NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

OMB No. 1024-0018

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hotel Kernan
other names/site number Congress Hotel; B-2250

2. Location

street 306-312 West Franklin Street
not for publication n/a city or town Baltimore vicinity n/a
state Maryland code MD county independent city code 510 zip code 21201

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide x locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

7-29-99

Signature of certifying official Date

In my opinion, the property ✓ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

B-2250

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

____ entered in the National Register _____
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined eligible for the National Register _____
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined not eligible for the National Register _____
____ removed from the National Register _____

____ other (explain): _____

_____ _____
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

_x_ private
___ public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

_x_ building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in National Register 0
Name of related multiple property listing n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: restaurant

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE Sub:

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/French Renaissance

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
roof Clay tile
walls Brick; Terracotta
other n/a

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

____ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
____ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
_x_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
____ B removed from its original location.
____ C a birthplace or a grave.
____ D a cemetery.
____ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
____ F a commemorative property.
____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1903-1932

Significant Dates 1903; 1912; 1932

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
n/a

Cultural Affiliation n/a

Architect/Builder J. D. Allen Co., architect
D. W. & G. H. Thomas, general contractors

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
_x_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre
USGS quadrangle Baltimore East, MD
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	360220	4350570	C	18	_____	_____
B	18	_____	_____	D	18	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The nominated property is described among the records of the City of Baltimore, Department of Public Works, Property Location Division as Lot 41 in Block 530, Ward 11, Section 10 and the vestigial entrance and cornerstone contained within a perpetual easement granted on an approximately 20 ft. by 20 ft. parcel at the southeast corner of Lot 2/11 in Block 530, Ward 11, Section 10.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION: This boundary constitutes the legal description of the property on which the Hotel Kernan is located and describes the portion of the adjacent lot that includes the cornerstone for the Million Dollar Triple Enterprise and the vestigial entrance shared by the Maryland Theater (demolished 1951) and the Hotel Kernan. The vestigial entrance and cornerstone are included with the resource because of their historic physical connection with the Hotel Kernan.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betty Bird and Heather Ewing
organization Betty Bird & Associates date November 30, 1998
street & number 2607 24th Street, NW, Suite 3 telephone (202) 588-9033
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20008

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets
Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state ____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Hotel Kernan, designed in 1903 by Philadelphia architect John Allen for theatrical impresario James [illegible] Kernan, originally comprised one of three elements of Kernan's "Million Dollar Triple Enterprise." The other two components were the Auditorium Theater (now called Mayfair Theater, in severely deteriorated condition) and the Maryland Theater (demolished 1951). The one-story base of a recessed hyphen (now gone) that connected the Hotel Kernan with the Maryland Theater survives as a vestigial entrance, connected to the west end of the primary facade of the hotel. The six-story plus mansard, French renaissance revival style Hotel Kernan is detailed in brick and terra cotta. The hotel, which faces south onto Franklin Street, is of steel and reinforced concrete construction and U-shaped in plan. The principal (south) facade, the only detailed facade, is finished with a stone base, brick walls, and highly ornate terra cotta detailing. The interior plan of the building consists of public rooms to either side of a central entry on the ground floor and basement level, and hotels rooms disposed about a double-loaded U-shaped corridor on the upper floors.

The building was altered in 1932 and again in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when owner Milton Firey undertook an extensive modernization campaign. Although the building, which has been vacant since 1986, has been stripped of all of its decorative metal exterior trim and much of its interior fixtures and furnishings, a considerable amount of the elaborate plaster detailing in the first floor public spaces as well as the renowned marble bar in the basement still remain. Despite neglect and harsh treatment, the Hotel Kernan still retains its essential physical features and possesses sufficient integrity to convey its significance as one of Baltimore's few remaining grand turn-of-the century hotels.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Hotel Kernan is a six-story plus mansard, brick and terra cotta French renaissance revival style building of steel and reinforced concrete construction. The sculptural, highly plastic character of its primary facade relates more closely to its eclectic 19th-century hotel predecessors than to the more restrained revival styles that characterized Baltimore's later hotels and the contemporary Hotel Belvedere. The mid-block building, which faces south onto Franklin Street, is flanked by a large parking lot (formerly the site of the Maryland Theater) on the west and mid-19th century low rise structures on the east. Its rear (north) facade abuts the

south facade of the Auditorium Theater (Mayfair), the only other remaining element of James L. Kernan's Million Dollar Triple Enterprise; only a small part of the undetailed upper portion of the north facade is visible from the street. The shadow of Kernan's Maryland Theater (demolished in 1951), which was completed before the Hotel Kernan, can be seen on the undetailed brick west facade of the Hotel Kernan. The one-story projecting base of the recessed hyphen that connected the two buildings remains as a vestigial entrance, attached to the southwest corner of the hotel, the cornerstone of the Million Dollar Triple Enterprise, which bears the date "1903," survives next to the west end of the vestigial entrance. The U-shaped plan of the upper floors of the building creates a large light well at the center of the east facade. There are smaller, shallow lightwells notched into the north and west facades as well.

The front (south) facade is the Hotel Kernan's only detailed facade. With the exception of shallow returns at the south end of the west and east facades, the east, west, and north facades are utilitarian in appearance. The south facade is a tripartite composition based on the Beaux Arts convention of base, shaft, and crown. The rusticated stone base of the building, which rests on a granite watertable, was originally designed as a free-standing, 1-1/2 story casino. It features an elaborately decorated central arch that rises above a full entablature marking the top of the base, dramatizing the hotel entrance below. The central arch is delineated by a broken scroll pediment that supports cherubs holding a cartouche. Two circular windows occupy the tympanum of the arch. An arched opening below this central arch originally featured a recessed entrance containing a wide granite stair leading up to the hotel lobby and flanking stairs leading down to a rathskeller and other public facilities in the basement. This entrance echoed the form of the vestigial entrance leading to the hyphen (now gone) that once connected the Hotel Kernan with the Maryland Theater. The original central recessed entry is now hidden from the street by the present ca. 1946 Federal revival frontispiece that houses the double doors providing access to the hotel. Elaborate classical detailing on the base includes fluted pilasters supporting a frieze with rosettes; panels decorated with swags, shields, crotches, and nymphs; and voussoirs with console keystones.

The vestigial entrance, the former one-story recessed entrance to the hyphen that connected the Hotel Kernan to the Maryland Theater (now gone), survives as a shallow element at the west end of the primary (south) facade. (Regulations that went into effect after the Great Fire of 1904 required that steps or stairs be recessed behind the plane of the building.) Rusticated piers resting on a granite watertable frame a massive

terra cotta arch embellished with ornamented spandrels, egg-and-dart molding, a paneled soffit, and a console keystone decorated with a swag and ornamental drop pendant. The keystone and consoles support a projecting balcony once topped with terra cotta balusters. . Only the metal framework and piers of the balcony now remain. The curved southwest corner of the Hotel Kernan extends down behind the arch. Recessed granite stairs lead up to an entrance at the first floor level and down to an entrance to the basement. Decorative metal bars are placed in front of the blank wall at the top of the stairs.

The variegated material and massing of the shaft of the Hotel Kernan (second - sixth stories) breaks up the bulk of the hotel's street facade and contributes to the hotel's robust, sculptural quality. The shaft is articulated in an a reeded manner that enhances the verticality of this essentially square facade. Piers and arcades that rise the height of the shaft are highlighted by quoins of contrasting color. The rounded return at the western corner of the building echoes the prominent round bay that anchors the southeast corner of the building. Three-story oriels surmounted by balustraded balconies add additional vertical emphasis. Historic photographs indicate the oriels were once clad in what appears to be decorative metal; today their surface is exposed concrete. Additional terra cotta balconies project at the third and fifth story levels to either side of the central element of the building. For the most part, fenestration consists of one-over-one sash, with two-over-two sash in many of the windows within the curved corners. Much of the sash appears broken or damaged.

The tiled mansard roof serves as the crown of the building. The mansard returns around the southern portion of the east facade to the edge of the lightwell. While many of the tiles are missing, the roof retains its original iron cresting. At the southern end of the east elevation, there is a large frame above the roof for a neon sign that reads "Friendship Classic Inn." Hooded window molds, once clad in decorative metal, project from the mansard. Pedimented terra cotta dormers housing paired one-over-one windows interrupt the cornice line.

The east elevation, which faces an alley, is arranged around a central recessed lightwell that begins at the second story. The channeled brick of the first story, which terminates in a corbelled stringcourse, echoes the rustication pattern of the primary facade. The southern block of the U is detailed in buff brick and surmounted by the mansard roof; the remaining portion of the east facade is detailed in common brick and topped by a corbelled cornice. A hexagonal bay of exposed concrete projects east into

the center of the light well. Window openings are detailed in a utilitarian manner; smaller window openings at the center of the north and south block of the east facade probably indicate the location of original bathrooms.

The west facade was not designed to be exposed, as it is today. The west wall of the Hotel Kernan originally abutted a hyphen that connected the hotel with the Maryland Theater. When the Maryland Theater was demolished in 1951, it left the Congress Hotel, as it was by then named, a free-standing building. The brick facade of the hotel now bears the scar of the former roof line of the Maryland Theater, which was completed before the Hotel Kernan, and displays several brick-up openings that indicate interconnections between the two buildings. The only decorative features on the west facade are a corbelled cornice and faint lettering of "HOTEL KERNAN" visible at the top of the southern end of the west facade.

The entrance at the center of the Hotel Kernan currently provides the only access to the interior of the building. (The vestigial entrance at the west end of the building, which is now sealed, also provided access to the hotel.) Public spaces are situated in the basement and first floor; upper floors house hotel rooms along a double-loaded, U-shaped corridor. The circulation system of the building originally consisted of an open well stair placed near the center of the base of the U and an elevator in the northeast corner of the building. (An additional stair in the demolished hyphen connecting the Hotel Kernan with the Maryland Theater would have provided secondary egress.) In the mid-20th century an elevator was placed within the open well of the stair and a fire stair was placed within the elevator shaft in the northeast corner.

The original, elaborate recessed entrance to the building is intact behind the present ca. 1946 frontispiece. A wide granite stair with balusters leads to the first floor; flanking stairs lead down to the basement, which was originally designed as a rathskeller. The open plan basement houses the celebrated marble bar; the back bar has vanished. With the exception of the bar, this space appears to have been stripped of any decorative features. On the first floor, the central entry leads into a late-20th century registration lobby immediately north of the stair. The dining room, which occupies the eastern half of the floor, appears to be the most intact of the public areas. It retains its full ceiling height and sufficient elaborate cast plaster detail to indicate the original character of the space. Fixtures like doors and hardware have been stripped from the building. The kitchen is located against the north wall of the building at the north end of the dining room. The probable Palm Court at the west side of the front of the lobby is also intact. In 1947, Milton Firey, the

owner/manager of the hotel, created an L-shaped mezzanine that wrapped around the northwest corner of the building, behind the stair, dropping the ceiling over the former art gallery and registration desk.

The six upper stories above the mezzanine are identical in plan. Rooms are placed on either side of a central U-shaped corridor that extends around the deep lightwell on the east side of the building. Smaller lightwells placed at the center of the north and west facades, and a lightwell notched into the northwest corner of the building, provide light to rooms that would have faced the Maryland and Auditorium Theaters. While the plan of the corridor on the upper floors appears to be intact, no decorative elements remain. The upper floors originally housed suites as well as single rooms. While some rooms had private baths, each floor probably housed lavatories serving several rooms. The floor plan of the upper floors has been reworked to create additional rooms and additional private baths. The building, which declined into a single-room occupancy hotel before being abandoned in 1986, is in fair to poor condition.

SUMMARY SIGNIFICANCE

The Hotel Kernan, constructed in 1903 for theater impresario James Lawrence "Addie" Kernan (1838-1912), is a locally significant example of lavish hotels of the period. Designed by Philadelphia architect John Allen, the hotel was constructed as part of Kernan's Million Dollar Triple Enterprise, which also included the Maryland Theater (now gone) and the Auditorium Theater (now Mayfair Theater).[1] Kernan, a noted Baltimore philanthropist who founded the J.L. Kernan Hospital and Industrial School at Radnor Park, lived at the hotel until his death in 1912. The Kernan interests sold the hotel in the 1920s. The establishment, which was renamed the Congress Hotel in 1932, was owned and operated by the Firey family from 1938 to 1977. By the 1970s, Kernan's deluxe establishment had declined into a single room occupancy hotel. The hotel has been vacant since 1986. The Hotel Kernan meets National Register Criterion C as one of the few surviving examples of a property type for which Baltimore was once noted. The period of significance of the Hotel Kernan extends from its date of construction in 1903 to 1932, when it was bought at a bankruptcy sale and remodeled.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Hotel Kernan, which features one of the most lavishly decorated exterior bases of any Baltimore hotel, is one of a handful of buildings that survive to represent this distinctive property type, for which Baltimore was particularly noted. Baltimore proved a fertile setting for hotel development. As a trade and transportation entrepot, the city required transient housing for the hundreds of travelers and businessmen passing through the city. In addition to lodging, hotel rooms offered temporary office space for traveling salesmen to display their samples. Moreover, until well into the 20th century, Baltimore hotels provided permanent as well as transient housing, since the city came late to apartment living.

Baltimore enjoyed a distinguished tradition of fine hotels, boasting one of the three most important American hotels of the early 19th century. David Barnum's six-story, 200 room City Hotel (built 1825, demolished 1889), designed by William Small, was among the world's grandest hotels, setting a standard for the type. Frances Trollope called Barnum's "the most splendid in the Union" and Charles Dickens praised it as "one of the most comfortable of all the hotels in the United States."[2] Barnum's set the standard for public hospitality that Baltimore's other renowned antebellum hotels, all now gone, adopted. Early hotels included the Fountain Inn, the

Eutaw House (constructed 1835, demolished 1916), and the Gilmor House/St. Clair Hotel (constructed ca. 1840, demolished 1897).

In contrast to the inn from which it ultimately evolved, the American hotel developed as a large, multi-room facility that offered a variety of public spaces like lobbies, ballrooms, dining rooms, specialized restaurants, smoking rooms, and bars. Many hotels featured large suites for residential, rather than transient, living. During the 19th and early 20th century, hotel residents could enjoy elegant meals and comfortable, stylish quarters without the expense of servants or furniture.[3] As American hotel design progressed and became more specialized toward the end of the 19th century, technological innovation became essential to the evolution of larger and larger hotels. Steel-frame construction and equipment like elevators, bathrooms, lavatories, and heating systems became increasingly important.[4] Baltimore's later grand hotels, which exemplified this type, included the St. James Hotel (built 1874, demolished early 1960s), the Rennert Hotel (built 1885, enlarged 1893, demolished 1941), the Altamont Hotel (built 1886, demolished 1965), and the Emerson (built 1911, demolished 1971). Of the dozens of grand hotels in Baltimore, only two turn-of-the-century grand hotels now remain -- the Hotel Kernan and the Belvedere (built 1903).

