

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes
no

Property Name: Ward Baking Company Inventory Number: B-5112-2
 Address: 2140 Edmondson Avenue Historic district: yes no
 City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21223 County: Baltimore City
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore West
 Property Owner: 2140 Edmondson Avenue LLC Tax Account ID Number: 0316252347 031
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): N/A Tax Map Number: 16
 Project: Baltimore & Potomac Tunnel Project Agency: Federal Railroad Administration
 Agency Prepared By: RK&K
 Preparer's Name: Elizabeth Fagan Date Prepared: 9/11/2015

Documentation is presented in: Baltimore City Archives, Enoch Pratt Library - Maryland Room, Google Books, HathiTrust Digital Library, Johns Hopkins University Libraries, National Register of Historic Places, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, www.HistoricAerials.com

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: Greater Rosemont; Midtown Edmondson (Pending)
 Inventory Number: B-5112; N/A Eligible: yes Listed: yes

Site visit by MHT Staff yes no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Architectural Description

The Ward Baking Company is located at 2140 Edmondson Avenue in the West Baltimore area of Baltimore City. Two buildings occupy the 2.9 acre site: (1) the Ward Baking Company bakery building (built from 1925-1927) and (2) an auto repair shop (built c.1927). The property lies within two historic districts found eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP): the Greater Rosemont Historic District (B-5112) and the Midtown Edmondson Historic District. Both districts are primarily residential, with a strip of industrial buildings along either side of the railroad tracks and a small collection of commercial buildings along Edmondson Avenue. The Ward Baking Company property is bounded by Amtrak's Northeast Corridor railroad tracks to the east, Edmondson Avenue to the south, North Bentalou Street to the west, and West Lanvale Street to the north.

The three-story Ward Baking Company building and the one-story auto repair shop are representative of typical early twentieth century industrial architecture. The Ward Baking Company building is located on the southern end of the property and is oriented on a north-south axis. Overall, the original plan of the building is rectangular in shape. A small, one-story boiler house annex is

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| MHT Comments: <i>Contributes to Midtown Edmondson HD; also individually eligible</i> | |
| <i>Jim [Signature]</i> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services | <u>9/22/15</u> Date |
| <i>[Signature]</i> Reviewer, National Register Program | <u>9/24/15</u> Date |

located on the northeast corner of the building and was built at the same time as the main bakery building. In addition, a small, wedge-shaped concrete block addition on the east elevation was added sometime between 1953 and 1957, based on aerial photographs ("1952-1953 Baltimore City & Baltimore County"). The main bakery building is set back from Edmondson Avenue. In front of the building, separating it from the street, is a concrete driveway area. This driveway entrance is located towards the southeast corner of the property and is bounded by brick pillars on either side which mark the vehicular entrance. In addition, additional brick pillars run along the west side of the driveway area. Currently, a chain-link fence runs across the driveway, preventing access up to the building. A separate, unrelated building is located near the southwest corner of the property and sits in front of the Ward Baking Company building. This building, currently used as a laundromat, partially obscures the view of the western portion of the Ward Baking Company's façade.

The façade of the main bakery building fronts Edmondson Avenue. The building sits on a concrete foundation and is clad in red brick in an American bond pattern. The façade's original design is symmetrical and is separated into seven main bays. Each bay is separated by brick pilasters. The end bays serve as visual anchors of the façade and feature brick corbelling, recessed rectilinear paneling, and a stepped parapet roofline. The building's flat roof has terra cotta coping, which resembles stone. Atop the roof is a small, slanted bulkhead which is only slightly visible when viewing the façade from across the street. In addition, a large metal water tower sits atop the roof. This tower is located in the center of the building's roof and creates a defining visual character for the building.

The primary entrance is located on the façade and has a slightly projecting brick door surround and lintel. The door is a simple, utilitarian, single-leaf metal door. Above the door is a transom-like panel of four decorative concrete screen blocks. The blocks have a geometric cutout and are painted white. This entrance is not easily seen from the street, but is identified by a sign above for the True Praise Christian Fellowship Ministries, which currently uses the building for religious services.

