

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: Catonsville High School Survey Number: BA-2728

Project: Proposed Demolition/Southwest Elementary Sch. Agency: S/PSCP

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

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility **not** recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

Based on available information, I believe that the Catonsville High School located at 106 Bloomsbury Avenue is significant for its importance in the history of education and the public school system in Catonsville/Baltimore County. Beginning in the nineteenth century, Catonsville was the home of several respected private schools such as St. Timothy's Hall which catered to the wealthy land owners of the area. As suburbanization occurred in Catonsville at the turn of the twentieth century, public education demands grew. Replacing an overcrowded school on Frederick Road, the Catonsville High School was constructed in 1925 and accommodated all grade levels. Population increases led to additions in 1930 and 1962, a trend seen at many county schools. The local architectural firm of Smith and May was responsible for the design of several Baltimore County schools, like Catonsville High School, constructed in the 1920s and expanded in the 1930s. In my opinion, the former Catonsville High School is eligible for the Maryland Register of Historic Properties.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: attached with this form, histories  
of Baltimore County

Prepared by: Randy Smith, Board of Education architect

L. Bowlin 9/25/95  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

NR program concurrence:  yes  no  not applicable  
Orlando Padgett 10-2-95  
Reviewer, NR program Date

*gms*

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I. Geographic Region:

- Eastern Shore (all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
- Western Shore (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's)
- Piedmont (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
- Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:

- Paleo-Indian 10000-7500 B.C.
- Early Archaic 7500-6000 B.C.
- Middle Archaic 6000-4000 B.C.
- Late Archaic 4000-2000 B.C.
- Early Woodland 2000-500 B.C.
- Middle Woodland 500 B.C. - A.D. 900
- Late Woodland/Archaic A.D. 900-1600
- Contact and Settlement A.D. 1570-1750
- Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
- Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
- Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930
- Modern Period A.D. 1930-Present
- Unknown Period (  prehistoric  historic)

III. Prehistoric Period Themes:

- Subsistence
- Settlement
- Political
- Demographic
- Religion
- Technology
- Environmental Adaptation

IV. Historic Period Themes:

- Agriculture
- Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning
- Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
- Government/Law
- Military
- Religion
- Social/Educational/Cultural
- Transportation

V. Resource Type:

Category: building

Historic Environment: suburban

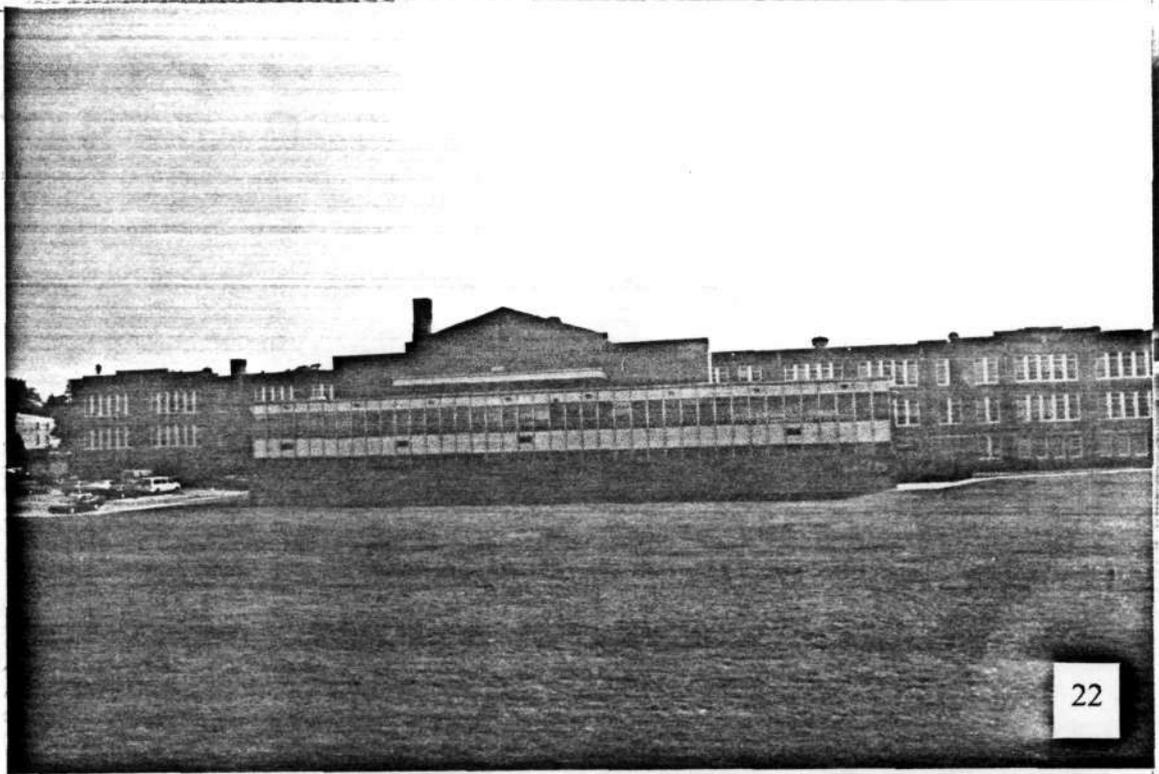
Historic Function(s) and Use(s): educational/high school/middle school/adult prog

