

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4781

1. Name

Historic 604 - 616 South Chapel Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 647 - 616 South Chapel Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21231 county

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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name
street & number telephone
city, town state & zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title
date federal state county local
depository for survey records
city, town state & zip code

7. Description

Condition		Check One	Check One
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move: _____

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

The group of seven two-bay-wide houses on the west side of the 600 block of S. Chapel St. show three different architectural styles.

606-608 and 612-614 are pairs of two-and-a-half story brick houses with gable roofs and dormer windows typical of the Federal-style houses built in Baltimore in the 1820s. Both pairs are also quite typical of the ways in which the older rowhouses in Baltimore have been "improved" over the years, reflecting the different tastes of different owners. All four houses were probably covered with formstone in the 1950s or 1960s but one of each pair has had its formstone removed.

The houses are two-and-a-half stories in height, two rooms deep, with a one-story brick rear kitchen addition somewhat narrower than the house. Because early house lots in Baltimore were laid out back to back, without rear service alleys, the only entrance to the backyard is through the gated passageway at the side of each house. The houses are constructed in common bond, and would have originally been painted. The pitched gable roofs are covered with modern asphalt shingles overtop the original cedar shakes. A simple corbelled brick cornice runs across the façade. A double chimney located at the peak of the gable roof, along the outside wall of each unit, serves both the front and rear rooms. Each house also has a chimney at the rear of the kitchen addition.

The door and window openings are surmounted by segmentally-arched brick lintels, with plain tympanums. The sills are brick. The window openings are filled with replacement 1/1 sash. Each doorway has a single-light transom, two of which—stained glass bearing the house number—are later upgrades. A variety of replacement door styles have been used. The houses sit on low basements, the entrances being reached by one brick step.

604 and 610 S. Chapel St. are individual two-story-and-attic brick houses, generally typical of a popular type of Baltimore rowhouse built in the late 1840s and 1850s to serve the city's growing working class population. The lower-pitched gable roof allowed for a more spacious upper story, which now could be lit by small rectangular windows at both the front and rear of the house, instead of the earlier dormer windows. Despite its practical nature, this new feature had its roots in a stylistic change in Baltimore's fashionable housing, the small "attic" windows being an important part of the façade design of much larger town mansions being built in the new Greek Revival style.

Continuation sheet

The houses are two-and-a-half stories in height, two rooms deep, with a one-story brick rear kitchen addition somewhat narrower than the house. Because early house lots in Baltimore were laid out back to back, without rear service alleys, the only entrance to the backyard is through the narrow passageway located at the side of each house. The houses are constructed in running bond, but 604 has been covered with formstone. A simple corbelled brick cornice runs across the façade. The roofs are covered with modern asphalt shingles overtop the original cedar shakes. A hooded chimney stack is located towards the rear of the houses. Each house also has a chimney at the rear of the kitchen addition.

The door and window openings are surmounted by segmentally-arched brick lintels, with plain tympanums. The sills are brick. The window openings are filled with replacement 1/1 sash. A modern six-panel door with stained glass transom at 610 dates from the house's restoration in recent years. The houses sit on low basements, with each entrance being reached by a single brick or concrete step.

Both the two-and-a-half story and the two-story-and-attic houses are two rooms deep, with the front room being entered directly from the front door. The front and back rooms of the first floor are separated by a wide opening, with the tightly winding, narrow stairs set in the rear room, in the space between the partition wall and the fireplace. The one-story rear addition served as the kitchen, with its own cooking fireplace. There are two bedrooms on the second floor of the main part of the house, each with a fireplace, and a third room in the dormer story.

616 S. Chapel St. is a later addition to the block, possibly replacing an earlier frame house on the site. It is two-bays wide, two-stories high with an Italianate-style wooden cornice consisting of a crown molding supported by three short brackets which frame a frieze panel decorated with jig-sawn butterfly shapes and a lower band of cut-work molding. The brick façade is laid in running bond and was originally painted. Door and window openings have segmentally arched lintels composed of a double row of headers, with plain tympanums and wood sills. The 1/1 sash are later replacements. The doorway has a single-light transom and a modern replacement door. The house sits on a low basement, lit by a narrow window, and reached by one marble step.

8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify	

Specific dates c. 1820; 1845 - 1855

Builder/Architect

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

606 – 608 and 612 – 614 S. Chapel St. are especially significant as being representative of an early form of two-and-a-half story house, most often built in pairs, in the oldest sections of Baltimore in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. By the later 1820s and the 1830s, builders more often constructed longer rows of houses as speculative ventures, but at the beginning of the century pairs, involving less risk and less initial capital, were the rule. The houses do not differ markedly from the two-and-a-half story houses built on nearby main streets—they are simply somewhat narrower and smaller versions priced to serve less affluent residents of the old walking city.

