

**Moller Apartments**  
**WA-HAG-169**  
**535 Surrey Avenue**  
**Hagerstown, Washington County, MD**  
**1906/1923**  
**Private Access**

## **Capsule Summary**

The Moller Apartments is a Spanish Eclectic Style building, converted into apartments between 1923 and 1925 from its original use as the Crawford Automobile Company factory built circa 1906. The building represents a noteworthy early application of the concept of adaptive-reuse. The building retains a high level of integrity and displays characteristic features of its Spanish Eclectic Style, including mission-shaped parapets, hand forged ironwork balconies, tile pent roofs and decorative ceramic tile work .

The Moller Apartments have served Hagerstown residents for nearly 80 years as an apartment building and is significant for its Spanish Eclectic architecture, unique in Hagerstown. The building, which was built circa 1906, is significant for its role in the economic and industrial development of Hagerstown. The building housed first the Crawford Motor Car Company factory, the longest-lived car company in Hagerstown's automobile manufacturing industry, and then the Moller Motor Car Company, which took over the Crawford Company in 1922. Dagmars, the most famous and expensive of the automobiles manufactured in Hagerstown, were designed and the first ones built in the Crawford factory. The building is significant for its long association with Mathias Peter Moller, a Danish immigrant, well-known nationally for mass production of organs and for his five pipe patent for organs. Moller adapted the Crawford automobile factory into the Moller Apartments circa 1923-1925, after he bought a larger factory for Dagmar production. Members of the Moller family who inherited the building after Moller's death in 1937, sold it in 1949, but his descendants have continued to live in the apartments to the present day.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

## 1. Name of Property

Moller Apartments

historic Crawford Automobile Company, Moller Motor Company, Moller Apartments

other NA

## 2. Location

street and number 535 Surrey Avenue not for publication

city, town Hagerstown vicinity

county Washington

## 3. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name David C. Hess

street and number 12208 Greenridge Drive telephone

city, town Boyd state MD zip code 20841-9032

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Courthouse liber 830 folio 913

city, town Hagerstown tax map 312 tax parcel 1207 tax ID number 014770

## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District  
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
 Recorded by HABS/HAER  
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
				<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>	
				_____	

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## 7. Description

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Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

### Condition

excellent       deteriorated  
 good             ruins  
 fair               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.

### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Moller Apartments is a Spanish Eclectic Style building, converted into apartments between 1923 and 1925 from its original use as the Crawford Automobile Company factory. The building represents a noteworthy early application of the concept of adaptive-reuse. The building retains a high level of integrity and displays characteristic features of its Spanish Eclectic Style, including mission-shaped parapets, ironwork balconies, tile pent roofs and decorative ceramic tile work surrounding several entrances.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

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### Comprehensive Description

The Moller Apartments building is located on the southwest corner of Summit and Surrey Avenues in Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland, and has both 401 Summit and 535 Surrey Avenue addresses. The 535 Surrey Address is above the main entrance into the lobby of the apartments and is used by the Washington County Tax Assessor's Office. The three-story building faces northeast. The building is sited in a residential neighborhood only one block from City Park in the Hagerstown City Park Historic District. The building contains two efficiency apartments, four two bedroom/two living room apartments and 18 two bedroom apartments. The exterior of the building and the grounds are in excellent condition. The building has a U-shape and except for narrow grassy areas between the sidewalks and the building on its Summit and Surrey facades and along the southwest elevation facade, the building and its courtyard completely cover the site. The land slopes up slightly from the Summit Avenue (southeast elevation) to the alley. The main facade of the building extends along Surrey Avenue for approximately 160 feet. The southeast elevation extends for approximately 120 feet along Summit Avenue. The northwest elevation is flush with and extends along the 14-foot wide alley that is parallel to Summit Avenue for approximately 120 feet. The southwest elevation of the building contains a courtyard (in the middle of the U). The building is sited on Lots 10, 11, 12 and part of Lot 9 of the Surrey Addition to Hagerstown, which was platted by George R. Oswald and recorded on July 25, 1893 (Liber 1, Folio 11). Lot 12 is the corner lot. Each lot in this block of the Surrey Addition was 40 feet wide and 176 deep, although four feet was taken from the 176 to increase the width of the 10 foot alley running parallel to Summit Avenue to 14 feet.

Built circa 1905 to house the Crawford Automobile Company's factory and converted to apartments circa 1923-1925, the U-shaped building is brick covered by rough swirled dark cream-colored stucco that covers all facades completely to the ground, obscuring the foundation. The roof has centered mission-shaped parapets on the main facade (northeast elevation fronting on Surrey Avenue) and the southeast elevation along Summit Avenue. The roof material of the flat roof is not visible, although the roof has terra cotta tile edging.

### Common Elements

Windows are either slightly inset 6/6 or 8/8 double-hung sash with wide wood sills or double leaf casement windows with four panes in each leaf. The glass in the casement windows is decorated (etched?) to obscure viewing (probably bathroom windows). The casement windows have dark red painted wood window boxes attached just below the sill. All wood window frames and sills are painted dark red. When two 6/6 windows are paired, the mullion has a decorative raised vertical wood pattern. Custom-made storm windows with matching dark red vinyl frames cover all windows, except as noted. Exterior doors are dark wood, probably oak, with paneled bottoms and multipane uppers and multilight transoms, except as noted. All exterior light fixtures are identical glass and black metal five-sided light fixtures with a dome top, decorative cap and spindle bottom. Pent tiled shed roof segments are located above the third floor windows, except on the southwest elevation. The other common elements of the building are the balconies cantilevered by decorative iron scroll brackets with matching decorative iron railings. All iron work was hand forged by a local artisan. Double-leaf wood-framed doors that open onto the balconies have 10 or 15 panes in each leaf.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 7 Page 2

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The doors are headed by five-light transoms and flanked by two vertical rows of five sidelights each topped by a two-light transom.

### **Front or Main Facade (Faces Surrey Avenue)**

The northeast or main facade has 18 bays on the first floor. From the corner of Summit and Surrey Avenues, the first floor has two large display windows without storm windows, remnants of a business that occupied the corner apartment for many years. The next bay is an entry door flanked by narrow 1/1 sash windows and light fixtures. The modern recessed metal-framed glass door is the service and delivery entry and has a decorative tile surround in which a row of dark green square glazed tiles are interspersed with dark red diamond-shaped glazed tiles in a smooth light cream stucco background.

The next three bays are a panel of three 6/6 sash windows with dark red painted wood panels beneath (probably a replacement window), and two 6/6 sash windows. The next bay is the main entry door into the building's lobby and has a decorative surround similar to the delivery entry, except that the surround is set out about six inches from the building, has a decorative crown, and has light fixtures mounted on the surround. The surround material appears to be molded cement with stucco covering. The modern double leaf metal-framed glass doors are recessed and up a shallow step from a poured cement stoop that is up a shallow step from the sidewalk. The main entry is under the mission-shaped roof section. The address, "535" is mounted over the doors on a narrow transom. The next three bays are two 6/6 sash windows, followed by a taller 6/6 sash window. The next bay is another entry door with a decorative surround identical to the delivery entry surround, flanked by light fixtures and tall narrow 1/1 sash windows. The door, however, is a wood door with paneled bottom and multipane upper that is an entry into an apartment. Three more 6/6 sash windows complete the bays on the first floor of the main facade. Because of the slight slope of the land, the bottom sills of these windows are very close to the ground.

The 17 bay second floor on the main facade from the Summit-Surrey Avenue corner has one 6/6 sash window, one casement window with flower box, and one 6/6 sash window. The next bay is a balcony. The next nine bays are two 6/6 sash windows, one casement window with brackets for the missing flower box, four 6/6 sash windows, one casement window with flower box and another 6/6 sash window. The next bay is a balcony, which is followed by two 6/6 sash windows flanking a casement window with brackets for the missing flower box.

