

St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church and School
B-5263
4500-4506 Park Heights Avenue
Baltimore
Date of Construction: 1909, 1925, 1929, 1947, 1949, 1955
Access: Private

Capsule Summary

St. Ambrose Catholic Church and School are on Park Heights Avenue north of Wylie Avenue in the Park Heights neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland. It is a complex of stone buildings constructed in the 1920s and 1950s predominantly in the late Gothic Revival style. A church, school, rectory, and convent are on the property.

The St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church was established in 1907, and the current church was built in 1929. The current school was built in 1925, and a large addition was completed in 1947. In 1955, the convent and rectory were constructed.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5263

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church, St. Ambrose Catholic School
 other St. Ambrose Catholic Church and School (preferred name)

2. Location

street and number 4500-4506 Park Heights Avenue not for publication
 city, town Baltimore vicinity
 county

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

name Roman Catholic Archbishop of Baltimore
 street and number 4500 Park Heights Avenue telephone 410-367-9918
 city, town Baltimore state MD zip code 21215-6330

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clarence M. Mitchell Courthouse, 6th Floor liber folio
 city, town Baltimore tax map 27 tax parcel 27, 20, 3301, 2 tax ID number 27203301 002

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 type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	4
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	_____
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	_____
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	_____
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			0

7. Description

Inventory No. B-5263

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.

St. Ambrose Catholic Church and School are on Park Heights Avenue north of Wylie Avenue in the Park Heights neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland. It is a complex of stone buildings constructed in the 1920s and 1950s (Attachments 1-4). A church, school, rectory, and convent are on the property.

St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church

St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church is located at 4504 Park Heights Avenue and faces east. It is a late Gothic Revival structure constructed between 1928 and 1929. Construction of the church was planned by Monsignor Hugh J. Monaghan and was the second home of the congregation. The building was dedicated on May 12, 1929 by Archbishop Michael J. Curley. It is a good example of the late Gothic Revival style commonly used for religious buildings throughout the early 20th century. The current configuration of the building remains predominantly the same as it was upon completion in 1929, except for a covered walkway that was added in 1955.

The church is a front-gable modified cruciform structure with a Latin cross ground plan. A square tower is located to the southeast of the center gable on the main elevation. The nave is flanked by two lower wings, or aisles, on the north and south elevations. Two one-story rooms are located in the southwest and northwest recesses of the cruciform plan. An enclosed walkway, part of the design for the rectory, was added to the gable end of the south transept in 1955 to connect the church to the rectory.

The single-story structure has a raised basement. The exterior building surface is random ashlar pattern, rusticated stone with multiple sandstone belt courses and shouldered buttresses. The roof is a gable form with a steep pitch and is clad with slate shingles with copper flashing and metal downspouts. All four gable ends feature large stained-glass gothic windows.

East Elevation (Main Façade)

The east elevation serves as the primary entrance to the church and has a steeply pitched gable front with a bell tower on the southeast corner (Figures 1 and 2). A handicapped access ramp, constructed of smooth, random ashlar patterned stone supporting the concrete sidewalk, was added to the northeast corner at a later date. A cross gabled side entrance, to the north of the main façade, is slightly recessed from the central bay. It is fenestrated with a paired rectangular stained-glass window with a stone surround. The north and south transepts are recessed from the main elevation. They are lit by single lancet windows topped with tracery transoms on the east elevation.

The three-bay gable end has a central bay flanked by buttresses with crocketed spires and single-light fixed windows. The central bay features a pointed arch doorway and a large gothic window. The doorway has a molded sandstone arch with an ogee arch hoodmold capped with a statue of a saint, which is likely Saint Ambrose. Eight stone stairs, flanked by wing walls and the handicapped ramp, provide access to the entrance. The double doors are battened wood with a wood transom. A decorative stone entablature featuring two niches with crocketed spires and the words "*Geritas mea et Mise ricordia mea cum ipso*" carved in relief surmounts the doorway. This phrase loosely translates to "You have my pity and mercy shall be with him." Above the entablature, there is a large, stained-glass gothic tracery window with a sandstone surround. As with all four gable ends, there is a narrow, rectangular, copper, louvered gable vent situated between two sandstone string courses. A stone cross caps the apex of the gable.

The square tower is attached to the southeast corner of the center gable. It features angled buttresses that ascend the entire height of the tower ending in plain spires. There are two sandstone belt courses in addition to a water table that divide the tower into three stages. The first stage has triple, lancet, stained-glass windows. The second stage is without fenestration and features a single central niche without a statue. Paired lancet, copper, louvered ventilators capped with tracery transoms pierce the third stage. Atop the third stage, a decorative stone cornice with dentil moldings accentuates the bottom of the parapet wall. Crocketed spires at the corners and stone coping complete the parapet wall. A central octagonal spire clad with slate shingles with four dormered ventilators and a tin finial in the shape of a cross tops the tower. The ventilators are louvered with copper and have tracery transoms.

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South Elevation

The south elevation is divided into three parts—the apse, transept, and nave (Figure 3). East of the transept, the nave and aisles are divided into six bays by shouldered buttresses. The nave clerestory has six, four-light, stained-glass gothic tracery windows with quatrefoils set within molded sandstone arch surrounds. The aisles have a single rectangular fixed window in each bay. The second bay from the east deviates from this pattern and features a projecting alcove with a flat roof and stone coping. The south transept gable is obscured by the 1955 addition of a stone covered walkway connecting the transept to the rectory, but the large stained-glass gothic window remains. West of the transept, the nave is pierced by two lancet windows with tracery transoms.

The south elevation of the tower is similar to the east elevation except for the presence of a doorway on the first floor and the replacement of the second-floor niche with a single rectangular fixed window. The first-floor doorway provides access to the single-bay narthex. This doorway has a molded arch surround with deep reveal and a pointed arch hoodmold. Eight stone stairs with wing walls provide access to it.

West Elevation

The west elevation is symmetrical and features three, single-light, rectangular windows on the first story of the chancel gable as well as the prominent gothic stained-glass window above (Figure 4). The gable is capped with a stone cross at its apex. Single lancet windows pierce the clerestory of the recessed south and north transepts. Obscuring the first floors of the south and north transepts, two rusticated stone one-story rooms are appended to the west elevation in the southwest and northwest corners of the cruciform plan. These rooms have a simple rectangular form. They feature flat roofs with stone coped parapet walls. The southwest room has a single rectangular window on the west elevation, while the north room has a single rectangular window on the west elevation and four, one-over-one double-hung metal windows on the north elevation. There is a single belt course above the lintels.

