

B-5108

Rognel Heights District

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

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Last Updated: 08-09-2011

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐ no ☐

Property Name: Rognel Heights ~~District~~ Historic District Inventory Number: B-5108
 Address: neighborhood northeast of Edmondson Village Shopping Center Historic district: X yes ☐ no ☐
 City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21229 County: Baltimore City
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore West
 Property Owner: various Tax Account ID Number: n/a
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): _____ Tax Map Number: _____
 Project: Red Line Corridor Transit Study Agency: Mass Transit Administration
 Agency Prepared By: John Milner Associates, Inc.
 Preparer's Name: Katherine Larson Farnham Date Prepared: 8/29/2005
 Documentation is presented in: Enoch Pratt Free Library--Md. Rm. vertical files; MHT DOE for Keelty Daylight Row House
Historic District (2004); Roderick Ryon, West Baltimore Neighborhoods (1993); Sandra Smith,
Edmondson Village (U. Baltimore Archives, 1998)
 Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: _____ Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended ☐
 Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
 Name of the District/Property: _____
 Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: _____ yes ☐ Listed: _____ yes ☐
 Site visit by MHT Staff _____ yes ☐ X no ☐ Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Rognel Heights is a wooded, grid-pattern neighborhood of detached single homes, duplexes, and several blocks of row houses. A variety of architectural styles are represented, including Queen Anne, Shingle, American Foursquare, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman, and hybrids of these styles. The detached houses are located primarily on Walnut Ave. and adjacent cross streets, and include myriad designs, sizes, materials, and styles. Numerous frame houses are present, as well as some brick ones. Most homes are of average size and quality, though there are a few examples of large, elaborate houses. The earliest homes are of Queen Anne, Shingle, and American Foursquare design. Later detached homes are predominantly Craftsman in appearance. A small number of urban-style duplex homes were also built on upper Walnut. A later phase of development resulted in duplex and row houses on some cross streets. These are primarily Colonial Revival or Tudor Revival in appearance. Both styles are represented by some very distinctive rows. The neighborhood is bounded on the west by Hunting Ridge (Glen Allen Rd.) and on the east by the Edmondson District (bounded by an alley west of Woodington Rd.). Its street grid is canted at a distinct angle which differs from these adjacent neighborhoods.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended ☐

Criteria: X A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments: Note reduced boundaries determined by MHT staff - map attached

Jim Tarduno
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

3/12/07
Date

B. Kuntz
Reviewer, National Register Program

3/16/07
Date

The neighborhood also includes a few churches and one elementary school, Rognel Heights Elementary (built in 1970). Most of these institutions are modern and not particularly compatible with the housing stock. The oldest is the Rognel Heights Methodist Church at Colborne and Walnut, built in 1949. The Engine Co. No. 53 Firehouse was built on Swann Ave. in 1921 to serve Rognel Heights and newer neighborhoods that were developing nearby. The arrival of the nearby Edmondson Village Shopping Center in 1947 eliminated much of the need for commercial businesses inside the neighborhood. In 1951, following great effort by residents of Rognel Heights and other nearby neighborhoods, the Edmondson Branch of the Enoch Pratt Library opened at Athol and Edmondson Aves., adjacent to the shopping center and the southern part of the neighborhood.

