NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

B-5143

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

EASEMENT

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 Polish Home Hall

other names

2. Location

street & number 4416 Fairhaven Ave. ☐ not for publication

city or town Baltimore ☐ vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Independent City code 510 zip code 21226-1243

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 11-9-07

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)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [x] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		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)

GOVERNMENT/city hall
GOVERNMENT/fire station
SOCIAL/meeting hall
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/
manufacturing facility
RELIGION/church school
RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater
RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH CENTURY AND 20TH CENTURY
REVIVALS/Beaux Arts, Classical

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Brick, Block
roof Slate
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)

ARCHITECTURE
ETHNIC HERITAGE/EUROPEAN

Period of Significance

Ca. 1905-1957

Significant Dates

Ca. 1905
1925

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Eastern European

Architect/Builder

unknown

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:

Polish Home Hall
Name of Property

Baltimore (City), Maryland
County and State

B-5143

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre Curtis Bay, MD quad

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	362765	4342725
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 Kate Mahood, Architectural Historian, with Ann G. Giroux
Organization Mahood & Associates, LLC date April 22, 2005
street & number 510 Pafel Rd. telephone 410-266-5608
city or town Annapolis state MD zip code 21401

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
street & number telephone
city or town state zip code

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:

Polish Home Hall is a large two-story masonry vernacular Beaux Arts style building bearing classical features and symmetry constructed ca. 1905 as the city hall, fire station, and meeting hall for the small community of Curtis Bay within the southern city limits of Baltimore, Maryland.

Polish Home Hall retains much of its original architectural character and integrity. The exterior remains substantially unchanged in its masonry, fenestration, and detailing, and the building retains its general roof form, deep projecting eaves, and chimney. Numerous large windows allow ample light into interior spaces characterized by high ceilings finished in pressed metal. Early lighting fixtures survive on the second level and wainscoting and other decorative elements are found throughout the building. Some changes were made ca. 1919 when the building was converted from its original function as city hall and fire station to use for the manufacture of sailcloth. The east elevation entrance for the fire wagon was presumably altered at this time, when the firehouse ceased operations.

General Description:

Polish Home Hall is a two-story masonry building constructed ca. 1905 in a vernacular interpretation of the Beaux-Arts style. The building is rectangular in plan, two bays wide across the north and south facades and five bays wide across the east and west facades. Access is primarily through two pairs of double doors in the south façade. Brickwork is laid in seven-course American bond. A red painted belt course encircles the base. The building has a low-pitched hipped roof with an overhanging soffit; the roof is covered in asphalt shingles.

The south façade is symmetrical with a pair of large entrances with glazed transoms and sidelights at the center of the first-floor level. While the door on the left has been modified extensively, the door at the right side of the façade contains original detailing and wood framing. The transom above each of the doors has a single pane of clear glass. The narrow sidelights have similar glazing and framing and are extended through the transom area. On the second floor, there is one large window opening above each of these entrances. Contained within each of the second-floor openings is a grouping of three wooden double-hung sash windows. Below each of the window openings is a projecting sheet metal sill, supported by two small metal brackets.

The corners of the building are classically proportioned to anchor the façade, and contain symmetrical features on both floor levels. On the first floor, there is a narrow double-hung wooden window on the left side only. The corresponding area on the right side has evidence of

an unknown element formerly attached to the building, visible near the header level on the wall. At the second-floor level, aligned above the narrow first-floor openings, there are circular windows. The building is capped with a metal cornice supported on five symmetrical brackets.

The two five-bay side facades are similar in proportions and detailing. The east façade is the more public of the two. The architectural details match those of the principal (south) façade very closely. The windows on the first floor level are larger and taller openings with framing that corresponds to the larger door openings on the front façade. There are matching circular windows at the corners of the second-floor level. The front-most, southeast corner has a narrow double hung window; the corresponding opening in the northeast corner holds a door providing access to the rear stairwell in the building. The openings on this façade have been modified from larger openings which originally accommodated the wagon-mounted fire tank.

