

BA-3065  
Westchester Avenue Consolidated School  
*2414* ~~4214~~ Westchester Avenue  
Oella  
Public  
1924

The Westchester Avenue Consolidated School is located at *2414* ~~4214~~ Westchester Avenue in Oella, in western Baltimore County. The school building faces south toward the road, and is a one-story, five-part building with a seven-bay front and a two-bay depth. It is a "T"-plan with a wing on the north that is three bays by one bay and has an exposed foundation. The ground slopes down to the north. It is built of rubble stone that appears to be local gneiss and has straight brick jack arches on all the windows, limestone sills, and a flat roof on all but the center section, which has a hip with asphalt shingles. On the south elevation, the center section is one bay with a pair of new metal doors and limestone Doric pilasters with a full entablature. There is a false pediment at the top of the wall. The upper story has an open center room with a hallway to the south that connects it to a front door and a hallway to the north that runs through the center of the wing. There are two rooms on the east and west sides of the hall in the wing, two rooms on the east and west sides of the center room, and two rooms to the south side of the center room. The center room has a clerestory supported on four wood posts on both the north and south sides.

The Westchester Avenue Consolidated School was the outgrowth of the country life movement begun in 1908 when President Theodore Roosevelt formed the National Commission on Country Life. One way to improve country life, its proponents argued, was to get rid of one-room, ungraded schools and substitute consolidated, graded schools.



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## 7. Description

Inventory No. BA-3065

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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

2414

The Westchester Avenue Consolidated School is located at ~~4214~~ Westchester Avenue in Oella, in western Baltimore County, Maryland. The school building faces south toward the road, and is a one-story, five-part building with a seven-bay front and a two-bay depth. It is a "T"-plan with a wing on the north that is three bays by one bay and has an exposed foundation. The ground slopes down to the north. It is built of rubble stone that appears to be local gneiss and has straight brick jack arches on all the windows, limestone sills, and a flat roof on all but the center section, which has a hip with asphalt shingles.

On the south elevation, the center section is one bay with a pair of new metal doors and an eight-light transom. There are limestone Doric pilasters and a full entablature with a plain frieze and architrave, an ogee bed mould, and an ovolo cornice. There is a blind opening above in a false pediment at the top of the wall. The hyphens to each side have two new six-over-six sash with a blind panel above each window. The wings project about eight feet and contain a single six-over-six sash in a blind, shallow recess. The west elevation of the main block, in the north bay, has six paired new six-over-six sash with a panel above each sash and two narrow metal vents below each pair of six. The south bay has five-pair of six-over-six sash, also with panels. Several other vents have been cut in or bricked in. The north elevation of the main block has one blind window opening with a typical architrave and sill.

The west elevation of the wing has a six-over-six sash in the basement and first stories of the north bay. The center bay has six pairs of six-over-six sash with panels above them on the first story. The lower-story center bay has two six-over-six sash, two new metal doors, and a large vent. They are all in original or matching openings, but the stonework here almost appears to be a large section of infill. The south bay has two vents in the basement story and the first story matches the center bay. There is a rubble stone chimney in the center of this elevation, and a projecting low rubble stone bunker between the center and south bays of the basement.

On the north elevation of the wing, the first story has a twelve-over-twelve sash with a fanlight in the center, and this has stone voussoirs. There is a six-over-six sash to each side, creating, in effect, a Venetian window. The basement story has five nine-over-nine sash with panels above them and a pair of metal doors with an eight-light transom to the west. All of the openings look original, but again, the stonework appears like an infill. There is a clear line in the stone and smaller stones used from the tops of the windows to this line that is approximately at the first-floor level.