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Known Design Source: 1925 original and 1930 addition = Smith and May, Baltimore

CATONSVILLE  
H.S.  
REAR  
ELEVATION

106 Bloomsbury  
AVENUE,



22



23



24

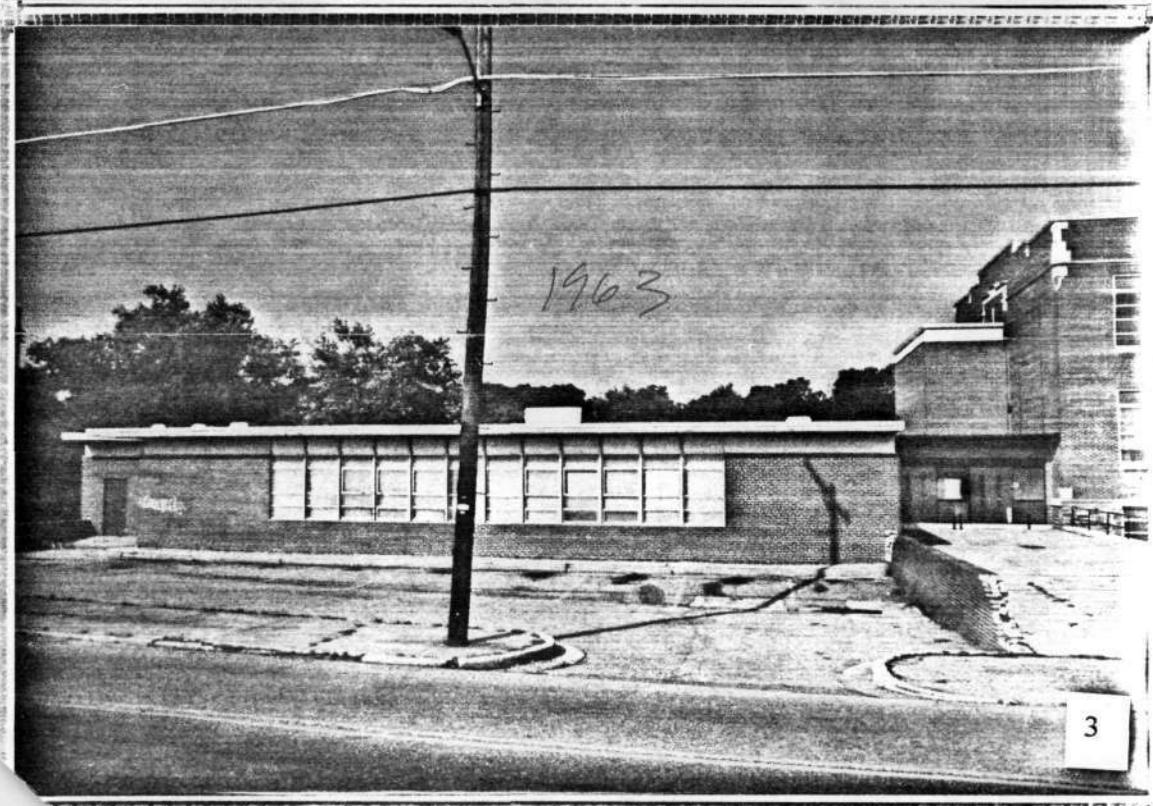
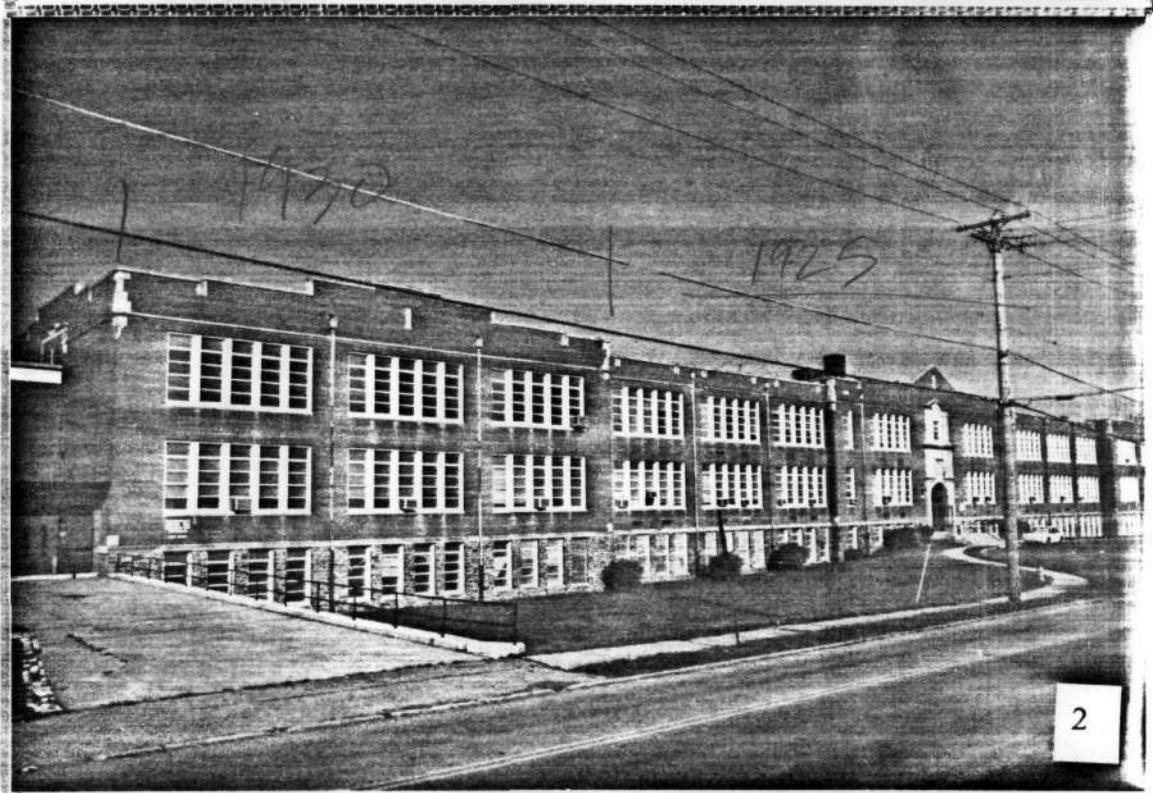
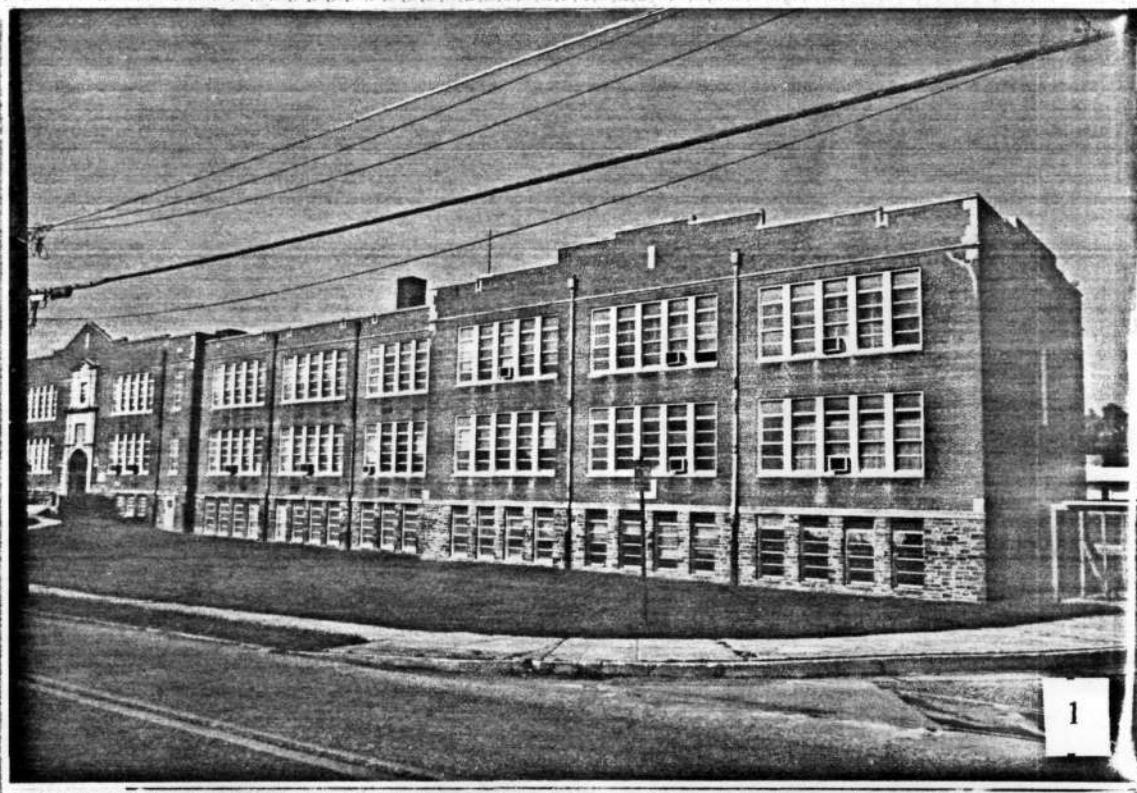
CATONSVILLE