The west side has matching windows on both levels. A fire escape has been added at the front corner. The first window at the second-floor level has also been altered to provide an additional means of egress from the large community assembly space at that level. There are no circular windows on the west façade. An exterior brick chimney rises at the southwest corner.

The rear (north) façade contains a one-story addition, constructed of concrete masonry units with brick veneer on the east and west sides. The addition has a low pitched shed roof covered in asphalt shingles. There are four small sliding metal windows located just below the gutter line. On the main building the north façade has a single double-hung wood window at the second floor level at the top of the rear stair area.

Polish Home Hall retains much of its original architectural character and integrity. The exterior retains its general form and massing, roof form, projecting eaves, and chimney; the exterior also retains original masonry, window arrangement, circular windows, window trim and framing details, metal brackets and decorative medallions. The south doors, door frames, and surrounding lights were altered recently. However, sufficient original woodwork remains intact to provide a basis for restoration of these few missing elements. Additionally, from ca. 1905 to ca. 1919 the building was used as a volunteer firehouse; the east elevation entrance for the fire wagon presumably was altered when this function ceased.

The interior fabric of the building is similarly intact. Polish Home Hall still has the original plan configuration and circulation patterns, including stairs, are generally intact on both levels. On the first level, preserved features include original columns, wainscoting, window trim and flooring. Preserved features on the second level include pressed metal ceiling, wainscoting, lighting, graining on doors, and original raised stage.

Summary Statement of Significance:

Polish Home Hall derives significance under Criterion A for its association with the Polish immigrant community in the Baltimore area. Beginning around the turn of the 20th century, the Curtis Bay community received an influx of immigrants arriving from Eastern Europe to work in the new industrial concerns operating in the area. Constructed ca. 1905 to serve the combined functions of town hall, volunteer firehouse, and community center, the building occupies an entire block within the small community, and represents a substantial and highly-visible institution. In 1925 United Polish Societies purchased the building and named it Polish Home Hall. Polish Home Hall was central to the Polish experience in Curtis Bay. A Polish school, which had been started in St. Athanasius Church in 1909, was moved into the Hall in 1925 and operated there into the 1930s. The property continued to function as a social, educational, and political center for Curtis Bay's Polish community into the 1970s. The property derives additional significance under Criterion C for its architectural character, exhibiting a vernacular interpretation of Beaux-Arts design through its classical symmetry and detailing. The period of significance, ca. 1905-1957, extends from the presumed construction date of the building to a date fifty years in the past.

Resource History and Historic Context:

Polish Home Hall is an early community building located in the heart of the hamlet of Curtis Bay in South Baltimore. The community of Curtis Bay existed within Anne Arundel County prior to its annexation by Baltimore City in 1919. Over the course of the 20th century, Curtis Bay has melded with several other hamlets including Brooklyn, Fairfield and Wagner's Point (also known as East Brooklyn). The present Brooklyn-Curtis Bay community encompasses most of the peninsula south of the Patapsco River.

Defying the efforts of land speculators, Curtis Bay remained sparsely populated and undeveloped until the turn of the 20th century. At that time railroad lines were extended to the area, streetcar service to Baltimore City commenced, and the toll was lifted on the bridge that connected Curtis Bay to Baltimore. Industry arrived in 1897 followed by rapid residential and industrial development. An influx of Eastern European immigrants contributed to rapid population growth.

During the period 1900-1920 a series of community buildings were constructed in Curtis Bay. Local tradition holds that the building which would become Polish Home Hall was constructed under the aegis of Anne Arundel County sometime between 1905 and 1909. The first fire company in the area was organized in 1907, and a Baltimore Sun article dated March 7, 1909

mentions "a large new town hall". Sanborn maps dated 1914-15 identify the building as a volunteer firehouse.

