

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☒

Property Name: Clarence W. Perkins Homes Survey District Inventory Number: B-5297
Address: East Pratt St to the north, S. Bethel St to the east, Bank St
1411 Gough Street to the south, S. Eden St. to the west Historic district: X yes ☐ no
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21231 County: Baltimore City
USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore East
Property Owner: Housing Authority of Baltimore City Tax Account ID Number: 03191418001
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 0000 Tax Map Number: 0003
Project: _____ Agency: Housing Authority of Baltimore City
Agency Prepared By: City of Baltimore, CHAP
Preparer's Name: Caitlin Audette Date Prepared: 9/30/2015
Documentation is presented in: _____
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: _____ Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: X A B X 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 no Listed: yes no
Site visit by MHT Staff yes X no Name: _____ Date: _____

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

The Clarence W. Perkins Homes, known as the Perkins Homes, is a 1942 public housing development located on approximately 23 acres in southeast Baltimore City. The group of homes consists of 48 apartment buildings and one community building bounded by East Pratt Street to the north, South Bethel Street to the east, Bank Street to the south, and South Eden Street to the west. The development is bisected by Gough Street, which runs east-west, and Caroline and South Bond Streets which run north-south. The property is surrounded by the Upper Fells Point, Fells Point, and North Central neighborhoods to the east, south, and west. These small-scale residential neighborhoods are designated National Register Historic Districts. To the north, several mid-century schools are located on large open blocks. A firehouse at 316 S. Caroline St., constructed in 1910, is the only property within these bounds not associated with the development. It has not been active since 1991.

Architectural Description

The apartment structures range from two to three stories high and between seventeen and five bays long with rectangular plans. The buildings create five north-south corridors upon which the building entrances face and which surround community green space, including permanent clothing lines. The ornament-free brick façades are patterned in five-course common bond that were

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____ Eligibility not recommended X
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:


Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

6/14/2019
Date

Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

historically interrupted by steel casement windows of various sizes. Building entrances are characterized by flat cast stone awnings.

The buildings have been altered since their construction to conform to subsequent building codes. The most notable of these alterations include the replacement of the windows in 1971 with double-hung aluminum windows. Additional alterations include the replacement of the entrance ways including concrete steps and ADA compliant ramps, metal railings, and new doors. The entrance awnings have been altered with the introduction of metal flashing and aluminum drip-edges top the structures. Several interior court yards have been refinished into asphalt parking lots and new playgrounds have been introduced.

The two-story T-shaped community building located at 1411 Gough Street, features a recessed entry of three double-hung doors that are situated below three decorative cast stone panels completed by noted Baltimore sculptor Henry Berge. The building, which maintains the same features as the other buildings in the development, has been altered with the introduction of a ramp at its entrance and associated railings. Additionally, a contemporary cloth awning is situated at the entrance.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

History of Public Housing in Baltimore

In 1937, Congress passed the Wagner-Steagall Act, which created the United States Housing Authority (USHA) for the purpose of eradicating slum neighborhoods and providing decent, safe, and healthy housing to low income citizens. To implement this goal, the USHA provided long-term, low-interest loans to local housing authorities, essentially allowing local jurisdictions to plan, design, and build public housing, according to their needs. Between 1937 and 1941, 622 local housing agencies were created in the United States. Pursuant to Maryland Code Article 44-A enacted in 1937, Baltimore established the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) on December 13, 1937.

Prior to the creation of HABC in 1937, Baltimore, along with other large cities, began addressing housing and public health issues as early as the 1890s. The earliest known report in Baltimore, *Streets and Slums: A Study in Local Municipal Geography*, written by Frederick Brown in 1892, discussed the relationship of street width to areas of concentrated poverty. Two years later in 1894, Carrol Wright, the first U.S. Commissioner of Labor, submitted to Congress *The Slums of Baltimore, Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia*. In 1907, Janet Kemp, a social worker, published *Housing Conditions in Baltimore* which identified the location and described the conditions of several slum areas in Baltimore City. Other reports followed as Baltimore began to document and address many of its public health and housing issues. By 1937, City officials were ready to seize the opportunity provided by the Housing Act to rebuild their slum communities according to the most up-to-date thinking of the time.