The third floor has an identical configuration of bays to that of the second floor including the missing flower boxes. Between the top of the third floor windows and the roof edge on each side of the mission-shaped parapet are decorative pent roof elements.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 7 Page 3

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### **Proceeding counter clockwise around the building**

#### **The Northwest (or Alley) Elevation**

The first floor has four bays from the corner, two 6/6 sash windows, one casement window and one double 6/6 window; all have their bottom sills just a few inches above the ground. The next bay is a centered deeply inset three story-arched entry that contains a metal stairwell (fire escape) to apartments on all three floors. The entry on the first floor has a double 6/6 window, light fixtures flanking a wood door with paneled bottom and 15 panes in the upper section. The door is reached by going down a short flight of the metal steps. To the right of the apartment door is a door that appears to go into the furnace room of the building. Three small fixed basement windows on the other side of the inset are the only other bays on the first floor.

The second floor has nine bays: two 6/6 sash windows, one casement window with wood flower box, one double 6/6 sash window, then the centered deeply recessed three story arched entry, which contains the metal stairwell and walkway to two apartments/four bays. The two apartment entry doors flank two 6/6 sash windows: the doors have 12 upper panes, paneled bottoms and multilight transoms. On the other side of the recessed area are four more bays: one double 6/6 sash window, one casement window with flower box and two 6/6 sash windows.

The third floor has nine bays: two 6/6 sash windows, one casement window with wood flower box, a balcony, followed by the recessed entry identical to that on the second floor, then another balcony followed by one casement window with wood flower box and two 6/6 sash windows. Above the third floor windows and below the roof edge on each side of the inset area are decorative pent tiled shed roofs.

#### **Southwest Elevation (Left End of U)**

The corner of first floor of the rear from the alley is in the slope of the land. An exterior chimney is the first object on this end. It is square, stucco covered and appears to extend above the roof of the building for at least 20 feet. To the right of the chimney is an outset from the building that contains a door into the basement. A small grassy area contains a table and chairs outside the door. The outset extends from the chimney, two-thirds of the way to the corner on the first floor.

The second and third floors on this end of the U are identical: one 6/6 sash window, the chimney, two double 6/6 sash windows and one 6/6 sash window.

#### **Courtyard (Interior of the U)**

The courtyard is entered from a graveled area and the flush top of a two foot wide poured cement wall about two feet high down two cement steps with metal railing to a sidewalk. The sidewalk continues around the perimeter of the entire courtyard and exits up two cement steps with metal railing back up to the cement wall. Four sidewalks from the center of each side of the perimeter sidewalk extend into the center of the square courtyard ending in a circle of sidewalk enclosing a flower bed. The area between the walks is grassy. The area between the perimeter sidewalk and the building on the facing interior building walls (the

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 4

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insides of sides of the U) are landscaped with flowers and shrubs. The bottom of the U has a raised patio laid with dark red square (6"x 6") glazed tile. The patio is about six feet wide and extends the width of the bottom of the U into deeply recessed three story insets in each interior corner that house metal fire escapes and apartment entries.

### **Northwest (Left Interior) Wall of the Courtyard**

The first floor has four bays: two 6/6 sash windows, one casement window with wood flower box, and one double 6/6 sash window. Inset in the corner is a metal staircase and walkways (fire escape) to the third floor. The first floor inset has three bays, an entry door in the short left wall of the inset, one 6/6 sash window and one double 6/6 sash window.

The second floor of the left interior wall has two 6/6 sash windows, one casement window with flower box and a balcony. The inset on the second floor has one 6/6 sash window and one double 6/6 sash window and an apartment entry door on the right wall of the inset. The third floor is identical to second.

### **Southwest (End Wall) of the Courtyard (Inside of the bottom of the U)**

The first floor has four bays, which are evenly spaced identical double leaf wood doors headed by a transom that open onto the tile patio. Each door leaf has 15 glass panels.

The second and third floors have identical bays. Each has from the southwest (left interior) corner: one 8/8 sash window, one 6/6 window, two balconies, one 6/6 window and one 8/8 sash window.

### **Southeast (Right Interior) Wall of the Courtyard**

One the first floor in the east (right interior) corner of the courtyard are metal stairs and walkways to the third floor. On the first floor of the inset are one 6/6 sash window, one double 6/6 sash window and an entry door in the inset's right wall. On the other side of the inset in the southeast (right interior) wall are one double 6/6 sash window, one casement window with flower box, and two 6/6 sash windows.

The second floor inset has an entry door in its left wall, one double 6/6 sash window and one 6/6 sash window. From the inset, the southeast (right interior) wall has one double 6/6 sash window, one casement window with flower box and two 6/6 sash windows.

The third floor bays are identical to the second floor.

### **Southwest Elevation (Right End of the U)**

All three floors on the right end of the U have identical bays: one 6/6 sash window, two double 6/6 sash windows and one 6/6 sash window.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 5

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### **Southeast Elevation (faces Summit Avenue)**

The first floor has eight bays: two 6/6 sash windows, one casement window, missing its window box but with brackets, one double 6/6 sash window and the first floor of a three story-arched inset with metal stairs and walkways under the mission-shaped parapet. The first floor of the inset has an entry door, two 6/6 sash windows and a second entry door. Just past the inset is a display window then an entry door with an identical tile decorated surround as those on the main facade. A shallow step leads to an inset modern metal-framed glass door. The final bay on the first floor is a double display window.

The second and third floors have identical bays. Each has nine bays: two 6/6 sash windows, one casement window, a balcony, the inset with the metal stairs with two entry doors flanking two 6/6 sash windows, then on the other side of the inset are another balcony, one casement window and two 6/6 sash windows. The casement window to the left of the inset on the second floor is missing its flower box. Above the third floor windows and below the roof line on each side of the mission-shaped parapet are decorative tiled pent roofs.

### **Other Objects**

Two exterior items along the southwest elevation are two poured cement objects. One is an oblong poured cement object about eight feet long and one foot high and the other is a two foot high roughly circular block of poured cement with a rounded bump out on its rear side. The block is being used as the base for a flowerpot. Both objects are supposedly remnants of a non-extant factory outbuilding, although one neighbor believes they are remnants of the stone garage that occupied Lot 10 of the Surrey Addition before the Crawford factory was built.

### **First Floor Interior (entered from the main entry on Surrey Avenue)**

The double glass entry doors in the center of the main facade lead into a small plaster walled foyer. The left wall has 24 metal mailboxes inset into the wall. The right wall of the foyer is blank. Entry into the main lobby area is through double leaf doors identical to the exterior balcony doors. The tile floor in the foyer continues into the extensive lobby. The tiles are small tan and brown glazed tiles laid in diagonal rows of alternating tan and brown squares comprised of eight small tiles. The floor borders along the walls have a row of V-shaped brown tiles flanked by rows of small square tan tiles. The tile baseboards are painted the cream color of the plaster walls. Just inside the lobby from the foyer, the space widens several feet and apartment doors opposite each other across the space are doors to the building's two efficiency apartments. The four large apartments with two bedrooms and two living rooms are on the second and third floors above the foyer and lobby. At each corner where the spaces widens a second time, a large round wood fluted column stands about one foot from the corners, which have matching corner pilasters. Along the walls both right and left from the corner fluted pilasters are 12 pane frosted glass windows for the bathrooms of the efficiency apartments. The high ceiling consists of large modern ceiling tiles with fluorescent lights with frosted panels that are inset flush with the ceiling. Painted pipes and fixtures for the fire sprinkler system hang from the ceiling.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 7 Page 6

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A person can walk across the floor of the large lobby space from the foyer directly to the four double leaf multipane doors that open onto the tile patio of the courtyard. This space is the width of the outdoor courtyard plus enough space at each end for matching staircases to the second and third floors with apartment doors at the foot of, beside and extending in a corridor behind the stairs. The apartment doors are dark wood (probably oak) five panel doors for the most part, although one or two have six upper glass panels; all doors have surrounds of painted wood. The stairs cases are wood with square newel posts, molded handrails supported by narrow rectangular balusters and wood treads and risers. Each staircase is enclosed on the first floor and has a door for storage in the rear of the staircase. In the corridor behind the staircase on the right is a small laundry room with two washers and two dryers and a table for folding clothes. Each set of stairs goes up to a landing and turns and goes up to the next floor. A surprising feature not visible from outside the building is a large skylight in the roof above each stairwell that brings natural light all the way down into the lobby.