The Hotel Kernan provides a splendid example of how hotels served as settings for ostentatious display. With his theatrical background, James Lawrence "Addie" Kernan possessed the showmanship required to build and operate an establishment that functioned as a social stage. The son of a feed store owner, Kernan was educated at Loyola College and Mount St. Mary's. As a young man working in the transportation department of the B&O Railroad, Kernan lived in the Fountain Hotel, one of Baltimore's grand antebellum hostelries. A rabid partisan during the Civil War, Kernan enlisted in the Confederate Army, was captured, and spent nearly two years as a prisoner of war at Point Lookout.

Despite his conventional job at the B&O, Kernan was drawn to the theatrical world. John Wilkes Booth was a childhood friend and his older brother, Eugene Kernan, invested in theatrical ventures. When Eugene Kernan's lessor defaulted on a loan in 1866, Eugene appointed Addie Kernan receiver of the burlesque house near Baltimore Street and Jones Falls.[5] Addie Kernan helped pioneer burlesque entertainment in Baltimore. After his first theater burned in 1873, he reopened his Fallsway operation as the Central Theater, later rechristening the house as the Monumental Theater and Bridge Theater. He booked a variety of well known acts, including the exotic dancer Little Egypt, whose gyrations caused Baltimore's police to shut down the theater.

Kernan relished offering popular, mass entertainment. He operated a Summer Garden featuring bands and nightly concerts in an annex across Jones Falls from the Monumental. The Summer Garden boasted pool tables, bowling alleys, a shooting gallery, a woman diver, a boxing ring, and a gas-lit bicycle track for bicycle races. When he took over the historic Holliday Street Theater in 1890, he transformed it from an expensive, elite theatrical establishment to a low-priced venue for melodramas and other populist entertainment. He expanded his empire to include three theaters in Washington -- the Grand Opera House, the Lafayette, and the Empire -- as well as four theaters in Buffalo.

In 1890 Kernan also bought the Howard Auditorium (later reworked as the structure within the Mayfair Theater) on Howard Street between Franklin and Center. Located in an area dominated by warehouses and granaries (Kernan's father's operation had been in the same block), the Howard's primary audience was students. Kernan quickly instituted the successful practices that marked his other operations. He introduced vaudeville double bills and made the lobby itself an attraction. He transformed the lobby into the Eden Musee, a wax museum featuring tableaux with automatons.

In the 1890s, as Addie Kernan's entertainment ventures reached their peak, he concocted plans for his "Million Dollar Triple Enterprise" that would consist of two theaters and a hotel. The Auditorium Theater (now the Mayfair) would rise on the site of the Howard Auditorium. The Maryland Theater would be constructed on Franklin Street, and the Hotel Kernan would rise on Franklin Street adjacent to the Maryland Theater and backing into the Auditorium. These establishments would upgrade the type of entertainment Kernan presented.[6]

Kernan's vision for the Million Dollar Triple Enterprise shifted several times over the ten years it took to complete it. The scheme originally contemplated two new theaters and a ten-story hotel. Later plans depict a one-story casino instead of the hotel.[7] The Maryland Theater and Hotel Kernan would be constructed on the site of small, 19th-century commercial buildings facing Franklin Street. The Auditorium Theater would rise on the site of the Howard Auditorium. Kernan's architect was John D. Allen, a Philadelphia architect and engineer with wide-ranging experience designing theaters.[8] Little is known about Allen, who first appears in Philadelphia city directories as an architect in 1890. Business directories tout interior art decoration and theater work as his specialties. By 1918 Allen is listed as president of the A. C. Axle Manufacturing Company; he is last listed in 1923. Allen's architectural projects included designs for new construction and alterations of theaters, auditoriums, and amusement parks

in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Brooklyn, New York, and Atlantic City.[9] In his design for Kernan's Million Dollar Triple Enterprise, Allen shows a sure hand with the popular architectural vocabulary for hotels and theaters. The contractor was D.W. and G.H. Thomas.[10] Frank Sims of Philadelphia designed the hotel decorations, which were executed by Henry Arens. Minch & Eisenbrey provided furniture and carpets and Thomas Boland was the plumbing contractor."[11] Newspaper articles noted that "the work of construction has been as far as possible by Baltimore labor and with Baltimore material."[12]

By the end of 1902, as construction began, the Million Dollar Triple Enterprise consisted of the two theaters linked by a casino, which replaced the hotel. Rather than demolishing the Howard Auditorium, the Auditorium Theater appears to have been constructed around the existing structure.[13] In July 1903 a fire within the casino, then under construction, virtually destroyed its interior and seriously damaged its exterior terra cotta. Kernan then returned to his original scheme of a hotel and two theaters, incorporating the surviving street facade of the casino into his hotel.[14]

In architectural style, the Hotel Kernan adopted a loose version of the French renaissance revival style popularized by the premier hotel architect of the day, Henry J. Hardenbergh of New York. Its lively facade held its own with the festive Maryland Theater next door, consistent with the popular idiom of hotel design in Baltimore. Late 19th century hotels like the St. James, Rennert, and Altamont featured picturesque rooflines with mansard roofs punctuated by towers and dormers; load-bearing masonry facades enlivened with projecting bays; and prominent entry features. The Hotel Kernan, like the contemporary Belvedere and the later Emerson, retained the hallmark hotel mansard. However, the Hotel Kernan was transitional in style, adopting the picturesque facade articulation and highly plastic ornament of the earlier hotels. It translated the refined French renaissance revival vocabulary of the fashionable contemporary hotels into a more theatrical baroque. The base of the building, originally designed as the facade of the free-standing casino, gave the building particular panache.

The Hotel Kernan opened to great fanfare on September 3, 1905, the crowning piece of Kernan's Million Dollar Triple Enterprise. The opening was scheduled to coincide with the beginning of the fall season for the two theaters, which were inaugurated the preceding year.[15] Kernan invited leading lights of Baltimore to the opening, including noted Baltimore architects E. Francis Baldwin and Charles Cassell]. An enormous rathskeller, later billed as Baltimore's first nightclub, was housed in the basement. A grand dining room occupied the eastern half of the first floor;

the western portion of the first floor served as an art gallery displaying Kernan's personal collection of 19th century drawings and paintings. Hotel rooms were located on the upper floors.

A newspaper article describing the opening details the twin concerns of technology and luxurious public spaces that characterized American hotel building at the turn of the century:

> The first impression of the visitor upon entering the lobby is one of magnitude, artistic beauty and solidity. He is impressed with the massive marble and gold columns with their Corinthian capitals, the marble floor and wainscoting, the finely polished mahogany furnishings and the general air of elegance. The beautiful marble quarter circle which forms the front desk and office counter [now gone] contrasts well with the other fittings.
> The hotel, which has been two years in the process of construction, is modern and up to date in every detail. It contains 150 rooms, luxuriously furnished, each of which is light and airy. They are arranged single double and en suite and nearly all have private baths.... [The hotel] is lighted throughout by electricity, ventilated by the latest exhaust fan system and heated by steam.[16]

Advertisements for the Hotel Kernan played up its "plunger elevator system" noted that the facility was "absolutely fireproof" and "perfectly safe." The Hotel Kernan's advertisements also touted its sumptuous amenities like its cuisine, "hygienic barber shop," and "special attention to after-theatre supper parties and private banquets." Leading performers, like Adelina Patti, appearing at Kernan's theaters were featured entertainers in the dining room, rathskeller, and palm garden.[17] Clearly the Hotel Kernan provided an opportunity for guests to enjoy the trappings of a luxurious life only available to the wealthiest private households.

The two theaters comprising the Million Dollar Triple Enterprise exhibited the same exalted taste as the hotel. Addie Kernan exercised stern censorship to guarantee that the upgraded vaudeville fare was suitable for family audiences.[18] Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin both played in vaudeville acts at the Maryland Theater. Later performers included Will Rogers, Weber & Fields, Al Jolson and Eddie Cantor.[19] The Auditorium, leased to the Schubert organization, featured legitimate theater. With the decline of vaudeville, the Maryland Theater was converted to a legitimate stage in 1927.[20] Nestled between Kernan's two theaters and on the same block with the Academy of Music, the Hotel Kernan became the favorite of theatrical people and road show personnel.[21] Described as "the hub of

theatrical life and the headquarters of sportsmen,"[22] it hosted Henry Fonda's wedding to Margaret Sullivan.[23]

Kernan was a self-made man who never forgot his humble roots.[24] He was an active Democrat, serving as both a Park Commissioner and Jail Commissioner. A generous soul, he assisted Confederate veterans and Catholic charities. His obituary noted that he typically wrote out checks to various organizations serving the needy three times a week.[25] He is best remembered, however, for his work establishing the James Lawrence Kernan Hospital and Industrial School for Crippled Children. In a state reluctant to provide public hospitals or facilities for children with special needs, Kernan's generosity was immensely important. Kernan became involved with the hospital in 1909 when Ada Mosby wrote to him requesting the loan of a piano to the Hospital for Crippled and Deformed Children, an institution housed in small buildings in the 2000 block of North Charles Street. When Kernan visited the makeshift facility and learned that Ada Mosby was the daughter of John Mosby, one of the heroes of the Confederacy, he gave the hospital a piano and became increasingly involved with its patients. In 1910 Kernan purchased the Radnor Park estate of William H. Ferguson for the hospital and gave the hospital $10,000 to adapt it for their use. The following year the hospital voted to change its name to honor Kernan, who visited the hospital every Sunday. Kernan then incorporated his hotel and entertainment enterprises, retaining a life interest in $340,000 worth of stock which was to be transferred to the hospital upon his death.[26]

Kernan remained actively involved with both the hospital and the hotel. In December 1912 Kernan died in his rooms at the hotel after a brief bout of pneumonia. Active until the end, he had taken dessert in the hotel dining room and watched games of pool in the billiard room on the night he took ill. At his death, he was eulogized by Cardinal Gibbons and memorialized for his "unfailing faith in Baltimore" on the editorial page of the Baltimore Sun.[27] Kernan's provision for the hospital in his will was so generous that in 1916 his son unsuccessfully contested both the will and the earlier incorporation of his father's hotel and entertainment interests.[28]

After Kernan's death, the decline of vaudeville and changing tastes in entertainment ultimately led to the dismantlement of his empire. Kernan's successor operation sold the Hotel Kernan to a Michigan company.[29] In 1932 the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company of Philadelphia, the mortgage holder, bought Kernan's "Million Dollar Triple Enterprise" at a bankruptcy auction for $225,000.[30] The Philadelphia insurance company immediately made "extensive renovations" and changed the hotel's name to the Congress Hotel.

They operated the Congress Hotel through 1938, when Penn Mutual sold the hotel to M.J. Firey, a third-generation hotel operator from Kingston, North Carolina, for $150,000. The Firey family would continue to own and operate the hotel for nearly 40 years. The theaters remained on the market.[31] In 1942 motion picture operator J. W. Hicks bought the Maryland Theater and adapted it for motion pictures. It was demolished for a parking lot in 1951.[32]

M.J. Firey's son, Milton, a Cornell Hotel School graduate, made extensive changes to the hotel. Like Baltimore's other hotels, the Congress suffered hard use during World War II. When Milton Firey inherited his father's hotel in 1945, he immediately began major alterations using the Southern Hotel Journal's study of modernization, "The 100-Room Hotel Study," as his guide. Firey made several exterior changes to attract automobile travelers on Franklin Street, which was also Route 40, a major route west. The present Federal revival frontispiece was installed, masking the original recessed entrance, which was "certainly not an attractive invitation to a passing motorist." A well-lit projecting marquee and new roof-top sign transformed the pedestrian scale of the original building to the automobile. On the interior, Firey reworked the public spaces, particularly on the west side of the building. He partitioned an existing mezzanine into commercial office space and leased the dining room as office space to a bank, a lawyer, and an insurance company, and constructed a mezzanine in the upper portion of the former "Peacock Alley" [probably the original Art Gallery] in the northwest quarter of the building. On the upper floors he installed vinyl wall covering to cover the extensive cracks in the interior walls.[33]

The Business Editor of the Sun noted that "what the Congress is doing is being done by hotels here and across the nation, that is, creating more guest rooms in the same floor area, by eliminating waste space and more efficient layouts."(sic) Firey started another $250,000 five year program of improvements in 1950, followed by an additional series of changes costing $150,000. He installed a new elevator and added 42 new guest rooms and bathrooms in 1955. He also added room air conditioning and installed vinyl wall coverings in all the guest rooms.[34] The innovative manager even returned the hotel to its theatrical roots. He invited the Vagabonds, one of Baltimore's oldest little theater groups, to establish their theater in the basement rathskeller.

However, even Firey's management skill could not overcome forces set in motion by the automobile. Like Baltimore's other downtown hotels, the Congress Hotel's doom was sealed by suburban flight and the decline of the

center city. By the 1970s, the once proud Hotel Kernan had become a single room occupancy hotel whose rooms rented for less than $5/day.[35] "The once-posh Congress had declined almost to derelict status. It was by then a great, crumbling hulk of a building, a ceiling-cracked, pipe-clanking, plaster-fallen parody of the palace that once had gleamed so brightly beneath the flood lights."[36]

In 1977 Angelo and Samuel Palumbo purchased the run-down building, which they continued to operate as a single-room-occupancy hotel. A newspaper article from the period noted that "the Congress became shabbier and shabbier, like an old movie star down on his luck."[37] Sam Palumbo, who was an engineering draftsman in the Baltimore city housing department, claimed that he sank $100,000 into the hotel, but in 1979 he was cited for 174 housing code violations, including a lack of smoke detectors.[38] Entertainment venues in the building, however, were code compliant and enjoyed greater success.

The old rathskeller in the basement became the Marble Bar. Roger Anderson and his wife Leslee operated the music club from 1978 to 1995.[39] The Marble Bar was a vital element of Baltimore's music scene, providing a stage for emerging acts too original for other clubs.[40] During its heyday the Marble Bar booked emerging talent like the Psychedelic Furs, REM, X, and Squeeze before they became nationally recognized.

The Hotel Kernan has been vacant since 1986. The building, which is occasionally used for television and film shoots, is in deteriorated condition. Vandals have stripped the decorative metal that once clad the exterior oriels and the hood molds above the dormer windows. Despite the Firey-era alterations and subsequent deterioration and vandalism, the Hotel Kernan retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic associations as a representative example of a grand, turn-of-the-century Baltimore hotel. The robust character of the hotel's facade is still readily apparent despite changes at the entrance and missing decorative elements. On the interior, most of the distinctive elements of the basement and first floor public spaces remain intact. Major changes associated with hotel remodeling appear to have been concentrated on the upper floors and in the mezzanine inserted in the northwest corner of the first floor. The original entry surround and processional stairs are intact behind the present entry frontispiece and the marble bar still dominates the basement space. The dining room space and front portion of the first floor lobby also survive to provide evidence of the lavish character of the decorative program.

