 North Pulaski Street, Baltimore, Maryland.

> 813 North Pulaski Street is located at latitude: 39.29797, longitude: -76.65039. The coordinates represent the center of the building and were obtained on 6 March 2023, using Google Earth (WGS84). There is no restriction on their release to the public.

Significance: The one-story industrial building at 813 North Pulaski Street was constructed in 1921 and served as a laundry from 1921-1959 under various names, including Park Arrow, Arrow, and Black Arrow. For the following thirty-four years, the building was used for a mix of commercial purposes, including: IMCO Manufacturing and Sales Corporation, an automotive parts manufacturer, from 1959-1968; Bay City Supply in the 1970s-1980s; E. B. Justice Co., a waterproofing and caulking installation company from 1984 to 1993; and Secure-It-Fastener Corporation from 1993 to 2005. The building was subsequently converted to religious use, with New Day Fellowship Ministries purchasing it in 2007. The Apostolic Bible Study Church took it over in 2017 and used it until 2024. The building contributes to the National Register-eligible Midtown Edmondson Historic District due to its association with the growth of West Baltimore and the industrial development clustered along the B&P rail line.

Description:

813 North Pulaski Street is a single-story masonry commercial building with perimeter walls consisting mostly of red brick with some modern concrete block infill panels, corrugated metal overlay panels, and modern vinyl siding. All the exposed brick appears to have once been painted white, although, at the time of the survey, most of the paint had worn. The building is rectangular in plan and measures approximately 63'-0" east-to-west x 191'-0" north-to-south overall.

The North Pulaski Street façade faces west and is clad with off-white horizontal siding capped by a silver metal coping. The metal coping on the north end of the façade is missing and an underlying brick coping is exposed to view. The façade is punctuated by three openings (listed south-to-north): the main entrance at the south end, a plain gray steel double man door, and a steel roll-up vehicular access door. The main entrance has a solid double man door with a black metal double security gate of vertical bars, a red brick surround, and a single gray painted concrete step. There is a metal "813" address plaque installed within the brick surround, a wall-mounted enclosed bulletin board

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located just north of the entrance, and black script individual sign letters spelling out *Apostolic Study Bible Church* mounted high on the wall just to the north of the main entrance.

The south (side) elevation faces a paved alley that connects North Pulaski Street with North Brice Street. The south elevation consists of a red brick wall with a parapet that steps down from west-to-east in three equal segments. The same horizontal vinyl siding that clads the west North Pulaski Street façade wraps around the southwest corner of the building and extends approximately thirteen feet eastward, concealing the underlying brick for that distance. The remainder of the south elevation wall is exposed red brick with a common bond pattern. There are four infill panels that appear to be former rectangular window openings. The east (rear) elevation faces a paved alley that separates the building from a vacant lot fronting North Brice Street. The rear elevation consists mostly of whitewashed common bond red brick, but also has infill panels of concrete block or similar brick, as well as several overlay panels of vertical corrugated metal. One large rectangular infill panel of concrete block appears to have once been a large door opening, while all the others are former window openings with brick infill and segmented brick arches. The parapet on the south end of the east elevation wall incorporates a gutter and is higher overall than the parapet on the north end of the east elevation wall. The north end of the parapet does not have a gutter and was originally topped by a brick coping, which is still visible below two courses of modern concrete block that have been added to raise the overall height of the wall.

The north (side) elevation faces another paved alley that connects North Pulaski Street with North Brice Street. This elevation consists of a common bond red brick wall with a parapet that steps down from west-to-east in four equal segments. This stepped wall has brick coping. There are eight equally spaced infill panels with segmental brick arches that appear to be former openings. The easternmost panel is partially infilled with non-matching brick and has a plywood-sealed opening, indicating that it may be covering a former wide doorway. The other seven panels, which appear to be covering former window openings, are infilled with concrete blocks that are painted red to blend with the surrounding brick, which itself appears to have been painted white at some time in the past.

The southern half of the building has a shallow monoslope roof of waterproof membrane that drains into a gutter and leaders mounted on the east wall. This roof extends to the approximate midpoint of the building and is supported on the north side by a modern concrete block wall running east-to-west. To the north of this wall, the roof deck has been removed, exposing a network of structural steel trusses. These trusses run east-to-west and are supported by the perimeter

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masonry walls and a center steel I-beam that runs north-to-south, bearing on five steel I-beam columns. The open area below the trusses, which serves as courtyard space, is surrounded by perimeter masonry walls and has a paved floor.