North Elevation

The north elevation is similar to the south elevation with the exception of the presence of a gabled vestibule providing access to the narthex and an access door to the basement on the north transept (Figures 4 and 5). The entry to the narthex has a gabled one-story vestibule in place of the tower. The entryway has battened wood double doors and a wood transom under a pointed arch surround with a deep reveal. The doorway is surmounted by a nesting pelican feeding her young, which is the symbol of atonement, carved in relief. There is a one-story vestibule with a flat roof and stone coped parapet walls with crocketed spires on the north transept gable. The pointed arch doorway has replacement metal double doors and a wooden transom. A granite slab stairway flanked by stone wing walls leads up to the entrance. A below-grade stairway east of this transept leads to a double metal door with a stone lintel which provides access to the basement.

St. Ambrose Catholic School

Father Thomas E. McGuigan developed plans to build a permanent school at St. Ambrose after his arrival at the parish in 1922. He was succeeded by Monsignor Hugh J. Monaghan who oversaw construction to completion. The first portion of the St. Ambrose Catholic School was dedicated on October 11, 1925. The St. Ambrose Auditorium, an addition to the north end of the St. Ambrose Catholic School, was dedicated on February 16, 1947. It contained a basketball court with stage on the first floor, additional classrooms on the second floor, and a nurse's room.

St. Ambrose Catholic School is located at 4506 Park Heights Avenue. It consists of two stories above a raised basement. The building originally had a T-shaped plan. Following the addition of the auditorium in 1947, however, the school assumed a modified H-shaped plan with a pair of front-facing gables. The roof is an intersecting cross-gable form with a flat roof infill. The east elevation faces Park Heights Avenue and serves as the main façade. It was greatly affected by the 1947 addition.

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The exterior building surface is random ashlar pattern cut stone. A water table unites the original construction with the 1947 addition. Typical of the Gothic Revival style, the pitch of the roofs is steep. The roofs of the cross gables are clad in slate shingles with copper flashing, copper gutters, and copper downspouts. Both gables are capped with cross-shaped copper finials. An exterior side chimney is located on the southwest gable.

East Elevation (Main Façade)

The southern gable façade, original to the 1925 construction period, has two rectangular windows on the basement floor, three fixed lancet windows with sandstone hoodmolds on the first floor, and a central decorative niche with a statue of a religious figure flanked by two, eight-light, fixed, rectangular windows with stone flat arch lintels on the second floor (Figures 6 and 7).

The central block is recessed from the two flanking gable ends. This portion of the building is composed of five bays. In the first bay, there is a decorative stone entablature with a denticulated cornice and crocketed spires surrounding a pointed arch doorway with a deep reveal and a sandstone hoodmold. The words "For God and Country" are carved in relief in Gothic lettering above the hoodmold. There are two, four-over-four, double-hung metal sash windows and two, four-light, fixed windows with sandstone surrounds between the first and second stories. The seal of Maryland carved in relief surmounts these windows. The next three bays have stacked fenestration. The second and fourth bays feature six, 12-over-12, ribbon windows with sandstone surrounds. The third bay consists of paired, 12-light, fixed windows with flat arch lintels and sandstone lug sills. On the basement level, seven, double-hung windows are aligned under the windows above. In the fifth bay, a first-floor doorway is surmounted by two, double-hung, four-over-four metal sash windows; two, four-light fixed windows; and two, six-light fixed windows. In both the north and south doorways, there are single-light, six-panel double doors with pointed arch wood transoms.

The 1947 addition includes the two-story northern gable façade and a one-story room to the north of the gable. The northeast gable façade features two sets of double doors under a single segmental arch with hoodmold. The words "Saint Ambrose Auditorium" are painted above both doors. The arched doorway is flanked by two buttresses and is surmounted by an oriel window flanked by two narrow, rectangular, 12-light, fixed windows. There is a single, rectangular, louvered gable vent with sandstone surround. The one-story room affixed to the northern gable is recessed from the gable. It has a flat parapet roof with stone coping and a single, pointed arch double door with deep reveal and hoodmold.

South Elevation

The south elevation is composed of two sections (Figure 6). The section built in 1925 is on the south end of the main block, while the section built in 1947 is on the north end of the main block. Both project west from the main block.

The symmetrical, three-bay south elevation of the 1925 building is two stories in height and sits on a raised basement. It features a central, three-sided, bay window extending from the basement to the first floor that is flanked by six windows on each side. On the basement story, there is a stair and access door to the basement on the east side and square windows on the remaining two sides. The first floor of the bay window is fenestrated on all three sides with six-over-six, double-hung windows and is capped by a parapet wall with stone coping. A pair of 12-over-12, double-hung, metal sash windows above the bay window, completes the central bay. The two flanking bays are identical and feature six-light mullion windows with sandstone surrounds on the first and second stories as well as three double-hung windows on the basement level.

The recessed south elevation of the 1947 addition is affixed to the north end of the 1925 building. It features one entrance with double metal doors on the west end. Extending east from above this entrance are three, four-over-four, double-hung metal sash windows and one square ventilator. East of the entrance on the first floor, three, large, rectangular windows have been infilled, except for a two-light

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transom in each. One, eight-light fixed window and two sets of seven-light ribbon windows are present on the second story. All windows have stone slip sills.

West Elevation

The west elevation is composed of the 1947 addition, the main block of the 1925 construction, and the main block cross gable (Figure 9). A projecting water table unites the cross gable and main block of the 1925 construction. The main block is composed of four bays. The first bay contains the rear entrance to the school which has the same pointed arch doorway with double doors and a hoodmold as the east elevation. It is surmounted by a four-part window with two, four-over-four, double-hung sash windows below two, four-light fixed windows with sandstone surrounds. The remaining three bays of the main block feature paired, 12-light fixed windows under flat arches flanked by six, double-hung ribbon windows on the first and second floors. The south projecting gable has a central external chimney stack flanked by rectangular, eight-light fixed windows with sandstone lug sills and flat arch lintels on the first and second stories and rectangular three-light fixed windows with sandstone lug sills and flat arch lintels flank the chimney on the attic story.

