Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-5039

1. Name

Historic: 624 – 660 Dover Street
and / common:

2. Location

street & number: 624 – 660 Dover Street
city, town: Baltimore
state & zip code: Maryland 21205 county:

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
__ district	__ public	X occupied	__ agriculture	__ museum
X building(s)	X private	__ unoccupied	__ commercial	__ park
__ structure	__ both	__ work in progress	__ educational	X private residence
__ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	__entertainment	__ religious
__ object	__ in process	X yes: restricted	__ government	__ scientific
	__ being considered	__ yes: unrestricted	__ industrial	__ transportation
	__ not applicable	__ no	__ military	__ 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
__ excellent	__ deteriorated	__ unaltered	X original site
x good	__ ruins	X altered	__ moved:
__ fair	__ unexposed		date of move: _____

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

This row of twenty two-bay-wide, two-story brick houses with low-pitched gable roofs are typical of the small alley houses built in Baltimore in the 1850s and 1860s, often along especially narrow secondary alley streets running perpendicularly off the main "alley" street. Many of the houses retain their original brick facades, which were always painted; others have been covered with formstone.

The houses are two stories in height, 11' and 11'4" wide (12' for the two end houses) and occupy lots 47' deep. Each two-room-deep house has the kitchen located in the tall basement. The pitch of the gable roof is especially low, a characteristic of this particular type of two-story, gable-roofed alley house. The houses are constructed in common bond, and were originally painted. Each house has a simple brick corbelled cornice. Chimneys are located at the rear corner of the house.

Door and window openings have flat wood lintels and sills. Most houses have been "restored" with 6/6 replacement sash and most also have modern six-panel doors set beneath the single-light doorway transoms. Others have 1/1 replacement sash and a variety of replacement door types. The houses sit on high basements, lit by a tall sash. The entrances are reached by four to six brick, concrete or wooden steps, set parallel to the facade.

The houses are basically 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.

3. Significance

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

Specific dates c. 1850 - 1860 **Builder/Architect**

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

These houses are significant as representing a relatively plain type of small street house that was constructed to provide inexpensive housing for the working class residents of the area, most of whom were German or Irish at the time of construction. The houses were built according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the middle and late nineteenth century. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and north-east and southwest of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell $1,000 - $1,500; small street houses for $600 - $800. Occasionally, the builder retained ownership of his small street houses to provide income for himself as rental properties. In this way people of varying means could afford to live in the same block. If they couldn't afford the purchase price of the small street houses, then they *could* afford the $8 or so a month it would cost to rent one, while they saved to be able to buy their own home later.

The houses are especially significant because of their proximity to the Baltimore & Ohio railroad yards, the nation's first railroad, and its related railroad-oriented industries, like car and rail shops. Housing of this type was built to provide inexpensive housing for the wide variety of both Irish and German immigrants who came to southwest Baltimore to work in railroad-related industries in the decade before the Civil War.

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

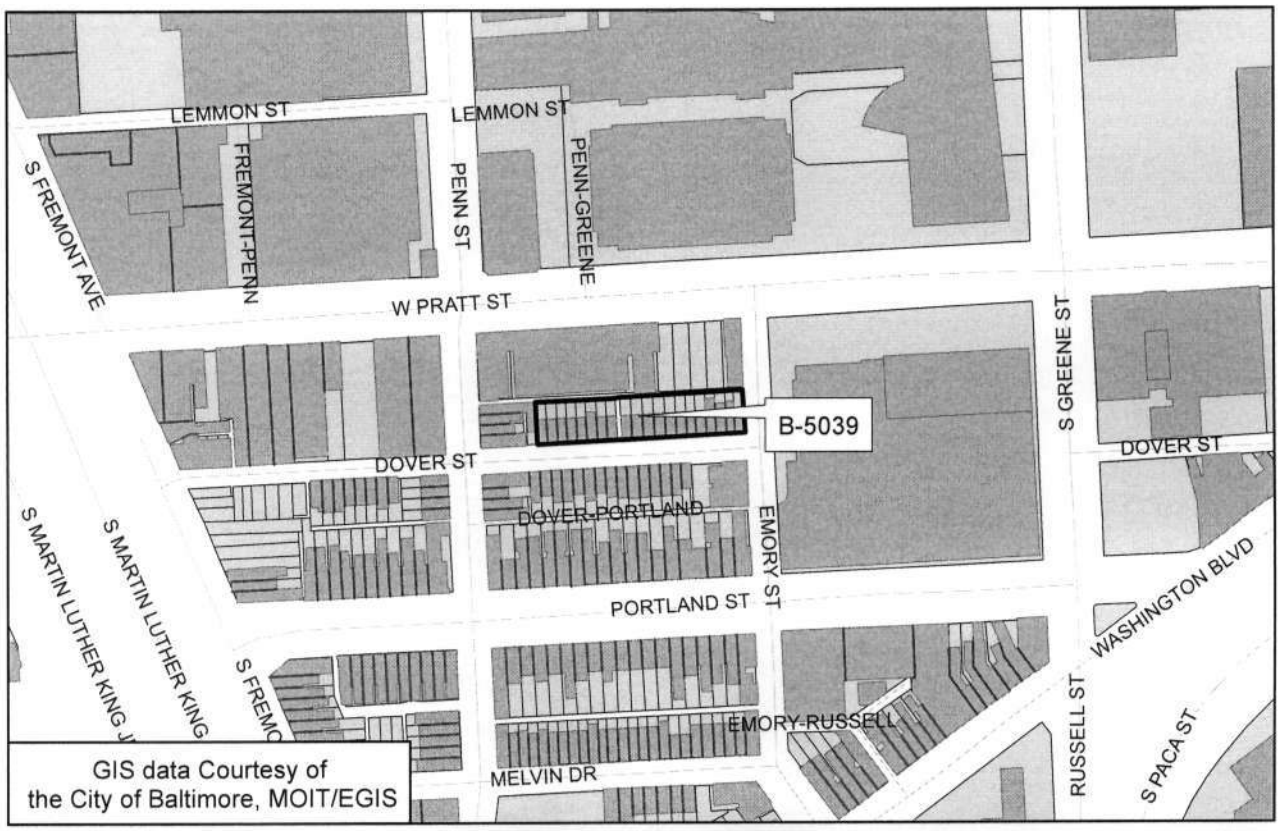
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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