In 1937, HABC began an ambitious program, to undertake seven slum clearance projects and one green-field housing project. The end result of this clearance was intended to be the completion of new housing for low-income residents in the cleared slum areas. This goal was shifted with the onset of WWII, and the high demand for war housing in Baltimore. In 1940 Congress passed the Lanham Act, imposing federal control onto local housing authorities in areas affected by defense industries. The yet-to-be completed low-income housing projects were utilized by HABC for war housing, at the same time as additional housing was planned and constructed specifically for defense workers. By 1943 the slum clearance projects were complete with the construction of the Poe Homes, Latrobe Homes, Douglass Homes, McCulloh Homes, Perkins Homes, Gilmore Homes, and Somerset Court. In addition, the green field public housing project of O'Donnell Heights was built on vacant land in East Baltimore. Between 1941 and 1945, HABC and/or federal agencies affiliated with the War Department built ten war housing projects in and around Baltimore: Cherry Hill, Lyon, Fairfield, Westport, Holabird, Banneker, Sollers, Turner Station, Armistead Gardens, and Brooklyn Homes. After the war, HABC acquired Cherry Hill, Fairfield, Westport, and Brooklyn Homes for use as low-income housing.

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

In addition, Armistead Gardens, Turner's Station, and Lyon homes were sold to private entities.

HABC's efforts continued in the 1950s with the construction of several housing projects, including two Cherry Hill expansion projects, Westport Homes, Claremont Homes, Lafayette Court, and Flag House Courts high-rises, among others.

In the 1970s, HABC began a vacant house program that acquired vacant houses (mostly rowhouses) and rehabbed them for use as public housing. In the late 1990s HABC demolished all of its multi-family public high-rise projects which comprised 18 high-rise buildings in five projects, Towers at Lafayette Courts, Flag House Courts, Lexington Terrace, and Murphy Homes. In addition, HABC disposed of hundreds of vacant scattered-sites and constructed Pleasant View Gardens based on new design and planning principles that support mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods. Several more mixed-use, mixed-income public-private development projects have been initiated since this time, such as Heritage Crossing and Albemarle Square.

A 1998 Preservation Magazine article entitled New Hope for Failed Housing, described how HUD has embraced the New Urbanism design principles in new housing projects, essentially reweaving the historic fabric of cities with new, compatibly designed developments. Preservationists hailed this change as a victory for cities. Baltimore embraced this new set of principles as stated in HABC's Planning and Development Division's mission to redevelop its "public housing stock through the use of the mixed-finance public development method. The goal, using a combination of public and private financing and partnerships, is to develop public housing that is integrated physically, socially, and economically with the greater community, thus improving job availability, community services, and citizen self-sufficiency."

History of Perkins Homes

The site of Perkins Homes had previously been the location of 799 dwelling units that housed 2,304 people, mostly African American. This densely populated corner of Baltimore was seen as an ideal location for the slum clearance project initiated by HABC, given its location situated near industries and local transit. As part of the slum clearance project that would result in the construction of Perkins Homes these buildings were demolished and their occupants displaced. The only remnant was the reuse of the building brick for new foundations, and the retained 1910 fire station.

Perkins Homes opened on March 13, 1942 with 688 apartments limited to white residents. Originally planned as a slum clearance project that would result in low-income housing for Baltimore residents, the development was altered with the start of WWII to house defense employees who largely worked at the Port of Baltimore.

The project was designed by architects Henry Powell Hopkins and Associates using elements of the Moderne style to be in direct contrast with the slum clearance properties. The densely situated buildings that had been demolished at the site were viewed as a fire hazard, generally lacking plumbing and any open space. These were replaced with garden style apartment buildings situated around large open green spaces intended to provide plenty of air circulation and opportunity by outdoor activities. The architects were assisted in this goal by R. Brooks Maxwell, a well-known Baltimore landscape architect. The design was emblematic of architectural design theory of the time, that supported the use of low-scale, flat roofed garden style apartments that created insular developments, largely unrelated to the surrounding streetscape. This typical multi-tenant housing type was most popular in the Washington, D.C. region as a response to the growing Federal government, and supported by FHA construction, design, and property standards.

It is unclear how much of the planned work was actually completed given the desperate need for housing with the onset of WWII. Though no documentation has been found to date, it is likely that aspects of the building and landscape plans were altered or removed entirely due to a paucity of building materials, and a rapid construction deadline.

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

The first documented change to the project occurred in the 1950s when HABC hired a color specialist to create paint schemes for the windows and doors. The 1970s saw the replacement of all remaining original windows and doors, and in the 1990s ramps and railings were added to bring the development up to new code requirements. Though interior alterations have likely occurred documentation of these changes are not known as an interior survey of the buildings was not completed. However, unlike many other housing projects in the city, all of the buildings remain extant and the open spaces are largely intact. New signage, in the form of brick piers separated by metal railings, provide a more elaborate entry to the green spaces.

