[1]NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory

other names B-5140

2. Location

street & number 901 N. Milton Avenue ☐ not for publication

city or town Baltimore ☐ vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Baltimore City code 510 zip code 21205

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☑ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☑ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date 10-31-07

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby, certify that this property is:
- ☐ entered in the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ Determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
0		sites
0		structures
0		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry/Processing/Extraction – manufacturing facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th-century Revivals –Italian Renaissance

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
roof Asphalt
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.

☐ **B** Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Area of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry
Commerce
Social History
Ethnic Heritage - European

Period of Significance

1914-1957

Significant Dates

1914
1916

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Frank & Kavanaugh , architects

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #_____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository:

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory (B-5140)
Name of Property

Baltimore City, Maryland
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.731 acres Baltimore East, MD quad

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	363543	4351201
2			
3			
4			

☒ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jennifer F. Hembree, Senior Associate and William G. MacRostie, Principal
Organization MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC date July 18, 2007
street & number 1400 16th St., NW, Suite 420 telephone (202) 483-2020
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20036

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition, Inc., c/o Edward Sabatino
street & number 808 North Chester telephone (443) 524-2805
city or town Baltimore state Maryland zip code 21205

Paperwork Reduction Statement: *This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate* properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et. seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Description Summary:

The L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory at 901 N. Milton Avenue (ca. 1914-1915) is a three-story brick and steel industrial building in fair condition, that features an expanse of multi-light steel windows, a metal cornice and sawtooth monitors. Its north, south and west elevations are lined with brick bays delineated by unornamented brick pilasters. Typically, bays feature large multi-light steel windows at floors two and three in even fenestration; floor levels are distinguished by simple brick friezes. The first floor windows have been infilled with brick and modern, narrow single-pane windows. A two-story, (raised basement level and first floor), brick addition (1921) is located off of the east elevation. The interior of the Manufactory is characterized mainly by three floors of open plan space with evenly spaced steel columns; some portions of which have been built-out or altered over time. Encompassing almost an entire city block and over 60,000 square feet of interior space, the Manufactory served as a clothing factory for L. Greif & Bro., Inc., makers of the men's clothing brand, 'Griffin.'

General Description:

Setting

The L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory is located in East Baltimore, Maryland. The building encompasses almost an entire city block, bounded by Milton and Ashland avenues, Eager and Rose streets. Immediately adjacent to the building's south and east sides – at the southeast corner of the same block as the Manufactory - are five rowhouses, separated from the building via short brick-paved alleys. The Manufactory and its block are surrounded, for the most part, by rowhouses, many of which are boarded and vacant. The residential location of the Manufactory, in fact, was one of the promotional highlights of the building upon completion. A ca. 1915 company brochure emphasized that the Manufactory was located "out where the air was clear and pure…in a neighborhood of spick and span model Baltimore homes, with not a factory or tenement in sight."[1] Railroad tracks are situated a few blocks north of the building. Due south about eight blocks is the northern edge of Patterson Park. Johns Hopkins Hospital is in the vicinity to the west. The Manufactory's neighborhood has suffered from years of urban blight and neglect, however, the area has recently begun to see

signs of rejuvenation. Through neighborhood block grants, numerous houses have been rehabbed or built; vacant lots cleaned and community gardens established. The Manufactory is part of the land parcel near the Biotech Park Initiative/East Baltimore Development Project, which is a mixed-use redevelopment project in the area around the Johns Hopkins medical campus, and jointly approved by the City of Baltimore, The Maryland Historical Trust, The Baltimore Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, Second Chance Inc. and East Baltimore Development Inc. in 2003.

Structure

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. is a three-story building, with a raised basement at its north end, and a rectangular footprint that follows the street line. Of approximately 68,000 square-feet large, including its addition, the building encompasses almost an entire city block. The building is of brick and steel construction with concrete flooring and a sawtooth roof. The building has a 1921 one-story brick addition, approximately 14,201 square feet, also with sawtooth roof, off its east elevation.

Exterior

The L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory faces west onto North Milton Avenue. Extending the full length of the city block, the primary or west elevation features 11 brick bays delineated by unornamented brick pilasters. Bays feature large multi-light steel windows at floors two and three in even fenestration; floor levels are distinguished by simple brick friezes. The first floor windows have been infilled with brick and modern, narrow single-pane windows. The primary elevation features three evenly-spaced entries, one at either end and one in the center bay. The entries are accessed via short brick or concrete stairs due to the building's raised basement. The sidelights and transom lights at the north and center entries have been boarded. The west elevation's northern half of the raised basement features infilled square window openings with masonry block lintels. The southern portion of the raised basement at this elevation is faced in masonry block that wraps around at this level of the south elevation. The north elevation fronts Ashland Avenue and the south elevation fronts Eager Street. The three-story north and south elevations feature three brick bays delineated by unornamented brick pilasters and stories distinguished by simple brick friezes. The north elevation features an additional narrow bay

at the east end that encloses one of the building's stairtower. An egress door provides access at the stairtower's first floor. First story window openings at both the north and south elevations have been infilled; those at the south feature brick infill with modern narrow single-light windows. Second and third story openings feature multi-light steel factory windows on both elevations. The building's roofline features a short parapet that extends beyond the building's metal cornice. As a result, the building's eleven sawtooth monitors are not visible from the street. A metal flagpole extends from the roof in the center of the west elevation. The building's east elevation is mostly obscured from view due to the 1921 Addition, but it runs the same length as the west elevation. A small portion of the east elevation is visible at the south end beyond several residential rowhouses situated in the southeast corner of the same block L. Grief & Bro., Inc. is located. At this end, the fenestration pattern is similar to that of the west elevation with first story window openings infilled and second and third stories featuring multi-light steel windows. Historic images indicate the north end of the east elevation featured asymmetrical fenestration presumably due to the stair tower, elevator and mechanical equipment located towards this end.

As mentioned above, a two-story, (raised basement level and first floor), brick addition (1921) is located off of the east elevation.[2] At the north end of the block (Eager Street), the Addition is flush with the Manufactory's main portion. At this end, the Addition features a metal rolling garage door at the west and large rectangular window openings, now infilled, towards the east. These window openings retain their masonry block lintels. The Addition's east elevation runs eight bays, delineated by metal downspouts and vents. The lower portion of its façade has been painted grey. Each bay features large rectangular infilled window openings with masonry block lintels at the second story (first floor) level. The south elevation of the Addition, like the others is brick with large rectangular infilled window openings and masonry block lintels. The south elevation fronts a brick alley and the rowhouses in the southeast corner of the block. It appears that the Addition also featured window openings (now infilled) at ground (raised basement) level along both the south and the east elevations however stone lintels remain only at the south elevation. The roof of the Addition features eight sawtooth monitors. They have received asphalt shingles and the skylights are infilled. Windows remain on the clerestories' east elevations. A single metal smokestack rises from the roof of the Addition.

Interior

The interior of the Manufactory is characterized mainly by three floors of open-plan space with evenly spaced steel columns throughout. In some areas on the first floor, in particular at its southern end, modern office partitions and dropped ceilings have been installed. The remaining interior spaces are open, with concrete floors, painted brick walls with exposed ceiling structure, ductwork and other mechanical equipment above. Individual water-closets are located along the building's east wall on all floors, although fixtures and doors have been removed in some instances. Two stairwells accessing all three floors and two elevators also are located on the main building's east wall.

The interior of the Addition features a street-level garage space with an enclosed concrete loading dock at its north end. This area is delineated from the remaining by brick walls. The remainder of the Addition's interior space (situated at the first story level, with basement below), is open plan space with painted brick walls, evenly spaced steel columns and a concrete slab floor. The sawtooth roof, ductwork, and lighting fixtures remain exposed above. Access into the main portion of the building is available through a large rectangular opening with sliding door. Some of the main building's original east elevation window openings are extant and visible from the interior of the Addition.