The east elevation of the wing has a pair of new metal doors with a fanlight and stone voussoirs in the south bay of the basement, and a small six-over-six sash in the upper story. The center bay has six pairs of six-over-six sash in both the upper and lower stories, with panels above each window. The north bay has five pairs of six-over-six sash on each story, also with panels. The center and north bays of the basement story have a break at the floor level, with small stones below this break continuing down to the tops of the basement story windows. The north elevation of the main block has a typical six-over-six sash on the upper story. The east elevation of the main block has six pairs of six-over-six sash with panels above them and two vents below in the south bay. The north bay has five pairs of these six-over-six sash, with the same panels and vents.

The upper story has an open center room with a hallway to the south that connects it to a front door and a hallway to the north that runs through the center of the wing. There are two rooms on the east and west sides of the hall in the wing, two rooms on the east and west sides of the center room, and two rooms to the south side of the center room. The center room has a clerestory supported on four wood posts on both the north and south sides. The clerestory has beaded-edge-and-center vertical-board siding below a range of six-light windows. There is a long, flat radiator on each side of the clerestory, below the windows. The north and south elevations of the clerestory each have nine windows, while the east and west elevations each have six. The ceiling also has beaded-edge-and-center boards. There is one post in the center of the west end, supporting the clerestory, but no post on the east end because there is a podium/stage located here. The floor is 2 1/2-inch-wide pine that runs east-west. All the doors to the rooms are new hollow-core wood doors. The doors have original trim consisting of a plain architrave with plain corner blocks, and this trim

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is carried up to the ceiling. The southwest room is a typical classroom with plaster walls and ceiling, tile on the floor, and a coat closet across the south end with two doors, one to the east and one to the west. The doors have five lying panels. Some of the classrooms have now been divided in half, in part to create several handicap-accessible bathrooms. A door has been added to the room on the east side of the entrance vestibule, on the north wall of this room, to the east. Wainscot has been added to the center room as part of the lead paint abatement.

The lower level is virtually unchanged. The north end room was a kitchen, and has concrete girders and ceiling with flat radiators hanging from them. This same construction can be seen in the cafeteria room on the east side of the wing. The outer walls are roughly parged stone, as are some of the inner walls. Other interior walls are CMU's with sloppy mortar joints. On the west side of the wing are boys' and girls' lavatories and a boiler room. It appears that the CMU's were added to create the bathrooms and cafeteria. The boiler room has a boiler set in the center, with the chimney on the east side, next to the door to this room. The chimney is constructed of brick and has a two-door clean-out labeled "KERNERATOR" and "NEW YORK 17 N.Y." On the north side of the chimney is an incinerator that also uses this chimney. To the south of the room is a room probably for coal storage. The west wall is open to the bunker on the west, and this appears to be original. At the south end of the center passage in the basement story of the wing is a five-lying-panel door set about 5 feet above the floor. The stairs from the first story are on the southeast end of this passage, and there are also stairs on the northwest end.

## 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 checked="" 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 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 industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

Specific dates	Architect/Builder
Construction dates 1923-24	Smith & May

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 reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The Westchester Avenue Consolidated School was the outgrowth of the country life movement begun in 1908 when President Theodore Roosevelt formed the National Commission on Country Life. One way to improve country life, its proponents argued, was to get rid of one-room, ungraded schools and substitute consolidated, graded schools. Improved and paved roads, and the advent of the automobile and the school bus, made such schools feasible. Many country residents, however, were opposed to consolidation, fearing that removing the school from their midst would reduce their influence on the schools and the central place they played in the community's life. The Catonsville Argus noted that opposition to the movement in Baltimore County was most often due to the transportation problem, but also came from a fear that taxes would rise and from indifference to improvements in education and school facilities. No mention of the Westchester School could be found in the Catonsville newspapers, and the Towson paper does not survive, so the reaction of local residents in this specific case is not known. The construction of new consolidated schools was apparently begun with a 1922 bond bill that appropriated money for the project. The 1924 annual report of the school board explained the process. "Consolidation of schools in our county is progressing satisfactorily. Oella, a four-teacher school; Thistle, a two-teacher school; Grays and Neepiers, one-teacher schools, will move into a new consolidated school building on Westchester Avenue near Oella, on September 15th, thus completing a program of consolidation which has been advocated for several years. The new building is a substantial ten-room structure on the edge of a five-acre plat which will permit all kinds of organized play. This will be an up-to-date school plant with a thorough-going school organization." The total cost of the building and land was just over \$85,000. Several photographs of the school building are included, suggesting that it was completed and opened on time. One of these includes several school busses in front of the school, and the report noted that "modern motor school busses are being substituted for horse-drawn vehicles . . ." The board noted that school consolidation depended upon this, and improved roads was clearly a prerequisite to the switch to busses. (1)