Endnotes:

1 The Auditorium Theater (Mayfair Theater), which is at present in severely deteriorated condition, is not included in this National Register nomination. The Auditorium Theater (Mayfair Theater) has been under separate ownership from the hotel since the late 1930s and has had no functional relationship with the Hotel Kernan since it was converted to a motion picture house in the 1940s. The Maryland Theater, adjacent to the hotel and demolished in 1951, was always more closely identified with J. L. Kernan and the hotel.

2 Nikolaus Pevsner, *A History of Building Types*, p. 175 and Carleton Jones, *Lost Baltimore*, pp. 118-119.

3 Elizabeth Cromley, *Alone Together*, p. 19.

4 Pevsner, pp. 178-186.

5 Kernan's biographer notes that the Baltimore News reported that the "variety shows" at Kernan's first house were "rather askance.‡ (Shirley Cammack, "James Lawrence Kernan, 1838-1912," p. 5).

6 Biographical information on Kernan taken from *Baltimore: Its History and Its People*, Vol. 2, pp. 373-374; Shirley Cammack, ‡ James Lawrence Kernan, 1938-1912;" and "J. L. Kernan Dead," *Sun*, Dec. 15, 1912.

7 See "Kernan Houses Ready," *Sun*, Aug. 31, 1904; "Kernan's New Maryland Hotel,‡ *Sun*, March 8, 1904; "Kernan's Maryland Theatre and Casino Annex, *Sun*, Dec. 2, 1902; and "Mr. James L. Kernan's New Hotel and Theater,‡ *Sun*, Aug. 25, 1903

8 "Throws his hotel open,‡ *Sun*, Sept. 3, 1905.

9 Sandra L. Tatman and Roger W. Moss, *The Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930*, pp. 7-8.

10 G. H. Thomas was married to Kernan's daughter, Adelaide.

11 ‡ Throws his hotel open," *Sun*, Sept. 3, 1905.

12 "Kernan Houses Ready," *Sun*, Aug. 31, 1904.

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13 Maryland Inventory of Historic Sites Form for the Mayfair Theater.

15 While the Maryland Theater opened in the fall of 1903, it was "opened . . . somewhat hurriedly and in an unfinished state." "Kernan Houses Ready," *Sun*, Aug. 31, 1904.

16 "Throws his hotel open," *Sun*, Sept. 3, 1905.

17 Advertisement, Baltimore *Sun*, September 5, 1905.

18 "J. L. Kernan Dead," *Sun*, Dec. 15, 1912.

19 "C. W. Hicks Buys the Maryland Theater," *Sun*, April 13, 1942.

20 "Maryland Theater is Sold; Vaudeville May Come Back," *Sun*, April 14, 1942.

21 "A Bit of Theatrical History," *Gardens, Houses, and People*, James L. Kernan Co. Vertical File (ca. 1950), Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Free Library.

22 "Congress Hotel Sale Announced," *Sun*, March 23, 1938.

23 David McQuay, "Guitarist Jazzes Up the Congress," *News-American*, Jan. 21, 1977.

24 *Baltimore, Its History and Its People*, p. 374.

25 "J. L. Kernan Dead," *Sun*, Dec. 15, 1912.

26 Shirley Cammack, "James Lawrence Kernan, 1838-1912," pp. 25-28.

27 "J. L. Kernan Dead," and Editorial, *Sun*, Dec. 15, 1912.

28 Shirley Cammack, "James Lawrence Kernan, 1838-1912," p. 36.

29 "A room at the Congress: Would you believe $15 a night?" *Sun*, April 11, 1978.

30 "Kernan Holdings Sold for $225,000," *Sun*, July 21, 1932 and "A room at the Congress: Would you believe $15 a night?" *Sun*, April 11, 1978.

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31 "Congress Hotel Sale Announced," *Sun*, March 23, 193 8.

32 Carleton Jones, *Lost Baltimore*, p. 229.

33 Grace H. Woolley, "Saving $20,000 Annually in a House of 125 Rooms," pp. 33 - 36.

34 Carroll E. William, "Big Expansion by Congress Hotel Planned," *Sun*, June 16, 1955.

35 Tom Nugent, ‘Once-grand Congress Hotel serves an invisible clientele: the lonely, the down-and-out," *Sun*, April 11, 1978.

36 "A room at the Congress: Would you believe $15 a night?" *Sun*, April 11, 1978.

37 ‘Guitarist Jazzes up the Congress," *News-American*, Jan. 21, 1977.

38 Housing Dept. aide cited as code violator," Evening *Sun*, Nov. 27, 1979.

39 Roger Anderson died in 1984. (David Zeiler, "The Marble Bar closes an era, *Catholic Review*, June 5, 1985.)

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MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Periods:

Industrial/Urban Dominance, A. D. 1870-1939

Prehistoric/Historic Period Themes:

Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Urban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

Domestic: hotel

Commerce/Trade: restaurant

Known Design Source: J. D. Allen Co., architect

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"Mr. James L. Kernan's New Hotel and Theatre," Baltimore Sun, August 25, 1903.

"Kernan's New Maryland Hotel," Baltimore Sun, March 8, 1904.

"Kernan Houses Ready: Opening Will Be An Event in Theatrical History," Baltimore Sun, August 31, 1904.

"Throws His Hotel Open: Mr. James L. Kernan Acts As Host to 1,000 Guests," Baltimore Sun, September 3, 1905.

"J. L. Kernan Dead," Baltimore Sun, December 15, 1912.

"Throng at Kernan Bier," Baltimore Sun, December 16, 1912,

"Kernan Interests to Keep Operating," Baltimore Sun, March 29, 1932.

"Kernan Holdings Sold for $225,000," Baltimore Sun, July 21, 1932.

"Congress Hotel Sale Announced," Baltimore Sun, March 23, 1938.

"Picture of Rescue at Sea to be Sold," Baltimore Sun, May 24, 1939.

"Kernan's Theater Art Gallery Sold at Auction," Baltimore Sun, May 25, 1939.

"'Romance is Dead,' whispered Leonard," Baltimore Sun, May 26, 1939.

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Grace H. Wooley, "Saving $20,000 Annually in a House of 125 Rooms," Hotel Management, June 1947.

"A Bit of Theatrical History," Gardens, Houses and People, [ca. 1950s].

Carroll E. Williams, "Big Expansion by Congress Hotel Planned," Baltimore Sun, June 16, 1955.

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David Zeiler, "The Marble Bar Closes an Era," Catholic Review, June 5, 1985.

B-2250

B-2250

HOTEL KERNAN

BALTIMORE CITY

MARYLAND

E-360220

4350570

B-2250
HOTEL KERNAN (CONGRESS HOTEL)
BETTY BIRD
JANUARY 1999
MDSHPO
SOUTH FACADE, LOOKING NE, VESTIGIAL ENTRANCE ON LEFT
1 OF 8


CAUTION

B-2250
HOTEL KERNAN (CONGRESS HOTEL)
BETTY BIRD
JANUARY 1999
MDSHPO
NORTH AND WEST FACADES, LOOKING SE
2 OF 8


SNOW ROUTE
NO
PARKING
OAKPARK

B-2250

HOTEL KERNAN (CONGRESS HOTEL)

BETTY BIRD

JANUARY 1999

MDSHPO

EAST FACADE, LOOKING WEST, SHOWING CONTEXT AND AUDITORIUM THEATRE (MAYFAIR THEATRE) AT RIGHT

3 OF 8

S022NOR T00315 P036

B-2250
HOTEL KERNAN (CONGRESS HOTEL)
BETTY BIRD
JANUARY 1999
MDSHPO
ENTRANCE FRONTISPIECE + CENTRAL ARCH, S FACADE, LOOKING N
4 OF 8

B-2250
HOTEL KERNAN (CONGRESS HOTEL)
BETTY BIRD
JANUARY 1999
MDSHPO

VESTIGIAL ENTRANCE, SOUTH FACADE, LOOKING N
5 of 8

B-2250
HOTEL KERNAN (CONGRESS HOTEL)
BETTY BIRD
JANUARY 1999
MDSHPO
1st FLOOR DINING ROOM, LOOKING NW
6 OF 8

S022 -1 T00346 P014

B-2250
HOTEL KERNAN (CONGRESS HOTEL)
BETTY BIRD
JANUARY 1999
MDSHPO
BASEMENT, LOOKING NW, MARBLE BAR IN CENTER BACK
7 OF 8

S022 -1 T00424 P010


EXIT

B-2250

HOTEL KERNAN (CONGRESS HOTEL)

BETTY BIRD

JANUARY 1997

MDSHPO

INTERIOR, SECOND FLOOR HALL OUTSIDE ELEVATOR,
LOOKING NORTH

8 OF 8

THE SUN, BALTIMORE, TUESDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 2, 1902.

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$220,000 FOR THE STATE

Government Wins Tax Case Against Northern Central.

DECIDED IN SUPREME COURT

Road Won Before Lower Tribunal, But The Opinions On Appeal Went Against It—History Of The Suit.

An Associated Press dispatch yesterday from Washington says:

"Justice White, of the United States Supreme Court, today delivered the opinion of that court in the case of the Northern Central Railway Company vs. the State of Maryland, involving the right to exemption by that road from taxation under old charters. The opinion of the Maryland Court of Appeals, which was favorable to the State, was affirmed."

Mr. Justice White, for the court, said that where a tax is claimed to arise from a State law and it is held by the State court that a subsequent statute has repealed the alleged contract and effect is thereby given to a subsequent law, the mere question whether the alleged contract has been repealed by the subsequent law is a State and not a Federal question and the decision of the highest State court will control.

He also held that where the constitution of a State reserves the power to repeal, al-

RELATED TO COL

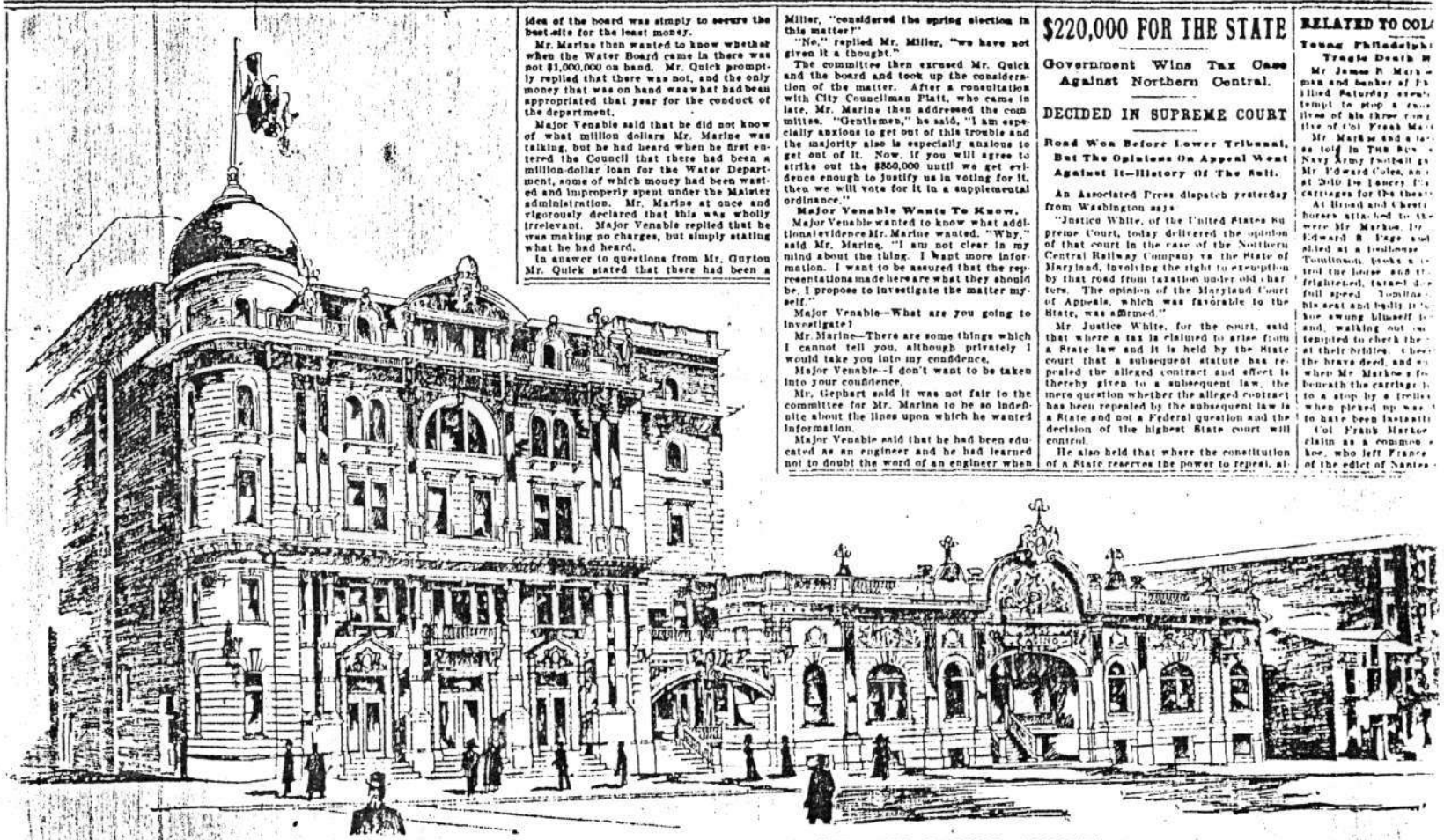
Young Philadelph Tragic Death M

Mr James B Mark man and banker of Ph killed Saturday aftern tempt to stop a run lives of his three com tive of Col Frank Mar

Mr Markoe and a la as told in THE SUN Navy Army football ga Mr Edward Coles, an at 2010 De Lancey Pl carriages for the thea

At Broad and Chest horses attached to the were Mr Markoe, Dr Edward B Page and skied at a bonhouse Tomlinson, broke a control the horse and th frightened, turned d full speed Tomlinson his seat and badly h hoe swung himself in and, walking out on tempted to check the at their bridles. Chee the brave deed, and ex when Mr Markoe s fe beneath the carriage h to a stop by a trolley when picked up was to have been instantl

