

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #68-13-1 Building Date: 1910

Building Name: Star/Potts Hall

Location: 3405 Rhode Island Avenue, Mt. Rainier

Private/Lodge Hall/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description:

3405 Rhode Island Avenue is an oversized one-story, freestanding three-bay painted brick building with a rectangular plan. It rests on a full-height basement and is sheltered by a gable roof sheathed with asphalt shingles. The main gable end fronts on Rhode Island Avenue. The full-height basement contains several finished rooms including a small luncheonette accessed by a non-historic door at the facade's extreme western edge. The center of the basement facade contains two large rectangular window openings that are boarded up, as is an entry door with an arched lintel to the extreme east. Both the obscured windows and east entry appear to be original openings. The building's upper story is oversized and the main facade is punctuated by three evenly spaced large rectangular window openings with arched lintels. All three have been bricked up. The main facade's gable ended attic is sheathed with non-historic vinyl siding. The eaves and sheathing material of the roof are also recent. The upper story contains a large meeting room with early and possibly original decorative details. The window surrounds, decorative moldings and chair rails as well as pressed metal panels on the walls of the meeting room appear to date from the early years of the 20th century.

Significance:

The building at 3405 Rhode Island Avenue known as Star Hall is significant for the contribution it made to the development of early 20th century Mt. Rainier's social and cultural life. The building's name is derived from its use as the lodge hall of the ADAH Chapter #25, Order of the Eastern Star, owners of the building since 1921. ADAH Chapter #25 is one of the community's oldest and most enduring organizations, founded on April 28, 1915, in a ceremony at 3405 Rhode Island Avenue, then known as Pott's Hall. Prior to becoming a lodge hall Star/Potts Hall served as a local movie theater, community hall and public meeting site. The Hall is one of the earliest buildings erected in downtown Mt. Rainier, the present building was apparently erected by Robert E. Potts, a local businessman by 1910. While Star/Potts Hall is significant to the social and cultural life of Mt. Rainier its architectural contribution to the survey area is marginal. The building's exterior has been heavily altered over the years and its architectural integrity has been substantially compromised.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Pott's Hall

and/or common Star Hall

## 2. Location

street & number 3405 Rhode Island Avenue (U.S. Route 1)  not for publication

city, town Mt. Rainier  vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Lodge Hall

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

name Adah Cahpter #25, Order of the Eastern Star of Mt. Rainier

street & number 3405 Rhode Island Avenue telephone no.:

city, town Mt. Rainier state and zip code Maryland 20712

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 171

street & number Main Street folio 247

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Historic Sites and Districts Plan

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Commission, Room 4010, C.A.B.

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

3405 Rhode Island Avenue is an oversized one-story, freestanding three-bay painted brick building with a rectangular plan (see Slides #92-95). The building rests on a full-height basement and is sheltered by a gable roof sheathed with asphalt shingles. The main (north) gable end fronts on Rhode Island Avenue.

The building's full-height basement contains several finished rooms. The northern portion of the basement is occupied by a small luncheonette accessed by a non-historic metal and glass door at the facade's extreme western edge. The center bay of the basement facade contains two large rectangular window openings that are boarded up, as is an entry door with an arched lintel to the extreme east. Both the obscured windows and east entry appear to be early or original openings while the luncheonette entry to the west does not. The rear portion of the basement contains a large room used for public gatherings and at the rear (south) is a small kitchen. The basement facade is separated from the larger story above by a metal watertable visible only on the main (north) and east (alley) facades.

The building's upper story is oversized and the main (north) facade is punctuated by three evenly spaced large rectangular window openings with arched lintels. All three of these openings have been bricked up and the main facade contains no functioning windows. The main facade's gable ended attic is sheathed with non-historic vinyl siding. The eaves and sheathing material of the roof are also of recent vintage.

The west facade also contains several large bricked up window openings at the upper story. Access to the upper story is provided by an enclosed concrete block staircase attached to the facade, rising from grade at the northern end of the building and reaching the upper story at the rear of the west facade. The staircase is punctuated by two rectangular fixed pane windows. Other than the staircase windows the west facade is fenestrated. Towards the rear third of the building there is an early or original unpainted brick chimney visible above the slope of the roof.