Curtis Bay's firehouse was furnished with a hand-pulled, wagon-mounted fire tank. The community firehouse in neighboring Brooklyn had a horse-drawn tank. When Baltimore City annexed the area in 1919, the volunteer fire company was superseded by the City fire department. The obsolete firehouse was sold to Wise Brothers, Inc., a sailcloth manufacturing company. A new modern firehouse was constructed just one block away at Filbert and Pennington in 1923, just one block away from the Polish Home Hall.

In 1925 the building was acquired by the United Polish Societies, an umbrella organization consisting of the Thaddeus Kosciusko Society, the St. Stanislaus Society, the Polish National Alliance, and the Holy Rosary Society. Along with St. Athanasius Church, Polish Home Hall was central to the Polish experience in Curtis Bay.

New Polish immigrants to the Curtis Bay area began creating formal organizations as early as 1906, when the now-defunct St. Stanislaus Kostka B.I.M. was organized. In 1912, Reverend Paul J. Sandjali of St. Athanasius Church, himself a recent immigrant, helped form The Hugo Kollatj Group 1468 of the Polish National Alliance (PNA). The PNA was a beneficial organization that provided financial assistance in the event of death or injury, and supported Polish schools like the one that operated at St. Athanasius Church from 1909-1924 and subsequently at Polish Home Hall from 1925-ca. 1934. The church, the Polish school, the social and political organizations, and Polish Home Hall were all woven together, and the Hall continued as a center of such activities into the 1970s, when the demographic character of the community began to change.

Polish Home Hall was then left in the care of Catherine and Casimir "Caz" Benicewicz. Catherine's father had been involved in the 1925 purchase of the building, and had been Secretary of the United Polish Societies for many years. Casimir was at one time Treasurer of the United Polish Societies. Catherine had attended Polish school first at St. Athanasius' and then at Polish Home Hall.

The Brooklyn and Curtis Bay Coalition (BCBC), Inc. intends to rehabilitate the building for community use.

Major Bibliographical References:

Archival Sources

Diehlman-Hayward Files. Maryland Historical Society. Baltimore, Maryland.

Land Records of Anne Arundel County. Annapolis, Maryland.

Land Records of Baltimore City. Baltimore, Maryland

Maryland Polonia Collection. Langsdale Library, University of Baltimore. Baltimore, Maryland.

Vertical Files. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, Maryland Room. Baltimore, Maryland.

Vertical Files. Maryland Historical Society. Baltimore, Maryland.

Maps

1878. *15 Miles Around Baltimore, Including Anne Arundel County*, G. M. Hopkins

1904. *Map of existing and proposed park lands of Baltimore and vicinity . . .prepared by Maryland Geological Survey, in cooperation U.S. Geological Survey*, Olmstead Brothers, landscape architects, Brookline, Massachusetts

1911. *Maryland and Delaware*, Rand McNally, Chicago

1914. *Maryland Geological Survey* [Map of Baltimore Harbor, Baltimore]

1914-1915. *Fire Insurance Maps of Baltimore*, Sanborn-Perris Map Company, New York.

1917. *Baltimore Harbor, Curtis Bay and vicinity*, Harbor Board of Baltimore [Baltimore]

1917. *Map of Anne Arundel County showing the topography and election districts . . ., Maryland Geological Survey* [Baltimore]

1918. *Map of property belonging to Curtis Bay Terrace, Inc., Curtis Bay Terrace, Inc.*

1918. *Baltimore and vicinity*, Maryland Geological Survey, Baltimore, A. Hoen & Co.

1919. *Map of greater Baltimore, complied from official records*, Baltimore, The Maryland Title Guarantee Company, R.L. Montague.

1919. *Flamm's New Index Map* – Baltimore, William A. Flamm & Co.