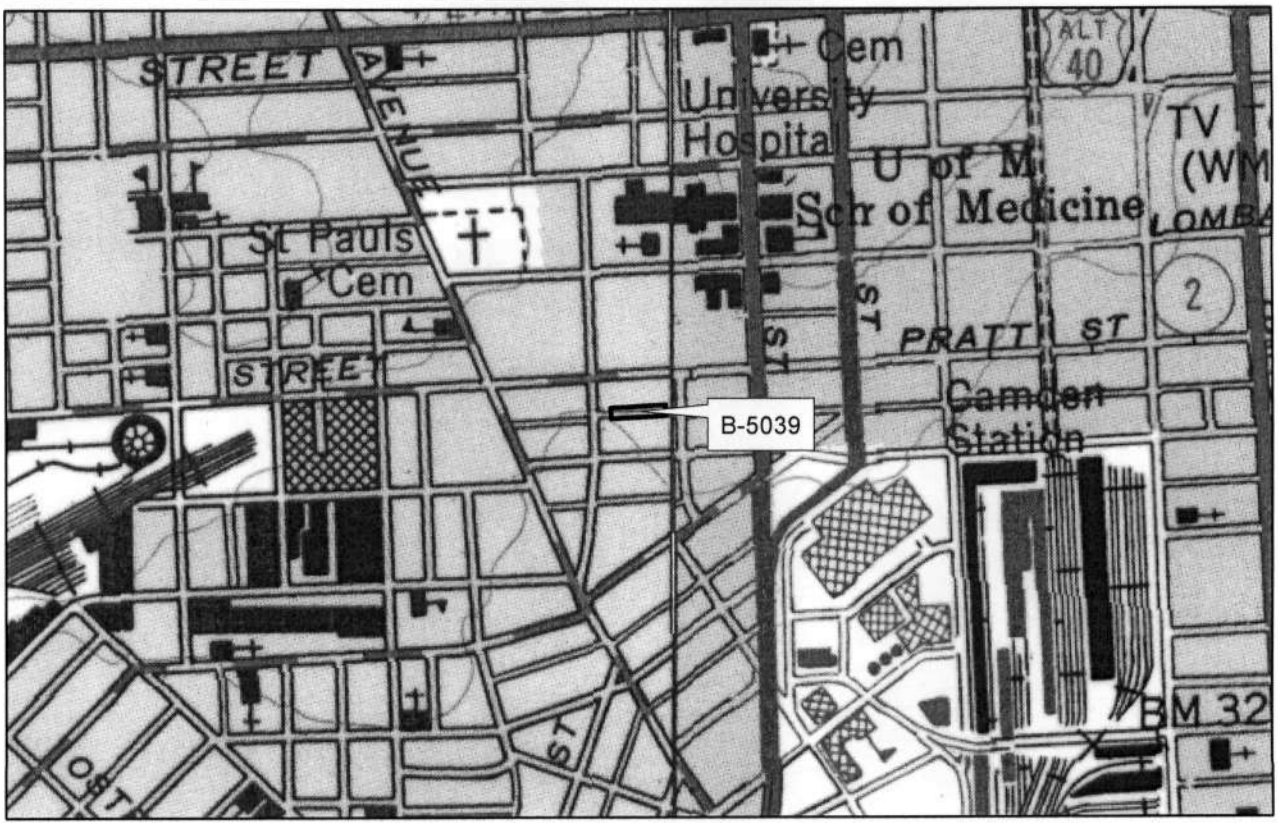
Return to:
DHCP/DHCD
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032-2023

W. LOMBARD
B-5039
VERSITY HOSPITAL
663 KING
664
665 ST.
666
EDISON ILLUMINATING CO.
A Busch BEEF AGENCY
BOX FACTORY
CRANE CO.
NORTH BROS. & STAUSS CLOTHING FACT.
Henry Sonneborn CLOTHING
48
ST.
LANGER BROS.
COAL YARD
S. GREENE
674
675 DOVER
676
COOPERAGE
PICTURE FRAME MFY.
BOX FACT.
PORTLAND
ST.
S. PACA
AVE.
CAMDE
FURNITURE MFY.
EMORY
HAW
685 ST.
FURNITURE MFY.
PENN
LITTLE GREENE
WEST
LITTLE PACA
ST.
WARNER
S. PACA
853
ST.
BURGUNDY
S.B. Sexton STOVE WORKS
864
ST. Carroll
W. CONWAY
863 WAYNE
W. BARRE
ST.
PUBLIC SCHOOL NO 12
ST.

B-5039
624-660 Dover Street
Block 0675 Lots 044-063
Baltimore City
Baltimore West Quad



GIS data Courtesy of
the City of Baltimore, MOIT/EGIS



624-640 Dorsey
SWS-1

B-5039
624-640 Dorsey St.
BALTO, MD
C. Belfoure
2/98
MD SHPO
1/2

642 Dover
SWB-1

8-5039
642 Dover St
BALTO, MD
C. Belfonte
2/48
2/2