The 1947 addition is affixed to the northwest corner of the main block and has three bays (Figure 8). The fenestration on the west elevation of the addition is symmetrical and includes three rectangular windows on the basement story that have been infilled. A single set of paired, 12-light fixed windows are centered on the first story. The second story has a set of paired, 12-over-12, double-hung windows in the first bay and a set of paired, 24-light fixed windows in the third bay. All windows have stone slip sills.

North Elevation

The north elevation of the addition is composed of the northeast gable, the one-story entrance north of the gable, and the auditorium. The northeast gable features a tall, rectangular window on the first story and a seven-light mullion window on the second story. The one-room entrance has two paired windows. The auditorium features five large rectangular windows on the first story that have been infilled and three, six-light mullion windows on the second story. The north elevation of the 1925 school building is completely obscured by the 1947 addition.

St. Ambrose Catholic Rectory

The St. Ambrose Catholic Rectory is located at 4502 Park Heights Avenue and faces east. It was completed in 1955 and was built of local stone in the Gothic Revival style, consistent with the existent St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church and the St. Ambrose Catholic School. It was designed by John E. Eyring and is attached to the St. Ambrose Catholic Church via a covered walkway.

The structure is a cross-gable, two-story, five-bay building with an L-shaped plan set on a raised basement. There is a small, one-story wing affixed to the west (rear) elevation. The exterior building surface is random ashlar pattern cut stone. The roof is a cross-gable form clad in slate shingles with a moderate pitch and closed eaves. A single stone chimney is situated on the front side of the gable slope of the main elevation. All windows are one-over-one, double-hung metal sash windows with stone slip sills and stone flat arch lintels with radiating voussoirs.

East Elevation (Main Façade)

The two-story east (front) elevation has five bays and a cross-gabled roof (Figure 10). The southern block projects forward and is fenestrated with a central door flanked by windows on the first floor. The door is accessed by five steps to a stone porch with a shed roof. The second floor has three windows that align directly above the first floor windows and door. There is a rectangular louvered gable vent in the gable. The two northern bays are in the recessed portion of the structure, which has a side gable roof with closed eaves and a central interior chimney stack. The fenestration on this portion of the structure is irregular. From north to south, the first story consists of one double-hung sash window in the southern bay and a triple double-hung sash window in the northern bay. On the

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second story, a single double-hung sash window and a set of paired double-hung sash windows fenestrate the southern bay. A set of paired double-hung sash windows completes the second bay.

South Elevation

The south elevation has five bays and a cross-gable roof (Figure 11). On the west end of the elevation, the gable end is divided into three bays. The first and third bays are composed of a single, double-hung sash window on the third floor; a paired, double-hung sash window on the second floor; and two, double-hung windows on the basement. The second bay is centered on the gable and has a single, double-hung window on all three floors surmounted by a louvered gable vent. The two eastern bays are slightly recessed and are irregularly fenestrated. The fourth bay is composed of three, paired, double-hung windows, one at each level. In the fifth bay, there are two, double-hung windows on the basement story and the second story. The first floor has a single, double-hung window.

A one-story wing with a flat parapet roof and stone coping projects to the west. The first floor features a single, horizontal, rectangular sliding window inside a large opening that has been infilled with siding. The basement level has a pair of louvered vents.

West Elevation

The west elevation has a side gable roof and is divided into four bays (Figure 12). The northernmost bay is fenestrated with a triple window on the first floor and two, paired, double-hung windows on the second floor. A paired, double-hung window on the first floor and two, small, double-hung sash windows on the second floor compose the second bay. The third bay has a rear doorway set in a vestibule with a flat roof. The rear door is a metal replacement door with a single-light transom. Access to the entryway is provided by a stone side stair. A paired, double-hung sash window surmounts the vestibule on the second story (Figure 13). The vestibule is affixed to the rear one-story wing, which composes the fourth bay. Fenestration on the fourth bay includes the large central opening on the one-story wing that has been infilled with horizontal siding. There is a paired, double-hung sash window centered above the siding infill.

North Elevation

The north elevation faces the St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church (Figure 10). When the rectory was constructed, the projecting western block was connected to the church by a covered walkway. A central door, second-story window, and a gable vent pierce this elevation. The two-bay recessed, eastern portion of the north elevation has a double-hung window on the first and second floors in the east bay. In the west bay, the first floor fenestration consists of a set of paired, double-hung sash windows. The second floor has a small, double-hung sash window adjacent to a paired, double-hung sash window that is aligned with the paired window below.

St. Ambrose Catholic Convent

The St. Ambrose Catholic Convent is located at 4500 Park Heights Avenue and was built in 1955. The building sits on the corner of Park Heights Avenue and Wylie Avenue and faces north. Built of local stone in the late Gothic Revival style, the structure was designed by John E. Eyring to be consistent with the existing buildings. It is a two-story, eight-bay building with a cruciform plan and a cross-gable roof clad with slate shingles. The exterior building surface is random ashlar pattern cut stone with a water table. All windows have stone slip sills and stone flat arch lintels with radiating voussoirs. Most are one-over-one, double hung metal sash windows, except for the stained-glass windows of the chapel, located in the east transept. A one-story wing with a flat roof is attached to the west gable.

North Elevation (Main Façade)

The two-story, north (front) elevation has seven bays and a cross-gabled roof (Figure 14). A single, off-centered stone chimney is situated on the front slope of the west block. The three-bay projecting gable is flanked by two recessed blocks, forming the cruciform

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plan. It is fenestrated with five, double-hung windows and a central door. The central door is accessed by two concrete ramps and is enclosed in a stone porch with a shed roof. On the first floor there is a single window to the east and west of the door. The second floor has three windows that align directly above the two outer windows and the central door on the first floor. There is a narrow, rectangular, louvered gable vent above the central window of the second floor. The east block features two, double-hung windows on the second floor and three stained-glass windows on the first floor. The west block has three, irregularly fenestrated bays. On the first floor, the easternmost bay is composed of a door and small, double-hung window. The door is accessed by four stairs with stone wing walls. The central bay has two, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows at the basement and first floors, which are aligned with each other. A single, double-hung window is present on the second floor in this bay. The third bay consists of a single, double-hung window on all three floors. The one-story wing affixed to the west end of the building has a large opening that has been partially infilled. Two, square, four-over-four, fixed windows located above the infilled portion illuminate the interior space. This wing also features a parapet wall capped with stone coping.

