

CAPSULE SUMMARY

B-5246

Engine Company No. 33

1749 Gorsuch Avenue

Baltimore, Maryland

1909

Public

Engine House No. 33, designed by Baltimore architect Charles M. Anderson, was constructed in 1909 in the Classical Revival style. The firehouse was part of a greater movement to improve the infrastructure within the land annexed from Baltimore County in 1888 and upgrade Baltimore's fire-protection system following the Great Fire of 1904. The architecturally significant building served the growing neighborhood of Homestead and the surrounding region until it was replaced by a nearby state-of-the-art firehouse in 2000. The city retains control of the building.

The building is a two-story purpose-built firehouse dating from 1909. The structure, set on a concrete foundation, is constructed of brick, which is laid in five-course American bond on the side and rear elevations. The Classical Revival-styled façade is composed of blonde Roman bricks laid in all-stretcher-bond. Stylistic detailing is finished in limestone and metal. The building has a flat roof covered in a composite material and is edged with a parapet. An interior-side chimney rises from the southern end of the northwest elevation, while the hose tower of wood-frame is located on the east corner of the building. Two fire truck openings, set deeply beyond the plane of the wall, pierce the first story of the façade. A band of three tripartite windows illuminate the second story. The southwest and south east elevations have segmentally arched windows and single entry openings.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5246

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Engine Company No. 33

other Truck Company No. 14

2. Location

street and number 1749 Gorsuch Avenue __ not for publication

city, town Baltimore __ vicinity

county

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mayor & City Council

street and number 1749 Gorsuch Avenue telephone

city, town Baltimore state MD zip code 21218-4927

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber 2451 folio 399

city, town Baltimore tax map 09 tax parcel 00 tax ID number 0916412322

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Recorded by HABS/HAER
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
 Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
				0

7. Description

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Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

Summary

Engine Company No. 33, located at 1749 Gorsuch Avenue, is a two-story purpose-built firehouse dating from 1909. The structure, set on a concrete foundation, is constructed of brick, which is laid in five-course American bond on the side and rear elevations. The Classical Revival-styled façade is composed of blonde Roman bricks laid in all-stretcher-bond. Stylistic detailing is finished in limestone and metal. The building has a flat roof covered in a composite material and is edged with a parapet. An interior-side chimney rises from the southern end of the northwest elevation, while the hose tower of wood-frame is located on the east corner of the building. Two fire truck openings, set deeply beyond the plane of the wall, pierce the first story of the façade. A band of three tripartite windows illuminate the second story. The southwest and south east elevations have segmentally arched windows and single entry openings.

Site

The masonry structure is set on a residential street, abutting the sidewalk directly. The building is located on the southwest side of Gorsuch Avenue, with the primary thoroughfare of Harford Road half a block to the east. Pedestrian alleys frame the building on both sides to provide access to the rear of the property. A chain link gate flanked by ornate wrought-iron fencing—attached to the structure and the adjacent house—secures the concrete-paved alley on the east side of the property at Gorsuch Avenue and leads to a second higher chain link gate and fence set atop a low brick wall at the vehicular alley at the rear. A chain link fence extends from the northwestern corner of the building to the adjacent property at 1747 Gorsuch Avenue. The open lot between the two buildings is green space. A shed-roofed garage of rock-faced concrete is located on the southern end of the northwest elevation. The garage is accessible from the vehicular alley.

Exterior Description

The two-story Classical Revival-styled building has a rectangular form, set on a concrete foundation. The two-story structure, standing 22 feet high, is constructed of red bricks laid in five-course American bond on the side and rear elevations, and blonde Roman bricks on the façade. The flat roof, covered in a composite material, is surrounded by a low parapet wall of brick with brick-on-edge capping and interlocked tiles as coping on the side elevations. Brick string coursing extends from the main entablature along the side elevations, creating an architrave and frieze at the base of the parapet. The parapet over the façade, which faces northeast, has square-edged limestone coping. This parapet is higher than those framing the side and rear elevations. It is stepped at the outer edges and center bay of the façade. The ornate entablature is composed of a limestone architrave and frieze with fillet molding. The overhanging cornice has metal modillions, and ogee profile with cavetto cap.

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An interior chimney, with a flat hood, projects from the southern end of the northwest elevation. A hose tower rises from the eastern corner of the structure. This ten-foot tower is covered in metal sheets placed over the vertically laid wood framing. The upper portion of the tower is pierced on all four sides by single, double-hung window openings that held 1/1 metal sash. The lug sills and narrow square-edged surrounds are covered in metal. The glass is no longer extant and some of the sash is missing; metal sheets cover the windows from the interior. The tower is topped by a hipped roof; the material was not distinguishable but appears to be metal sheets. The overhanging eaves have a boxed cornice with ogee profile. The rear southwest elevation has a brick string course that matches that along the side elevations, although because the wall does not have a parapet the course does not align. A metal gutter projects from the cornice line.