Two of the façade's central bays have been modified to include a small loading dock area with brick side walls and a shed roof. This loading dock sits atop a concrete slab platform. A secondary entrance is located within this loading dock area, and has a single-leaf, utilitarian metal door that is protected on the outside by a metal mesh grate. Just to the east of this door is a large, sliding metal garage door. This loading dock appears to be a later addition, possibly dating to the 1960s. Another smaller, utilitarian door is located adjacent to this loading dock on the east side.

Along the first floor of the building, the window openings have been filled in with the same decorative concrete screen found above the primary entrance. These block-filled windows have also been painted over in white. The alteration of these windows and the loading dock addition may all have been completed during the same period, likely the 1960s. Decorative brick corbelling frames the bays of windows, providing some decorative interest to the façade. The end bays of the first floor have sliding metal garage doors, similar to the one found in the center of the façade yet are larger.

The second floor features original, six-over-six double hung sash windows. These steel windows feature a unique, raised wave pattern on the head, meeting rail, and sill of the metal frame. On the end bays of the second floor, the windows are grouped next to each other to form a tripartite arrangement. Moving inwards from the end bays on either side, the next adjacent bays each have four windows. Finally, the innermost bays each have three windows.

The third floor features a similar fenestration, except the easternmost end bay features a sliding metal garage door, similar to those on the first floor. This third floor garage door may have been a later addition, as a sketch of this building from the Ward Baking Company's 1927 Annual Report shows a group of windows in this location (See Figure 1). In addition, brick soldier course runs above the third floor windows on the central bays, which provides some simple ornamentation.

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The east elevation of the building is ten bays wide. The section of the building containing the southernmost four bays is three-stories tall, while the remaining six-bay section is two-stories tall. A raised parapet is located atop the southernmost bay, matching the parapet on the façade. A wedge-shaped concrete block addition on the east elevation is one story tall, with a flat roof. The windows on this elevation have been covered up with sheets of corrugated metal.

The north elevation is five bays wide and two-stories tall with a basement. The central portion of the north elevation features a slightly raised roofline, resulting in what seems to be a small, attic or utility space. A one-story, brick and concrete boiler room addition projects from the northwest corner of this elevation. The windows on this elevation appear to be boarded-up.

The west elevation, like the east elevation, is ten bays wide. This elevation is three-stories along southernmost three bays, and two stories along the remaining seven bays. In addition, the three-story segment has two raised parapets which echo those found on the façade. It appears that the first floor windows on this elevation have been boarded-up, while the second floor windows remain intact.

The second building on the property, the Ward Baking Company's accessory auto repair shop, is located on the north end of the parcel along West Lanvale Street. This building was likely used for the storage and repair of the bakery's delivery trucks. The street dead-ends just to the east of the property where it meets the railroad tracks. The façade of the auto repair shop is located on the north elevation and faces West Lanvale Street. This one-story building has a rectangular plan and is a simple, utilitarian structure. A concrete driveway extends from the westernmost bay of the building. In addition, an open driveway area is located adjacent to the building on the west side. The entrance to this lot is accented by brick pillars on either end, similar to those found outside the main bakery building.

The auto repair shop building sits on a concrete foundation and is clad in red brick in an American bond. The building is four bays wide and is segmented with brick pilasters, similar to those found on the main bakery building. The roof is flat with a metal coping. The primary entrance to the building is located within the third bay from the east. The entry door is single-leaf metal door with large, metal strap hinges. The first three bays from the east have original windows, while the end bay has a large garage door opening. Currently, the door has been covered in plywood. The windows in each bay are multi-pane, hopper windows. These windows are covered by a projecting, box-like cover constructed from a metal frame covered in a metal mesh covering. The west elevation, which is visible from the right-of-way, is three bays wide and features the same pilasters and windows as the façade. The window opening on the central bay has been filled in with brick.

Historic Context

West Baltimore and the neighborhoods of Midtown Edmondson and Greater Rosemont consisted of primarily rural, open land with scattered homes and churches until the early 1880s, when the development of the area as a rowhouse suburb began. Before the growth of West Baltimore took off in the 1880s, a number of important transportation projects helped the area become more accessible and desirable to residents and business owners. Beginning in 1868, improvements were made along Edmondson Avenue, which helped to usher in residential growth. In that year, the estate of Dr. Thomas Edmondson donated land to Baltimore City, which included the area along Thompson Street from Freemont Street to Kirby's Lane. In 1871, more land was donated to extend Thompson Street west to Fulton Avenue. In honor of this, Thompson Street was renamed Edmondson Avenue. Soon after the donation, blocks of rowhouses began to be constructed along this main thoroughfare (Pousson, Section 7, 13-14).

