

Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

96 68-4-11  
Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

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

historic

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 6105 Rhode Island Ave.  not for publication

city, town Riverdale  vicinity of congressional district #5

state Maryland county Prince George's County

**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 type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name John C. Dorsey Plumbing & Heating Co., Inc.

street & number 6100 R.I. Ave. telephone no.:

city, town Riverdale state and zip code MD

**5. Location of Legal Description**

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

street & number 14735 Main St. folio

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title none

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. 68-4-11

<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date of move _____
<input 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.

6105 R.I. Ave. is a 2-story brick building which stands on the RR bed of the B & O (Washington branch), immediately to the west of the tracks. It is rectangular, roughly 500' x 25', with a flat sloped roof.

There is no principal facade; main access is via a door on the west facade and a door on the south facade. The west facade, of red brick, has four windows assymmetrically spaced on the second floor, and on the first floor a larger window, slightly off-centre, which may have been a bay window, but is now boarded up. A drain pipe runs down the facade. The south and east facades are of yellow brick, and laid in a different bond than the west facade. The south facade has two windows on the second floor, more or less evenly spaced; and two on the first floor, unevenly spaced. The east facade, fronting the tracks, has four windows on the second floor, symmetrically spaced; one window on the first floor; two exposed pipe openings; an air vent; and a chimney that runs up a few feet above the roof line. There are two other chimneys as well, both on the interior of the building. All windows are 1/1. There is no north facade, as the building is attached there to 4701 Queensbury Ave.

The building occupies most of the lot; grass slopes from the east facade down to the tracks. From the west facade to R.I. Ave. is paved for parking, and to the south is a make-shift parking lot of gravel.

# 8. Significance

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation			
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)			

**Specific dates**

**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.

The building at 6105 R.I. Ave. is a typical example of warehouse style building, a supporting structure for the commercial activity that developed at Riverdale's principal B & O Crossing.

The land on which it was built was part of the "Riversdale" estate of the Calvert family. The B & O line was laid through the property in the mid-19th century, but what became the town of Riverdale was not platted until 1889, two years after 475 acres of the estate were bought by the Riverdale Park Co., with the intention of developing a commuter suburb for Washington.

The actual development of the suburb of Riverdale was initiated in 1890/91, with the construction of the B & O RR Station. The fact that it was located at the (present day) Queensbury Ave. crossing argues strongly for the likelihood that this point was envisioned by the suburb's developers as the actual "centre" of the community. The community's major institution, the Presbyterian Church, was located a block away, and streetcar service initiated in 1899 along (present day) R.I. Ave. reinforced the idea of the centrality of the Crossing to the life of the community.

6105 R.I. Ave. was clearly intended as serving a secondary, supporting commercial function in the scheme. It was built some time after the building at 4701 Queensbury, to which it is attached, but before the mid-1940s, when it appears in a photo of the B & O crossing. Hence, it was built between 1924 and 1945. The fact that its present owners are at 6100 R.I. Ave., across the street, and that that property underwent substantial improvement in 1939 upon changing ownership, combined with the fact that 6105 R.I. Ave. doesn't appear on a 1940 Atlas map, argues strongly for a construction date sometime in the first few years of the 1940s.

Item #8 (continued)

Its usage is severally limited; indeed, its present condition, although good, indicates haphazard maintenance if not outright neglect in recent years. Unlike 4701 Queensbury, it is not suited to retail. It seems always to have served as a storehouse of sorts--a presently does so for its owners, Dorsey Plumbing, as it must have for Dorsey's predecessor, the Riverdale Fuel and Coal Co.

Because of its generic and ancillary functional role, and the indeterminate status of its original fabric, 6105 R.I. Ave. must be said to contribute to the significance of the larger commercial complex of the Queensbury Crossing only as a supporting structure.

