

REVIEW SHEET

B-1221

Historic Preservation Certification Application—Significance

Property: Redwood Center, 131 E. Redwood St + 26 S. Calvert St, Balt. Project No.: _____

Historic District: Business and Government Historic District

9/7/89 date initial application received by State 10/30/89 date(s) additional information requested by State

11/3/89 date complete information received by State

3/23/89 date of this transmittal to NPS

Inspection of property by State staff? no yes date(s): Fall 89, Michael Day

There is adequate documentation enclosed to evaluate the historic character and integrity of this property.

There is insufficient documentation to evaluate the property adequately. The application is missing the following items:

Reasonable efforts have been made to obtain this information. Copies of the information requests are enclosed.

NUMBER	This property involves:
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Extensive loss of historic fabric
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantial alterations over time (<u>interior</u>)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary determination of listing
	<input type="checkbox"/> for district
	<input type="checkbox"/> for individual property
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significance less than 50 years old
	<input type="checkbox"/> Obscured or covered elevation(s)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved property
	<input type="checkbox"/> State recommendation inconsistent with NR documentation
	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation different from the applicant's request

NUMBER	Complete item(s) below as appropriate.
2	(1) The documentation on file with the National Register cites the period(s) of significance of this historic district as <u>1723-1941</u>
	(2) The property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> contributes <input type="checkbox"/> does not contribute to the historic significance of this registered historic district in: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> location <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> design <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> setting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> materials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> workmanship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> feeling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> association <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Property is mentioned in the NR or State or local district documentation in Section <u> </u> , page <u> </u> . <u>see map</u>
	(3) For properties less than 50 years old: <input type="checkbox"/> the historical merits of the district (the periods and areas of significance) are documented in the National Register form or district documentation on file as less than 50 years old, justifying the certification of this property's contribution. <input type="checkbox"/> the exceptional historical or architectural significance of this property as described in the National Register form or district documentation on file justifies its certification as contributing. <input type="checkbox"/> there is insufficient justification to consider this property as contributing to the district for its individual exceptional architectural or historical significance or the significance of the district does not extend to the last 50 years.
	(4) For preliminary determinations: A. The status of the nomination for the property/historic district: <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination has already been submitted to State review board, and nomination will be forwarded to the NPS within <u> </u> months. (Draft nomination is enclosed.) <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination was submitted to the NPS on <u> </u> . <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination will be submitted to the State review board within twelve months. <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination process likely will be completed within thirty months. <input type="checkbox"/> Other, explain: <u> </u>
	B. Evaluation of the property: <input type="checkbox"/> Property is individually eligible and meets National Register Criteria for Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Property is located within a potential registered district that meets National Register Criteria for Evaluation: <u> </u> A <u> </u> B <u> </u> C <u> </u> D Criteria Considerations: <u> </u> A <u> </u> B <u> </u> C <u> </u> D <u> </u> E <u> </u> F <u> </u> G
(5) The property is located in a registered district, is outside the period(s) or area(s) of significance as documented in the NR form and: <input type="checkbox"/> appears to contribute to the expanded significance of the district. Enclosed is the revised nomination documentation. <input type="checkbox"/> does not appear to contribute to the period(s) or area(s) of significance of the district.	

NUMBER

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Describe and evaluate the physical characteristics of the property, its integrity, and its significance within the context of the historic district (or individually for preliminary determinations of individual listings).

Redwood Center consists of two classically ornamented office buildings built to house the Corporate headquarters of United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company, an insurance + financial services firm founded in Baltimore in 1896. 131 E. Redwood was constructed in 1906 with a 1911 wing and 26 S. Calvert was constructed in 1921 with an addition of five stories in 1927. The two buildings are connected by an enclosed bridge and underground tunnel. They are representative of grand scaled, classical buildings ~~which~~ constructed in the decades after the Great Fire which characterize the Business and Government Historic District, a cohesive group of commercial and governmental buildings located in the historic center of Baltimore near the inner harbor.

131 E. Redwood is a 7 story steel frame building clad in limestone on the primary facade and brick on the secondary facades. The base is of granite and a decorative stone parapet is located at roof top. 26 S. Calvert is a 12 story, steel frame building clad in limestone on the primary facade and tan brick on the secondary facades. Classical ornamentation includes a decorative stone parapet and pedimented main entrance.

The exteriors retain nearly all their original features, although there have been some modifications, mostly at street level. The interiors of the buildings have undergone numerous renovations, but retain some original finishes and features, including staircases and a lobby area.