In 1873, the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad was completed, connecting Washington, D.C. and rural areas of southern Maryland to Baltimore and cities north. The completion of the line sparked commercial and industrial development in the city. The railroad tracks cut through West Baltimore, originating at Baltimore's Pennsylvania Avenue Station. While the tracks ran through a tunnel

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underneath the neighborhoods of Upton, Madison Park, and Bolton Hill to the northeast, the railroad tracks ran along an area of open cut through the Midtown Edmondson neighborhood. When construction of the railroad came through the neighborhood, many property owners were upset about the potential loss in value of their land and the disruption of the residential area. Residents actively fought the construction of “rowdy” commercial and industrial development, including factories and saloons. Around the same time that the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad was completed, horse-drawn omnibus service had extended to the Midtown Edmondson and Greater Rosemont areas. By the late 1890s, streetcars served the neighborhoods, which resulted in a boom in rowhouse construction. This construction boom defined the area as a “streetcar suburb”, featuring rapid speculative development and rows of identical houses designed by vernacular builders (Pousson, Section 8, 8-9).

Alongside the growth and expansion of West Baltimore, the city’s overall industrial growth was booming. Between the 1880s and 1900, the population of the city rose substantially, in part due to the annexation of land in 1888, and also due to an increase in immigration and those moving to the city in search of jobs. Most of Baltimore’s industrial activity was focused around the Inner Harbor area, where both rail and ship transportation was accessible. Yet, there was a small amount of industrial growth elsewhere, including the Midtown-Edmondson and Greater Rosemont areas. In 1905, National Biscuit Company opened a warehouse in the Midtown Edmondson neighborhood at Appleton Street, near the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad tracks. The construction of this warehouse ushered in more industrial growth along the railroad tracks, including the erection of the American Ice Company Building on West Franklin Street in 1911 (B-1040). In the period just before construction of the Ward Baking Company, industry in Baltimore continued to grow. Between 1921 and 1923, it was reported that the city’s industrial growth increased by 40 percent, partly due to the rise in the value of manufactured products. In addition, Baltimore’s bakeries combined produced nearly 18 million dollars’ worth of goods (Baltimore Association of Commerce).

By the 1920s, increased automobile transportation resulted in more industrial and commercial building, although the neighborhood still remained largely residential. Some residential buildings, especially those along Edmonson Avenue, were converted to include commercial space on the first floor. Other existing industrial buildings near the Ward Baking Company building include the American Stores Company Warehouse at 2120 West Lafayette Avenue (DOE-BC-0003) and the Warehouse at 2020 Mosher Street (B-5296). The proximity of these properties to the railroad tracks were likely an important factor in the construction of these warehouses. A 1948 map entitled “Location Map of Railroad Sidings and Industrial Tracks in Baltimore” shows that there were a number of siding locations in this area, including one siding that led directly to the east side of Ward Baking Company property, adjacent to the main bakery building (Sanborn Map, “Baltimore, Maryland”).

The Ward Baking Company

In 1849, Irish immigrant Hugh Ward opened a small bakery on Broome Street in New York City. A few years later, Ward relocated his business to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Ward’s sons, Robert and George, began their own bread baking business in Pittsburgh’s East End around 1880, under the name R.B. Ward & Company. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Ward brothers’ business had expanded with the popularity of “Ward’s Bread.” Thus, the brothers opened a large, modern bread-making plant in 1903. Within a few years, the business had expanded to open bakeries in Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, and Providence. In 1911, the company returned to New York and was organized as the Ward Baking Company (Ward Baking Company, 69).

