

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. B-4386

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic 209 West Saratoga Street
and/or common Rose Shanis Loans (1st floor) Bal Masque Costumes
(2nd floor)

2. Location

street & number 209 W. Saratoga Street not for publication
city, town Baltimore vicinity of _____ congressional district Seventh
state Maryland county Baltimore

3. Classification

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

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

name Stephens Corp.
street & number 313 N. Howard Street telephone no.: _____
city, town Baltimore state and zip code MD 21201

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber _____
street & number 100 N. Calvert Street, Room 610 folio _____
city, town Baltimore state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title _____
date _____ federal state county local
depository for survey records _____
city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Survey No. B-4386

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date of move _____

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

Resource Count: 1

This circa 1875 shed-roofed commercial building faces north on W. Saratoga Street and abuts two partywall buildings. The three-bay, three-story building is part of a large brick commercial block. This section, defined by seams in the brick work and fenestration, has a street frontage of 18' and a depth of 73'. The brick is painted tan.

The first story has been altered circa 1940-1950. It is remodelled into an angled storefront with a recessed entrance. To the east is a large single plate, floor-to-ceiling display window. To the west are two glass doors with transom. The first one opens into the store. The second one leads to the second story. The floor of the recessed vestibule is painted concrete. The recessed wall area is veneered with black vitrolite panels with aluminum across the top. The top of the first story is sided with fluted aluminum siding and includes a small awning/canopy.

The second story contains a central tripartite window. Narrow 1/1 sash sidelights flank a double-width central plate. The lintel has a profile of fillets, quarter round, back band and bead.

The third story has three 4/4 sash windows with wood sills and brick splayed jack arches.

Scrolled brackets with jig-sawn ornaments on the projecting arms support the projecting cornice that has a profile of fillet, ogee, bead, and back band. Below the cornice runs a row of raised molding in a foliated pattern. Below the molding runs a scalloped, jig-sawn back band. This cornice and entablature have one brackets at the west end. The bracket is grooved and dotted with beads. A raised stringcourse runs below the foot of the giant bracket.

The interior of the first story is finished with mock wood panelling and a suspended acoustical tile ceiling. The stair hall interior is embellished by a simple wainscot created by laying a grid of tape over the wall and painting it. The stairs rise straight back.

8. Significance

Survey No. B-4386

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

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D

and/or Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

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

This three-bay, three-story building is a good example of speculative commercial block construction along Saratoga Street during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. It is part of a series of partywall structures with similar cornices and massing, but the units are separated by a brick seam indicating separate stages of construction, and there are separate entrances and separate alterations to each of the row buildings.

The building's style and massing are representative of the late nineteenth-century rowhouses and partywall structures on the block. A few elements of Victorian fashion are still visible on the upper stories. The cornice (which it shares with its row neighbor) is typical of the period. The cornice's modestly overhanging eaves are supported by small modillion brackets and bay-defining scrolled brackets and a scalloped barge board below, a common way of decoratively capping the top of a building.

The presence of a mixed residential-commercial buildings indicates the mixed character of this Baltimore neighborhood in the nineteenth century. Architectural historian Richard Longstreth writes that "Shop-houses prevailed in emerging commercial centers of cities and towns alike through the early decades of the 19th century. Examples can still be seen in areas that have not experienced radical change, even though the shopfronts themselves have almost always been altered. . . the upper section retaining a domestic character."¹ This building, however, shows a new experimental aesthetic and planning device at work. Longstreth continues, "the gradual abandonment of the shop-house as the dominant form of commercial architecture was due to the ever-increasing demands for trade and professional services along with a corresponding increase in land values, all of which fostered the design of buildings used entirely for commercial purposes."²

¹ Longstreth, Buildings of Main Street, p. 24.

² Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street, pp. 24, 29.

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209 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore, MD
Section 8 Significance
8.1

In this case, the commercial solution was to retain the basic shop-house form but create a commercial second-story reading. The tripartite window in the second story, complete with its row of transoms, millwork lintel and corner brackets, is an early Victorian experiment in commercial architecture. The large expanse of framed plate glass and row of transoms invoked the nineteenth-century street-level shopfront and could be used as display windows for the second-story merchant's wares. While the overall shell of the building retains the previous nineteenth-century shop-house form, the tripartite window shows an attempt to make a commercial statement from a residential building type. Before there was a clear definition of a commercial building type there was this early, experimental form. The presence of two entrances indicates that the building was constructed to hold more than one tenant, another sign that the old shop-house idea had passed. The third story, however, could have still been used as dwelling quarters.