These particular houses were built at a time when Fells Point was already an important ship building center for the growing town of Baltimore. Early occupants included people involved in the maritime trades, small-scale craftsmen, and laborers who made their homes in the smaller scale and more affordable housing located on the small “alley” streets of Fells Point. Until about 1850 Chapel Street was known as Star Alley and its occupants were racially mixed.

604 and 610 S. Chapel St. represent a later style of house, built in the late 1840s and 1850s as housing for the newly arrived immigrant workers, most of whom were German, employed at the small factories springing up in the area. Their style is important as showing the ways in which high-style designs, in this case the Greek Revival, were adapted for working class, vernacular housing.

The houses are especially significant as being located in the oldest part of Fells Point, only a few blocks from the water, and represent an integral part of the history of this National Register district. Slated for demolition in the 1960s as part of the planned East-West highway connection existing segments of I-95 to the north and south of the city, these houses were saved by local preservation activists who created the Fells Point National Register District in 1969.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

date

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

telephone

city, town Baltimore

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotate 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 rights.

Return to:

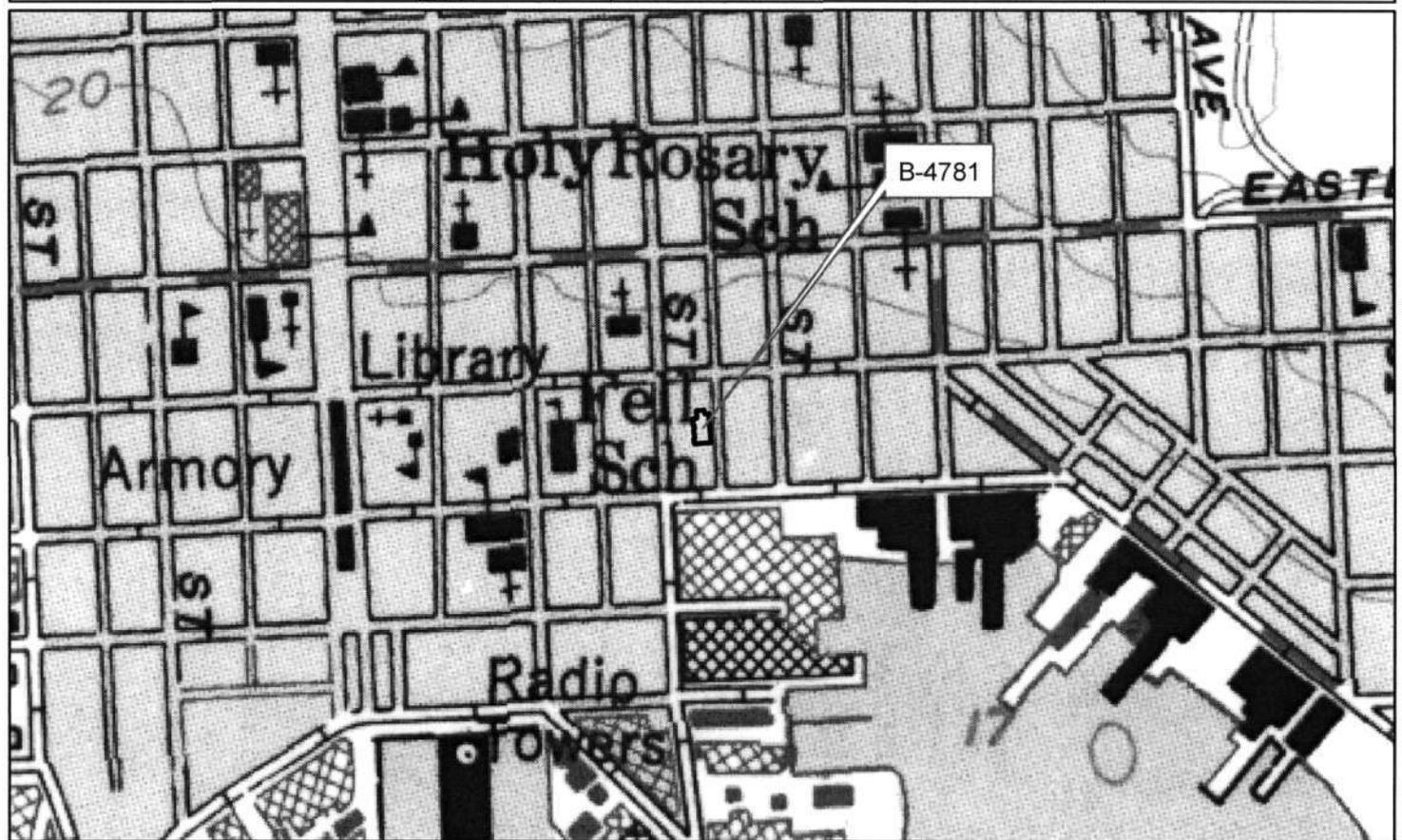
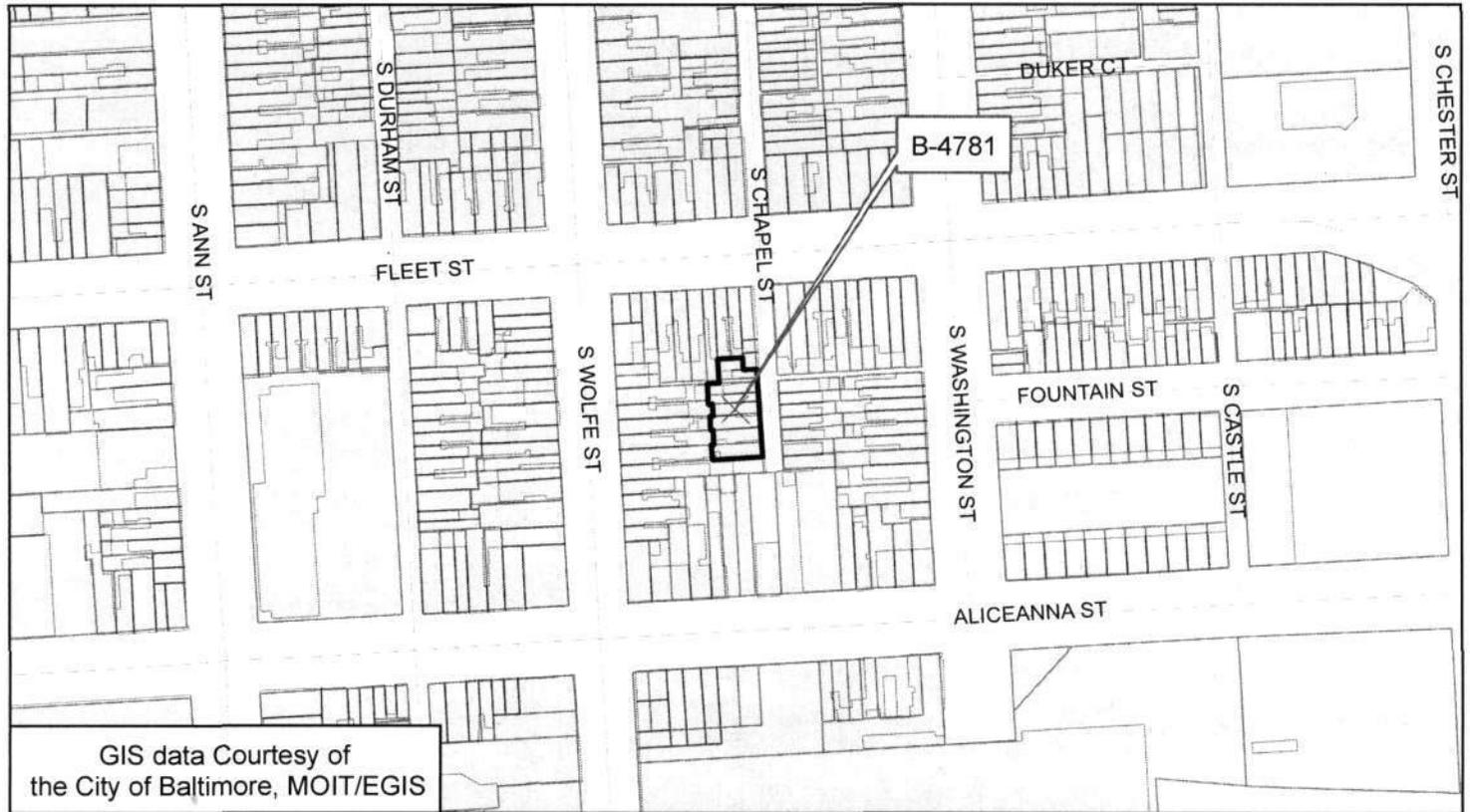
DHCP/DHCD

Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023

B-4781
604-616 S. Chapel Street
Block 1830 Lots 059-065
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.





604 S Chapel

FPS

B-4781

604-616 S. Chapel St.

BALTO MD

C. Belgrave

6/97

1/5

15

15

15



606-617 S Chapel
FPG

B. 4781

604-616 S Chapel St

ZACTO. M. 18

C. Kelfone

6/9-1

2/5

2005-11-11



610 S Chapel

FPS

B-4781

604-616 S. Chapel St.

BA 679, MD 3

C. Selfcare

6/97

3/5

B

3

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612-614 S Chapel

FP8

B-4781

604-616 S Chapel St.

6120-411 13

2. Signature

6/97

4/5

13
14
15



