

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes
no

Property Name: Highland Village Townhomes Inventory Number: BA-3290
 Address: 3953 McDowell Lane Historic district: X yes no
 City: Halethorpe Zip Code: 21227 County: Baltimore County
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Relay
 Property Owner: Sawyer Realty Holdings Tax Account ID Number: 13-1322350111
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 0445 Tax Map Number: 0109
 Project: MD 295 Riverview Noise Barrier (BA9798B22) Agency: Maryland State Highway Administration
 Agency Prepared By: Maryland State Highway Administration
 Preparer's Name: SHA Consultant Architectural Historian Rebecca Crew Date Prepared: 05/29/2014

Documentation is presented in: Cohn, Meredith. "Knott Company sells most of its real estates: 12 apartment buildings involved in transaction." The Sun, May 8, 2003.

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended
 Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
 Name of the District/Property: _____
 Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: yes no Listed: yes no
 Site visit by MHT Staff yes no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*
 Highland Village Townhomes is a typical townhouse-type apartment complex in Baltimore County, Maryland. The complex is located east of MD 295, south of Myrtle Avenue, west of Oak Road, and north of Virginia Avenue in Halethorpe. Constructed on multiple parcels totaling 65 acres of land, the complex includes 1,098 townhomes divided into irregularly-sized and shaped groups. McDowell Drive forms a curvilinear spine from which small cul-de-sacs and courtyards extend. Some buildings face McDowell Drive. Twin Circle Drive connects the northern part of McDowell Drive to the southern part of the same, and it contains two circles of apartment buildings. A small number of buildings are not attached to McDowell Drive. Pull-in parking is available in front of each building. Concrete sidewalks line the roads and parking areas, and grassy areas are located between the buildings. The units are arranged in rectangular, L-shape, and U-shaped buildings. Grass lawns surround each building, and the entire complex is surrounded by stands of mature trees. Landscaping is concentrated at the front of the buildings. The apartment buildings contain different numbers of units, but each unit is uniform in size and appearance. They are all two-stories tall with flat roofs and The buildings' first floor is clad in brick, and the second floors are slightly cantilevered and covered in vinyl siding.

The complex contains one-,two-, and three-bedroom units that have been remodeled. The first floor of each unit is uniform in size

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW	
Eligibility recommended <input type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <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
MHT Comments:	
<u>Jim Valenza</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>6/20/2014</u> Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, National Register Program	<u>6/24/14</u> Date

and arrangement, consisting of an eat-in kitchen in the front of the unit, and a living room in the rear. A small pantry separates the vinyl-floored kitchen from the carpeted living room. The stairs to the second floor are situated in the kitchen, directly in front of the front door. The stair railing is painted metal pipe, an original feature that corresponds to the low-cost nature of the original materials. Most units have two bedrooms, with large closets, and a bathroom on the second floor. The three-bedroom units have L-shaped floor plans, with one bedroom extending over the first floor of the neighboring unit; one-bedroom units complement the three-bedroom units.

A single concrete sidewalk leads to a single concrete stoop that accesses the doors to two units. The doors are solid and paneled and set directly next to paired six-over-six sash windows. Narrow, single-paneled wood doors, leading to a utility closet, are at the other end of the window, and the window and door arrangement repeats in a symmetrical arrangement. The upper level of each unit contains a central, six-over-six sash window with decorative paneled shutters. The windows are replacement.

The rear elevations of each unit are symmetrical in pairs. Each unit's first floor contains a tripartite six-over-six window with brick sill next to a solid panel door. Poured concrete stoops are shared by neighboring units. The rear elevations slightly over hang the first floor; and exposed wiring is frequently attached to this space. Each unit's rear second floor contains a tripartite ribbon window with a longer horizontal light in the middle. Some of the units have air conditioning units set on concrete pads along the rear elevations.

The end units' exposed side elevations are devoid of openings, but the dual-material cladding continues with brick on the first floor and vinyl siding on the second floor. It is likely that asbestos siding was the original cladding of the second story.

History/ Context

Highland Village Townhomes are located in southwest Baltimore County, north of the Patapsco River and Anne Arundel County, and south of the Baltimore City line. The nearby community of Lansdowne, located to the northeast, along the B & O Railroad, had been laid out in the late nineteenth century, but the land that would become Highland Village Apartment Townhomes remained rural. Baltimore Highlands, located east of the Highland Village Apartment Townhomes was platted in 1908, but developed slowly until plans for the Baltimore-Washington Parkway came to fruition. The concept for the Parkway dates back to the eighteenth century, but its construction began in 1947, spurring development along the corridor. By 1953, Baltimore Highlands was about 80% built-out, and by 1957, the Riverview community, located west of the Parkway, was fully built-out (1). Riverview was built by Baltimore real estate developer Henry J. Knott, and in the early 1960s, Knott began planning Highland Village Townhomes, under the same subsidiary, Mardo Homes, Inc., that built Riverview. Andrew Knecht, of Knecht and Human Landscape Architects platted Highland Village Townhomes' first section in 1964. Additional sections were platted in 1964, 1966, and 1969 (2).