Col Frank Markoe claim as a commoner kee, who left France of the edict of Nantes



KERNAN'S MARYLAND THEATRE AND CASINO ANNEX

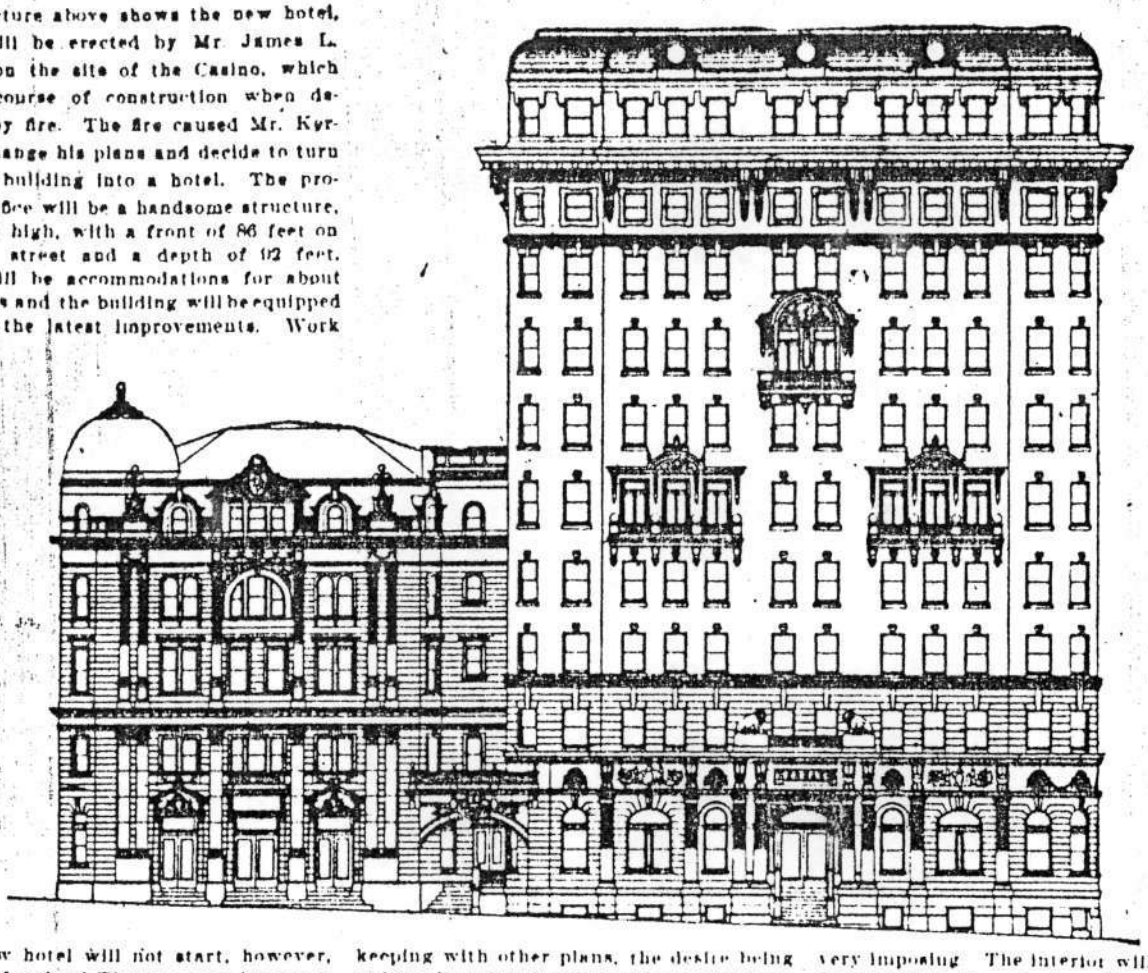
First presentation of architect's drawing for this important improvement and enterprise. It faces on Franklin street.

Original Design for the site showing the casino.

B-2250

MR. JAMES L. KERNAN'S NEW HOTEL AND THEATRE

The picture above shows the new hotel, which will be erected by Mr. James L. Kernan on the site of the Casino, which was in course of construction when destroyed by fire. The fire caused Mr. Kernan to change his plans and decide to turn the new building into a hotel. The proposed edifice will be a handsome structure, 10 stories high, with a front of 86 feet on Franklin street and a depth of 92 feet. There will be accommodations for about 800 guests and the building will be equipped with all the latest improvements. Work



on the new hotel will not start, however, until the Maryland Theatre, now in course of construction, is finished.

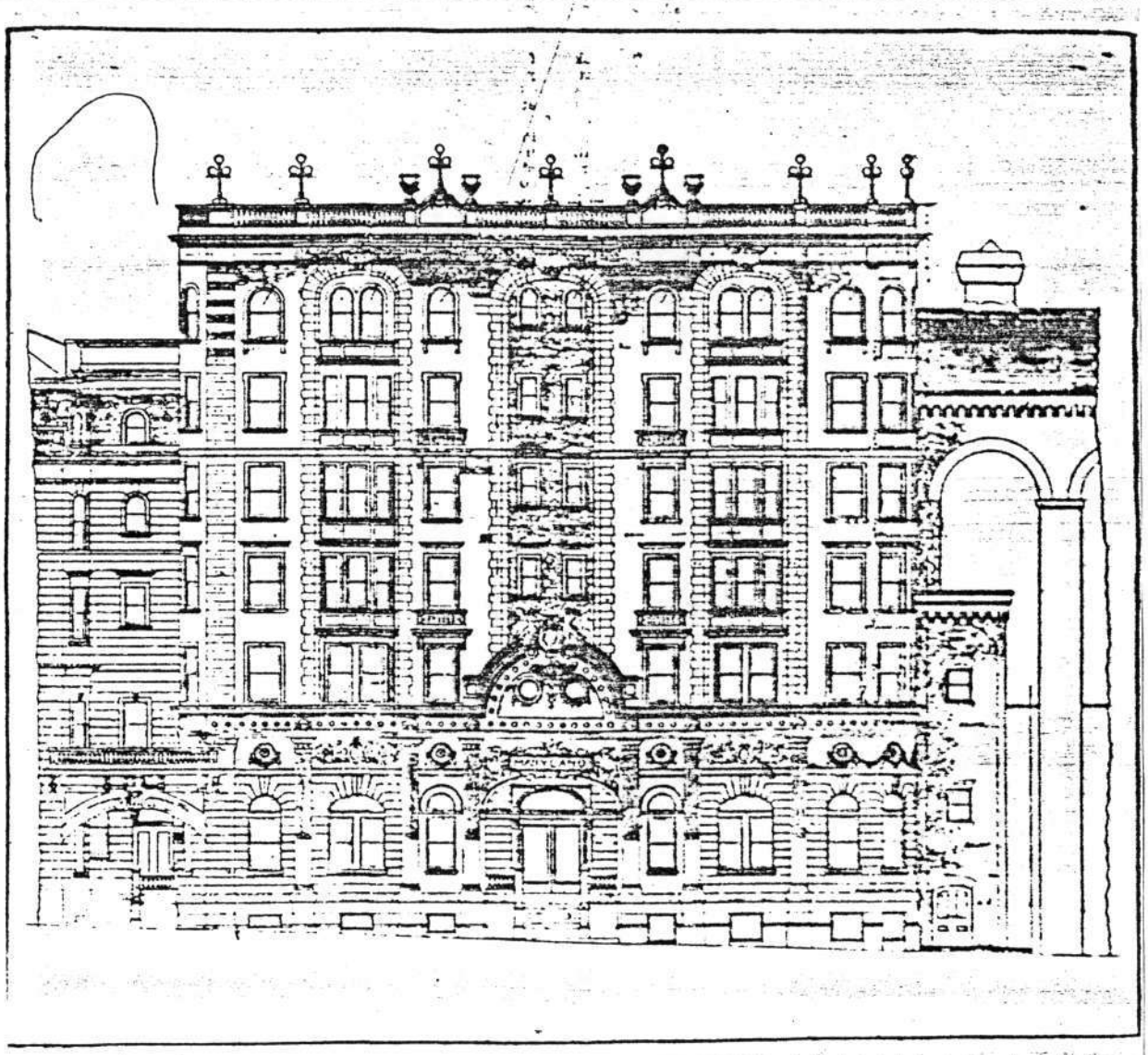
The front will be highly ornate, terra cotta embellishments being freely used, and the general style of the building will be in keeping with other plans, the desire being to have harmony between the several structures in process of construction. The front of the hotel will be a modified French, with heavy cornice and curved roof, while the height of the building alone will make it very imposing. The interior will be in conformity with the exterior. The rooms and suites are to be finely furnished and all the modern conveniences and the latest sanitary appliances are to be installed.

Baltimore Sun August 25, 1903.

Early design scheme showing hotel as a ten story building.

B-2250

THE SUN, BALTIMORE, TUESDAY MORNING, MARCH 8, 1904.



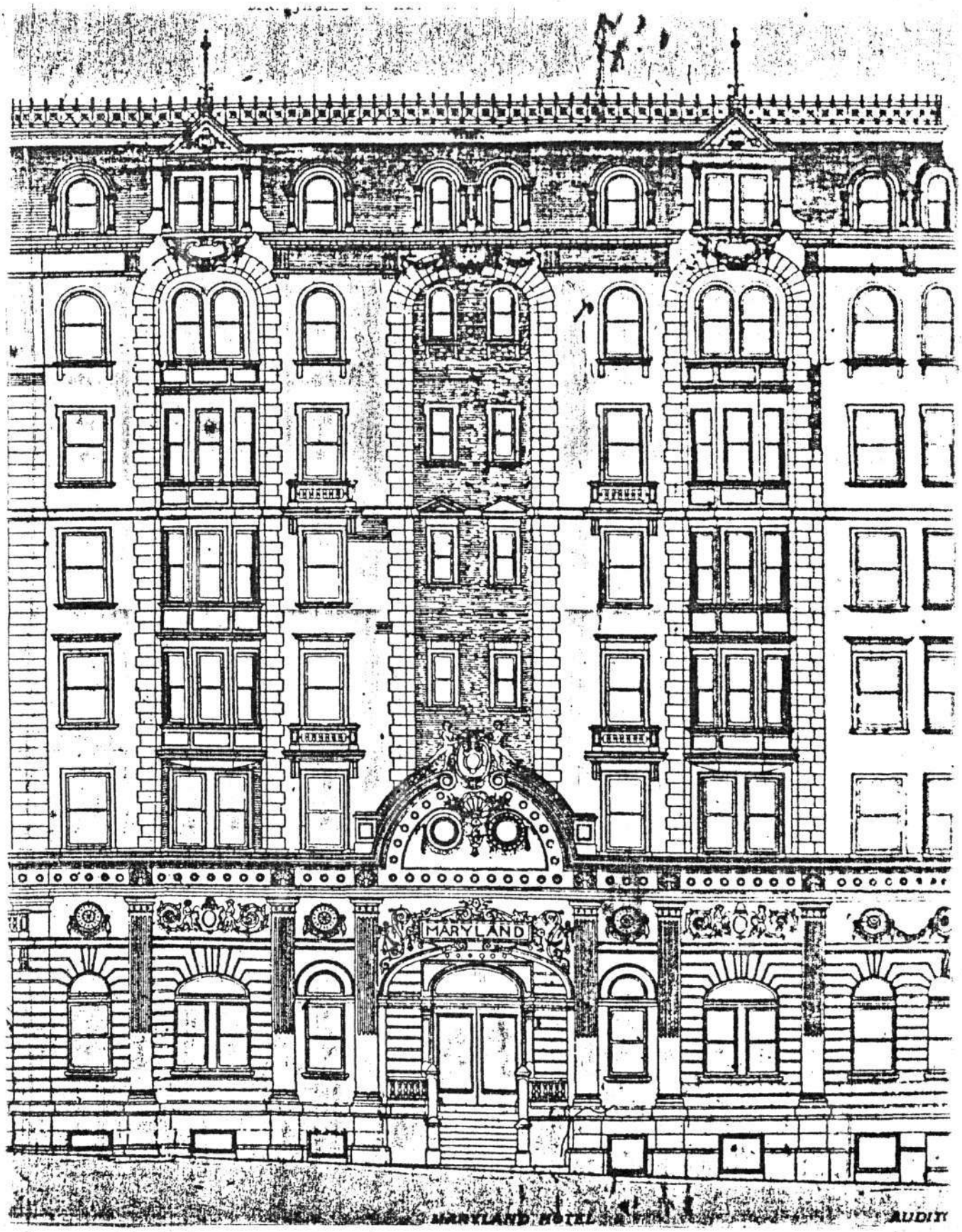
KERNAN'S NEW MARYLAND HOTEL

To be erected on Franklin street, adjoining the new Maryland Theatre on the east

Baltimore Sun March 8, 1904.

Design for hotel without mansard seventh floor level.

B-2250

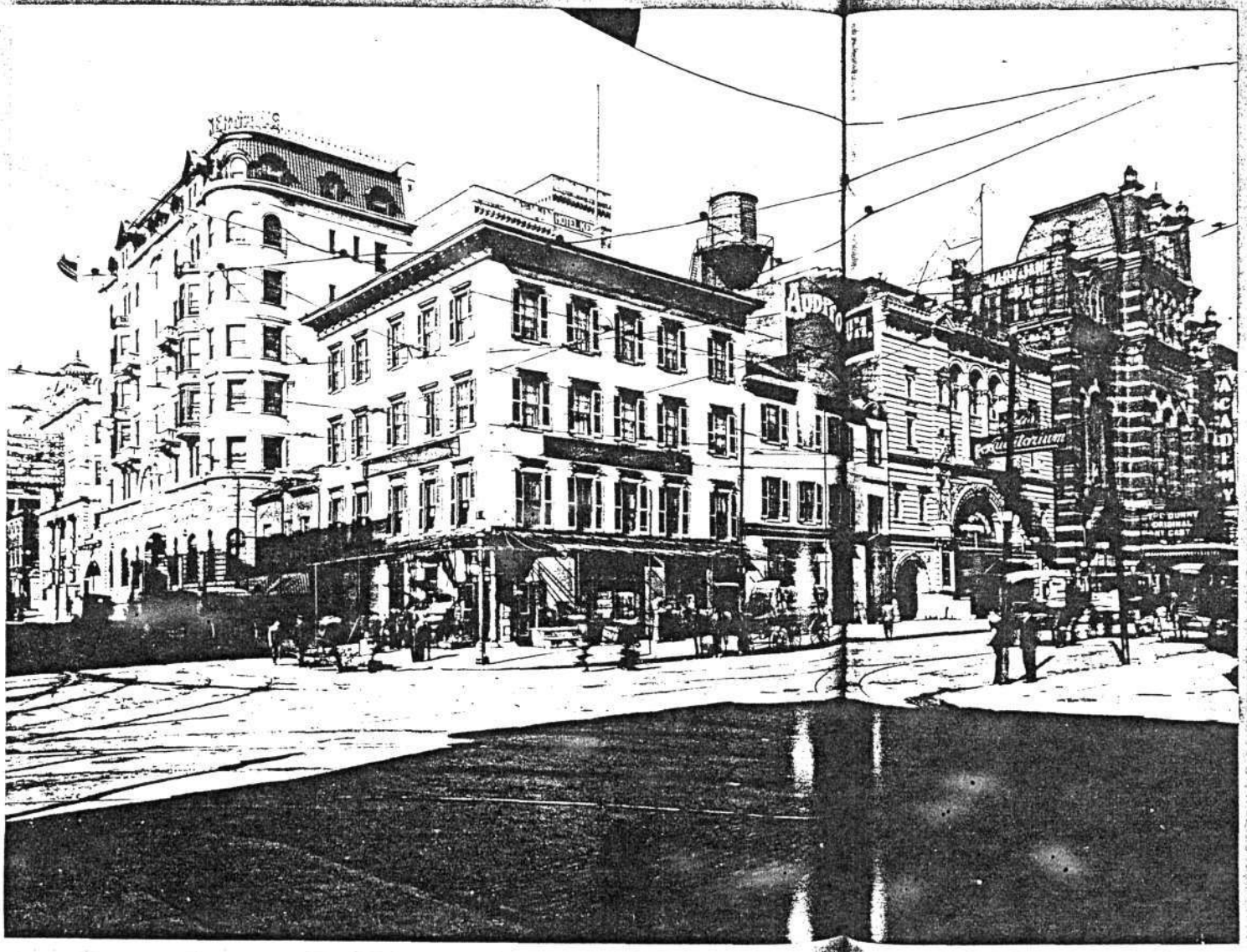


Newspaper illustration unknown source. – B.S. 8/31/04 p. 6

Final Design for Hotel.