According to residents, the apartments have plaster walls, interior oak doors and woodwork and deep built-in closets. All apartments, except the two efficiency apartments have both front and rear entries; the rear entries on the second and third floors have fire escapes and most apartments on the second and third floors have one of the highly decorative but usable iron balconies. The kitchens and bathrooms are small but use the space efficiently. The bedrooms and living rooms are large, or as one tenant said, "Huge." The apartment building's courtyard, spacious lobby and Spanish Eclectic architecture, show evidence of considerable thought and money.

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

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 type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input 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 history	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

<b>Specific dates</b>	1893, 1904, 1906, 1923, 1937, 1949	<b>Architect/Builder</b>	Unknown
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<b>Construction dates</b>	circa 1906, circa 1923-1925
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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 projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

### Summary

The Moller Apartments have served Hagerstown residents for nearly 80 years as an apartment building and is significant for its Spanish Eclectic architecture, unique in Hagerstown. The building, which was built circa 1906, is significant for its role in the economic and industrial development of Hagerstown. The building housed first the Crawford Motor Car Company factory, the longest-lived car company in Hagerstown's automobile manufacturing industry, and then the Moller Motor Car Company, which took over the Crawford Company in 1922. Dagmars, the most famous and expensive of the automobiles manufactured in Hagerstown, were designed and the first ones built in the Crawford factory. The building is significant for its long association with Mathias Peter Moller, a Danish immigrant, well-known nationally for mass production of organs and for his five pipe patent for organs. Moller adapted the Crawford automobile factory into the Moller Apartments circa 1923-1925, after he bought a larger factory for Dagmar production. Members of the Moller family who inherited the building after Moller's death in 1937, sold it in 1949, but his descendants have continued to live in the apartments to the present day.

**Maryland Historical Trust  
Maryland Inventory of  
Historic Properties Form**

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 1

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MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

**Historic period theme(s):**

Architecture/Industry

**Geographic organization:**

Hagerstown

**Chronological/Developmental period (s):**

Industrial/Urban Dominance – A.D. 1870-1930

Modern Period - A.D. 1930-Present

**Resource Type:**

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Urban

**Historic Function (s) and Use (s):**

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Known Design Source: None

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 3

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The pace of manufacturing increased in the new building to about 60 Model E and Model F Crawfords in 1907. A larger car produced in 1908 cost \$3,000 and only 30 were sold. The Model H, a smaller car, introduced in 1908 sold for \$1,250 and created an increase in sales and production. For most years between 1904 and 1923, production was less than 50 vehicles a year for the Crawford Automobile Company, although one source reported that 275 Crawfords were built in 1910. (*Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805-1941*) The greatest production years, according to most sources, were 1919 with 141 cars and 1920 with 109. However, production dropped in 1921 to only 23 cars, a lower number than produced in any year in the new building except during World War I when the factory produced gun sights for the U. S. Army.

Robert Crawford left the company circa 1908, when investors became restive at no return on their money. Crawford's career after leaving the automobile company is not known except for one further adventure. He was president of the Midland Manufacturing Company, a company incorporated in 1913 in Huron, South Dakota, to manufacture Crawford motorcycles. Midland built a plant in Morgantown, West Virginia, circa 1914, but quickly went out of business without ever building a motorcycle. Nothing is known about Robert S. Crawford after that time, although his brother, George, continued to be involved with the Crawford Automobile Company until 1922 when M.P. Moller bought the rest of the company's stock. Moller had become the chief stockholder after the departure of Robert Crawford and had installed his nephew, Abel A. Miller, as plant manager.

The Crawford Company never used an assembly line, but instead built cars to customer specifications. For instance, a car with a remote control horn for a doctor and a mobile home, probably the first ever built, which had beds, a stove and ice box, were custom designed. In 1914, the Crawford Automobile Company added a truck line and continued building trucks until at least 1920. The Crawford 1918 medium duty truck cost \$2,450, had a capacity of two tons, a wheel base of 144 inches, a six cylinder continental engine, 34"x 4" tires on the front and 34"x6" tires on the rear.

While the company had good years in 1919 and 1920, by 1922 it was failing. Mathias Peter Moller bought the Crawford Company on June 12, 1922 (Land Record EO 163/73), and quickly developed the Dagmar, a sports model named after one of his daughters, to save the company. Moller (Mohler) had emigrated from Denmark in 1872, become wealthy and made his name famous by manufacturing both reed and pipe organs in Hagerstown that were shipped all over the United States. According to Sharf in his 1882 *History of Western Maryland*, "The organs combine all the late improvements and new designs of cases and very elegant in finish. A novel construction of Mohler's choral pipe-organs, which is patented, is built with five sets of pipes and an independent pedal base that can be shipped to any distance without removing a single pipe and ready for use." (p. 1178) The Moller factory in Hagerstown continued to build and install organs until 1992 and the Moller patent is still in use today.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 4

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In 1923, the Crawford Automobile Company ceased to exist and the J.P. Moller Motor Car Company was born. Moller was encouraged to make this move by his success with the first Dagmar, which was bought by Frederick Royal Barnard of New York City for \$3,500. Barnard was so impressed by the car that he gave a dinner at the Hagerstown Country Club on September 3, 1922, for the officials and department heads of the Crawford Automobile Company to show his appreciation "for how wonderfully the car had performed under all sorts of conditions." (*Morning Herald*, September 5, 1922) Barnard had owned the car for six weeks and had driven 3,200 miles "over very severe mountainous roads, including a trip to White Sulphur Springs." "Mr. Barnard's explanation of his appreciation is that he has received more pleasure out of this car than any other car that he has ever owned and that he not only has the pride of possession of a fine automobile, but special pride in being owner of the very first Dagmar." (*Morning Herald*, September 5, 1922)

Moller designed the Dagmar to exude opulence; it had high fenders, a heater, spare tire in the fender well, a six cylinder engine, brass light fixtures, brass hubcaps and plush velvet interiors, but was ruggedly constructed to withstand the rigors of Hagerstown's surrounding terrain. Auto critics condemned the Dagmar as "a Packard gone native in Paris." This statement seems to have stemmed from the fact that the hexagonal hubcaps and radiator on the Dagmar were copied from the Packard. Moller changed the hubcaps when the Packard Company complained. He also had to change the Dagmar emblem, after the Danish embassy complained about Moller using the royal Danish coat of arms. Moller was undaunted and launched a nationwide advertising campaign in 1923 highlighting the car's "stylish custom-made body" and offering it in three colors with a 90-day warranty. The Dagmar, according to Moller's advertisements written to appeal to all audiences, was "a woman's idea of beauty" and a "man's car in mechanism." Moller sought publicity in other ways, for instance, giving a Dagmar to the 1924 Miss America.

Moller decided in late 1923 to look for another manufacturing site because expensive repairs were needed in the Crawford factory. He bought the Pope Manufacturing Company factory, which had been built by Robert S. Crawford for his bicycle factory circa 1891. After Crawford sold the bicycle factory to the American Bicycle Company, it was not only used to build bicycles but also to build Pope-Tribune automobiles. Local historians contend that Robert Crawford started experimenting with automobile engines in his stone barn because of the Pope automobiles that were being built in his old bicycle factory.

Moller moved from the Crawford factory on December 25, 1923, and brought out new Dagmar models in his new factory each year between 1924 and 1927: a petite sedan, a deluxe brougham, a nine-passenger sedan and a flashy sports model, which had a top speed of 87 mph. However, 1927 was the last year the Dagmar was built; the high cost of the custom cars and the length of time it took to build a custom car kept sales too low to continue. However, Moller had discovered that the ruggedness of the

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 5

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Dagmar was much sought after. He started manufacturing taxicabs and limousines circa 1924 for New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Philadelphia and other cities through a subsidiary, the Fried-Heidt Company. Luxor, Astor, Blue Light, Aristocrat and Super Paramount taxicabs and limousines were manufactured in Robert Crawford's old bicycle building on Pope Street until Moller's death in 1937.

