



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18BC136

Site Name: 907-909 Hillen Street

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

backyard lots of 2 mid-19th century dwellings, early 20th century pit feature

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 39.2916 Longitude -76.5961
Elevation 7 m Site slope

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Topography

- Floodplain
- Hilltop/bluff
- Interior flat
- Upland flat
- Ridgetop
- Terrace
- Low terrace
- High terrace
- Rockshelter/cave
- Hillslope
- Unknown
- Other

Ownership

- Private
- Federal
- State of MD
- Regional/county/city
- Unknown

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Northwest Branch of Patap

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 1000 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

- Paleoindian site
- Archaic site
- Early archaic
- Middle archaic
- Late archaic
- Unknown prehistoric context
- Woodland site
- MD Adena
- Early woodland
- Mid. woodland
- Late woodland
- Unknown historic context
- Unknown context

- Contact period site
- ca. 1820 - 1860
- ca. 1630 - 1675
- ca. 1675 - 1720
- ca. 1720 - 1780
- ca. 1780 - 1820
- ca. 1860 - 1900
- ca. 1900 - 1930
- Post 1930

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

- Native American
- African American
- Anglo-American
- Hispanic
- Asian American
- Unknown
- Other
- Russian, Jewish, E. European

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

- Multi-component
- Village
- Hamlet
- Base camp
- Rockshelter/cave
- Earthen mound
- Cairn
- Burial area
- Misc. ceremonial
- Rock art
- Shell midden
- STU/lithic scatter
- Quarry/extraction
- Fish weir
- Production area
- Unknown
- Other context

Historic

Urban/Rural? Urban

Domestic

- Homestead
- Farmstead
- Mansion
- Plantation
- Row/townhome
- Cellar
- Privy

Industrial

- Mining-related
- Quarry-related
- Mill
- Black/metalsmith
- Furnace/forge
- Other

Furnace/forge

Other

Transportation

- Canal-related
- Road/railroad
- Wharf/landing
- Maritime-related
- Bridge
- Ford

Educational

Commercial

- Trading post
- Store
- Tavern/inn

Military

- Battlefield
- Fortification
- Encampment

Townsite

- Church/mtg house
- Ch support bldg

Burial area

- Cemetery
- Sepulchre
- Isolated burial

Bldg or foundation

- Possible Structure

Post-in-ground

Frame-built

Masonry

Other structure

Slave related

Non-domestic agri

Recreational

Midden/dump

Artifact scatter

Spring or well

Unknown

Other context

brick rowhouses, rear yards

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken

Flotation samples taken

Other samples taken

Historic context samples

Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N

Other samples taken



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types		Koens-Crispin	
Clovis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Perkiomen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehana	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vernon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Piscataway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calvert	<input type="checkbox"/>
Le Croy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Madison/Potomac	<input type="checkbox"/>
Otter Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Levanna	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Townsend	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yeocomico	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selden Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minguannan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monongahela	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accokeek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mockley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Vinette	<input type="checkbox"/>	Page	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moyaone	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				Potomac Crk	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone		Staffordshire		Stoneware	
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>	English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>			Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/>
						Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shell midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ossuary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
House pattern(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palisade(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Lithic Material

Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jasper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
		European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	21	Activity item(s)	1
Glass (all)	51	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	38	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture		Misc. kitchen	50
Arms		Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing		Misc.	24
Personal items		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Road/walkway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="checkbox"/>				

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 2: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 3: +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 4: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 5: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 6: +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 7: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 8: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 9: +/- years BP Reliability

Additional radiocarbon results available



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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The archeological site at 907-909 Hillen Street (18BC136) consists of the backyard lots of two mid-19th century dwellings and an early 20th century pit feature in a neighborhood north of the Inner Harbor in downtown Baltimore, Maryland. The site is situated within Baltimore's Old Town area, immediately east of the Jones Falls Expressway (I-83). It sits within the northeastern corner of a discontinuous triangular parcel located on the northern side of the Orleans Street viaduct designated as Baltimore City Block 41. The landscape surrounding the site is heavily developed and the soils are intensely modified from their native state. Soils mapped for the area are classified as "Urban Land" meaning that 80% of the surface is covered either by buildings or by impervious surfaces such as asphalt or concrete.

Intensive development within this area was essentially contemporaneous with surrounding blocks. Hillen Street, one of the major perimeters of the block, was established as a westward extension of North Street in approximately 1825. Baltimore City Tax assessment records for 1824 noted that 2 two-storey frame dwellings on High Street that belonged to a John Constable were pulled down to make way for the construction of Hillen Street. The 1837 tax assessors records indicate that Elizabeth Edwards owned a 42 X 155 ft unimproved property at the corner of Hillen and High Streets. This parcel eventually came to include two small houses sometime after 1837.

By 1865, this portion of the 900 block of Hillen Street was lined with a series of eleven identical 2 ½ storey dwellings on lots that measured 12 ½ X 39 feet. The rear yards of these properties abutted a large commercial property that extended back from North High Street. Tax assessments for this period suggest that all of these dwellings had been constructed by a single individual for investment purposes, since ownership of the lots and the buildings was assigned to John Latrobe, an agent, and all were occupied by tenants. The 11 lots extended from J. Ryan's grocery store at the southeastern corner of Hillen and High Streets up to an unnamed alleyway.