Alterations and Integrity

The L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory is highly intact and retains a high degree of integrity. Interior alterations appear to be limited to the addition of minimal build-out and dropped ceilings on the first floor, and removal of earlier partial height partitions seen in historic images.[3] Steel posts remain intact and undisturbed, as does the roof structure and its sawtooth monitors. The building's interior construction, design, and materials remain intact. Exterior alterations are primarily confined to infilled window openings at the first floor level. As a result, the building's exterior construction, design, and materials remain visible. Derived from simplified Italianate Revival motifs, the exterior features a combination of brick pilasters, brick friezes, masonry lintels, metal cornice and

parapet roof line. The original three entries at the primary (west) elevation remain visible, although partially infilled. Steel sash windows also remain at the second and third stories, although they are in poor condition. The location and setting of the building remains unaltered, including its relationship to the houses on the same block, as well as to the surrounding mostly working-class residential neighborhood. As one of the few industrial buildings in the immediate vicinity, the Manufactory continues to reflect its association with its original promotion as a healthy and sunny factory in which to work. It stands as a physical reminder of the L. Greif & Bro., Inc. firm, a significant factor in the history of Baltimore's needle trade, labor relations, and German-Jewish ethnicity.

Notes to Section 7:

[1] L. Greif & Bro., Inc. *"What the Work-and-Pleasure Plant Offers You."* A ca. 1915 company promotional booklet. Available at the Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.
[2] "News of Baltimore Real Estate," *The Baltimore Sun*, 19 Aug. 1921.
[3] L. Greif & Bro., Inc. *"What the Work-and-Pleasure Plant Offers You,"* a ca. 1915 company promotional booklet, available at the Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.

Summary Statement of Significance:

Built in ca. 1914-1915, the L. Greif & Bro. Inc. Manufactory at North Milton and Ashland avenues is an important example of the significant role the needle trade and particularly men's clothing manufacturing played in Baltimore's early 20th-century industrial and cultural history. L. Greif & Bros., Inc. was, for a time, the country's second largest men's clothing company and the N. Milton Avenue Manufactory qualifies for listing on the National Register under Criterion A at the local level as a significant component of Baltimore's needle trade, which was important to the city's industrial development from as early as 1860 through the 1920s. L. Greif & Bros., Inc., founded by Levi Greif, is also representative of the Baltimore needle trade's labor relations history in the early 20th-century, as well as its ties with the city's German-Jewish population and history. The building derives additional significance under Criterion C as an example of a type of building which characterized manufacturing enterprises in the early twentieth century. Its expansive open plan and provisions for ample light and air represent the state of the art in factory design in the period. The period of significance for the L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory extends from 1914, when the main portion of the building was constructed, to 1957, shortly after which date the company was sold to a national conglomerate.

Resource History and Historic Context:

Baltimore's German-Jewish Population and the Needle Trade

Baltimore was one of the five major ports that received passenger ships during the 19th and 20th centuries (along with Boston, New Orleans, New York and Philadelphia) and may have been the second-leading port of immigrant entry into the United States during the 1800s.[1] Of the thousands of immigrants to arrive in Baltimore, Irish (over a third) and German (over half) immigrants made up a substantial portion of the new population in the mid-19th century.[2] The numbers of new German arrivals increased particularly after the failed German Revolution and political unrest of 1848. In fact, the 1860s to the mid-1870s were the "heyday" of German Baltimore – with nearly all the immigrants arriving by steamship German-speaking, and numbers reaching 12,000 in 1868.[3] This included Germans from Bremen, as well as those from the newly formed German union and Austro-Hungarian Empire such as

Bohemian Catholics and Romanian and Polish Jews. The German immigrants built and developed German neighborhoods, newspapers, clubs, halls, churches, synagogues and schools.

They also established clothing manufactories. Among the early pioneers of Baltimore's garment trade were specifically German Jews who were skilled in and familiar with the tailoring industry.[4] (During the early part of the 20th century, an estimated 70 percent of Baltimore's Jewish community made its living directly from the clothing industry.[5]) A combination of having a large skilled population in the tailoring industry, as well as Baltimore's proximity and commercial and financial ties to the southern states, may have primed the city well for a successful garment industry. No industry would come to matter as much, in fact, to Baltimore's industrial growth as the manufacturing of men's ready-to-wear garments.[6] The demand for men's ready-to-wear clothing emerged in the mid-19th century. The increased urbanization of America in the 1800s had also increased people's concern about their clothing; factory workers who could not afford personal tailors wanted mainstream fashion clothing that could fit almost anyone and be afforded by anyone. In 1845 Brooks Brothers is believed to have introduced the first ready-to-wear men's suit in the United States; in 1850 the patent for the Singer sewing machine was approved.[7] These new concepts fueled and supplied a demand for men's clothing. Reasons for the rapid growth and success of men's garment manufacturing in Baltimore specifically included the large German Jewish population (who established the manufactories), the influx of Russian Jewish immigrants in the 1890s (who would work for the manufacturers), as well as the Southern market, (which purchased more than one-third of the clothes produced in Baltimore post-Civil War), the shift from home manufacturing to large-scale commercial production of clothing post-Civil War, and the "modest capitalization requirements" necessary for new entrepreneurs in the business.[8] In the 1860s Baltimore employed over 6,000 workers in the garment industry and 119 different men's-clothing establishments were in business.[9] By 1895, Baltimore dominated the Southern market (surpassing New York) and ranked fourth in the nation for production of men's garments.[10]

By 1900, the Baltimore ready-to-wear men's garment manufacturers were concentrated into two distinct areas of the city and featured distinct methods of employment. Petty entrepreneurs, known as 'sweaters,' operated contract shops that specialized in a few functions

of the manufacturing process. These typically paid their workers 20% less than factories and provided limited workspace, usually located in the rowhouses to the east of Baltimore's central business district. Large manufacturers and wholesale dealers, on the other hand, established large and mid-sized 'inside shops' or factories where employees completed all steps of garment production. Most of these factories developed in the area west of Baltimore's central business district, around Paca and Redwood Streets. These manufactories typically were "modern in organization and construction…adopted technological advances…and endorsed scientific approaches to increase efficiency."[11] The large Baltimore menswear manufacturers that would dominate the market in the 20th century and become "the five greatest men's clothing companies of the era" were well established by the turn of the century. These firms were: Henry Sonneborn Company, Strouse & Brothers, Schloss Brothers, J. Schoeneman, Inc. and L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Their owners all were German Jewish entrepreneurs.[12]

Levi Greif and the formation of L. Greif & Bro.

The development of L. Greif & Bro., Inc. is exemplary of Baltimore's older generation of German Jews who had "peddled and pinched and starved in the [18]50s," but succeeded and "owned the large garment factories and department stores…" [by the 1880s].[13] The development of the firm is also representative of the trend among Baltimore's men's-clothing establishments from being small shops, averaging fewer than ten workers (in the 1860s) to a 'factory system' at the turn of the 20th century in which manufacturers of men's clothing averaged 126 workers per firm.[14]

In 1851, Levi Greif (1837/38-1904), of Merchingen, in Baden, Germany emigrated to America, having both a maternal uncle already settled in Baltimore and having secured himself a position at the Shepherdstown, West Virginia branch of a Baltimore retail clothing and furnishing store. By 1859, Greif had been promoted to manager and was thus able to relocate to Baltimore City. He then spent some time working under his uncle, retail merchant Nathan Schloss on South Broadway. In 1859 Greif opened his own furnishing store on the first floor of 216 S. Broadway.[15] At that time, the remainder of his family, including his younger brother, Max, joined Levi in Baltimore. The furnishing store also specialized in the sale of men's overalls which Greif purchased from jobbers to sell.