The façade is two bays wide with two vehicular openings tall enough to accommodate fire trucks. The identical openings are segmentally arched with stepped surrounds of dressed limestone. Each arch is finished with a central keystone and impost with rusticated water table and finished string course connecting the two openings. The water table sits on a double-stepped plinth of granite. The inner architrave of each opening, extending upwards from the string course, is ornamented by bell flower molding with banding between. A bunch of grapes act as drip molding. The deeply recessed openings have ornately finished side walls and ceilings. Each begins with a smooth granite-clad base. Ceramic tiles in a burnt amber color and glossy finish form the wainscoting. The fields of the side walls are covered with $\frac{3}{4}$ inch square tiles, the colors of which create an ornamental pattern. The border, created by one and two courses of brown, pink, and white tiles, has five courses of blue tile with white and dark green tiles creating quatrefoil design. Brown and white tiles edge the white tiles of the center panel, creating a denticulated pattern. Red tiles with frets in the corners frame the panel. The entablature is created by courses of brown and orange tiles with yellow tiles forming a cross motif along the architrave. The cornice has brown and grey tiles making an acanthus leaf and floral design hanging from courses of brown and orange tiles. The coffered metal ceiling is edged by cove molding with a reeded architrave. The vehicular openings now have roll-up doors of metal and glass and the transom has been covered from the exterior with plywood. Commercial-style reflector lights hang from the center of the ceilings, connected by a primary stem with two secondary stems. Rounded bollards mark the edges of the openings, protecting the structure from damage by the fire trucks.

A single-leaf entry opening is located between the vehicular openings. Completed with a low granite sill, the opening has been altered by the insertion of wood framing along the southeast side and transom. The original entry door has been replaced by a flush metal security door with vertical light. The string course acts as the jack-arched lintel with the stones gauged. Set directly above the opening is a medallion projecting from a limestone surround that is flush with the building's brick façade. The shield-shaped medallion has a sunken

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face with the letters BFD rising from the center. Bell flowers frame the shield, which is topped by scrolled acanthus.

The second story of the façade has a band of three openings, each holding a tripartite window. The center sash is wider than the framing sash, all of which are replacement 1/1 with narrow surrounds and square-edged mullions. All three openings are set within a single frame of rusticated limestone that creates the continuous sill, keystones, and supports. The architrave is stepped. The rustication extends to create two string courses that reach to the corners of the façade.

The northwest side elevation has no openings. The one-story garage abuts the firehouse at the southern end. The southeast side elevation has six openings on each of the two stories; a secondary entry also pierces the first story. The openings, set in square-edge replacement surrounds, have segmental arches composed of three courses of rowlock bricks and square-edged limestone sills. The elongated first-story openings, most covered in metal security screens, have replacement 1/1 metal sash. The secondary entry is located in the southernmost bay of the first story. Infilled and thus no longer serving as an entry, the opening has three-course rowlock brick arch. The second-story openings have standard-sized 1/1 sash in four of the six openings. The sash in the southernmost bay has been removed in part with an air conditioning unit installed. The opening is covered in plywood from the interior. The third bay from the eastern corner has been altered to serve as an entry; ghosting in the brick documents this change. The upper sash of the former window serves now as a fixed transom over the single-leaf opening. It is reached by a metal fire escape with thin balusters and landing. The entry holds a flush metal door with single light.

The southwest elevation, which is the rear of the building, fronts directly on the vehicular alley. Jack-arched basement windows have been infilled with brick and limestone applied over portions of the foundation. The six bays of the first story contain elongated window openings and a double-leaf entry, which is located in the second bay from the western corner. The window openings, like those on the side elevations, have limestone sills, replacement square-edged surrounds, and segmental arches composed of three courses of rowlock bricks. The openings, holding 1/1 vinyl sash, have been covered in metal security screens. The entry opening is reached by a limestone step and sill. Set behind metal security screens, the opening holds paneled wood doors with glass and wood-frame screen doors; the screening is no longer extant. The large transom has a single light set in a wood surround. Like the windows, the segmentally arched entry opening has three courses of rowlock bricks. The second story is asymmetrically fenestrated with two single and one paired opening, the latter being in the western end bay. The easternmost opening was originally a single-leaf entry, as indicated by the brick infill and extant limestone sill set lower than those of the window openings. The segmental openings all have limestone sills, replacement square-edged sash, and three-course rowlock brick arches.

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Interior Description

EHT Tracerics was unable to access the interior of Engine Company No. 33 due to the abandonment of the building in 2000. The below interior description is primarily based on views from the exterior and photographic records from an interior survey conducted by Roger Katzenberg in 2010.

The first floor of the building is a single large equipment bay, divided by a central north-south row of steel columns. The equipment bay is accessed from the south elevation by two large roll-up garage bay doors and a centered single-leaf pedestrian door. A spiral metal staircase is located near the midpoint of the east wall, leading to the second floor. The space features a tiled floor with areas of exposed concrete. Located below the window sill, the lower field of the wall consists of a (color) fired-tiled... The upper field of the wall features small decorative mosaic tiles in geometric designs. The decorative tilework includes a mock chair rail applied directly above the fired-tile wainscoting, large wall plaques in between windows, and a crownpiece applied directly below the wall coving, and. The stamped-metal ceiling panels show dramatic floral and geometric designs, and cover the entirety of the ceiling including summer beams and coving. The existing light fixtures on the first floor are all mid-late 20th century fluorescent-bulb pendant tray fixtures.