Socially, the development was a microcosm for Baltimore race relations. The slum clearance resulted in the displacement of a mostly African American population, while the new housing was intended for white residents who would be located near sought after port jobs. Originally segregated and planned for white residents only, HABC was forced to integrate their development following the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954. Though the implementations were slow, the population at Perkins shifted to predominantly African American by the mid-1960s. As identified in the 1994 class action lawsuit, *Thompson v. HUD*, the ACLU successfully argued that HABC had significantly segregated race by their housing policies. HABC was shown to have illegally maintained segregated public housing developments. Today, Perkins Homes remains predominantly African American.

Henry Powell Hopkins and Associates, Architects

A July 16th, 1940 Baltimore Sun article states that "Plans and specifications for the project were prepared by Henry Powell Hopkins and Associates, including Laurence H. Fowler, Howard F. Baldwin, Frederick A. Fletcher and Cyril H. Hebrank." This statement is somewhat puzzling as each architect mentioned was individually successful, and was known to have worked as principle of their respective firms. Perhaps, as this was the end of the Depression, these architects sought this larger commission together.

A native of Annapolis, Maryland, Henry Powell Hopkins began his career after graduating from Columbia University with a bachelor's degree in architecture in 1914. In 1919, he moved to Baltimore where he opened his own practice. A well-known preservationist, Hopkins was considered a leading scholar on Georgian architecture. His work included the restoration of the Maryland State House among many other commissions in historic Annapolis. Other work completed by Hopkins included the design of educational and healthcare buildings, McKeldin Library at the University of Maryland being his most well-recognized work.

Laurence Hall Fowler was one of Baltimore's outstanding and most prolific architects of the early 20th century. His designs range from the stark purity of Classical architecture, as in the War Memorial, to the electric asymmetrical massing of the Ascot House. Fowler completed studies at the Ecole de Beaux Arts following degrees from both Johns Hopkins University and Columbia University and amassed a large collection of original documents and books by historic architects from the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth.

A graduate of the architecture program of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Howard F. Baldwin began his career in Baltimore working for various well-respected firms. While working at Taylor and Fischer, Baldwin was a contributing architect for the Baltimore Trust Company Building at 10 Light Street. After starting his own firm in 1930, Baldwin completed a number of personal residences, but is likely best remembered for the Chesapeake Cadillac Building at 2401 Charles Street. This 1930 art deco building was demolished in 1994, but the iconic carved stone eagles resting at the corners of the building were retained and reused for the construction of a Safeway at that site.

Frederic A. Fletcher, was a successful Baltimore architect who as an independent architect completed large scale projects, such as

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

the Old Town National Bank Building at 221 N. Gay Street, and smaller library remodeling projects at the Patterson Park Library and Forest Park Library. In 1954 he created the firm of Fletcher and Fletcher with his son, Frederic A. Fletcher Jr. Together they completed a number of projects including the Curtis Bay Elementary School, Dickeyville Elementary School, and several dormitories at Frostburg State College.

The last architect noted as involved with the plans and specifications for Perkins Homes was Cyril H. Hebrank. Hebrank had his own practice that completed private residential work with many commissions in Roland Park and Homeland that contribute to these National Register Historic Districts.

Clarence W. Perkins

The Perkins Homes were named for the former Baltimore Housing Authority's Executive Secretary Clarence W. Perkins. Born in 1871 in Chestertown, MD, Perkins was a graduate of Washington College and the University of Maryland Law School. Following his admittance to the bar and two years of employment, Perkins began his own practice. A State Senator from 1904-1906, Perkins would continue a lifelong interest in government. In 1915 he was appointed Special Counsel to the State Bank Commissioner, would serve as a trustee for the Maryland Training School for Boys, and a state housing board. With this experience, Baltimore Mayor Howard W. Jackson appointed Perkins to the municipal housing group, before being appointed the Executive Secretary of the newly created Housing Authority of Baltimore City. With his passing from heart ailments in August 1939, prior to the construction of Perkins Homes, the site was named in recognition of his leadership of the new department.

EVALUATION

Perkins Homes, located at 1411 Gough Street, fails to achieve state or national significance due to the extensive alterations to the buildings, and a lack of feeling and association connected with the site. Additionally, the rapid construction and change in intended use from low-income to war housing resulted in the alteration of planned materials due to restrictions on building material and the increased housing need.

The development retains a high degree of integrity of setting and location as the development remains in its original location and the surrounding landscape and neighborhood have remained largely unchanged. Due to poor workmanship of the original structure and extensive alterations since its construction the development lacks integrity of material and workmanship. These alterations, as well as the assumption that the design completed by noted Baltimore architects was never fully implemented, result in a low degree of integrity of design, as the overall as-built site plan remains intact. Furthermore, Perkins Homes is distinctly a poor example of the works of its architects who all have other works of architecture identified as historic within the City of Baltimore. The development's integrity of association and feeling are missing or greatly diminished due to alterations completed throughout the property over time, including the paving of green spaces and replacement of windows. A feeling of detachment from the surrounding neighborhoods resulted from the highly secluded urban design of Perkins Homes which turned its back on the greater city. This experimental design ultimately increased the negative impacts of racial and class conflict within the city of Baltimore.