After Moller moved his car manufacturing operations from the Crawford factory, he converted the factory into the apartment building, known as the Moller Apartments, circa 1923-1925. Moller seems to have been a master at juggling several projects at once. His organ factory reached its peak production during the same years, 1923-1927, that he was building Dagmar cars and converting the Crawford factory into apartments. In 1927, his organ company was the largest in the world. During the 1920s he was producing about one hundred pipe and five hundred reed organs every year (Williams, p.1046). Moller was sometimes criticized for his mass-produced organs. His goal was to make organs inexpensive enough so that every church that wanted an organ could afford to buy a Moller organ. Today on the Internet, churches, such as the Grove Presbyterian Church in Aberdeen, Maryland, extol possession of their Moller organs. Music companies can also be found on the Internet advertising Moller consoles. For instance, the Allen Organ Company web site says, "M. P. Moller synonymous with quality organs for over 100 years." ([allenorgan.com/artiste.htm](http://allenorgan.com/artiste.htm)) Fabray Son Pipe Organ Builders brag that they installed and finished 600 pipe organs in the Midwest during the 1920s for the "Venerable M.P. Moller Organ Company." ([Fabryinc.com/fabryinc.htm](http://Fabryinc.com/fabryinc.htm))

At the same time Moller was building very expensive custom-made automobiles and mass producing organs, he obviously spent considerable money to convert the Crawford factory into high-class apartments. Moller was very involved in many civic activities as well as owning a piano and organ store on West Washington Street in Hagerstown. He was a director of Kee Mar College, president of the Home Builders Association, a director of Susquehanna College, a director of the First National Bank of Hagerstown, a member of the Boumi Temple, Mystic Shrine of Baltimore and a delegate to the General Synod of the U.S. and to the Maryland Synod for the Lutheran Church. (Williams, page 1047)

When Moller died in 1937, he left all his assets, including the organ factory, taxicab factory and the Moller Apartments, to his wife, May Belle Greenlund Moller and to his children and their spouses, J.P. Moller, Jr. and Hilda Moller; Mary Dagmar Moller Hansen; Martha Moller Daniels and Wilson Daniels; and Louise Moller Wagman and John Wagman. May Belle Moller and her children and their spouses sold the apartment building to Robert H. and Evelyn Chatkin on March 31, 1949 (Land Record JGW 251/253), although Moller's widow, May Belle and his daughter, Mary Dagmar Moller Hansen, continued to live in the apartments for some years after the sale.

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

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Homan, Arther and Marvin, Keith. *The Dagmar and the Moller Motor Car Company: An American Enigma*. New York: Automobilsts of the Upper Hudson Valley, 1960.

Kimes, Beverly and Clark, Henry. *Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805-1942*. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed. Iola, Wisconsin: Krause Publications, 1989.

See Continuation Sheet Section 9, page 1

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 1/4 acre

Acreage of historical setting 1/2 acre

Quadrangle name Hagerstown

Quadrangle scale: 1:25,000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The Moller Apartment building is indicated on the plat map as parcel 1207 and is situated at the southwest corner of the intersection of Summitt and Surrey Avenues, beginning at the intersection of the west marginal line of said Surrey Avenue and running thence westwardly with the southern margin of Surrey Avenue 176 feet, more or less, to the eastern margin of the said 14 foot alley and parallel to the west margin of said Summit Avenue 160 feet, more or less, to a point in and four feet from the western end of the southern lot line of Lot 9 of the Surrey Addition to Hagerstown (Liber 1, Folio 11), thence from said point eastwardly with the southern lot line of said Lot No. 9, 50 feet to a point, said point being 126 feet westwardly as measured along the southern lot line of said Lot No. 9 from the western margin of said Summitt Avenue, thence in a northerly direction parallel to the east margin of said alley a distance of 40 feet to a point in the southern line of Lot No. 10 of the Surrey Addition, thence in an easterly direction with the southern lot line of said Lot No. 10, 126 feet, more or less, to the west margin of said Summit Avenue, thence with the west margin thereof in a northerly direction 120, more or less, to the point and place of beginning, and being all of Lots No. 10, 11,12 and the western most 50 feet of Lot No. 9. (Land Records 462/443)

### Boundary Justification

This description comprises the historic setting for the Moller Apartment. Boundaries coincide with existing property lines.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

---

name/title	Jeanne Grimm		
organization	GranJean Research & Consulting	date	June 15, 2001
street & number	P.O. Box 4266	telephone	304-293-0221
city or town	Morgantown	state	WV 26504

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 do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 9 Page 1

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### **Bibliography, continued**

*Polk's Hagerstown Maryland City Directory*, Detroit, Michigan: R.L. Polk & Co., 1903-1904, 1905-1906, 1908-1909, 1901-911, 1917-1918, 1922-9123, 1929, 1935, 1937-1938.

*Randall's City Directory of Hagerstown*, 1895-1896 and 1908-1909.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Western Maryland. Being a History of Frederick, Montgomery, Carroll, Washington, Allegany and Garrett Counties from the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Biographical Sketches of their Representative Men*. Vol. 1, Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1882.

Washington County Historical Society Archives, Jamison Library, pamphlet files.

Washington County Land Records, various volumes, Washinton County Courthouse, Hagerstown, Maryland.

Washington County Wills and Inventories, various volumes, Washington County Courthouse, Hagerstown, Maryland.

Williams, Thomas J.C. *History of Washington County, Maryland: From the Earliest Settlements to the Present Time, Vol. 2*, Reprinted Clearfield Company & Family Line Publications, 1992.

### **Newspapers**

*Daily Mail and Morning Herald*, various issues, Hagerstown, Maryland.

### **Interviews**

John Moller, great grandson of M.P. Moller, telephone interview.

Katie Moller-Wright, resident of Moller Apartments and great granddaughter of M.P. Moller, telephone interview.

Kevin Moller, grandson of M.P. Moller, telephone interview.