The second floor contains locker rooms, bathrooms, and office spaces. The second floor flooring is vinyl composition tile. The walls are plaster and in many areas have been clad in mid- to late-20th century laminate wood paneling. The south end of the second floor contains offices and a common area, and a hallway runs along the east wall where the staircase is located. A ca. 1970 kitchen is located along the north wall at the end of the east hall. Bathrooms and locker rooms are located along the west wall from the midpoint to the north end. The office entryways are marked by large cased openings featuring molded trim, a paneled dado, and large transom and sidelight windows. Similar molded trim is present in most rooms, including baseboards, deep crown molding, pilaster capitals, window trim, door trim, and some extant areas of chair rail. The hall/kitchen features beaded paneling extending from the baseboard to the tops of the door frames. The locker room features paneled cabinet-style lockers with historic hardware and carved wooden vents. The bathrooms have beaded dividers and paneled swing doors with historic hardware. The second floor rooms have stamped-metal ceilings in various patterns continued on the interior of the large light wells. The second floor retains some historic metal pendant light fixtures in the bathrooms and locker rooms; most of the light fixtures in the common areas and offices have been replaced with fluorescent-bulb pendant tray fixtures.

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Integrity

Engine Company No. 33., although no longer in use as a fire station, retains sufficient historic integrity. The building presents its original design inspiration of the Classical Revival style, presenting its use to the residential neighborhood of Homestead its use as a city-operated fire house. The building is similarly designed to other contemporaneous fire houses in the city of Baltimore. Therefore integrity of feeling and location are intact. The building was intentionally placed within a developing residential neighborhood, a community that has grown substantially. Residential buildings flank the fire house on both sides, across Gorsuch Avenue, and along the alley at the rear of the property, preserving integrity of setting. Alterations have been minimal, such as the replacement of pedestrian and vehicular doors, creation and closing of entry openings, and infill of basement openings. These alterations, clearly visible due to ghosting and brickwork, are thus reversible. The sash of the windows in the hose tower do not appear to be extant and the tower has deteriorated, but the structure is easily identifiable as an important component of this particular building type. A one-story garage has been attached to the side of the building, but because of its differing construction materials, massing, and design, reads as an addition. Therefore, integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are sufficiently intact. The building no longer serves as a fire house, although a fire truck remains inside the structure. Yet, the neighborhood is intact, the building is city-owned, and continues to read clearly as a fire station and thus has integrity of association.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates 1909, 1919, 2000 **Architect/Builder** Charles M. Anderson

Construction dates 1909

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Statement of Significance

Engine House No. 33, designed by Baltimore architect Charles M. Anderson, was constructed in 1909 in the Classical Revival style. The firehouse was part of a greater movement to improve the infrastructure within the land annexed from Baltimore County in 1888 and upgrade Baltimore's fire-protection system following the Great Fire of 1904. The architecturally significant building served the growing neighborhood of Homestead and the surrounding region until it was replaced by a nearby state-of-the-art firehouse in 2000. The city retains control of the building.

Historic Context

Homestead

The rapid growth and expansion of Baltimore City in the late eighteenth century led to the creation of an elite merchant class. In keeping with social and cultural expectations, the wealthy merchants acquired large tracts of land on the periphery of the city's boundaries and established picturesque summer estates.¹ In 1731, Thomas Gorsuch purchased and patented two land patents in Baltimore County called Ensor's Choice and Loveless's Addition, respectively.² Each consisting of 100 acres of land, the patents adjoined one another and were sited near present-day Clifton Park and Hillen Road. Thomas established his dwelling on the two tracts and remained there until his death in 1774.³ On February 14, 1752, he gifted the property to Thomas and John

¹ Eric L. Holcomb, *The City as Suburb: A History of Northeast Baltimore Since 1660* (Chicago: The Center for American Places, 2008), 18-19.

² Baltimore County Court Land Records, "John Ensor to Thomas Gorsuch," Liber IS L, Folio 145, <http://www.mdlandrec.net> (accessed June 12, 2012); J.H. P., "The Gorsuch and Lovelace Families (Continued)," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 26 no. 2 (April 1918): 326.

³ J.H.P., 327.

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Gorsuch, his sons. Thomas acquired Loveless's Addition and John received Ensor's Choice.⁴ The tracts, however, were resurveyed into a single 160-acre parcel called Gorsuch's Regulation and jointly patented by the two sons in 1759.⁵ The Gorsuch heirs continued to own the property and the estate, named Homestead, until 1850 when Robert Gorsuch, Jr. subdivided the ancestral land.⁶

Robert Gorsuch and his syndicate including John Fox, Edward Jackson, and John W. Van Hook desired to establish Baltimore's first middle-class suburban neighborhood. Named "Homestead" in honor of the old family estate, the subdivision was one-and-three-quarter miles from Baltimore City's courthouse and a quarter-mile north of the city's limits. The plat consisted of over 1000, 16x90 foot lots, fronting 50-foot streets and 20 foot alleys.⁷ An advertisement in the 1853-1854 *Matchett's City Directory* stated:

A number of Cottages and Country Seats have already been erected, and many other improvements are in contemplation. A beautiful Protestant Episcopal Church is now erected, to which a School House is attached. The proprietors have also in contemplation, by presiding sites for churches, the accommodation of other religious denominations, and making sure other conveniences as a respectable suburban population may require.⁸

Homestead Village struggled to grow due to poor financial planning and a lack of reliable transportation to Baltimore City. The Halls Spring Passenger Railway, a horse-drawn line, did not provide access to the community until the 1870s.⁹ Baltimore City's 1888 annexation of the surrounding western and northern sections of Baltimore County, however, increased the properties' value as the city became responsible for improvements to the local infrastructure.¹⁰ In *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, Sherry H. Olson contends:

⁴ J.H.P., 327.