The property was evaluated under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A and C. The property does not meet Criteria C for architecture due to alterations to its design and construction and the lack of integrity of material and workmanship in the original structures. The property does not meet Criteria A for association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Though the property is connected to the goals of the U.S. Housing Authority and the creation of HABC, as well as issues of war housing and structural racism, these ideas are connected to large areas of the city of Baltimore and the design and construction of Perkins Homes do not effectively representative low-income and war worker housing in Baltimore City.

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

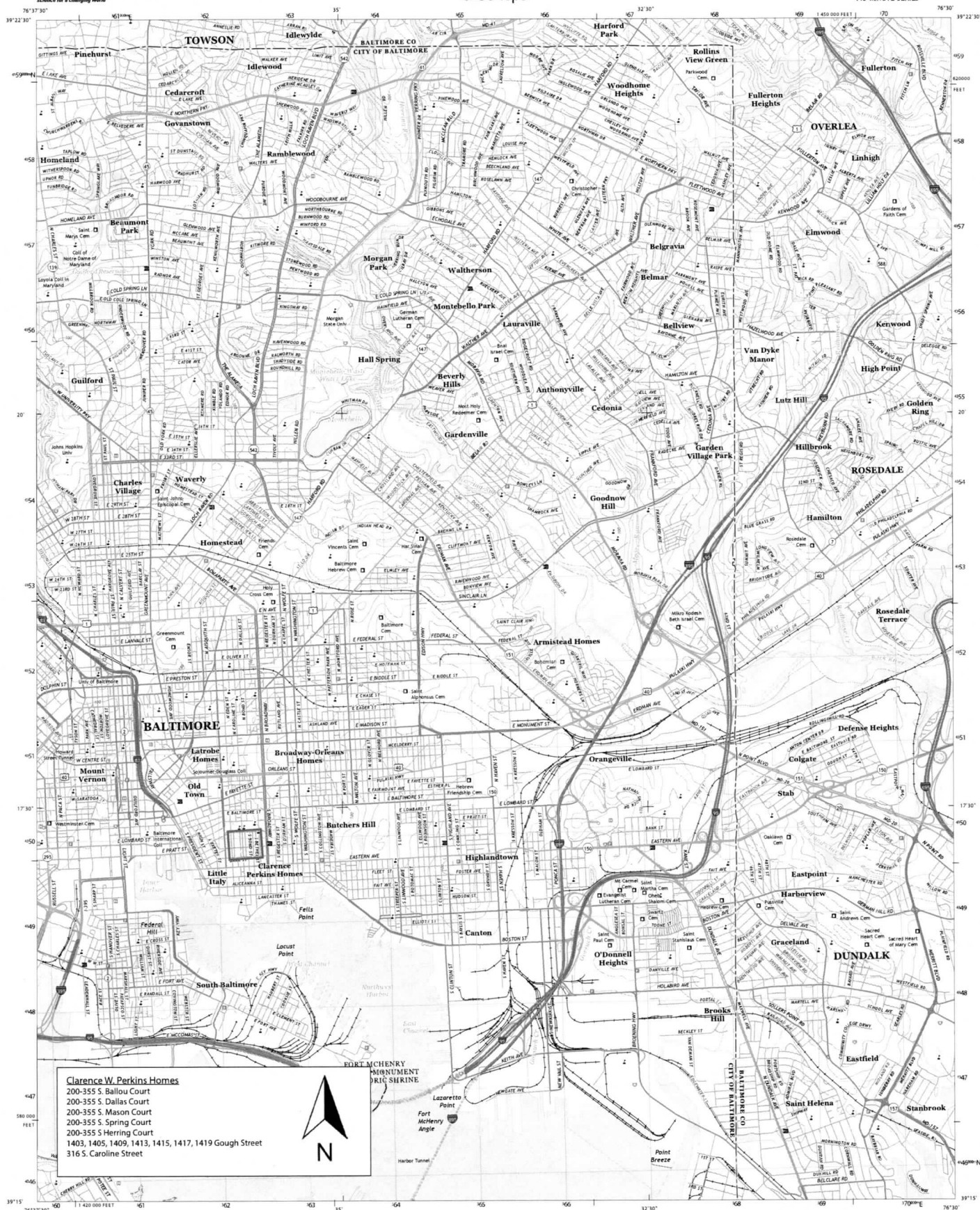
Date



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



BALTIMORE EAST QUADRANGLE
MARYLAND
7.5-MINUTE SERIES



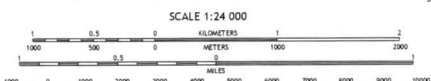
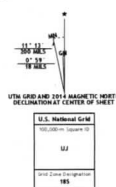
Clarence W. Perkins Homes
