FHR-8-300 (11-78)

B-3681

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic 303-317 and 319-327 East North Avenue

and/or common 303 - 327 East North Avenue

2. Location

street & number 303-327 East North Avenue n/a not for publication

city, town Baltimore n/a vicinity of congressional district Seventh

state Maryland code 24 county independent city code 510

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	___ private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	X both	___ work in progress	___ educational	X private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	X not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name See Continuation Sheet No. 1

street & number

city, town ___ vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse

street & number Calvert Street

city, town Baltimore state Maryland 21202

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1984 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

B-3681

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date n/a
X fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Number of Resources

Contributing	Noncontributing	
14	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
14	1	Total

Number of previously listed National Register properties included in this nomination: none

Original and historic functions and uses: residential

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The row houses at 303-317 and 319-327 East North Avenue consists of two groups of brick Victorian row houses that rest on high masonry foundations and are four stories high which includes a mansard roof along the street or north elevation. The 303-317 group is divided into eight units and has incised stone decorative detailing surrounding the doors and over the windows and a pressed metal cornice with swag decoration. The facade is divided symmetrically with a projecting center bay. The end unit which stood at 301 was demolished in 1981 because of extensive fire damage. The 319-327 group has five units and an elaborately decorated facade with central pavilion, wall dormers, mini-towers, highly decorative brick work, and belt courses. Several of the entrance steps retain ornate iron balustrades. On the interiors, the houses have elaborate period woodwork (surrounds, doors, balustrades), multiple staircases, and skylights. Behind 313 stands a two story brick structure with a tall smoke stack that was the central heating system (dating probably soon after construction of the houses) for 303-317. These houses have a high level of integrity of original design, materials workmanship, and location that give a strong late nineteenth century sense of time and place. Several garage-type structures which do not contribute to the significance of the resource stand along the south end of the lots.

For General Description, see Continuation Sheet No. 2

OWNER OF PROPERTY

303-307 and 319-321
The Honorable William Donald Schaefer
Mayor of Baltimore
City Hall, Room 250
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

309-317
Mr. John R. Maguire
3016 Guilford Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

323-325
Ms. Harriett McAdoo
5209 Eliots Oak Road
Columbia, Maryland 21044

327
Mrs. Rachel Tutt
1605 Burnwood Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21239

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

These two groups of terrace houses are located at 303-327 East North Avenue in Baltimore City. The row commenced eastward from the southeast corner of North Avenue and North (now Guilford Avenue) Street.

The houses at 301-307 formed a terrace of housing in a Victorian Second Empire style. The corner house, no. 301, was demolished in 1981. When this group was built, the Maryland Institution for the Instruction of the Blind grounds were directly across what was then called Boundary Avenue. The building, built in 1868, was a raised three story and mansard roof marble ediface. This building may have inspired the developer or builder to use the same style for the houses he was about to build.

Each of these houses is of red running bond brick, 3 full stories on a raised basement, and capped by a decorative tile mansard roof at the fourth floor level. The twenty-one foot fronts are three bays wide. The former corner house was one foot wider. The entrances to each of the house, where they still remain, are located in the left bay. These raised entrances are accessable from sets of marble steps. The door surrounds are marble with carved motifs in the pedimented lintels and the side pilasters. One set of the original double doors remains at no. 311. These very decorative doors had full glass panels. A carved transom bar separates a glass transom above. House no. 305 has had the entranceway removed and a large masonry opening spans the front of the basement as well as the first floor. The basement portions of the front facades are faced with marble. Above the basement windows (two per house with the exception of those altered in no. 305) runs a slightly projecting marble belt course running the length of the terrace. This course is interrupted only by the entrances. Basement entrances are located under the stair landings and are accessable from side stair wells under the steps.

Where window sashes exist, they are what appears to be the original one over one style. Each window opening is headed by a marble lintel. The first and second floor lintels are pediments with carved floral and geometric motifs. They also have a dentilled lower edge. The first floor lintels have a greater pitch than those of the second floor. The third floor openings are capped by a flat marble lintel that is in turn capped by a wood trim piece. In all cases, the marble trim projects about ½" beyond the brick facade. The spacing between the first and second bay of each building is narrower than that between the second and third bays. The only exceptions to this are houses nos. 307 and 311 where the center and right fenestrations are located in a 4" projecting bay. The paired window openings in the bay of 311 are headed by double lintels with a 16" brick pier between the center and right bays. The first floor fenestrations of 303-307 have been altered for commercial purposes.