Greif soon decided he would prefer to manufacture the overalls himself, and legend details that he secured his patterns by the "analytic method – pulling out the stitches of a pair of overalls in his store, noting just how they were cut and then adding certain developments of his own."[16] Greif sent his overall materials out to be stitched by tailors in their homes. Soon demand increased and Greif found himself selling overalls not only out of his own store, but also to other retail stores in Baltimore. In 1864, Max partnered with Levi and the firm *L. Greif & Bro.* was established. Their clothing specialty expanded to include men's cotton trousers and suits, the furnishings portion of the business having been abandoned. The business surpassed the confines of their S. Broadway location and over the course of the next twenty-some years, continued to expand. In about 1868 the firm relocated to three-story quarters on Baltimore Street near Charles Street, where it operated until ca. 1876, when it moved to another, slightly larger, three-story building at 10 Hanover Street. In 1886 the firm moved to a six-story building at 107 W. Baltimore Street. By this time, the 'house' had seven or eight salesman with a selling territory that included New England, and areas throughout Pennsylvania and south of Washington, D.C.[17] A ca. 1900 promotional piece described the firm at the time as a wholesale clothing manufacturer with "upwards of 250" employees: "The house has achieved the most enviable reputation, and is one of the most representative in its line."[18]

The firm remained at the W. Baltimore address until the Great Baltimore Fire of February 7, 1904 destroyed the building and all company records.[19] After the fire, headquarters was re-established at 42 S. Paca Street in Baltimore's 'loft district.' It was in this building that in August 1904 Levi Greif was killed in an elevator accident. The business community was "shocked" at this event, and remembered Greif as one who "stood high as a business man and took a lively interest in all things that tended to advance the interests of the city."[20] He was prominently identified with all of the local Hebrew charities; was treasurer of the Hebrew Hospital and Asylum; a member of the Hebrew Benevolent Society, and attended Eutaw Place Temple.

The firm continued after his death under the partnership of brother, Max, and Levi's two sons, Simon and David L.

In 1908, due to inadequate space, the firm moved its manufacturing departments from the Paca building to a seven-story building at Eutaw and German (later renamed Redwood) Streets; this building proved to be too small and the firm again expanded into 20,000 square feet of the adjacent, 'Hamburger Building.'[21]

Shortly thereafter, the firm was compelled to expand yet again.

The N. Milton and Ashland avenues Manufactory -- "The Griffon Model Plant"

By this time, the word, "GRIFFON," coupled with the monogram, "L G & BRO" with the pictorial representation of chains below a shield had been registered (in 1903) with the U.S. Patent Office, securing the firm's use of it as the 'label' or 'brand.'[22] (Greif is the German word for gryphon; eventually, the mythical beast and word 'GRIFFON' melded into the symbol for Greif clothing.)

In ca. 1914-1915 the L. Greif & Bro. "Griffon Model Plant" –the N. Milton and Ashland avenues Manufactory - was built.

Deed records indicate that Max Greif actually had the northeast Baltimore property upon which the factory was constructed since as early as 1911. In March of that year he deeded the property to Frank Novak (a local residential developer). On January 16, 1912, however, Frank Novak deeded the property back to Max Greif *et al.* A permit was granted on January 10, 1912 to Mommonier & Sorrell for the erection of the three-story, brick and stone L. Greif & Bro. Manufactory. The architects were Frank & Kavanaugh and estimated cost of construction was $40,000.[23] (Architect Benjamin Frank was the grandson of German Jewish immigrants.[24])

Completely surrounded by rowhouses at the time of its opening, the Griffon Model Plant marketed its residential locale as one of the building's positive aspects, the company likely being concerned with the poor conditions at local sweatshops that the Bureau of Industrial Statistics was reporting at that time. Moreover, non-unionized garment firms were receiving much publicity, not necessarily

positive. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America union (ACWA) had recently successfully settled (in 1914) with Baltimore's Sonneborn Company (one of Greif's competitors) for workers' rights. The ACWA had appealed to Henry Sonneborn's Jewish culture and religion (which was shared with the Russian, Polish and Lithuanian workers), complete with strikers picketing Sonneborn's Temple to show the contrast of their living conditions with those of Sonneborn's affluent German Jewish neighbors. Sonneborn's settlement included agreement to introduction of a pension plan, improved safety features including fire-drills, and a medical department staff for employees.[25]

Similar benefits to the above were described in a ca. 1915 Greif booklet about the Griffon Model Plant intended for perspective employees.

"The Griffon Model Plant is a great, splendid, new Manufactory – a house of glass, of daylight, sunshine and fresh air, of recreation and pleasure…the third, the latest and the largest of the homes of the famous Griffon Clothes for Men and Young Men – a place as unlike factories you've seen and heard about…It was built for the health, happiness, safety and convenience of those who help to make Griffon Clothes one of the best lines of clothing in America…the Model Plant is located in the northeastern section of Baltimore – out where the air is clear and pure, away from the soot and grime and noise, in a neighborhood of spic and span Baltimore homes, with not a factory or tenement in sight."[26]

Throughout the booklet, the firm emphasizes the high degree of sanitation and numerous safety measures utilized at the factory. The building was described *as "nearly all windows on all four sides"* with no artificial light needed except in winter, which *"prevents eye strain."* As an *"up-to-date working home"* the Manufactory featured *"sanitary drinking fountains," "sanitary toilets," "shower baths,"* and individual *"sanitary lockers."* The building was described as fireproof, featuring a sprinkler system, five exits, and panic proof stairways. Employee benefits included an Emergency Hospital (room) on the first floor, a kitchen and lunch counter where employees could purchase food, and separate male and female dining rooms and recreation halls. *"All work and no play isn't good for*

anybody," states the booklet. As a result, the plant is said to have provided the men's recreation hall with billiard and pool tables, chess, checkers, a gymnasium apparatus, whereas the women were provided with a piano and jumping ropes. The area immediately to the east of the building – a vacant lot at the time of its construction (until 1921 when the Addition was constructed) – was described as the *"recreation grounds"* where employees could play "*quoits, handball, basketball, tennis, etc.*" during lunch or evening hours. Hoping to quell the public's fears of working in a garment factory, the booklet further states, *"Parents can send their sons and daughters to work in the Model Plant and feel assured that not only are they working under the best conditions imaginable, but that their physical, metal and moral welfare is being attentively looked after."*

L. Greif & Bro. and Labor Relations

L. Greif & Bro., however, did not escape the textile employee unrest, resulting unionization and union battles that were prevalent on a national and local scale at the time. In the early part of the 20th century, workers nationwide were demanding eight-hour work days and the right to organize; the varying unions struggled over leadership, membership and solidification.

In 1913, 300 workers spontaneously struck at Greif's German Street factory, a result of rumors that the Greif firm was doing scab work for New York companies under strike at the same time. The Greif strikers demanded a nine- rather than ten-hour day and increased wages. Greif at first refused to negotiate with the strikers or union (UGW) representatives; the firm brought in tailors from elsewhere in order to continue operations and hired private detectives to deter union talk in the factory. A three-day "riot" in the streets of Baltimore ultimately brought Greif to the negotiation table. He conceded an adjustment to the work week, and promised to negotiate further disputes with an employees committee.[27]

Shortly thereafter, at the national level, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), which was thought to have strong Socialist ties (and therefore considered a liberal organization), formed in 1914 as a result of the revolt of two-thirds of the conservative

AFL's (American Federation of Labor) affiliated United Garment Workers (UGW) members. The AFL refused to recognize the ACWA and the ACWA and the UGW, as a result, spent the coming years 'battling' for membership numbers and recognition. Through the 1910s, the ACWA was able to establish a stronghold in Chicago, but had difficulties doing such in Baltimore. Baltimore was a key and desirable city, having the largest garment industry next to New York and Philadelphia. L. Greif & Bro., along with the other major local menswear manufacturers, including Sonneborn and Strouse experienced ACWA and UGW battles for membership (and associated workers' rights) firsthand.