East Elevation

The east elevation has five bays and a cross-gabled roof (Figure 15). The two southern bays compose the southern block which is recessed. These two bays are irregularly fenestrated. The first bay contains three, one-over-one, double-hung windows on the first floor that are equally spaced from one another. This grouping is surmounted by two, double-hung sash windows that are aligned with the first and third windows of the first floor grouping. The second bay on this block has a single, one-over-one, double-hung window on the second floor. The projecting center gable has a single bay. In the center gable, there is a projecting stone alcove with a shed roof which houses a statue of the Mother Mary on the first floor. A single, double-hung window and louvered gable vent surmount the alcove. The recessed block to the north of the gable is composed of two bays. The first bay has two, double-hung windows on the second story and a single, double-hung window on the first story. The first-story window is located directly below a window on the second-story. A single, double-hung window on the first floor lights the northernmost bay.

South Elevation

The south elevation has two stories with a raised basement and a cross-gable (Figure 16). It has a total of seven bays—two in the gable end, two west of the gable, and three east of the gable. The center gable is irregularly fenestrated with two, double-hung windows on the first floor composing a single eastern bay. The central bay has a single, double-hung window on the second floor and a louvered gable vent. The recessed block east of the gable is regularly fenestrated. Three, rectangular, stained-glass windows on the first floor are evenly spaced from one another. The second floor has two, double-hung windows that align with the first and third windows on the first floor. The two-bay section west of the gable is also recessed. Fenestration of the basement and first floors are stacked. Both floors have three, double-hung windows in the western bay and a single, double-hung window in the eastern bay. The second floor has two, double-hung sash windows in the western bay that align with the first and third windows on the floor below. The south elevation of the one-story wing includes the same partially infilled fenestration as the north elevation. Two, four-light fixed windows are installed above the concrete infill. This wing also features a parapet wall capped with stone coping.

West Elevation

On the west elevation, the one-story wing is attached to the gable end (Figure 17). The wing is symmetrically fenestrated with three, partially infilled openings, all with paired four-light fixed windows. The roof of the wing is without a parapet on this elevation. A single, double-hung window is centered above the wing on the second story. Differing from the three other gables, there are two vents on the west gable. One is the standard, narrow, rectangular gable vent present on all four gable ends. The other is a small, rectangular, louvered vent located above the second floor window. Flanking the central gable are two recessed portions of the cruciform plan. The northernmost section has three bays. The central and southern bays have a single, double-hung window on the first and second floors. The northern bay has one, double-hung window on the first floor and no fenestration on the second floor. The three-bay recessed portion south of the gable end is irregularly fenestrated. Two, second-story, double-hung windows and a three-light mullion window

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on the first floor compose the southern bay. The central bay has a door with a stoop and hood accessed by a side stair. A single, double-hung window on the second floor is the only fenestration in the northern bay.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input 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 checked="" 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 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	Architect/Builder
Construction dates	1909, 1925, 1929, 1947, 1949, 1955	
Evaluation for:		
<input type="checkbox"/> National Register	<input type="checkbox"/> Maryland Register	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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.)

Summary

The St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church was established in 1907. The current church was built in 1929. The current school was built in 1925, and a large addition was completed in 1947. In 1955, the convent and rectory were constructed.

History

The St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church had its beginnings in 1897 when Reverend Philip J. Walsh, an assistant priest at St. Gregory's the Great Parish Church, was tasked with establishing a new parish in the Pimlico neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland. At this time, the area was sparsely settled territory made up of a few large estates spotted with farmland. For the first few years, Father Walsh continued to live at St. Gregory's, which was located at 1542 North Gilmore Street in Baltimore. Father Walsh purchased a lot at the southeast corner of Park Heights Avenue and Wylie Avenue for \$7,000. A tall, plain gray, one-story, wood-frame church was erected in 1907 for \$12,000.¹

In 1909, a cottage was purchased to serve as a rectory for the parish priest. It was located on the northwest corner of Park Heights and Wylie Avenues. With the area quickly developing, Father Walsh purchased the Suburban Hotel on June 15, 1920 to be converted into a school. Father Walsh died on July 15, 1920, and the Reverend Louis Paul Rennolds became the second pastor. He made additions to the Rectory and purchased the cottage adjoining it, which became the basis for a convent for the School Sisters of Notre Dame.²

The third pastor, Father Thomas E. McGuigan, began working at St. Ambrose on January 24, 1922. He developed plans to erect a permanent school and undertook a mortgage of nearly \$200,000 for its construction. Sickness overtook him and he was recalled from his duties. Shortly after, on June 25, 1925, Monsignor Hugh J. Monaghan succeeded Father McGuigan. He continued Father McGuigan's plans for the school, and St. Ambrose School was dedicated on Sunday, October 11, 1925. Teaching and management of the school was under the direction of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Following completion of the school, Monsignor Monaghan immediately undertook planning of the new St. Ambrose Church, which was dedicated in 1929.³

With the completion of the new church, the original frame church building was converted into a parish hall. Over the next few years, the building received several classroom additions and a kitchen. Another cottage was purchased, and an addition connecting them was built in 1930 and 1934.⁴

¹ "Dedication of St. Ambrose Auditorium In Honor of Rt. Rev. Msgr. Hugh J. Monaghan, February 16, 1947" and "St. Ambrose's to Mark 50th Year," (*Evening Sun*, October 17, 1957). Churches Vertical File, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5263

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Tragedy struck when a fire erupted during a card and bingo party at the parish hall on December 6, 1944. The blaze, which may have started from an overheated chimney or defective electrical wiring in the ceiling near the stage, exploded through the loft between the ceiling and the roof of the building before it was noticed. Although there were nine clearly marked exits, nearly all of the 170 people rushed for the front entrance. Timbers from the burning ceiling broke loose and began to fall onto people still inside. More than 50 people were burned or injured in the stampede to the front door. Many people were trampled by the onrushing crowd. Two women died at the front entrance, and at least six others passed away in the following days from their injuries.⁵