The straight sided mansard roof is delineated by a cornice. Houses nos. 303-307 have a bracketed wood cornice with ventilator panels above each of the third floor openings. The remainder of the houses have a pressed metal cornice that probably replaced the original wooden one.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

There are two dormers per house in the mansard roof. They are wood dormers with projecting gables. Decorative carving is located above the window area. House no. 311 has a hipped dormer above the projecting bay. The roof on no. 307 has been slightly altered.

Houses nos. 319-327 are of a Victorian eclectic style. Each of the houses is three stories on a raised basement and a mansard fourth floor. The first floors are three bays wide and the upper floors are two bays. All are built of brick and decorative brick trim and are currently painted. Marble steps lead up to the entrances that are located in the left bay. These houses also have basement entrances on the front and have two basement windows to the right of the steps. The original entrance doors are still intact at 323-327. The first floor openings have glass transoms in a sunburst pattern still remaining in most instances. The upper floors of the buildings are delineated by brick pilasters in relief. These frame each of the windows and provide blind openings in the center of 323. In some cases, the original windows that have a fixed clear glass pane surrounded by multi-colored side lights still remain. Decorative scallop shell designs, corbeling, garland swags, various other ornamentation and medusa head enliven the facade.

The fourth story of this terrace is highlighted by a mansard roof. Brick wall dormers pierce the roof in a symmetrical fashion. The dormers of 319 and 327 have pyramid like roofs. The left dormer of 325 and the right dormer of 321 have a gable shape and incorporate an arched dormer window. The right dormer of 325 and the left dormer of 321 have flat-sided turrets and also have a round arched window opening.

House no. 323 acts as the central pavillion for this terrace of five houses. The upper floors are accentuated by a projecting facade capped by a temple front-like gabled dormer. The dormer has three narrow windows that are topped with a shell-like pattern in decorative brick work. A larger projecting mansard roof rises behind the dormer bay. Compositionally, this group of buildings presents a dramtic and ecclectic facade that is terminated by a romatically symmetric roofline. Although somewhat smaller than 303-317, the five house terrace is no less grand in its appearance. The interplay and mixture of many elements is contrasted by its more rhythmic and more conservative neighbor.

The rears of 303-317 are all alike, for the most part. The basement opens to the rear yard, thereby creating a five story elevation. This long five-story wall is broken up visually by projecting two story asphalt shingle-clad bay windows at the first and second floor levels. The rears of these buildings are flush with each other and do not incorporate back buildings. A variety of fenestration widths is used. There were originally wood porches that ran along the base of the bays.

See Continuation Sheet No. 4

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

At the rear of no. 313 fronting on the alley is the two story brick structure that housed the central heating plant for these dwellings. The large interior space is located below grade and has a second floor above that. An underground pipe runs into the rear of 313 from this structure. Adjacent to the heating plant is a 50'+ smokestack that is connected to the plant with a flue.

The rears of 319-327 are marked by three story ells, a four story main rear wall and a set back rear wall of the attic or fourth floor. This rear wall is frame with iron cladding. As with the other group of houses, the basements of 319-327 also open directly into the rear yard.

There are many large trees remaining in the rear yards. These were probably planted by the first occupants of the houses.

The interiors of these houses vary in condition and room changes. These have all been renovated into apartments throughout the years. Many of the original features still remain, although in somewhat of a deteriorated state in some cases. Both groups of houses originally featured basement kitchens with pantries off the dining rooms. The interiors of 303-317 incorporated a four story light-well that brought natural light to a reception room located between the parlor and the dining room. The ceilings of these houses are thirteen feet on the first floor and twelve feet on the second. The ceilings of 319-327 were twelve and ten feet, respectively. A third story oval staircase lit by a fourth-floor rear window graces 319-327; the stair at 303-317 is lit by a skylight. (See enclosed plans of first floors for basic layout.)