By 1924, the Ward Baking Company had become the “largest and oldest baking company in America...with 16 plants in 12 cities, with an approximate annual output of 300,000,000 loaves of bread a year” (“Ward Baking Company Expands”). As a part of the Company’s expansion, a new building application was submitted in 1925 to build a new bakery in the area along Spedden Street and Edmondson Avenue in Baltimore. Upon the proposal, a group of 75 neighboring residents gathered at a public hearing to protest the erection of the bakery. Although zoned for commercial use, the neighbors stated that the new building would depreciate the value of their homes and cause loud, annoying disturbances (“75 at Hearing Protest Plan to Erect Bakery”). Nevertheless, by

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August of that year the excavation for the foundation of the building had been completed and plans were drawn by architect C.B. Comstock. Construction began in November of 1926, and reports state the building was to be completed in the fall of 1927 ("Real Estate Deals and Building News"). Comstock, born in Pittston, Pennsylvania in 1874, designed a number of bakeries, warehouses, sports venues, and industrial buildings along the East Coast. Comstock advertised himself as a "refrigeration and consulting engineer" who specialized in "the designing and remodeling of buildings for cold storage and packing house plants of all kinds" (The National Provisioner, 32). Comstock designed other Ward Baking Company buildings, including bakeries in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, and East Orange, New Jersey. The simplistic, brick style of the Baltimore bakery differs greatly from the Company's trademark white terra cotta-clad buildings. Around 1920, Comstock became a co-director of the Ward Baking Company ("Engineer Ends Life in 42d St. Office"). In addition to his architectural work, Comstock also designed a commercial oven, which became a popular and successful product through the 1930s (Sefton 13).

On October 5th, 1929, the Baltimore Afro-American reported that the Ward Baking Company building was opening its doors to the public, allowing visitors to come in an "inspect" the facilities during the week. Since its founding, the Ward Baking Company prided itself on its sanitary, efficient, and modern bakeries. This bakery "open house" period was likely brought about to showcase these qualities. Earlier Ward bakeries also boasted about the cleanliness of their operations. For example, in 1911 the Ward bakeries in Brooklyn and the Bronx were opened to the public and described as "Snow-white Temples of Cleanliness" and the "Brightest, Whitest, Cleanest Places in All New York" ("The Story of an American Business Success"). At the time the building was opened to the public on October 5th, the Edmondson Street bakery was producing nearly 100 varieties of baked goods, including the company's famous "Tip-Top" bread.

By the Great Depression, bread production fell 25 percent across the country, and in the post-Depression years there was a return to home baking. Despite this, the Ward Baking Company continued to thrive (Whitten, 48). By 1930, the company had grown so large the government forced the company break up into three separate companies (Continental Baking, General Baking, and Ward Foods) in the fear of an anti-trust monopoly. Ward's sister company, Continental Baking, later became known for its Wonder Bread and Hostess products.

Federal Census reports from 1930 and 1940 show a handful of residents in the immediate area who worked as bakers, and although the specific bakery is not listed, it is possible that these neighborhood residents were employees of the Ward Baking Company. The Company was active in the building on Edmondson Avenue until 1974, when the property was sold to Locust Industries for use as a warehouse facility ("Baking Company to be Warehouse"). Currently, the main bakery building is being used by the True Praise Christian Fellowship Ministry, although the majority of the building appears to be vacant. In addition, the rear auto repair shop appears vacant.

Significance Evaluation

The Ward Baking Company building was evaluated for significance under the NRHP Criteria A, B, and C, using the guidelines set forth in the National Register Bulletin "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation." The property was not evaluated for eligibility under Criterion D as part of this assessment. Previous Determinations of Eligibility for bakery buildings were also consulted to inform this assessment, most notably the Hauswald's Bakery building at 2822 Edmondson Avenue (B-5115). Hauswald's Bakery building is located nearby, further west along Edmondson Avenue. This building was evaluated under Criteria A and C and, although the preparer determined the building eligible, the Maryland Historical Trust deemed it not eligible. The Ward Baking Company is identified as a contributing building in the eligible Greater Rosemont Historic District and the pending Midtown Edmondson Historic District. These districts are both eligible under Criteria A and C, most notably for their significance to the residential growth of West Baltimore.

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MHT Comments:

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Date

The Ward Baking Company was a New York City-based company with multiple bakeries across the East Coast. Although the Company has been referred to as the “largest and oldest baking company in America,” its Baltimore bakery was only an outpost of this larger company. In addition, the center of Baltimore’s industry has historically been focused around the Inner Harbor area. The Historic Districts in which the Ward Baking Company are located only have a small amount of industrial buildings, and thus do not hold a great deal of significance in the larger context of Baltimore’s industrial history. Because the research does not support the argument that the evaluated property had a specific significant influence in these historical events or trends, the Ward Baking Company is not eligible under Criterion A.