Baltimore architects Smith & May were hired by the Board of Education of Baltimore County to design several of the new buildings, including the Catonsville and Towson high schools and the Westchester building. Wilson Smith and Howard May worked for the Baltimore office of Boston architects Parker, Thomas, & Rice, and formed their own partnership in 1912. They are best known today for their collaboration on two Art Deco buildings, the Baltimore Trust Building (Maryland National Bank Building) of 1929, and the University of Maryland Hospital of 1934, both in Baltimore. They seem to have made a specialty of school buildings, as they were also responsible for University of Maryland School of Law, the Forest Park Junior High School, and the Garrison Junior High School of 1931, the latter also an Art Deco building. Their plans for the Westchester Consolidated School are dated 1923, too early for Art Deco, and their design shows an astylar structure, with the exception of a Georgian frontispiece on the doorway. The plan centers on an auditorium lit by a clerestory and surrounded by classrooms. Flanking the front door were the library and a teacher's room. A passage off the rear led to additional classrooms, with eight total in the building. What is not clear is whether this school was intended for children up to grade eight, with a separate high school for older children, or whether some elementary grades would have been spread out in more than one room. After the construction of

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the new elementary school in the c. 1960s, this building was used for only the first and second grades, and later became offices. It is now a community center. (2)

### Notes:

(1) Andrew Gulliford, *America's Country Schools* (Washington, D. C.: The Preservation Press, 1984), p. 41. *Argus*, (Catonsville) 15 July 1922, p. 3. *Annual Report, Public Schools, Baltimore County, Maryland* (Towson, MD: Jeffersonian Publishing Co., 1924), pp. [9-11].

(2) S. Cuchiella, *Baltimore Deco* (Baltimore, Md.: Maclay & Associates, Inc., 1984), pp. 12-15, 41, 44. *Sun* (Baltimore), 10 September 1931. *Sun* (Baltimore), 29 January 1941. The Board of Education retains the plans of the building. Copies of the plans are in the possession of the community center.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 5.49

Acreage of historical setting 5.49

Quadrangle name Ellicott City

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries consist of the entire existing parcel.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Kenneth M. Short

organization \_\_\_\_\_

date 01/27/2003

street and number 610 Regester Ave.

telephone 410-377-4953

city or town Baltimore

state MD zip code 21212-1915

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 not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville MD 21032  
410-514-7600

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name Westchester Avenue Consolidated School