The interior perimeter wall surface materials surrounding this open "courtyard" area consist of exposed red brick, concrete block, and corrugated metal panels. The red-brick portions appear to be original to the building, and all former window openings are infilled with concrete block and topped by segmental brick arches. The full-height wide metal roll-up door on the façade divides the west "courtyard" wall, with concrete block south of the door, and red brick, concrete infill, and overlaid metal panels north of the door. The red brick portion has four former window openings. The surface of the north "courtyard" wall is red brick with a central red brick pilaster and the eight equally spaced former openings (the wide door on the east end and the seven windows). The surface of the east "courtyard" wall is red brick with nine former window openings and two former door openings (one at the northern end of the wall and one located off-center at the south end of the wall). Some details of the east wall are obscured by overlaid metal corrugated panels and vegetation. The south "courtyard" wall is concrete block, and it has a centrally located man-door and a former wide vehicular access door that has been infilled with concrete block. This wall acts as the dividing wall between the enclosed southern half of the building and the open-air unroofed "courtyard" northern half.

The exterior of the building appeared to be in fair condition on the south side of the building that is fully enclosed and has its roof intact. The exterior perimeter walls that frame the open air "courtyard" on the north side of the building exhibited extreme structural failure at the northeast corner in the form of a full-height fracture in the east masonry wall. This fracture has resulted in the north wall being out of plumb, visibly leaning over the adjacent alley and indicating the possibility of collapse in the near future.

The interior of the enclosed southern half of the building was completely refurbished by the Apostolic Study Bible Church, which acquired the building in 2017. Therefore, no existing interior elements other than the exposed structural steel trusses in the sanctuary are original or historic. The church interior is partitioned into fifteen non-original rooms including one large entry foyer, three circulation corridors, one large sanctuary with an altar/stage, one mechanical/storage room, three closets, one commercial kitchen, two restrooms, one private bathroom and dressing room, and two offices. All rooms have painted gypsum board wall finishes.

One of the offices and one of the access corridors have suspended acoustic tile ceilings. The foyer and sanctuary have an open ceiling with exposed roof trusses

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and exposed foam insulation. All other rooms have painted gypsum board ceilings. Floor finishes include carpeting, ceramic tile, and vinyl tile. All interior fixtures and finishes were in excellent condition at the time of the survey.

History:

The 1914 Sanborn map shows the property that is now 813 North Pulaski Street as a vacant lot.¹ On January 12, 1920, the Black Arrow Laundry Company purchased the property.² One year later, in April 1921, the Park Arrow Laundry Company applied for a permit to build a one-story brick building on the east side of Pulaski Street, near Lanvale Street.³

In the May 7, 1921, issue of *Electrical Review*, there was a notice that "Electrical equipment will be installed by the Park Arrow Laundry Co. at its building to be erected on Pulaski street." Within two months, the *National Laundry Journal* described the building as being complete, i.e., "Baltimore-The Black Arrow Laundry Company has erected a new building, one story brick, 65 by 100 feet, at a cost of \$25,000." Advertisements in *The Sun*, including an ad for electric motors and a December 1921 ad for the return of "family wash" that had fallen off the company's truck, support the fact that the laundry was in operation on North Pulaski Street.⁶

The laundry company, which went by various names, including Park Arrow, Arrow, and Black Arrow, incorporated in September 1913.⁷ In 1913, the company was located at 1126 North Fremont Avenue in Baltimore.⁸ Somewhat contradictory information is provided in a June 1924 advertisement by the National Central Bank. In that ad, the bank showcased the Black Arrow Laundry

¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland, Vol. 2, 1914, Image 60, Map 159, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm_g3844bm_g03573191402/?sp=60&st=image&r=0.228,0.527,1.545,0.662,0, accessed 20 April 2024.

² Parsons Brinckerhoff/Parsons Joint Venture, *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment*, 813 North Pulaski Street, Baltimore, MD, August 2021, 8.

³ Classified advertisement, *The Sun* (Baltimore), 20 April 1921, 16, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 6 March 2023.

⁴ "Business Opportunities," *Electrical Review* 78, no. 19, (7 May 1921), 756, https://www.google.com/books/edition/Electrical_Review/B2g-

AQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Electrical%20Review%2C%20Vol%2078%2C&pg=PA756&printsec=frontcover, accessed 2 April 2023.

⁵ "Trade Topics in Tabloid," *National Laundry Journal* 86, no. 1, (1 July 1921): 54, https://www.google.com/books/edition/National_Laundry_and_Cleaning_Journal/jNs1AQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv= 1&pg=PP13&printsec=frontcover, accessed 27 July 2023.