Undaunted, within two weeks of the tragedy, the church began a funding campaign for construction of an auditorium to replace the destroyed parish hall and school annex. The St. Ambrose Auditorium, an addition to the 1925 St. Ambrose School, was dedicated on February 16, 1947. This multipurpose facility housed a basketball court with a stage at one end and balcony at the other. It also housed six additional classrooms and a nurse's room.⁶

In December 1949, the church had three bells cast, ranging in size from 700 pounds to 2,000 pounds. The bells featured electrically operated bell swingers, a toller, and an automatic clock-controlled Angelus. The bells were installed one month after the death of Father Monaghan and rang for the first time at the Christmas Eve mass.⁷

In 1955, the final additions to the St. Ambrose complex were completed. A new rectory and convent were built in the Gothic style from local stone to conform to the existing structures. They were designed by John E. Eyring.⁸

The church celebrated its 50th anniversary with a year-long commemoration that began with a reunion dance on February 22, 1957. The official church celebration was held in the fall of 1957. By this time, the church had grown into one of Baltimore's largest Catholic pastorates with approximately 6,000 parishioners and 900 children.⁹

⁵ "More than 30 Injured in Fire in Old St. Ambrose Parish Hall," (*Evening Sun*, December 7, 1944) and "8th Victim of Fire at Party Dies," (*Evening Sun*, December 27, 1944). Churches Vertical File, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

⁶ "Dedication of St. Ambrose Auditorium In Honor of Rt. Rev. Msgr. Hugh J. Monaghan, February 16, 1947," Churches Vertical File, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

⁷ "Monsignor Managhan's Bells Nearly Ready," (*Evening Sun*, December 15, 1949). Churches Vertical File, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

⁸ "Church Additions Under Way," (*Evening Sun*, October 7, 1955). Churches Vertical File, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

⁹ "St. Ambrose's to Mark 50th Year," (*Evening Sun*, October 17, 1957). Churches Vertical File, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. B-5263

Churches vertical file, Maryland room, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 3.1200 acres
Acreage of historical setting 3.1200 acres
Quadrangle name Baltimore West Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Ward 27, Section 20, Block 3301, Lot 002 is the legal boundary of the surveyed property.

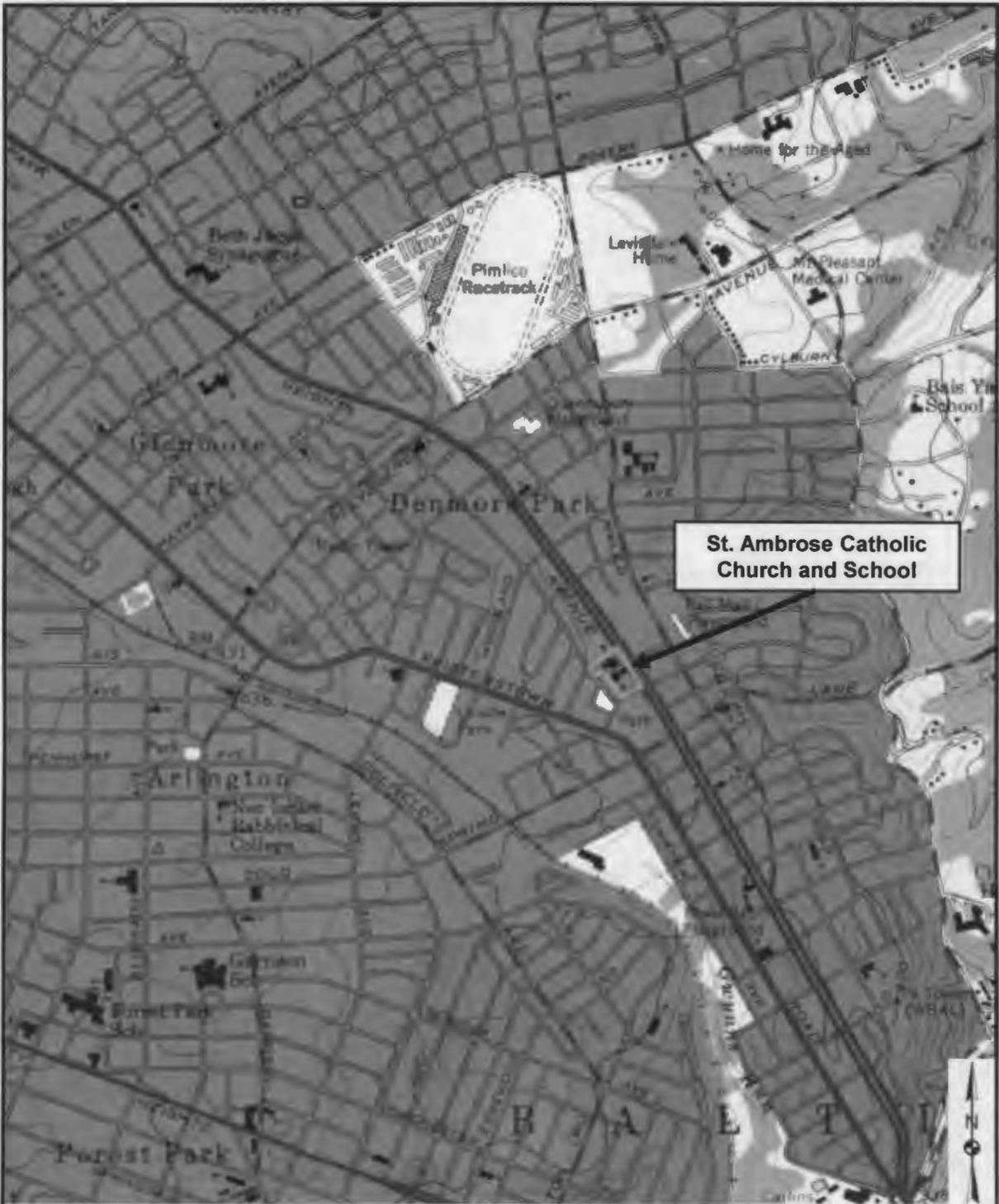
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	<u>URS &</u> Robyn Chrabascz, Historic Preservation Officer		
organization	Corporation for Baltimore City DHCD	date	June 2012
street & number	417 E. Fayette Street, Suite 313	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.