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State Official Recommendation:

This application for the above-named property has been reviewed by Elizabeth Hannotel, a professionally qualified architect, architectural historian, or historian on my staff.

- The property is included within the boundaries of a registered historic district, contributes to the significance of the district, and is a "certified historic structure" for the purpose of rehabilitation.
- The property is included within the boundaries of a registered historic district, contributes to the significance of the district, and is a "certified historic structure" for a charitable contribution for conservation purposes in accordance with the Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980.
- The property does not contribute to the significance of the above-named district.
- The property appears to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely be nominated.
- The property does not appear to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will not be nominated.
- The property appears to contribute to the significance of a:
 - potential historic district which appears to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely be nominated.
 - registered historic district but is outside the period(s) or areas of significance as documented in the National Register nomination or district documentation on file with the NPS. Revised nomination or district documentation is enclosed.
- The property should be denied a preliminary determination that it could qualify as a certified historic structure.
- Insufficient documentation has been provided to evaluate the structure.

Detailed NPS review recommended Precedent-setting case Forwarded without recommendation

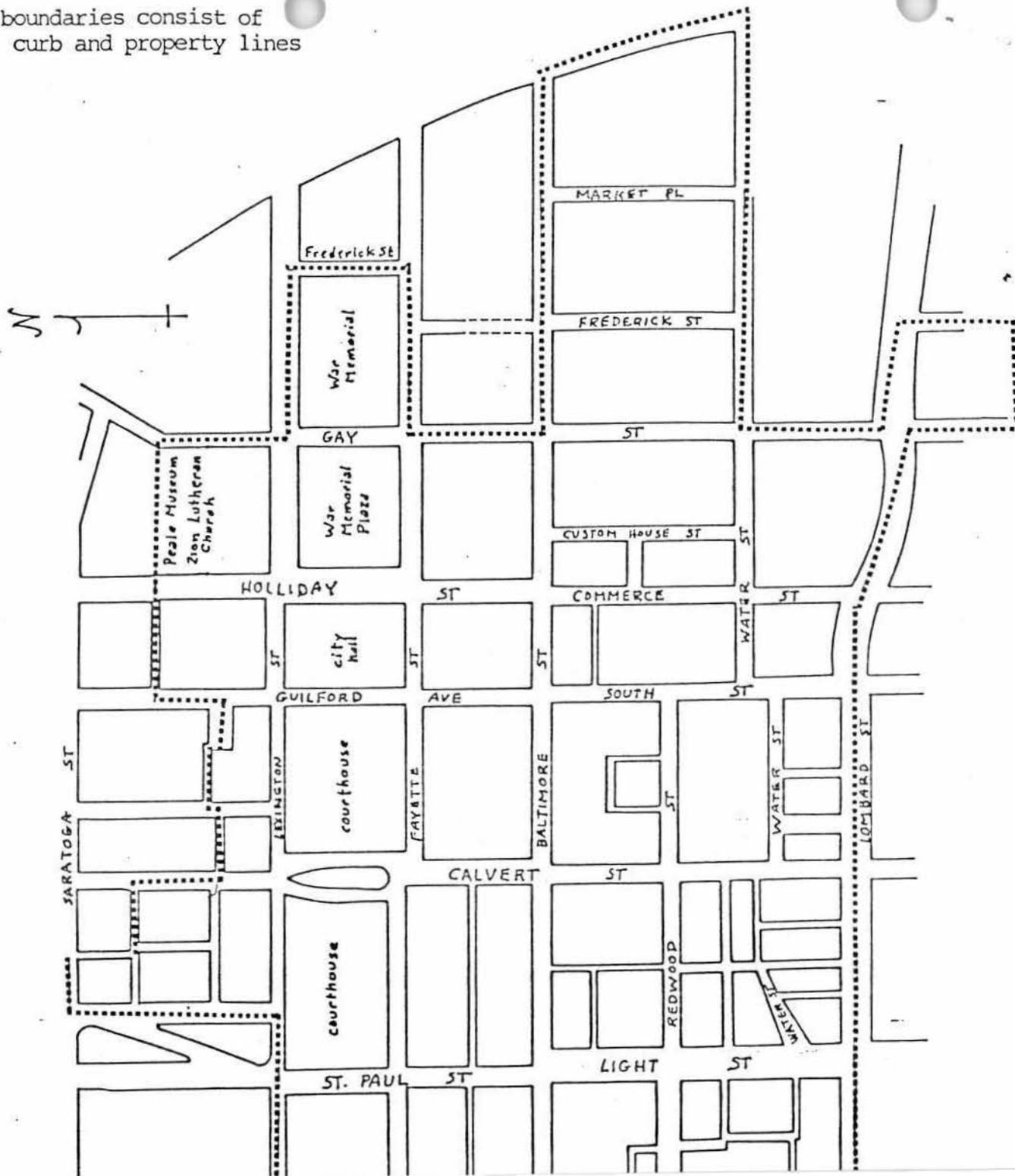
3/29/90
Date

[Signature]
State Official Signature

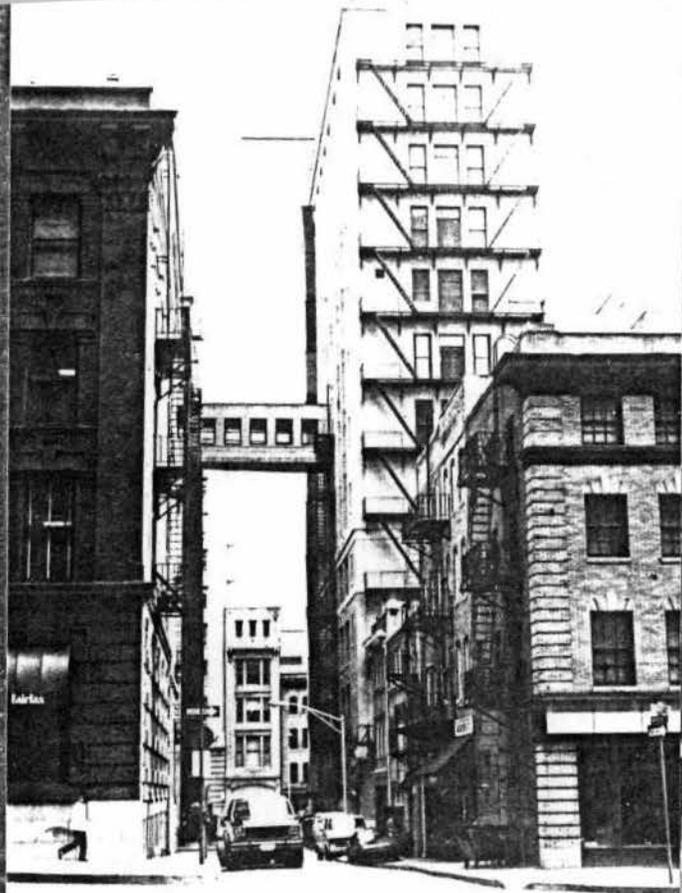
See attachments:

NPS Comments:

boundaries consist of
curb and property lines



B-1221



ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 10-10-83 BY SP-6 JRS/STW

AREA: Financial District

MAGI NO.: 0412215711

Address: 131 East Redwood Street
Current Name: Redwood CenterBlock: 661 Lot: 1
Height: 7 stories
Condition: Good
Use: Offices
Designation: NoneLot size: 68 x 158
Materials: Limestone & Granite
Owner: Shamrock Associates
Accessible: Yes
Liber/Folio: CWM 4038-345Historic Name: United States Fidelity and Guarantee Company
Date: 1905 & 1910
Architect/Builder: Simonson and Pietsch/Cramp & Co.
Style (if appropriate):

Description:

The old USF&G Building is a seven story high Indiana limestone structure with a granite base. It is three bays wide on the front Light Street facade and nine bays wide on the Redwood Street elevation. The entrance on the front facade is set into a broken round pediment with brackets and garlands surmounted by an oval window with floral design and square surround. Flanking the entrance are grouped one over one windows with filled transoms and a bracketed surround. Rusticated pilasters are located between the windows and have simple capitals decorated by bezants. A cornice and long tablet with the inscription, "U S FIDELITY & GUARANTY CO." cap the first two floors. The next four floors are comprised of recessed segmentally arched bands of three-part windows between plain pilasters. Emphasized keystones and a band course completes the sixth floor. Six one over one windows punctuate the seventh floor building walls between simple pilasters. A dentilled cornice with lions head details and a parapet wall with arched openings form the building's roofline. The side elevation is similar to the front. The central Redwood Street entrance is flanked by brass lamp posts and the oval window above the broken pediment has been filled in. A secondary entrance at the corner of Calvert Street features end brackets, egg and dart molding and a filled transom. An electrical "Computerland" sign on Calvert Street at this corner is not in keeping with the original design of the building.