In all probabilities, the fourth floors of these houses were meant to be servants' quarters. The fourth floor rooms in 319-327 are small, low ceilinged and feature less ornate woodwork. Those in 303-317 are somewhat larger but still are not as ornate as lower floor rooms. In both groups of houses, elaborate pocket doors, baseboard, cornices, mantelpieces and stairs graced the interiors.

Although demolished in 1981, insurance maps indicate the general appearance of 301. The mansard roof turned the corner and ran along the Guilford Avenue side of 301, as well as turning again to adorn the rear also. A four story brick bay was located on the side wall, towards the front wall. This three-sided bay was capped by a mansard roof dormer.

8. Significance

B-3681

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

Specific dates 1879–1881 **Builder/~~Architect~~** 303–317, George A. Foreman; 319–327, Belvidere Land & Loan Co.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: A, C
Applicable Exceptions: none
Level of Significance for Evaluation: local

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The significance of the row houses at 202-317 and 319-327 East North Avenue is derived from their architectural merit and their association with the development of Baltimore in the late nineteenth century. Built on a large scale, these two groups of row houses are some of the most elaborately decorated rows that were constructed in Baltimore in the late nineteenth century outside of Mount Vernon, a neighborhood several blocks to the south that is characterized by ornate grand-scale row houses. The East North Avenue buildings are particularly noteworthy architecturally for the exterior decorative detailing (generally stone on 303-317 and generally brick on 319-327), interior woodwork and plan (303-317 contain four story sky lights that light first floor reception rooms), and the unique central heating system for 303-317. Historically, these houses which are an anomaly today for North Avenue, represent an early attempt at planning the future of the street. The row houses at 303-317 and 319-327 are the first row houses developed on the street which through the mid nineteenth century was the northern boundary of the city and not developed on any major scale until 1874 when it was widened to the scale of a grand boulevard. Development of the buildings along the street, however, never took on the grand scale the width of the street and these rows set.

For History and Supporting Documentation, see Continuation Sheet No. 5

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Located in an area of two and three story rowhouses, these two groups of buildings are an excellent example of late 19th century terrace housing. Such development, while more common in Baltimore's exclusive neighborhoods, is an anomaly among the immediate surroundings with respect to scale and detailing. This grouping was the first residential development along North Avenue east of Guilford Avenue. The pastoral setting of the Maryland Blind Asylum (incorporated into the Old Baltimore Polytechnic Building in 1912) and surrounding undeveloped treed lots provided a rural setting for these houses upon their completion in 1880-1881. The subsequent development that occurred in the next twenty years around this group did not incorporate the grand expectations that were so much a part of 301-327. In short, these houses may be said to be a development folly located in an area that did not live up to its original expectations.

North Avenue was a paper street serving as the northern city limit prior to 1850. In that year, North, or Boundary Avenue as it was also known, was opened between Pennsylvania and Greenmount Avenues. Development along North Avenue, however, was slow to occur. Because the city was developing in a linear fashion to the north, Charles Street, and to a lesser extent, St. Paul Street, became the focus of development in the post-Civil War period.

It wasn't until the late 1870s that north Avenue became an area for potential development. The 1869 Saschse view of Baltimore City shows the south side of North Avenue (sic) virtually undeveloped between Charles Street and Greenmount Avenue. The Maryland Institution for the Blind occupied the north side of North Avenue between what is now St. Paul and Barclay Streets. This imposing structure had a marble front and was three stories and a mansard roof. The grounds of this public institution stood directly across the road from this development site. In 1874, North Avenue was widened to its present width between Charles Street and Greenmount Avenue. A fifty foot strip of land on the south side was deeded over to become part of the right-of-way.

At this time, the western portion of the south side of the 300 block was owned by the firm of Wills and Hanna, a marble yard located at Madison and Constitution Avenues. On March 29, 1875, Thomas V. Wills died, leaving Mr. Hugh B. Hanna as the sole proprietor of the marble yard.