Baltimore native Henry J. Knott (1909-1995) began building brick rowhomes in East Baltimore (on East Federal and North Decker Streets) in 1946, although he began planning for this project in 1939 (3). Because he was already married with children, Knott did not serve in the military during World War II, but his contract business benefitted from the need to house veterans, and his business expanded from contracting to developing. Knott made large numbers of land purchases in Baltimore County in 1948 and 1949, and in 1950, Henry J. Knott became a director of the Home Builders Association of Maryland (4). This leadership position suggesting some level of success in home-building and interest in networking, staying current on technological and design advancements, and working towards policies to benefit the home-building industry. The Home Builders Association of Maryland had been formed in 1946 as independent association affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, and its formation came at a time when housing had been in short-supply for decades, and mass-production techniques developed for the World War II were able to be re-applied to housing to create the suburbanized cities we know today.

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_____	_____
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_____	_____
Reviewer, National Register Program	Date

In 1950-51, Knott served as contractor in a project called Freedom Apartments and Shopping Center developed by James Rouse and designed by architect Alexander Smith Cochran. It was a 308-unit complex with adjacent shopping center that won awards from the Baltimore Chapter AIA for a Certificate of Merit in 1951, and an award from the Association of Commerce architectural competition in 1952 (5). It was also published in "House & Home" magazine in April 1953 (6). Like many of the developments Knott and Rouse later went on to build, the apartments were divided into two-story units directly accessing the outside, and the buildings, laid out in U-and L-shaped groupings around off-street parking, encircling an irregularly-shaped street pattern.

Following completion of Freedom Apartments, Knott began serving as developer on his own projects, using the land purchases he made in the late 1940s. Reflecting this full change of role, Knott was elected president of the Homes Builders Association of Maryland in October 1954 and remained president for two years (7). In 1958, he was appointed to the board of directors of the National Association of Home Builders, and in 1965, Henry J. Knott became president of a newly formed Baltimore County Chapter of the Homes Builders Association of Maryland (8).

By 1964, Knott had constructed more than 10,000 homes and apartments throughout Baltimore city and county, Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties. Highland Village Townhomes was a low-cost apartment complex, and the design was more or less the same as Knott had been building since Freedom Apartments in 1950 (9).

Knott employed the same town-house style apartment style at Highland Village Townhomes, Riverview Townhomes, Cove Village Townhomes in Essex, and Fontana Village in Rossville, and Whispering Woods Townhomes in Middle River. They each exhibit of two-story, brick and asbestos buildings with flat roofs, paired symmetry, brick window sills on the first floor and ribbon windows on the second floor rear elevations. (Whispering Woods, built slightly later has sliding glass rear-elevation doors).

While other developers in the 1960s built apartment complexes with communal amenities such as swimming pools and club houses, Knott's low-rent apartments stuck to the basics, providing parking, bus-service, and communal laundry rooms. Knott proudly explained his rents were so low that he did not have to spend money advertising his apartments because they rented themselves (10). By 1969, Knott had built approximately 4,000 units of low-cost, townhouse-style apartments. Knott built slightly more up-market apartment town-homes, and is credited as the first builder of Dutch Colonial group houses in the country; Dutch Village on Perring Parkway is an example of this style (11). The Knott family's Partners Realty Trust sold twelve apartment complexes, including Highland Village Townhomes, to Sawyer Realty Holdings LLC in 2003. Sawyer Realty Holdings LLC has made some improvements to the property, but the overall design remains the same (12).