Despite the Griffon Model Plant accolades and the pleasurable features promised in Greif publications, neither employee unrest nor ACWA involvement at the Greif factories subsided. In 1916 the ACWA initiated attempts to unionize the firm. Greif managers, however, rejected the ACWA and its goals, preferring to recognize only cutters who were members of the UGW and those of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) (both of which were trying to prevent the expansion of the ACWA). To further dissuade employee interest in the ACWA, a Greif company foreman visited female workers' homes to warn the girls' parents and family members that the danger of female workers being lured into prostitution rings under the guise of unionization was real; the foreman further stated that the company had started a "mutual aid society for the girls," and would provide safe Bohemian folk dances in the evenings when union meetings were held.[28] Additional measures to dissuade women from joining the ACWA included assigning women who joined it less work (thereby affecting their weekly income which was based on quantity) and Greif also fired 20 women after they joined the ACWA in January of 1916 - setting an example for other would-be ACWA members.

On February 2, 1916 the ACWA called a strike at the Griffon Model Plant. 3,500 clothing workers, including sympathy strikers from Sonneborn's and residents from the surrounding neighborhood congregated outside the N. Milton Avenue factory. Seventy police officers were sent to break up the strike, arresting 95 females who were charged with "disorderly conduct" or failure to "move along;" the crowd reportedly expanded to 10,000 with shouts of encouragement to those arrested.[29] The Greif firm then signed an agreement with the ACWA, similar to that which Sonneborn had signed in 1914, however, shortly thereafter, the firm signed an alternative

agreement with the UGW which was meant to ensure "peaceful conditions" at the Greif factories and which was agreed to by approximately 600 workers. The ACWA counteracted with a second strike that subsequently lasted 4 months. During that time the Greif strikers (several hundred women) were under the leadership of Dorothy Jacobs Bellanco (women's ACWA labor leader). In late May of that year, however, because the striking women were desperately poor and needed the income, which the ACWA could not provide, they returned to work at the Model Plant.[30]

L. Greif & Bro., Inc., 1920-1959

The Greif firm was incorporated in 1917, and despite the labor unrest, resisted ACWA unionization and prospered, even as other local firms faced hard-times coming in the 1920s and 1930s. A 1920 sudden drop in men's ready-to-wear products caused turmoil in Baltimore's clothing industry. Strouse & Bros. liquidated their inventory in 1920; the Sonneborn Company would finish liquidating its entire stock in the summer of 1931. Greif, however, (and competitor J. Schoeneman) prevailed and because of its strength through the 1920s and later the 1930s became a "national leader of medium-priced summer clothing," along with Schoeneman.[31] In 1925, Greif constructed a new and larger administrative headquarters building on Homeland Avenue in northern Baltimore. A 1925 stock sales report stated that the company at the time had expanded its operations beyond Maryland, operating "15 modern factories' in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania in which approximately 4,500 people are employed."[32] During the '20s and '30s, both Greif and Schoeneman provided retailers confidence in the product and price and "pioneered extended non-penalty credit terms" for retailers. Clothing sold by the two firms "four to six months before scheduled delivery was sold without a quoted price. As delivery dates neared, prices were established which reflected the current market value…" -- this method allowed the retailer to sell a considerable amount of merchandise received before invoices for goods became due.[33] Merchants realized that Griffon line was salable at a substantial profit at moderate prices.[34] Greif continued to remain nonunion. In 1932, another strike by the ACWA was called with little success. In 1933 Greif was the "second largest manufacturer of men's clothing in the United States."[35] That same year, the United States government charged the company with noncompliance with National Recovery Administration (NRA)

regulations (which included minimum wages). Greif sought an injunction against the NRA for interfering with its wages and was in turn, denied the NRA's 'seal of approval' – the Blue Eagle. As a result, retailers cancelled orders; Greif was forced to abide by the NRA wage ruling.[36] L. Greif & Bro., Inc. endured another lawsuit in 1937 to 1939 when the ACWA alleged that the firm sponsored and dominated its Westminster, Maryland factory 'Carroll Workers' Association.' The ACWA filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) upon which the NLRB ordered the Carroll Workers' Association to disband. Greif filed suit against the NLRB; the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth district overruled the NLRB's order in a unanimous decision.[37] Once again, Greif defeated the ACWA – until 1943 after additional years of persistent ACWA activity.

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. emerged through the World War II years with profits in excess of $15 million, as a result of uniform production for the War, although the firm was forced to reduce the number of its Homeland Avenue employees from 1,030 to 870.[38] In the late 1940s, still considered "one of the world's largest men's clothing manufacturers," Greif sought to expand its retail outlets, rather than relying on Macy's which had been its largest outlet.[39] In 1947, Greif secured a $5,000,000 deal to furnish Gimbel Brothers, New York with 36,000 apparel units annually for five years. The deal would supply Gimbel with a continuous supply of worsted suits worth $50/piece. Despite the deal and the stature of the Greif firm in menswear clothing production, L. Greif & Bro., Inc., including all 13 of its factories, was sold to a national conglomerate, Genesco in 1959. Irvin Greif remained president and David Greif II followed, heading the Genesco apparel division for a few years, before becoming executive vice-president of ironically, J. Schoeneman. By 1971, the Griffon Model Plant was operating as a warehouse and offices for the English-American Tailoring Company, a subsidiary. The building's property ownership card indicates that the property was transferred to the City of Baltimore (Mayor and City Council) in 1979. The building for a time was used by Marlenn Corp., makers of synthetic fragrances, but has been largely vacant since ca. 1985. Meanwhile, the 'L. Greif & Brother' designer-label replaced the affordable Griffon label, but Greif remained a Baltimore presence, in label only, until 1983 when Genesco closed all of its Baltimore operations, moving to Bridgewater, Virginia.[40]

In mid-1998 the Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition, Inc., a nonprofit partnership acquired the Manufactory with the intention of rehabilitating the building for use as new sources of employment or services for community residents.

Notes to Section 8:

[1] Quick Facts. "The Baltimore Immigration Project." <http://www.immigrationbaltimore.com/quick_facts.htm>. Accessed March 1, 2006.
[2] Sherry Olson, Baltimore – The Building of an American City, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 118.
[3] *Ibid.*, 179-180.
[4] Tailoring was one of the few livelihoods Jews were permitted to pursue in Germany, having lived under such restrictions since the 15th century. See: Timeline. "Broken Threads: From Aryanization to Cultural Loss – the Destruction of the Jewish Fashion Industry in Germany and Austria." Vancouver Holocaust Education Center. <http://www.chgs.umn.edu/Educational_Resources/Curriculum/Broken_Threads/Timeline/timeline.html.> Accessed March 2, 2006. See also "Pins and Needles," *Baltimore City Paper*, 7 Oct. 1998; and Encyclopedia of American Industries, Volume One: Manufacturing Industries, 3rd ed., s.v. "Men's and Boy's Suits, Coats, and Overcoats."
[5] Olson, 280.
[6] Jo Ann E. Argersinger. Making the Amalgamated: Gender, Ethnicity, and Class in the Baltimore Clothing Industry, 1899-1939. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 9.
[7] Encyclopedia of American Industries, Volume One: Manufacturing Industries, 3rd ed., s.v. "Men's and Boy's Suits, Coats, and Overcoats."
[8] Argersinger, 10.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] Philip Kahn, Jr. A Stitch in Time: The Four Seasons of Baltimore's Needle Trades. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1996), 109.
[13] Olson, 231.
[14] Argersinger, 10-11.
[15] See various obituary newspaper clippings available in the *L. Greif and Family Vertical File*, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland. Some discrepancies in the early life of Greif are visible in the various obituaries, including his year of birth, age at arrival in America and the firm name of his West Virginia employer.
[16] "L. Greif and Brother Incorporated," Credit. II: 219, (6 April 1925), 2; see also, Milford H. Whitehall, "L. Greif & Bro., Inc.," typewritten document, dated 1935, located in *L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Vertical File*, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] Typewritten document, n.d., located in *L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Vertical File*, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.
[19] The Great Fire of 1904 raged through Baltimore's business district for 36 hours after a blaze began in the basement of the Hurst Building on German Street. Seventy-two fire companies from Baltimore and as far away as New York and Altoona, Pa. assisted in putting the blaze out. The fire burned 140 acres, destroying over 1500 structures and some 2500 businesses, including the Greif building. Miraculously, only one death resulted from the blaze.