⁶ "Electric Motors," classified advertisement, *The Sun*, 2 November 1921, 20; "Family Wash," classified advertisement, *The Sun*, 12 December 1921, 20, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 6 March 2023.

⁷ Report of the State Tax Commissioner of Maryland to the General Assembly (Annapolis, Maryland 1914), 324, https://www.google.com/books/edition/Report_of_the_State_Tax_Commissioner_of/QkUCAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gb pv=1, accessed 21 August 2023.

⁸ "Young Man," classified advertisement, *The Sun*, 3 February 1913, 9, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 19 July 2023.

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as one of its clients, indicating that the company had organized in 1915 and expanded in 1920, with its growth attributed to "word-of-mouth recommendation"

The building continued to operate as a laundry facility for approximately forty years under various names including Black Arrow Laundry, Arrow Yale Laundry, Royal Laundry, and Regal Laundry. The 1914 Sanborn map, updated in December 1950, shows the building extending between the two alleys that ran east-west between North Pulaski and North Payson Streets. The building, labeled as "The Arrow Laundry," is shown as brick construction with a concrete floor, wood posts, steel columns and beams, and plastered walls. In December 1956, *The Sun* reported, "Burglars ransacked the office of the Arrow Laundry, 800 block North Pulaski Street." On December 28, 1959, Reagle Empire Associates, Inc., (formerly Regal Laundry, Inc.) sold the property to Irvin M. Cook.

According to his 1972 obituary, Irvin M. Cook operated an automotive parts manufacturing business. In 1919, he started a company called System Brakes, which later grew into IMCO Manufacturing and Sales Corporation and IMCO Support Corporation. In May 1966, Mr. Cook retired, selling IMCO Manufacturing and Sales Corporation to a Norfolk automotive wholesaler, James R. McLean, Jr. The new owner was reported as having plans to move IMCO's general offices from its location on East Lafayette Street to the plant at 813 North Pulaski Street. A few months later, in August 1966, IMCO acquired Fort Dearborn Screw and Bolt Company of Chicago. According to IMCO President McLean, the company's operations would continue to be located in Chicago, but the general offices of Fort Dearborn would be relocated to Baltimore. In April 1968, IMCO Manufacturing and Sales Corporation declared bankruptcy, resulting in an attorney's sale of the property and its contents, such as brake shoe

of housewife to housewife."9

⁹ National Central Bank of Baltimore, "A Laundry and Its Bank," advertisement, *The Sun*, 27 June 1924, 19, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 6 March 2023.

¹⁰ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Baltimore, Independent Cities, Maryland, Vol. 2, 1914 (updated December 1950), Image 60, Map 159,

https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3844bm_g03573195002/?sp=60&st=image&r=-1.153,-0.08,3.305,1.598,0, accessed 20 April 2024.

¹¹ "Burglars Ransack Office of Laundry," *The Evening Sun* (Baltimore), 14 December 1956, 48, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 6 March 2023.

¹² Parsons Brinckerhoff/Parsons Joint Venture, 8.

¹³ "Irvin M. Cook dies; founded heart charity," obituary, *The Sun*, 2 January 1972, 16, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 8 June 2023.

¹⁴ "IMCO Sold to Norfolkian," *The Sun*, 29 May 1966, 84, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 8 June 2023.

¹⁵ "Imco Acquires Chicago Firm," *The Sun*, 3 August 1966, 29, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 8 June 2023.

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manufacturing equipment, brake shoes, master cylinders, brake lining, and office furniture on April 23rd of that year.¹⁶

In March 1975, according to an advertisement in *The Sun*, 813 North Pulaski Street was subject to a property auction.¹⁷

A 1977 property deed indicates that 813 North Pulaski Street was owned by Charles W. Hadfield, owner of Bay City Supply. ¹⁸ Additionally, telephone directory listings from 1980 and 1984 list Bay City Supply as the occupant of the building. ¹⁹ In January 1985, the building was put up for auction by a trustee who had been granted the authority to sell the property by the Baltimore City Circuit Court in December 1984. ²⁰ The building was then sold to E. B. Justice Co., a waterproofing and caulking installation company that had been founded in 1955 and was owned by Edgar B. and Bertha Justice. ²¹

An October 1992 article in *The Sun* describes a "propane-fed fire" at the "E. B. Justice Co., a waterproofing and caulking installation company." Explosions from the fire "caused some walls and more than half the roof to collapse" in the building where "parts of the brick and frame (sic) were more than 70 years old." The building's current condition, with no roof on the northern half of the building, is most likely a result of this fire.