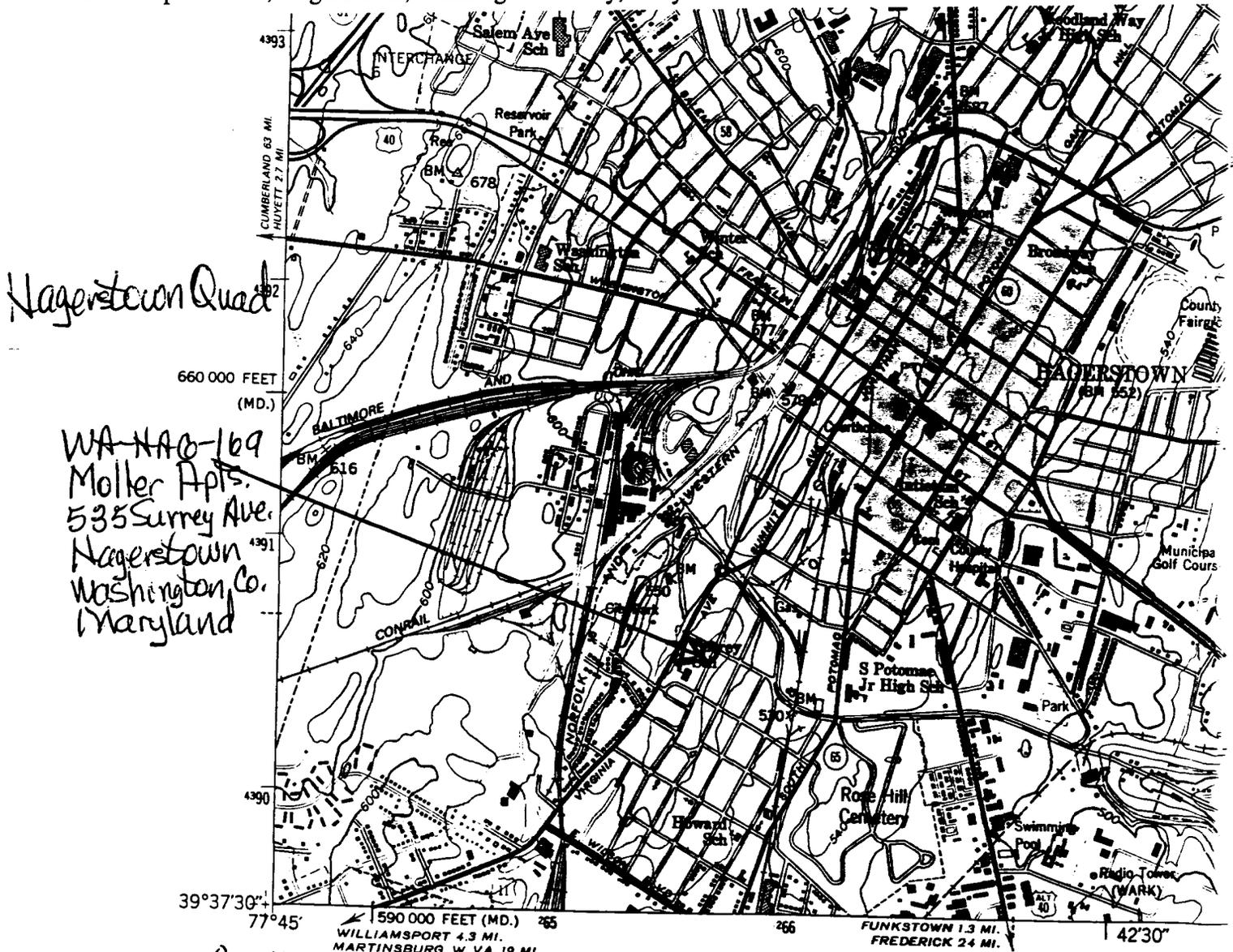
# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

Name Moller Apartments, Washington County, Maryland  
Continuation Sheet

Number 10 Page 2

USGS Map – Hagerstown Quad  
Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland



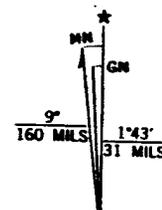
(WILLIAMSPORT)  
5463 III SE

Mapped by the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1943. Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1953

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Maryland  
coordinate system and Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue  
1927 North American Datum



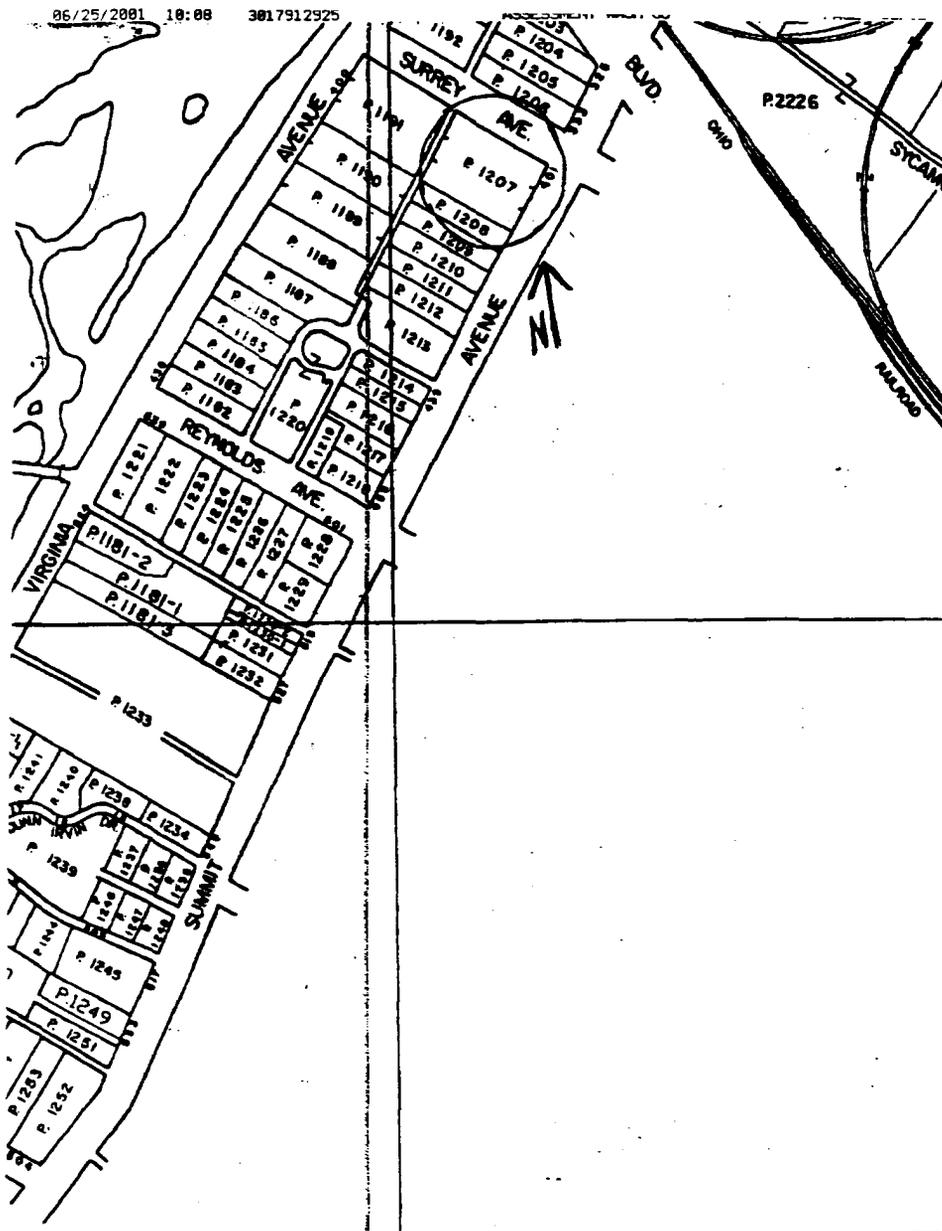
# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of

Inventory No. WA-HAG-169

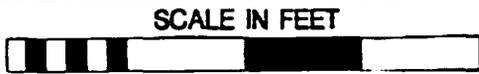
Name Moller Apartments, Washington County, Maryland  
Continuation Sheet