H.S.

106 BLOOMINGDALE AVE.

BA-2728

1925 | 1930



**CATONSVILLE CENTER for ALTERNATIVE STUDIES****HISTORY****(Formerly Catonsville High School)**

The region known as Catonsville developed along the Frederick Turnpike and became a popular stopping point for wagons and stagecoaches. The area soon became the summer residence of the Baltimore City's elite families when the summer heat drove them to a more pleasant atmosphere. Eventually, some families began to stay all year, traveling into the city by private carriage or the Frederick Road Horse Car Line.

As Catonsville continued to grow from seasonal occupancy to permanent occupancy, the need for schools increased. A growing population lead to the construction of a new Catonsville High School on Frederick Road, east of Bloomsbury Avenue. It replaced the former structure at Melrose Avenue and Winters Lane and housed all of the elementary and secondary school grades for the community's youth.

By the 1920's, Catonsville's population continued to grow, requiring the construction of second new school. In 1925, Catonsville High School was opened on Bloomsbury Avenue on the site of the old Catonsville Country Club, a social center for the elite families of the region. With continued population growth, additions were added to the school in 1930 and 1962. Further use of the facilities by the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Department, required a storage addition to be added in 1963, and an office addition in 1967.

Still  
EXISTING?

Design Statistics**Catonsville High School - Original Building**

Year Designed: 1924  
 Architect: Smith and May  
 Structural: Information not available  
 Mechanical/Electrical: H. Egli

**Addition**

Year Designed: 1930  
 Architect: Smith and May  
 Structural: Information not available  
 Mechanical/Electrical: H. Egli

**Cafeteria and Gymnasium Addition**

Year Designed: 1962  
 Architect: Ferdinnad P. Kelly  
 Structural: Van P. Saxe  
 Mechanical/Electrical: Egli & Gompf, Inc.

**Recreations and Parks Storage Addition**

Year Designed: 1963  
 Architect: Baltimore County Public Schools  
 Structural: Baltimore County Public Schools  
 Mechanical/Electrical: Baltimore County Public Schools

**Recreations and Parks Office Addition**

Year Designed: 1967  
 Architect: Hok-Ming Chen  
 Structural: I.E. Valsecchi  
 Mechanical/Electrical: W.S. Lippincott

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

**Maryland Historical Trust**  
**State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

Magi No. BA-2728  
0327283702  
DOE  yes  no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Catonsville High School (1924)

and/or common Catonsville Junior High School/Middle School

**2. Location**

street & number 106 Bloomsbury Avenue

not for publication

city, town Catonsville

vicinity of

congressional district

state Maryland

county Baltimore County

**3. Classification**

**Category**

district  
 building(s)  
 structure  
 site  
 object

**Ownership**

public  
 private  
 both  
**Public Acquisition**  
 in process  
 being considered  
 not applicable

**Status**

occupied  
 unoccupied  
 work in progress  
**Accessible**  
 yes: restricted  
 yes: unrestricted  
 no

**Present Use**

agriculture  
 commercial  
 educational  
 entertainment  
 government  
 industrial  
 military

museum  
 park  
 private residence  
 religious  
 scientific  
 transportation  
 other: Vacant

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

name Board of Education of Baltimore County

street & number 6901 North Charles Street

telephone no.: 887-5555

city, town Towson

state and zip code Maryland 21204

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Courts Building

liber WPC 542

street & number 401 Bosley Avenue

folio 156

city, town Towson

state MD 21204

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title None. No MHT Number

date

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

# 7. Description

Survey No. BA-2728

Condition  
 excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

Check one  
 unaltered  
 altered

Check one  
 original site  
 moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Catonsville High School of 1924 is a long two-story brick building consisting of a center block and two wings of equal length. The brick portion is set on a full marble basement. The building is 43 bays wide with clusters of windows located in groups of five. The central entrance is set in a Beaux Arts pedimented enframement. The center bay is topped by a brick parapet. The building in its original configuration was 60 feet deep and 230 feet wide along Bloomsbury Avenue. At the rear, wings were added in the 1950's to provide shop classrooms and cafeteria. There is also a large auditorium equipped with flood lights. The seats are arranged in a sloping layout.



--News-American Photo

November 14, 1930

# 8. Significance

Survey No. BA-2728

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates	1924	Builder/Architect	Smith & May
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D		
and/or			
Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G		
Level of Significance:	<input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input type="checkbox"/> local		

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Catonsville's main high school has enjoyed several locations, and in 1926, moved into a large building at 106 Bloomsbury Avenue. This was a mega-school for its time, 43 bays wide, a great central block with two balanced wings, two stories high set on a high marble basement. The plan was published in the Jeffersonian of October 18, 1924, the design of Smith and May, city architects who had also designed the third and fourth buildings to house Towson High School. Smith and May in 1907 had designed the third home to house Towson High School, a very complex, somewhat Victorian school with elaborate window panels. The designs for both Towson and Catonsville in 1924 were much more functional, but not without at least a vestige of classical style: The central doorway, which was set in a marble enframingent and pediment. The main block also featured a brick pediment and parapet. There were to be 24 rooms and an auditorium.

The school opened in 1926 and served as a high school until 1954. Then it served as Catonsville Junior High School. One high school graduate of 1942 became School Superintendent: Dr. Robert Y. Dubel.