⁵ J.H.P., 327.

⁶ J.H.P., "The Gorsuch and Lovelace Families," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 26 no. 4 (October 1918): 424.

⁷ Baltimore County Circuit Court, "Plan of the Buildings Lots of the Homestead," Plat Book JWS 2, Folio 88, Maryland State Archives, MSA C2136, <http://www.plato.mdarchives.state.md.us> (accessed June 12, 2012); Baltimore City Circuit Court, "Plan of the Building Lots of the Homestead," Plat Book RHB, Folio 2412, Maryland State Archives, MSA 2828-5046, <http://www.plato.mdarchives.state.md.us> (accessed June 12, 2012).

⁸ Richard J. Matchett, *Matchett's Baltimore Director for 1853-4* (Baltimore: Richard J. Matchett, 1853), 18-19.

⁹ Clayton Colman Hall, *Baltimore: Its History and Its People* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1912), 548.

¹⁰ For more information regarding the annexation's tax structure, Sherry Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 219.

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Many of its wells were polluted, and there was no adequate water supply for putting out fires. The county volunteer fire departments were ineffectual, and city fire fighters had long complained of the "good neighbor runs" they made out of town because of wear and tear on their horses and steam engines; they had to race uphill over rutted roads and draw silty water from farm ponds.¹¹

Chemical Engine Company No. 1 was constructed to serve and protect Homestead.¹² The building remained the neighborhood's firehouse until its condemnation in 1908.

Housing developed at a rapid pace in the first quarter of the twentieth century due to the favorable economic climate and improved transportation to the neighborhood. City Passenger Railway purchased the Halls Spring Passenger Railway in 1885 and electrified the line in 1894.¹³ The neighborhood's desirability was further increased in 1901 when the city purchased Clifton Park, located directly to the east.¹⁴ As a result, large lot owners and developers filled in Homestead, creating an eclectic architectural landscape of circa 1850-1890 wood-frame or brick free-standing dwellings and circa 1890-1930 brick row houses. Early *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* record numerous businesses interspersed among residential dwellings along Harford and Gorsuch Avenue, suggesting a prosperous and growing commercial district.

Engine Company No. 33 Historic Context

The building at 1749 Gorsuch Avenue, historically known as Truck Company No. 14 and then Engine Company No. 33, was constructed in 1909 as part of a greater citywide movement in the first quarter of the twentieth century to significantly upgrade Baltimore's fire-protection system. Instigated by Baltimore's Great Fire of 1904, the Baltimore City Fire Department entered an intensive period of expansion that lasted until 1923, during which a number of new engine houses were constructed. Many of the new truck and engine houses had similar design features, and all were built with new, upgraded standards.

The Great Fire of 1904 was the catalyst for these upgrades, following approximately 150 years of gradual improvements in the city's fire-protection system. Though special regulations with regards to fire were introduced by the mid-eighteenth century, as in other cities across the country, the work of firefighting in

¹¹ Olson, 218.

¹² Chemical Engine Company No. 1 is recorded on the 1901-1902 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*.

¹³ Eric L. Holcomb, *The City as Suburb: A History of Northeast Baltimore Since 1660* (Chicago: The Center for American Places, 2008), 123.

¹⁴ Olson, 217.

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Baltimore was carried out by volunteers until the middle of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, reliance on volunteers often proved to be inefficient and ineffective, and for many years the introduction of a new method was called for. It was not until December 1859, that a paid, professional system was created as the Baltimore City Fire Department.

Professional firefighting equipment and communications were slowly updated through the remainder of the nineteenth century, but it took the devastation of the Great Fire “to inspire a completely modern system.”¹⁵ The Great Fire struck between February 7th and 8th in 1904. Consuming over 140 acres of land in the heart of the city’s business district, also corresponding roughly to the original Baltimore Town settlement, the fire destroyed 86 city blocks and approximately 1545 buildings.¹⁶ Fire companies from both Washington and Philadelphia had been called in as back-up, but terribly, neither was able to connect their hoses to Baltimore City hydrants.¹⁷ The result was an active campaign to expand and improve Baltimore’s fire department, and to standardize fire-fighting equipment and procedure. A building code was developed, high-pressure water service, alarm boxes and hydrants were introduced to the larger urban area under development at that time, and the number of fire fighters and horses were increased by 50 percent.¹⁸ By 1923, the Baltimore City Fire Department had nearly doubled its number of companies and tripled the number of staff.¹⁹

Engine Company No. 33 Building History

The fire station at 1749 Gorsuch Avenue was constructed as part of this Baltimore City fire-protection expansion program in the first part of the twentieth century. The building was specifically constructed to serve as the new headquarters for Truck Company No. 14, whose previous headquarters in the neighborhood had recently been deemed inadequate. On April 5, 1908, local newspaper the *Baltimore American* reported that the company’s former quarters had been condemned several months earlier by the Building Inspector, and the company had temporarily been placed in the quarters of Engine Company No. 19 as a result.²⁰ Consequently, Fire Department Chief Horton called on Baltimore City’s Mayor Mahool for an appropriation for a new truck house in the neighborhood of Homestead, noting in particular that “it was desirable that the

¹⁵ Marion E. Warren and Mame Warren, *Baltimore: When She Was What She Used to Be: A Pictorial History, 1850-1930* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 42.