200-355 S. Ballou Court
200-355 S. Dallas Court
200-355 S. Mason Court
200-355 S. Spring Court
200-355 S. Herring Court
1403, 1405, 1409, 1413, 1415, 1417, 1419 Gough Street
316 S. Caroline Street



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84). Projection and
1:250,000-meter grid. Universal Transverse Mercator. Zone 18S
10 000-foot ticks: Maryland Coordinate System of 1983

This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be
generalized for this map scale. Private lands within government
reservations may not be shown. Obtain permission before
entering private lands.

Imagery: NAIP, July 2011
Roads: NHD, 2011
Names: GNS, 2013
Hydrography: Hydrography Dataset, 2011
Contours: National Elevation Dataset, 1999
Boundaries: Multiple sources; see metadata file 1972-2013



SCALE 1:24 000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NORTH AMERICAN DATUM OF 1983



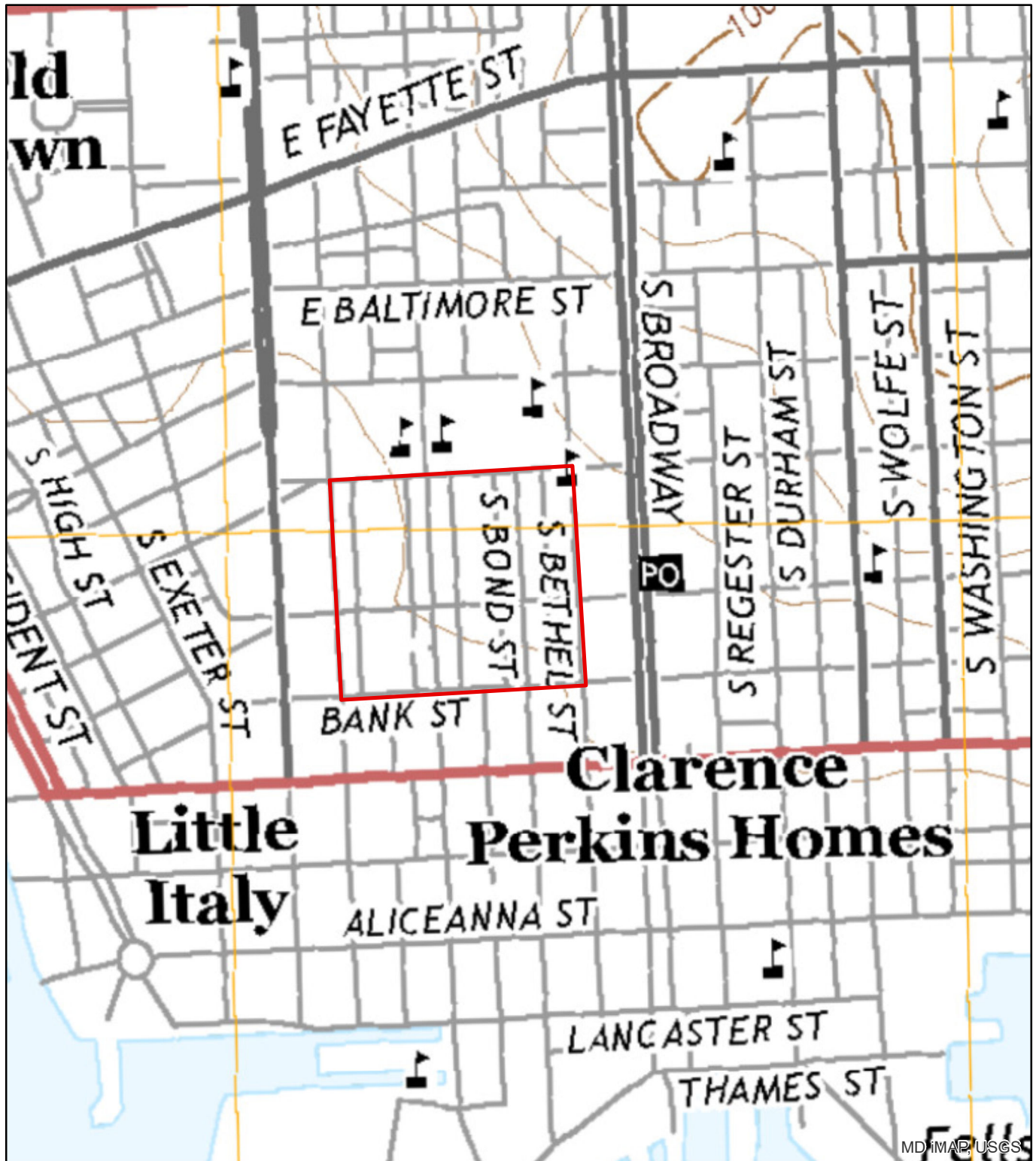
ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Expressway
Secondary Hwy
Interstate Route
Local Connector
Local Road
US Route
State Route

