

PYLES HOUSE

4608 North Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Locational Atlas & Index of Historic Sites

Designation Form

May 2022



Table of Contents

1. Name of Property.....	4
2. Location of Property	4
3. Zoning of Property	4
4. Type of Property	4
5. Function or Use	5
6. Description of Property.....	5
Site Description	5
Architectural Description	5
7. Statement of Significance	6
A. Applicable Designation Criteria	6
B. Statement of Significance	6
C. Period of Significance.....	6
D. Significant Dates	6
E. Significant Persons	6
F. Area of Significance	6
G. Architect/Builder	6
H. Narrative	6
I. Local Designation Criteria	12
J. Evaluation of Integrity	13
K. Nearby Resources	14
L. Conclusion	15
8. Environmental Setting/Geographical Data	15
Property Land Area	15
Tax Account Number	15
District	15
Environmental Setting Description	15
Environmental Setting Justification	15
Areas Exempt from Designation	15
9. Current Property Ownership.....	15
10. Form Prepared By	15
11. Major Sources Consulted	15

Appendix One: Environmental Setting/Geographic Data 17

Appendix Two: Detailed Architectural Description 19

Appendix Three: Historic Maps..... 22

Appendix Four: Exterior Photographs..... 29

Appendix Five: Chain of Title 36

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Pyles House

Current Name: 4608 North Park Avenue

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties #: Pending

2. Location of Property

Street Address: 4608 North Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

3. Zoning of Property

CR-3.0 C-2.0 R-2.75 H-90: The intent of the CRN, CRT, and CR zones is to permit a mix of residential and nonresidential uses at varying densities and heights. The zones promote economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable development patterns where people can live, work, recreate, and access services and amenities. The CR zone is intended for larger downtown, mixed-use, and pedestrian-oriented areas in close proximity to transit options such as Metro, light rail, and bus. Retail tenant gross floor area is not restricted.

4. Type of Property

A. Ownership of Property

☒ Private
☐ Public
☐ Local
☐ State
☐ Federal

B. Category of Property

☒ Private
☐ Public
☐ Local
☐ State
☐ Federal

C. Number of Resources within the Property

Contributing		Noncontributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	Buildings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4	Buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	Structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	Objects	<input type="checkbox"/>	Objects
<input type="checkbox"/>	Archaeological Sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	Archaeological Sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	Total	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5	Total

D. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places

The property has not been evaluated for the National Register of Historic Places.

5. Function or Use

Historic Function(s): Domestic

Current Function(s): Domestic; Commerce/Trade

6. Description of Property

Site Description

The Pyles House is located mid-block on the south side of North Park Avenue between Willard Avenue and Shoemaker Lane in the Village of Friendship Heights. The site is approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile west of Wisconsin Avenue and $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile from Montgomery County's border with the District of Columbia. The surrounding neighborhood retains only a few of the early-to-mid twentieth century homes which were once predominant here. The nearby area was extensively redeveloped by the 1970s with high-rise condominium, apartment, and commercial buildings.

The building remains in its original location and retains most of its original parcel footprint. It sits on a triangular .25-acre lot that slopes down across the rear yard to the south of the dwelling.¹ The property is bounded by a fifteen-story condominium building to the west, North Park Avenue to the north, and single-family dwellings converted to commercial use to the east and south.

The property is accessed from North Park Avenue. An L-shaped paved drive with five parking spaces abuts the building to the west and south. On the building's east side, a fenced brick patio enclosed with a wrought iron fence abuts the recessed porch at the home's rear. The fenced patio separates this property from a paved driveway and parking area for the property at 4604 N Park Avenue. At the rear of the site, a sloped grass yard of approximately 3,000 square feet contains four small non-historic sheds and a horse trailer, all resting on concrete pads.

Architectural Description

This two-bay frame dwelling was constructed in 1906. It features two-over-two, double-hung, wood-sash windows; and a single-leaf front door with a large light and recessed panels. A full-width front porch, likely original in form but altered in style, has chamfered posts, pendant drops, and molded brackets that form the architrave.

The original narrow, rectangular-plan footprint has been expanded with a two-story rear addition and one-story side porch, now enclosed, both of wood frame construction. The building is clad in dropped wooden siding. A narrower wood siding is used on the enclosed side porch. The home sits on a foundation composed of both concrete block and uncoursed stone with raised rounded ribbon joints and includes a rear stair descending below grade to the basement. It is capped with an asphalt-shingled hipped roof that is pierced by a brick chimney centrally located on the ridge. At the rear, an exterior

¹ The original 10,890 square foot lot is now divided into two parcels following dedication for street widening at the front of the property. The home sits on an 8,493 square foot lot under tax account 00494613. Both parcels are still privately held.

staircase provides direct access to the second story. Fenestration consists primarily of two-over-two, wood-sash windows and several partially glazed wood doors.

The home's wide overhanging eaves, elongated windows, and the large light of the front door suggest that the original design was influenced by the Italianate style. Alterations to the porch and to the hipped-roof frieze suggest that additional detailing possibly present in the original design has been removed.²

7. Statement of Significance

A. Applicable Designation Criteria

The dwelling at 4608 N Park Avenue does not meet any applicable designation criteria listed in §24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code. See Section 7-I for a complete evaluation.

B. Statement of Significance

Historic Preservation staff does not recommend designation of the property. Therefore, no statement of significance will be included.

C. Period of Significance

c. 1906

D. Significant Dates

1906 (construction), 1975 (sale to current owner)

E. Significant Persons

Joseph Frank and Bertha Anna (née Fahrenwald) Pyles

F. Area of Significance

N/A

G. Architect/Builder

Joseph F. Pyles (builder)

H. Narrative

Historic Context: Brief History of Friendship Heights

In the years preceding European colonization, land in the vicinity of Friendship Heights was home to Native American people who practiced agriculture, hunting and gathering, and fishing along Rock Creek and the Potomac River. These native residents were largely displaced amid increasing European settlement in the 17th and early 18th centuries.³

In 1713, a 3,124-acre tract of land called "Friendship" was patented to Thomas Addison and James Stoddart.⁴ Through the mid-19th century, the land between River Road and Wisconsin Avenue remained largely rural, though the large Friendship tract had been divided and the land was now home to

² The corner boards on the porch include a kick-out which suggests that elongated brackets were part of the original construction. Likewise, alterations to the frieze may have included the removal of an original bracketed cornice typical of the Italianate style.

³ DC Historic Preservation Office, *Ward 3 Heritage Guide* (Washington, DC: DC Office of Planning, 2020), 6.

⁴ https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/page_content/attachments/Ward%203%20Heritage%20Guide.pdf.

⁴ Montgomery County Court (Land Records), "Benjamin Stoddart to Charles Beatty," May 4, 1782, Liber B, Folio 45. Many secondary sources attribute the name "Friendship" to the amicable relationship between the two families.

members of the Shoemaker, Perry, Ball, and Williams families.⁵ The Shoemakers had relocated here from Pennsylvania by 1832, when Samuel Shoemaker bought 102 acres of the Friendship tract between the “Main Road” (Wisconsin Avenue) and River Road.⁶

The population of the District of Columbia grew substantially in the Civil War years, spurring development of previously unimproved areas inside the city and driving residents of means to seek less crowded quarters. This expansion continued with the opening of the Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad in 1873, which transformed Montgomery County and established a suburban commuter corridor. Real estate developers marketed these suburbs’ easy access to the District and drew a contrast between the crowded conditions in the city and the healthy, green settings of these new communities.

The invention of the electric streetcar in 1888 drove a further wave of suburbanization. Speculative real estate developers saw opportunity in areas previously isolated from rail lines as streetcar lines were added to existing turnpikes and new roads were built. Somerset Heights (1890), Chevy Chase (1892) and Friendship Heights (1901) emerged in this era.