Number 10 Page 3

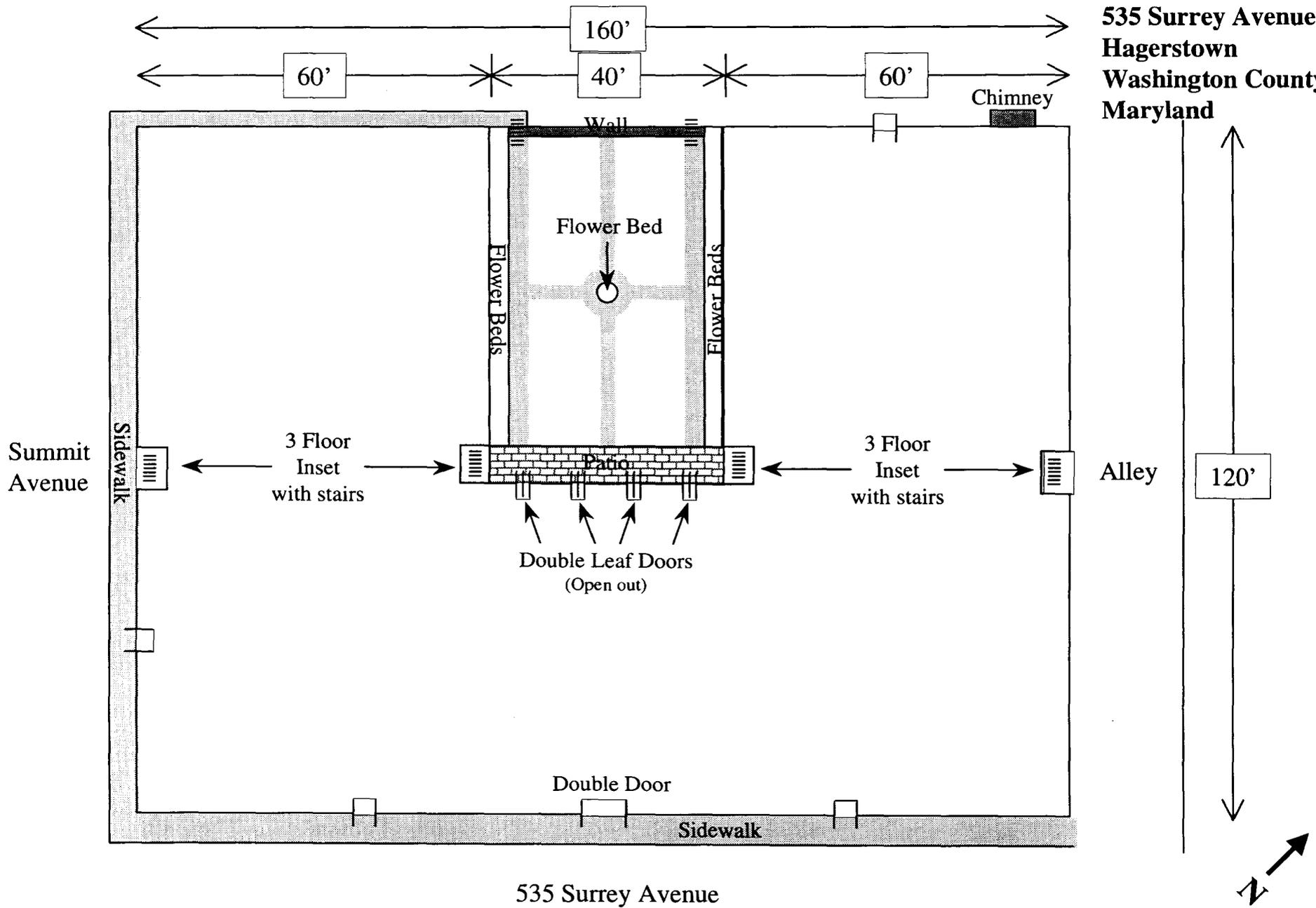
Washington County Tax Map 312, Parcel 1207  
Moller Apartments, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland



BY COPYRIGHT. THEY MAY NOT BE COPIED  
INCLUDING ELECTRONIC MEANS SUCH AS  
SCANNING OR IMAGE PROCESSING OR BY ANY



**Moller Apartments**  
535 Surrey Avenue  
Hagerstown  
Washington County  
Maryland



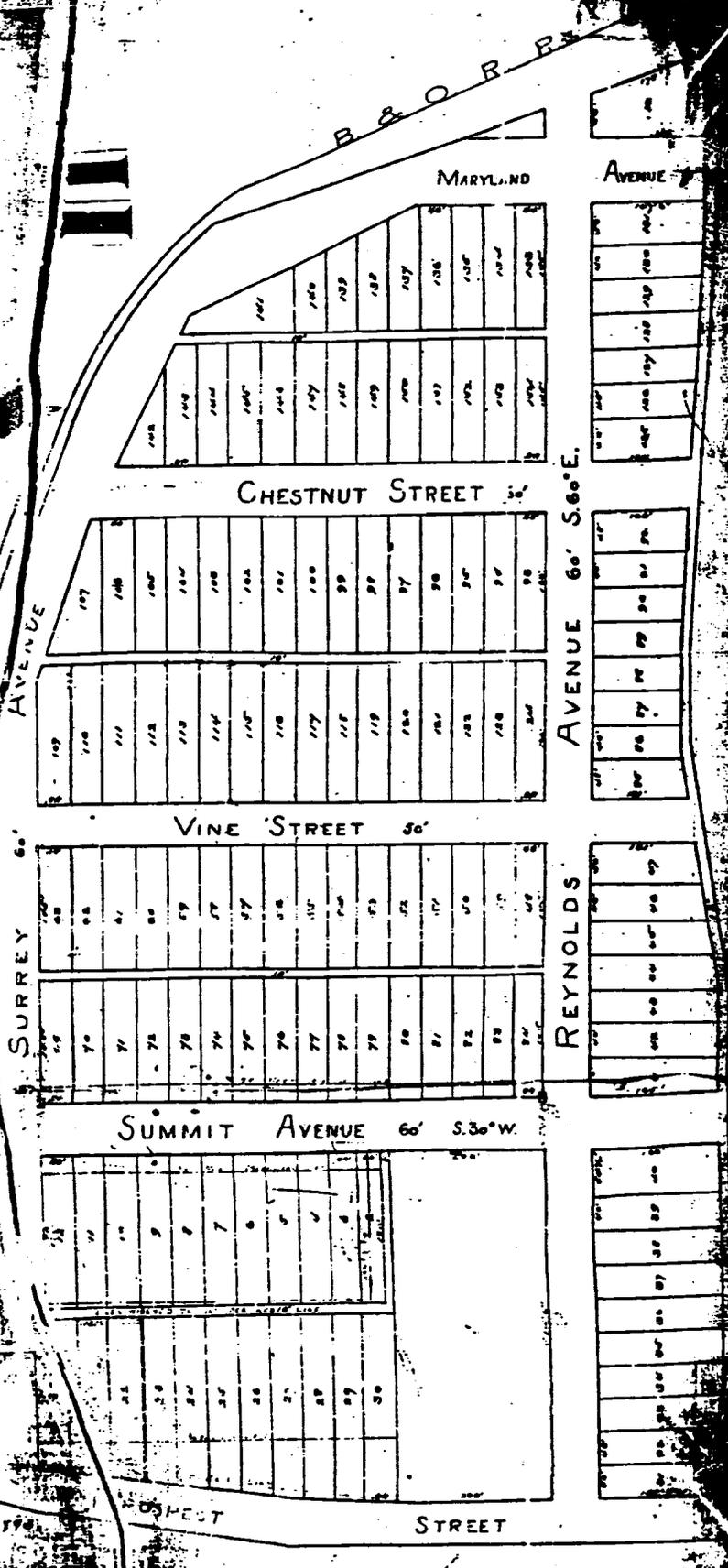
WA-NAG-169

WA-HAG-169  
 Moller Apts.  
 535 Surrey Ave  
 Hagerstown  
 Washington Co.  
 Maryland

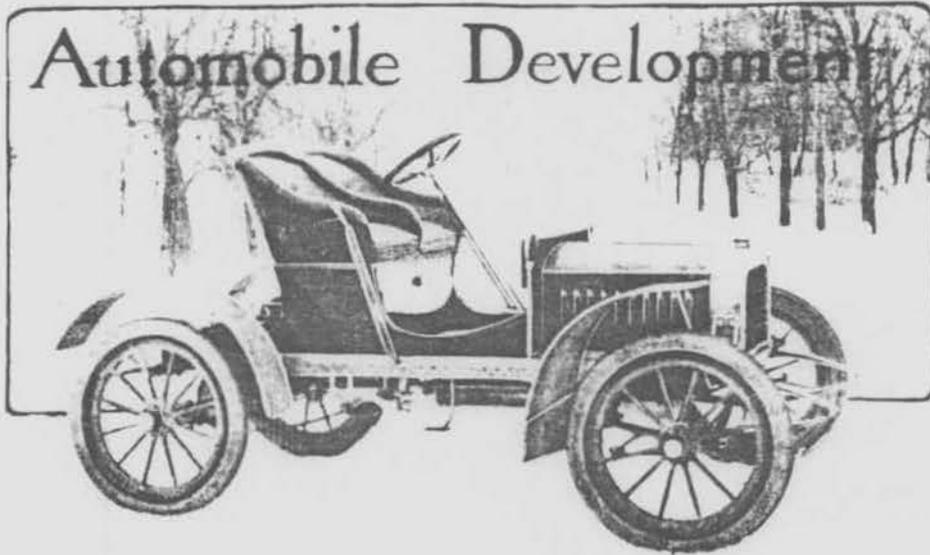
Surrey Addition  
 To Hagerstown, 1885

Scale 80 ft. to 1 inch.