By 1979, the building was beset by problems, including roof leaks and basement flooding. New outside drainage work was performed to thwart flooding from the street. Constant dampness had rusted mechanical and electrical equipment in the 1970's. (Evening sun, December 31, 1979).

The Board of Education decided to replace the school, then called Catonsville Middle School in July 1995. At that time, local citizens argued that rehabilitation would cost less than new construction. (Catonsville Times, July 19, 1995).

The Board of Education hoped to obtain State funding to demolish the building.

In a letter of September 22, 1995, to C. Randolph Smith of the School system, State Historic Preservation Officer, J. Rodney Little stated:

Based on available information, the Trust believes that the Catonsville School at 106 Bloomsbury Avenue is significant for its importance in the history of education and the public school system in Catonsville/Baltimore County. Beginning in the nineteenth century, Catonsville was the home of several respected private schools which catered to the wealthy land owners of the area. As suburbanization occurred in the Catonsville area at the

Maryland Historical Trust/  
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

BA-2728  
MHT Inventory No.

name of property:

Section number 8 Page 2

turn of the twentieth century, public education demands grew. Replacing an overcrowded school on Frederick Road, the Catonsville High School was constructed in 1925 and accommodated all grade levels. Population increases led to additions in 1930 and 1962; a trend seen at many county schools. The local architectural firm of Smith and May was responsible for the design of several Baltimore County schools, like Catonsville High School, constructed in the 1920's and expanded in the 1930's. In our opinion, the Catonsville High school is eligible for the Maryland Register of Historic Places.

The Law requires state agencies like PSCP to consider the effects of their undertakings on Maryland Register eligible properties. The historic preservation review process allows the Trust to examine possible alternatives, and together with PSCP and the Board, consider ways to mitigate adverse effects which result from the actions of PSCP approvals. PSCP must carefully balance all the issues regarding new school construction including the possibility of affecting historic properties.

Because the school is eligible for the Maryland Register, the Trust recommends that the building be rehabilitated in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. All possible alternatives to demolition should be considered. In addition, adequate justification for the demolition of the former Catonsville High School will be necessary. Enclosed you will find a list of questions or comments (Attachment A) regarding the proposed undertaking. We request that the Board address these questions to the best of its ability. Please provide your written response to this office as well as PSCP.

If state funding is awarded, we look forward to working with the Board and PSCP to fulfill compliance with the Maryland Historic Preservation Law. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call Ms. Lauren Bowlin at (410) 514-7637.

Mr. Little's "Attachment A" is herewith appended.

The citizens opposed to demolishing the building attended the Landmarks Preservation meeting of October 12, 1995, and the LPC agreed to schedule the site for the next possible hearing. Mr. McGrain posted the site with a sign on October 30, 1995, announcing a hearing for December 14.

In October, several members of the General assembly and Councilman Samuel Moxley urged a stay of demolition until the citizens could exhaust all avenues of appeal (Catonsville Times, October 18, 1995). About that time, a chain link fence was erected

Maryland Historical Trust/  
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

BA-2725  
MHT Inventory No.

name of property:

Section number 8 Page 3

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around the building.

On balance, Smith and May's 1924 Towson High School has been superbly restored for use by the Department of Ageing but a similar Essex Elementary School was demolished without much local concern, preserving only the marble door enframement to set up in a park (Sun, November 28, 1995).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. BA-2728

Jeffersonian, October 18, 1924

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 7.643Quadrangle name Baltimore WestQuadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Rectangular parcel on w/s of Bloomsbury Avenue at SW corner of Magruder Avenue. See Tax Map 101, Grid 8, Parcel P359

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title John McGrainorganization Office of Planningdate December 5, 1995street & number 401 Bosley Avenuetelephone 410-887-3495city or town Towsonstate MD 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 260-2438

BA-2728

Catonsville High School

(Catonsville Junior High School, Catonsville Middle School, Catonsville Center for Alternative Studies)

106 Bloomsbury Avenue, Catonsville

Baltimore West Quadrangle