[20] Various obituary newspaper clippings available in the *L. Greif and Family Vertical File*, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.
[21] "L. Greif and Brother Incorporated," Credit. II: 219, (6 April 1925), 2. The 'Hamburger Building' is presumably the former Isaac Hamburger & Sons Building at N. Hanover and W. Baltimore Streets.
[22] Whitehall, n.p. According to Whitehall, the firm had been using the GRIFFON name since 1892.
[23] *Baltimore Sun*, 11 Jan. 1912.
[24] Tercentenary History of Maryland, Vol. III (Chicago and Baltimore: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1925, pp. 713-714.
[25] Argersinger, 43.
[26] For all quoted descriptions of the N. Milton Ave. Manufactory, see L. Greif & Bro., Inc. *"What the Work-and-Pleasure Plant Offers You,"* a ca. 1915 company promotional booklet, available at the Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.
[27] Argersinger, 36-39.
[28] Argersinger, 49-51.
[29] *Ibid.*, 50-52.
[30] *Ibid.*, 53-55.
[31] Kahn, 156.
[32] *"L. Greif & Bro. Company Stock Sales after the Company was Incorporated in 1917,"* 31 Dec. 1925. Document available in the *L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Vertical File*, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives.
[33] Kahn, 156.
[34] Whitehall, n.p.
[35] Kahn, 158.
[36] *Ibid.*, 158-161.
[37] Various newspaper clippings in *Greif, L. and Brother, Inc. Vertical File*, Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Library, Baltimore, Maryland.
[38] Argersinger, 178.
[39] "Big Gimbel Order for Greif," 22 Mar. 22, 1947, newspaper clipping in *Greif, L. and Brother, Inc. Vertical File*, Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Library, Baltimore, Maryland.
[40] Kahn, 191-192; See also *Baltimore Sun*, 19 Dec. 1959 and 4 Mar. 1971.

Major Bibliographical References:

Argersinger, Jo Ann E. Making the Amalgamated: Gender, Ethnicity, and Class in the Baltimore Clothing Industry, 1899-1939. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.

Baltimore Sun

Baltimore City Land Records Office, Baltimore, Maryland.

Baltimore City Paper

Encyclopedia of American Industries, Volume One: Manufacturing Industries, 3rd ed., S.v. "Men's and Boy's Suits, Coats, and Overcoats."

Greif, L. and Brother, Inc. Vertical File, Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

L. Greif and Family Vertical File, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.

L. Greif & Bro., *The House that Greif Built*," 1918 booklet, available at the Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Vertical File, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. *"What the Work-and-Pleasure Plant Offers You,"* ca. 1915 booklet, available at the Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.

"L. Greif and Brother Incorporated," Credit. II: 219 (6 April 1925): 2-3.

Olson, Sherry. Baltimore – The Building of an American City. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.

Philip Kahn, Jr. A Stitch in Time: The Four Seasons of Baltimore's Needle Trades. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1996.

Sanborn maps, 1914-1915, 1951-1952.

On-line Resources

Quick Facts. "The Baltimore Immigration Project." http://www.immigrationbaltimore.com/quick_facts.htm. Accessed March 1, 2006.

Timeline. "Broken Threads: From Aryanization to Cultural Loss – the Destruction of the Jewish Fashion Industry in Germany and Austria." Vancouver Holocaust Education Center. http://www.chgs.umn.edu/Educational_Resources/Curriculum/Broken_Threads/Timeline/timeline.html. Accessed March 1, 2006.

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is described as Ward 7, Section 1, Block 1592, Lot 54 in the land records of Baltimore City, Maryland.

Boundary Justification:

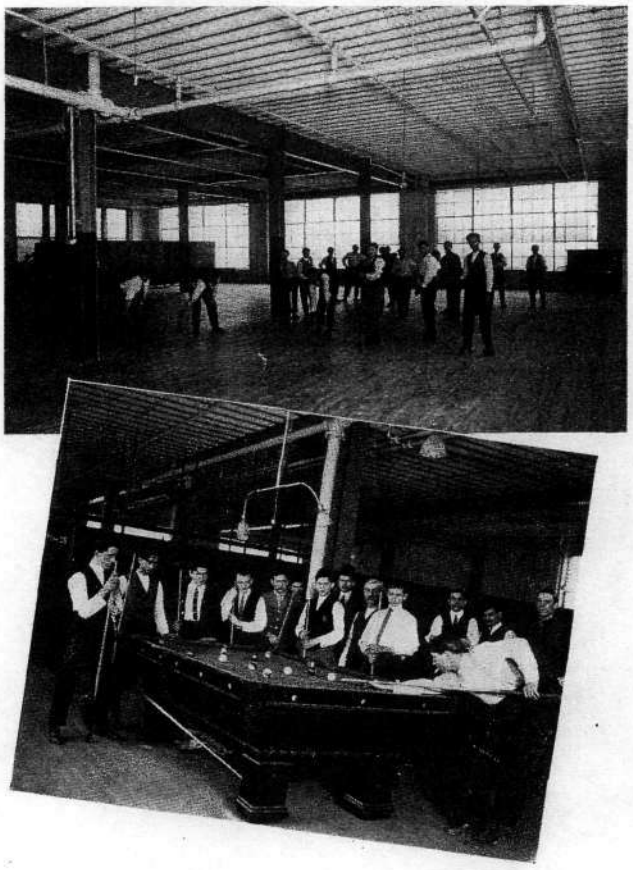
The boundary represents the single city lot historically associated with the resource.

B-5140

WORK ROOMS

L. Greif & Bro. Inc., Manufactory – Interior, ca. 1915
Work Rooms (third floor at top)
(Credit: What the Work-and-Pleasure Plant offers you, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, 1988.104)

B-5140



MEN'S RECREATION HALL AND BILLIARD TABLE

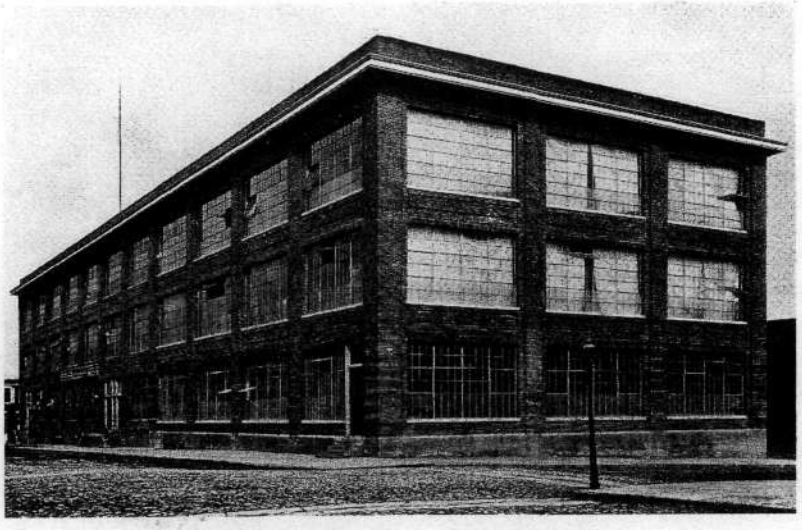
L. Greif & Bro. Inc., Manufactory – Interior, ca. 1915
Men's Recreation Hall and Billiard Table
(Credit: What the Work-and-Pleasure Plant offers you, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, 1988.104)

B-5140

EMERGENCY HOSPITAL AND PLAYGROUND

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory,
East elevation, north end, ca. 1915
(Credit: What the Work-and-Pleasure Plant offers you, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, 1988.104)

B-5140



THE GRIFFON MODEL PLANT

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory, ca. 1915

(Credit: What the Work-and-Pleasure Plant offers you, Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, 1988.104)

B-5140

ITS time to look to your Fall clothes needs. And we're especially ready to serve. Your wardrobe can be an expense or an investment. Its the latter only when it combines good looks with long service. And its the "investment" character of GRIFFON CLOTHES that has earned their wide popularity. You may be always sure of right style—careful, thorough tailoring—and the kind of service that makes you congratulate yourself on your choice.