¹⁶ Warren and Warren, ix; Olsen, 247.

¹⁷ Olsen, 246.

¹⁸ Olsen 248

¹⁹ Maryland Historical Trust, “Paca Street Firehouse,” <http://www.mht.maryland.gov/nr/> (accessed June 14, 2012).

²⁰ The Sanborn Fire Insurance map from 1901-1902 show a Chem. Engine Company No. 12 located in the lot adjacent to the present building at 1749 Gorsuch Avenue. This is likely the condemned quarters mentioned in the *Baltimore American* newspaper article. The map notes the company as having 3 men, 3 horses, 1 Holloway Chem. Engine (50 Gal.) and a 300’ ¾” hose.

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company be returned to its original location as soon as possible, as a truck company was badly needed there.”²¹ Horton was instructed to prepare a statement for the Board of Estimates for the following week, but he recommended that the city should make provisions for a temporary headquarters for the company in the vicinity of Gorsuch Avenue and Harford Road in the meantime.

A month later, a memo dated May 23, 1908 was signed by members of the Board of Public Improvements describing the authorization of a new house for Company No. 14. The board received an order at the meeting entitled “An ordinance authorizing and directing the Mayor, Comptroller and President of the Board of Fire Commissioners to acquire by purchase or condemnation, a lot of ground in the vicinity of Gorsuch avenue and Harford road, and providing for the erection of a truck house on said lot for the use of the Baltimore City Fire Department.” The ordinance was considered and approved by the board as being an advisable and necessary matter.²² Ordinance No. 168 was approved on July 2, 1908, and on September 23rd, land for the Engine House was purchased from Lockhart Scott Carswell for \$875.00.

A week later, *The Sun* published an article describing initial plans for the newly purchased property. The necessity for an engine house in the neighborhood was again emphasized, the article specifically noting that “Appreciating the necessity of adding another fire-fighting apparatus in that vicinity, which is rapidly being built up, President Parrish recommended the building of the proposed truck house several weeks ago.”²³ It was reported that plans were in place “erect a buff and red brick truck house on Gorsuch avenue, west of Harford avenue.” Estimating that construct costs would amount to about \$6,000, it was stated that the work was to “begin at once.”²⁴

Locally prominent architect Charles M. Anderson was hired to design the truck house, and he completed plans for the building by May 1909. Anderson practiced widely in Baltimore during the early twentieth century, his work encompassing a variety of building types including theaters, schools, and multi-family dwellings. Some of his local projects include work on nearby Baltimore City College, the Empire Theatre, and the Cecil Distillery Company & Warehouse. The engagement of Anderson’s respected architectural services speaks to the Fire Department’s commitment to improvement, represented to the public through the construction of a number of new engine houses with high quality architectural design.

²¹ *Baltimore American*, “Horton After New Engine-house,” April 5, 1908, <http://www.geneoglybank.com> (accessed June 14, 2012).

²² Letter from Board of Public Improvements to The City Council of Baltimore, May 23, 1908, Baltimore City Archives, Special Collections, MSA SC 5511.

²³ *The Baltimore Sun*, “Truck for Gorsuch Ave.; Fire Commissioners to Build Handsome Structure There,” September 29, 1908, <http://www.proquest.com>.

²⁴ *The Baltimore Sun*, “Truck for Gorsuch Ave.; Fire Commissioners to Build Handsome Structure There.”

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On May 28, 1909, *The Sun* reported on the completion of plans for two of these new truck houses, including No. 14. In an article titled "To Build Truck House," the newspaper stated that plans were finished and on file at the Builders' Exchange for two truck houses, No. 2 at North Paca Street, and No. 14 at Gorsuch Avenue.²⁵ The article noted that "The buildings will correspond in design with other new city truck houses."²⁶ Nearly a year later, a permit was issued to build the No. 14 Truck House. It was reported that the building would be of brick, set on a concrete foundation, capped by a tin roof, and embellished with a cornice of terra cotta. The 48' x 90' building was to be set on a 55' x 90' lot. The contract for construction was awarded to the American Contracting Company, and it was estimated that the building would cost \$23,800.²⁷

The fire house at 1749 Gorsuch Avenue continued to serve its growing neighborhood through the first half of the twentieth century. During that period, the city continued to significantly improve its fire system. Under the continually expanding system, in 1919 Truck Company No. 14 was sent to Lauraville, and its place was taken at the 1749 Gorsuch Avenue location by Engine Company No. 33.²⁸