On July 1, 1878, Hugh B. Hanna and his wife leased to George A. Foreman, a builder in Baltimore City, nine lots running easterly fromt the southeast corner of North Avenue and North (now Guilford) Street. This agreement of lease, however, was to be executed and delivered "...as soon as the said George A. Foreman shall have erected and completed the nine buildings herinafter described upon the nine lots of ground...." The lease goes on to describe the construction: "...the said George A. Foreman hereby agrees to erect-build and complete at his

See Continuation Sheet No. 6

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

own cost and expense in a good substantial and workmanlike manner on the first lot above described a dwelling house 22' front with a depth of 60' and each one of the other 8 lots above described a brick dwelling house 21' front with a depth of 60' each....Each of the said nine brick dwellings is to be three stories height with a mansard roof and basement kitchen. The front to be of pressed bricks with marble trimmings and the interior of said houses to be finished in a similar manner to those built by George A. Blake at the corner of Charles and John Streets...."

On December 8, 1878, a mortgage was made for eight of the nine houses between the builder and a Mr. Lennox Birckhead, an influential real estate developer. The corner house was not involved with this agreement. Mr. Birckhead lent $32,000 ($4,000 a dwelling) to Mr. Foreman for construction.

The houses (301-317) were completed soon after and a real estate ad under the name of Lennox Birckhead first appeared in the News Advertiser on May 15, 1880. In the following years, the houses were advertised as either sale or rental units. The corner house (301) was retained by Mr. Hanna, and leased to Calvin Chestnut, a wholesale grocer, in 1880. The Chestnut family was the only family residing in this block of North Avenue in the 1880 census.

The most uncommon element of the development of 301-317 was the incorporation of a central heating plant for all nine houses. A two-story-and-basement brick structure is located at the rear of 311. This building with its fifty foot smokestack, provides hot water through an underground duct to the rear of 311. From there, pipes transversed the party walls in the basements to supply hot water for heating all of the nine houses. Only one other instance of this type of central heating for multiple housing is known of in Baltimore, and that block has been demolished. This modern concept added to the sophistication that this terrace offered at the time.

The belvidere Land and Loan Co. leased the lots for 319-327 from Robert M. McLane (trustee) on June 3, 1878. This agreement stated that "...the Belvidere Land and Loan Co. within 24 months from the date hereof to erect at its expense on each of said five lots of ground a good and substantial three story brick dwelling house to cost not less than $6,000 and to commence the erection of all of said houses within twelve months from the date hereof."

On September 10, 1880, Hugh B. Hanna , Lennox Birckhead, and the Belvidere Land and Loan Co. were among those who signed a petition to "...to improve North Avenue between Charles Street and Greenmount Avenue...by making a driveway in the center of the Avenue of the width of sixty feet and parking the north and south sides the width of forty five feet..." Unusual oval grass plots were planted on the south side of the street in front of 301-327. The idea of

See Continuation Sheet No. 7

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

"parking" this portion of North Avenue probably was inspired by the just completed "Taney Place" - park squares laid out in the center of North Avenue between Charles and Oak (Howard) Streets. Although Taney Place became quite fashionable the, pretentions of 301-327 were not fully realized.

It seems that these houses did not carry the most sought-after address at that time. Newspaper ads constantly appear from May 1880 onward advertising these houses for rent or sale. One early resident of this block was Mr. Richard H. James, who moved to 323 E. North Avenue in 1889. His daugher, Mrs. Laura Taylor, wrote a Sunday Sun article in 1958 that supports this assumption: "That was back in the '80's' when the few poeple who lived along Boundary Avenue, as North was called then, were considered suburbanites...for not only was the neighborhood far from civilization. It had a distinct off-the-beaten-path atmosphere."

She goes on to say, "...We moved across the line, occupying a large house (323) in the 300 block. It was one of the only group of houses on the south side between Calvert and Greenmount, and even then all of the houses in the block were empty save the one in which lived a Dr. White (325)."

The 1898 assessment book has numbers 305, 313, and 315 as being vacant at the time. Of the fourteen houses, only four were owner occupied. Among the residents of the block at that time was Mr. James Shuter, an agent of the Adams Express Company. He moved into 301, the corner house, in 1886 following Mr. Calvin Chestnut, the original tenant. The Shuter's bought their house from Mr. Hanna. Mr. Thomas White, proprietor of Thomas H. White & Co., merchandise brokers, moved into 325 in 1883. One of the more illustrious occupants of the block was Prudencio de Murguiondo, the Consul General Oriental for the Republic of Uruguay. He purchased the house at 309 in the 1890s. Born in Scotland in 1830, he lived at 309 with his wife, son, two daughters, sister, and two servants. Mr. George P. Renner, a realtor, owned the house at 311 in the 1890s. Harry William and Henry H. Fauntleroy of Faunt Le Roy & Co. Passenger Freight Elevators owned the house at 319.