B-2250

Between the Acts



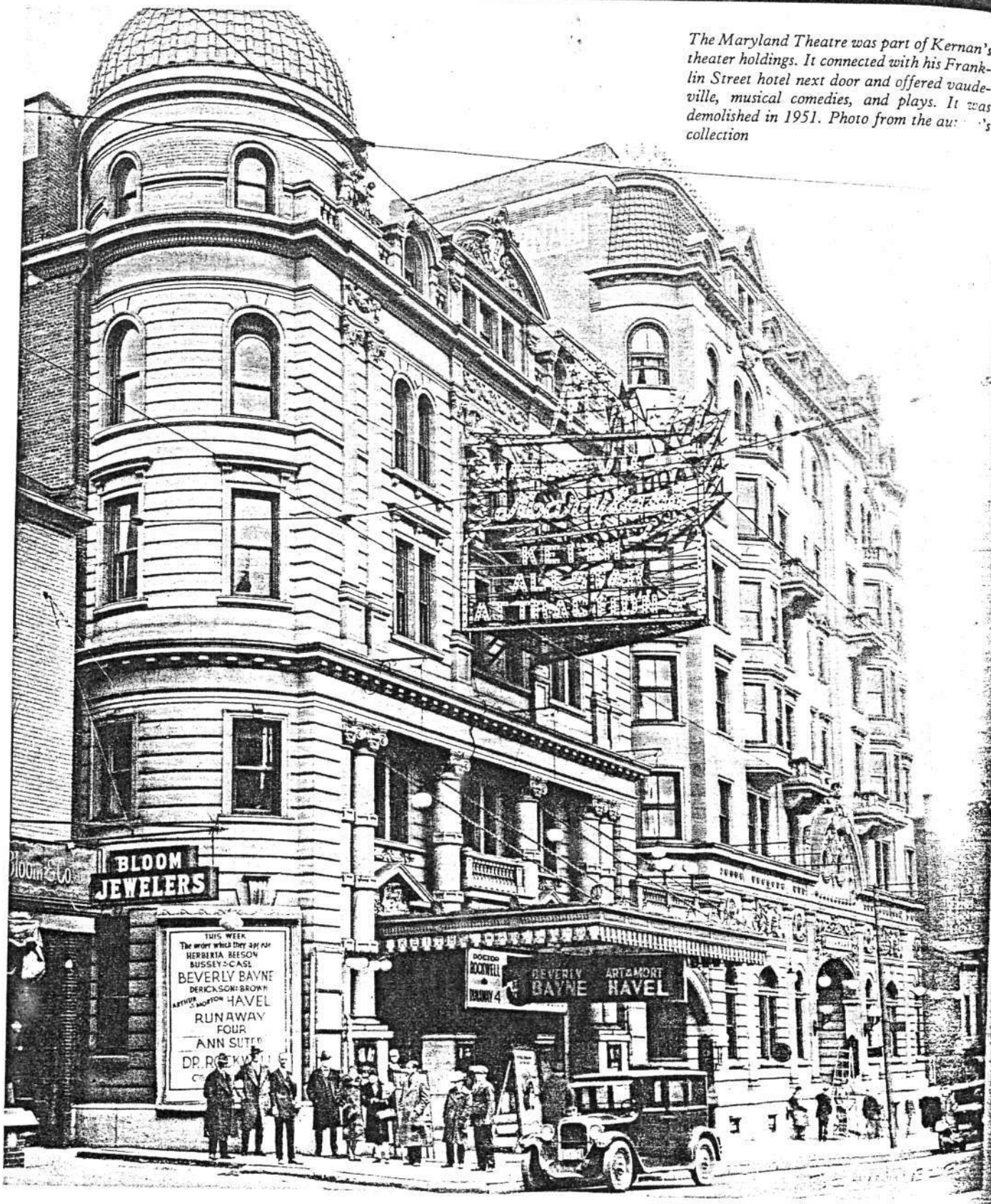
Baltimore may not have been a *great* theater town, but all the greats played there. There was old Ford's Grand Opera House on Fayette Street, and an entire theatrical neighborhood at Howard and Franklin, with the Maryland, the Auditorium (now the Mayfair), and the Academy of Music. Katharine Cornell, Marilyn Miller, Ethel Waters, Al Jolson, Tallulah Bankhead, Gertrude Lawrence, Fred and Adele Astaire, Noel Coward, Eva Le Gallienne, Ethel Barrymore, Mae West, Alfred Lunt, and Lynn Fontanne are part of the city's theatrical history.

There were great movie places downtown and scores of neighborhood second-run houses. Lexington Street had its Century and Valencia; the Stanley dominated the Howard Street film trade. It had 4,000 seats and the obligatory pipe organ. The Hippodrome, which opened in 1914, made a specialty of vaudeville acts. North Avenue had the beautiful Parkway, which was modeled after a London theater.

Neighborhood movie theaters mushroomed too. Waverly had its Boulevard and Waverly, Highlandtown its Patterson and Grand, South Baltimore its Brodie and McHenry, York Road its Senator, and Howard Park its Ambassador. Television subsequently took a heavy toll on the kingdom of MGM, RKO, Warner Brothers, and Paramount.

If Baltimore ever had a theater district, it was the northwest corner of Howard and Franklin. At the far left was the Maryland Theatre, a legitimate vaudeville house, dating from 1903. It was part of James L. Kernan's Triple Million Dollar Enterprise. Other parts of the triumvirate were Kernan's (now Congress) Hotel and the Auditorium Theatre, now the Mayfair. At the far right stood the Academy of Music, which opened January 5, 1875. Maryland Historical Society photo; from the Hughes Collection

Bygone Baltimore, by Jacques Kelly, p.128.



The Maryland Theatre was part of Kernan's theater holdings. It connected with his Franklin Street hotel next door and offered vaudeville, musical comedies, and plays. It was demolished in 1951. Photo from the au[illegible]'s collection

B-2250
Congress Hotel

B-2250

THE SUN, BALTIMORE, TUESDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 2, 1902.

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Road Was Before Lower Tribunal, But The Opinions On Appeal Went Against It—History Of The Suit.

An Associated Press dispatch yesterday from Washington says:

"Justice White, of the United States Supreme Court, today delivered the opinion of that court in the case of the Northern Central Railway Company vs. the State of Maryland, involving the right to exemption by that road from taxation under old charters. The opinion of the Maryland Court of Appeals, which was favorable to the State, was affirmed."

Mr. Justice White, for the court, said that where a tax is claimed to arise from a State law and it is held by the State court that a subsequent statute has repealed the alleged contract and effect is thereby given to a subsequent law, the mere question whether the alleged contract has been repealed by the subsequent law is a State and not a Federal question and the decision of the highest State court will control.

He also held that where the constitution of a State reserves the power to repeal, al

RELATED TO

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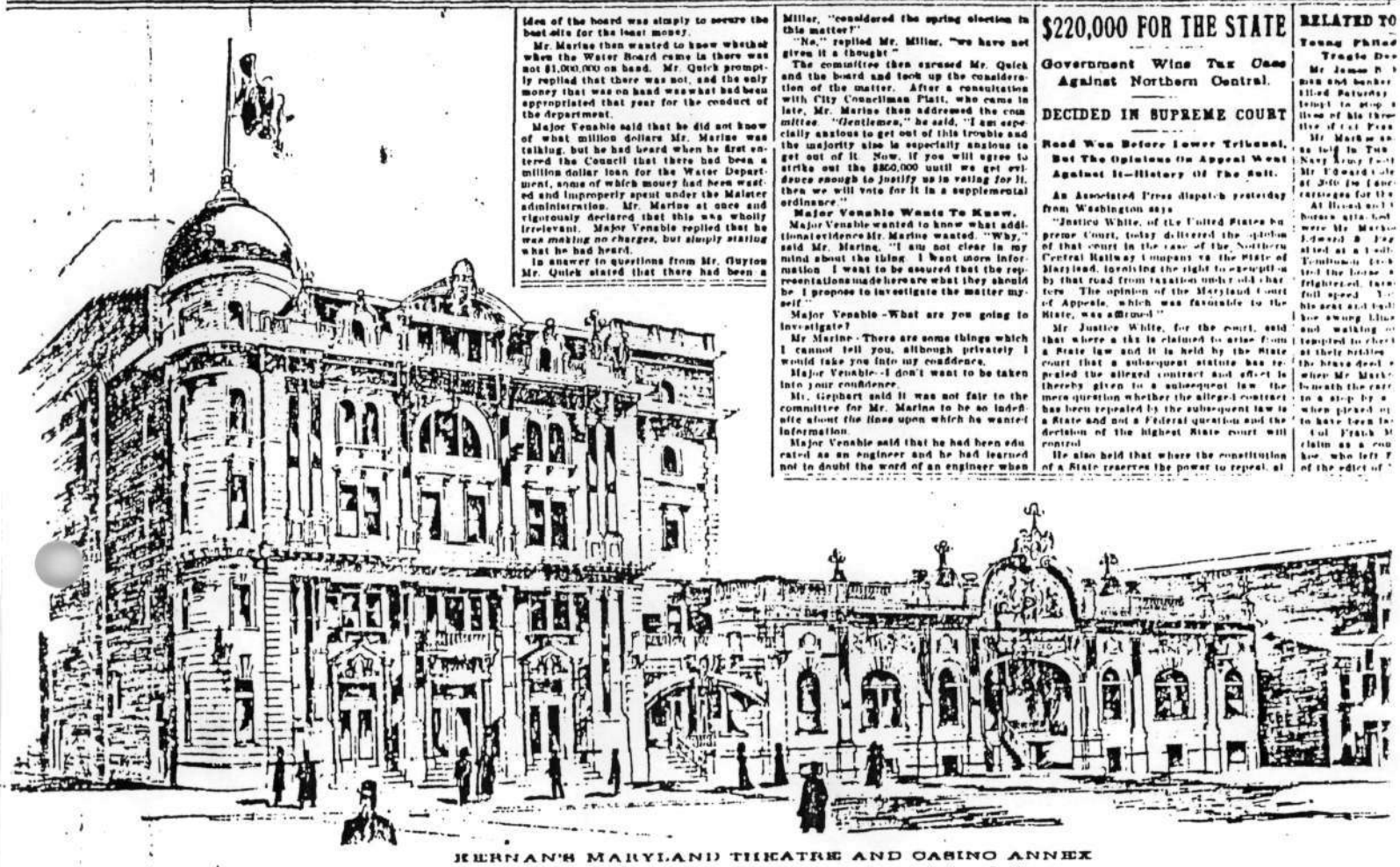


KIERNAN'S MARYLAND THEATRE AND CASINO ANNEX

First presentation of architect's drawing for this important improvement and enterprise. It faces on Franklin street.

Original Design Proposal for the site showing the casino. The Sun, Baltimore, 2 December. 1902.

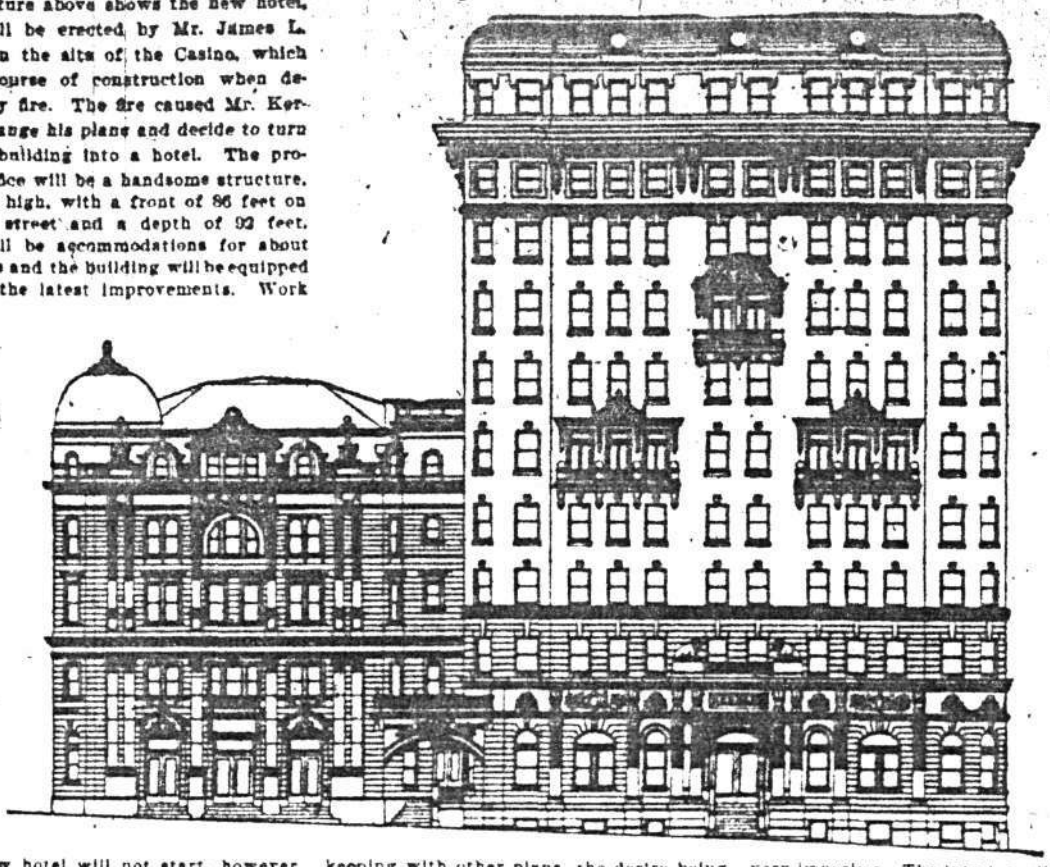
Congress Hotel
Baltimore City

A

B-2250

MR. JAMES L. KERNAN'S NEW HOTEL AND THEATRE

The picture above shows the new hotel, which will be erected by Mr. James L. Kernan on the site of the Casino, which was in course of construction when destroyed by fire. The fire caused Mr. Kernan to change his plans and decide to turn the new building into a hotel. The proposed edifice will be a handsome structure, 10 stories high, with a front of 86 feet on Franklin street and a depth of 92 feet. There will be accommodations for about 800 guests and the building will be equipped with all the latest improvements. Work on the new hotel will not start, however, until the Maryland Theatre, now in course of construction, is finished.