Significance:

Area: Architecture

Level: Local

The old USF&G Building was the result of an architectural competition won by the firm of Simonson and Pietsch. A competition entry by the firm of Beecher, Friz and Gregg has been documented, as well as an earlier ten story design by Parker and Thomas. The design by Simonson and Pietsch is typical of their work -- a massive, strong straightforward structure. The broken pediment is an element that was used often by Simonson and Pietsch. The building was built in two stages. The original building was only five bays wide on Redwood Street but was added on to in 1910. This building is an important, contributing element to the district. It's use as the early twentieth century headquarters of USF&G adds to the significance of the structure. The company dates from 1896. It is the largest insurance company in the City and one of the largest nationally known corporations headquartered in Baltimore. USF&G occupied this building until their new building at the Inner Harbor was completed in the early 1970s.

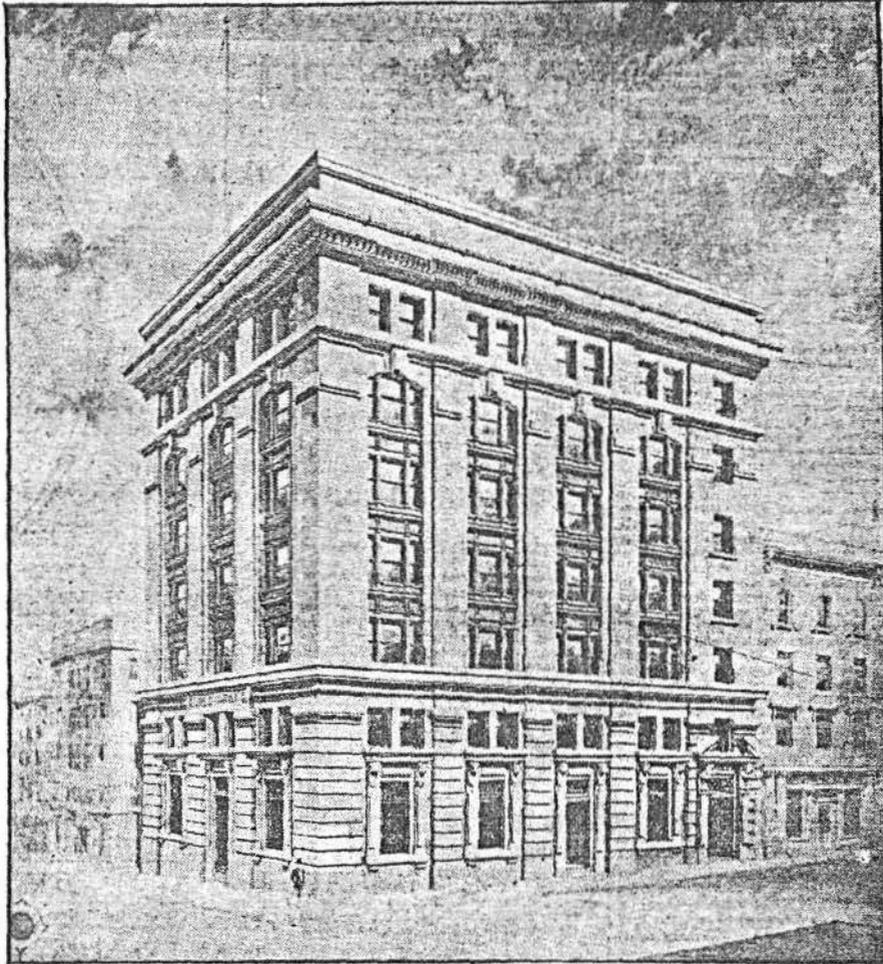
Sources: BS 4/15/1904 p. 16 c. 2-3 (Parker & Thomas design); BDR 12/3/1904 (competition); BS 4/8/1905 p. 9 c. 6 (permit issued); 1907 Architectural Club Exhibition (Beecher, Friz & Gregg design); BDR 7/16/1910, 7/23/1910 & 8/6/1910 (1910 addition).

Surveyor and Date: Fred B. Shoken, March, 1985.

B-1221

United States Fidelity & Guarantee Building
131 East Redwood Street.

FOR UNITED STATES FIDELITY AND GUARANTY COMPANY



TO BE ERECTED AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF CALVERT AND GERMAN STS.