Rognel Heights, lying just outside the 1888 city line, was rural estates until around 1900. Much of the neighborhood lies on property that was part of Lyndhurst, an estate owned by Reverdy Johnson, and General John Swan's estate Hunting Ridge, later owned by E. Austin Jennings. Electric streetcar lines began serving this area in the 1890s, and the estates on either side of Edmondson Ave. began to develop into neighborhoods after that point. Rognel Heights began to develop in 1894 after Jennings sold a portion of his property to investors William F. Rogers and William O. Nelson, whose last names provided the neighborhood's name. It was developed by William T. Pfeiffer, who laid out the street grid on an angle reflecting the eastern line of the property. It was the first planned subdivision to develop in the area between Gwynns Falls and the present city line, and lies immediately west of the Edmondson District which developed later. Rognel Heights and some of the earlier subdivisions nearby (i.e. Ten Hills, Hunting Ridge) were developed, at least initially, with detached homes. The oldest house in the neighborhood is believed to be Pfeiffer's former residence, an elaborate Queen Anne home at the north corner of Walnut Ave. and Gelston Dr., which is also one of the larger homes in the neighborhood. Pfeiffer also drilled artesian wells north of the neighborhood as a water source, opened a bottling plant, and marketed this "Rock Crystal Spring Water" to downtown merchants. The bottling operation had ended by 1918, when Rognel Heights was annexed into the city. Three houses had been built by 1898, and most of Walnut Ave. had been developed by 1914.

Improvements to the Gwynns Falls bridge and extension of municipal services west to that point spurred the first development of the adjacent Edmondson neighborhood inside the older city line. Beginning around 1911-1914 and continuing until 1950, developers built up that neighborhood with "daylighter" row housing. Soon afterward, Rognel Heights' development changed dramatically and the streets east and west of Walnut Ave. were built up with dense row housing similar to that in Edmondson. With the proliferation of row houses, the course of Rognel Heights' development was changed significantly, and the transition between the Rognel Heights and Edmondson neighborhoods is now difficult to discern. Construction continued into the 1940s. The appeal of the overall neighborhood increased in 1947, when the Edmondson Village Shopping Center opened nearby, creating a retail district within walking distance.

As in other local neighborhoods, Rognel Heights initially was populated by middle-class white residents, who commuted to work downtown via streetcar until 1954, when streetcar service was ended and replaced by city buses and private automobiles. It later diversified as whites moved outward to county suburbs and were replaced by black residents. The neighborhood at present contains a number of well-preserved older homes, mixed with others that have been modernized to some degree.

The Rognel Heights District has a somewhat fragmentary quality, as it did not develop entirely as planned with single-family homes and parts of it are indistinguishable from nearby Edmondson. While Walnut Ave. has an interesting mixture of earlier homes, as a group they are not overly distinctive and only a handful are true standouts in terms of integrity and architectural quality. The later row house streets contain some distinctive house groups, but these are not sufficient to characterize the entire neighborhood. The community as a whole is not cohesive and does not represent a typical complete planned suburb of its period. A number of homes have lost integrity, and there are some modern intrusions at the edges of the neighborhood, such as the elementary school. The Rognel Heights District is recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____ Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