The area that would become Friendship Heights was served by several lines, making it an attractive location for developers and new residents. The Georgetown and Tenallytown Railway, chartered in 1888, ran along Wisconsin Avenue from the Potomac River to the District boundary, where it terminated near the intersection with Willard Avenue.⁷ Soon after, the Tenallytown and Rockville Railroad (1890) and Glen Echo Railroad (1891) opened and provided further service to the local area.⁸ The latter ran along what would become Willard Avenue west to Glen Echo and Cabin John, but was short-lived and discontinued service to the Wisconsin and Willard Avenue junction in 1900.⁹

Henry W. Offutt platted the 16-acre subdivision “Friendship Heights” in June of 1901. Offutt was a successful grocer, real estate developer and banker, who had assembled the land over the previous decade.¹⁰ Through the mid-1890s, much of this land still belonged to Shoemaker descendants or had been acquired from the family in recent decades.¹¹ Offutt purchased 12 acres of this 16-acre subdivision from Louisa Ernest, daughter of Aquila Eld. Eld had purchased land here from the Shoemaker family in 1854.¹² Offutt acquired the final four acres from the Ball family, who obtained their land from Isaac Shoemaker.¹³ Offutt’s Friendship Heights consisted of three blocks divided into approximately 6,000 square foot lots closer to Wisconsin Avenue, and six larger lots of one to two acres towards the interior

⁵ Simon J. Martenet, *Martenet and Bond's Map of Montgomery County, Maryland*. (Baltimore: Simon J. Martenet, 1865), Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002620533/>; Griffith Morgan Hopkins, Jr., “Bethesda District No. 7,” *Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, Including the County of Montgomery, Maryland*. (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1879), Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/87675339/>.

⁶ Benjamin H. Shoemaker, *Genealogy of the Shoemaker Family of Cheltenham, Pennsylvania*, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1903), 87.; Montgomery County Court (Land Records), “Walter Smith, Clement Smith, and Margaret Clare Smith to Samuel Shoemaker,” November 22, 1832, Liber BS 5, Folio 379.

⁷ Now named “Tenleytown,” the older spelling was still in use in the late 19th century. LeRoy O. King, Jr., *100 Years of Capital Traction: The Story of Streetcars in the Nation's Capital*. (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company, 1972), 39.

⁸ King, *100 Years of Capital Traction*, 42.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁰ William G. Offutt, *Bethesda, A Social History* (Washington, DC: The Innovation Game, 1995), 218; William J. Latimer, “Friendship Heights,” February 14, 1902, Plat 45.

¹¹ Griffith Morgan Hopkins, Jr., *The Vicinity of Washington, D.C.* (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1894), Map, <https://www.loc.gov/item/88693364/>

¹² Montgomery County Court (Land Records), “Julian B. Miller, Trustee, to Henry W. Offutt,” April 25, 1890, Liber JA 17, Folio 449; Ancestry; Montgomery County Court (Land Records), “Isaac Shoemaker to Aquila Eld,” July 19, 1854, Liber JGH 3, Folio 320.

¹³ Montgomery County Court (Land Records), “Richard L. Ball and Rachel J. Ball to Samuel E. Hill,” March 24, 1886, Liber JA 1, Folio 456.

of the subdivision along High Street.¹⁴ The ¼-acre Pyles property would be drawn from the triangular Block 9 at the westernmost edge of the subdivision. Offutt's subdivision abutted "The Hills," a subdivision created primarily from Shoemaker family land the previous year.¹⁵

Over the next dozen years, Friendship Heights grew into an established residential community where the affordable land allowed for large yards with room for domestic chickens and kitchen gardens.¹⁶ Many of the principal early homes were built by Richard Ough & Son, a builder who contributed to commercial and residential construction in Georgetown, Tenleytown, and nearby Somerset.¹⁷ These homes reflected a mix of Victorian and early Colonial Revival styles. In 1914, the Maryland General Assembly created a special taxing district for "the villages of 'Friendship Heights' and 'The Hills'" that allowed the unincorporated community some autonomy to levy local taxes for public works projects, police and fire protection, and public services such as garbage collection.¹⁸ The legislature granted limited governing authority to the "Friendship Heights Citizens' Committee," a precursor to the Village Council. The committee was emblematic of an active citizenry who organized local institutions including a school, church, and women's club; fundraised for street improvements; and established local regulations addressing community concerns ranging from domestic livestock to nuisance fireworks.¹⁹

The growing community was comprised nearly entirely of white families. Black residents of the District and of the nearby River Road community faced racial discrimination in Friendship Heights that culminated in overt threats of violence when land in the Belmont subdivision, just across Wisconsin Avenue, was sold to Black buyers in 1906.²⁰ Richard Ough, the prominent Friendship Heights resident and builder, declared to *The Washington Times* that, "No negro shall ever build a house in Belmont... I speak for 500 men as determined as I am myself. We do not care what methods are needed to prevent a calamity which appears to be impending; whatever they are, those methods will be taken." Ough went so far as to directly compare the local men he spoke for to the Ku Klux Klan.²¹ Friendship Heights remained a primarily white community through at least the mid-twentieth century.

By the 1940s, suburban neighborhoods, including Friendship Heights, were changed by the emerging development of supermarkets and shopping centers.²² The opening of a Woodward & Lothrop department store in 1950 was the first sign of a transformational wave of construction. It was followed shortly by the construction of the GEICO Headquarters, Chevy Chase shopping center, and Lord & Taylor (over the District line).

In 1964, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission adopted commercial zoning for Friendship Heights that allowed construction of buildings up to 140 feet tall, beginning a period of rapid transformation that accelerated when Friendship Heights was identified as a future Metrorail stop in

¹⁴ An early resident of Friendship Heights, Anne Sheiry, recalled High Street as the old wagon road to the Eld family farmhouse. Offutt, *Bethesda, A Social History*, 219.

¹⁵ C.J. Maddox, "The Hills," December 26, 1901, Plat 44.

¹⁶ "District Stretching North Along Wisconsin Avenue," *The Evening Star*, April 9, 1910, NewsBank.

¹⁷ Offutt, *Bethesda*, 219.

¹⁸ Maryland General Assembly, *Laws of the State of Maryland*, (Annapolis, MD: Maryland General Assembly, 1914), 166, via the Maryland State Archives: <https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2900/sc2908/000001/000533/html/am533--166.html>

¹⁹ Offutt, *Bethesda*, 219-227; "Parties Planned to Pay for Paving," *The Evening Star*, September 28, 1931, NewsBank.

²⁰ Offutt, *Bethesda*, 225.

²¹ "Belmont Colony Arouses Whites to Danger Point," *The Washington Times*, July 5, 1906, Chronicling America. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026749/1906-07-05/ed-1/seq-1/>

²² KCI Technologies, Inc., *Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology, I-495/I-95 Capital Beltway Corridor Transportation Study, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, Maryland*, (Maryland Department of Transportation: State Highway Administration, 1999, B-19.

1966.²³ High-rise apartment and office buildings rapidly replaced the existing single-family houses. By 1969, *The Washington Post* estimated that only 30 such homes remained, and that these were likely to be demolished within five years.²⁴

Much of this transformation was driven by local resident and real estate agent Thelma ‘Tim’ Edwards, who saw a moment of opportunity as commercial development surrounded the Village to the south and east. Acting as a broker, she successfully assembled large parcels for commercial and residential development by convincing her neighbors of the financial windfall to come.²⁵ The large-scale redevelopment that followed resulted in the rapid physical transformation of Friendship Heights from its origins as a streetcar suburb to the urban form seen today.