It appears that from early in its history, the Engine Company No. 33 building also served a secondary function as a museum collections space for the Fire Department. A newspaper article titled "Relic of Great Fire to Appear," published in October 1949 reported that "A relic of the great fire of 1904, a steam fire engine drawn by three horses," would tour the city the following day. The article noted that the vehicle was borrowed from the Fire Department's museum at Engine Company No. 33 at Gorsuch Avenue near Harford Road.²⁹ The building remained in use as a collections location at least through the 1960s, as an article from May 1961 reporting on a new fire museum in the city stated that some of its featured artifacts came from a city collection that had been stored at the No. 33 Engine Company House since the 1930s.³⁰

After serving the City of Baltimore for nearly a century, the building's role as a fire station came to an end in 2000 when it was replaced by a new station located at East 25th Street and Kirk Avenue. Ironically, a building that at its construction symbolized significant improvements made to the city's fire-prevention system in the

²⁵ No. 2, designed by architect J.E. Lafferty, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983 as the Paca Street Firehouse.

²⁶ *The Baltimore Sun*, "To Build Truck House," May 28, 1909, <http://www.proquest.com>.

²⁷ *The Baltimore Sun*, "For New Engine House; The City Gets Permit to Build on Gorsuch Avenue," July 2, 1909, <http://www.proquest.com>.

²⁸ *Baltimore American*, "The City Extending Fire System," January 11, 1919, <http://www.genealogybank.com>.

²⁹ *The Baltimore Sun*, "Relic of Great Fire to Appear," October 9, 1949, <http://www.proquest.com>.

³⁰ *The Baltimore Sun*, "Fire Museum to Open Tonight," May 15, 1961, <http://www.proquest.com>.

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Engine Company No. 33
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 7

twentieth century was deemed ineffective for fire-fighting by the standards of the twenty-first century.³¹ On August 13, 1998, the *Baltimore Sun* reported the city's Board of Estimates approved "\$2.4 million to build a long-awaited fire station at 25th Street and Kirk Avenue in Northeast Baltimore."³² The article noted that two stations near Harford Road would be consolidated at the 25th Street location, as "City fire officials have expressed concern over the aging, two-story red-brick buildings that house the Company 33 engine at the Gorsuch Avenue station and the company truck at the Oliver Street station." Groundbreaking ceremonies for the new station were held on October 17, 1998 and the newly constructed station went into operation in March 2000.³³ Soon after, the station was turned over to the city's Department of Housing and Community Development.

The building has generally remained inactive since that time, though it experienced a brief revitalization in 2003 when it served as the main filming location for the movie *Ladder 49* and was refurbished in preparation for filming.

³¹ Mark Ribbing, "O'Malley dedicates fire station amid protest; Plan to close 7 stations irks firefighters, officials," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 19, 2000, <http://www.proquest.com>.

³² Gerald Shields, "City board approves \$2.4 million to pay for Northeast fire station; Facility to be built at 25th Street, Kirk Ave. may be completed by 1999," *The Baltimore Sun*, August 13, 1998, <http://www.proquest.com>.

³³ *The Baltimore Sun*, "Regional Briefs," October 17, 1998, <http://www.proquest.com>.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. B-5246

Baltimore Sun

Olson, Sherry. *Baltimore: The Building of An American City*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1997.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Baltimore City and County*. Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property .12
Acreage of historical setting .12
Quadrangle name Baltimore East Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The former firehouse at 1749 Gorsuch Avenue is located mid-block near Harford Road. The building, set on a .12 acre lot, is bound by Gorsuch Avenue to the north, residential buildings to the east and west, and an alley to the south. The property is located in Ward 09, Section 16, Block 4123, Lot 022 of Baltimore City. The building has been historically associated with this lot since its construction in 1909.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Robyn Chrabasz, Historic Preservation Officer		
organization	EHT Tracerics, Inc. for Baltimore City DHCD	date	September 25, 2013
street & number	417 E. Fayette Street, Suite 301	telephone	443-984-1871
city or town	Baltimore	state	MD

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

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

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5246

Engine Company No. 33
Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 1

CHAIN OF TITLE

Lots 16,17,18,19

April 14, 1856

Joseph W. and Jane Rayner to John Scott Carswell

Baltimore County Circuit Court
Liber HMF 17, Folio 132

April 25, 1879

John Scott Carswell to Lockhart Scott Carswell

Will Records of Baltimore County
Liber RIB No 61, Folio 371

Lot (18)

May 23, 1902

Lockhart Scott Carswell and Charlotte Annie
Carswell to Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

Baltimore City Superior Court
Liber RO 1961, Folio 174

Lots (All of 19 and part of 18)

September 23, 1908

Lockhart Scott Carswell and Charlotte Annie
Carswell to Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

