

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) Inventory Number: B-5332

Address: 1303 West Mount Royal Avenue Historic district:  yes  no

City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21217 County: Baltimore City

USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore East

Property Owner: The Maryland Institute Tax Account ID Number: 14010386002

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): Tax Map Number: 08

Project: Howard Street Tunnel Project Agency: Federal Railroad Administration

Agency Prepared By: RK&K, LLP

Preparer's Name: Meghan P. White and Nicole A. Diehlmann Date Prepared: 11/3/2020

Documentation is presented in: Howard Street Tunnel Project: Architectural Historic Properties Identification and Effects Assessment Technical Report, City of Baltimore, Maryland, and Delaware County, Pennsylvania (2020)

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation:  Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property:

Inventory Number: Eligible:  yes Listed:  yes

Site visit by MHT Staff  yes  no Name: Date:

Description of Property and Justification: (Please attach map and photo)

Location/Setting

The circa-1915 Cannon Shoe Company building is located on an irregularly shaped parcel at the eastern corner of West Lafayette Avenue and West Mount Royal Avenue, west of the Howard Street Bridge (B- 4529), and south of the former Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad tracks (now owned by CSX Transportation) and the Jones Falls Expressway. It has a concrete walkway at the southwest façade. Lamp posts with saucer lights illuminate the walkway. South of the building is a small grassy plaza with a fountain and tree plantings along the southwest façade. A parking lot with shrubbery and grass, and a small, circa-1980, attached one-story building are northwest of the Cannon Shoe Company. The ground slopes to the east on the southeast and northeast elevations. A raised metal platform is at the southeast elevation, as is a hyphen connecting to the 2004, Deconstructivist-style Brown Center building. The Cannon Shoe Company building and parcel, and attached Brown Center building are part of the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA).

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

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MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

Reviewer, National Register Program Date

Description

The trapezoidal brick building has four visible stories on the northwest and southwest elevations. The northeast and southeast elevations have five stories due to the sloping grade that exposes the building’s poured-concrete basement. The eight-bay southwest façade is constructed of stretcher-bond brick. The bays are defined by brick pilasters with recessed areas in between. The current primary entrance is in the fifth bay and consists of paired glass doors with sidelights. “Fox Building” is inscribed on a steel beam above the door in white lettering. Saucer lights are on either side of the door. The original entrance, now enclosed with a fixed-sash window, is in the second bay. It is surrounded by limestone trim and classical columns supporting an entablature with “Fox Building” inscribed in the architrave. Above the window is a rectangular masonry panel inscribed with “Maryland Institute College of Art.” Windows are primarily ribbon with three awning windows, each with two-light, fixed sash above and a four-light sash below —though those on the first floor of the southwest façade have 10 lights total—and distinguish each of the bays. The windows on the first story of the southwest façade have steel lintels, while the other windows have soldier-course brick lintels. All windows have stone sills. The spandrels below the windows on the third and fourth stories have a recessed panel with a basket-weave brick pattern. The flat roof has a crenelated brick parapet with projecting metal coping. At the parapet, above the brick pillars, are rectangular limestone panels with geometric motifs.

The northwest elevation has five bays with 5:1 common-bond brickwork and a crenelated parapet at the roof. The windows are identical to those on the southwest façade, except that the first-story windows in the second and fourth bays and the second-story windows in the second through fourth bays have single awning windows.

The northeast elevation has eight regularly spaced bays with 5:1 common-bond brickwork and a crenelated parapet at the roof. Windows on all five levels are identical to those on the façade, except for the three first-story bays at the east end that have ribbons of three fixed-sash windows. Between the third- and fourth-story windows is painted “Maryland Institute College of Art/Founded 1826.”

The southeast elevation has 5:1 common-bond brickwork, a crenelated parapet at the roof, and four bays, three of which are regularly spaced; the northernmost bay is narrower than the others. The southernmost bay on the first story contains a fixed-sash hyphen that connects to the Brown Center. The second bay contains paired metal-and-glass doors set within a window wall, while the third and fourth bays contain ribbon windows with fixed sash. Upper story windows are similar to those on the rest of the building.