*John B. ...*  
*of Hagerstown*

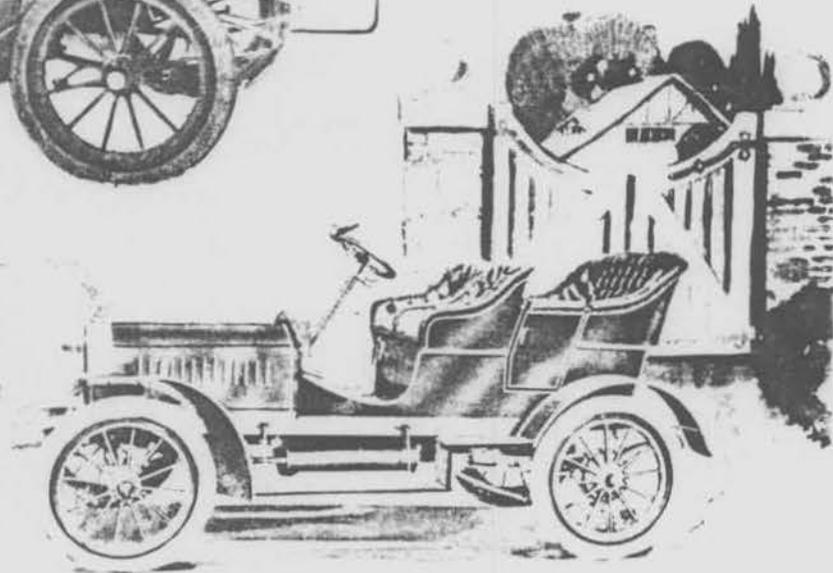


*John B. ...*  
*of Hagerstown*

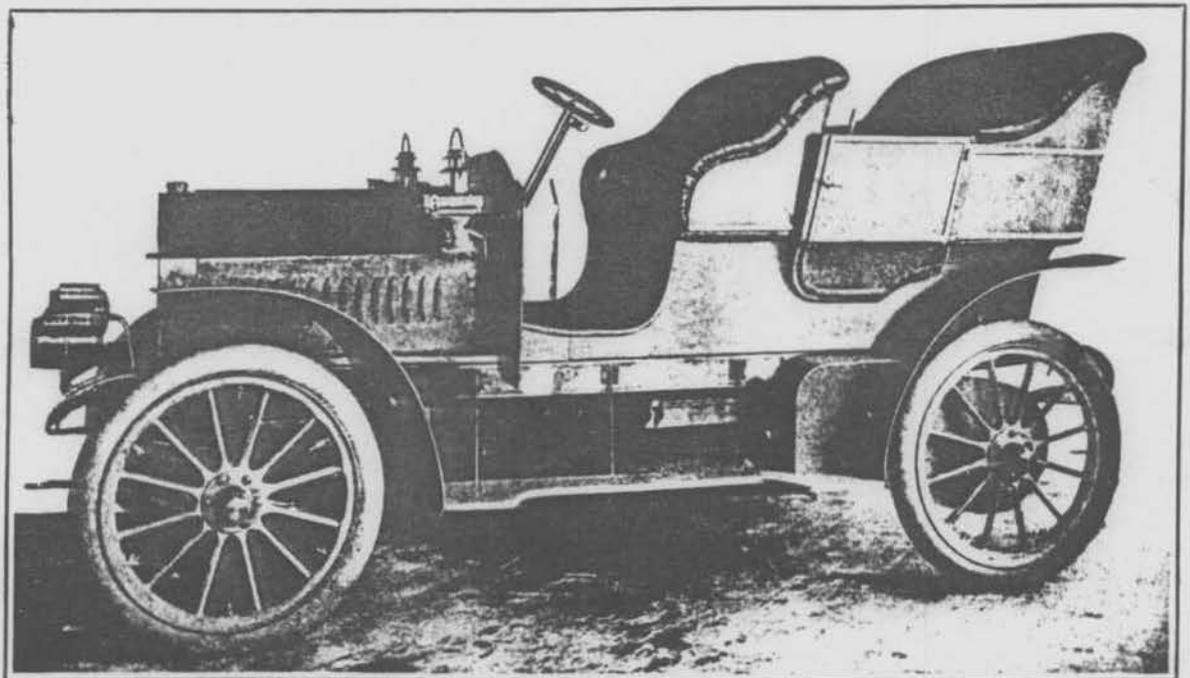


*Crawford*

MADE BY THE  
**RAWFORD**  
*AUTOMOBILE*  
 CO  
 HAGERSTOWN, MD.



CRAWFORD TOURING CAR



CRAWFORD AUTOMOBILES FOR 1905 AND 1906 ARE SHOWN IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS ABOVE. THE 1905 RUNABOUT CONTRASTS PRETTILY WITH THE TOURING CAR PICTURED IN FRONT OF A STRICTLY PHONY SETTING. THE 1906 MODEL IS SHOWN BELOW. EARLY RADIATOR SCRIPT IS SHOWN TOP RIGHT AND EARLY IDENTIFICATION PLATE IS SHOWN CENTER LEFT.

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*Guarantee of the*  
CRAWFORD AUTOMOBILE CO.

**T**HE automobiles furnished by the Crawford Automobile Co. are warranted to be free from defects in material and workmanship under normal use and service, our obligation under this guarantee being limited to making good at our factory any part or parts thereof, which shall within ninety days after delivery to the original purchaser, be returned to us with transportation charges prepaid, and which our examination shall disclose to our satisfaction to have been thus defective; this guarantee being expressly in lieu of all other guarantees expressed or implied, and of all other obligations or liabilities on the part of the Crawford Automobile Co., and we neither assume, nor authorize any person to assume for us any liability in connection with the sales of our automobiles.

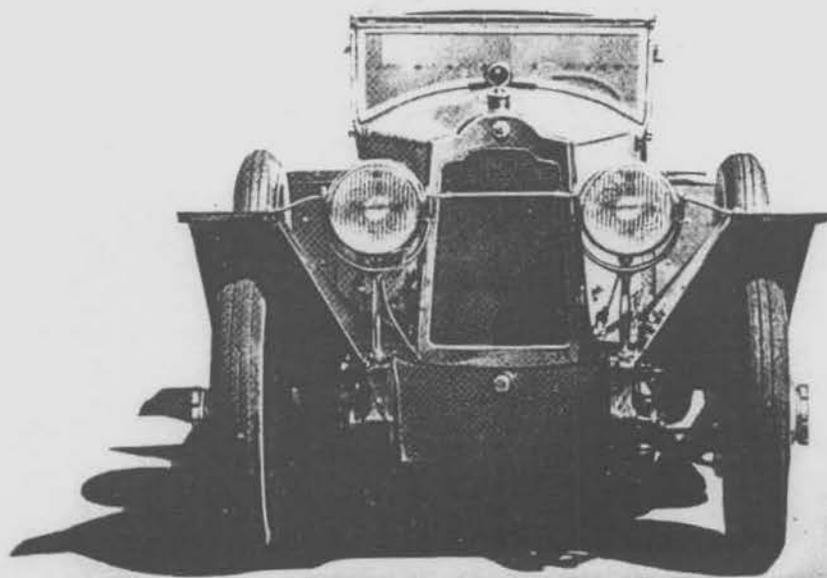
This guarantee shall not apply to any automobiles manufactured by the Crawford Automobile Co. which shall have been repaired or altered outside of our factory in any way so as, in our judgment, to affect their stability or reliability, nor which have been subject to misuse, negligence or accident.

The Crawford Automobile Co. makes no guarantee whatever in respect to tires, rims, ignition apparatus, horns or other signaling devices, starting devices, batteries, speedometers or other trade accessories, inasmuch as they are usually guaranteed separately by their respective manufacturers.