The front will be highly ornate, terra-cotta embellishments being freely used, and the general style of the building will be in keeping with other plans, the desire being to have harmony between the several structures in process of construction. The front of the hotel will be a modified French, with heavy cornice and curved roof, while the height of the building alone will make it very imposing. The interior will be in conformity with the exterior. The rooms and suites are to be finely furnished and all the modern conveniences and the latest sanitary appliances are to be installed.

HE WOULD ISOLATE CASES

Diphtheria And Scarlet Fever Increasing, Says Dr. Bosley.

GIVES STATISTICS AS PROOF

Declares These Two Diseases The Greatest Obstacles In The Way Of Health Department Work.

Health Commissioner Bosley stated yesterday that the most important obstacle with which he has to contend is the increase of scarlet fever and diphtheria. It is the most important, he said, because of the contagious character of the diseases.

"With the population constantly increasing and the crowding of various sections, the city will sooner or later have to face a crisis," argued Dr. Bosley. "There are no diseases more acutely infectious than scarlet fever and diphtheria. For this reason great care and isolation are necessary. These features we aim to teach in our campaigns against the maladies. Legally we can only placard the houses where the diseases are. A child may go out too early or some member of the family may carry the infection, and the natural result is the spread of the diseases.

"What is needed most is an infectious disease hospital, where these cases can be isolated and cared for. Supposing there

call for smaller blasts and the cutting of the iron ore stratum which leads from the water to the street above.

WOULD SILENCE CHARGES

Mr. McCuen Has Drafted Specifications For Lighting Contracts.

City Solicitor Bruce will return to Superintendent of Lamps and Lighting McCuen today the specifications for gas lighting. There are a few minor changes.

In submitting to Mr. Bruce the specifications Mr. McCuen took occasion to send him also a copy of certain conditions which he thought ought to be imposed on all bidders. These conditions must be sworn to before a magistrate and state that the bidder is not in collusion with any other bidder or municipal official.

"I returned the copy of conditions to Mr. McCuen without comment," said Mr. Bruce last night. "My reason for this was that there is no law prescribing their embodiment in the specifications. It is solely a matter for the Board of Awards to determine. As a member of the board I am inclined to favor the conditions. If they can be legally incorporated they certainly would put at rest all doubt of fairness in municipal bidding."

Mr. McCuen stated yesterday that the conditions were drawn after the New York city specifications. He said he was aware that disappointed bidders often hinted at fraud, graft and collusion. These conditions, he thought, would place all the bidders in such a position as to silence such

PREDICT HIGHER COAL PRICES

Shippers And Dealers Advise Against Delay In Ordering Supplies.

"The supply of coal for the winter will be limited, but sufficient to prevent actual want if the people will lay in their supply early and not wait until the cold weather is actually upon them."

"The price will be stiff, probably a trifle higher than formerly, with a tendency to rise when the cold weather sets in and the urgent demand begins."

"No one need hold back about laying in a supply with the idea that prices will be lower as the season advances."

These are the opinions expressed by the coal dealers and shippers of the city when asked as to the outlook for the coming winter. The form of expression varied, and there was a difference of opinion in some cases as to details, but the above quota-

Early Design Proposal for a 10-storey Hotel. The Sun, Baltimore, 25 August, 1903.

Congress Hotel
Baltimore City

cars. In addition the officials declare that the shortage caused by the anthracite strike last year has not been fully made up and will exercise some influence on the supply this season, although not enough so,

GEN. LATROBE

Would Have Mr. L. N. H

HE OPPOSES

Says It Was His To Pay Off Deb As Soon As Poss

Gen. Ferdinand C Mayor of Baltimore lly in accord with th Mr. Lewis N. Hopkin for the sinking fund, in The Sun last Thu reason w the debt that is own not be canceled and for the sinking fund Latrobe. "If the s enough to meet the not owned by the c now in the fund and is certainly no rea should be taxed to p plus in the fund. I proposition and one road company or oth poration would hesit ministration of its should not the city ples dictate?

"There is no doub change can be made islature. There wo reason why that bod an act and there is that it would be leg passed. It is neit sense to compel the pay a tax which is be used for any pur

Speaks

"My plan while M debts at maturity There is no reason stand any longer th city owes $100,000 stock for a sinking the debt, then the on $190,000 until th raised and the debt bad financial policy

"I think the city should be allowed funds in securities city stock. Of c should be conserva a Board of Financ posed of men of the be chosen for the p satisfied the Mayor be depended upon best securities.

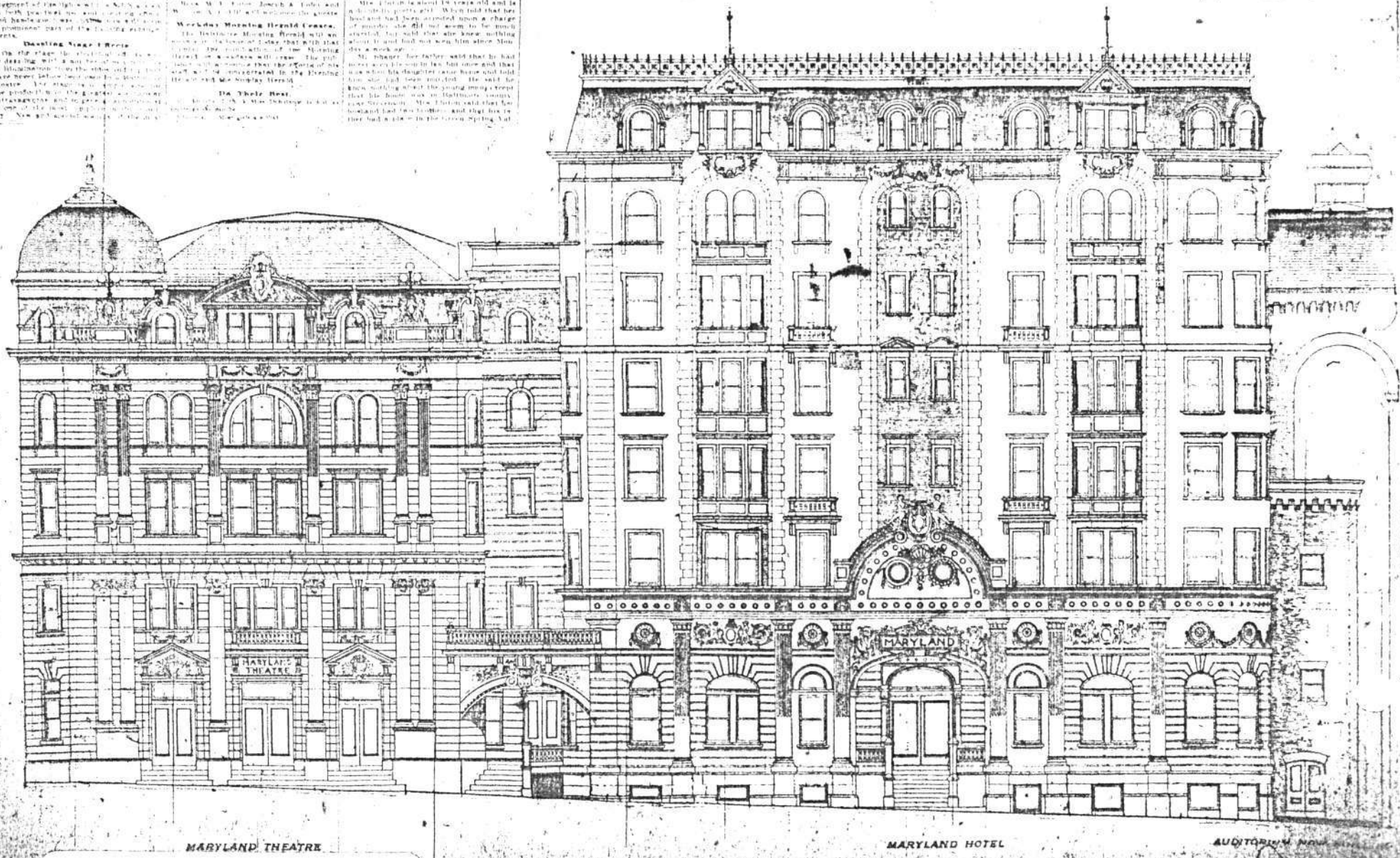
"As suggested by a few days ago, thriving, prosperou ting bonds on the fectly good and w ter rate of interest a short time ago th an amount of 4 pe thought struck me the money in the s be invested in these

ot studie but th the mai imports

B eps sho leve the of tax oller H

City Comptroller very much in favo tax levy, providing ments could also be the belief that Mr

MR. JAMES L. KERNAN'S NEW MILLION-DOLLAR ENTERPRISES

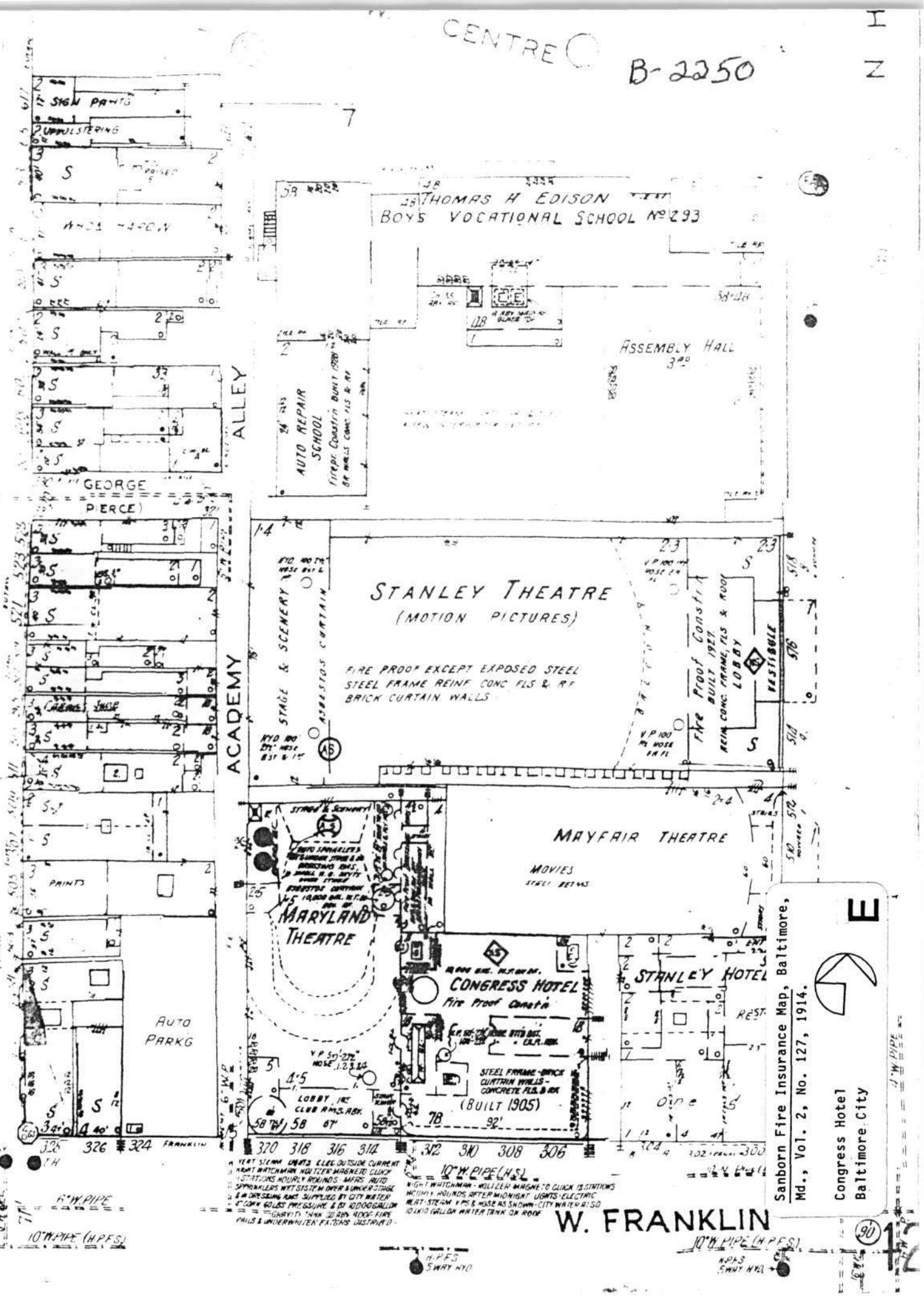


Maryland Theatre and Hotel Kernan.
The Sun, Baltimore, 31 August, 1904.