Historic Context

The building at 1303 West Mount Royal Avenue was built around 1915, replacing a smaller office building (LOC 1914, 193). The current building, which has a railroad connection, was built for L. Grief and Company to make uniforms for soldiers fighting in World War I (Schoettler 1980, 9). Beginning in 1936, it became home to the Cannon Shoe Company, which used the building as a warehouse and as headquarters for its retail division. Other tenants included the Goodyear Rubber Company, which stored tires in the building, but eventually Cannon Shoe took over the whole building (Schoettler 1980, 9; The Sun 1976, A9). The Cannon Shoe Company was founded in Baltimore by Warren MacPherson in the early 1930s. By the time of his death in 1969, the business had around 140 stores across the United States (The Sun 1969, 15). The company operated several factories including ones in Baltimore, Thurmont, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. In 1967, the company was producing 10,000 pairs of shoes a week (Roberts 1967, 27).

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

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MHT Comments:

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 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

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 Reviewer, National Register Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

In 1976, the Cannon Shoe Company moved its corporate offices and retail headquarters to Hagerstown, Maryland. That same year, the company sold the property to the Maryland Institute of Art, now called MICA (The Sun 1976, A9). The school undertook a \$2.5 million renovation of the building, beginning in May of 1979. The architect, Richard W. Ayers, noted that he wanted to maintain the "industrial feel" of the building, which had 75,000 square feet of space on five levels. In addition to altering the interior layout to create studio space, classrooms, and galleries, other changes to the building included new windows; the windows facing the Jones Falls Expressway (I-83) contained sound-resistant glass. Limestone lintels over the banks of first-story windows flanking the original entrance were removed. Inside, ceilings were left bare and pipes and other structural components were exposed (Dorsey 1979, D1; The Sun 1980, M12). The school renamed the building the Fox Building after Charles James Fox, an architect who graduated from the Maryland Institute of Art in 1885 (The Sun 1980, 23). The new name was inscribed in the architrave of the original entrance and a new concrete panel with "Maryland Institute College of Art" was added above the new entrance, between the second and third stories. In 2004, MICA completed construction of the \$17 million Brown Center, designed by Ziger/Snead Architects and Charles Brickbauer, that was attached to the southeast elevation of the Cannon Shoe Company building by a simple one-story glass hyphen (Architect Magazine). The Cannon Shoe Company building is still owned by MICA as of 2020. It currently contains a café on the first story, and the remainder of the space continues to be primarily used as classroom and studio space.

Baltimore City always had a strong industrial base, but after the Civil War, the city saw dramatic industrial growth. Between 1870 and 1890, the number of established industries tripled, ranging from fertilizer to men's clothing and shoes, and this growth continued into the twentieth century. One of the city's major industries was garment manufacturing, and in 1900 only New York City produced more ready-made clothing (Hayward and Shivers 2004, 176). Warehouses were important components of industrial production, as manufactured goods needed to be stored prior to shipment to far-flung markets. These industrial pursuits were generally housed in simple, utilitarian buildings that were located along the waterfront and beside the city's extensive rail lines. Most of these buildings had little architectural refinement, but some light industrial buildings, in areas visible to the public, contained some level of architectural detailing. Factories and warehouses were typically masonry buildings with large expanses of open space and high ceilings. Windows provided light and ventilation (Hayward and Shivers 2004, 151, 153, 168, 176). The Cannon Shoe Company building is typical of these early-twentieth-century industrial buildings and warehouses throughout the city. Many other garment manufacturing and storage buildings still exist, particularly more architecturally refined buildings in the Loft Historic District North (B-4093) and the Market Center Historic District (B-1262). Other factory and warehouse buildings remain throughout the city, particularly along current and former rail alignments.

Eligibility Determination

The Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) was evaluated for significance under the National Register of Historic Places Criteria A, B, and C. The resource was not evaluated for eligibility under Criterion D.

The Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) is one of many factory and warehouse buildings constructed in Baltimore City in the early twentieth century and has no significant association with the growth of the garment industry in the city during this time period. In addition, the building has late-twentieth-century alterations. Therefore, the Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) is not eligible under Criterion A.

Research has revealed no significant association with persons who have made specific contributions to history. Therefore, the Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) is not eligible under Criterion B.

The Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) is not a significant example of an early-twentieth-century industrial building in Baltimore City. The city experienced a booming industrial economy in the early twentieth century, resulting in the construction of

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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many warehouses and factories throughout the city. Many of these buildings still exist and a number of them are more architecturally refined than the Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building), as seen in the Loft Historic District North (B-4093) and the Market Center Historic District (B-1262). The Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, does not represent the work of a master, does not have high artistic value, and does not have the potential to be part of a district. Though the MICA campus was established more than 50 years ago, the Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) did not become part of the campus until the late 1970s; therefore, the building's relationship to the school campus is not significant. Furthermore, the building has been modified with replacement windows, changes to original entrances, and other alterations to the property. Therefore, the Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) is not eligible under Criterion C.

Parcel Description

The property encompasses 0.47 acres and is confined to the footprint of the building which is on a portion of property tax parcel found on Baltimore City Tax Map 14, Ward 14 Section 01 Block 0386 Lot 002 (2020).

References

Architect Magazine. "MICA Brown Center." November 16, 2017. <https://www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/mica-brown-center>.

Dorsey, John. 1979. "Renovation to Begin at Cannon." The Sun. February 18, 1979, D1.

Hayward, Mary Ellen, and Frank Shivers Jr. 2004. The Architecture of Baltimore: An Illustrated History. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Library of Congress (LOC). 1914. Sanborn Maps Collection. 1914, Vol 2, 193.

Roberts, Harold S. 1967. "Cannon Shoe Adds Stores." The Sun. February 3, 1967, 27.

Schoettler, Carl. 1980. "Identity of a Shoe 'Factory' Will be All Academic After Sunday." The Evening Sun. September 19, 1980, 9.

The Sun. 1969. "Cannon Shoe Founder Dies." April 5, 1969, 15.

-----, 1976. "Cannon Shoe to Move Offices to Hagerstown." May 18, 1976, A9.

-----, 1980. "Maryland Institute Spreads its Wings." September 21, 1980, M12; 23.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