Baltimore City Superior Court
Liber SCL 2451, Folio 399



1749 Gorsuch Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21218-4927

City of Baltimore

Baltimore East, USGS Topographic Map, 1953, Revised 1974

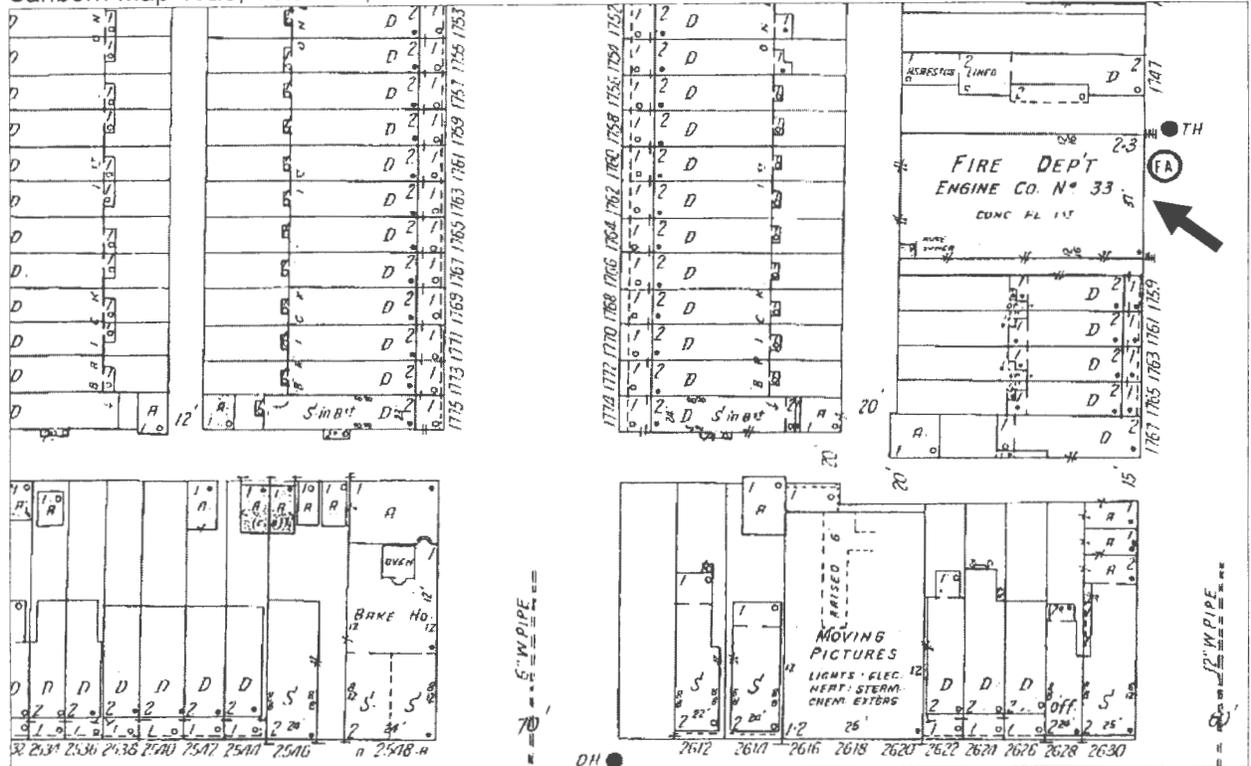
EHT Tracerics, Inc., 2012

B-5246

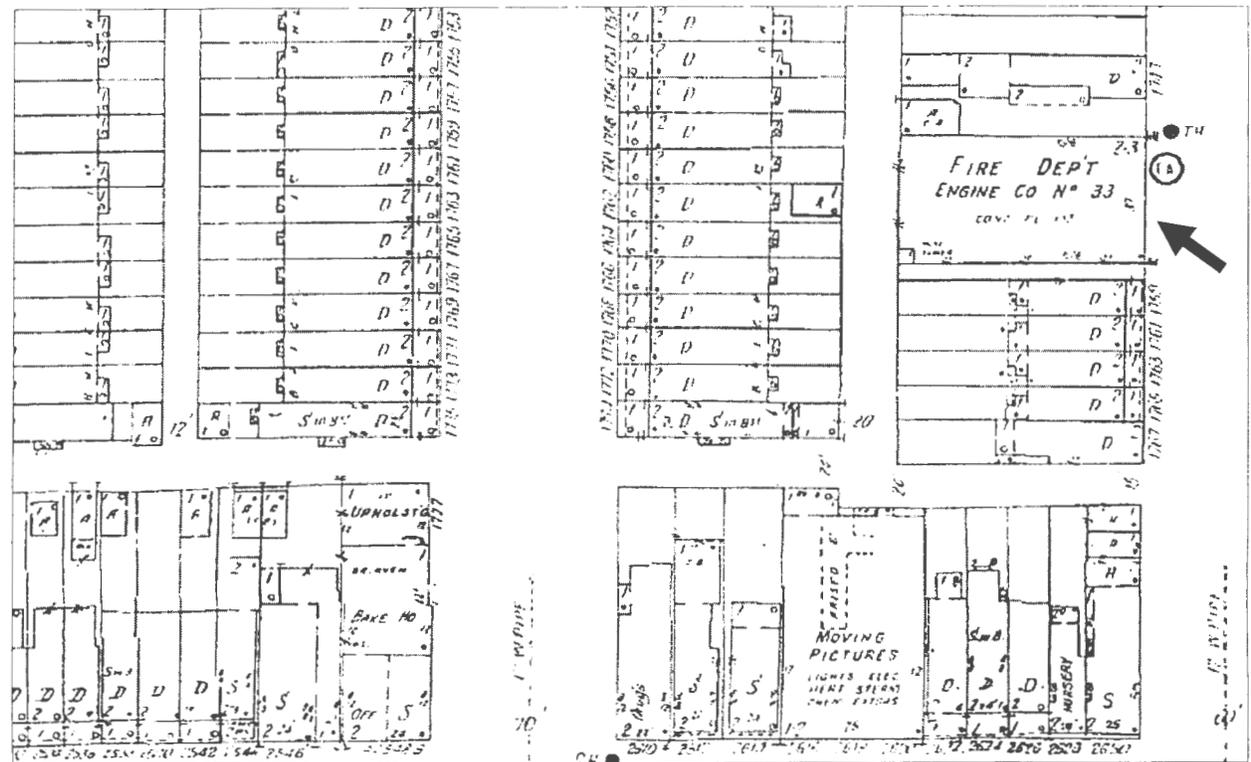
Engine Company No. 33

1749 Gorsuch Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21218

Sanborn Map 1928, Volume 7, Sheet 714



Sanborn Map 1953, Volume 7, Sheet 714





GORSUCH AVE

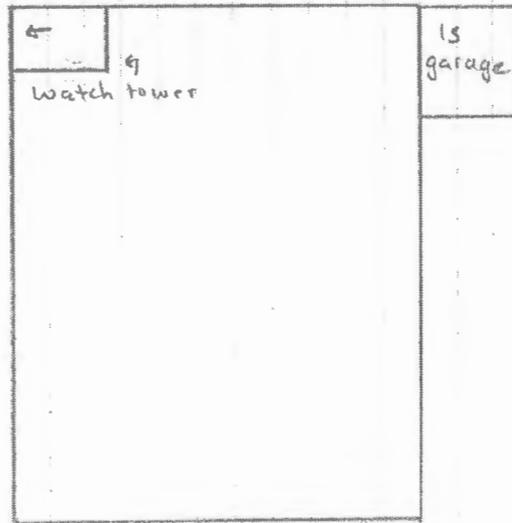
HOMESTEAD ST

DELIER ST

Engine Company No. 33
 B-5246
 1749 Gorsuch Avenue
 Coldstream Homestead Montebello, Baltimore City
 Map Courtesy of Baltimore City GIS
 Prepared by EHT Tracerics, 2012



concrete alley



concrete sidewalk

Gorsuch Avenue



Date 5/8/2012

Not to Scale

I.D. # B-5246

Name/Address Engine 33 / 1749 Gorsuch Avenue

**Engine Company No. 33
B-5246**

Photographer: EHT Tracerics
Date: May 10, 2012
Photographer: Roger Katzenberg
Date: April 06, 2010

1.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2012-05-10_01.tif	Façade, looking south
2.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2012-05-10_02.tif	Façade and southeast elevation looking southwest
3.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2012-05-10_03.tif	Façade detail looking east
4.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2012-05-10_04.tif	Southeast elevation, looking northwest
5.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2012-05-10_05.tif	Southwest elevation looking northeast
6.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2012-05-10_06.tif	Northwest elevation, looking south
7.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2010-04-06_07.tif	First floor equipment bay, looking southwest
8.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2010-04-06_08.tif	First floor equipment bay, looking southeast
9.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2010-04-06_09.tif	Second floor bathroom
10.	1749 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5246_2010-04-06_10.tif	Second floor locker-room



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY NO. 33

1749 GORSUCH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