THE STANFORD Overcoat shown to the left above, is one of the attractive double-breasted ideas for Fall—it has both warmth and style.

THE FIAT belted Overcoat has that impression of "bigness" so much sought in the coat for rough weather wear.

THE STRAND (in the center) has the right touch for the man who wants to be well but not conspicuously dressed.

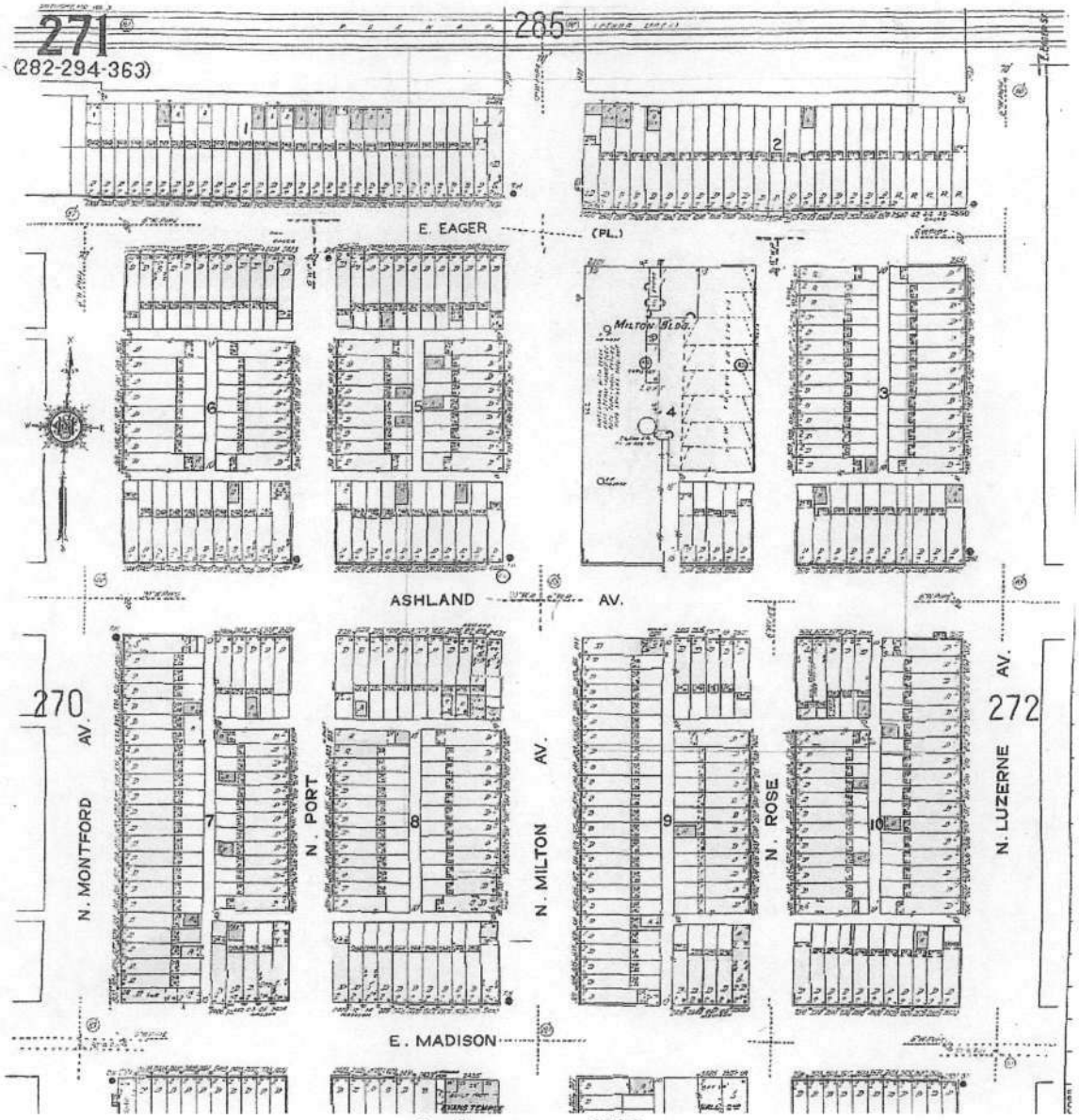
THE BENTON (at the right) has the "style atmosphere" younger men will favor.

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. 1925 Catalog excerpt

This 1925 catalog excerpt shows some of the Fall overcoat and men's suit options available at the time. The 'Griffon' label symbol is located in the upper right hand corner.

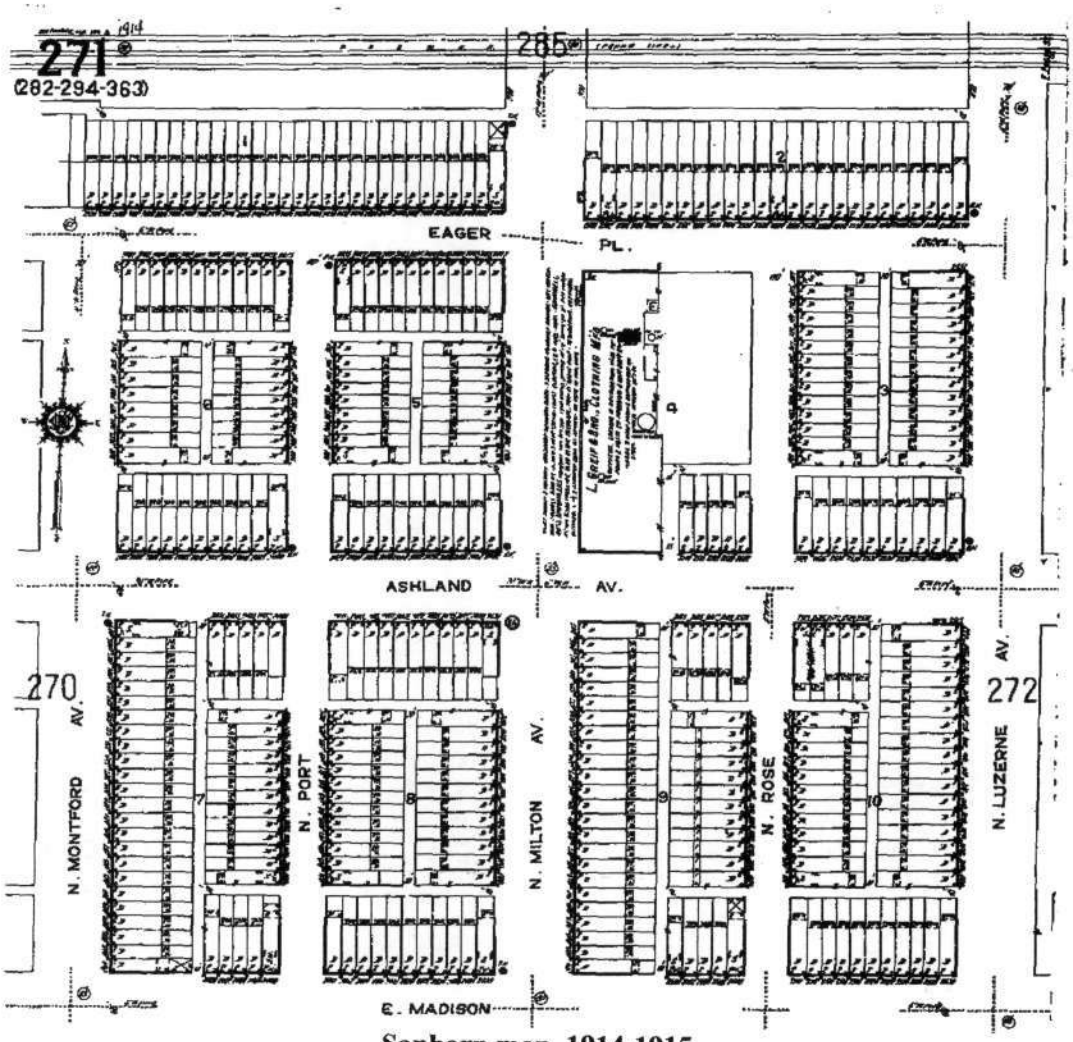
(Credit: from Griffon Clothes, 1925, brochure available at the Jewish Museum of Maryland Archives, Baltimore)