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**B-5332**

**Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building)**

1303 West Mount Royal Avenue  
Baltimore City, Maryland, 21217



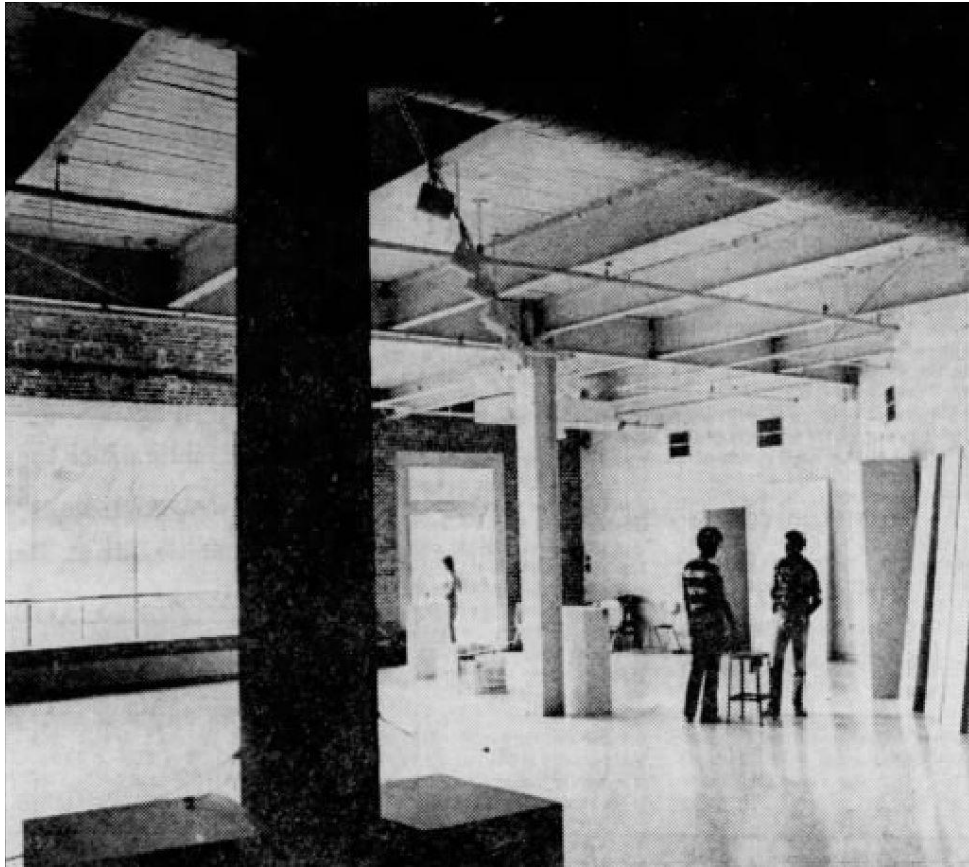
Historic Image 1: Southwest façade of the Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) in 1977, when MICA had recently acquired the building.