The twentieth-century alterations to the facade include the 1940s shopfront. This facade shows how vitrolite could be used in a melding of the 1930s streamlined Art Deco style with the 1950s Moderne; the glossy black panels and fluted aluminum bands create a planar, geometric simplicity that is definitely unVictorian. The angled facade running towards a recessed entrance was popular in the post-war period: the recessed entrance permitted additional display areas along the vestibule wall and the slant of the facade wall "drew" the sidewalk traffic in.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATAHISTORIC CONTEXT:

Geographic Organization:
Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period:

Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Modern Period, 1930-present, alterations

Historic Period Themes:
Architecture
Economics

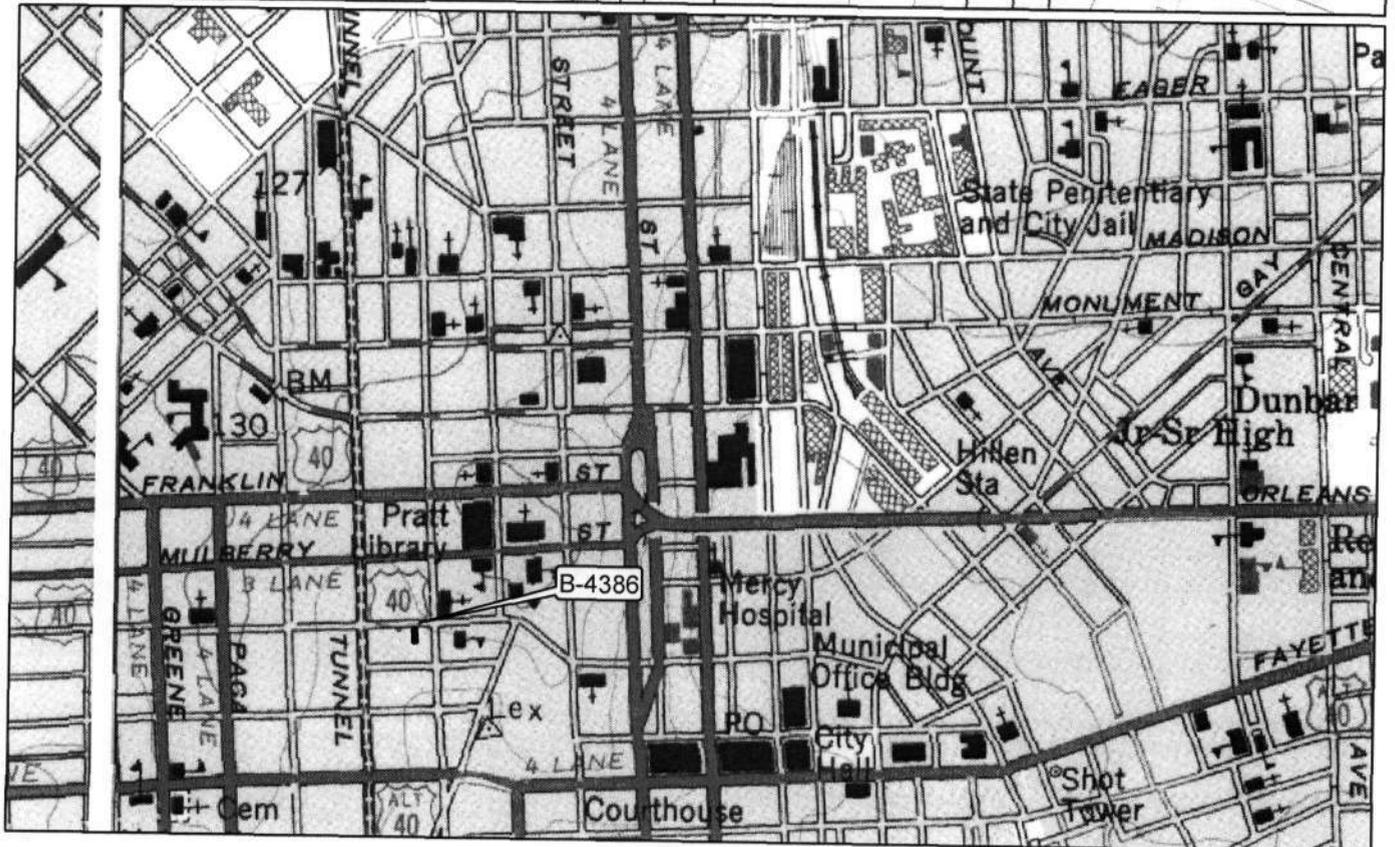
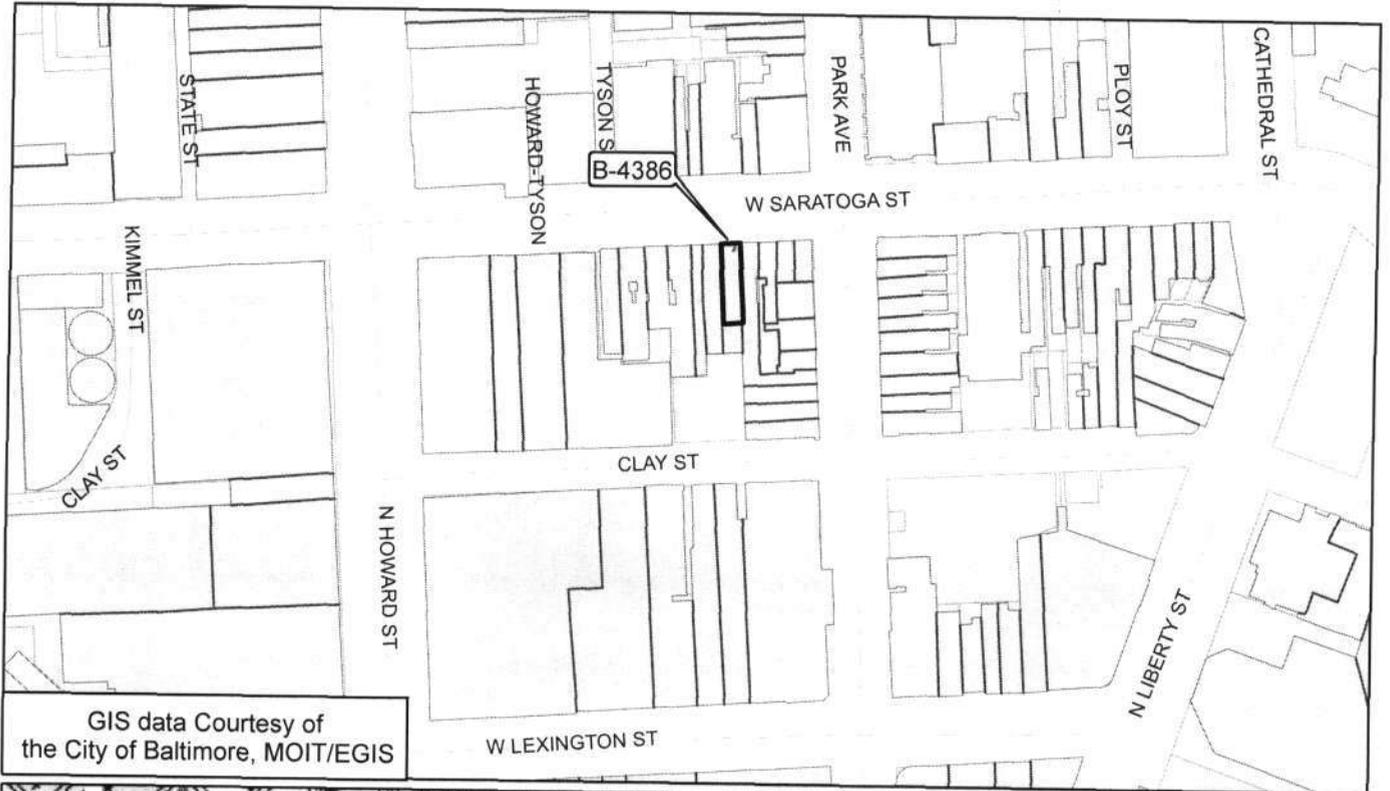
Resource Type:
Building