Historic Context: Ownership of 4608 N Park Avenue

Joseph F. and Bertha A. Pyles and family (1906 – c. 1975)

On January 11, 1906, Henry W. and Florence G. Offutt sold to Joseph F. Pyles a quarter-acre portion of Block 9 in the Friendship Heights subdivision.²⁶ Joseph F. Pyles was born September 3, 1882, and raised in Washington, DC, by a working class family.²⁷ In purchasing this property, he settled just across the street from his older brother, William H. Pyles, who had built a modest dwelling on a .65 acre lot at 407 High Street by 1904.²⁸ Joseph F. Pyles, a carpenter by trade, constructed the dwelling at 408 High Street in 1906.²⁹

On November 29, 1906, *The Washington Post* announced the upcoming marriage of Joseph F. Pyles and Bertha A. Fahrenwald, of Baltimore.³⁰ Bertha was born in November of 1884 near Yankton, in the Dakota Territory, to first-generation Russian and Prussian immigrants.³¹ By 1900, her family had relocated to Baltimore and Bertha, then 15, worked as a servant.³²

Joseph F. Pyles was employed throughout his adult life as a carpenter. In addition to building this house, he is likely to have contributed to suburban residential construction throughout the immediate area. Military draft registration cards reflect his employment as a carpenter in Chevy Chase (1918) and later as an employee of the Meadowbrook Construction Company (1942), a building and real estate

²³ Melanie Rose White, Ed., *Village of Friendship Heights: The First 100 Years*, (Chevy Chase, MD: Village of Friendship Heights, 2015), 28, <https://www.friendshipheightsmd.gov/PDFs/HistoryBookfinal.pdf>; The Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning, *Sector Plan for the Central Business District of Friendship Heights, Montgomery County, Maryland*, (Silver Spring, MD: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1974), 19.

²⁴ John B. Willmann, “Friendship Heights – Emerging Little City,” *The Washington Post*, March 16, 1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

²⁵ Adriane Quinlan, “The Pastel Dream of the Developer,” *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2006, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/2006/08/11/the-pastel-dream-of-the-developer-span-classbankheadthelma-edwards-made-a-little-pink-house-her-building-block-for-friendship-heightsspan/5f7cc3ed-844d-4733-87ef-ad9f217ceece/>.

²⁶ Montgomery County Court (Land Records), “Henry W. Offutt and Florence G. Offutt to Joseph F. Pyles,” January 11, 1906, Liber 184, Folio 449.

²⁷ In 1900, the last U.S. Census to record Pyles living at home with his parents reflected that his father William, was employed as a day laborer. 1900 U.S. Federal Census, “William H. Pyles, Jr.,” Ancestry.

²⁸ Maryland State Archives, Department of Assessments (Montgomery County), Assessment Record, Election District 4 [and 7], Rockville & Bethesda, 1896-1906, T221-191904, Assessment Year 1904. This home has since been demolished and the land is now part of the apartment complex at 4615 N Park Avenue.

²⁹ Maryland State Archives, Department of Assessments (Montgomery County), Assessment Record, Election District 4 [and 7], Rockville & Bethesda, 1896-1906, T221-191904, Assessment Year 1906; “Friendship Heights, MD,” [Real Estate Advertisement], *The Evening Star*, June 20, 1926, NewsBank. Pyles states in this ad that the home was “built by owner.”

³⁰ “Licensed to Marry,” *The Washington Post*, November 29, 1906, via ProQuest.

³¹ Bertha’s parents, Heinrich and Katharine Fahrenwald, had settled in the Dakota Territory by 1880. They arrived there amid a wave of immigrant settlers attracted to the territory by the Homestead Act of 1862, which distributed traditionally Native American lands to private ownership. 1880 U.S. Federal Census, “Heinrich Fahrenwald,” Ancestry.

³² 1900 U.S. Federal Census, “Bertha Fahrenwald,” Ancestry.

development firm active in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area in the early to mid-twentieth century.³³ Census takers recorded no occupation for Bertha, but it is likely that she managed the household and held primary responsibility for raising the Pyles' three children: Anna (born c. 1909), Joseph Jr. (b. 1910) and Albert (b. 1920). Based on staff review of historical records and community social histories, neither Joseph nor Bertha appear to have played an active part in Friendship Heights' civic and social life in the decades of their ownership of this property.³⁴

In 1910, the Pyles family was living independently at 408 High Street, Friendship Heights. By 1920, the household included three boarders, suggesting that the family's financial circumstances may have changed.³⁵ Over roughly the same period, Joseph made a series of attempts to sell the property. Advertisements for the home reflect little change to the property between 1913 and 1931, when the final sale ad appears. A typical ad described the home and grounds in 1926:

FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS, MD -- \$6,500; 6-room house, ¼ acre of ground, garage, poultry house, fruit and shade trees; house built by owner; 5 minutes' walk from car line.

J.F. PYLES, 408 High St., Friendship Heights, MD. Cleve. 475-W.³⁶

By this time, a garage had been added to the property to house an automobile purchased by the family c. 1923.³⁷ Other physical changes to the main dwelling are more difficult to date. The 1927-1963 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map reflects that it was once a rectangular dwelling with a one-story front porch. In this same period, Pyles likely constructed a one-story addition to the rear of the building.³⁸ Real estate maps from the 1930s to 1950s depict only a simple two-story rectangular outline with a detached outbuilding, likely the garage.³⁹ Available resources do not clearly suggest when the one-story rear porch was replaced with the two-story addition and side porch seen today. However, based on the uniform physical descriptions of the home between 1913 and 1931 and the consistency of materials used throughout the dwelling, it is likely that the sizable rear addition and side porch were added between 1931 and Joseph Pyles' death in 1958.⁴⁰

The additions may relate to the periods of the Pyles' family's occupancy of the home. On December 18, 1924, Joseph F. and Bertha Pyles purchased Lot 17 in Block B of Section 8, Chevy Chase.⁴¹ The lot was part of a subdivision made by Monroe and Robert Warren, major developers of Chevy Chase, and

³³ U.S., World War I Draft Registration Card, "Joseph Frank Pyles," 1917-1918, Ancestry; U.S., World War II Draft Registration Card, "Joseph Frank Pyles," 1942, Ancestry; Cynthia A. Liccese-Torres, Arlington County Historic Preservation Program, "Arlington Forest Historic District, National Register Nomination Form," 2004, http://www.arlingtonforestva.org/Nomination_for_Historic_Places_Register.pdf

³⁴ Neither appears in social histories of the community, such as *Bethesda: A Social History*, or were identified in local newspaper articles documenting social and civic activities as Friendship Heights coalesced as a community in the early and mid-twentieth century.

³⁵ 1920 U.S. Federal Census, "Joseph Frank Pyles," Ancestry.

³⁶ "Friendship Heights, MD," [Real Estate Advertisement], *The Evening Star*, June 20, 1926, NewsBank.

³⁷ Maryland State Archives, Department of Assessments (Montgomery County), Assessment Record, Election District 7, [Book 4], Friendship Heights and the Hills, Drummond, Somerset, Northwest Park, Oakmont, Norwood Heights 1923-1927, T221-84, 1923, Assessment Year 1923.

³⁸ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: Washington Suburban, Volume One W*. (New York, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1927-1963), Sheet 18.

It is probable that Pyles made the addition himself based on his construction of the home.

³⁹ Similarly, a review of tax assessment records from 1906 – 1970 did not reveal any obvious major building campaigns that added significantly to the assessed value of the improvements on the property.

⁴⁰ The 1927-1963 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows that only the one-story rear addition existed at the time the final revision was made to this map. This revision reflects the revised street number (4608) and therefore must have been made at some point after 1950.

⁴¹ As was common throughout Chevy Chase, this lot was sold to the Pyles family with a racially restrictive covenant that stipulated that the property may never be rented, leased, or sold to "any negro or colored person." Montgomery County Court (Land Records), "Monroe Warren and Robert B. Warren to Joseph F. Pyles and Bertha A. Pyles," December 18, 1924, Liber PBR 364, Folio 301.

employers of Joseph Pyles by 1942.⁴² By about 1926, the Pyles had built a Craftsman-style bungalow on the lot, which was historically addressed as 4300 Leland Street, Chevy Chase.⁴³

The 1930 census recorded the Pyles family living at the new home on Leland Street. Residents of 408 High Street in Friendship Heights were not captured in the census, but available evidence indicates that the home was likely occupied by renters.⁴⁴ The last sale advertisement discovered for the home appeared in *The Evening Star* in 1931.⁴⁵

By 1940, the family had returned to 408 High Street, where Joseph and Bertha then lived the rest of their lives.⁴⁶ As the Pyles children aged into adulthood, they eventually moved out of their parents' home. Anna married Peter T. Michonski and moved to Massachusetts; Joseph Jr. became a professional photographer, for the Army during World War II and later for *National Geographic*, and eventually moved into the home at 4300 Leland Street; while Albert joined the armed forces and served in both World War II and the Korean War. He was killed in a plane crash in 1957.⁴⁷

Joseph F. Pyles died on October 1, 1958, leaving Bertha as the sole owner of the home, now addressed as 4608 High Street.⁴⁸ She lived there until her death on March 28, 1970.⁴⁹ Before her death, she deeded the property to her daughter, Anna Michonski, and to Frank E. Joyce, whose relationship to the Pyles family is unknown.⁵⁰ In 1968, Michonski and Joyce dedicated 2,397 square feet at the front of the lot to the Village of Friendship Heights and the Hills for the widening and improvement of High Street, which brought the street edge significantly closer to the home's façade.