The occupants of the houses were of the middle and upper middle classes. Many were owners or partners in businesses in the city. The 1900 census lists many of the houses with servants. Extended families, boarders, and more than one family in a house seems common on the block at that time. With the houses as large as they were, this seems like logical living arrangements.

Contiuuing the trend of the late 19th century, these houses continued to have more and more people living in them. Apartments were carved out of the once stately single family houses. Fortunately, however, many of the original details were left intact.

See Continuation Sheet No. 8

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

The future of this block is very questionable. The corner house (301) was demolished by the city in 1981 after a fire ravaged its interior rendering it unsafe. Years of neglect are beginning to take their toll on the exteriors and interiors of the remaining houses. The surrounding neighborhood has been in constant decline for the past fifty years or more. All buildings in these two groups are now vacant, except for 323 and 325 East North Avenue. The city, however, is acting on plans to revitalize North Avenue. The old Poly building across the street is to become the main offices for the Department of Education after a total renovation. The North and Charles intersection is beginning to come to life with development proposals and renovation work.
Renovation of the 300 block would help to preserve part of the city's past that is now only a memory.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

The Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore

G. M. Hopkins, "Atlas of Baltimore and the Environs," vol. 3, 1876

G. W. Bromley & Co., "Atlas of 1885"

The Sanborn Co., "Insurance Maps of Baltimore, Maryland, 1911"

Engelhardt, George W., Baltimore City, Md. - The Book of its Board of Trade 1895

Baltimore City Directories, 1873 - 1902

Baltimore Sunpapers, 1880 -1888 (various dates)

Baltimore American and News Advertiser, 1880 - 1888 (various dates)

Baltimore City Courthouse

Land Records

Baltimore City Records, 211 E. Pleasant Street, Baltimore

Ordinance File

Petition File

Assessment Book of 1898, Ward 8

Field Book of 1876, Ward 8

The Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore

Newspaper File

The Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, Room 601, City Hall, Baltimore

Various Files

Jacques Kelly, Private photograph and slide collection.

Saches and Co., "Bird Eye View of Baltimore, 1869"

1880 Census of Population, manuscript returns

1900 Census of Population, manuscript returns

9. Major Bibliographical References

B-3681

See Continuation Sheet No. 9

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Baltimore East, Maryland **Quadrangle scale** 1:24,000

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	361020	435230	B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The boundaries are delineated on the enclosed map and encompass only the city lots upon which the houses stand.

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

state	n/a	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert M. Quilter and Stuart Matz