Research has not shown that the property is associated with the lives of individuals significant in the past. Therefore, the property is not eligible under Criterion B.

The main Ward Baking Company building and auto repair shop are both examples of standard, early twentieth century industrial architecture. Both buildings have minimal style, yet do represent a larger trend of simplistic, utilitarian industrial buildings during the period of the building’s construction. The main bakery building has only slight ornamental detailing, notably the stepped parapet roof and brick corbelling. In addition, the building has lost some of its historic integrity, most of which has occurred on the bakery building’s façade. This loss of integrity lies in the alteration of the first floor windows, the addition of the covered portico, and the addition of a garage door opening on the third floor. The concrete block addition to the east elevation of the bakery building is not easily seen from the right-of-way, and is less detrimental to the overall character of the building. Regardless of these changes, the bakery building and auto repair shop are not distinctive enough to be considered true representatives of a particular type, period, or method of construction, and therefore are not eligible under Criterion C.

Works Cited

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Ward Baking Company (B-5112-2)

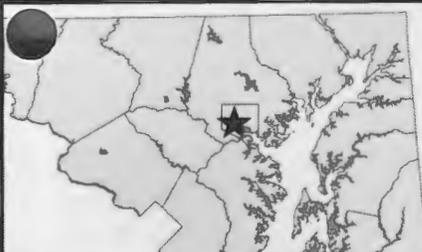
2140 Edmondson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21223



USGS Baltimore West
Quadrangle 7.5 minute series



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Highway - - - - -
Trunk Road - - - - -
Main Road - - - - -
Local Road - - - - -
Unimproved - - - - -
Proposed - - - - -
U.S. High - - - - -
State Road - - - - -



Location Map

Date: September 2015

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2140 Edmonson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21223



USGS Baltimore West
Quadrangle 7.5 minute series



0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Location Map

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ArcGIS World Imagery
2015

Legend

Parcel Boundaries



0 50 100 200 Feet

Location Map

Date: September 2015



Figure 1: Drawing of the Edmondson Avenue bakery from the Ward Baking Company's 1927 Annual Report (Ward Baking Company, 27).

Photo Log
MIHP# B-5112-2
Ward Baking Company
2140 Edmondson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21223
Photographer: Elizabeth Fagan
Date: August 10, 2015

| # | Digital Image File Name | Description of View |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | B-5112-2_2015-08-10_01.tif | <i>Main bakery building – façade, looking north</i> |
| 2 | B-5112-2_2015-08-10_02.tif | <i>Main bakery building – façade, looking northeast</i> |
| 3 | B-5112-2_2015-08-10_03.tif | <i>Main bakery building – façade, looking northeast</i> |
| 4 | B-5112-2_2015-08-10_04.tif | <i>Auto repair shop – façade, looking southwest</i> |
| 5 | B-5112-2_2015-08-10_05.tif | <i>Auto repair shop – façade, looking southeast</i> |
| 6 | B-5112-2_2015-08-10_06.tif | <i>Auto repair shop – façade, looking south</i> |
| 7 | B-5112-2_2015-08-10_07.tif | <i>Auto repair shop – façade and west elevation, looking southeast</i> |

Prints:

Processing – RA-4

Paper: Fujicolor Crystal Archive Professional Paper (Super Type CN)

DVD-R Gold:

Verbatim, UltraLife Gold, Metal Azo dyes



B-5112-2

Ward Baking Company

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

August 10, 2015

MD SHPO

Main bakery building - facade, looking north

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Ward Baking Company

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

August 10, 2015

MD SHPO

Main bakery building - facade, looking north

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Ward Baking Company

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

August 10, 2015

MD SHPO

Main bakery building - facade, looking northeast

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Ward Baking Company

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

August 10, 2015

MD SHPO

Auto repair shop - facade, looking southwest

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Ward Baking Company

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

August 10, 2015

MDSHPO

Auto repair shop-facade, looking southeast

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B-S112-2

Ward Baking Company

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

August 10, 2015

MD SHPO

Auto repair shop- facade, looking south

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Ward Baking Company

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

August 10, 2015

MD SHPO

Auto repair shop - facade and west elevation, looking
southeast

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