Joan A. Estrada, the Joan A. Estrada Family Trust, and the Richard Mariscal Family Trust (1975 – Present)

After Anna Michonski's death on November 18, 1971, the property was briefly held by William A. Volkman, Jr. and J. Willard Nalls, local land use attorneys, before it was purchased by Joan A. Estrada on July 17, 1975.

Estrada was born Joan Arlene Sherman in Nebraska on August 12, 1938.⁵¹ She owned the property, individually or as trustee of the Joan A. Estrada Family Trust, until her death on June 2, 2019.⁵²

⁴² William Bushong, Clare Lise Cavicchi, Robin Ziek, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, "Chevy Chase Survey District (Phase II)," Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form, 1997. <https://mht.maryland.gov/secure/Medusa/PDF/Montgomery/M;%2035-13-4.pdf>.

⁴³ This property is now addressed as 4330 Leland Street.

⁴⁴ The Pyles family had already opened the home to rental tenants by 1920, and a 1929 obituary for Margaret E. Stadtler provides her address as 408 High Street, Friendship Heights, MD, indicating her residency in this time frame. Stadtler does not appear to be related to the Pyles family. "Stadtler, Margaret E.," [Obituary], *The Evening Star*, April 28, 1929, NewsBank.

⁴⁵ "408 HIGH STREET, FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS," *The Evening Star*, October 25, 1931, NewsBank.

⁴⁶ The Chevy Chase home was rented in 1940 to the Sowers family; 1940 U.S. Federal Census.

⁴⁷ "Michonski, Peter T (Anna E)," *Chicopee, MA City Directory, 1965*, 264, Ancestry; "Joseph Frank Pyles, Jr.," [Obituary], *The Washington Post*, December 29, 1984, NewsBank; 1950 U.S. Federal Census, Election District 7, ED 16-77; "Major Albert H. Pyles, Victim of Plane Crash in Germany," *The Evening Star*, May 22, 1957, NewsBank.

⁴⁸ "Pyles, Joseph F." [Obituary], *The Evening Star*, October 3, 1958, NewsBank.

⁴⁹ "Pyles, Bertha A." [Obituary], *The Evening Star*, March 31, 1970, NewsBank.

⁵⁰ Montgomery County Court (Land Records), "Bertha A. Pyles to Anna E. Michonski and Frank E. Joyce," October 26, 1967, Liber 3688, Folio 36.

⁵¹ "Joan A. Sherwood," Nebraska, U.S., Birth Ledgers, 1904-1911, Birth Index, 1912-1994, Ancestry.

⁵² Joan Arlene Mariscal, Find a Grave, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/234450464/joan-arlene-mariscal?_gl=1*hb54zg*_ga*MTE4MzY0OTY0Mv4xNiA3NiMwMzk3*_ga_4QT8FMEX30*MTY1NDAYMDIzMy4yNi4xLjE2NTQwMjEzNzYuMA..

During the time of Estrada's ownership, the home was restored to its current appearance. In an undated photograph taken between 1975 and 2014, the home appears in a deteriorated condition but structurally matches the current configuration.⁵³

I. Local Designation Criteria

The dwelling at 4608 N Park Avenue does not meet any applicable designation criteria listed in §24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code. Based on historic research and architectural evaluation, staff determined that the property does not demonstrate historical or architectural significance.

Evaluation Criterion (1): Historical and Cultural Significance

The subject property fails to meet designation criteria for historical and cultural significance. It is not the site of a significant historic event, nor is it associated with a person or group of persons who influenced society. Though the Pyles family were longtime residents of Friendship Heights, they did not distinguish themselves through contributions to the social, political, cultural, or economic history of the county or the local community. In a time when Friendship Heights experienced growing social and civic participation by residents striving to improve their community, there is no evidence that the Pyles family played an active role in the emerging institutions which shaped the Village.

The home does not symbolize the county's development, heritage, or cultural characteristics. Though it does date to the period of Friendship Heights' emergence as a streetcar suburb, it does not communicate this history today. As a result of the wholesale change to the neighborhood character, the property's relationship to the historic context of the streetcar suburb is no longer evident. The community's buildings and structures from that era have been demolished, including the c. 1891 transfer station at Wisconsin Avenue and Willard Avenue that served the local transit lines.⁵⁴ At the time of its development, Friendship Heights was noted for its affordable land and large lots with gardens and domestic agricultural outbuildings.⁵⁵ With the loss of open land surrounding the Pyles House and the demolition of the home's detached garage and poultry house, the property's origins within this context are no longer apparent.

Nearby resources, including the Somerset Historic District (Master Plan Historic District #36/35) clearly convey the county's suburban streetcar history where this property does not. Somerset Heights, established in 1890, is adjacent to the Village of Friendship Heights. It is noted for its "unassuming" architecture and "solidly middle-class residents," and maintains characteristics which evoke its period of development: mature trees, regular rhythm and spacing of buildings and open space, homes set back from the street, and large lots, which originally attracted families to settle here.⁵⁶

Staff does not recommend designation on the basis of historical or cultural significance.

⁵³ Undated Photograph, *Village of Friendship Heights: The First 100 Years*, 31. <https://www.friendshipheightsmd.gov/PDFs/HistoryBookfinal.pdf>

⁵⁴ E.H.T. Traceris, "Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2005, 41, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/9ea78f08-8661-406d-90cb-9db0bfe9cb2b>.

⁵⁵ "District Stretching North Along Wisconsin Avenue," *The Evening Star*, April 9, 1910, NewsBank.

⁵⁶ Somerset, established in 1890, is adjacent to the Village of Friendship Heights. It is noted for its "unassuming" architecture and "solidly middle-class residents," unlike the neighboring streetcar suburb of Chevy Chase. Clare Lise Kelly, *Places from the Past: The Tradition of Gardez Bien in Montgomery County, Maryland*, (Silver Spring, MD: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 2011), 243-244.

Evaluation Criterion (2): Architectural and Design Significance

Though the dwelling at 4608 N Park Avenue is one of the oldest surviving residences in the Village of Friendship Heights, the subject property lacks architectural or design significance.

The home's wood frame construction and simple design reflect building trends commonly employed throughout the region in the early twentieth century. This building does not stand out as a significant example of its method of construction. Alterations to the dwelling have obscured its simple Italianate style and removed features which may have originally given it some stylistic distinction. Though elements of early-twentieth century design and construction are retained, these aspects do not impart historical or architectural significance to the property.

Joseph F. Pyles, the home's builder, does not qualify as a master of his trade.

The home has not been recognized as a familiar visual feature of Friendship Heights or the county. The 1998 *Friendship Heights Sector Plan* distinguished this dwelling based on its age, but did not recommend historic designation of the property.⁵⁷

Staff therefore does not recommend designation on the basis of architectural or design significance.