Congress Hotel
Baltimore City

D

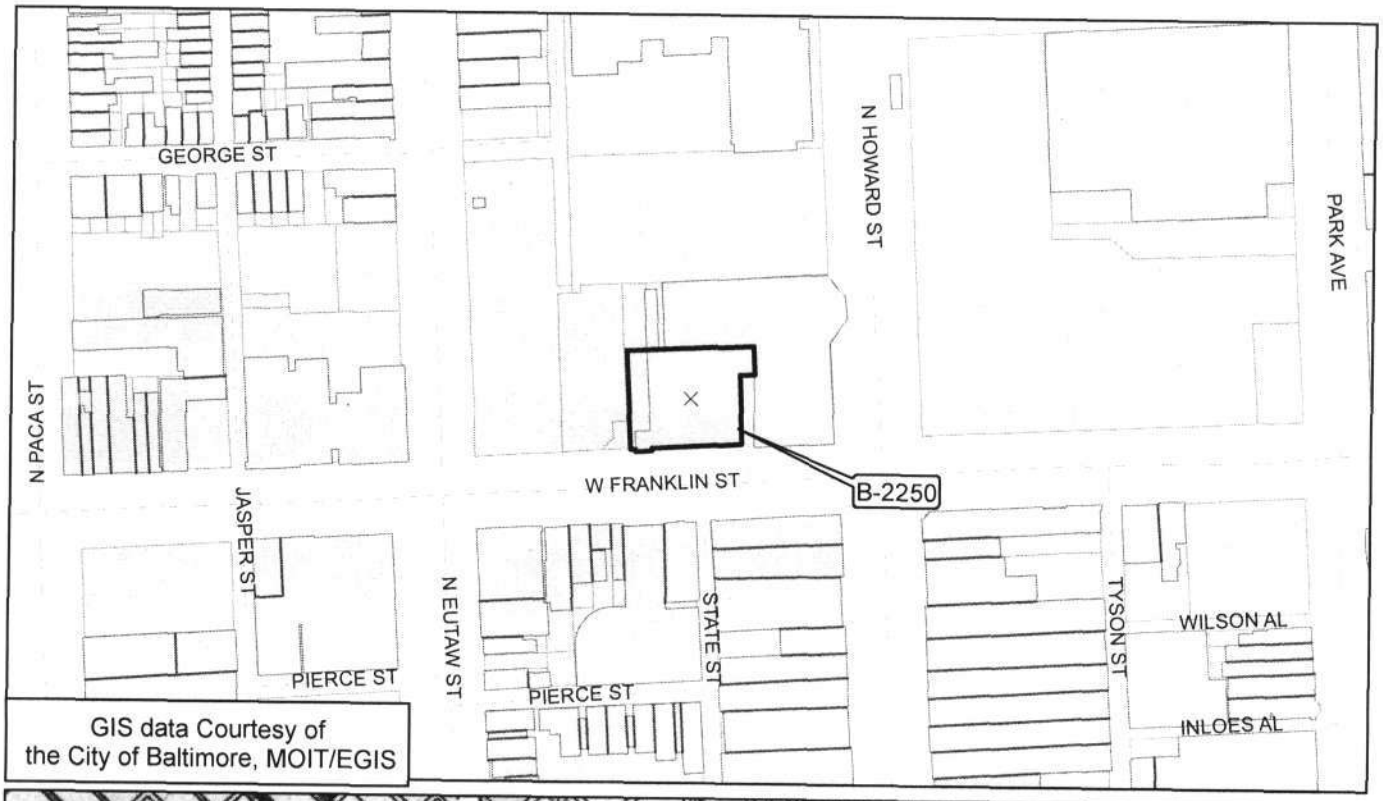
B-2250

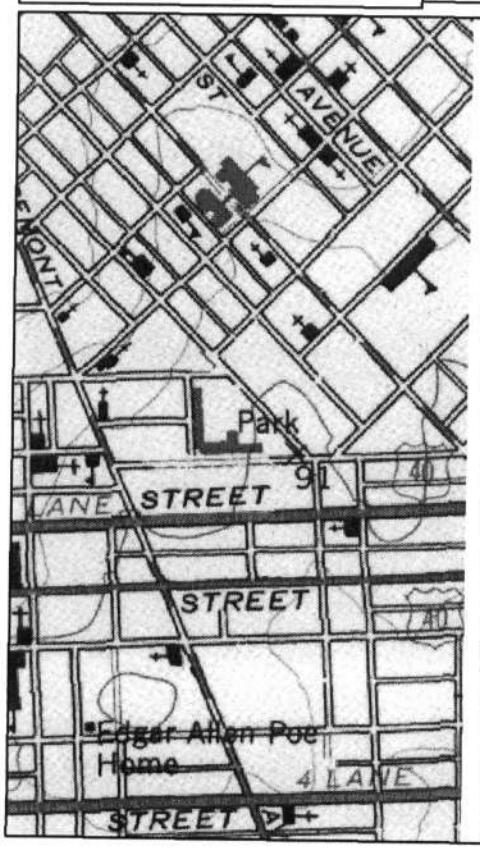


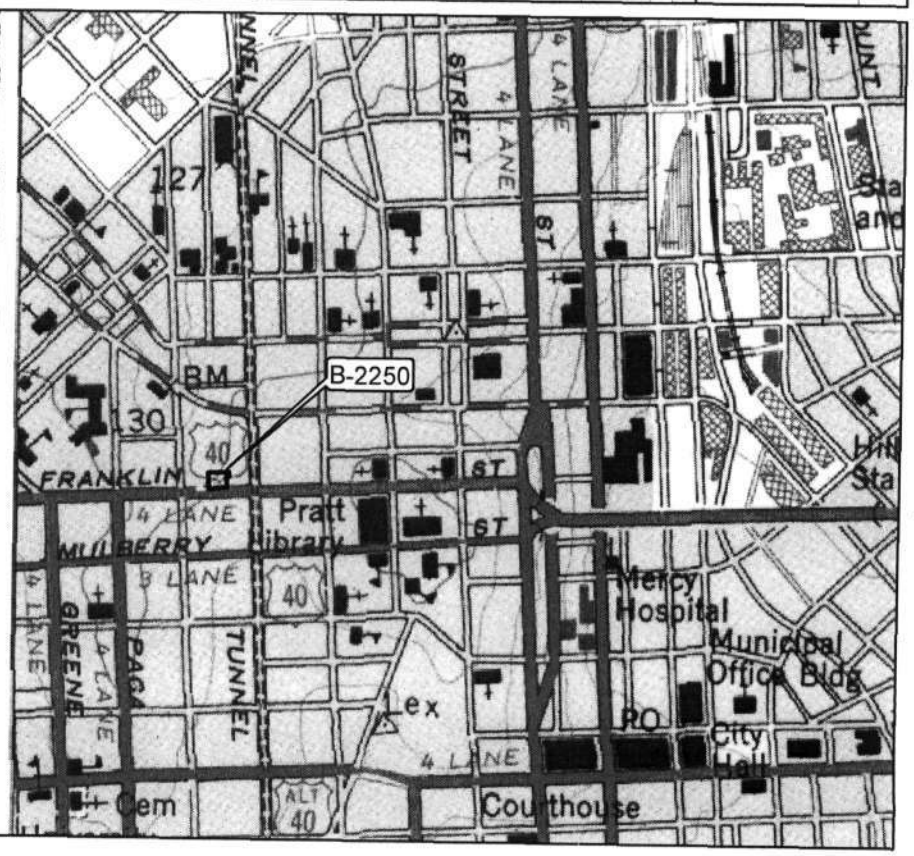
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Baltimore, Md., Vol. 2, No. 127, 1914.

Congress Hotel
Baltimore City

B-2250
Congress Hotel (Hotel Kernan)
306-312 W. Franklin Street
Block 0530, Lot 041
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.







Congress Hotel 1903-1905
306-312 West Franklin Street
Private

The Congress Hotel is significant as one of the finest hotel structures to be built in downtown Baltimore. It is representative of restrained Second Empire styling and has a degree of decoration at the base that is unrivaled among downtown hotel structures. It was part of a three building complex made up of the Hotel Kernan (the original name of the Congress Hotel), Maryland Theatre (demolished), and Auditorium Theatre (now the Mayfair Theatre). The hotel was included in this theatre complex to provide suitable living quarters for both visiting actors and patrons of the theatre. This "Triple Million Dollar Enterprise," as it was called at the time, was the crowning achievement of James L. Kernan, a leading theatrical entrepeneur in Baltimore and a great philanthropist. This hotel also is associated with many important guests, primarily actors, that stayed here while giving performances at Kernan's theatres. Although neglected for many years, the hotel retains much of its original architectural character. The historic rehabilitation of this building will be an important development in the revitalization of the northern edge of the Market Center area in downtown Baltimore.

Survey No. B-2250

Magi No.0422505725

DOE x yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Hotel Kernan

and/or common Congress Hotel

2. Location

street & number 306-312 West Franklin Street ___ not for publication

city, town Baltimore ___ vicinity of congressional district 3rd

state Maryland county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	x occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
x building(s)	x private	___ unoccupied	x commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	x yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	x not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Congress Renaissance, Inc.

street & number 306-312 W. Franklin Street telephone no.:

city, town Baltimore state and zip code Maryland 21201

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber SEB 79

street & number Fayette and Calvert Streets folio 580

city, town Baltimore state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Baltimore Retail District Survey

date 1980 ___ federal ___ state ___ county x local

depository for survey records Commission for Historical and ARchitectural Preservation

city, town Baltimore state Maryland

7. Description

Survey No. B-2250

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
X good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

SUMMARY:

The Congress Hotel is a seven story high, seven bay wide running-bond brick and terra cotta structure built in a modified Second Empire Style located on the north side of West Franklin Street halfway between North Howard and North Eutaw Streets in Central Baltimore, Maryland. The building has a highly decorative base featuring pilasters, arched windows, a broken arch flanked by cherubic figures, a rosetted frieze and a cartouche. The upper floors feature stone balconies, projecting bay windows set within a slightly recessed arch, a curving easternmost corner bay, and ornate window surrounds. A bracketed and dentilled cornice surmounted by a shingled mansard roof with wall dormers and cresting completes the exterior of the building. The hotel orignially contained 150 rooms. It was lavishly decorated with an impressive lobby space featuring Corinthian columns, marble floor and wainscotting and mahogany furnishings. On the first floor was a dining room finished in marble, green, ivory and gold with frescoed ceilings and massive columns. There was also an art gallery and Rathskellar featuring a sixty foot long marble bar. Hotel rooms were furnished with mahogany dressers and wardrobes, brass beds, marble washstands, steam radiators and brass gas and electric fixtures. Although there has been some modernization and deterioration of the building, many of its original interior and exterior features are extant.

General Description:

This large hotel, styled in modified Second Empire fashion is located near the northwest corner of Franklin and Howard Streets. It is seven stories high, seven bays wide and surfaced in running-bond brick and terra cotta.

The ornate ground floor, surfaced in a smooth rusticated terra cotta, rests on a stone foundation punctuated by flat recessed cellar windows in all but the central bay. Separating the bays are six projecting stone posts upon which rise stylized wooden pilasters, their upper half fluted. The pilasters support a rosetted frieze, rising over the central bay to a broken arch, the gap filled by cherubic figurines flanking an emblem. The tympanum of the arch is punctuated by a pair of recessed circular windows capped by a cartouche.

The central ground floor bay is dominated by a double door opening surmounted by a triple transom and panelled fanlight. Double hung arched windows punctuate the first floor walls. Many of the arches are decorated by console keystones. The panel below the frieze is decorated by cartouches, swags and figurines.

(continue, please)

8. Significance

Survey No. B-2250

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	x architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	x theater
x 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates 1903-1905 **Builder/Architect** JohnD. Allen, architect

check: Applicable Criteria: xA __B x C __D
and/or
Applicable Exception: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Level of Significance: __national __state xlocal

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

SUMMARY:

The Congress Hotel is significant as one of the finest hotel structues to be built in downtown Baltimore. It is representative of restrained Second Empire styling and has a degree of decoration at the base that is unrivaled among downtown hotel structures. It was part of a three building complex made up of the Hotel Kernan (the original name of the Congress Hotel), Maryland Theatre (demolished), and Auditorium Theatre (now the Mayfair Theatre). The hotel was included in this theatre complex to provide suitable living quarters for both visiting actors and patrons of the theatre. This "Triple Million Dollar Enterprise," as it was called at the time, was the crowning achievement of James L. Kernan, a leading theatrical entrepeneur in Baltimore and a great philanthropist. This hotel also is associated with many important quests, primarily actors, that stayed here while giving performances at Kernan's theatres. Although neglected for many years, the hotel retains much of its original architectural character. The historic rehabilitation of this building will be an important development in the revitalization of the northern edge of the Market Center area in downtown Baltimore.

History and Support:

In December of 1902, James L. Kernan, an important Baltimore theatrical entrepreneur, revealed his plans for a large theatrical complex in the vicinity of Howard and Franklin Streets. The complex consisted of the Maryland Theatre on Franklin Street, the Auditorium Theatre on Howard Street and a casino between the two theatres. The casino was designed to be a cafe on the first floor, and a palm garden, art gallery and dining room on the second floor. A stained glass dome would top the casino. The architects for the three building group was the John D. Allen Company of Philadelphia. D.W. and G.H. Thomas of Baltimore were the general contactors.

(continue, please)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B-2250

(See attached sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Baltimore East **Quadrangle scale** 1:24000

UTM **References** do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

co-terminous with irregular shaped lot approximately 86 ft. 9 in. x 97 ft. 3 in.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Fred Shoken Historical Preservation Analyst

organization Comm. for Hist. & Arch. Pres. (CHAP) **date** 1985

street & number 606 Tower Suites, 118 N. Howard St. **telephone** (301) 396-4866

city or town Baltimore **state** Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

The upper floors are all of brick, with symmetrically arrayed windows. The central bay is set into a recessed arch that is crowned by a large decorative cartouche with swags. On each floor level, the window surrounds differ. The third floor windows are capped by a bracketed hood. Pediments surmount the fourth floor windows. The fifth floor windows have a simple surround which is slightly larger at the window head. The sixth floor windows are arched with bracketed sills. The bays flanking the arch feature heavy stone balconies with balustrades on the third and fifth floors. These bays are each flanked by a bay set into a recessed arch featuring projecting bay windows on the third, fourth and fifth floors. The projecting bays end in a small balcony for the sixth floor double arched windows surmounted by a cartouche. A brick string course runs above the fourth floor level.

A bracketed and dentilled stone cornice announces the shingled mansard roof. The roof is broken by arched dormers and two large wall dormers with pediments. Cresting spans the top of the mansard completing the highly decorative front facade of the buildling.

Adjoining the building to the west is a large archway that was the connection between the Hotel Kernan and the Maryland Theatre. The "shadow" of the mezzanine and balcony of the Maryland Theatre can be seen on the plain western elevation of the Congress Hotel. The eastern and northern walls of the building dif not face major streets; they are not as highly articulated as the front, Franklin Street facade.

On July 11, 1903, a fire broke out in the casino building which was under construction. The fire virtually destroyed the interior of the building and badly damaged the terra cotta work. After the fire, Kernan decided to construct a hotel building on the site, stating that his original intention was to construct a hotel, and the casino was only a temporary use. The fire caused him to revert to his original idea.

The design for the hotel, which was drawn up by the original architect, went through several revisions. Early illustrations show both a ten story and a six story design (minus the mansard). The final design was roughly based on Second Empire architecture. The highly ornate first floor level of the casino was retained in the design of the hotel. This highly ornamental terra cotta first floor surpassed any base of a hotel building in downtown Baltimore. Larger hotels, such as the Belvedere were built in the same period, but since the base of this building was originally designed as a structure in its own right, it featured a great deal of ornamentation capped with the broken arch and cherubic figures. The design for the building expressed exuberance in its highly ornamental front facade, a complimentary design for Kernan's adjoining theatres. The architect for the building, John D. Allen, was a Philadelphia architect who specialized in theatre design. He designed many theatres in Philadelphia, New York, Pittsburg, and Atlantic City.

The hotel was opened on September 2, 1905 completing Kernan's triple million dollar enterprise. The Hotel Kernan, Maryland Theatre and Auditorium Theatre were the largest theatre complex ever built in Baltimore. The completion of the Kernan, the third jewel of his enterprise, was the crowning accomplishment of his career as a theatre entrepreneur.