*The Baltimore Sun*, August 15, 1977, 21.

B-5332

**Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building)**

1303 West Mount Royal Avenue  
Baltimore City, Maryland, 21217



Historic Image 2: MICA gallery space on the first floor of the Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building) in 1980.

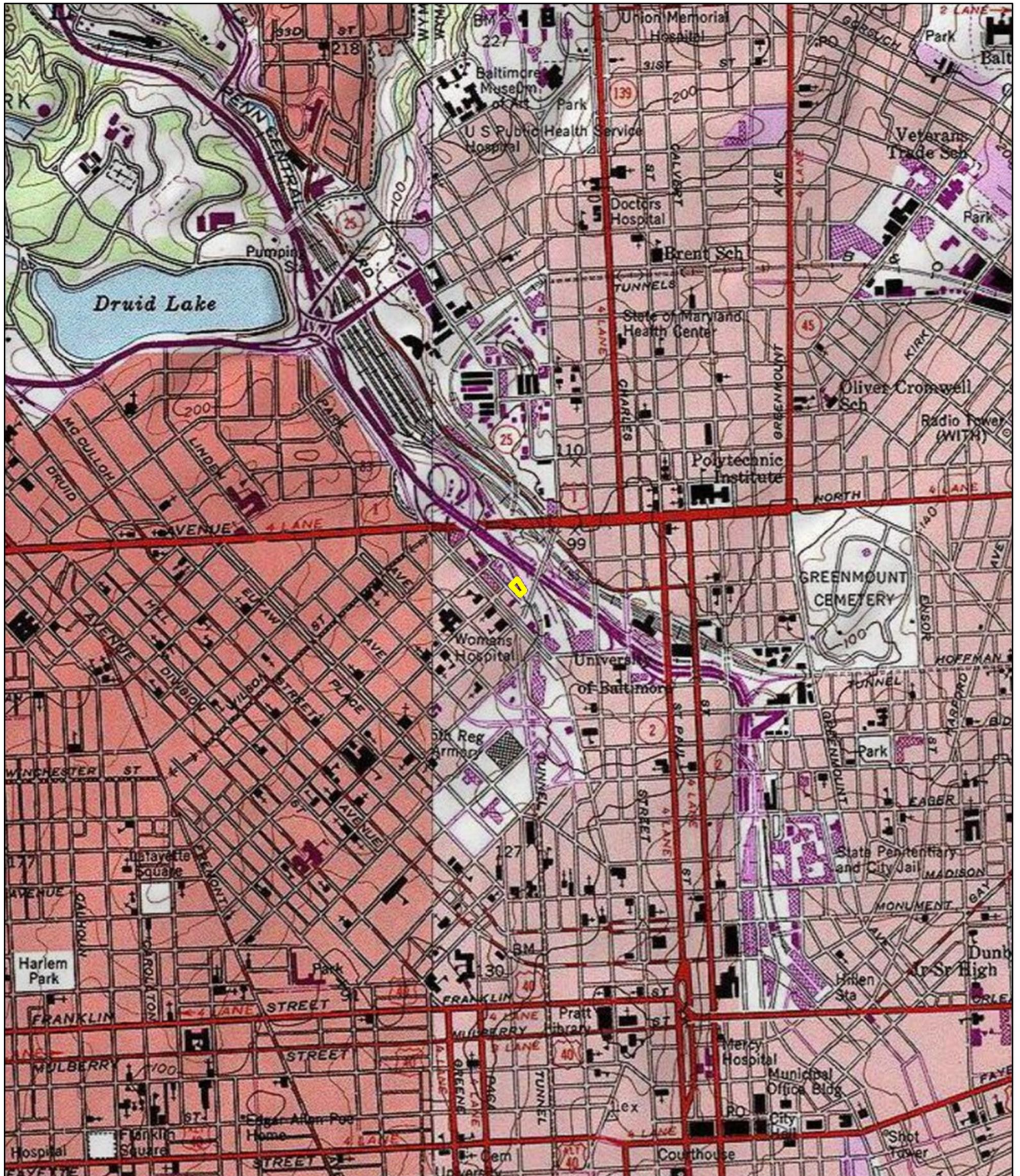
*The Baltimore Sun*, September 19, 1980, 9.



Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building)

Location: 1303 W. Mount Royal Avenue

City: Baltimore

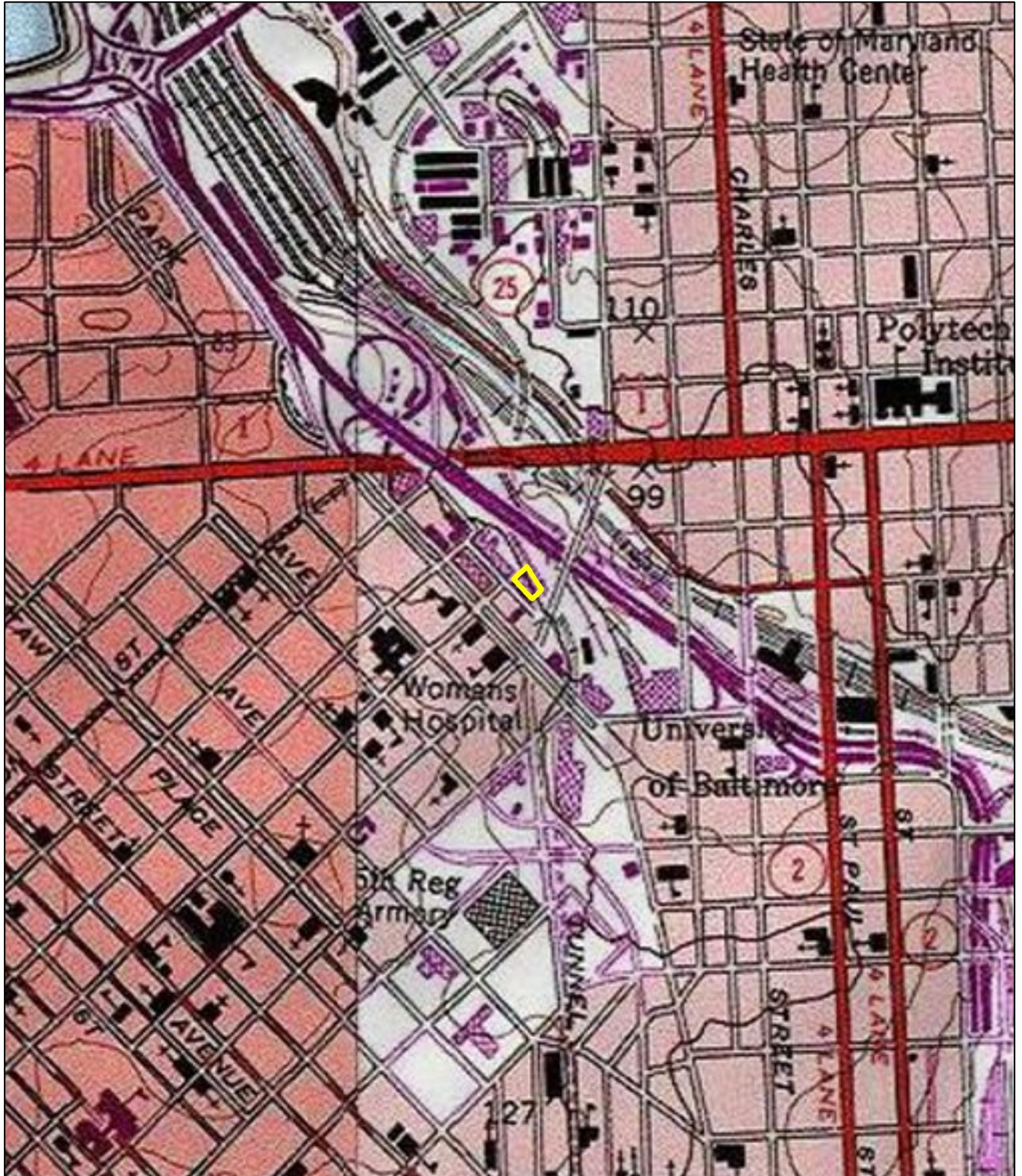




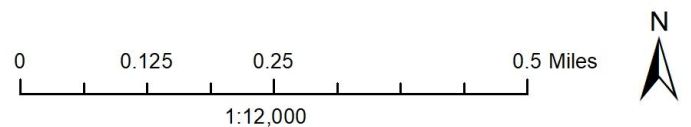
Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building)

Location: 1303 W. Mount Royal Avenue

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USGS 7.5' Quadrangle - Baltimore East