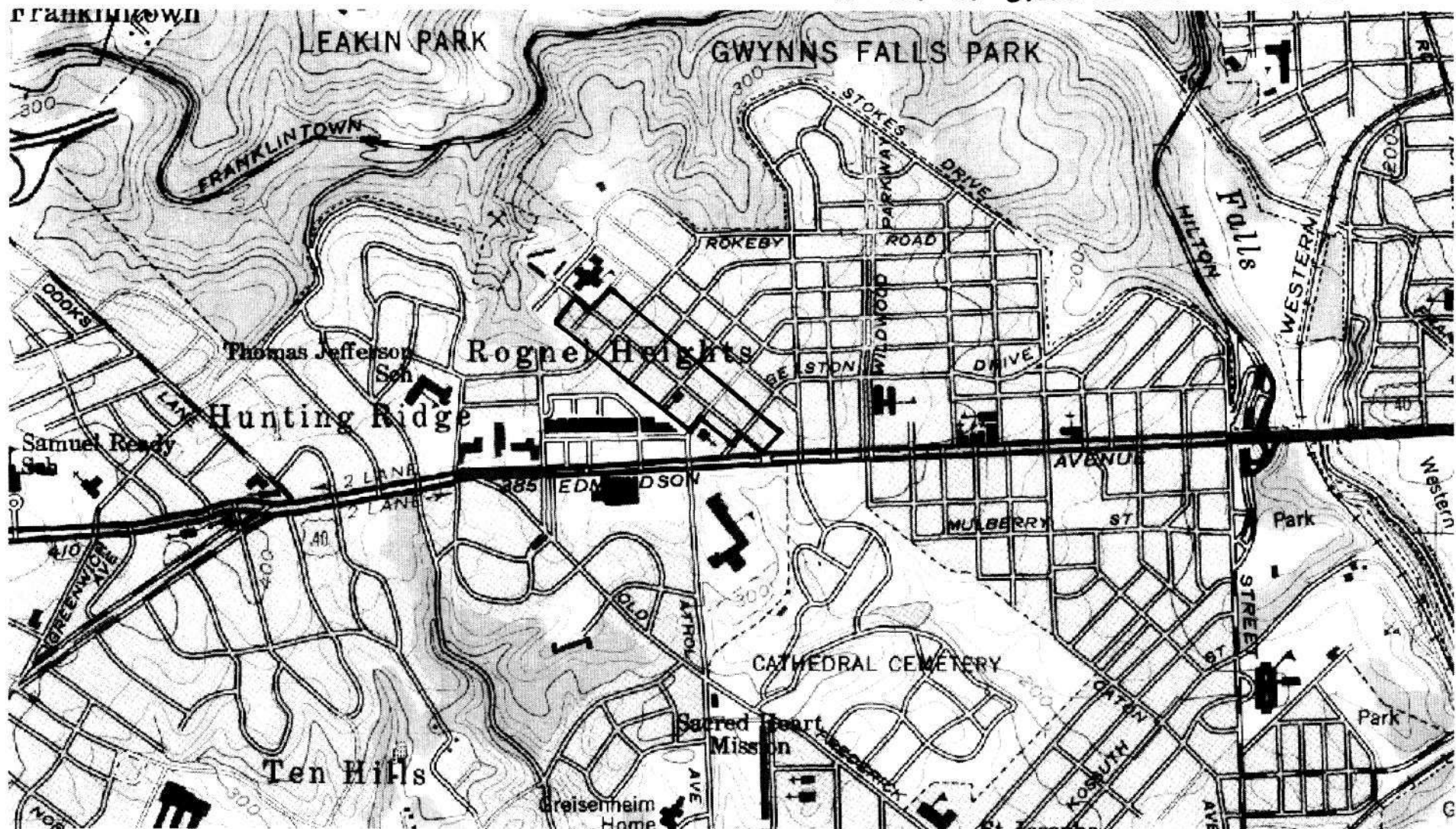
Date

Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

Rognel Heights Historic District
Baltimore City, Maryland
MIHP No. B-5108

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE - c. 1895-1930



Baltimore West USGS Quadrangle

*MHT Recommended boundary of
 NR-eligible district.*



B-5108

701 Walnut St, Regret Hts. District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/14/2005

MD SHPD

View to N of 1st house in Regret Hts.

#1 of 7

023

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3-5108

700 blk. Walnut St., Regent Hts. District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/14/2005

MD SHPO

View to SW

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B-5108

900 blk Walnut Ave., Regent Hts District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/15/2005

MD SHPO

view to W

#3 of 7



B-5108

Corner of Walnut Ave + Colborne Rd, Pognel Hts District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/15/2005

MD SHPO

view to N

#4 of 7

007

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B-5108

4600 blk Pokahby Rd., Rognel Hts. District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/14/2005

MD SHPO

View to NW of Tudor row houses

#5 of 7



B-5108

4600 blk. Coleherne Rd. Regent Hts. district

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/14/2005

MD SHPO

view to SW. Colonial Revival rowhouses

#6 of 7



B-5108

4200 Gue. Flowerton Rd. Roynel Heights District
Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/15/2005

MD SHPD

view to W from Washington Rt., 1000 - 1000 houses

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