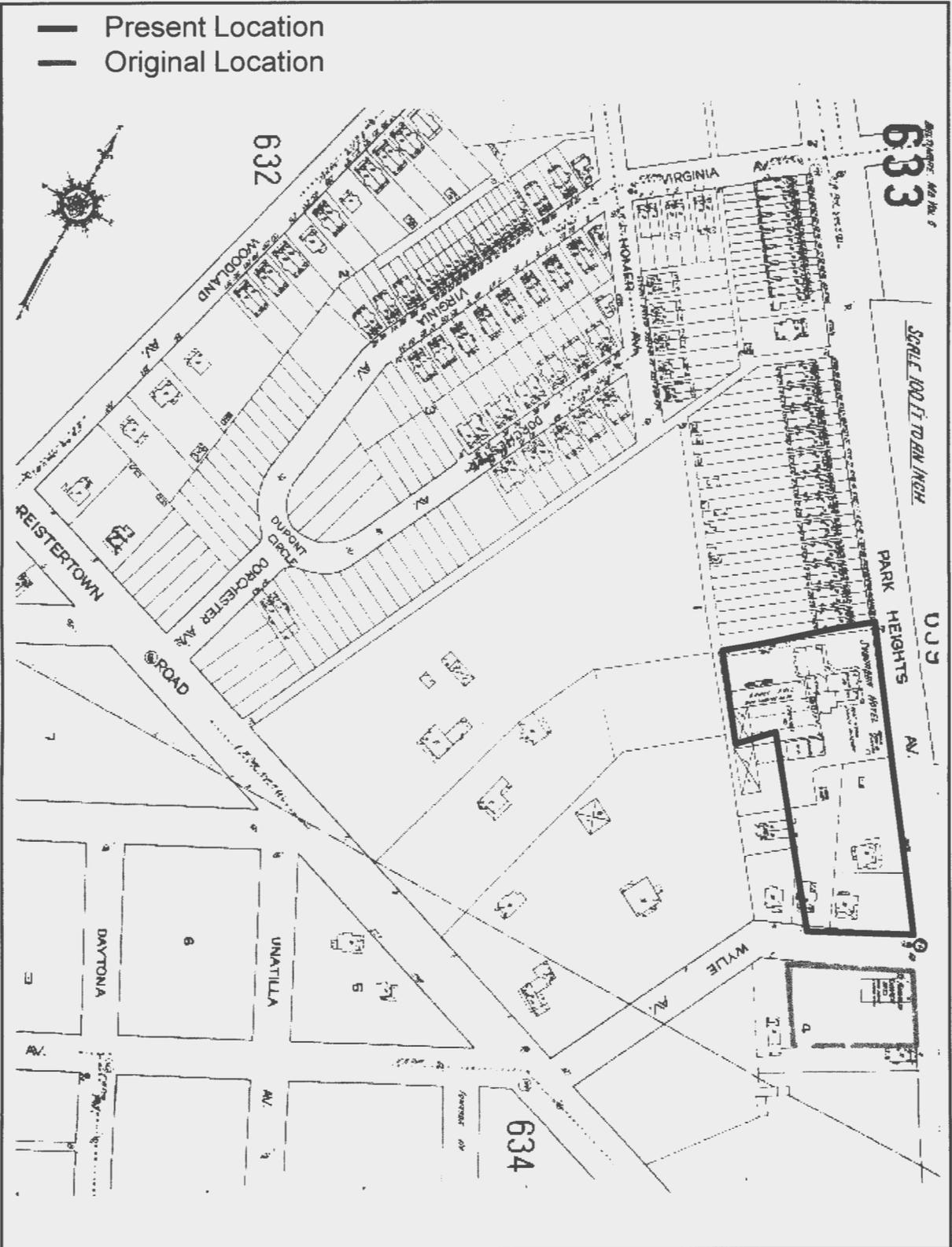
return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600



**St. Ambrose Catholic
Church and School**



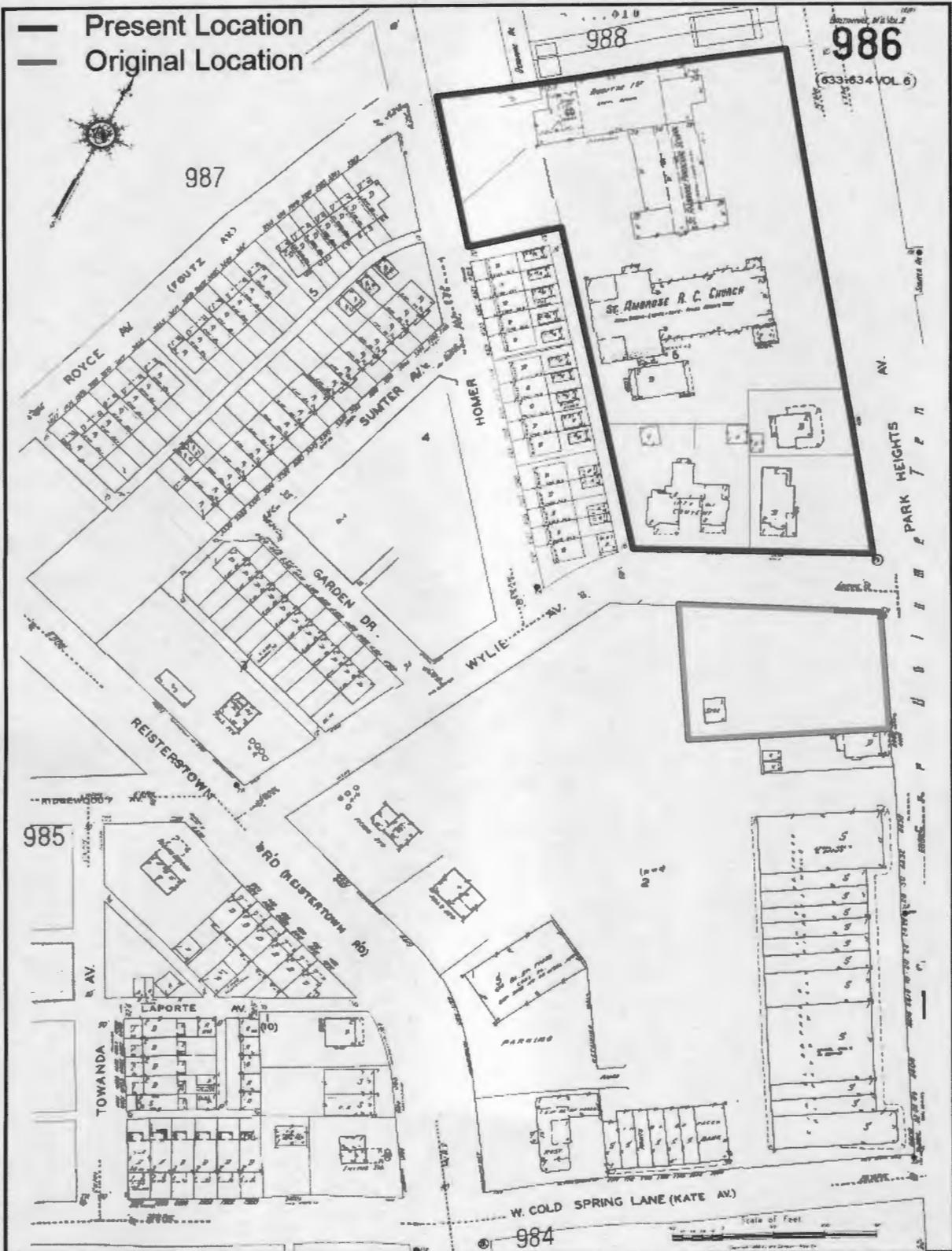
PROJECT	Baltimore Housing	Topographic Map of St. Ambrose Catholic Church and School	
SCALE	1:24,000	URS	Project No. 15303130
SOURCE	USGS 7.5' Series Baltimore West MD 1953		Attachment 1