Continuation Sheet

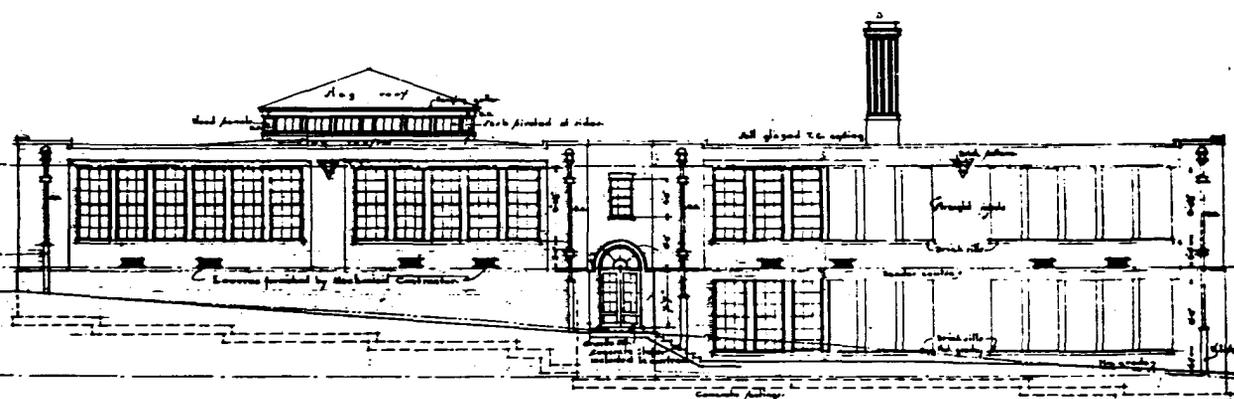
Number 9 Page 1

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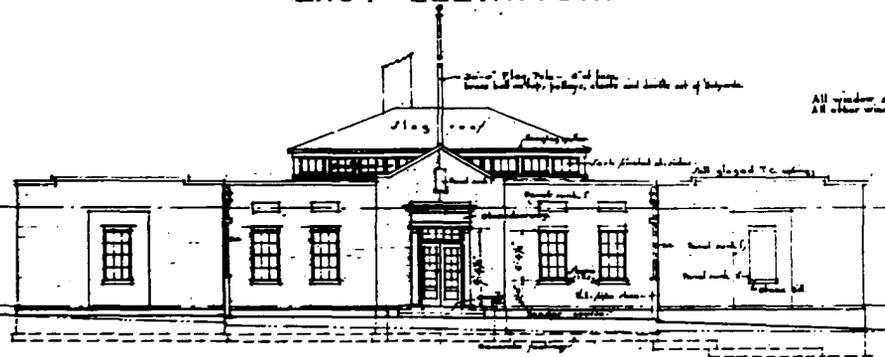
See endnotes