J. Evaluation of Integrity

Integrity is the ability of a historic property to convey its historical and/or architectural significance. Resources must retain essential physical characteristics that allow it to convey this significance. There are seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Location and Setting

The property lacks integrity of location and setting. While the home remains in its original location, the parcel has been reduced and the surrounding environment has experienced a near-total transformation from the turn of the century when the home was constructed. When Joseph F. Pyles purchased this property, Friendship Heights had been recently subdivided and remained largely undeveloped. The neighborhood that emerged in the early 20th century was characterized by single-family residences with wide yards, free-standing garages and small outbuildings supporting domestic agriculture. The Pyles property at one time included a poultry house and c. 1923 garage that have since been demolished. The parcel is effectively diminished in size by the land dedicated to the Village of Friendship Heights in 1968 to allow for the widening of High Street. The road expansion eliminated the setback from High Street, now North Park Avenue, and paving of a significant portion of the parcel has further reduced the property's ability to convey its suburban residential origins.

The character of the surrounding physical environment has been drastically altered since the time of the Pyles' residence. The historically single-family residential streetscape of former High Street is now predominantly characterized by high-rise apartment and condominium buildings. The adjoining property to the west, the 4620 North Park Condominium (built 1975), is an imposing 15-story structure built very close to the property line. Facing 4608 N Park Avenue, on the land where William H. Pyles Jr.'s home formerly stood, is the 17-story North Park Apartments building (built 1971). These high-rise structures were built in the massive wave of construction that transformed Friendship Heights in the late 1960s

⁵⁷ *Approved and Adopted Friendship Heights Sector Plan*, 76.

and 1970s.⁵⁸ The changes to the parcel and the surrounding neighborhood have resulted in a highly altered physical environment which no longer conveys the property's early twentieth century origins.

Therefore, the subject property does not retain integrity of location and setting.

Design, Materials, and Workmanship

The property retains integrity of materials and workmanship reflecting Joseph F. Pyles' construction and likely modification of the dwelling in several phases during his ownership of the property. The form, though altered, does convey the essence of the home's simple original plan. Materials represent a mix of original and replacement components. The integrity of design has been negatively impacted by alterations made to the porch and roof cornice which likely removed or obscured elements reflecting the Italianate style.

Association and Feeling

The property lacks integrity of feeling and association. The significant changes to the parcel, and the surrounding physical environment have compromised the property's ability to convey the home's original period of construction or its association with the streetcar lines which spurred development here. Buildings and structures associated with the streetcar era have been demolished, including the c. 1891 transfer station at Wisconsin Avenue and Willard Avenue. On its own, this dwelling does not convey the feeling of suburban life in the early 20th century, or a connection to any important historic events or persons. The subject property therefore lacks integrity of association and feeling.

K. Nearby Resources

As part of this research effort, staff evaluated the Pyles House in the context of the nearby single-family dwellings at 4602 N Park Avenue (1938), 4604 N Park Avenue (1928), 5406 Shoemaker Farm Lane (1951), and 4607 Willard Avenue (1929).⁵⁹

Among these properties, the "Pink House" at 4607 Willard Avenue, formerly home to Thelma 'Tim' Edwards, stands out as having the greatest potential historic significance as representative of the evolution of the Village of Friendship Heights. This property is a better candidate for potential historic designation.

The home is associated with a historically significant figure. Thelma Edwards is widely recognized for her major role in the development of Friendship Heights and as a noteworthy female real estate developer in the Washington metropolitan area. She has been described as the "unofficial mayor" of Friendship Heights, one of "the most important developers in the history of Washington," and as having "almost single-handedly" developed Friendship Heights as it is today.⁶⁰

Edwards is an important figure who shaped the local landscape. Potential historic designation of her home offers an opportunity to reflect the community's early architectural and economic heritage as well as the significantly underrepresented theme of women's history.

⁵⁸ See Section H, Historic Context: Brief History of Friendship Heights for further information on the community's redevelopment.

⁵⁹ Preliminary dates of construction are based on information available in SDAT.

⁶⁰ T. Rees Shapiro, "A Local Life: Thelma 'Tim' Edwards, 94, Real Estate Developer," *The Washington Post*, June 25, 2011, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/a-local-life-thelma-tim-edwards-94-real-estate-developer/2011/06/22/AGg2W7kH_story.html; Quinlan, "The Pastel Dream of the Developer"; Ken Adelman, "Washington Real Estate: Interview with Realtor Thelma Edwards," *Washingtonian*, April 1, 2005, <https://www.washingtonian.com/2005/04/01/washington-real-estate-interview-with-realtor-thelma-edwards/>.

Staff recommends that further evaluation of the property at 4607 Willard Avenue be conducted as part of future design studies and/or master planning projects in the Friendship Heights area.

L. Conclusion

Based on field survey and archival research, Historic Preservation staff does not recommend that 4608 N Park Avenue be listed to the *Locational Atlas & Index of Historic Sites*. The building does not meet designation criteria for historical or architectural significance.

8. Environmental Setting/Geographical Data

Property Land Area

10,890 square feet

Tax Account Number

00494613 & 00494112

District

07

Environmental Setting Description

The dwelling at 4608 N Park Avenue is in Friendship Heights, Montgomery County, Maryland. The site considered for designation includes the 8,493 square foot property identified as 00494613 and the 2,397 square foot property identified as 00494112, District 7, and shown on the accompanying map (Appendix 1, Figure 1). The property is in the northwestern portion of Block 9 in the subdivision "Friendship Heights."

Environmental Setting Justification

Not applicable. Historic preservation staff is not recommending designation of the property.

Areas Exempt from Designation

Not applicable. Historic preservation staff is not recommending designation of the property.

9. Current Property Ownership

Julie Uhar, Trustee

Joan A. Estrada Family Trust

4904 Greenway Drive, Bethesda, MD 20816

10. Form Prepared By

Kacy Rohn, Cultural Resources Planner II

Montgomery Planning

May 2022

11. Major Sources Consulted

Ancestry.com [numerous]

Evening Star [numerous]

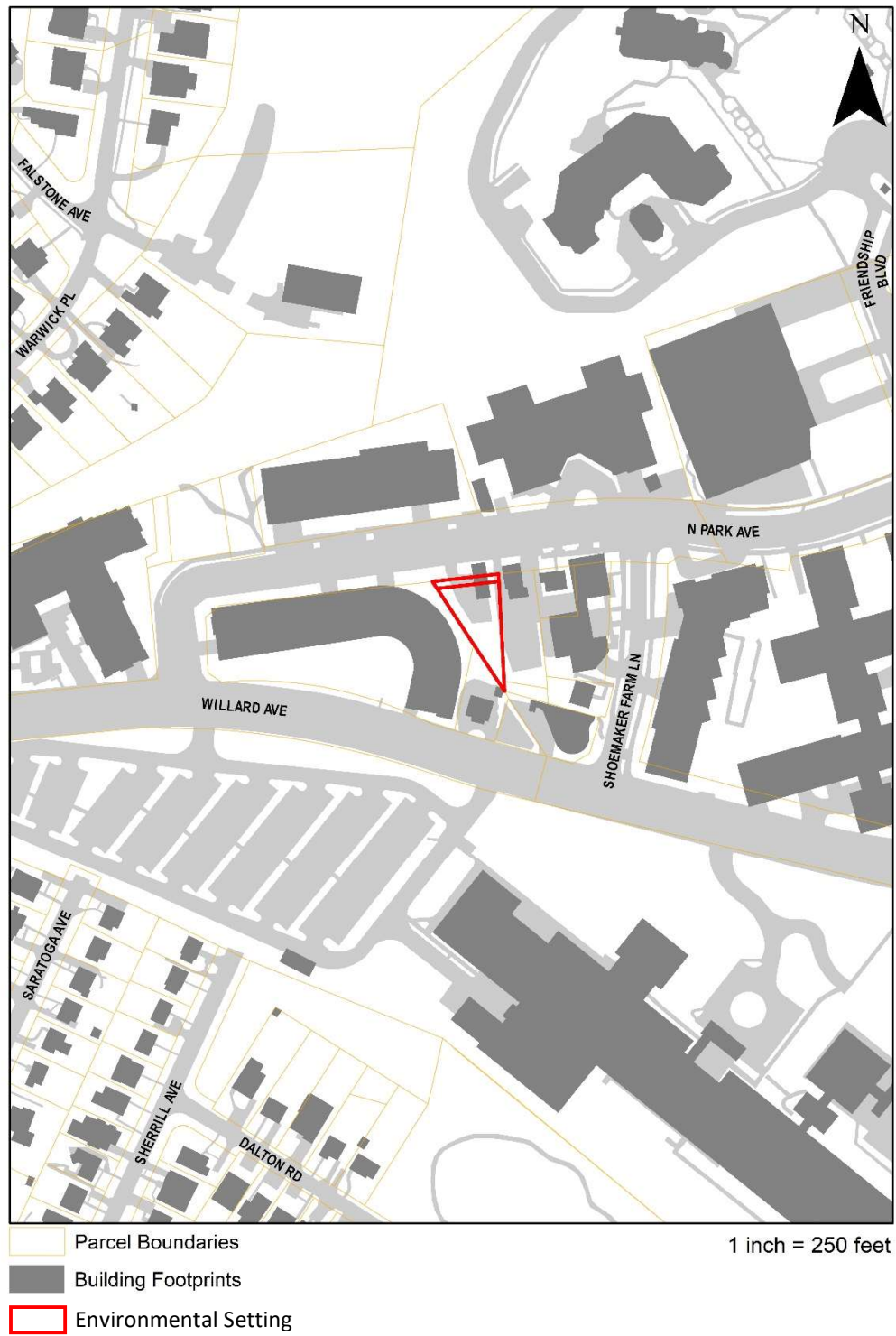
Maryland State Archives, Department of Assessments (Montgomery County), Assessment Records.