In July 1993, 813 North Pulaski Street was purchased by Jerome Wicks, Sr., CEO of the Secure-It Fastener Corporation.²⁴ After Mr. Wicks' death in 2004, the property was sold to the Pulaski Land Development Partnership, LLC in August 2005.²⁵

¹⁶ A.J. Billig & Co., "Trustee's Sale in Bankruptcy," advertisement, *The Sun*, 23 April 1968, 47, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 8 June 2023.

¹⁷ Alex Cooper Auctioneers Inc., "Sale on the Premises," advertisement, *The Sun*, 2 March 1975, 167, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 19 July 2023.

¹⁸ Baltimore City Superior Court (Land Records) RHB 3514, 83, MSA_CE168_13834, https://msa.maryland.gov/, accessed 17 July 2023.

¹⁹ The Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company of Baltimore City, annual telephone directories, 1980, 1984, collection of Environmental Data Resources, Inc.

²⁰ Baltimore City Circuit Court (Land Records) SEB 456, 297, MSA_CE164_456, https://msa.maryland.gov/, accessed 19 July 2023; Michael Fox Auctioneers, "Auction," advertisement, The Sun, 4 January 1985, 57, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 19 July 2023.

²¹ "Frank L. Mahaffey at 74," obituary, *The Evening Sun*, 13 September 1982, 32, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 19 July 2023.

²² "Warehouse destroyed in propane-fed fire," *The Sun*, 8 October 1992, 22, https://www.newspapers.com, accessed 19 July 2023.

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Baltimore City Circuit Court (Land Records) SEB 3791, 43, MSA_CE164_3791, https://msa.maryland.gov/, accessed 19 July 2023.

²⁵ Baltimore City Circuit Court (Land Records) FMC 6677, 679, MSA_CE164_15828, https://msa.maryland.gov/, accessed 19 July 2023.

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The structure was converted to a religious building after it was purchased in August 2007 by New Day Fellowship Ministries, a.k.a. Freedom Church and Ministries. The congregation held the property until August 2015, when it was sold at auction to Chesapeake Bank of Maryland. In 2016, the property was foreclosed. Subsequently, in 2017, 813 North Pulaski Avenue was purchased by the Apostolic Bible Study Church, which occupied the building until 2024. ²⁷

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²⁶ Baltimore City Circuit Court (Land Records) MB 19437, 117, MSA_CE164_28594, https://msa.maryland.gov/, accessed 19 July 2023.

²⁷ Ibid.

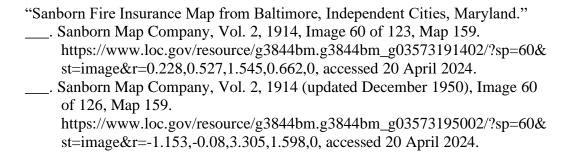
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Historians: Nancy L. Zerbe; Steven Patrick, ARCH², Inc., 2023-2024.

Project

Information:

The documentation of 813 North Pulaski Street was undertaken in 2023-2024 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. 813 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, of ARCH², Inc. Jet Lowe prepared the large-format photography. Christopher H. Marston, HAER Architect, advised the project.

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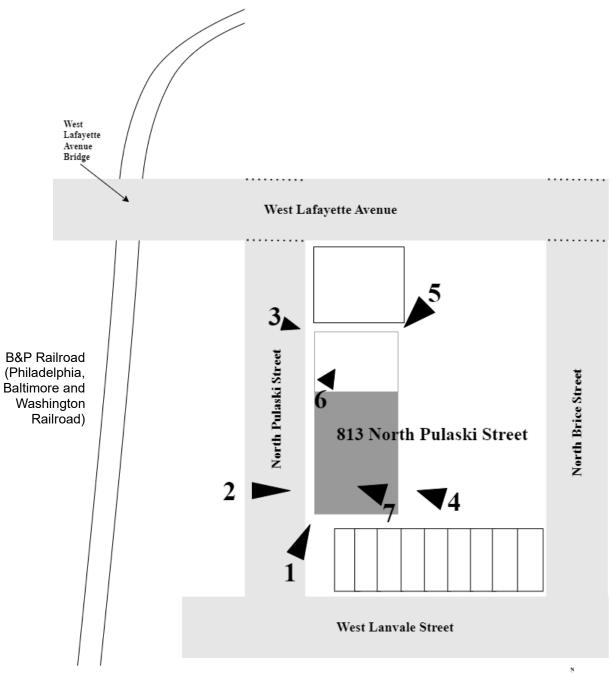
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Jet Lowe, photographer, June 2023

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