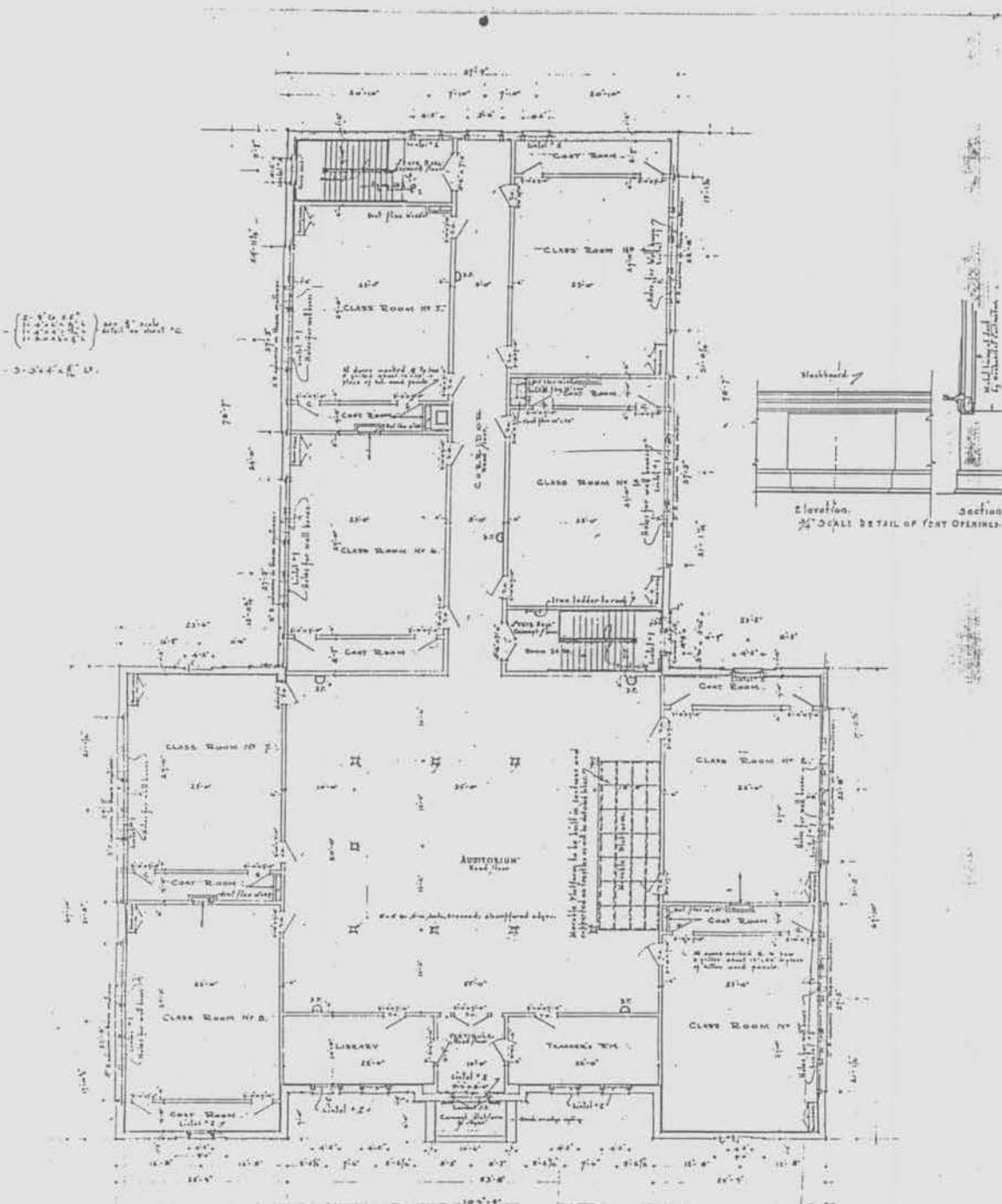
-REAR (NORTH) ELEVATION-



-EAST ELEVATION-



-FRONT (SOUTH) ELEVATION-



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

10-425	WESTCHESTER AVENUE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL				SMITH & ARCHITECT 763 CALVERT
	NEAR OLLA BALTIMORE COUNTY MARYLAND				
	FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY MARYLAND				

# MERLIN Online Map

## Base Maps

3.75' Quarter Quad Grid



Ellicott City Quad 7.5' Topo



N 178235.37m E 418333.76m



Coordinates at center of image in Maryland State Plane, NAD 1983 meters

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BA-3065  
 Westchester Ave.  
 Consolidated School  
 2414 Westchester Ave.



BA-3065

Westchester Consolidated Elem. School

2414 Westchester Ave.

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Short

July 2002

MD SHPO

South & East Eleus

1/7

Westchester  
Community Center

Westchester  
Community Center  
100 Westchester Ave.  
Yonkers, NY 10901  
(914) 961-1000



BA-3065

Westchester Consolidated Elem. School  
2414 Westchester Ave.