B-5140



Sanborn map, 1952
L. Greif & Bro. Inc. Manufactory
(referred to on the map as the Milton Building)
Showing the 1921 Addition at Eager Place and N. Rose

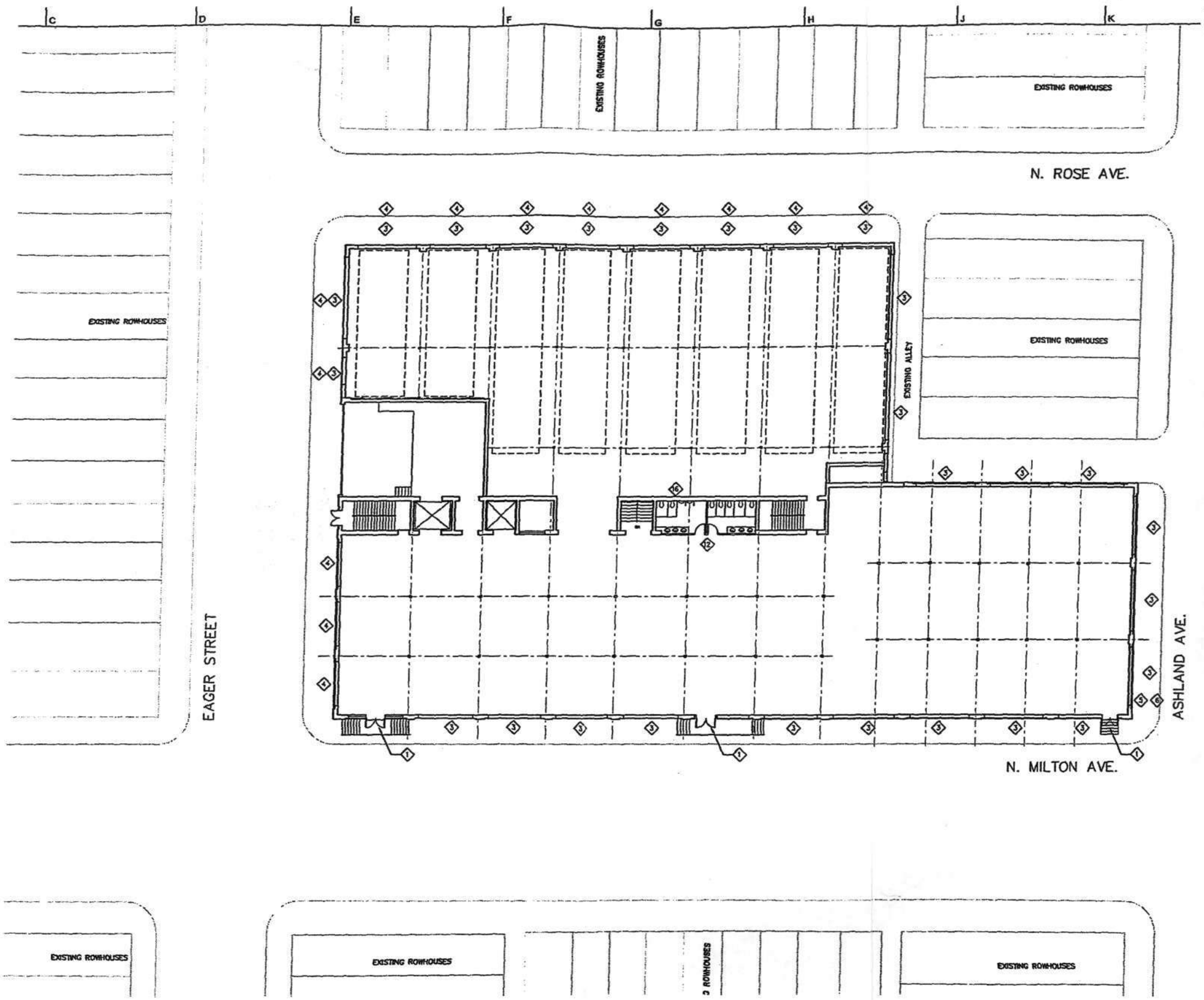
B-5140



Sanborn map, 1914-1915
Showing L. Greif & Bro. Clothing Manufacturing
(The Griffon Model Plant)
at N. Milton, between Eager Place and Ashland Avenue.
The area immediate adjacent to the building is vacant.

B-5140

L. Greif & Bro., Inc. Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
National Register Nomination
Existing Site Plan/First Floor Plan



901 NORTH MILTON AVENUE

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

hord | coplan | macht

HORD COPLAN MACHT, INC.
ARCHITECTURE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
PLANNING
INTERIOR DESIGN

750 E. Pratt Street Suite 1100
Baltimore MD 21202
410 837 7211
410 837 4530 fax
www.hcm2.com

CONSULTANTS

SEAL

DRAWN BY: CHECKED:

NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE

REVISIONS

SHEET TITLE

EXISTING SITE PLAN/ FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE	DATE	PROJ.#
AS NOTED	03.17.06	25059.00