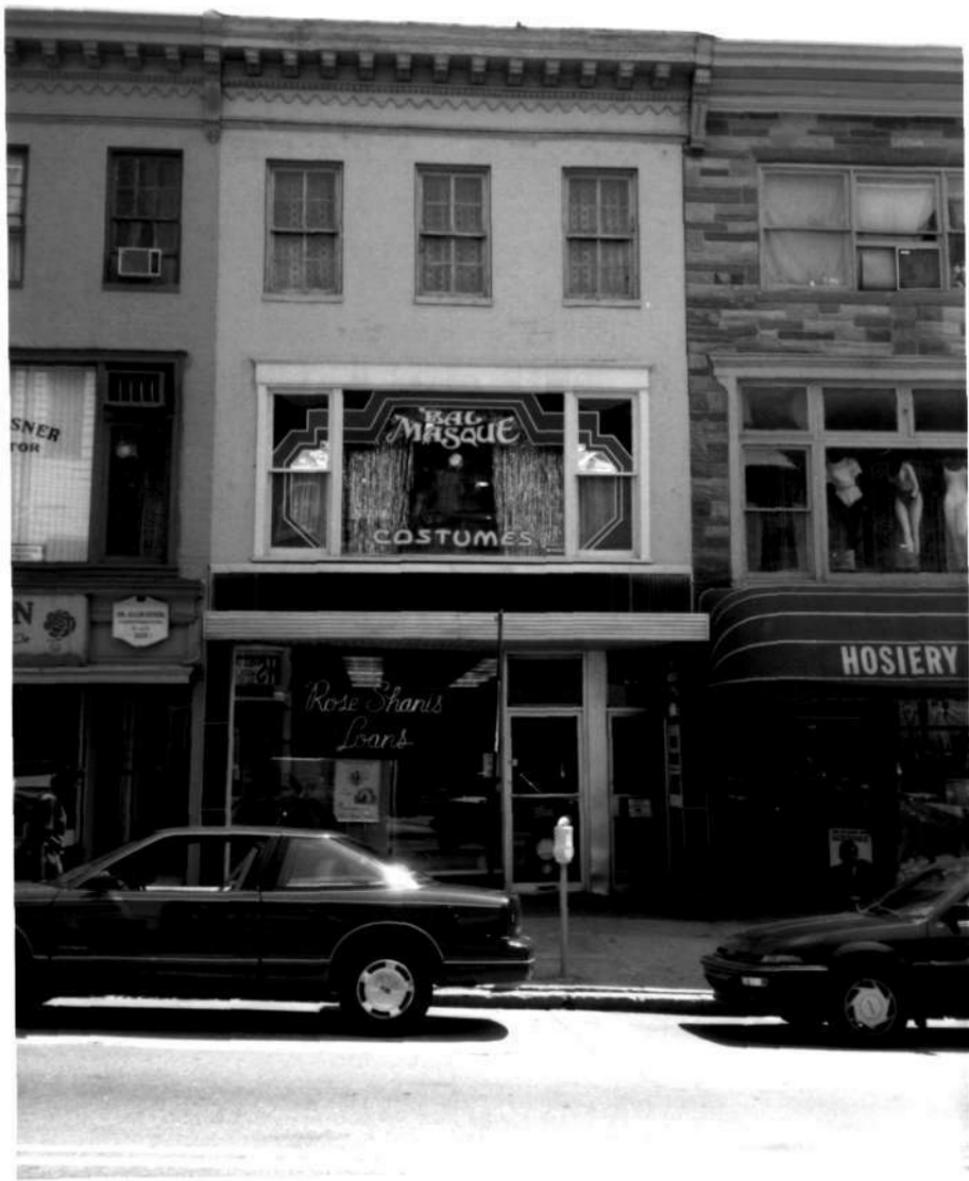
Historic Environment:
Urban

Historic Function and Use:
C
o
mmercial

Known Design Source:
None

B-4386
Rose Shanis Loans/Bal Masque Costumes
209 W. Saratoga Street
Block 0597, Lot 018
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.





B-4386

209 W. Saratoga St

Baltimore MD

Diane Shaw

8/91

Maryland SHPO

Facade, north elevation

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