Balto. Co., MD

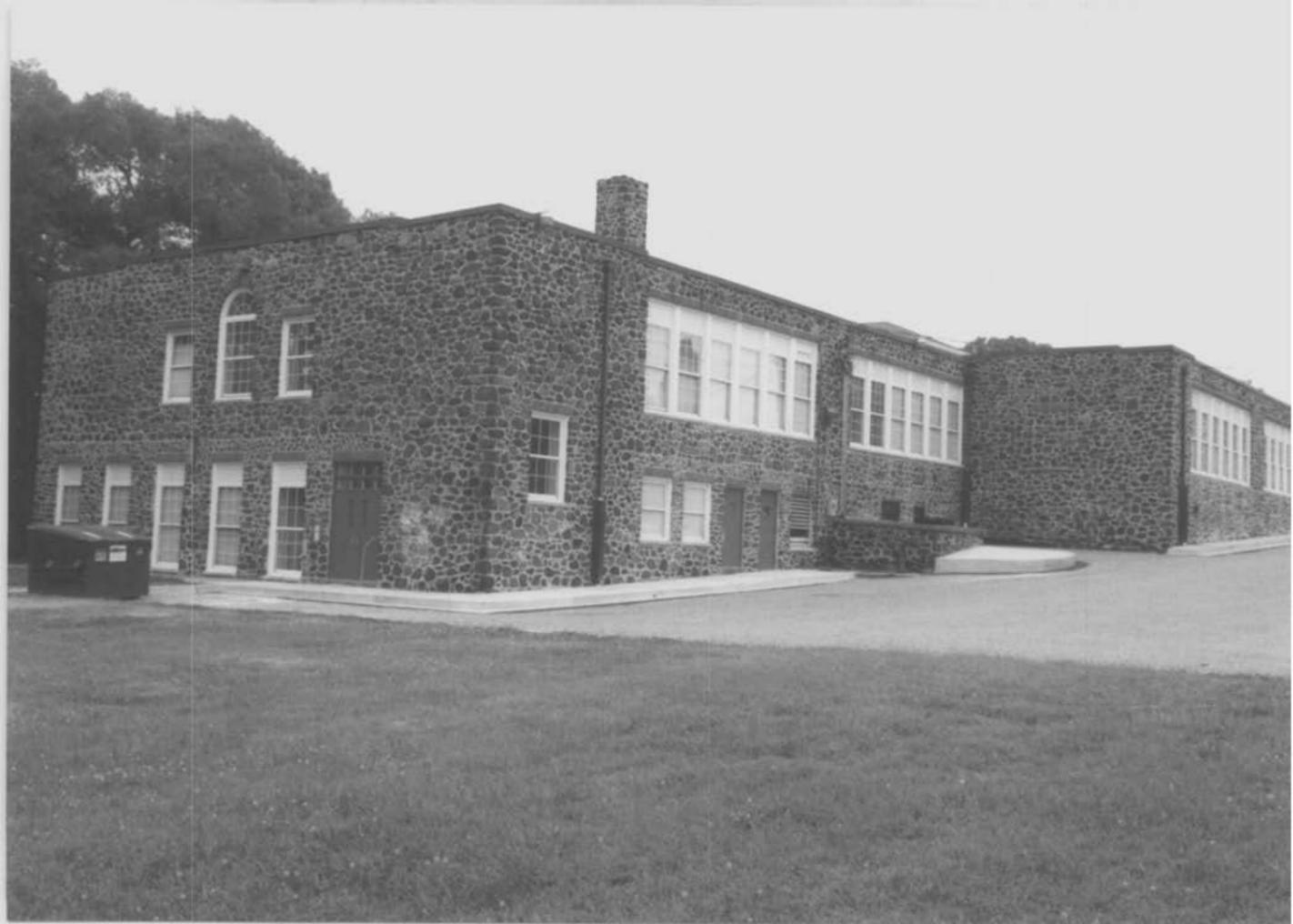
Ken Skort

July 2002

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South elev., front door

2/7



BA-3065

Westchester Consolidated Elem. School  
2414 Westchester Ave.

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Skort

July 2002

MD SHPO

North & West eleus

3/7



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Westchester Consolidated Elem. School

2414 Westchester Ave

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Short

July 2002

MD SHPO

East & north elevs

4/7



BA-3065

Westchester Consolidated Elem. School  
2414 Westchester Ave.