organization date April 30, 1984

street & number 806 Leadenhall Street telephone 685-8725

city or town Baltimore state Maryland 21230

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 8-8-84

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

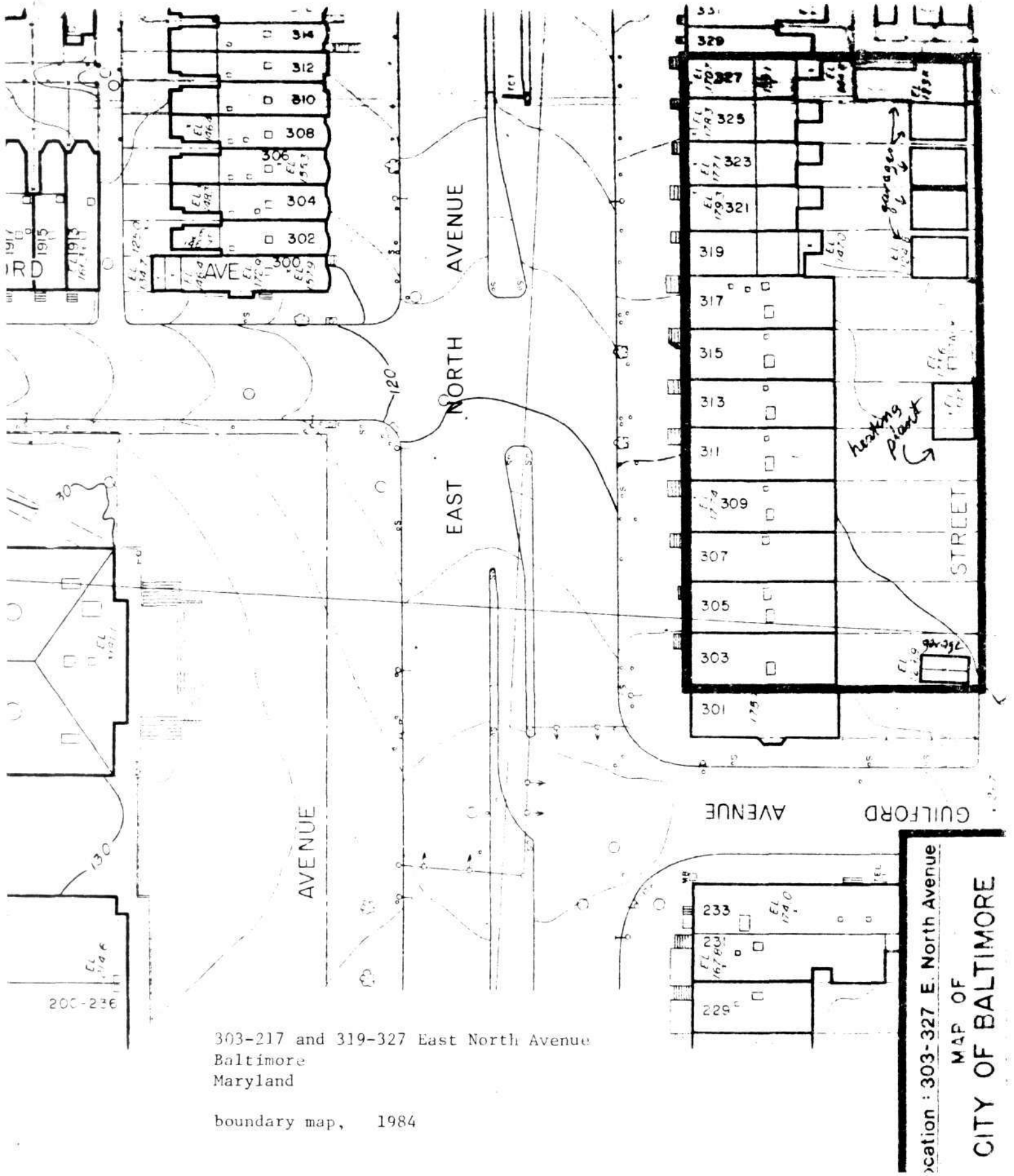
B-3681

303-317 and 319-327
East North Avenue

Baltimore
Maryland

18/361020/4352320

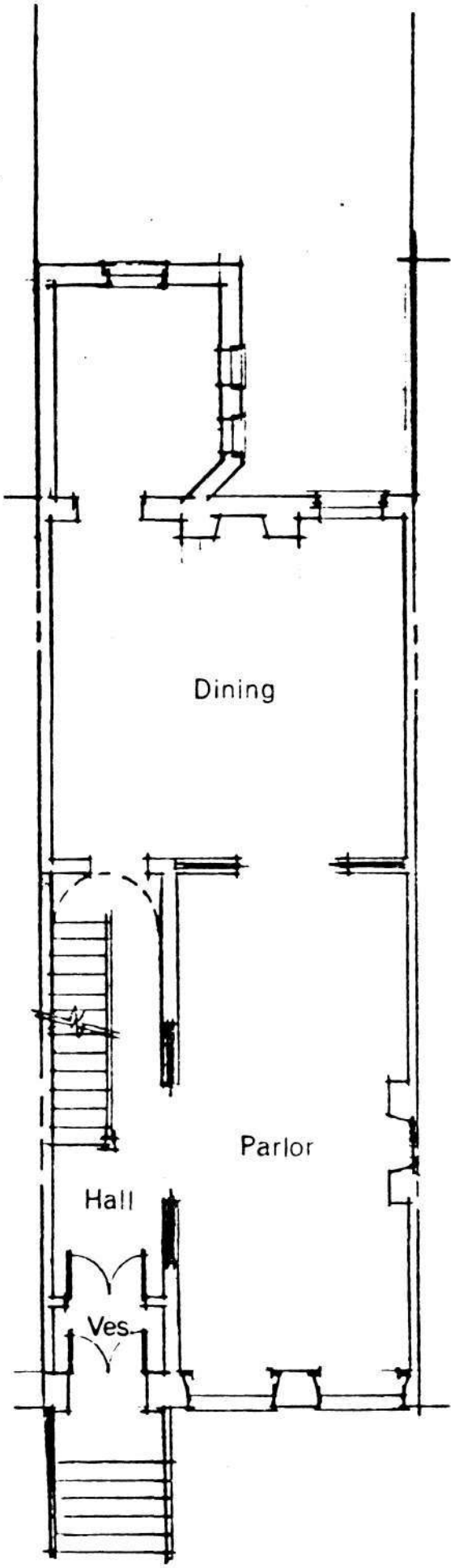
B-3681



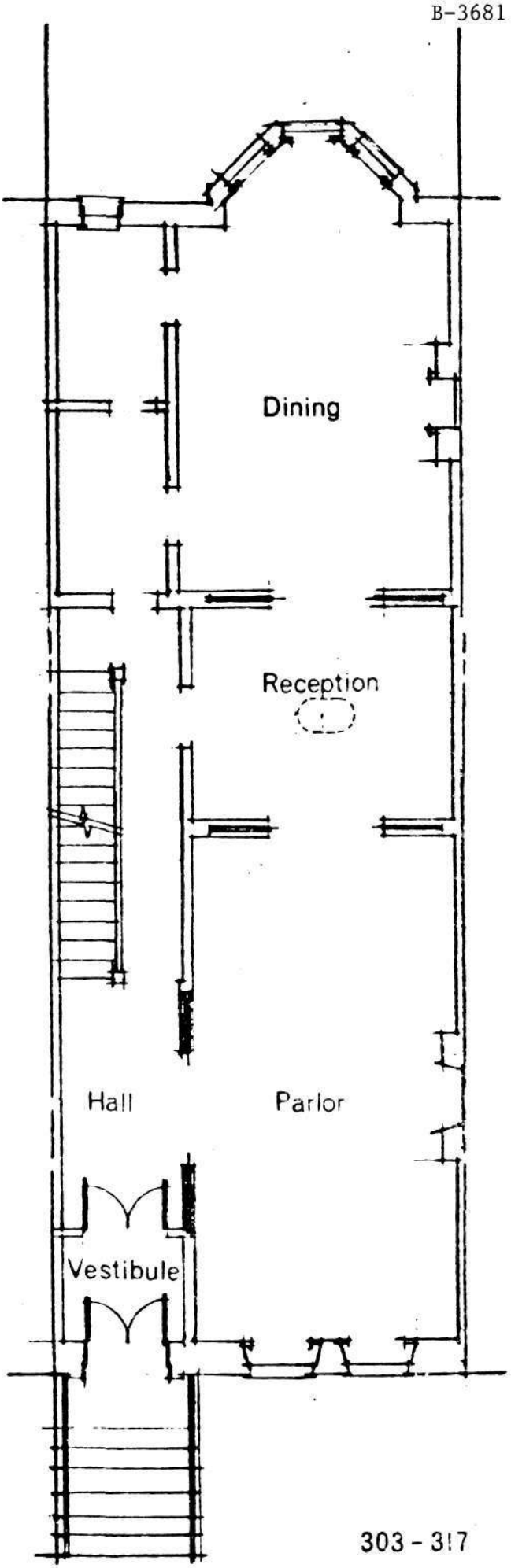
303-217 and 319-327 East North Avenue
Baltimore
Maryland

boundary map, 1984

B-3681



319 - 327



303 - 317

303-317 • 319-327 East North Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland

Typical First Floor Plan

Location : 303-327 E. North Avenue
MAP OF
CITY OF BALTIMORE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
1977
SCALE 1 INCH = 1500 FEET
B-3481
GREENMOUNT CEMETERY
BASIN
PIER 3
PIER 4
PIER 5
PIER 6
CIVIC CENTER
FEDERAL