As the 19th century progressed, these modest dwellings were occupied first by immigrants from Ireland or migrants from adjacent states, and later by families from Russia, Italy, and Germany. Many residences apparently assumed a partially commercial function, as skilled craftsmen or entrepreneurs utilized their first floors as retail outlets, did their productive activities in the rear yards, and maintained their residences on the upper floors. Representative businesses in the 900 block of Hillen Street in 1900 included a clothing store, a grocery store, three shoemakers, another unidentified storeowner, and perhaps a mule dealer. Photographs taken after construction of the Orleans Street viaduct in 1934 and the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show that most of the dwellings along the 900 block of Hillen Street survived into the 2nd third of the 20th century.

The site was first investigated beginning in October of 1996 as part of a combined Phase I, II, and III archeological investigation undertaken at the site of a new Juvenile Justice Center in Baltimore, MD. The site of the (then) proposed Baltimore Juvenile Justice Center encompassed two heavily developed blocks which encompassed Site 18BC136. A total of eight archeological sites were the subject of the investigation at the Phase I/II level of inquiry. At 18BC136, investigations only rose to the Phase II level. These investigations were required under the terms of Section 83-B, Paragraphs 6-517 and 5-618, of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and pursuant to the terms of a Memorandum of Agreement concluded between the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) and the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).

In order to locate sites, fieldwork initially employed the mechanical removal of overlying modern features or surfaces, followed by the excavation of 5 m long mechanized trenches to assess stratigraphy and site integrity of the underlying deposits. The size of trenches were sometimes altered to better delineate features and to accommodate conditions in the field.

At 18BC136 two mechanized units were placed adjacent to one another to form one large block unit measuring 5 m in length and 4.5 m wide. The two trenches were excavated simultaneously and all strata were recorded and associated materials were recovered as from a single unit. The purpose of adopting this strategy was to expose a broader surface to determine whether landscape features could be located.

Removal of the overlying asphalt and underlayment surfaces from the parking area did not immediately reveal foundations or features. Instead, the plan view at this level suggested that two very different occupation surfaces had been exposed. The lateral boundary between these two occupation surfaces corresponded roughly to the boundary between the rear yards of the Hillen Street dwellings and a commercial lot on High Street.

Stratigraphy within the mechanically excavated units was recorded on excavation unit sheets, utilizing standard pedological nomenclature and Munsell readings. Stratigraphy and features within each unit were also drawn in plan and profile (as appropriate) and were photographed in both black and white and color. To reduce the potential for Phase I sampling bias, a uniform 15-gallon volumetric sample was recovered from each mechanically excavated natural/cultural stratum. These soils were screened through hardware mesh and all cultural materials recovered from this procedure were retained for analysis.

Stratigraphy in the southern half of the double unit block was characterized by a straightforward sequence of fill levels overlying an apparently undisturbed series of occupation levels. The northern half was dominated by a very disturbed series of fill levels within an initially indistinct confined area that was designated as Feature 1. These fill soils contained such materials as coal ash, coal, sand, clay, brick, and brick fragments. A pit penetrated into the surrounding subsoil in the northern area. A small (50 X 50 cm) test window excavated into the bottom of this deposit showed that it continued to a depth in excess of 84 cm below surface. Three additional features were exposed in the eastern wall of the unit: a possible disarticulated un-mortared brick surface, a modern fencepost hole, and the butt end of a truncated and disarticulated brick wall that was one course wide.

The artifact assemblage obtained from both the volumetric sample and the small test window showed a similar functional distribution with a slightly different breakdown in terms of materials. The volumetric sample produced 1 activity item (industrial in nature), 16 architectural artifacts, 40 kitchen-related items, and 13 miscellaneous objects. This assemblage included 31 glass objects, 15 ceramics objects, 16 metal objects, 4 biological objects, and 4 stone (coal/slag) items. The test window produced 22 architectural artifacts, 31 kitchen-related artifacts, and 11 miscellaneous objects. This assemblage included 20 pieces of glass, 6 ceramic sherds, 23 metal objects, and 15 biological items. Both deposits clearly represented 20th century activity. The terminus post quem (TPQ) obtained from the volumetric sample was ca. 1935, based upon the presence of stenciled painted glass bottle fragments. The TPQ from the materials within the defined pit feature post-dated 1898.

Excavation revealed that the features and stratigraphy associated with the former residential and commercial properties at 907-909 Hillen Street had been



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subjected to moderate to severe disturbance within the past 60 years. It is tempting to characterize Feature 1 as the demolished remains of, perhaps, a double-oval turn-of-the-century privy shaft. However, aside from its depth and confinement to a specific area within the unit, no stratigraphic or architectural evidence was recorded that could verify this conclusion, nor did the soil matrices possess the intrinsic attributes of privy deposits. If the feature was indeed a privy shaft at one time, it obviously had been cleaned out and the shaft walls had been demolished.

The complex of archeological features within the rear yards of 907-909 Hillen Street lacked horizontal and vertical integrity, and the recent date of the associated archeological assemblages limit their research value. No further archeological work is recommended for 18BC136.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

97000183