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

ADJOINING QUADRANGLES

BALTIMORE EAST, MD
2014

Clarence W. Perkins Homes Survey District
Bounded by East Pratt Street to the north, South Bethel Street to the
east, Bank Street to the south, and South Eden Street to the west
Baltimore, MD 21231
Baltimore City
Baltimore East USGS Quad.



0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet



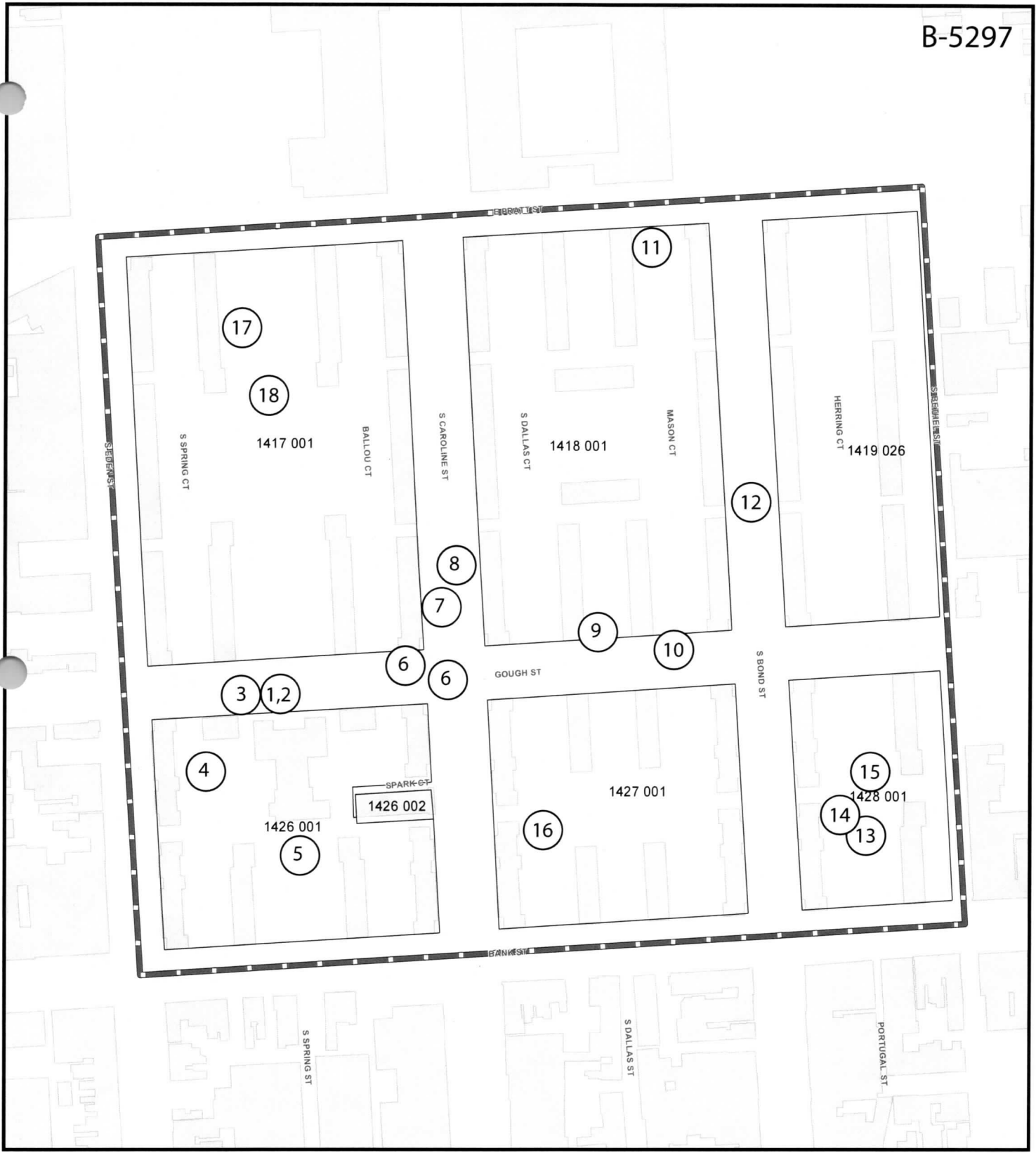
Clarence W. Perkins Homes - Parcel Boundaries



Clarence W. Perkins Homes Survey District – Photo Log

Photos were printed using Epson UltraChrome pigmented inks on Epson Premium Glossy Paper.