The Crawford Automobile Co. reserves the right to make changes in design or add any improvements on its cars at any time without incurring any obligations to install same on cars previously purchased.

*T*HE DAGMAR AUTOMOBILE manufactured by the Crawford Automobile Co., of Hagerstown, Maryland, has been placed on the market giving to the public the most stylish custom-made body as a standard proposition. Embodied in its construction are the best units possible to procure. The photographs presented herewith give but an inadequate idea of the exquisite lines of beauty.

*The price is \$3,500.00 f. o. b. Hagerstown.*





535 Surray Avenue  
Hagerstown

WAHAG-169  
Moller Apartments  
Washington County, Md.  
Christy Venham

May, 2001

Negative - MD SHPO

Main facade on  
Surray Avenue.

Looking South  
# 1 of 8



WA-HAG-169  
Moller Apartments  
535 Surrey Avenue

Hagerstown  
Washington County, Md  
Photographer: Christy  
Venham

May, 2001  
Negatives - MD SHPO  
Main Entrance door  
on Surrey Avenue  
Looking West

#2 of 8



WA-HRA-169  
Moller Apartments  
535 Surrey Avenue  
Haverstown  
Washington County, Md  
Photographer: Christy  
Venham

May, 2001  
Negatives - MDSHPO  
Rear Facade -  
Courtyard

#3 of 8

Looking North



WA-HAG-169  
Moller Apartments  
535 Surrey Avenue  
Hagerstown  
Washington County, Md  
Photographer: Christy  
Jerrom  
May, 2001  
Negatives-MDSHPO  
Rear Facade-  
courtyard

#4 of 8

Looking northeast



WA-HAG-169  
Moller Apartments  
535 Surrey Avenue  
Hagerstown  
Washington County, Md.  
Photographer: Christy  
Venham

May 2001  
Negatives: MDSHPO  
Rear facade -  
courtyard  
Looking northeast

#5 of 8



WA-NAC-169  
Moller Apartments  
535 Surrey Avenue  
Nagerstown  
Washington County, Md.  
Photographer: Christy  
Venham

May, 2001  
Negatives: MDSNPO  
Rear Facade  
Looking Northwest

#6 of 8



WA-LAG-169  
Moller Apartments  
535 Surrey Avenue  
Kagerstown  
Washington County, Md.  
Photographer: Christy  
Venham

May, 2001  
Negatives: MDSHPC  
Reart Summit Street  
Facades  
Looking North

# 7 of 8



WA-HAG-169  
Moller Apartments  
535 Surrey Avenue  
Hagerstown  
Washington County, Md.  
Photographer: Christy  
Venham

May, 2001  
Negatives: MDS#PO  
Rear Facade  
Looking Northwest

# 8 of 8

## HAGERSTOWN LANDMARKS RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties # WA-HAG-169

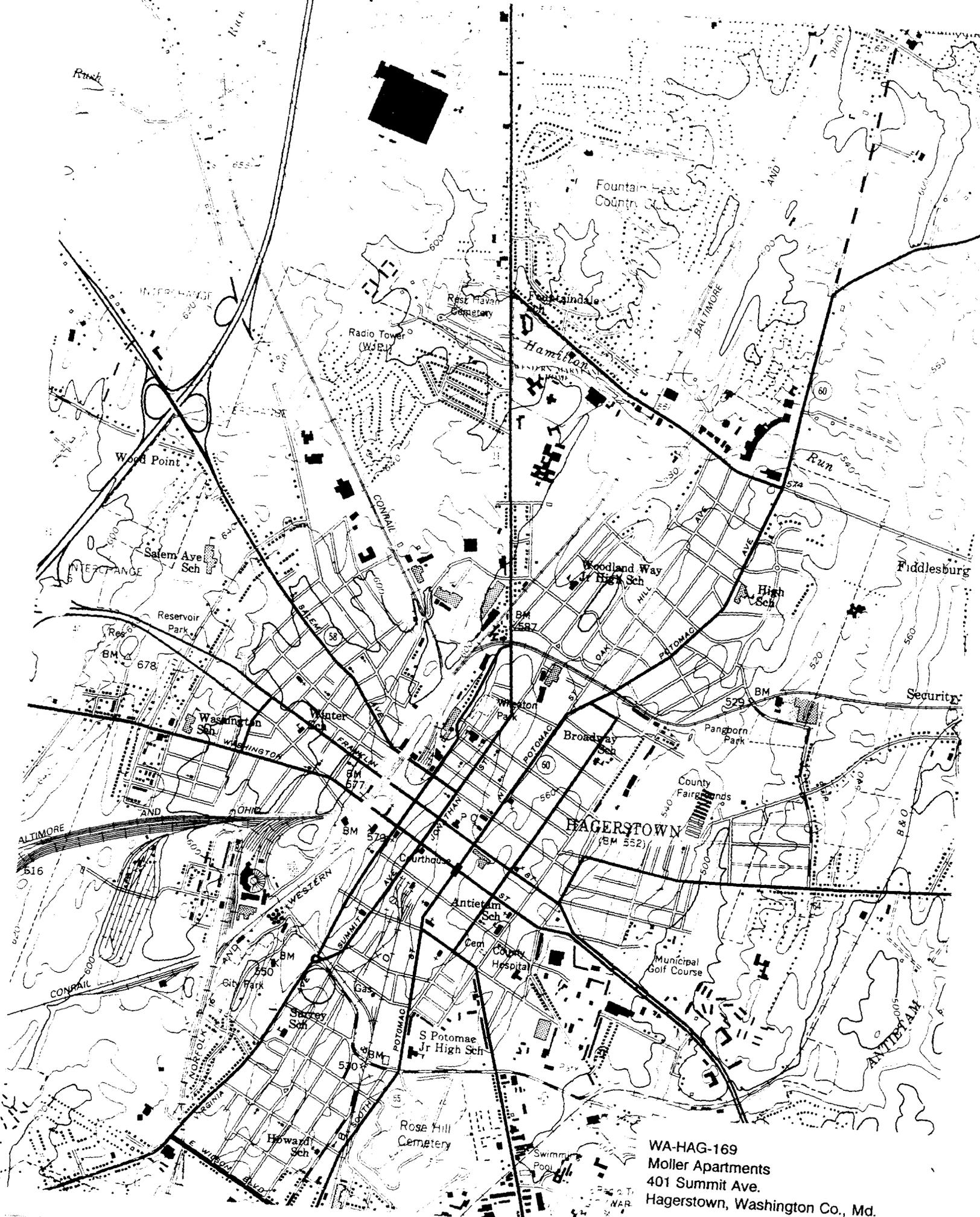
Property Name/Address: Moller Apartments, 401 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Maryland

Description/Significance: This three-story stuccoed Spanish Colonial Revival apartment building was converted before 1925 from a bicycle manufacturing facility. This conversion reflects the changing character of the neighborhood, as residential development supplanted industrial use, and represents a noteworthy early application of the concept of adaptive reuse. In its present configuration, the building retains a high level of integrity, and displays characteristic features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, including ironwork balconies, tiled pent roofs, and decorative ceramic tile work surrounding entrances.

### MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

- I. Geographic Organization: Western Maryland
- II. Chronological/Developmental Period(s):  
Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
- III. Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):  
Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning
- IV. Resource Type
  - Category: Building
  - Historic Environment: Urban
  - Historic Function(s) and Use(s):  
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/manufacturing facility  
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
  - Known Design Source: Unknown

Form Prepared by: Peter E. Kurtze  
109 Brandon Road  
Baltimore, Maryland 21212  
August 15, 1991



WA-HAG-169  
Moller Apartments  
401 Summit Ave.  
Hagerstown, Washington Co., Md.



WA - HAG - 169

MOLLER APTS

401 SUMMIT AVE

HAGERSTOWN, WASH CO., MD

7/91 P. KURTZE

VIEW FROM NORTHEAST