Montgomery County Land Records, <http://mdlandrec.net>.

Washington Post [numerous]

Appendix One
Environmental Setting/Geographical Data

Figure 1: Environmental Setting



Source: M-NCPPC GIS

Appendix Two
Detailed Architectural Description

North-Facing Elevation (Façade) – Appendix Four, Figures 1-2

The façade of the Pyles House is two bays wide and sits very close to the sidewalk facing North Park Avenue. Concrete steps provide access to a one-story, full-width, front porch that is approximately six feet in depth. The porch is capped by a hipped roof that is supported by chamfered wooden posts and decorated with molded brackets and pendant details. The porch includes a wooden balustrade and tongue-in-groove wood decking and rests on brick piers. It shelters a single-light, three-paneled wooden door in the eastern bay, and a two-over-two wood-sash window in the western bay. On the second story, two two-over-two, wood-sash windows align with the fenestration on the first story.

West-Facing Elevation – Appendix Four, Figures 2-4

Additions to the rear of the property have altered the original appearance of the west elevation. The original dwelling was two bays deep and featured two-over-two wood sash windows on the first and second stories, with one set of windows towards the front of the house and another near what was once the rear corner. These windows are widely spaced to accommodate an interior staircase. When the rear of the building was extended, an additional bay of two-over-two wood sash windows was added to the first and second stories. The windows appear fairly consistent in construction and dimension across this elevation. Any variation in materials is obscured by layers of paint. Each window has louvered wooden shutters with metal hardware and shutter dogs.

The foundation displays a mix of materials. On the west elevation, a section of the original stone foundation has been replaced with concrete block. The variations in material do not appear to correspond to the position of the rear addition and likely reflect a repair to the foundation. There are two barred, two-light, wood-sash, awning windows that pierce the foundation.

South-Facing Elevation – Appendix Four, Figures 4-6

The south-facing elevation has been altered by a series of additions. The rear elevation of the original two-bay house is mostly obscured by the two-story, single-bay addition on its western extent and the one-story, enclosed porch on its eastern extent.⁶¹ A dog-legged exterior wooden staircase provides direct access to the building's second story.

The projecting rear addition sits on a stone foundation with raised ribbon joints. Fenestration includes paired, four-over-four barred wood casement windows, centered in the first story of the rear addition; a fifteen-light wood door on the addition's second story; and a two-over-two wood sash window on the second story of the original building. It is framed by louvered wooden shutters with metal hardware and shutter dogs. Windows on this elevation are protected with locking grates affixed to the window frame. At the southwest corner, a stair descends below grade to provide access to the basement via a fifteen-light wood door.

East-Facing Elevation – Appendix Four, Figures 6-8

The east-facing elevation consists of the original house to the north and a two-story addition with an enclosed one-story porch to the south. The porch sits on brick piers and is capped with an asphalt-shingled roof with overhanging eaves. The enclosed porch is clad with a narrow, lapped wood siding not found elsewhere on the home. A glassed-in section features square wooden posts, decorative pendants, and simple brackets matching those on the front porch. A wood-framed glass door provides access to

⁶¹ A previous configuration of the rear elevation featured a one story, full-width addition across the rear of the original rectangular footprint. Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: Washington Suburban, Volume One W*. (New York, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1927-1963), Sheet 18.

the porch. Within the enclosed porch, another door (not clearly visible from the exterior of the property) provides access to the home's interior. Above the porch on the second story, there is a two-over-two, wood sash window placed close to the southeast corner. A locking metal grate is affixed to the window frame. This window features a narrower muntin profile than others seen on the home but is consistent in size and placement.

In the original main block of the house, there are four, two-over-two wood sash windows. The northernmost pair of windows appears to align with the placement of the corresponding windows on the home's west elevation. The second pair of windows is slightly offset from center towards the rear. Each window is framed by louvered wooden shutters matching those on the rest of the home. Between the second story windows, a smaller, four-over-four wood sash window indicates the location of the restroom.

The foundation on this elevation was not visible.

Appendix Three

Historic Maps



Figure 1: Martenet and Bond's Map of Montgomery County, Maryland, 1865. The red arrow points to the approximate location of Friendship Heights and the Pyles House (not shown on map). Source: Library of Congress.

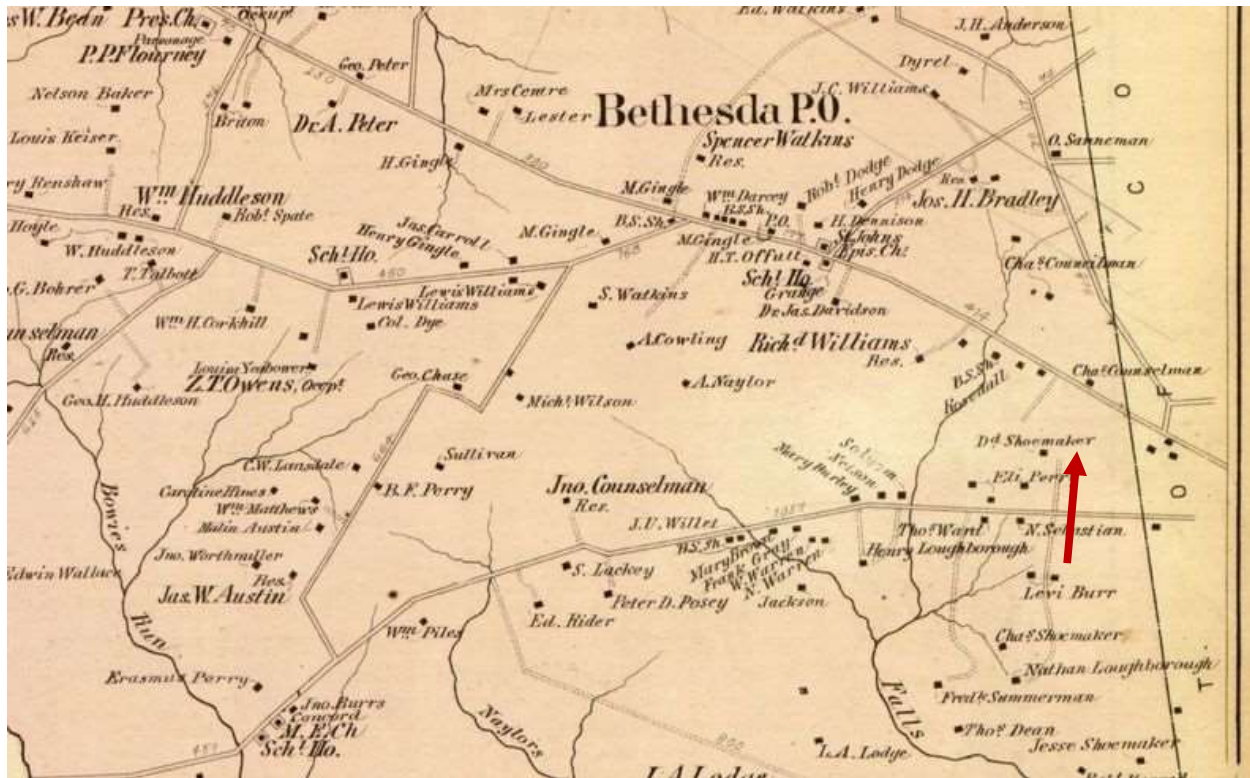


Figure 2: G.M. Hopkins' Atlas, 1879. The red arrow points to the approximate location of Friendship Heights and the Pyles House (not shown on map). Source: Library of Congress.