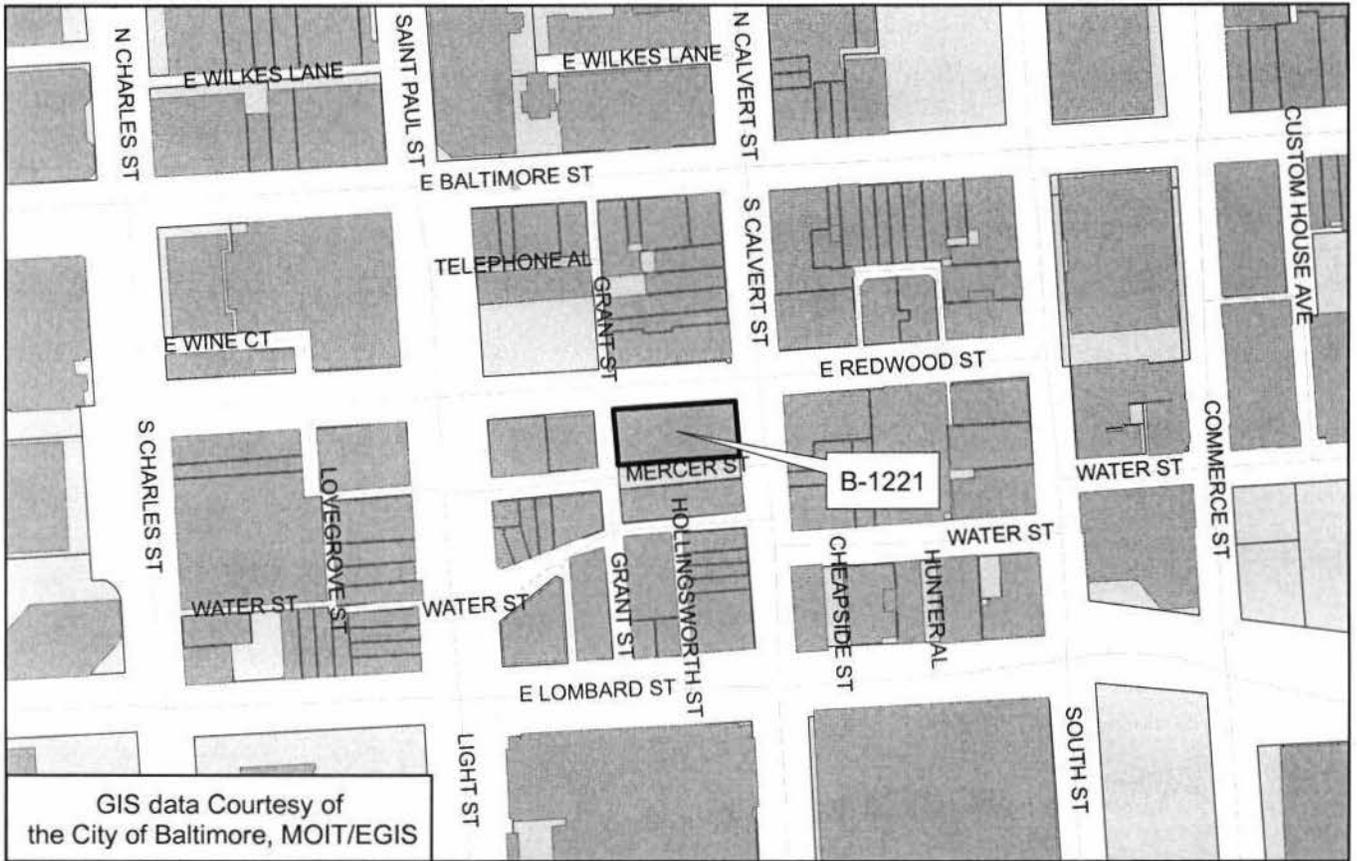
The United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company has commissioned Architects Simonson & Pletsch to draw plans for the new home at the southwest corner of Calvert and German streets. The company has selected the above design, which was submitted by the architects.

The new building will be seven stories high and will have a frontage of 68 feet

on Calvert street and 92 feet 9 inches on German and Mercer streets. The first story will be 18 feet high and each of the other stories will be 15 feet high. The first floor will contain three offices, finished in marble. This floor, as well as the second and third floors, will be divided into offices for rental purposes, while the rest of the structure will be used by the company. There will be

a fire-proof vault running the entire height of the building and the offices on each floor will have access to this vault. The building will be of steel frame, fire-proof construction. It will have a base of granite and the other stories will be of Indiana limestone. The structure will cost about \$200,000.