1. B-5297_2015-06-26_01.tif – View south from Gough Street of main entrance to Community Building.
2. B-5297_2015-06-26_02.tif – View southeast from Gough Street of main entrance to Community Building.
3. B-5297_2015-06-26_03.tif – View southwest from Gough Street of two-story building.
4. B-5297_2015-06-26_04.tif – View southeast from Spring Court.
5. B-5297_2015-06-26_05.tif – View north of rear elevation of Community Building.
6. B-5297_2015-06-26_06.tif – View north from intersection of Caroline and Gough Streets.
7. B-5297_2015-06-26_07.tif – View north on Caroline Street.
8. B-5297_2015-06-26_08.tif – View north east of Caroline Street.
9. B-5297_2015-06-26_09.tif – View north of courtyard off of Gough Street.
10. B-5297_2015-06-26_10.tif – View north of courtyard off of Gough Street.
11. B-5297_2015-06-26_11.tif – View south on Mason Court.
12. B-5297_2015-06-26_12.tif – View north on Bond Street.
13. B-5297_2015-06-26_13.tif – View south of courtyard north of Bank Street.
14. B-5297_2015-06-26_14.tif – View southwest of properties off Herring Court.
15. B-5297_2015-06-26_15.tif – View east from Herring Court to Bethel Street.
16. B-5297_2015-06-26_16.tif – View west to Caroline Street and 316 S. Caroline Street.
17. B-5297_2015-06-26_17.tif – View southeast from parking lot south of Pratt Street.
18. B-5297_2015-06-26_18.tif – View west from asphalt play area between Eden and Caroline Streets.



Clarence W. Perkins Homes - Photo Locations



HABC

PERKINS HOMES

1411

SOUTHEASTERN
DISTRICT



Baltimore
Police
COMMUNITY
POLICING OFFICE



B-5277 Clarence W. Harris Home Survey 2011

Baltimore City, MD

Ardu Cook, 6/25/15

MD SHPD

View south from Cough Street at main entrance
to Community Center

Photo #1



B-5297, Clarence W Perkins Homes, Survey District
Baltimore City, MD

Andy Cook, 6/26/15

HD SHPO

View southeast from Gough Street of main entrance
to Community Building

Photo # 2



3-5297, Clarence W. Perkins Home Survey District
Baltimore City, MD

Andy Cook, 6/26/15

MD SHPO

View southwest from Cough Street of two-story
building

Photo #3



3-5297, Clarence W Perkins Homes Survey District
Baltimore City, MD

Andy Cook, 6/26/13

MD SHPO

View southeast from Spring Court

photo #4



3-5297, Clarence W Perkins Homes Survey District
Baltimore City, MD
Andy Cook, 6/26/15
MD SHPD

View north of rear elevation of Community Building
Photo #15



B-5297, CLARENCE W. PERKINS HOMES Survey District
Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/26/19

MD SHPD

View north from intersection of Eough and
Caroline Streets.

Photo # 6



B-5297, Clarence W Perkins Homes Senior District
Baltimore City, MD

Andy Cook, 6/20/15

MD SHPD

View North on Caroline Street

Photo #7



B-5297, Clarence W. Perkins Homes Survey District

Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/26/15

MD SHPO

View northeast of Caroline Street

photo # 8



B-5297, Clarence W. Perkins Homes Survey District
Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/24/15

MD SHPO

View north of courtyard off of Lough Street

-Photo # 9



B-5297 - Clarence W. Perkins Homes Survey District

Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/26/15

MD SHPO

View north of courtyard off of Crough Street

Photo # 10



B-5277, Clarence W. Perkins Homes Jury Day District

Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/24/15

MID SHPD

View South on Mason Court

Photo # 11



B-5297, CLARENCE W. PARKIN: Home, Spring District

Baltimore, MD

Archie Cook, 6/26/19

MD SHPD

View North on East Street

Photo # 12



B-5297, Clarence W. Perkins Home Survey District
Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/26/15

MD SHPO

View south of courtyard north of Bank Street.