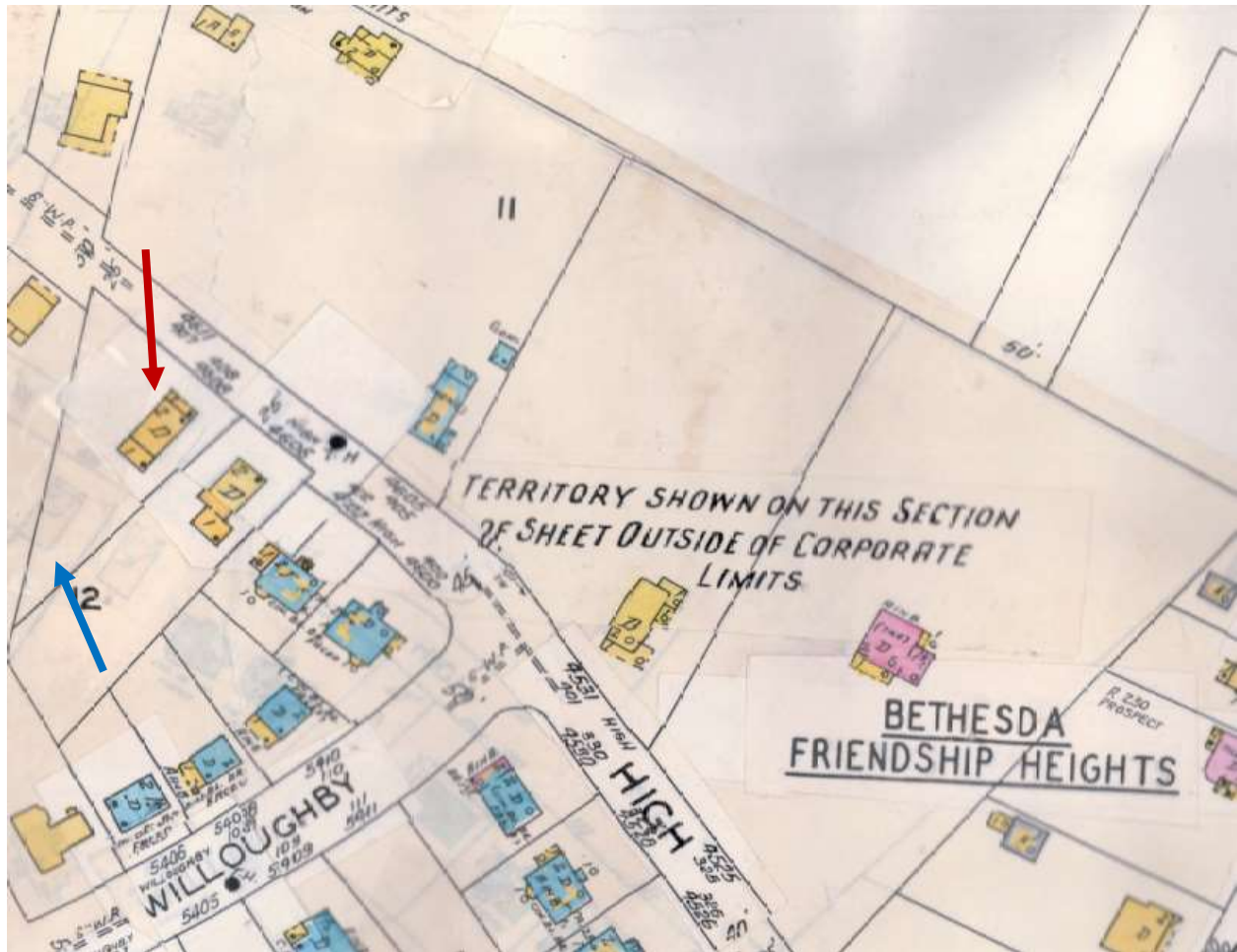


Figure 4: Detail, 1927-1963 Sanborn Insurance Maps, Sheet 18. The red arrow indicates the dwelling at 408 High Street as a simple rectangular structure with full-width one-story rear addition. Note that the street addresses reflect the new numbering system not implemented until the 1950s. The blue arrow indicates an earlier configuration of the dwelling visible through the amended layer on top. This earlier configuration did not include a rear addition. Source: Historic Preservation Program Archives.



Figure 5: Detail, 1931 Klinger Atlas, Volume 1, Sheet 10. The map indicates a two-story frame building with a detached frame outbuilding (now demolished), which was likely the garage. Source: Historic Preservation Program Archives.

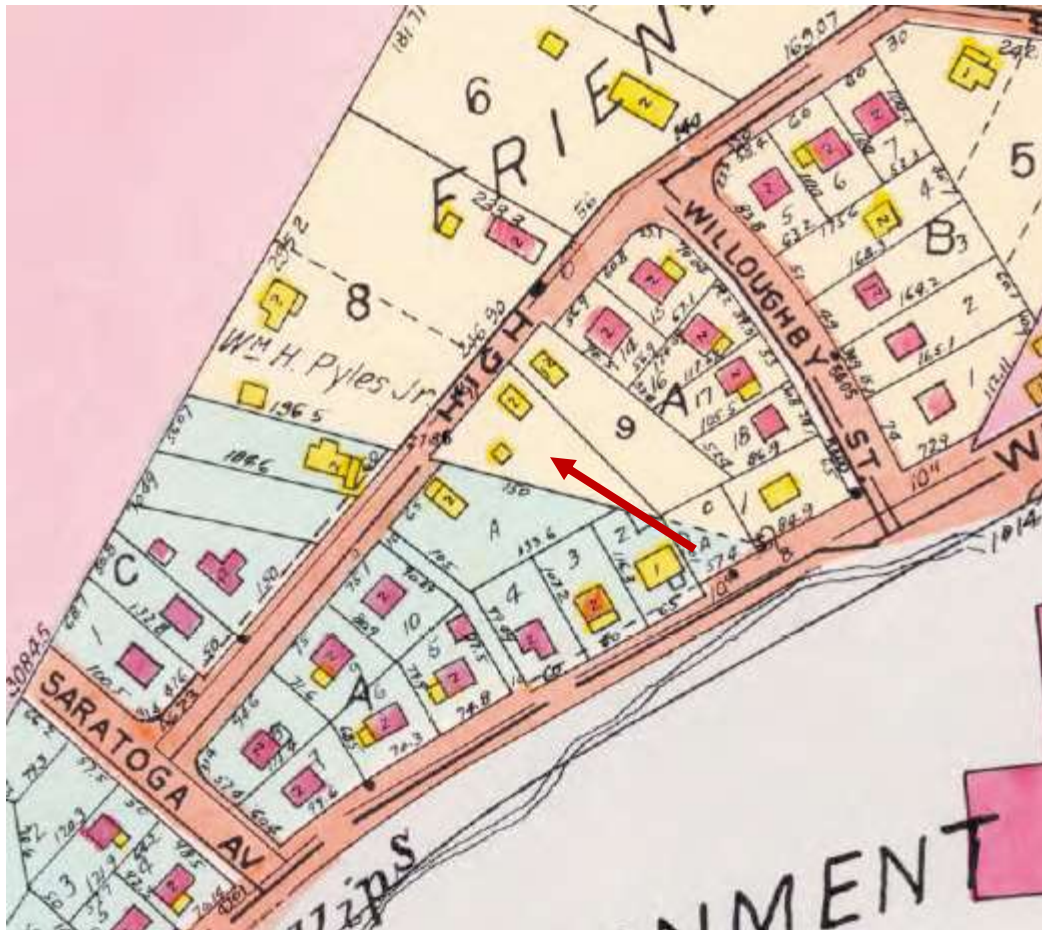


Figure 6: 1959 Klinge Atlas, Volume 2, Sheet 9. Source: Historic Preservation Program Archives.