1919. *Map of Baltimore County and Baltimore City showing the agricultural soils . . .* [Baltimore], Maryland Geological Survey

1920. *Map of Baltimore City showing the boundaries of wards and councilmanic districts*, Baltimore Board of Supervisors of Elections

1922. *Railroad map of Baltimore issued by The Harbor Board from data gathered in the latter part of 1922*, Baltimore Harbor Board

1924. *Commercial Map of Baltimore*, Md., Pitner & Fergie publishers

1924. *Map of Baltimore County and Baltimore City showing the topography and election districts . . .* [Baltimore], Maryland Geological Society

1926. *Residential distribution of 75,986 persons employed in the downtown district*, Kelker, DeLeuw and Company.

1928-1939. *Fire Insurance Maps of Baltimore*, Sanborn-Perris Map Company, New York.

1933. [*Map of South Baltimore*] *Baltimore Sun*

1965. *Curtis Bay and its environs from the air, aerial photograph, Baltimore Sun*

2005. *Curtis Bay Area*, Live Baltimore Website

2005. Mapquest

2005. Yahoo Maps

Published Secondary Sources

-: *A History of Brooklyn-Curtis Bay 1776-1976*. Baltimore: The Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Committee: 1976.

-: *The First One Hundred Years: St. Athanasius Church, Curtis Bay, Maryland 1891-1991*.

Scharf, J. Thomas: *History of Baltimore City and County*. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1971.

Williams, Harold A.: Robert Garrett & Sons Incorporated: Origins and Development 1840-1965. Baltimore: Schneiderietch & Sons, 1965.

Other Sources

Brooklyn and Curtis Bay BCBC, Inc. Website

CHAP City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey of Hawkins Point/Wagner's Point/Curtis Bay

Conversation with Mr.Frank Bittner; March 2005. Mr. Bittner was at one time Financial Secretary for Polish National Alliance Group 1468 in Curtis Bay.

Interview with Ms. Catherine L. Benicewicz, February 28, 2005. Ms. Benicewicz attended Polish school at Polish Home Hall.

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is described among the Land Records of Baltimore City, Maryland in Liber FMD 3978, folio 43.

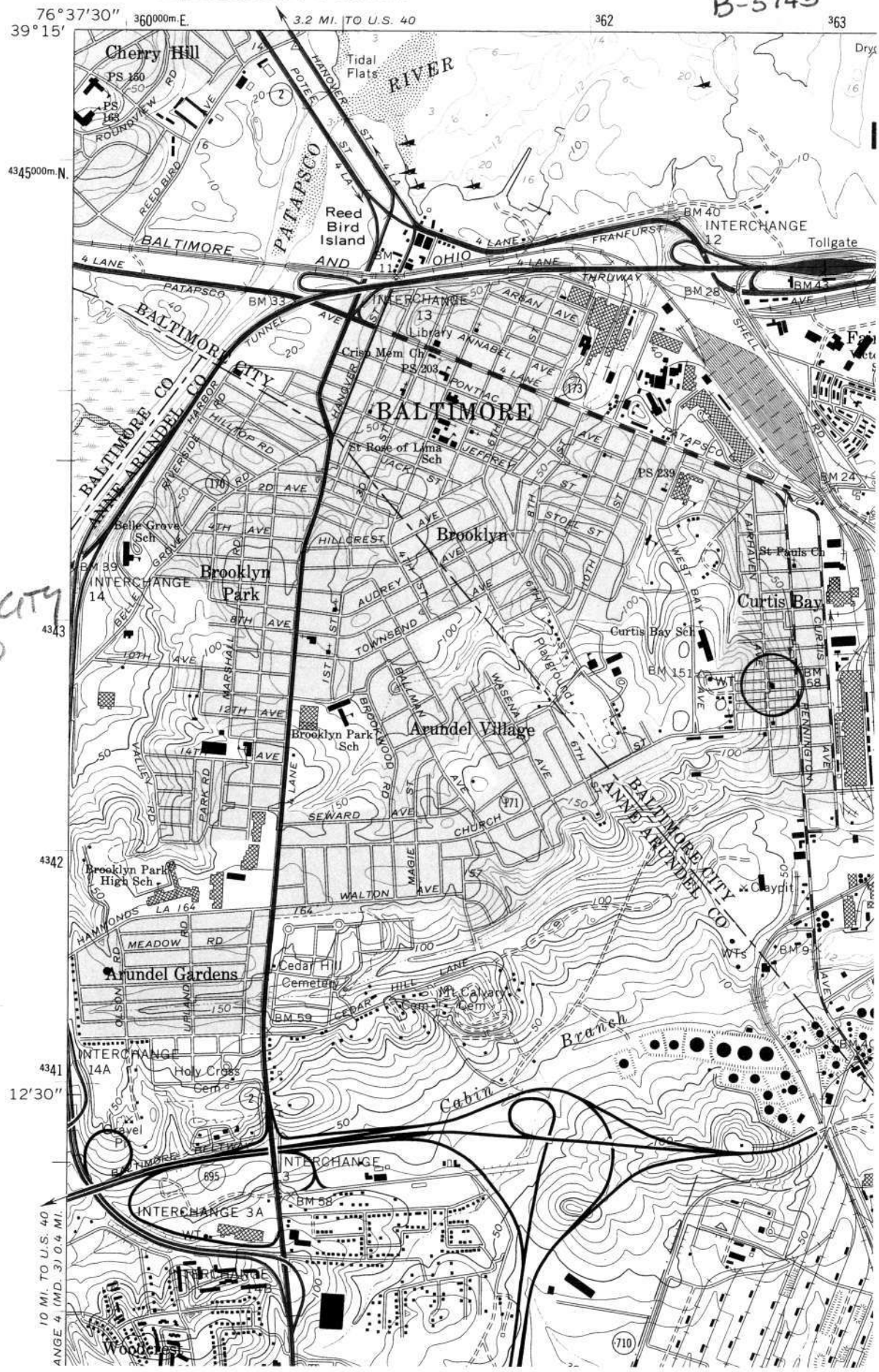
Boundary Justification:

The nominated property represents the single lot historically associated with the resource.

5662 I SW
(BALTIMORE WEST)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

B-5143



POLISH
HOME
HALL
BALTIMORE CITY
MARYLAND

18-362765-
4342725

PLEASE
DO-NOT
BLOCK
DRIVEWAY

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD.

B-5143

EXTERIOR, SOUTH & WEST ELEVATIONS
MHT ORIG. NEGS.
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX/MAHOOD & ASSOC LLC
1 OF 12

SPEED
LIMIT
25
Help Us to Restore
the Polish Home Hall

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD.

B-5143

EXTERIOR, SOUTH & EAST ELEVATIONS
MAT ORIG NEGS
2/28/05
ANN G GIROUX/ MAHAND & ASSOC, LLC
2 OF 12

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD

B-5143

INTERIOR - FIRST FLOOR HALL LOOKING NORTH
MAT ORIG. NEGS
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX / MAHONEY & ASSOC., LLC
3 OF 12

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD

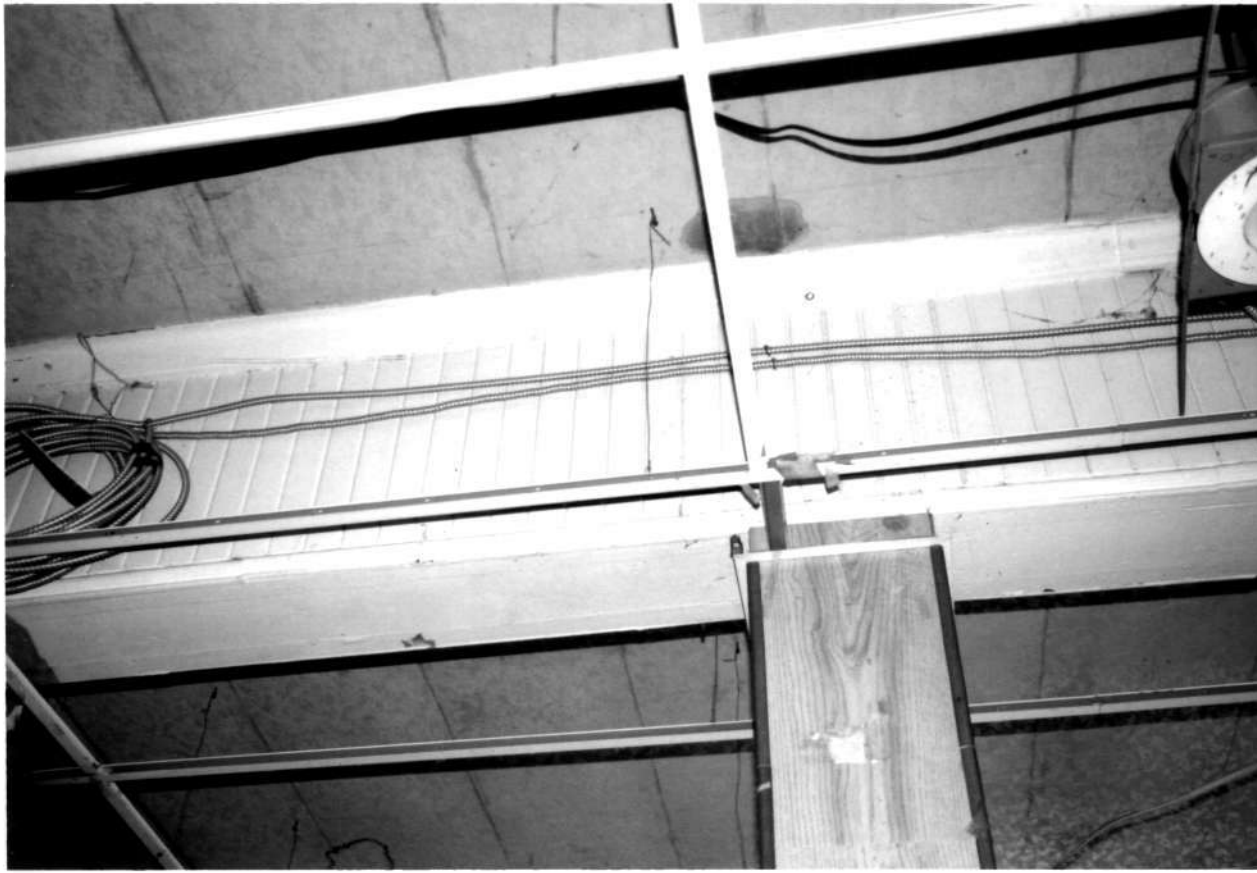
B-5143

INTERIOR - FIRST FLOOR HALL, NE CORNER (KITCHEN)
MHT ORIG. NEGS
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX / MAHOOD & ASSOC, LLC
4 OF 12

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD

B-5143

INTERIOR - FIRST FLOOR HALL, LOOKING SOUTH
MHT ORIG NEGS
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX/MAHOOD & ASSOC. LLC
5 OF 12