B-1221
United States Fidelity & Guarantee Company Building (Redwood Center)
131 E. Redwood Street
Block 0661 Lot 001
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad





131 E. Redwood

B-1221

United States Fidelity and Guarantee
Company

131 E. Redwood Street

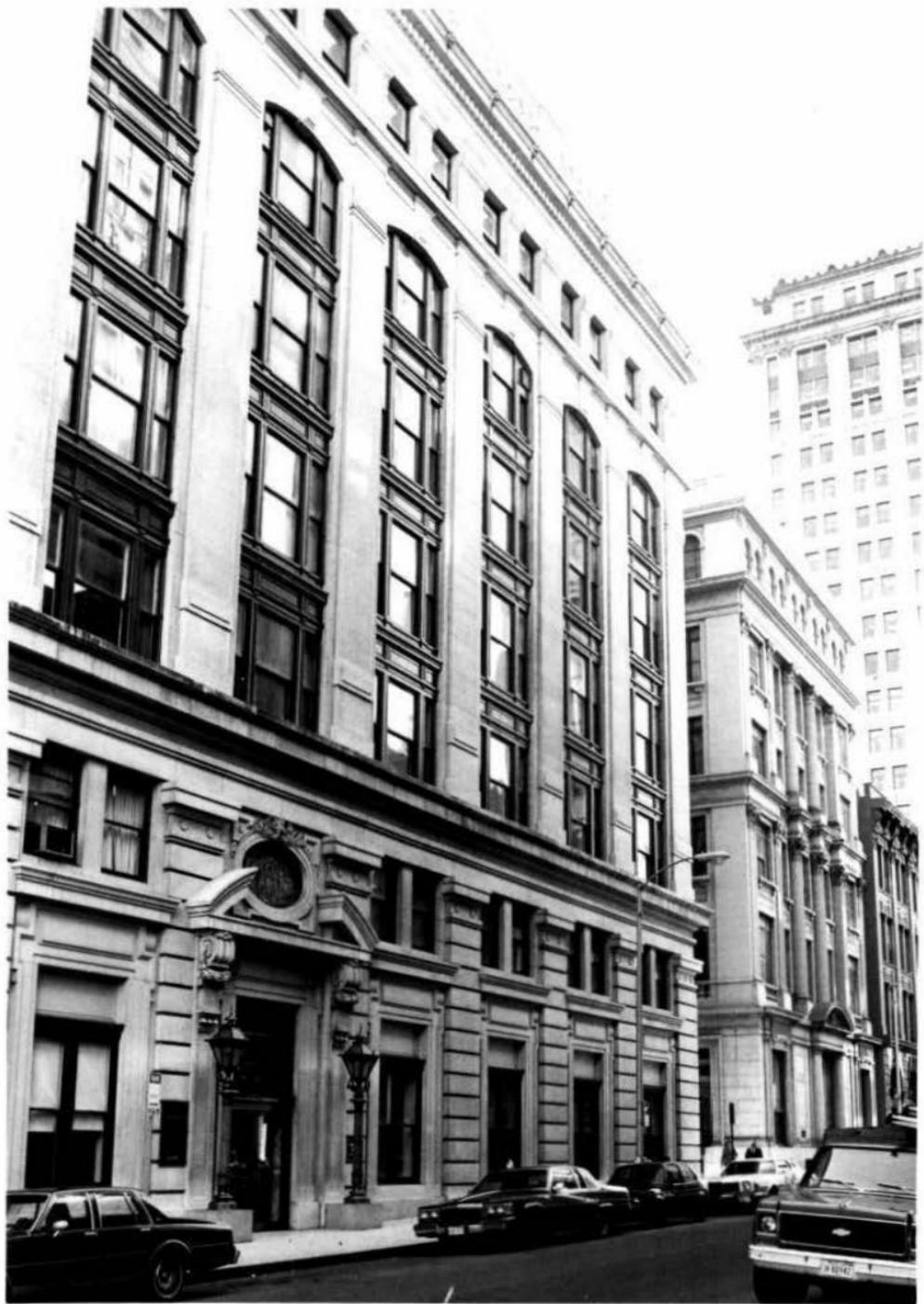
Financial District-Metrocenter Survey
Baltimore (City), Maryland

Photo: Fred Shoken

Date: October 1983

Neg.loc.: Maryland Historical Trust
West elevation

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131 E. Redwood

B-1221

United States Fidelity and Guarantee
Company

131 E. Redwood Street

Financial District-Metrocenter Survey

Baltimore (City), Maryland

Photo: Fred Shoken

Date: October 1983

Neg.loc.: Maryland Historical Trust

North elevation

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