Significance Evaluation

Highland Village Townhomes was evaluated for significance under National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criteria A, B, and C. Highland Village Townhomes is representative of the type and style of suburban expansion surrounding Baltimore in the 1960s. The apartment complex is typical of townhouse-type apartments in Maryland and is a basic example of the type commonly built in Baltimore County. Highland Village Townhomes is not an early example and the complex has not been shown to have had a significant influence on subsequent apartment design. Furthermore, the property is not known to be associated with any other events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history. Therefore, the property is not eligible under Criterion A. Research did not reveal significant persons in history to be closely associated with Highland Village Townhomes. Therefore, the property is not eligible under Criterion B. Highland Village Townhomes is a modest and basic example of Modern Movement-influenced townhome-type apartment complexes in Maryland. The complex includes standard stylistic elements typical of the type such as flat roof, slightly overhanging second floor, varied building shapes, and off-street parking. The buildings do not retain the aesthetic sensitivities of a master architect. They exhibit common materials and forms, which have been updated over time. They demonstrate no distinctive stylistic details. Highland Village Townhomes is a common example of a mid-twentieth-

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century townhouse apartment complex and does not convey distinctive characteristics or artistic values. It is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C. Criterion D was not considered as part of this assessment. Based on the criteria evaluated, Highland Village Townhomes is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The boundary for the property encompasses approximately 65 acres and is confined to the current property tax parcels found on Baltimore County Tax Map 109, Parcels 275, 374, and 445; crossed referenced to Plat Books RRG 29, p. 112; OTG 30, p. 146; OTG 31, p. 116; OTG 33, p. 38; and OTG 33, p. 107.

(1) Lione, Brian Michael. "Baltimore Highlands, BA-3001." Maryland Historical Trust Determination of Eligibility Form, May 22, 2002.

(2) Baltimore County Land Records.

(3) History- The Marion I. & Henry J. Knott Foundation. http://www.knottfoundation.org/about_us/histpry. Accessed August 8, 2013.

(4) "Home Builders Dine Thursday." The Sun: January 3, 1950. Pg. 13.

(5) Weeks, Christopher. "Alexander Smith Cochran: Modernist Architect in Traditional Baltimore." Maryland Historical Society, 1994. (84-85).

Photo Standalone 7- No Title. The Sun: April 20, 1952. Pg C1.

(6) Weeks, 85.

(7) "Home Builders Group Elects New Officers." The Sun: October 31, 1954. Pg S10. "Home-Building Unit's Scope, Aims Told." The Sun: September 16, 1956. Pg. 138.

(8) "4 N.A.H.B. Directors." The Sun: January 19, 1958: pg. A30. "Builders' Chapter Formed." The Sun: May 30, 1965. Pg. RE3.

(9) "Knott Builds Home in Bel Air Group." The Sun, August 23, 1964. Pg. F2.

(10) Hill, Frederic B. "Low-Rent Apartment Project Stirs Dispute In Rossville: Builder and Politicians Argue Quality, With Tenant In Middle." The Sun: November 20, 1969. Pg. A14.

(11) "Knott Builds Home in Bel Air Group." The Sun, August 23, 1964. Pg. F2.

(12) Cohn, Meredith. "Knott Company sells most of its real estates: 12 apartment buildings involved in transaction." The Sun, May 8, 2003.