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Short

July 2002

MO SHPO

Center rm. - uw north

5/7



BA-3065

Westchester Consolidated Elem. School /

2414 Westchester Ave

Balto, Co, MD

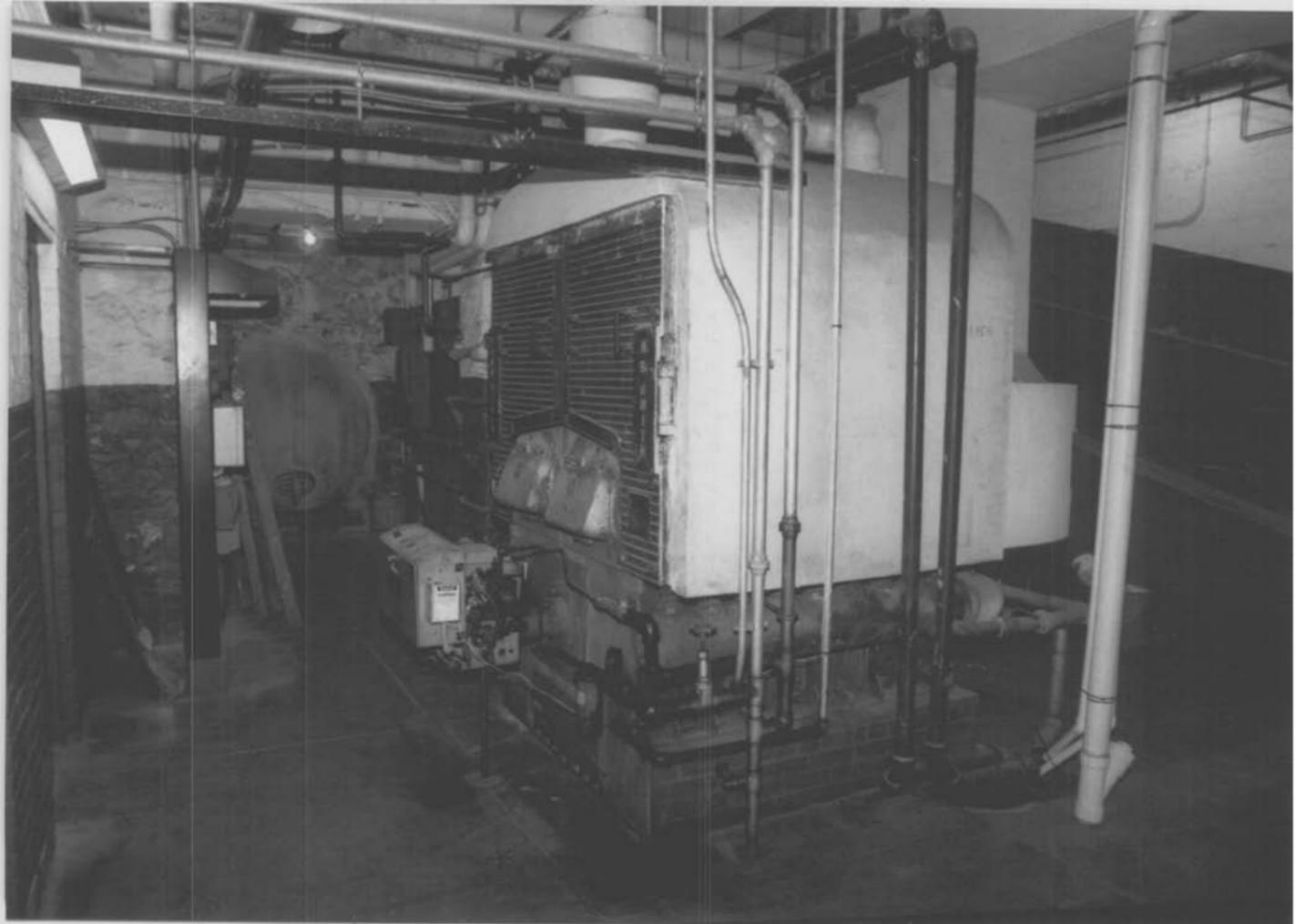
Ken Short

July 2002

MD SHPO

Center rm - vw. east

6/7



BA-3065

Westchester Consolidated Elem. School

2414 Westchester Ave.

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Short

July 2002

MD SHPO

Boiler rm - v.w. west.

7/7