

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes  no

Property Name: Monroe-Riggs ~~District~~ Historic District Inventory Number: B-5118  
 Address: Bounded by Pennsylvania RR tracks, W. Franklin St., Old W. Baltimore HD Historic district: X yes  no  
 City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21217 County: Baltimore City  
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore West  
 Property Owner: various Tax Account ID Number: n/a  
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Map Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Project: Red Line Corridor Transit Study Agency: Mass Transit Administration  
 Agency Prepared By: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
 Preparer's Name: Katherine Larson Farnham Date Prepared: 1/2/2006

Documentation is presented in: National Register Nomination for Old West Baltimore HD (2004); Enoch Pratt Free Library--Maryland Room vertical files

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible: \_\_\_\_\_ yes Listed: \_\_\_\_\_ yes

Site visit by MHT Staff  yes  no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Monroe-Riggs District is a small neighborhood of middle- and working-class rowhouses and one commercial area. It is located west of the Old West Baltimore Historic District (with the alley west of Fulton Ave. as boundary), north of W. Franklin St., and surrounded on the west and north by the former Pennsylvania Railroad tracks and Riggs St. Its primary arterial streets are N. Monroe St., W. Franklin St., and Edmondson Ave., with most other streets being narrower. On the northwest edges of the neighborhood bordering the railroad tracks are several dead-end roads and alleys, some of which provide access to modern industrial warehouses along the tracks. Buildings in the neighborhood date primarily from ca. 1890-1915, with the commercial district possessing somewhat later buildings (ca. 1910-1930).

With the exception of those on primary streets, most houses in the neighborhood are modest in scale and decoration. Most are two-story, two- or three-bay, shed-roofed working-class dwellings constructed in Italianate style. They predate the porch-front row house trend and generally have small stone or marble stoops leading to transomed front doors. The houses all front directly on the sidewalks and are of brick construction. Older houses are built of dark red brick and feature flat fronts with contrasting stone windowsills and decorative wood or iron cornices, sometimes with brackets. Many have been covered with formstone or stucco,

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended <input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G
MHT Comments:	
<u>John Milner</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>7/20/06</u> Date
<u>B. County</u> Reviewer, National Register Program	<u>8/7/06</u> Date

hiding their original details. Slightly later examples have full-height bow-fronts and are faced with earth-toned brick. These houses typically have rusticated stone foundations, windowsills, lintels, and belt courses, and their cornices are denoted by decorative brickwork and wooden molding bands. Some of the bay-front rows alternate square and round bay fronts. Corner buildings at the ends of rows have often been commercialized with first-floor storefronts, many of which are intact examples from the early 1900s. Other end buildings were constructed as stores with second-floor apartments.

Housing on the primary streets is of somewhat richer architectural quality than that on the side streets. Edmondson Ave. boasts some three-story rows, which are far more elaborate than most housing seen in the neighborhood. These Italianate or Richardsonian Romanesque houses often sport paired first-floor front windows with keystone or stone hood details, elaborate parapet cornices, or heavy cast-iron bracketed cornices.

The neighborhood's primary commercial area is on Edmondson Ave. just east of the railroad overpass, where there is a small concentration of early twentieth century commercial buildings. These include a Spanish-style gas station, a few freestanding store buildings, and what appears to have been a theater. Immediately to the east of the freestanding buildings are rows of two-story attached buildings with ground-floor storefronts and upstairs apartments. A number of buildings in the commercial area are not in use.

This neighborhood evolved in the late nineteenth century as development spread northwest from downtown Baltimore. Speculators built block after block of row houses to shelter working- and middle-class residents, who could take advantage of expanding streetcar mass transit to access jobs around the city. Monroe-Riggs, named for two boundary streets, is technically part of a larger area of multiple neighborhoods referred to collectively as Old West Baltimore. While the areas of Old West Baltimore that lie east of Fulton Avenue evolved into a distinctive African-American neighborhood beginning in the 1890s, Monroe-Riggs remained white until a later time. Fulton Ave. was considered the boundary for this racial division. The original inhabitants of both areas were primarily of German background, but Old West Baltimore east of Fulton Avenue transformed rapidly into an African-American neighborhood by the 1930s while Monroe-Riggs was historically considered a white neighborhood. As with most areas of greater west Baltimore, Monroe-Riggs' white residents eventually moved outward and were replaced by black residents by the 1960s; it is not clear exactly when this change occurred. The neighborhood has seen some decline; vacant buildings are found on all streets, and some blocks can be described as blighted with numerous boarded-up homes.

Monroe-Riggs was excluded from the National Register nomination for Old West Baltimore because, as a historically white neighborhood, it was considered separate from the conglomeration of adjacent neighborhoods that were majority-black at an earlier date. Its development, which occurred over a few decades, is not particularly noteworthy or distinct from the development of other Baltimore neighborhoods of the same era. Similarly, its housing stock is of average quality and not overly well preserved. While there are some house groupings that could be called distinctive, the majority of neighborhood dwellings are of relatively bland, modest character. Loss of integrity is widespread, due to the deterioration and abandonment of numerous buildings, and renovation of many others with Formstone, vinyl windows, infill of original openings, and other unsympathetic alterations. Such integrity loss mars even the more distinctive blockfronts in the neighborhood. Monroe-Riggs does not appear to meet NRHP criteria and is recommended not eligible.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

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

MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Monroe-Riggs  
District  
MIMP# B-5118

Baltimore  
West



B-5118

500 blk. N. Pulaski St. Mount-Riggs District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/15/2005

MD SHPO

View to N. from W. Franklin St.

# 1 of 12 020

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B-5118

1100 blk. N. Payson St., Mon. St. - Riggs. V. 100

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPO

view to SW

# 2 of 12

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B-5118

2000 blk W. Lafayette St - Prince Georges County, VA

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPO

View to NE

#3 of 12

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B-5118

800 blk. N. Payson St.,  
Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPS

view to SE

#4 of 12

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B-5118

500 blk N. Oriole St. <sup>Marine - Ridge - 112301</sup>

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPO

View to NE

#5 of 12

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105



LANHAM GROCERY

B-5118

900 blk. W. Lamarle St, 1150, 20 - Riggs & 2nd

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPO

View to NE

#6 of 12

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Get it On  
THE BIG BOSS  
RAYMOND  
7.1

Scott Tire Service

with 255-8888  
SCOTT Tire Service

B-5118

S. side Edmondson Ave. below overpass. Forest - Riggs District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPO

View to E

# 7 of 12

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B-5118

1900 blk. Edmondson Ave. Monroe-Riggs District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

DA GANXONG NAN - 3 0019

6/16/2005

MD SHPO

view to SW

#8 of 12

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B-5118

1900 blk. Edmondson, Manassas-Riggs District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPO

View to NE

#9 of 12

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B-5118

1800 61k Harlem Ave, Morgan-Cross-District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPO

View to NE

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B-5118

900 blk Appletan St., Monroe-Riggs District

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MP SHPD

View to NW

#11 of 12

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B-5118

800 blk. Monroe St., Monroe - Ring 7 3114

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

6/16/2005

MD SHPD

view to S

#12 of 12

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