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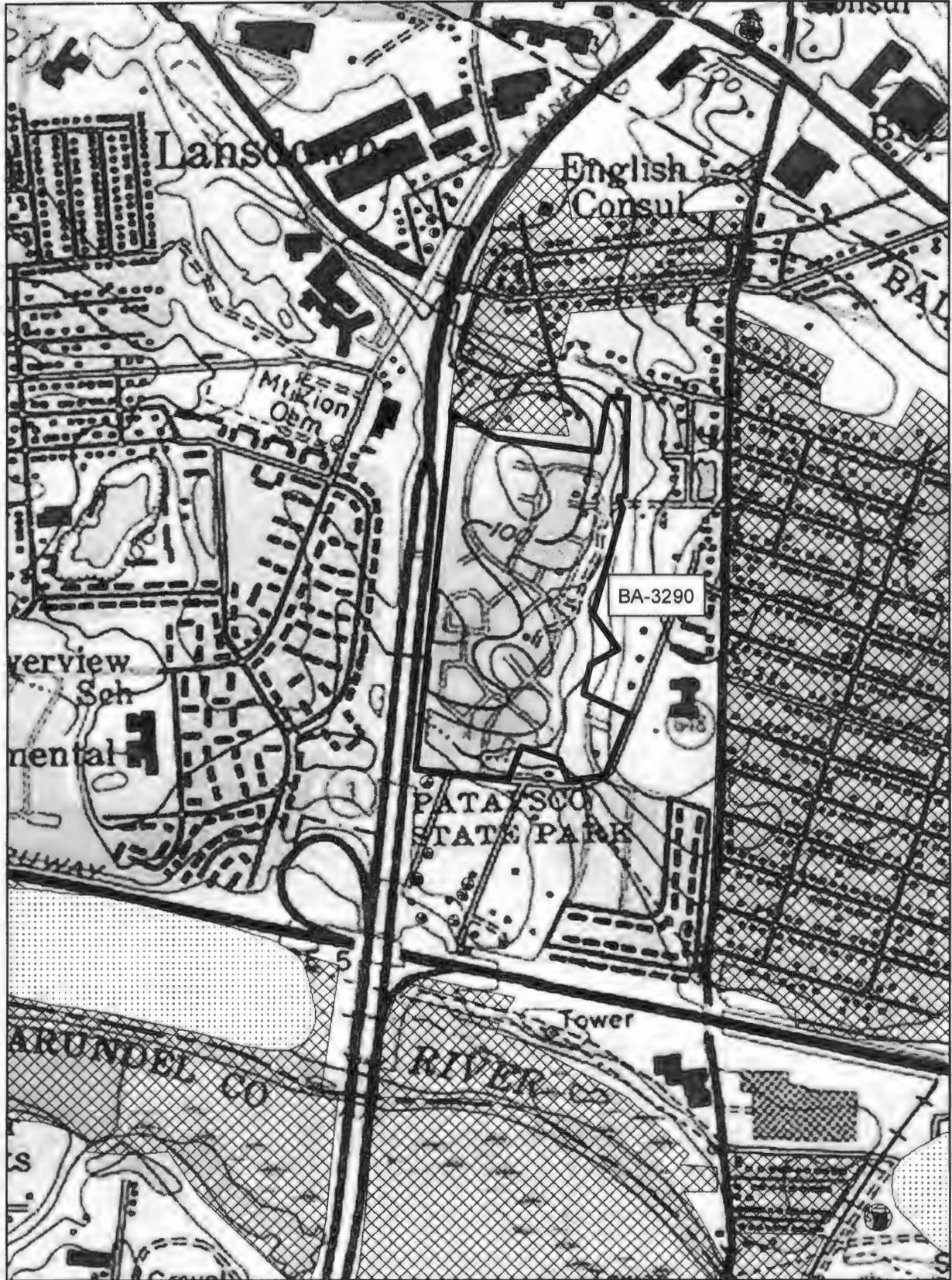
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Highland Village Townhomes, BA-3290
Lansdowne, MD
(Baltimore County, Relay Quad)

1:12,000





1:6,000



Highland Village Townhomes, BA-3290
Lansdowne, MD
(Baltimore County, Relay Quad)

**Maryland State Highway Administration
Cultural Resources Section
Photo Log**

Project No.: BA 978B22

Project Name: MD 295 Riverview

MIHP No.: BA-3290

MIHP Name: Highland Village Apartments

County: Baltimore

Photographer: Rebecca Crew

Date: August 20, 2013

Ink and Paper Combination: Epson UltraChrome pigmented ink/Epson Premium Luster Photo Paper

CD/DVD: Verbatim, CD-R, Archival Gold

Image File Name	Description of View
BA-3290_2013-08-20_01	View facing north towards townhomes on Twin Circle Way.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_02	View facing southeast towards townhomes on Twin Circle Way.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_03	Detail of townhome facades at 115 and 117 Twin Circle Way.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_04	View facing north towards townhomes at west end of Virginia Avenue.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_05	View facing northeast towards Virginia Avenue townhomes.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_06	View facing east towards rear of units along McDowell Lane and Twin Circle Way.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_07	View facing southeast towards rear of Twin Circle Way units.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_08	View facing southeast towards rear of Twin Circle Way units.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_09	Detail of rear of Twin Circle Way unit.
BA-3290_2013-08-20_10	Detail of rear of Twin Circle Way units.



BA-3290

Highland Village Townhomes
Baltimore Cr., MD

R. Crew

8/20/2013

MD SHPO

View facing north towards townhomes on
Ivan Circle Way

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BA-3290

Highland Village Townhomes

Baltimore Co, MD

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8/20/2013

MD SHPO

View facing southeast towards townhomes
on Twin Circle Way

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Highland Village Townhomes
Baltimore Co., Md.

R. Crew

8/20/2013

MD 5460

Detail of townhome facades at 11 Sand 117

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3/10



BA-3290

Highland Village Townhomes

Sabrinore Cr., MD

R. Crew

8/20/2013

MS 5460

New paving north towards townhomes at
west end of Virginia Avenue

4/10



BA-3296

Highland Village Townhomes
Baltimore Co., MD

R Crew

8/20/2013

MD 8400

View facing northeast towards

Virginia Avenue townhomes

5/10



BA-3290

Highland Village Southhome
Baltimore Co, MD

R. crew

8/20/2013

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View facing east towards rear of units
along McDowell Lane and Twin Circle Way.