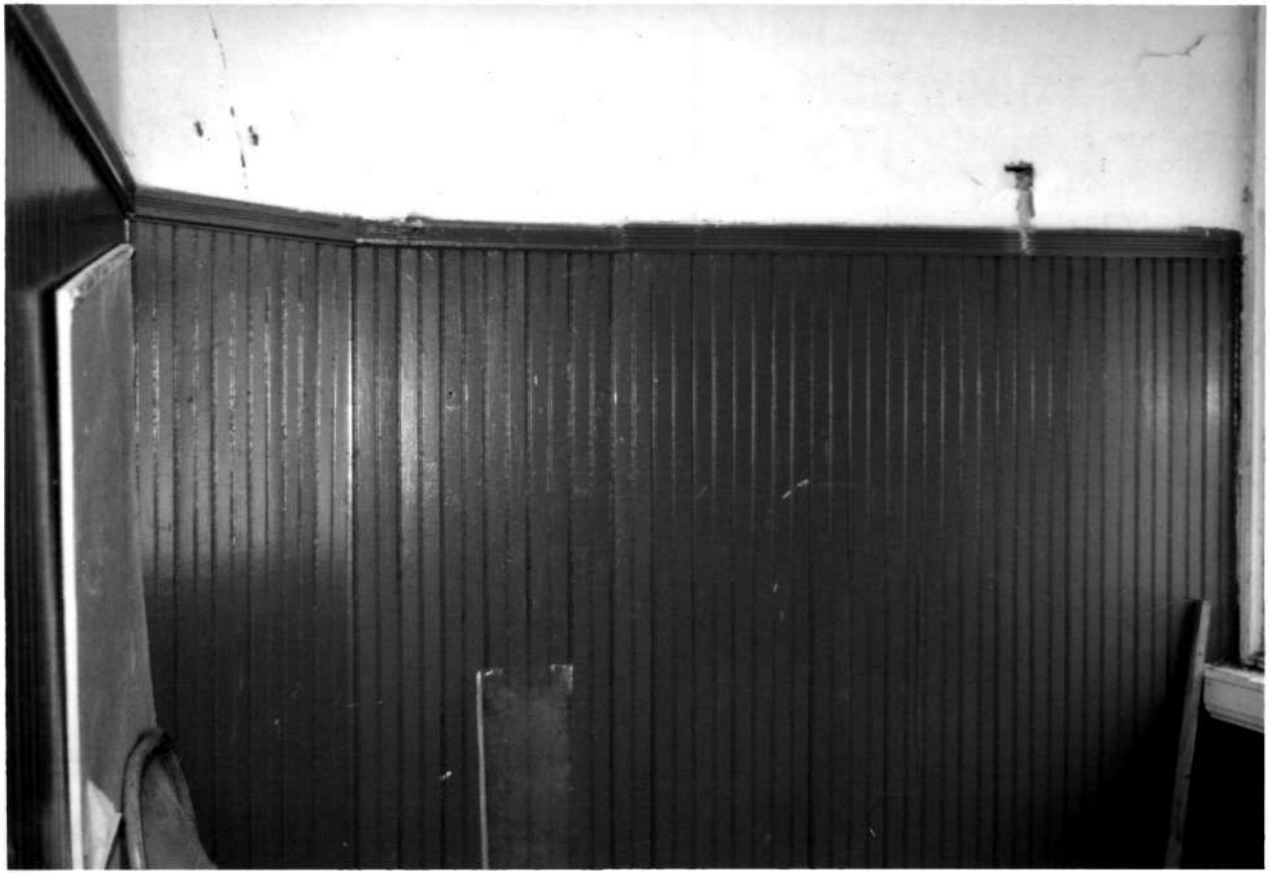
POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD

B-5143

INTERIOR - FIRST FLOOR HALL, DETAIL
MAT ORIG. NEGS
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX / MAHOOD & ASSOC. LLC
6 OF 12

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD
B-5143

INTERIOR - STAIR HALL
MHT ORIG. NEGS
4/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX | MAHOOD & ASSOC, LLC
7 OF 12



POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD.
B-5143

INTERIOR-SECOND FLOOR ROOM AT TOP OF STAIRS
MAT ORIG NEGS
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX/WAHOOD & ASSOC., LLC
8 OF 12

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD.