Appendix Four

Exterior Photographs



Figure 1: View of the façade (north elevation).



Figure 2: View of the northwest corner.



Figure 3: View of the west-facing elevation.



Figure 4: View of the southwest corner.



Figure 5: View of the south-facing (rear) elevation.



Figure 6: View of the southeast corner.



Figure 7: View of the east-facing elevation of the original main block of the dwelling.

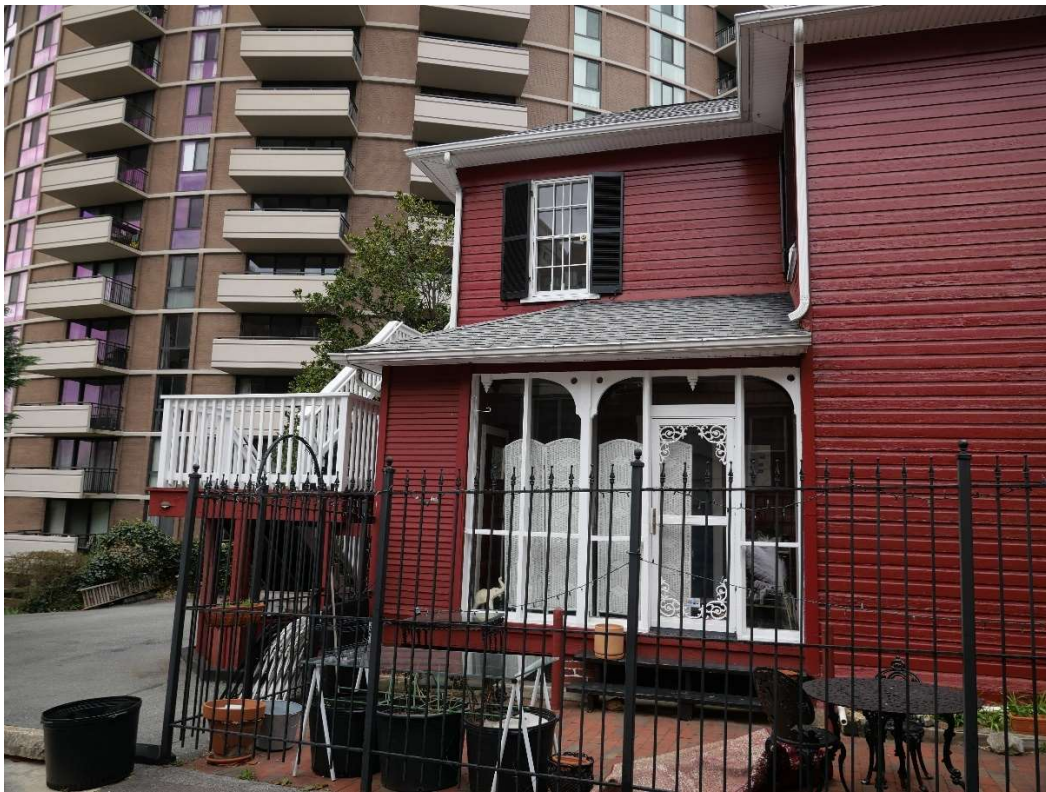


Figure 8: View of the east-facing elevation of the rear addition and enclosed side porch.



Figure 9: Detail of mixed foundation materials visible on the west-facing elevation.



Figure 10: View of the rear yard of the subject property.



Figure 11: View of 4608 N Park Avenue and the adjacent fifteen-story condominium building to the west.



Figure 12: Rear view of the Thelma 'Tim' Edwards "Pink House" at 4607 Willard Avenue.

Appendix Five
Chain of Title

Chain of Title, 4608 N Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815						
Date	Grantor	Grantee	Liber	Folio	Area	Notes
11/10/2001	Joan A. Estrada	Joan A Estrada, Trustee of the Joan A. Estrada Family Trust and Richard Mariscal, Trustee of the Richard Mariscal Family Trust	19683	90	10,890 ft ²	Conveyed two parcels which together comprise the original parcel footprint. Tax accounts for these parcels are 00494613 and 00494112.
11/10/2001	Joan A. Estrada, Trustee of the Joan A. Estrada Family Trust	Joan A. Estrada	19683	85	10,890 ft ²	
3/8/1994	Joan A Estrada	Joan A. Estrada, Trustee of the Joan A. Estrada Family Trust	12408	501	10,890 ft ²	
7/17/1975	William A. Volkman, Jr. and J. Willard Nalls	Joan A. Estrada	4668	841	10,890 ft ²	William A. Volkman, Jr. representing the estate of Bertha A. Pyles; and J. Willard Nalls representing the estate of Anna E. Michonski, and in his own right.
2/9/1971	Anna E. Michonski	J. Willard Nalls	4041	541	10,890 ft ²	Conveys 3% of her interest to Nalls.
9/18/1968	Anna E. Michonski and Frank E. Joyce	Villages of Friendship Heights and the Hills	3862	270	2397 ft ²	Dedicated for the widening and improvement of High Street
10/16/1967	Bertha Anna Pyles	Anna E. Michonski and Frank E. Joyce	3688	36	10,890 ft ²	
5/1/1947	Alger Y. Barbee	Bertha A. Pyles and Joseph F. Pyles	1071	194	10,890 ft ²	
5/1/1947	Bertha A. Pyles and Joseph F. Pyles	Alger Y. Barbee	1071	191	10,890 ft ²	

10/4/1946	Robert Dodge Hagner and LL Green, Trustees	Bertha A. Pyles and Joseph F. Pyles	1046	35	10,890 ft ²	Release of lien recorded at 515/151 (1931)
3/20/1931	Joseph F. Pyles and Bertha A. Pyles	Robert Dodge Hagner and LL Green, Trustees	515	151	10,890 ft ²	Property held as collateral on a \$3000 loan from Walter E. Perry
3/20/1931	Robert D. Hagner and L.L. Green, Trustees	Joseph F. Pyles and Bertha A. Pyles	513	366	10,890 ft ²	Release of lien recorded at 452/287 (1928)
4/3/1928	Joseph F. Pyles and Bertha A. Pyles	Robert Dodge Hagner and LL Green, Trustees	452	287	10,890 ft ²	Property held as collateral on a \$1500 loan from Walter E. Perry
4/19/1920	Henry Maurice Talbott and William H. Talbott, Trustees	Joseph F. Pyles	293	338	10,890 ft ²	Release of lien recorded at 186/393 (1906)
2/27/1906	Joseph F. Pyles	Henry Maurice Talbott and William H. Talbott, Trustees	186	393	10,890 ft ²	Property held as collateral on a loan of \$1000 from Willie G. Holland
1/11/1906	Henry W. Offutt and Florence G. Offutt	Joseph F. Pyles	184	449	10,890 ft ²	"Being the northwest portion of Block nine (9) of that subdivision of a tract of land formerly known as "Friendship" said subdivision being known as "Friendship Heights" as shown by a plat of said subdivision made by William J. Latimer, Surveyor in June A.D. 1901 and duly recorded among the records of said Montgomery County, Maryland in Plat Book J.A. No. 1 as Plat numbered forty five (45)."