6/10



BA-3290

Highland Village Townhomes

Baltimore Co, MD

R. Crew

8/20/2013

MD SHPO

View facing southeast towards rear of

Jum Circle Way units

7/10



BA-3290

Highland Village Townhomes

Baltimore Co., MD

R. crew

8/20/2013

MD SHPO

View facing southeast towards rear of
Twin Circle Way units

8/10



BA-3210

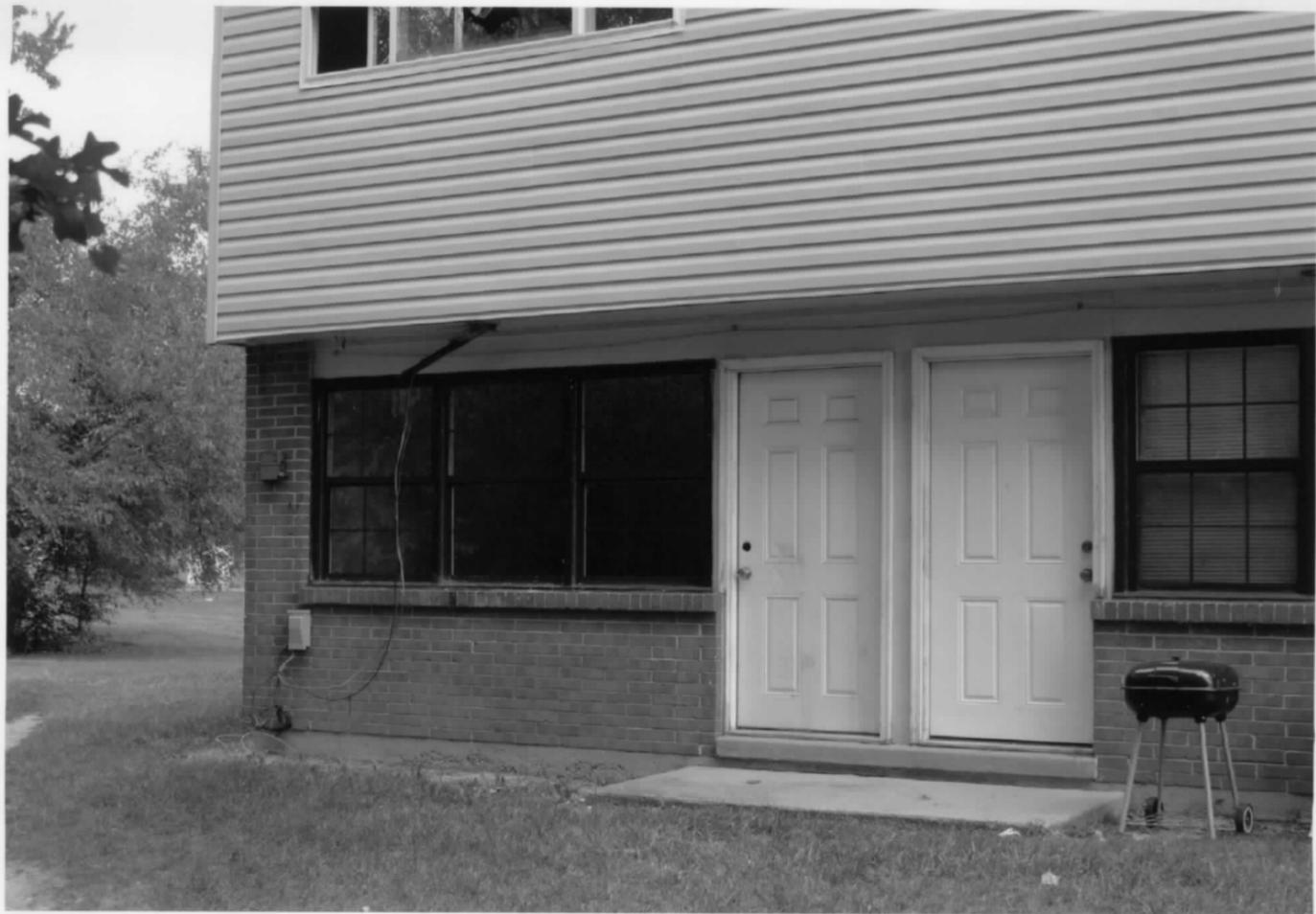
Highland Village Townhomes
Baltimore Co., MD

R Crew

8/20/2013

MD 8780

Detail of rear of Twin Circle Way units
9/10



BA-3290

Highland Village Townhomes

Baltimore Co., MD

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MD SHPO

Detail of recal of Twin Circle Way units

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