James L. Kernan, the mastermind behind this large complex, was born in Baltimore in 1838. He attended Loyola College and Mt. St. Mary's college. In his youth he had been in the dry goods business, worked for the B & O Railroad and was a Confederate soldier in the Civil War. After the Civil War, Kernan became involved in the theatre business. He specialized in vaudeville and burlesque shows. By 1903 he owned or operated the Howard Auditorium, Holliday Street Theatre, Monumental Theatre, Convention Hall, Lyceum Theatre (Washington), Lafayette Square Theatre (Buffalo), Hollywood Park, Front Street Theatre, and Empire Theatre (Washington). Kernan's greatest achievement, however, was his philanthropic enterprise in caring for handicapped children. Eventually he built the James Lawrence Kernan Hospital and Industrial School of Maryland for Crippled Children. The building used for the hospital on the Radnor Park estate is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Kernan died in his room at the Kernan Hotel in 1912. He left most of his estate to the hospital named for him. His theatres and hotel continued operating after his death. Many important actors and actresses performed at the Maryland and Auditorium Theatres. They include: Helen Hayes, Ethel and Lionel Barrymore, Eddie Cantor, Sarah Bernhardt, Al Jolson, Burns and Allen, Bob Hope, Jack Benny and the Marx Brothers. Many of these theatre stars stayed at the Kernan while performing in Baltimore. Henry Fonda married

(continue, please)

Margaret Sullavan when the University Players were in town and his wedding reception took place in the dining room of the Kernan Hotel.

The glory days of the hotel and theatres were shortlived. By the 1930s Kernan's art collection housed in the hotel went for auction. The Auditorium was turned into a movie theatre called the Mayfair. The Maryland Theatre was torn down in the 1950s. The Kernan Hotel was renamed the Congress Hotel and became a second rate hotel. The last claim to fame for the Hotel was the Marble Bar which became a popular music center in the past twenty years.

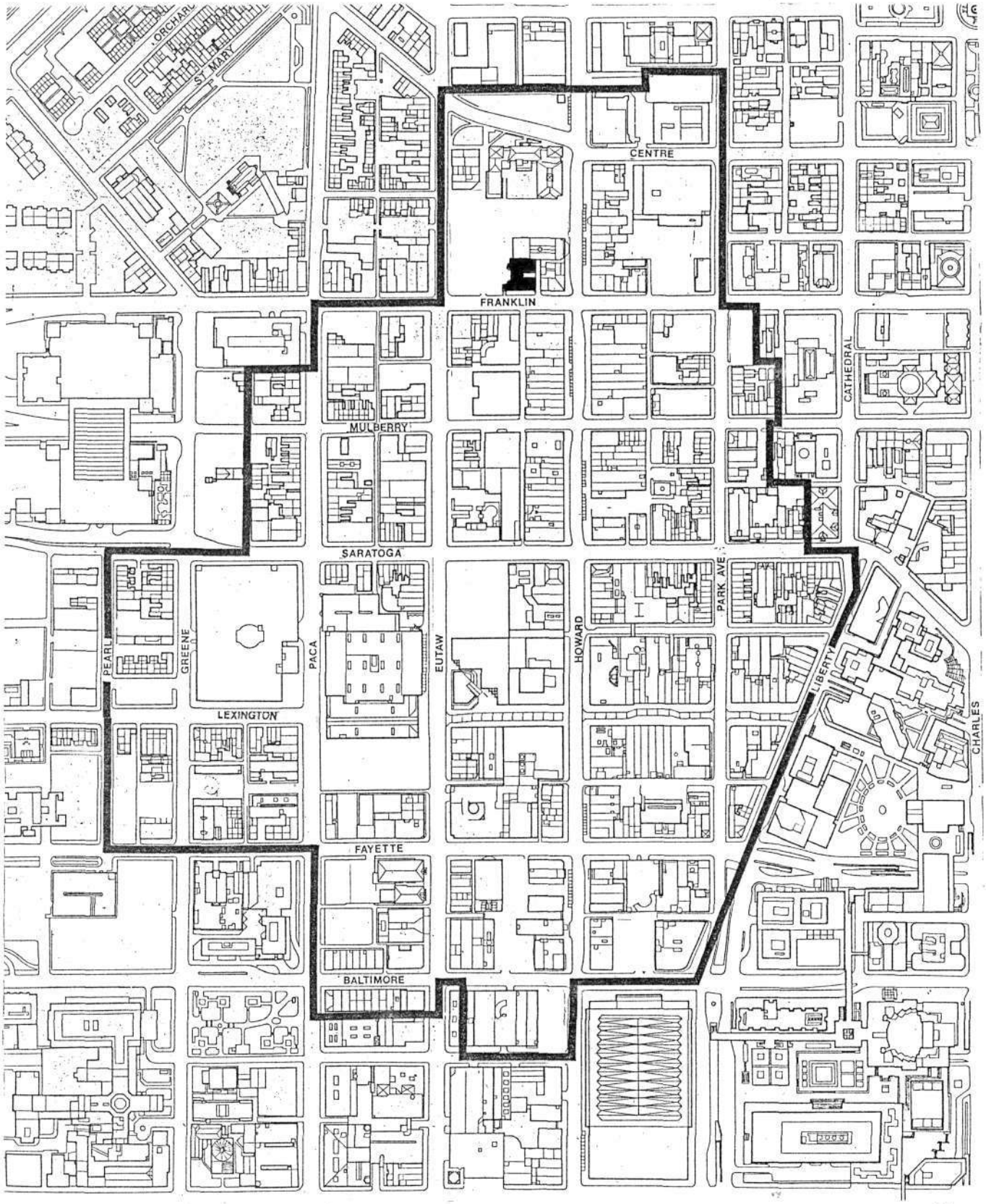
Baltimore Magazine, July 1976. Shirley Cammack, "James Kernan's Enterprise".
Baltimore Sun, Dec. 2, 1902; Mar. 8, 1904; Aug. 31, 1904; Mar. 27-28, 1905; Sept. 3, 1905.
Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, 1700-1930, Sandra L. Tatman & Roger W. Moss. The Athenaeum, Philadelphia, 1985.
Historic Preservation Certification Application, Part I, Fred Shoken, 1985.

ATTACHMENT D B-2250
Historic Photograph

Hotel Kernan
Baltimore, Maryland

Maryland Theater and
Hotel Kernan, pre-1951

Carleton Jones, Lost
Baltimore, 1993



Baltimore Metrocenter Survey
Market Center
Congress Hotel
306-312 West Franklin Street
B-2250

N

Congress Hotel B-2250
306-312 West Franklin Street
Market Center - Metrocenter Survey
Baltimore (City), Maryland
Photo: Janet Davis
March 1986
Neg. loc.: Maryland Historical Trust
West elevation
2/4


INCOME
TAX
PREPARED
BUSINESS
PERSONAL
WALK-IN
OFFICE
HOTE
ROOM
$16.
COMMER
SPAC
AVAILA

Congress Hotel B-2250
306-312 West Franklin Street
Market Center - Metrocenter Survey
Baltimore (City), Maryland
Photo: Janet Davis
March 1986
Neg. loc.: Maryland Historical Trust
Detail, entrance
3/4

Congress Hotel B-2250
306-312 West Franklin Street
Market Center - Metrocenter Survey
Baltimore (City), Maryland
Photo: Janet Davis
March 1986
Neg. loc.: Maryland Historical Trust
Detail, terra cotta panel
4/4

B-2250 530

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST MA61#04225057 25

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Hotel Kernan

AND/OR COMMON: Congress Hotel

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 306-312 W. Franklin Street

CITY, TOWN: Baltimore ___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: Maryland

COUNTY:

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME:

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER:

CITY, TOWN: ___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Records Office Room 601

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER: Baltimore City Courthouse

CITY, TOWN: Baltimore

STATE: Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey

DATE: 1976 COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY X LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Room 900

CITY, TOWN: 26 South Calvert St. Baltimore, Md. 21202

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

B-2250

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	__ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

~~DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE~~
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE →

This large hotel, styled in modified Second Empire fashion is located near the NW corner of Franklin and Howard Streets. It is 7 stories high, 7 bays wide, and surfaced in running-bond brick and stone.

The massive ground floor, surfaced in smooth rusticated stone, rests on a stone foundation punctuated by flat recessed cellar windows in all but the central bay. Separating the bays are six projecting stone posts, upon which rise stylized wooden pilasters, their upper half fluted. The pilasters support a rosetted frieze, rising over the central bay to a broken arch, the gap filled by cherubic figurines flanking an emblem. The tympanum of the arch is punctuated by a pair of recessed moulded circular windows capped by a cartouche.

The central ground floor bay is dominated by a double-door opening under a projecting awning. Above is a triple transom and panelled fanlight. The third and fifth bays contain a double-hung (1/1 lights) window with arched transom. The second and sixth bays contain a double window (each double-hung, 1/1 lights under a single arched transom. The far left bay is similar to the 3rd and 5th, but the arch is keystoned, as in the second and sixth. The far right bay is bowed around its corner, containing three windows similar to those of the first bay. A string course below the frieze, interrupted only by the pilasters and the central bay, demarcates a decorative panel below the frieze punctuated by cartouches and swags.

The upper floors are all of brick, with symmetrically-arrayed windows. The first and seventh bays feature stone-framed rectangular windows (double-hung, 1/1 lights) on the second through fifth floors. Those on the third floor have projecting lintels. The sixth floor windows are arched. As in the case of the ground floor, the seventh bay is bowed with three sets of windows. The second and sixth bays have stone-framed double windows (double-hung, 1/1 lights) on the 2nd floor, a continuous oriel (with double-hung, 1/1 lights windows) on the third through fifth floors, and an arched double window on the sixth floor. Each bay is recessed in an arch. The third and fifth bays are similar to the end bays, with the exception of heavy bracketed stone balconies on the third and fifth floors. The central bay is punctuated with pairs of smaller windows on each floor similar to those of the end bays (the second floor center arch is filled by the ground floor arch. The entire central arch is recessed in an arch. A stone string course spans the structure between the fourth and fifth stories.

A bracketed and dentilled stone cornice announces the shingled Mansard roof. Single arched wall dormers with arched hoods are situated in the first, third, fifth and seventh bays (the latter with a group of three). A pair of these dormers rise from the cornice in the central bay. The second and sixth bays feature double rectangular windows which break the cornice at their bases (cartouches separating them from the sixth story), capped by large, decorative, pedimented window hoods. Decorative grillwork spans the roofline.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This Hotel, originally the Hotel Keran, was built in 1903 by James Keran. Keran was an important developer of this time, also being responsible for the Maryland Theatre (now demolished) directly to the West of the Hotel, and the Auditorium Theatre (now the Mayfair) around the corner on Howard Street. The three were known as the "Triple Million Dollar Enterprise". The Congress itself is a massive structure, designed as an eclectic combination of late 19th century styles. Notable are the ornate Mansard roof with grillwork, the oriel windows and the monumental first floor, with its columns and decorative detail.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

B-2250

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE	Planning Assistants		
ORGANIZATION	COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL &	DATE	1976
STREET & NUMBER	ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION Room 900	TELEPHONE	
CITY OR TOWN	26 South Calvert St. Baltimore, Md. 21202	STATE	

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

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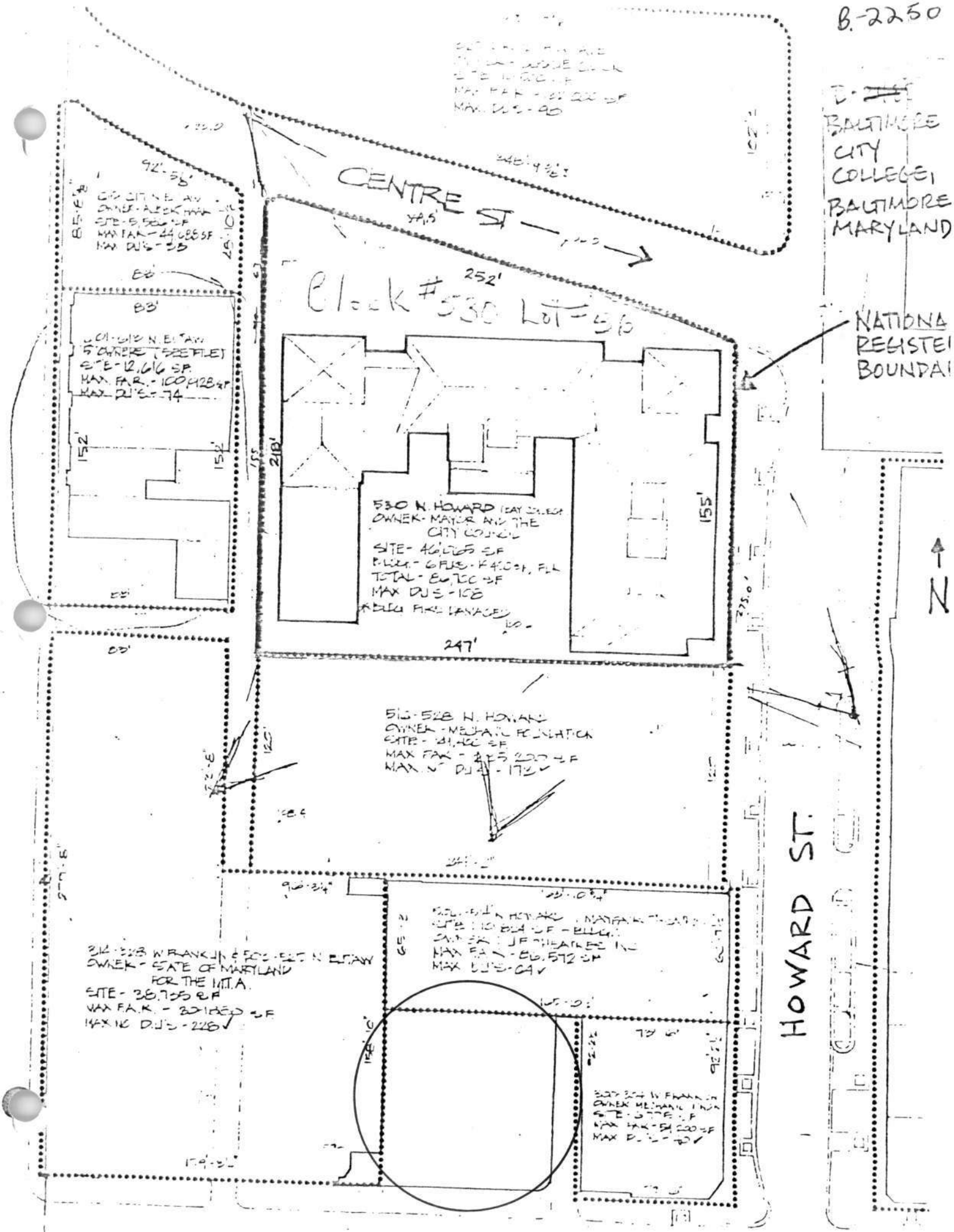
CENTRE ST
Block #530 Lot 56
BALTIMORE CITY COLLEGE, BALTIMORE MARYLAND
NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY
530 N. HOWARD
OWNER - MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL
SITE - 46,065 SF
TOTAL - 86,700 SF
MAX DU'S - 108
247'
252'
218'
155'
152'
83'
92'-5"
HOWARD ST.
N


CONGRESS
HOTEL
AHA
CONGRESS
HOTEL
J.C. SMITH

B-2250

306-312 W. Franklin

Neg #

2/76

B. Pencek

Block

530