The building's rear (south) and east (alley) facades both contain window openings that have been bricked up. The rear facade contains an early or original wood and glass entry at the extreme east of the basement. The gable end attic of the rear (south) facade is sheathed with vinyl siding.

The building's upper story contains a large meeting room with early and possibly original decorative details. The window surrounds, decorative moldings and chair rails as well as pressed metal panels on the walls of the meeting room would appear to date from the early years of the 20th century. The rear (southern) third of the upper story contains an entry hall, cloak room and bathrooms that do not appear to be original.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. P.G.#68-13-1

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 type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Lodge Hall

**Specific dates** 1910 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  
Level of Significance:  national  state  local

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

### CONTRIBUTING

The building at 3405 Rhode Island Avenue (Block 2, Lot 4, Rhode Island Avenue Addition to Mt. Rainier), known as Star Hall is significant for the contribution it made to the development of early 20th century Mt. Rainier's social and cultural life. The building's name is derived from its use as the lodge hall of the ADAH Chapter #25, Order of the Eastern Star, owners of the building since 1921 (see Chain of Title). ADAH Chapter #25 is one of the community's oldest and most enduring organizations, founded on April 28, 1915, in at ceremony at 3405 Rhode Island Avenue, then known as Pott's Hall.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to becoming a lodge hall in 1921, Star/Potts Hall served as a local movie theater, community hall and public meeting site. The Hall is one of the earliest buildings erected in downtown Mt. Rainier. Robert E. Potts, a local resident and businessmen, purchased Lot 4 in Block 2, unimproved in August of 1909 from Annie L. and Horace H. White, who had purchased the property from Messrs. Bigelow, Spalding and Rogers in Decemeber of 1906.<sup>2</sup> The present building was apparently erected by Potts by 1910 when assessment records first indicate an improvement valued at \$2,000.<sup>3</sup>

While Star/Potts Hall is significant to the social and cultural life of Mt. Rainier its architectural contribution to the survey area is marginal. The building's exterior has been heavily altered over the years and its architectural integrity has been substantially compromised. The original window openings have been obscured, the building has been reroofed and painted and an incompatible, non-historic exterior staircase has been added to the west facade.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Program for the Celebration of the Completion of Rhode Island Avenue, Mt. Rainier, Maryland, October 15, 1932, p. 31.