PROJECT PHASE

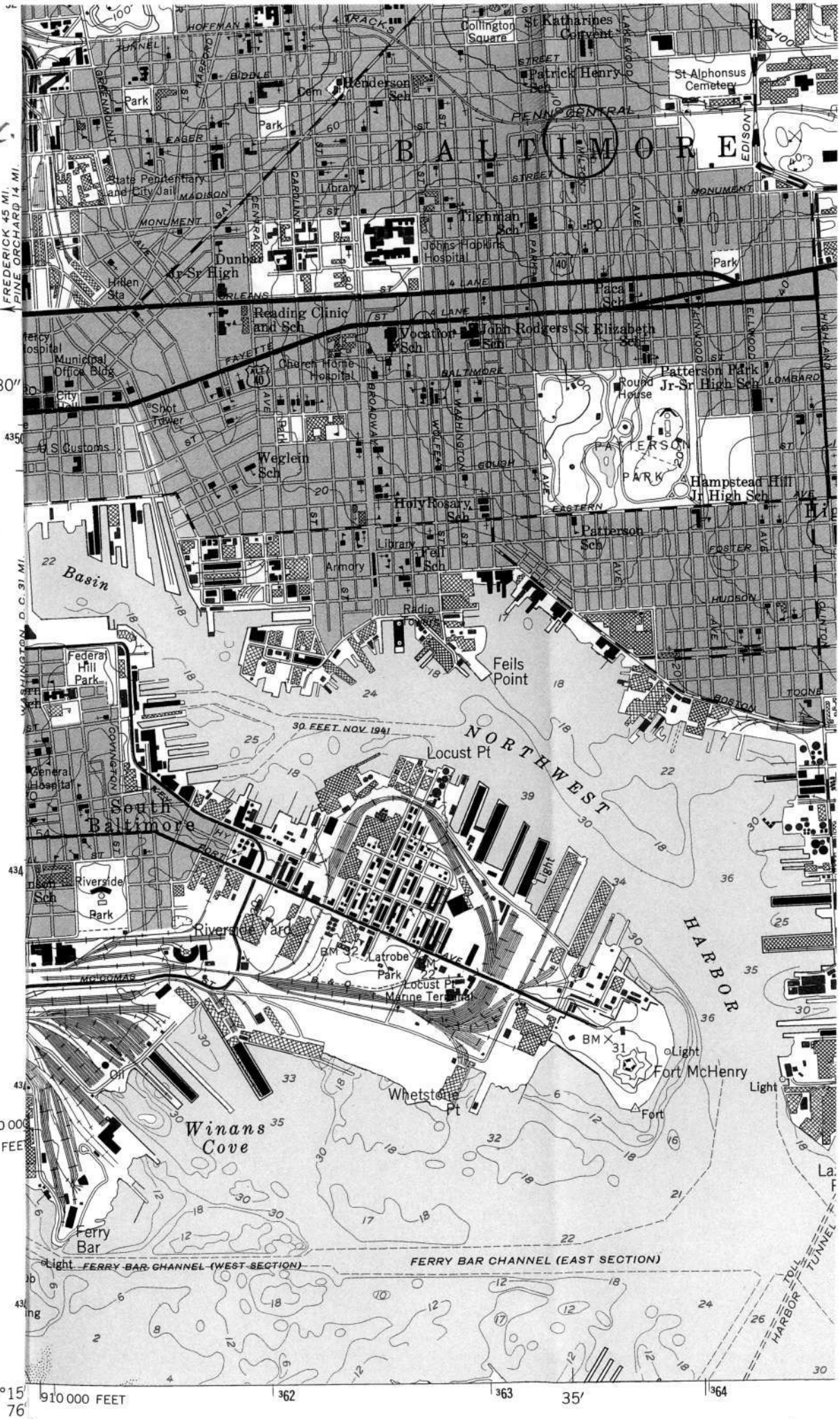
Preliminary Design
Not For Construction

DRAWING #

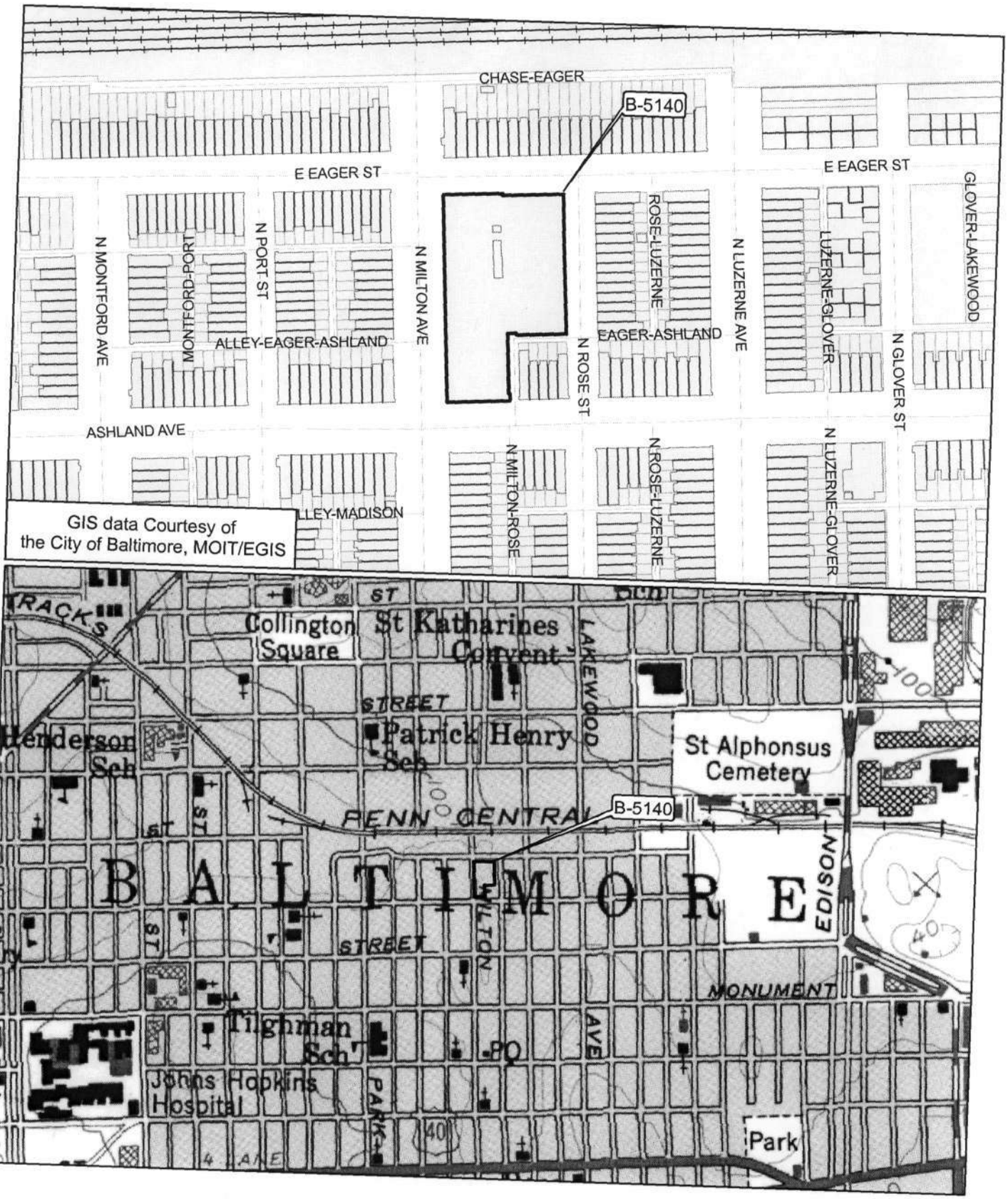
1 EXISTING SITE PLAN/ FIRST FLOOR PLAN

N

B-5140
L. GREIF & BRO., INC.
MANUFACTORY
BALTIMORE
CITY, MD
18-363543-
4351201



B-5140
L. Greif & Brothers Manufactory Building
901 N. Milton Avenue
Block 1592, Lot 054
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.



STOP

B-5140

L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory

Baltimore, Maryland

MacRostie History Advisors, LLC

West Elevation at southwest corner

#1

EPSON

ASHLAND

B-5140

L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory

Baltimore City, Maryland

MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC

West elevation at southwest corner, facing north up N. Milton Ave.

#2

B-5140
L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
South elevation, view northwest
#3

B-5140
L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
North and west elevations, view southeast
#4

DO NOT
ENTER

B-5140
L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
1921 Addition, east and north elevations
#6

B-5140
L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
North elevation (1921 Addition at left), view southwest
#6

B-5140
L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
East elevation, south end, view northwest
#7

B-5140
L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
Northeast stairwell
#8

B-5140

L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory

Baltimore City, Maryland

MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC

First floor, facing south

#9

B-5140
L. Greif + Bro., Inc Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
Second floor, facing southwest
#10

EPSON
Epson Professional Paper
Epson Professional Paper
EPSON

B-5140
L. Greif + Bro., Inc. Manufactory
Baltimore City, Maryland
MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
Third floor, facing northwest
#11