PROJECT	Baltimore Housing	1914 Sanborn Insurance Map	
SCALE	See Map	URS	Project No. 15303130
SOURCE	Sanborn Insurance Map		Attachment 2



PROJECT	Baltimore Housing	1929 Sanborn Insurance Maps	
SCALE	See Map	URS	Project No. 15303130
SOURCE	Sanborn Insurance Map		Attachment 3



PROJECT	Baltimore Housing	1951 Sanborn Insurance Maps	
SCALE	See Map	URS	Project No. 15303130
SOURCE	Sanborn Insurance Map		Attachment 4



PROJECT	Baltimore Housing	Photo Map Key, St. Ambrose Catholic Church and School	
SCALE	N/A	URS	Project No. 15303130
SOURCE	Google Earth Professional 2012		Attachment 5



0-5263

ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH COMPLEX, LOOKING NORTHWEST

1 OF 17



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ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, MAIN FAGADE, LOOKING
SOUTHWEST.

#2 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

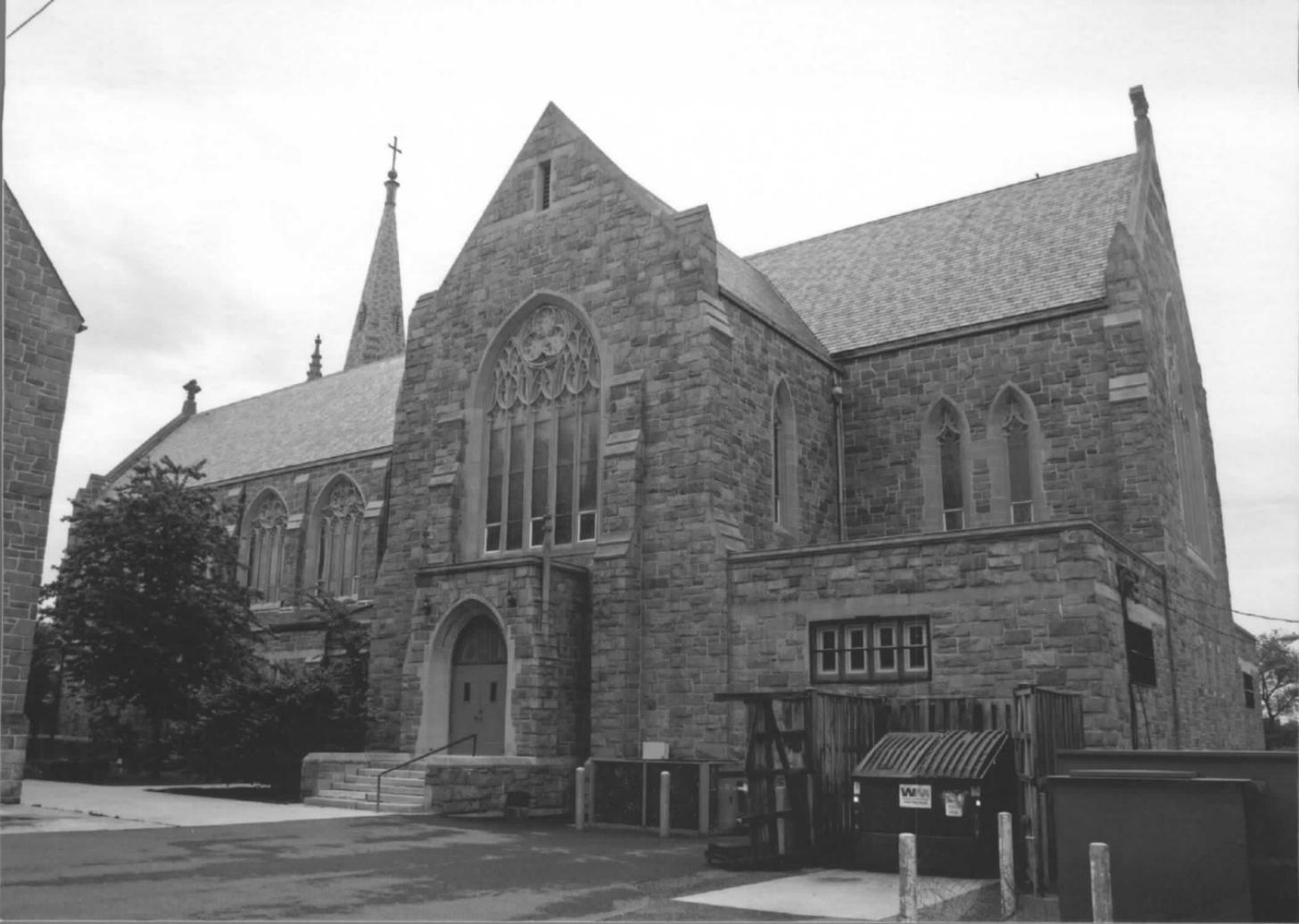
BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, SOUTH ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTH.