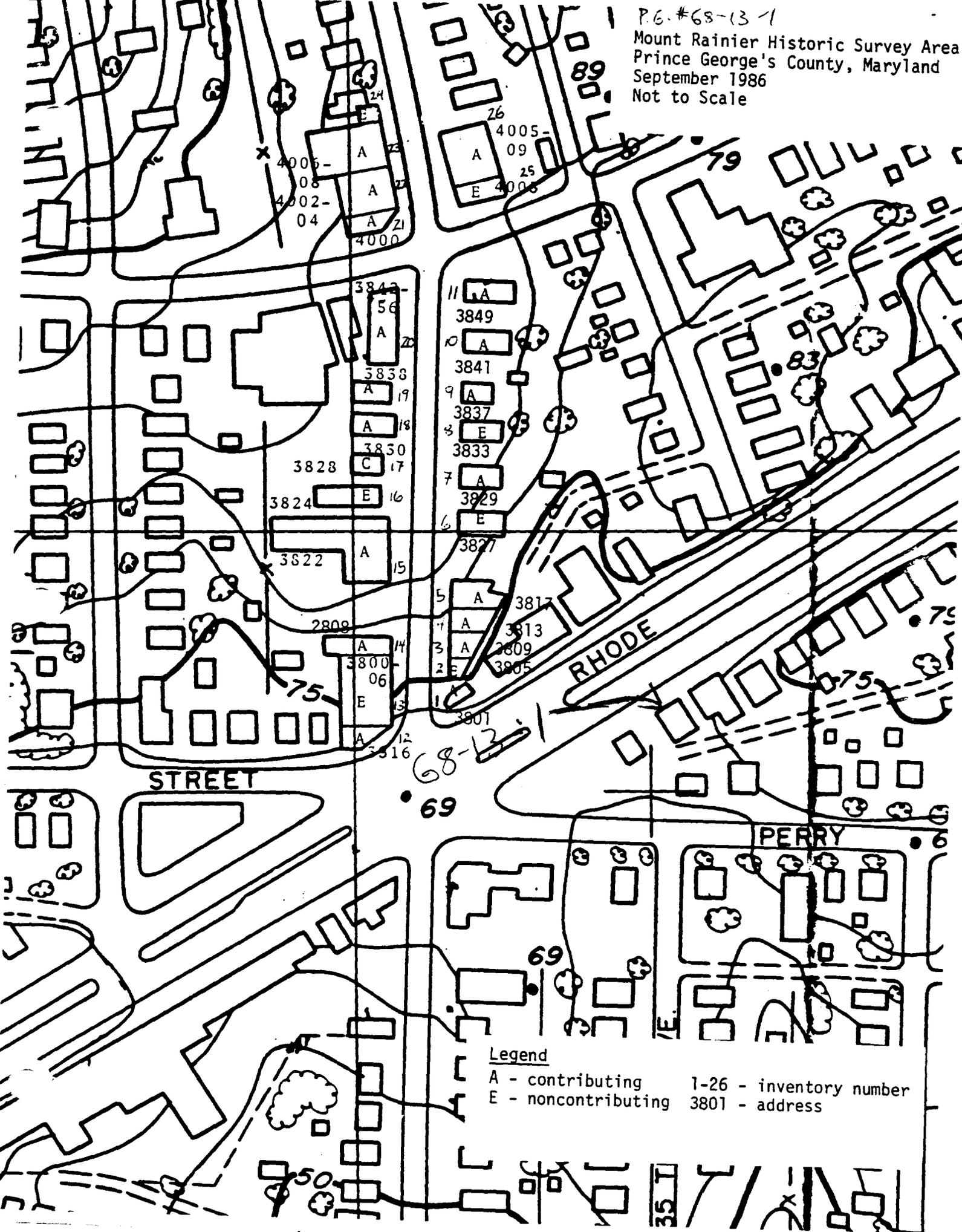
<sup>2</sup> Prince George's County Land Records, 51:367; 37-169.

<sup>3</sup> Prince George's County Assessment Records; 1910, p. 164.