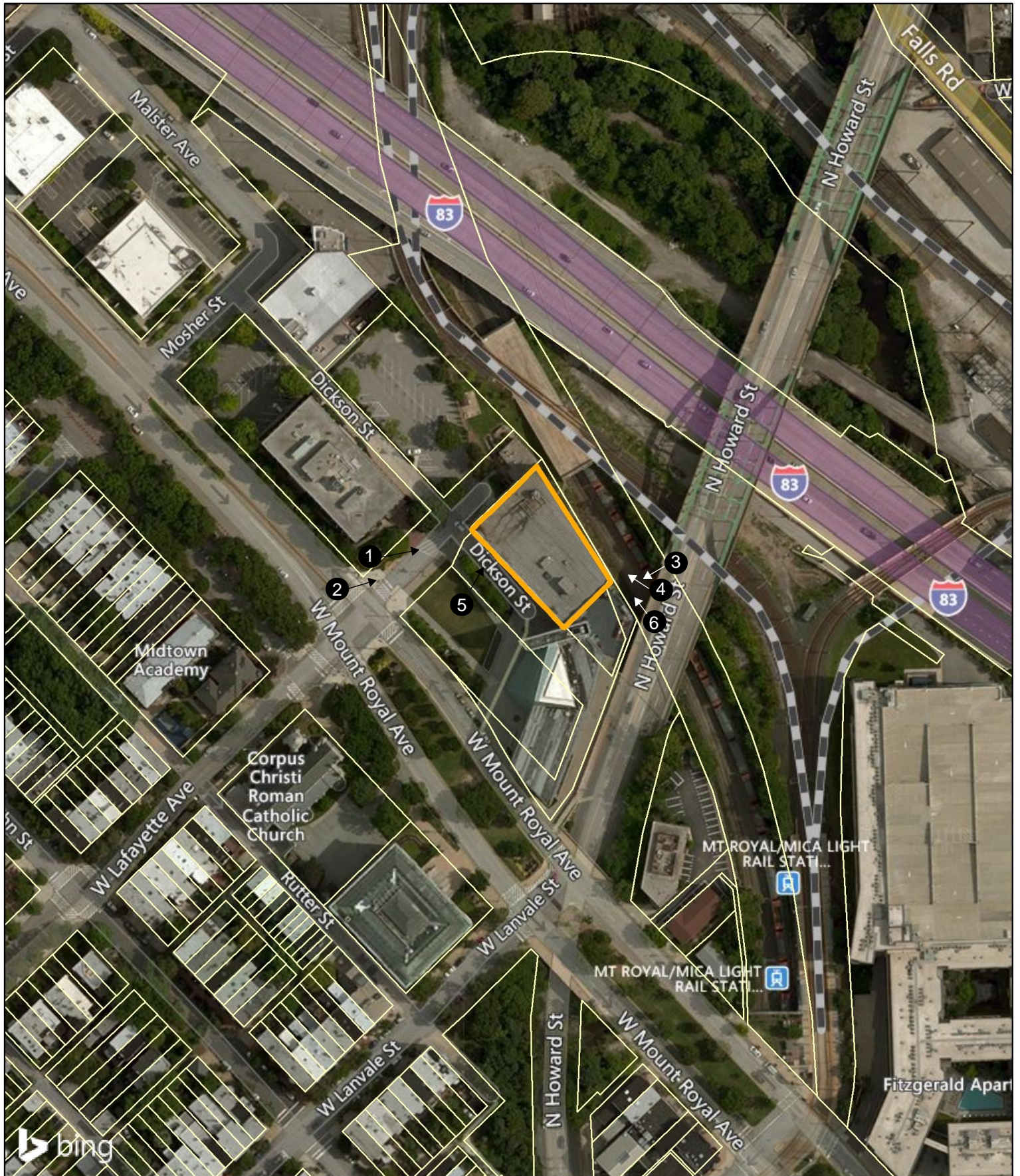





# Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building)

Location: 1303 W. Mount Royal Avenue

Baltimore City



 Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building)

 Photo

0 100 200 400 Feet

1 inch = 200 feet





# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5332

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**Name of Property:** Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building)

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**Photo 1: Southwest façade and northwest elevation, facing east**



**Photo 2: Southwest façade and attached Brown Center, facing east**



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Photo 3: Southeast elevation and hyphen to the Brown Center, facing west

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Photo 4: Northeast elevation, facing northwest



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Photo 5: Detail of former entrance on the southwest façade, facing northeast

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**Photo 6: Northeast elevation and former Baltimore & Ohio Railroad tracks, looking northwest**



# Maryland Historical Trust

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### PHOTO LOG

**Name of Property:** Cannon Shoe Company (Fox Building)

**Name of Photographer:** Nicole A. Diehlmann

**Date of Photograph:** September 2020

**Location of Original Digital File:** MD SHPO

*Photographs inserted on continuation sheets.*

**Photo 1 of 6:**

Southwest façade and northwest elevation, facing east

B-5332\_2020-09-15\_001.tif

**Photo 2 of 6:**

Southwest façade and attached Brown Center, facing east

B-5332\_2020-09-15\_002.tif

**Photo 3 of 6:**

Southeast elevation and hyphen to the Brown Center, facing west

B-5332\_2020-09-15\_003.tif

**Photo 4 of 6:**

Northeast elevation, facing northwest

B-5332\_2020-09-15\_004.tif

**Photo 5 of 5:**

Detail of former entrance on the southwest façade, facing northeast

B-5332\_2020-09-15\_005.tif

**Photo 6 of 6:**

Northeast elevation and former Baltimore & Ohio Railroad tracks, looking northwest

B-5332\_2020-09-15\_006.tif