EHT TRACERIES

5/2012

MDSHPO

FACADE, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

#1 OF 10



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY NO. 33

1749 GORSUCH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

ENTRANCES

5/2012

MD SHPO

FACADE & SOUTHEAST ELEVATION LOOKING SOUTH WEST

*2 OF 10



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY NO. 33

1749 GORSUCH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

EHT TRACERIES

5/2012

MD5HP0

FACADE DETAIL, LOOKING WEST

* 30F/10



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY NO. 33

1749 GORSUCH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

EHT TRACERIES

5/2012

MD SHPO

SOUTHEAST ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTHWEST

4 of 10



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY NO. 33

1749 GORSUCH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

EHT TRACERIES

5/2012

MDSHPO

SOUTHWEST ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTHWEST

*60F10



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY/NO. 33

1749 GORSUCH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

EHT TRACERIES

6/2012

MDSHPO

NORTHWEST ELEVATION, LOOKING SOUTH

* 6 OF 10



MIHP NO. B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY NO. 33

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

ROGER KATZENBERG

APRIL 06, 2010

MD SHPO

INTERIOR, FIRST FLOOR EQUIPMENT BAY

NUMBER 7 OF 10

B-5246_2010-04-06_07.tif



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY #33

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

ROGER KATZENBERG

APRIL 06, 2010

MD SHPO

INTERIOR, FIRST FLOOR EQUIPMENT BAY

NUMBER 8 OF 10

B-5246_2010-04-06_08.tif



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY #33

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

ROGER KATZENBERG

APRIL 06, 2010

MD SHPO

INTERIOR, SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM

NUMBER 9 OF 10

B-5426 - 2010-04-06_09.tif



B-5246

ENGINE COMPANY #33

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

ROGER KATZENBELG

APRIL 06, 2010

MO SHPO

INTERIOR, SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM

NUMBER 10 OF 10

B-5246-2010-04-06-10.t.f.