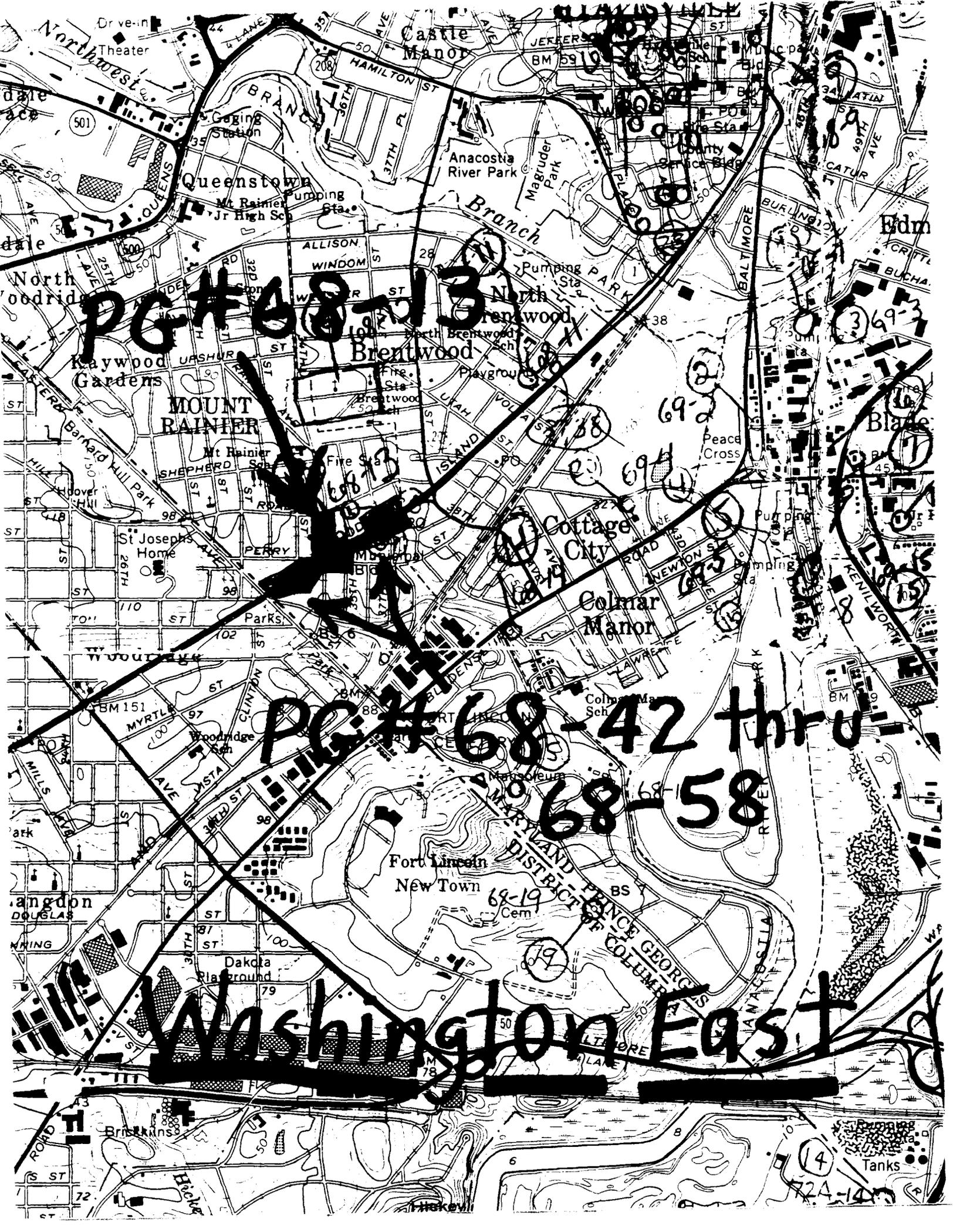
Chain of Title  
3405 Rhode Island Avenue  
P.G.#68-13-1

171:247 4 June 1921 Deed	Star Hall Co. to Fred E. Weber, et al., ADAH Chapter #25, Order of the Eastern Star of Mt. Rainier. Grantors convey Lot 4, excepting a 10' foot strip adjacent to Lot 5, front to rear in Block 2, Rhode Island Avenue Addition at Mt. Rainier. Plat recorded JWB 5:694 or A:6. Same obtained from Robert E. Potts, 14 July 1916, 171:18.
171:180 14 July 1916 Deed	Robert E. Potts to Star Hall Co. Grantor conveys Lot 4 in Block 2. Same obtained from Annie L. and Horace H. White, 16 August 1909, 51:367.
51:367 16 August 1909 Deed	Annie L. and Horace H. White to Robert E. Potts. Grantors convey Lot 4 in Block 2. Same obtained from W. D. Bigelow, et al., 10 December 1906, 37:169.
37:169 10 December 1906 Deed	W. D. Bigelow, E. S. Spalding and J. Harris Rogers to Annie L. White. Grantors convey Lot 4 in Block 2, excepting 10 feet, front to rear of Lot 4 adjacent to Lot 5 conveyed to A. L. Foster, 14 December 1906, 31:313. To clear title, this deed is made.



Legend  
A - contributing      1-26 - inventory number  
E - noncontributing      3801 - address





PG# 68-13

PG# 68-42 thru  
68-58

Washington East

14  
724-14



Potts Hall

Prince George's County, MD

Howard Berger

Fall, 1987

NW

Neg: MD Historical Trust

Annapolis, MD