Photo # 13



B-5297, CLARENCE W. PARKINS HOUSE, SUMMIT DISTRICT
BALTIMORE, MD

ANDY COOK, 6/20/15

MD SHPD

VIEW SOUTHWEST OF PROPERTIES OFF HERRING COURT

PHOTO # 14



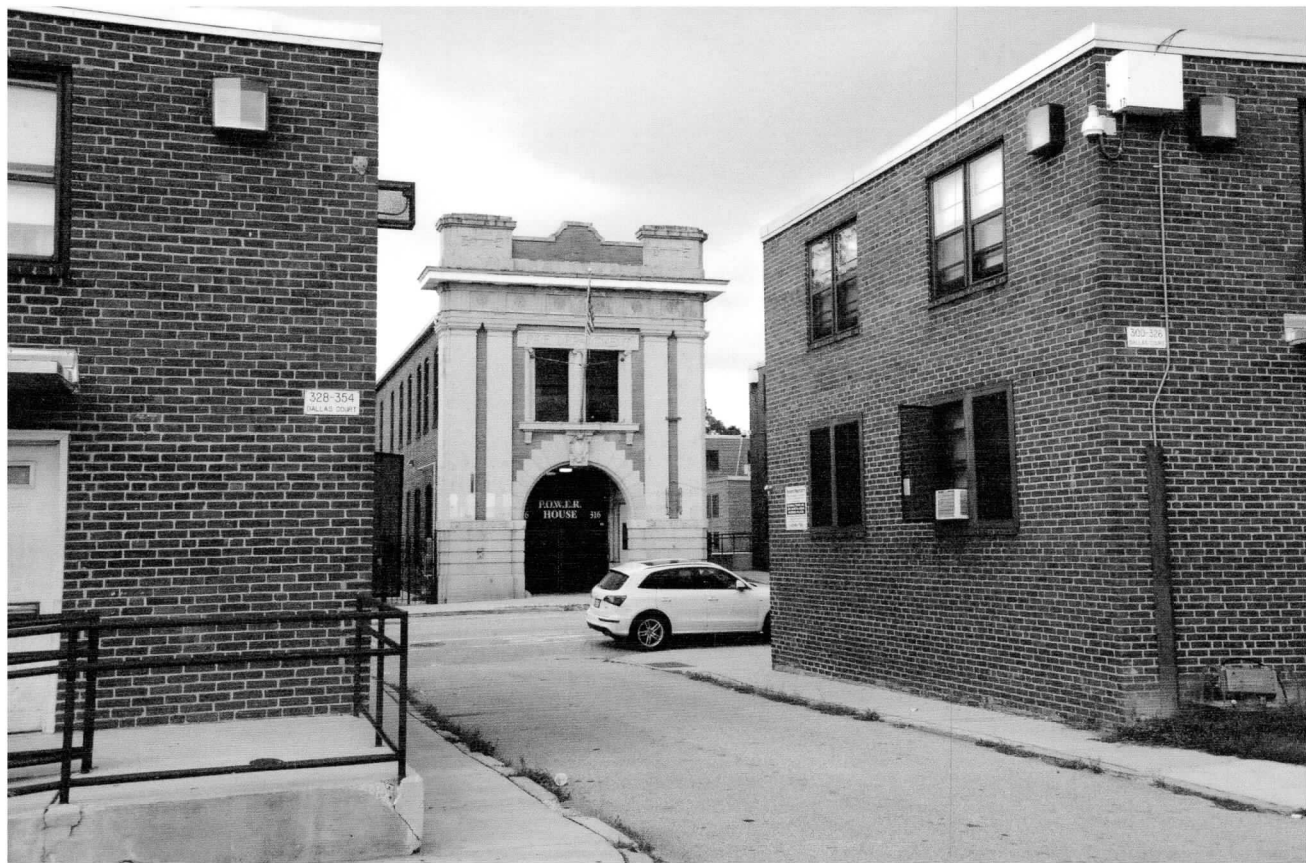
B-6297, Clarence W. Perkins Homes Survey District -
Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 4/26/19

MD SHPO

View east from parking court to Bethel Street

Photo # 19



B-5297, Clarence L. Perkins Homes Survey District
Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/24/15

MD SHPO

View west to Caroline Street and 310 S. Caroline

Photo # 10



B-5297, Clarence W. Perkins Homes Survey District
Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/20/15

MD SHPO

View southeast from parking lot south of Pratt
Street

Photo #17



B-5297, Clarence L. Perkins Homes Survey District

Baltimore, MD

Andy Cook, 6/24/19

MD SHPD

View west from asphalt play area between
Eden and Caroline streets.

Photo # 18