#3 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, NORTH ELEVATION (LEFT) AND
WEST ELEVATION (RIGHT), LOOKING EAST.

#4 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, EAST ELEVATION (LEFT) AND NORTH
ELEVATION (RIGHT), LOOKING SOUTH.

#5 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

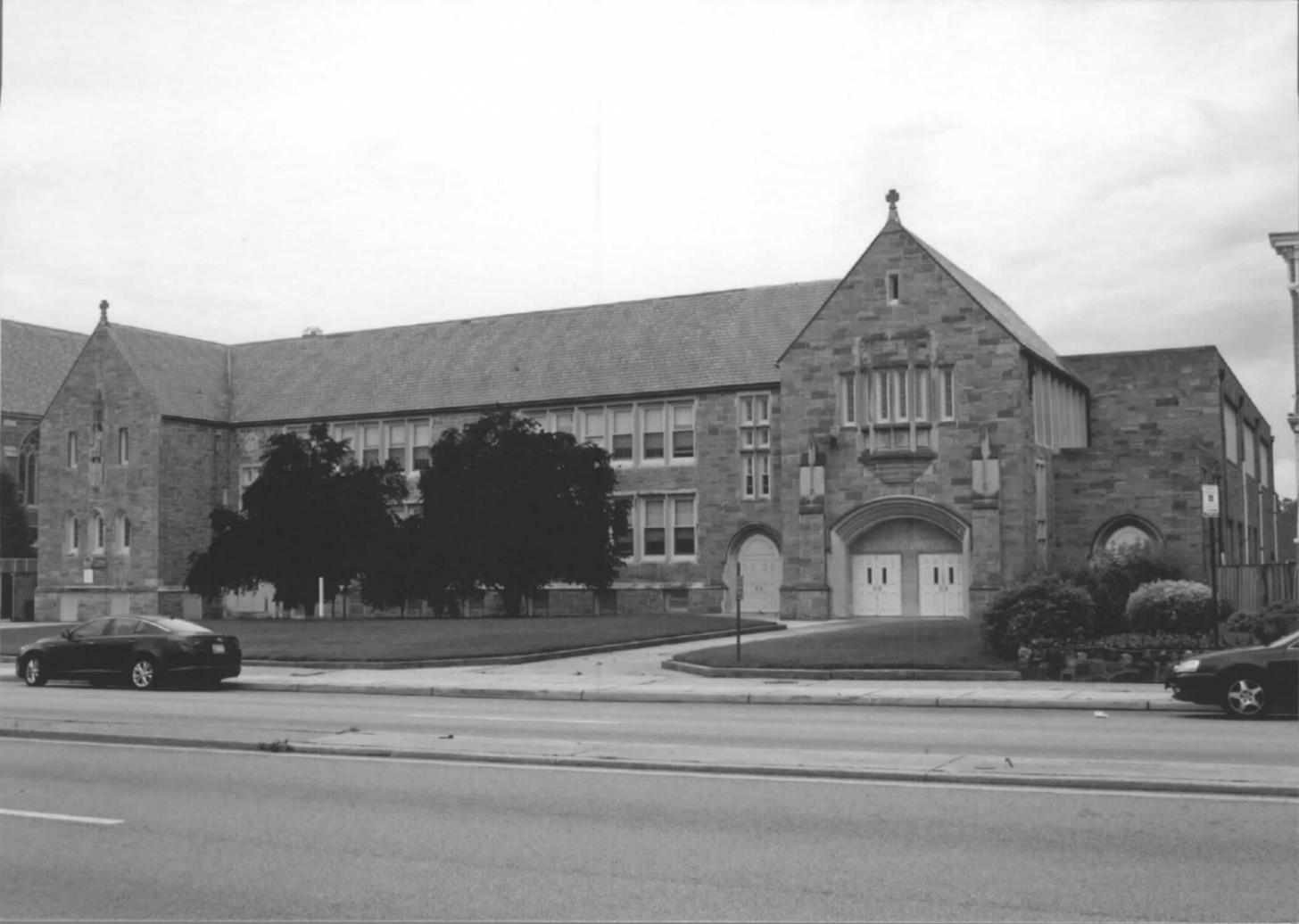
BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE SCHOOL, SOUTH ELEVATION (LEFT) AND EAST ELEVATION
(RIGHT), LOOKING WEST.

#6 OF 17



B-5263

ST AMBROSE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE SCHOOL, EAST ELEVATION (LEFT) AND NORTH ELEVATION
(RIGHT), LOOKING SOUTHWEST.

#7 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BAITIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

ST. AMBROSE SCHOOL, 1947 ADDITION, WEST ELEVATION (LEFT) AND
SOUTH ELEVATION (RIGHT), LOOKING NORTH.

#8 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE SCHOOL, WEST ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTHEAST.

9 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH RECTORY

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH RECTORY, EAST ELEVATION (LEFT) AND NORTH ELEVATION
(RIGHT), LOOKING SOUTHWEST.

#10 of 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH RECTORY

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH RECTORY, SOUTH ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTHWEST.

#11 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH RECTORY

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH RECTORY, WEST ELEVATION (LEFT) AND SOUTH ELEVATION
(RIGHT), LOOKING EAST.

12 OF 17



Religious & Educational Center
Welcome!

B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH RECTORY

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CHURCH RECTORY, WEST ELEVATION, LOOKING EAST.

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B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CONVENT

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CONVENT, MAIN FACADE, LOOKING SOUTHEAST.

14 OF 17



GASTWICK

The University City of Eastern

B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CONVENT

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CONVENT, EAST ELEVATION, LOOKING WEST.

#15 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CONVENT

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CONVENT, SOUTH ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTHWEST.

#16 OF 17



B-5263

ST. AMBROSE CONVENT

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

BRIAN CLEVEN

30 MAY 2012

MD SHPO

ST. AMBROSE CONVENT, WEST ELEVATION, LOOKING EAST.

17 OF 17