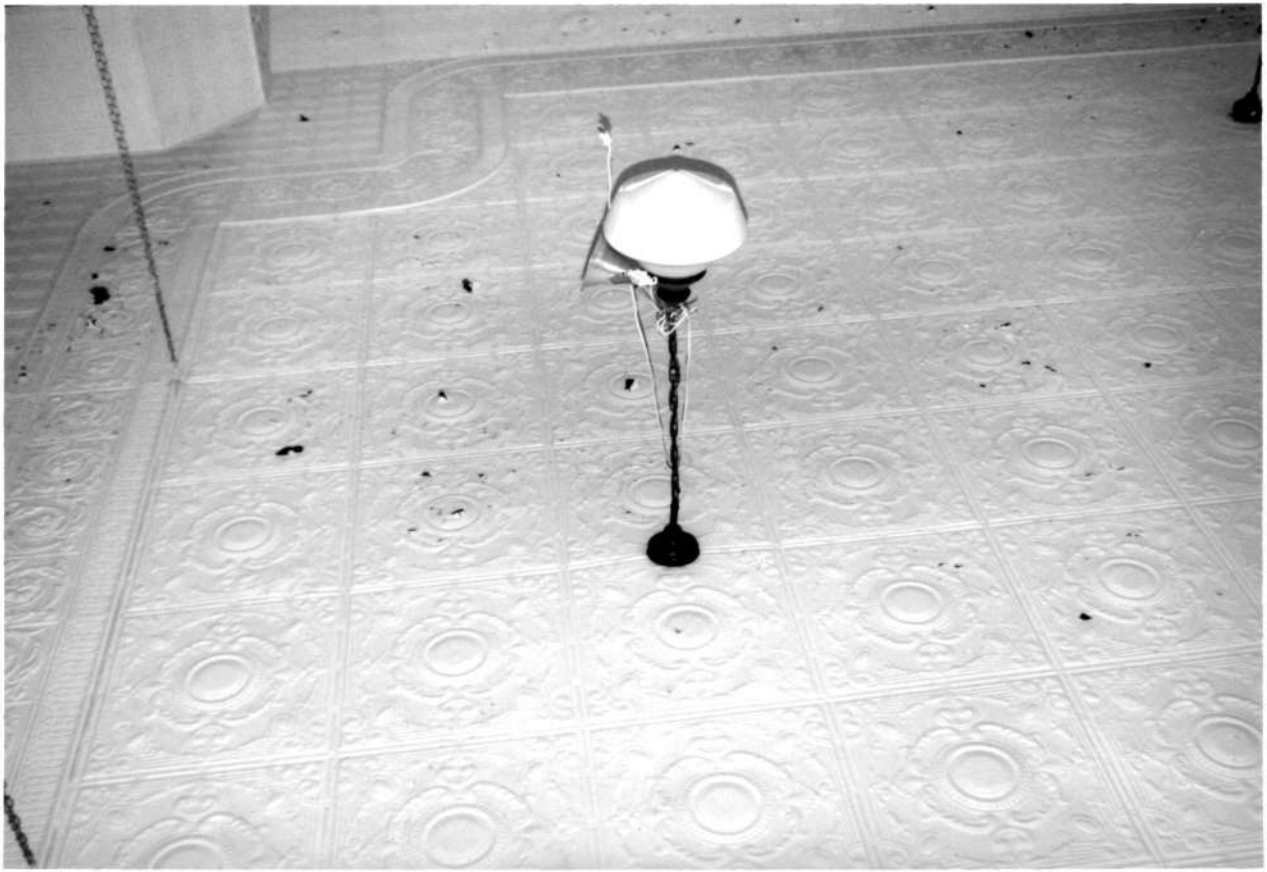
B-5143

INTERIOR - SECOND FLOOR - LOOKING SOUTH
MAT. ORIG. NEGS.
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX / MAHOOD & ASSOC. LLC
9 OF 12

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD.

B-5143

INTERIOR - SECOND FLOOR - LOOKING NORTH
MHT ORIG. NEGS.
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX/MATTOON & ASSOC, LLC
10 OF 12



POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD.

B-5143

INTERIOR-SECOND FLOOR HALL, CEILING DETAIL
MAT. ORIG. NEGS.
ANN G. GIROUX/MAHOOD & ASSOC., LLC
2/28/05
11 OF 12

POLISH HOME HALL
4416 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BALTIMORE CITY, MD.

B-5143

INTERIOR-SECOND FLOOR ROOM OFF
HALL (ENTRANCE)
MHT ORIG. NEGS
2/28/05
ANN G. GIROUX/MAHOOD & ASSOC., LLC
12 OF 12